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POWERFUL NEW TALE OF SLAPTON SCHOOL.

The Boys' Realm

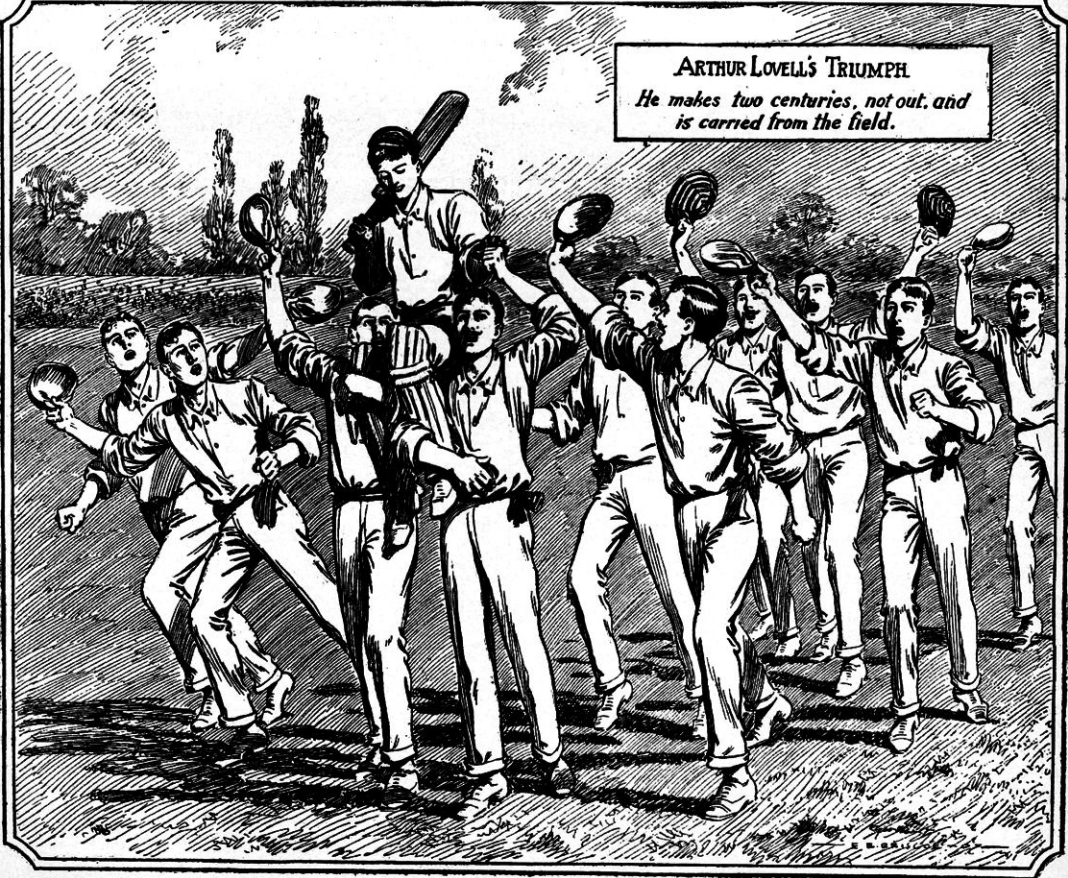
of Sport & Adventure.

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KING CRICKET! By Charles Hamilton.

ARTHUR LOVELL'S TRIUMPH

He makes two centuries, not out, and is carried from the field.



New Football Story Starts Next Week.

KING CRICKET!

A Fascinating Story of County Cricket.

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



The Chief Characters in this Fine Story. ARTHUR LOVELL, Loamshire's champion batsman...

KIT VALANCE, Loamshire's best bowler. He first comes to notice in the Colts' match, where he takes Arthur and Kit...

LEN VALANCE, Kit's twin brother. GEORFFREY LADGEN, an amateur and a good bowler...

JAMES LADGEN, who has ruined Arthur's uncle, Blance, Captain of Loamshire, and the steady friend of Arthur and Kit...

PONSNEY, Geoffrey Ladgen's friend, and a man of similar character—stubbish to a degree.

Arthur Lovell, owing to the ruin of his uncle, had to forfeit his status as an amateur player for Loamshire and three professional.

Kit Valance, Arthur's bosom chum, has a twin brother named Len, who is not a cricketer...

Len makes a bow blunder, and strikes down Blance, the captain of the Loamshire team...

After the day's play Kit Valance overhears his uncle James, and reveals on him to accept...

The following day the match with Kent starts, and Ladgen, by his insubordination and faulty play, rouses Loamshire...

After the day's play Kit Valance overhears his uncle James, and reveals on him to accept...

The injury prevents Arthur from playing for Loamshire for two or three weeks...

An Angry Blow.

IN a new respect, however, the illness of Lovell had not "panned out" for Ladgen...

Ponsney retained for the present the captaincy of Loamshire, having apparently turned out a new ball...

And the hope Ladgen had entertained of shinning the championship...

The fact, in truth, was that although he was not a good and sometimes very brilliant batsman...

This fact he was very slow to realize. He hated and affected to despise the young professional batsman...

And he had not succeeded. He had done well very well, but there was nothing that could be called uniformly brilliant in his batting...

It was very bitter to Geoffrey Ladgen to realize that, given every possible chance, he could not have done so well.

When Lovell began to be seen about the Loamshire pavilion again so carefully avoided Geoffrey Ladgen.

He had made up his mind to say nothing of the story of his accident in the clubhouse, but he felt that it would be difficult for him to meet the cowardly scoundrel without giving some expression to his word or look...

A quarrel with Ladgen would serve no useful purpose, so it was not easy to keep on civil terms with a man who so obviously covetously injured him...

The next match on the Loamshire ground was with the Meryborough Cricket Club...

Next week Lovell was playing, and his name was on the every tongue, and success would once more follow the colours of Loamshire.

Ladgen ground his teeth at the thought. At all-lick would have it, he came upon Lovell as he left the pavilion...

"So you are coming back into the team next week?" he said, in a sneering tone.

leave him out of the team till he was quite fit again. It was possible that too early a strain upon his injured leg might lead to bad results.

The colonel had had a talk with Lovell on the question of the Loamshire captaincy when he had been ready to take his place in the team again.

It could not be said that Lovell's captaincy had been a success. Had he been a captain for a cricket side, but a team like the Loamshires, full of class pride and strongly tainted with snobbishness...

Lovell himself had said so from the first, but the colonel had overruled his better judgment. But the experience on the Tonbridge ground had made the old county cricketer wiser.

Still, he left it to Lovell to decide whether he would resume the captaincy. It did not take Arthur long to make up his mind.

He had taken the position in the first place simply because it was pressed upon him. He had tried his best to make a success of it, but he had failed, by no fault of his own, but by the faults of the team that was under his orders.

It was useless to repeat the disagreeable experiences of the Kent match. Ponsney seems to keep the team together pretty well...

Very well, Lovell," said the colonel. "It shall be as you wish."

In his heart he was not sorry for Lovell's Under more propitious circumstances, Arthur Lovell would have made a splendid county captain...

Lovell was in the pavilion on the Loamshire ground when the M.C.C. team came down to do battle with the Loamshires in their own territory.

The M.C.C. eleven was a very strong one, with some of the finest county players of England in it, and from the first it was seen that Loamshire had little chance.

Loamshire batted first, and were all down for their first innings. Lovell's share being a single round 0.

When Loamshire batted again, the wickets went down at a rapid rate before the bowlers from M.C.C.

Lovell's first innings was half through it was certain that the M.C.C. would not have to bat again.

Loamshire were seven down for 40 when Geoffrey Ladgen was clean bowled for 0, and thus achieved the distinction of the dread pair of spectators—4 0 in each innings.

Ladgen rode from the cricket in a savage temper, and flung his bat down in the pavilion. Thank goodness Lovell will be batting in our next match with Kent...

Lovell heard the remark, and he ground his teeth. Arthur Lovell—always Arthur Lovell!

He stood there with a savage anger in his breast, and a savage gleam in his eyes.

At all-lick would have it, he came upon Lovell as he left the pavilion, and greeted him with a word, but Ladgen was in too bitter a mood to let him pass without a word.

"So you are coming back into the team next week?" he said, in a sneering tone.

"How much have you got, the bookmaker, said you for maltinging all this while, and standing over the odds of the matches?" asked Ladgen pointedly.

Arthur's face went scarlet. This deliberate insult, from the man who had caused his injury, was too much for the most patient temper to endure.

"You—you call!" broke out Arthur. "You dare to say that—you, who plotted with a cowardly ruffian to injure me by treachery. You coward!"

Ladgen started, and turned deadly pale. He had known that someone had overheard his talk with Len Valance and the plot against Arthur, but as nothing had been said for so long he had not imagined that the knowledge had come to Arthur Lovell's ears.

"What do you say?" he cried. "I say that you plotted with Len Valance to injure me and keep me out of the team. You coward!" cried Arthur, with flashing eyes.

Ladgen snarled the words at Lovell; but he had gone too far. Arthur's clenched fist shot out like lightning, and Geoffrey Ladgen went flying. He went to the ground with a crash, and at the same moment Colonel Hilton came out of the pavilion.

"Lovell!" he said sternly. "You have done too far. Arthur's clenched fist shot out like lightning, and Geoffrey Ladgen went flying. He went to the ground with a crash, and at the same moment Colonel Hilton came out of the pavilion."

To Leave Loamshire.

Colonel Hilton rapped out the word in angry tones. He could scarcely believe his eyes. Geoffrey Ladgen was sprawling on the turf, and his angry blow had stretched on the ground his fist.

Arthur Lovell did not answer; he did not look at his coldly, did not even hear him at that moment. His eyes were fixed upon his traitor, whose angry blow had stretched on the ground his fist.

"Get up!" Lovell's voice was sharp and savage. "Get up, Geoffrey Ladgen! You have been trying to drive me to this for a long time, and now that you have succeeded you had better stick it out. Get up, unless you are a coward as well as a liar and a slanderer!"

Ladgen staggered to his feet. His face was white with rage, and although at a cooler moment he would not have cared to come to blows with Arthur Lovell, he had forgotten now the price he had to pay.

He sprang savagely towards the young cricketer. Colonel Hilton fairly shouted out the word as he sprang between them, and forced them apart. Bitter as the anger was on both sides, they obeyed him.

Ladgen's eyes were burning. "You saw what he did," he said thickly. "That paid player—that rank outsider has struck me!"

"I saw it. Stand back!" "I am not—"

Geoffrey Ladgen clobbered his teeth, but he obeyed. Colonel Hilton faced Arthur, with frowning brows.

"What have you to say, Lovell?" Arthur's eyes met his. The young cricketer was somewhat pale now, but the anger died out of his face. He realized his position, but he was calm and cool.

"Nothing, sir, no falter. The colonel's frown grew darker. "You have nothing to say in defence of your outrageous action, Lovell?"

"You have nothing to say," said Arthur Lovell, with a sneering smile. "I have nothing to say."

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captaincy of the team might have been a success but for him. He has sought time and again to drive me into some action which would make impossible for me to continue to play for Loamshire. He has succeeded. He is ready to leave the club."

Colonel Hilton bit his lip. Although there has certainly been in the main, the colonel was something of an autocrat, and once or twice before Lovell's independence had caused a sensation.

Dismissal from the Loamshire County Cricket Club was, in the colonel's eyes, an awful doom, to be thought of with bated breath, and not faced so coolly and calmly as Arthur Lovell faced it now.

"I do fancy it will come to that, Lovell," he rapped out sharply. "There has certainly been more discretion in the team since you played for it as a professional than I ever remember before."

Lovell bowed his head. "I am ready to get out, as I said."

"You seem anxious to leave us," said the colonel, smothering his lip. "and at a time when you know that we need you badly."

"I am not anxious to leave," said Lovell, in a low voice. "I have a little business. Even a professional player may have his hopes and ambitions, you know. I have always done my best for Loamshire, and for the sake of my county, and for my sake, sir, I have put up with more than most men would have endured in my place. But it has come to the end at last. I cannot play any more."

"I suppose I was wrong to knock Ladgen down; but he would have provoked me into it sooner or later."

Lovell was silent. The colonel's words were true; he ought to have commanded his temper better. But what would have been the use? The end must have come!

There was a long pause. Had Arthur Lovell been a less valuable member of the Loamshire eleven it is very probable that the colonel would have bidden him go there and then.

But to part with the best bat in the Loamshire team—the man who was to Loamshire what a county's anchor is to a ship, Surrey or Fry to Sussex—as good as saying good-bye to the last chance of winning the county championship.

And that was an object dear to the colonel's heart. For the sake of the county he had endured much anxiety, and had exacting amateurs, from financial backers, from criticising members.

And for the sake of the county he swallowed his pride, and more now.

"I dare say you have both been to blame," he said. "You must admit that you had no right to strike Ladgen, Lovell. Considering your positions in the club, it was an outrageous action. I know—"

"Our positions!" he exclaimed. "Yes, a paid player, I suppose, must have no feelings of his own; he must be simply a machine to bat in and to strike Ladgen, Lovell. Considering your positions in the club, it was an outrageous action. I know—"

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The name of Arthur Lovell, for a time at least, would disappear from first-class cricket! For a long time Arthur Lovell had "faced the music" pluckily, determined that he would keep on and up in despite of the repeated blows which Fortune had dealt him. But now it seemed at last as if he had reached the end of his tether.

Molly Hilton Steps In.

OLONIA HILTON was silent and gloom. She drove home from the cricket ground to Lincroft. His interview with Arthur Lovell, and the young cricketer's attitude towards him, for he knew that without Arthur Lovell Loamshire's chance of the championship was gone. But as he was not called for, he remained from the position he had taken up. The cause of the dispute between Lovell and Geoffrey Lagden he did not know, but he set it down to an exhalation of bitterness, the outcome of the friction that had long existed between amateur and professional.

Lovell must either apologise or leave the club! Upon that point the colonel was determined, but as to the fact that Lovell would do so what was best for himself, and tender the required apology.

Upon a faint hope; but the colonel nourished it, not caring to consider the county's prospects with her boat gone for ever.

The result of the M.C.C. match had not cheered the old cricketer either. Loamshire had been hopelessly and thoroughly beaten by the M.C.C., who had an average and a heap of runs spare at the finish.

The "pair of spectacles" achieved by Lagden had constituted very materially to that undesired result.

The M.C.C. team had been a pretty strong one, but not so strong as that of the same name, and that crushing defeat seemed like a forerunner of the wrath to come.

He planned to leave, several times during the drive to Lincroft, without speaking, wondering whether it was only the defeat at the hands of the M.C.C. which had done that, brought the dark shade to his brow.

He caught her glances presently. "What had luck to do with it, Molly," he said, guessing her thoughts. "Lovell is going to leave us, my friend."

"The girl started. "Why should Lovell leave us?" "Yes, I fear so."

"But why, dad? You mustn't let him go!" exclaimed Molly. "You remember that you and at the beginning of the season, when Mr. Lovell's uncle was ruined, and he left the club, you said we should include him as badly as you could as last if Mr. Lovell did not return."

"I know I did, Molly." "And when I came back to play as a professional instead of an amateur—"

"I thought we were in luck, my dear," said the colonel, with a faint smile. "But there has been friction ever since—more of it than I suspected at the time. Some of them say that they cannot tolerate the idea of an amateur in the team, and that he puts on airs unsuitable to a paid professional."

"That is not true, dad, and it has come to my ears. Personally, I never saw anything in Lovell's conduct to complain of in the least."

"But they are saying, and it has come to my ears. Personally, I never saw anything in Lovell's conduct to complain of in the least."

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"But why is Mr. Lovell going? I heard a rumour before we left the ground about a quarrel outside the pavilion—"

"It was a quarrel between Lovell and Lagden, and as Lovell is a professional, and Lagden is an amateur, he must have been very much provoked."

The colonel smiled. "I am sure you are right, Molly. That's the true reason, Molly Hilton could see no wrong in the man who was a hero in her eyes."

"Unfortunately, it is difficult to get at the exact basis of the matter, Molly," he replied. "But Lovell has the choice of apologising to Lagden or leaving the club. I hope that he will choose to apologise, but I have my doubts."

"But if he leaves—"

"It will be bad for Loamshire. But discipline must be maintained, and the old soldier, I cannot alter my decision. Lovell must give in or go."

The arrival of the carriage at Lincroft put an end to the conversation. The matter did not leave Molly Hilton's mind.

The girl was deeply concerned by what her father had told her.

In the old days, before misfortune and poverty fell upon Arthur Lovell—through no fault of his own—Molly had learned to care for her handsome young cricketer, and his fall from his previous station had made no difference to her.

She had now seen him now, save on the cricket-ground, for there could be little in common between the professional cricketer and the student of a county magazine. But the old regard remained in her heart unchanged.

But it was not merely her regard for Arthur Lovell that prompted her now. She remembered the declaration of his brother-in-law, that if Arthur Lovell were employed in the City, that he could find proof that James Lagden had swindled Arthur's father, and that he had no further to do with Lagden was a rogue, and force him to restore

she longed to speak to him and urge him to stand by his county in the time of need. The secret of her heart—which had been hardly a secret in the days when it had seemed possible for her to give her love to Arthur Lovell—slood between them now. She cared for Lovell, and she believed that, although no word was spoken, his heart would fall from fortune, he cared for her. And so she shrank from asking him to see her.

Kit Valance. Molly had always liked and respected the young bowler, and she had a regard for him as for one who was as good as a friend. She could speak freely, and discover if there was any way of changing Arthur's decision, or of making the colonel more lenient towards the player who was not called for. For Molly was convinced that Lagden had been flagrantly in the wrong, though Lovell had been too proud to apologise.

The result of the girl's reflections was a little note that Kit Valance received. The young bowler read it, and wondered; but he lost no time in doing what he was asked to do. In the summer morning, before the time for appearing on the Loamshire ground, the young cricketer of Lincroft, who had been waiting on the bridge that spanned the little stream meandering among the old trees.

Molly Hilton came from the trees and joined him. The girl nodded cordially.

"What is the matter, Kit Valance? Or, rather, I need not ask, since you are here."

Kit looked. "Yes, Miss Hilton. How can I serve you?" "Yes, Miss Hilton, what happened yesterday on the cricket-ground?" said Molly Hilton, plunging into the subject at once. "Mr. Lovell has no doubt been called for."

"Yes; he told me all about it," said Kit, wondering. "Is that what you wish to speak to me about, Miss Hilton?"

"My father has decided that Arthur Lovell must either apologise to Mr. Lagden or leave the club, and he has resolved to leave."

Molly coloured a little. "Loamshire cannot spare him, Mr. Valance," she said. "Yes, he must not leave the county, I am certain. His father was well known, Mr. Lovell would be proved to be in the right, and Colonel Hilton would be changing his decision."

"Why bring the truth to light?" Kit understood. "Yes," he said quietly. "Lovell's decision is a blow to me. I have urged him to leave the county the whole truth, but his pride has been bitterly wounded, and he will not say a word to me, or to my father, in favour of approaching the colonel on the matter."

"And the truth—what is that?" "Geoffrey Lagden and another caused the incident to occur at Lincroft, which led him up for so long. It was done deliberately to keep him out of Loamshire cricket."

"Can that be true?" "I could prove it. I know it all along; and Lovell for a while refused to believe it. For your sake! I do not understand."

"You will understand when I tell you that the cause of Lagden's confederate was my brother, Len Valance."

Kit spoke quietly, but his face was very pale. A look of quick sympathy flashed into the girl's eyes. "But I am sure that it must have cost him much to tell her this."

"I am sorry, Mr. Valance."

"It is not the first time that she has brought such news to me, and I have said nothing!" But that was not all. Yesterday Lagden, not knowing that Lovell was aware of his slyness, taunted him with malingerer—pretending to be ill for the sake of not playing for the county, and with being bribed by a bookmaker to do so."

The girl flushed hotly. "No wonder Mr. Lovell struck him down," she exclaimed. "He would have been less, or more, if he had not done so."

"That was a short sentence."

"Can this be proved?" asked the girl at last. "Lagden would deny everything, of course," replied Kit. "I suppose it could be proved if my brother had been called and charged."

"That must not be."

"I would rather Len came to his deserts at last, than that Arthur Lovell left Loamshire," said Kit quietly.

"But there may be another way."

"I cannot think of one."

"I will tell him how much is known, and tell him that it shall be made public if Arthur Lovell leaves Loamshire."

Kit smiled. "I did not think of that. It is quite possible that you will succeed, Miss Hilton."

She gave Kit her hand, and left him. The young bowler turned and walked away in the direction of the Loamshire ground, with many thoughts in his mind.

Little as Molly dreamed it, Kit guessed her father's plan. He had seen that Arthur Lovell the man as for Lovell the cricketer. He knew that he loved his club, and that Fortune had made a mistake in forcing them to meet, except as mere antagonists.

And a new idea came into Kit's mind. He remembered the declaration of his brother-in-law, that if Arthur Lovell were employed in the City, that he could find proof that James Lagden had swindled Arthur's father, and that he had no further to do with Lagden was a rogue, and force him to restore

fifty thousand pounds to the man he had robbed. Lovell had refused to have a hand in the matter, but the method he had proposed had revolted him, and it was his refusal as much as any other thing that had exasperated Len, and made him so determined to force Lagden to rest. If the truth were made known, and retaliation compelled, then the bar between Arthur Lovell and the girl he loved would be removed, and two lives would be made happy.

Kit would lose his claim to some extent, but he knew that, so long as Arthur Lovell would never change in his true friendship. And if he played again for Loamshire as an amateur, and retained his position as county captain, Kit would still be his claim. But even if Kit lost his to some extent, surely he could not allow selfish considerations to stand in the way of helping his friend.

The young bowler turned the matter over in his mind very carefully. The result was a letter to Len Valance for which the seapacker received with great satisfaction.

The Match with Sussex.

GEORFFREY LAGDEN entered the drawing-room at Lincroft with a beating heart.

"Molly Hilton, in a brief note, had asked him to call. Why, he could not guess; but he allowed his imagination to run riot."

He was dressed in his long and unrelaxing coldness towards him was to end at last, that she had at last forgotten Arthur Lovell and was willing to smile at his rival? It was hardly likely, but Lagden allowed himself to picture it. He eked as much for Molly Hilton as his hard, cold nature would permit, and he was sure that he would have dearly liked to cut Arthur out in this direction, even if he could not oust him from his position as champion cricketer of Loamshire.

He waited, after he was shown in, impatiently for Molly to appear. She did not come, but he saw that she was coming.

Lagden started forward eagerly as the girl swept into the room.

"Molly, I am glad to see you. He thinks that all the amateurs in the team are against him. Perhaps my forbearance in this instance will have a good effect upon him. In any way, I will much rather the affair didn't go any further."

"This is very decent and generous of you, Lagden, but I don't think you are making the young man warmly by the hand, his own manner showing how relieved he was. 'I didn't want to get part with Lovell, of course, but I could not help it. I am sorry to hear that, but I am very glad you have spoken out in this way—very glad indeed.'"

"The girl smiled, and walked on, his face considerably brighter than it had been before he met Lagden in the drive. Colonel Hilton lost no time in telling Arthur Lovell how matters stood, and in opening his mind to the presence of Kit Valance, and gave a whistle of surprise as he read it. Kit looked at him with a smile.

"It's from the colonel," said Lovell. "Lagden forgoes the apology, and I am to stay in the county, and do nothing more to be said, I don't understand it. That's not like Lagden."

Kit laughed. "Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

"Yes—"

again! If you do not promise to make amends to Arthur Lovell, I shall tell Colonel Hilton the whole story as soon as he returns."

"I am sure you will do it, my champion," sneered Lagden. "Perhaps the colonel would not be exactly pleased by the deep interest you take in the outcome of my dispute."

"That is no business of yours! Have you decided?"

"I suppose so."

"Miss Hilton, there must be no double-dealing!" said Molly icily. "Mr. Lovell remains in the club, or else you are exposed as you really are to a woman's eyes that he did at this moment."

"I quite understand, Miss Hilton. I shall not forget this. I assure you," said Geoffrey Lovell, who had been listening to the dispute with a keen interest, and who had remained, but perhaps in the long run he will wish that he had gone."

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"I am sure you will do it, my champion," sneered Lagden. "Perhaps the colonel would not be exactly pleased by the deep interest you take in the outcome of my dispute."

"That is no business of yours! Have you decided?"

"I suppose so."

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The Gentleman Gamekeeper



A Fine
New
Series
of
Complete
Tales,

By the author of "Paddy Leary's Schooldays."

No. 1.—The Mystery of Cross Covert.

THE 1st CHAPTER

Jack Wants His Old Home.

EVERYONE in the county was sorry when the Bellams went to smash and had to leave Brookworthy Hall. Old John Bellamy had been liked and respected as the finest sportsman in Devonshire, the best rider to hounds, and as pretty a shot as you'd find in the most sporting county in England.

Quite why he came to grief no one seemed to know. Of course, land values had gone down, but the Brookworthy property was fine farm land, and the rents ought to have been enough to keep the place up. There were rumours of speculation, of a dishonest lawyer, all sorts of stories. No one knew for certain, and old Mr. Bellamy never told. But it broke his heart to have to leave the home of his fathers. He was dead within six months of leaving Brookworthy, and Jack, his only son, whose mother had died twenty years before, was left to make the best he could of things.

Jack had been at Oxford when the crash came. Of course, he left at once, and went back to his father at Fratton, a little barren farm on the Cornish coast, the last morsel of property left to the Bellams, and worth a bare fifty pound a year.

Jack and his father had always been great pals, and it hit the boy terribly hard when the poor old man died. Jack had never done a day's work, apart from sports, in his life, but he had no idea of eking out an existence at Fratton. He made up his mind to do something for a living, and by the interest of an old friend got work in a shipping office in Plymouth. But he soon made up his mind that this was not his job.

Jack was a first-class shot, a good man with a horse. He could put a trout fly on the water as prettily as any man in Devon, and hunt a pack of otter hounds in first-class style. He knew how to set a wire for a rabbit, and how to break a setter to the gun. He was an open air man pure and simple, and no manner of use with his pen. He hated towns, and figures worried him. He stuck to the office for six months, and then one day went to his friend and said:

"I'm very sorry; I've done my best, but I can't stick it. I'm going to chuck this job, and take a place as a gamekeeper. You see, I don't know but that you're right, Jack," answered the other. "You'd make a better gamekeeper than clerk; but you must remember it's cutting your throat at the heels, your friend. Do you think you can stand it?"

"My best friends are dogs and horses," said Jack. "I can't be unhappy while I'm with 'em."

So it was settled, and a month later Jack Bellamy, who now called himself Jack Ball, found himself installed in a small cottage on the estate of Mr. Herbert Stanton at Yenners, about ten miles from his old home. His wages were a pound a week, and as the place was small, he was given a dog and a hen, and a couple of fowls, and a very good rooster, and Jack found himself busy all day in the open air, and fifty times happier than he had been since his father's death.

Mr. Stanton did not know who his new gamekeeper was, but he recognized that he was a cut above the rest of the type, and he was accordingly. So things went very smoothly all the summer, and it was nearly autumn before Jack had his first adventure.

One hot day late in August, Mr. Stanton told Jack to go over to Brookworthy and see a setter which he thought of purchasing from Mr. Wray, the present tenant of the hall. Naturally Jack would rather have gone anywhere else on earth, but there was no help for it, and about three in the afternoon he found himself

tramping up the familiar avenue of great beeches, with his terrier Nell at his heels. As Nell figures rather largely in this story, she deserves a word to herself. She was one of that fine old Devonshire breed of rough-coated terriers known as the Jack Russell, because they were originated by the celebrated hunting parson of that name. These terriers are small, and, as a rule, white, with a patch or two of black. They are the gamiest little creatures on earth, and will face anything from a bull to a badger. Nell was a specially fine specimen of her race. She had a close, wiry coat, a beautifully shaped head, and large, prominent brown eyes. Though barely a year old, and not yet arrived at her full strength, she was wonderfully intelligent, and she and Jack were the best pals in the world. Jack valued her more than anything else he possessed, and she was absolutely devoted to him.

Instinctively Jack turned up the front drive, and then realising who he was now and how things were changed, he turned and took his way to the back door. With disgust and sorrow he saw that the new tenants were altering the place, lopping the timber, and building an ugly electric light plant on the site of the old rose garden. He had not heard much of the Wrays, but he knew they were rich people from London who were making a great effort to get into country society.

He rang, and sent in his name and business by a maid to Mr. Wray. She came back and

told him the master was out, but she thought young Mr. Wray was somewhere about the place. Jack was not and thirty, and in old days no one came to the hall without being offered refreshment, but the maid did not even suggest a glass of beer.

Just then a great row broke out in the stable-yard close by, men shouting, dogs barking, and a scuffling of feet.

"That's him!" said the maid, with a curl of her lip. "That's Mr. Edgar. You'll find him in the stableyard."

"Thank you, I'll go there," said Jack. When he turned he found that Nell was not with him. "Nell!" he called, and whistled. But she did not come. "Must have found a mischief," and he wasted no time in looking or two looking round the backyard. Meantime the noise in the stableyard was tremendous, and thinking it might have attracted Nell he hurried off there.

For a moment he could not make out what was happening. A dozen or so stable help, brooms, and gardeners were bunched round a big kennel in the far corner, and an over-dressed young fellow in buggy riding breeches, yellow gaiters, and a loud check coat, was in the middle in front of the kennel, apparently directing operations. Some of the men were laughing, some shouting, while a number of dogs were barking furiously.

"Loo in there! Fetch him out! Good dog!" Jack heard the over-dressed man shouting above the din. "What's the matter with the dog? Finking it!"

"No, sir; she's all right. Plucky as they make 'em. But I reckon he's a bit too much for a little 'un like that," answered an elderly man, whom Jack recognized as George Dawe, a gardener in his father's time.

Then Jack saw what was doing. They had a badger in the kennel, and were drawing him with dogs. Indeed, a second glance showed that several of the dogs were bleeding badly. It's a cruel business, drawing a badger, pretty much on a level with coaxing staked rabbits and shooting live pigeons. The badger is a powerful beast, armed with tremendous teeth in long, narrow jaws, and is amazingly quick in his movements for such a heavy-looking creature. A full-grown badger will weigh twenty-five or even thirty pounds, and very few dogs have any kind of chance against such a hefty fighter in the narrow confines of a kennel.

Jack stood where he was. He could not, of course, interfere, but the business made him sick. He loved dogs, and to see them tortured was pain and grief to him. He made up his mind that Edgar Wray was a cruel-minded scoundrel, and heartily wished that he had not had to see work of this kind going on in the stableyard of his dear old home.

"She's got him!" came a shout. "She's a good plucky 'un! My word, but he's bit her bad!"

A small white terrier came backwards out of the kennel. She had the badger by the throat, and though he was twice her size and weight, was actually lugging him out of his retreat. It was a marvellous exhibition of strength and pluck, and the men roared applause. The terrier, poor little beast, had suffered fearfully. Her whole head and chest were dull red and dripping. Indeed, she was just about done, for

at that moment she lay her grip, staggered, fell over sideways, and lost on the flags quite momentarily.

"Reckon she's done," said Dawe, and stepped over to pick her up. The man moved aside for him, and Jack, for the first time, saw the dog plainly.

It was Nell!

For a moment the whole yard danced before his eyes. He saw red. Then he was in the middle of the throng.

"Give her up!" he said to Dawe, and he hardly knew his own voice as he spoke. "She was dead! Nell, his best and dearest, his only friend. Murdered to give a moment's brutal pleasure to Edgar Wray and his mob of stable-hand miscreants. Who is responsible for it? He asked me not loudly, but in a voice which must have showed what he was feeling, for a dead and un-comfortable as the man followed."

Then Edgar Wray spoke up. "Who are you, and what do you mean by interfering in my business?" he began, in a loud, blustering voice.

"I did you see her on her knees?" inquired Jack, and his tone was deadly. He remembered Wray now. The fellow had been at Oxford in Jack's first year—a wealthy toady and tuff-bunter.

"Confound you! What do you mean by talking to me like that?" roared Wray in a fury. "Get out of this at once!"

"Did you or did you not set my dog on the badger?" demanded Jack again.

"I did, and I'll tell the dogs on you if you don't leave pretty quick, you insolent black-guard! Here, turn him out, you fellows!"

There was a slight stir among the crowd, but no one seemed anxious to be the first to lay hands on this clean-built young man in the well-cut but shabby tweed.

Jack stepped forward and laid poor Nell's mangled body in the arms of Dawe. Then he turned on Wray.

"Put up your hands!" he said.

"Why don't you obey my orders and turn him out?" he roared at his men.

"I did, and I'll tell the dogs on you if you don't leave pretty quick, you insolent black-guard! Here, turn him out, you fellows!" There was a slight stir among the crowd, but no one seemed anxious to be the first to lay hands on this clean-built young man in the well-cut but shabby tweed.

Utor silence followed. No one stirred. Dawe was the first to recover himself. Here's the dog, sir, and she's quite dead. He's quite dead. Beat take her and go quickly. There'll be trouble about this."

Jack took the little, mangled animal tenderly in his arms, and then he was heard all over the yard of excited talk rose behind him, swung out of the yard.

THE 2nd CHAPTER.

Poachers.

DAWE was right. Nell was not dead.

Before she had reached the drive-gate she was trying to lick her master's hands. But she was in a shockingly bad way. One leg was stiff, and she had a flap of flesh hung down, and there were deep rents in one shoulder and in her throat. She had lost a terrible deal of blood.

Jack made all speed for the Brookworthy village inn. He had not much fear of being recognised in his rough kit, and he knew he had changed a lot in the eighteen months since he had left the hall. He got milk, mixed a few drops of brandy in it, and fed Nell with a spoon. Then he bound up the worst of the wounds with soft rag, and spent the best part of a week's income on the hire of a dogcart to drive home. He carried Nell in his arms all the way, and when he reached his cottage he set to work in earnest.

The clock wound had to be sewn up. A horrid business, but Jack was a good hand at a needle, at least at that kind of thing, and plucky little Nell never so much as whimpered during the operation. The other wounds were washed with warm antiseptic, and tied up carefully. Then he put the little dog on a soft cushion in a quiet corner, and fed her with beef-tea in an egg-spoon.

She was too weak to eat. She just lay, a poor little, helpless rag of a dog, with her eyes half shut, except for her slow breathing, looking about as nearly dead as any creature could look.

Jack never went to bed. He sat up with Nell all night long. More than once he thought she had gone, but each time one drop of brandy in a spoonful of milk revived her. Now and then, when he lay down, he was wakened by a few snore before he had the liveliest, healthiest little dog for miles round, Jack fairly ground his teeth. It quite frightened him to realize how it had come.

Jack was too honest to neglect his work, even for Nell's sake. He sent for a man who sometimes came and mended him out of his own pocket to do what was necessary. By next evening the little dog was distinctly better, and her master was, with intense relief, that she was probably well round.

This had all happened on the Tuesday. On

(Continued on the next page.)



Next second Jack's hard, brown left fist caught Edgar Wray on the point of the chin with a crack that was heard all over the yard.

THE GENTLEMAN GAMEKEEPER.

(Continued from the previous page.)

The Friday Mr. Stanton sent a message for Jack to come and see him. Jack would not leave Nell alone, so carried her with him, and left her in the kitchen, where the stout cook put her up and fed her as usual.

Mr. Stanton was looking over. "What's this I hear, Ball? You failed to do your errand, and I hear, buckled down and half killed Mr. Edgar Wray."

"It's a pity I did not quito kill him, I think, sir," was Jack's surprising reply. "Mr. Stanton stared. 'May I tell you?' continued Jack very quietly.

"Yes; if you can explain your amazing remark assured the other, it was plain that he was very much annoyed.

"Wait one moment, sir. I must show you something," and Jack left the room and fetched a dog.

As soon as he set eyes on the dog, Mr. Stanton exclaimed at her condition. It was nearly dead, and he was in a state of collapse.

Then Jack told his story—very simply. He kept back nothing, and when he had finished the other jumped up.

"You may say, Ball, you did quite right! It was blactuatedly cruddy to see a mere puppy like that at a badger's den."

"I was blactuatedly cruddy to see a mere puppy like that at a badger's den," and he told Mr. Stanton that he had been here and told him that you were drunk, and wantonly assailed his son! "He wanted me to destroy the dog and spot the badger."

"I said I would first hear what you had to say. I'll take care you don't have to go to Brock-worth again, and I'll see that Mr. Wray shall tell him my opinion of his son's conduct."

As Jack left the house, he smiled a little to himself at the thought of the next morning. He had an idea that the latter would not mind much. And Mr. Stanton, although a hunter, and no sportsman, was a power in the land from a social point of view. So Wray would not dare to report.

Time passed, and Nell mended. Slowly at first, but afterwards more rapidly. Fortunately no bones were broken, and her eyes were not injured. The wear on the top of her head was a bad one, but with the aid of coconut oil Jack got the hair to grow again. By the middle of September, Nell was healthy again, ready for rat or rabbit, or a game with her master.

Partridge shooting began, and Jack had so much to do of that he almost forgot Wray. He was too busy with his pheasants. Pheasant poachers became active in September. They were not keen to take the birds to work in the month, for the birds cannot by law be exposed for sale until October. But you get the professional poacher to work a month or two earlier in the month, finding out where the birds roost preparatory to a grand coup just before the first of October.

Jack followed cautiously. He had walked nearly across the wood, when he caught sight of a pale gleam of bluish light in the distance. At the same moment, Nell stopped with a little whining sound.

"Smoking them, by Jove!" muttered Jack. He meant that the poachers were using a sulphur fire to suffocate the pheasants as they roosted. He did not want to risk Nell in a fight, so he took off his cap and laid it on the ground. "Trust, Nell!" he said, and the terror at once lay down on the cap. Jack, sitting in hand, crawled forward very cautiously.

Yes; he was right. There was the unmistakable blue flame of sulphur. The odd thing was that it seemed to be burning out in the open. Poachers usually use an old tin biscuit-burner, with the bottom knocked out, to hide the flame. Had they heard him, and cleared 'er up, Jack best double, and wormed his way silently through the bushes. His heart was beating a little faster than usual. There would be two, if not three, men on this job. Heavy work to tackle—especially if they had guns.

He could see the flame quite clearly now. Yes; there was no doubt about it! The poachers had taken alarm. There was no one to be seen within the little circle of light cast by the small, blue, flickering fire, from which a column of smoke rose straight into the branches of the beech-trees above.

The ground was open between him and the beech. It was a little natural glade in the very heart of the wood. In the center of the glade was a spring, and all round hazel and bramble were matted in a tangle.

Jack was a good deal puzzled. He could not imagine how the poachers had heard him, for his approach had been absolutely noiseless, nor why the men had left their smoke fire burning away in a mere stamp of a notional boot without leaving it out.

He waited for some minutes on the edge of the glade. All was deadlly still. Not a bird moved; not a breath of wind rustled a leaf.

FIRST GREAT FOOTBALL NO. 10. SATURDAY. Powerful New Football Story. By A. S. HARDY. ORDER YOUR COPY TO-DAY.

"They must have gone," said Jack to himself, and getting up, he walked across to the fire.

At that moment a shot crashed out from the dark bushes behind. Jack flung up his hands and fell forward on his face, close beside the ashes of the dying fire.

THE 3rd CHAPTER. The Clue. THE next thing that Jack knew was finding himself lying in a most comfortable bed, in a large, airy, well-furnished room. He couldn't imagine where he was, nor remember what had happened. He tried to move, only to find that his body was entangled in bandages, and that the attempt was extremely painful.

But his movement was heard. Next instant he felt a hand touching her master's face, and positively squealing with delight.

Someone got up from a chair at the far corner of the room, and came to the bedside. It was Mr. Stanton, stout cook.

"So you've come round, Mr. Ball? Well, if I ain't glad! We thought you were dead, so enough. I'll go and tell the master," and he bustled off.

Presently in came Mr. Stanton. "How are you, Ball?" he said anxiously. He liked his gentlemanly young gamekeeper.

"Stiff, sir; but not very bad," answered Jack. "Pon my word, you're wonderful for a man who's just had a charge of number six picked out of him!" returned the other. "Do you know who did it?"

"Who shot me—not I, sir! It was done from behind."

"The Background! Was it Worth, do you think?" "I hope not!" said Jack earnestly. "I think

better of him than that. More likely some of the gang from Newton. But who found me, sir?"

"She did!" said Mr. Stanton, stroking Nell's rough head. "You owe your life to this little red dog, Ball. She came here, like the mad, at four this morning. Tyrrell, the butler, heard her, and when he went out she began to whine and run over the wood. He called me, and she took us straight to Mad Dingle, in Cross Covey. We couldn't see anything at first, but Nell went burrowing into the bushes, and I followed, and there you were, huddled up in a deep hole, under the roots of a big, dead oak."

"Why, I was in the glade when they shot me!" declared Jack, with a gasp.

"Were you? Then they took the trouble to bury you. You were covered up with leaves and brush. If Nell hadn't scratched them away from your face, you'd have been suffocated, for a dead crust."

Jack stretched out weakly, and patted Nell's head. She licked his hand delightedly. For a few moments neither of the men could trust themselves to speak.

"It's good of you to have me here, sir!" said Jack at last.

"Nonsense! You're to stay here till you're quite well! You'll be properly looked after, and fed up. The doctor says you'll be all right in ten days. You had a wonderful escape. The charge struck you in the back instead of the head, and that heavy twadd of yours saved you. All the same you had about thirty wounds in you. And look here, Ball, I'm killing two birds with one stone. No one knows you're here, and my servants and the doctor. You're much more likely to find out who did this thing if you're supposed to be feigning. You're to stay here quietly until you are quite fit, and then we'll see what's to be done."

"The doctor was right. In a week Jack was almost well. In ten days he could get about as well as ever. But meantime nothing oc-

up in long rows, while the stands were packed with nearly a hundred people.

Jack kept well in the background. It was not his cue to be seen yet. Nell trotted close at her master's heels. As the other two were at last! A big, red motor had whirled up, and half a dozen people got out, and walked up to the grand stand entrance. When they had passed in, Jack also strode a little, and followed them. Now was Jack's chance, and he followed.

The Wrays were in the middle of things. There were the stout, red-faced father, the ever-dressed mother, couple of vacuous-looking youths from town, and young Edgar Wray—the latter got up in the very latest effort of a Bond Street tailor, and looking in spite of it, like the underbred cat he was.

You could see at a glance how keen they were to look and be seen. As Jack came close he heard Mr. Wray say to his mother:

"Look, there's the Mount Edgecumbe party. Can't you get an introduction, Edgar?"

Then Jack stopped forward, and as he did so, he saw the father and mother looking in spite of it behind him. He touched Edgar Wray on the arm.

"The man started. Then, when he saw who it was, his prominent eyes goggled, and his jaw dropped, while his face went a sickly yellow. Next instant he made a big effort, and pulled himself together.

"What do you mean by speaking to me, follow?" he gasped out.

"I have found something which I think belongs to you, Mr. Wray," said Jack, speaking very quietly and distinctly. By this time quite a number of people were looking at the group. The Wrays showed their embarrassment but they did not say a word as a customer, too.

With great deliberation he took a small packet from his waistcoat pocket, and unwrapped it, Edgar Wray staring at him all the while, and his father and mother looking on about as two well-to-do to crowd round, but every moment more eyes were directed at the Wrays. Somehow, all felt that something out of the ordinary was happening. Nell knew, too. She stood like a little statue, but her throat vibrated with deep growls.

Finally Jack finished unwrapping his find, and held it up. It was a small, gold seal.

"Is this not yours, Mr. Wray?" he asked, in the same tone as before.

Edgar Wray gasped out: "No!"

"But is this not your crest?" inquired Jack, still with the same intense politeness. "It is the same as that on the ring which you are now wearing."

Young Wray was beyond speech by this time. "Would you like to know where I found it?" continued Jack. And he felt the rustle of curiosity in the crowd, which seemed to have mended and thickened.

"It was in Cross Covey, on the property of my employer, Mr. Stanton, and Jack raised his hand to his forehead, as if all could have found it in a hole under the great, dead oak. A curious place, was it not, Mr. Wray?"

"Edgar Wray's face was simply ghastly. If he did not know all, he might have carried it off. But he could not. Jack had accurately sized him up."

"Then it is not yours?" went on Jack again. "I am sorry to have troubled you, but of course, I thought it must be, because of the crest. It is the same as yours, is it not? By this time, perhaps it might have come off your watch chain. Well, I must try to find the real owner. I'll send you an apology for having troubled you. And, with a slight bow, he disappeared away, leaving Wray standing, apparently rooted to the ground, and the centre of a humming circle of eyes.

Later that afternoon, Jack felt a touch on his arm. There was Mr. Stanton, with a smile on his face, and a hand on his shoulder.

"You look extraordinarily well, Ball! If you wanted revenge you have it. The wildest stories are about, and the Wrays have been a good deal better than a few days ago. I hardly think they will stay on at Brock-worth."

"I'm thankful for that, sir!" said Jack, with some emphasis that his employer looked at him anxiously.

And as Jack touched his hat and turned away, Mr. Stanton said, half aloud:

"What a mystery about that chap! How he did let Wray have it! I couldn't have done it so myself. Well, I like him, and I only hope he won't leave me."

Jack trotted quietly home his face was thoughtful. "They may leave Brock-worth," he muttered. "But I've very much doubt if I've done with them. I've got a very good reason for wanting to try to murder me, he's not likely to take what he's had to-day lying down."

TEDDY LESTER'S CHUMS.

Rattling New Tale of Slatton School. By JOHN FINNEMORE.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

TEDDY LESTER, a pupil at Slatton School, in Mr. Jayne's house. A popular character well known to the members of the Slatton School...

The opening of a new term at Slatton School is made conspicuous by the arrival of Jimmy West. In appearance he is guileless and a little bit new...

THE 6TH CHAPTER.

Mr. Jayne and Mr. Jayne. "AID a little more, did you, you stly, young beast!" howled Curzon, his voice muffled in the rug which had got still more matted under the foot of his head in his fall...

The master at last broke the silence. "So this is your idea of the conduct of a big fellow in the Fifth grade, is it? You're hitting tons. Will you be good enough to explain what you mean by bursting into this study in that manner, and then to intend to break every bone in Lester's body?"

"He was trying to break into the room, sir," put in Teddy.

"He was trying to break into the room, sir," put in Teddy. "He wanted to get hold of West, sir, and according to my theory, to whom you, as an older boy, were bound to show every tenderness and courtesy?"

"Will you explain to me why you wished to do this?" "I wish to know you, as an older boy, were bound to show every tenderness and courtesy?"

"Yes, sir, all right," "we've done all right, so far. But we've got to get to bed to-night. Good night, you and your mother. See you in the morning, what his chum meant."

"Just about done 'em all looked on," cried Teddy joyfully. "The merry little equine laid its life into it, too."

"Now," said Teddy, "how many chaps can we count on in the dorm, to lend us a hand, if there's trouble in the wind?"

"Only Foulkes to depend on," he replied. "Teddy nodded right, old chap!" he said. "And Curzon and Gibson are pretty strong there."

"B-b-but, Teddy," said the Bat, "w-w-with all about the p-p-pre-fer-fer. You've f-f-f-told me all s-s-sorts of x-y-y-yrars about what the p-p-pre-fer can do."

THE 7TH CHAPTER. The New Prefect.

Three friends went up to the dormitory that night; they found that several boys were already there, preparing busily for bed.

"The Bat went to the dormitory that night; they found that several boys were already there, preparing busily for bed. He was in too much of a hurry to tell."

"Hullo, Teddy," he said. "how did you get on this afternoon?" "He wanted a bit of his side knocked out of him, I should wonder he means to do."

"Right you are, Nagmo!" said Foulkes, nodding to the little Jay. "His upper lip isn't stiff enough to keep No. 10 in order."

"The new prefect came in, a slight, timid-looking little fellow, very neat and serious. He was not one who had sought authority. It had been thrust upon him by his position in the school, and he kept it with a certain care."

"Curzon made no secret of his intentions. He marched in behind the prefect, banged the dormitory door and said in a voice of savage glee."

"What do you mean, Curzon?" asked the prefect, glancing over his shoulder. "That's all right, Polly!" said Curzon with a chuckle. "You tumble into bed, and leave corners to the soft answer to you."

"The prefect flushed, and replied in a tone of weak anger. "Curzon made no secret of his intentions. He marched in behind the prefect, banged the dormitory door and said in a voice of savage glee."

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"When he came down with it," said Curzon carelessly, making it his aim to laugh through the air as he launched imaginary swishing cuts.

"Get ready to stand together, my merry men all!" muttered Teddy, at the end of the room. He was keeping the corner of his eye on Curzon, and knew that the signals stood at "Danger."

"If you defy my authority, Curzon," cried Polo. "I shall appeal to Mr. Jayne."

"The truth of this remark threw the unlucky party somewhat for a few instants, and he had nothing to say."

"Nothing much, Polly," said Curzon. "Only make 'em sing a song, and you know as well as I do that the canty old term, 'a new chum' boy always has to sing a song first night to pay his footing."

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Then the Bat stood belt upright, and rolled his eyes towards the ceiling, and recited in a loud, shrill voice the following impromptu verse:

"There once w-w-was a f-f-fellow named C-C-Curzon, Who w-w-was a most u-u-u-p-p-pleasant p-p-pref-er-er."

But w-w-with all his s-s-silly t-t-tricks, He w-w-was off in a f-f-f-iff. This w-w-was a most u-u-u-p-p-pleasant p-p-pref-er-er."

"The whole dormitory, save one, burst into a roar of laughter. Even Curzon's own toadies were compelled to laugh, so immitigably comic was the style in which the Bat made his little recital."

"But Curzon himself was in a furious and deadly rage. He was white with fury. He darted forward, in a hand, and buried himself upon the daring Bat."

"Dodgy him, Jimmy!" sang out Teddy. "Jimmy dodged nimbly, and the cane fell with a swish on the floor, and the Bat had sat down again. The latter ran nimbly up the room, and Curzon dashed after him in pursuit."

"Benson thrust out a foot to trip up the fugitive, but the Bat's spitting eyes missed and he hopped as nimbly as a goat over the outstretched foot, and as he passed his long arm shot out and his fist landed full on Benson's mouth, spitting the upper lip clean through."

"The Bat doubled round a washtand and came down the long room again, with Curzon still in hot pursuit. The latter, who had just been checked. It was to who now took a hand in the game. He dropped upon one knee almost full to Curzon's past him, his presence for his mind was full of catching the Bat and beating him till he yelled for mercy."

"With a gasp the little Jay shot out a hand and laid it on Curzon's knee. Then, with all the suile skill of a splendid jiu-jitsu wrestler, he pulled Curzon up, and the maddened Curzon to bring about the bully's own downfall. Curzon whirled to one side, as if he were a thunderbolt, and went down full length, striking his head with a tremendous crash against the iron frame of a bed."

"The Bat pulled up and looked over his shoulder at Curzon, who was lying on the floor, old chap. 'Good business!' But Gibson and Palmer ran to the side of their discomfited leader, and cried out in alarm when they saw how still he lay."

"Nagmo has done for him!" cried Gibson. Teddy went across to the spot and turned Curzon over. "Not a bit of it," said Teddy. "He's all right. He's only landed his head a jolly good crack on the bedstead. Check some cold water on him."

"This advice was followed, and soon Curzon's head was sat and looked round him in savage anger. He was dazed and fumed, and when he tried to get on his feet, he stumbled and sank down again."

"What's the matter, Curzon?" he asked. "That little yellow beast of a Jay checked me!" replied Curzon, and tried to break my neck."

"Look here, you fellows," said the prefect. "The head is all right, but the ragging. 'Tumble in, all of you. It only wants a few minutes. 'Lights out!'"

"For a wonder! Polly's words were obeyed. Curzon rolled his feet and went to his own quarter of the room. The bully had received so severe a shock that he was cowed for the present."

"I s-s-say, Nagmo," muttered the Bat, "I'm aw-w-awfully obliged to y-y-you. You've knocked the f-f-fight out of him f-f-for a b-b-bit."

"Rather!" said Teddy. "He hasn't any real pluck, has that Curzon; but we've got to look out for our backs, when his mollifiers, as you call 'em, hit you any way he can, under the belt or anywhere. Now, we'll tumble in."

And tumble in the three friends did. "THE 8TH CHAPTER. A Run to Oakford. THE chief which he had received on his caudal segment to fear Curzon in his caution. Day after day and night after night slipped by, and he made no quarter. But when his mollifiers, as you call 'em, he'll hit you any way he can, under the belt or anywhere. Now, we'll tumble in."

"The pitch will be too jolly soon for anyone to go near it," said Teddy. "A wet half-holiday is enough to make a saint grow!"

"Perhaps it won't be a wet half-holiday, after all. Bad as it looks, I've heard that the girls are going."

During morning school the clouds thinned, and the rain gradually stopped. By midday it had cleared, and every sun was trying to outlive the soaked earth.

"It isn't a wet half-holiday, after all," said Ito, putting a book on a shelf in the study after morning school.

"No," said Teddy, who was oiling his favourite bat, "but it's no go for cricket."

"I've saved a seat for you on the little Jan," said Ito, "so go along to the town and take the Bat. He'll like to see Oakford."

"Good idea, Ito, my son," said Teddy. "So we'll go."

When the idea was put before the Bat, he flopped his long arms in pleasure. He was keen on seeing the little town to which the boys were all to go on fixed days to make any purchases they wished.

The rain had quite stopped when they started home, and they enjoyed the three-mile swing across the heath and along the main road which runs into the town. As they entered the place the boys' souls, which had started half an hour before, were free.

"I say, you chaps," said Foulkes, "go down to the bridge and have a look at the river. It's a bit of a sight."

"Big flood," asked Teddy.

"A whacker," replied Foulkes, "all the bottom part of the town is under water. It's flooded people out of bed-room windows with boats."

Teddy and his friends went at once to see the river, and they enjoyed the three-mile swing beneath which a broad river flowed through Oakford to the sea. The parquets were thronged with people who were pouring in wildest fury through the wide arches.

Heavy as the rain had been in the neighbourhood, it must have been heavier still in the uplands thirty miles away. So vast was the volume of water poured down from the hills that the banks could not contain it. One bank was a little lower than the other, and over that the water had poured and entered a low-lying part of the scene of the flooding. The water had already reached the rooms of the cottages ceiling high, and the inhabitants were calling from the upper windows. The boats were busily plying along the flooded streets, and family after family were returning from their water-logged homes.

For an hour or more the boys watched the busy and exciting scene; then the Bat looked at his watch and announced:

"T-t-time for the s-s-spread!"

In a hour or two they were in Oakford. The Bat meant to take Teddy and Ito to the finest tea that the famous pastry-cook, Mr. Seaton Goddle, could give.

The three boys went up the High Street, and paused outside a shop to get a good look at the windows piled high with toothsome delicacies.

"I wish I could have a j-j-jolly good b-b-buster!" remarked the Bat.

At this moment the cheerful sounds of a band sounded from the top of the street.

"Hallo!" said Teddy. "Here come the Volunteers, and they are out on a practice march. Let's wait and see 'em go by."

"We w-w-will," said the Bat, and he nodded.

"C-c-come in and t-tell 'em to get things ready, T-Teddy," went on the Bat. "I'll be waiting in my p-place, and it w-w-will save t-t-time. Then w-w-we can g-g-go back and s-s-see the flood."

"All right," said Ito, "and I'll be out the shop, at the back of which a number of tables stood ready for customers."

"I'll be out the shop, at the stout waiter who knew him well," just rig out this table in the corner with a jolly good tea for three, and I'll be out and get it at once. We'll be in a few minutes."

"Yes, sir!" said William, and Teddy returned to his friends to rush in and, Teddy did not see that Palmer and Gibson were already seated at a table near at hand to the one he had, but so it was.

With a malignant eye, Gibson watched William spread the table with a splendid supply of the best shop could afford.

"I wish I could put a dose in the grub that I'm sure will see 'em all down the drain," Palmer grinned and nodded.

"And I will," said Gibson suddenly; "at any rate I'll have a good look at 'em."

He waited till William was out of sight at the farther end of the shop, then made a swift dash to the table with a couple of small pies from a plate. With the edge of a knife he neatly lowered the top half off, and took out its contents. The latter he replaced by a mis-

ture of salt, pepper, and mustard from the casket on the table he was sitting at. Then he carefully fitted the tops of the pies on again, and restored them to their former places.

Three minutes later in came Teddy, Ito, and the Bat. The waiter bustled forward, and showed them to the table, and brought the tea. Keen after their walk, the three boys pitched into the toothsome feast, and Gibson and Palmer waited eagerly to see one of them trapped into biting the stinging mixture with the two pies were loaded.

Now, Teddy and Ito had their backs to the enemy, and saw nothing of them; but the Bat had had one of his wandering eyes on them from the moment he sat down at the table. Thanks to the squint, he could watch them while they believed him to be staring thoughtfully at the clock on the wall; and the Bat did watch them.

"Those chaps have got a bit up their sleeve," said the Bat to himself. "They've done something so clever that they're just about tickled to death. What is it? By the way they're watching the table it must be some rag on us."

He was still watching them, though they did not suspect it, when he reached out his hand and seized one of the doctored pies. The Bat saw a grin of unholly joy pass over the face of the constrictors, and at the same moment his sense of touch warned him that the top of the pie was loose.

This was enough for the wide-awake Bat. He put the pie on his plate, carefully slid aside the top, and saw the queer-looking mixture inside. Teddy and Ito were too busy with their own shares of the feast to notice how slow he was in starting on the brown and toothsome-looking morsel.

Then the Bat leaned over the table, and whispered to them:

"I'm going to start a little performance," he whispered. "Don't get rattled at the exhibition. I'm going to frighten a couple of chaps

out of their lives. But don't look round for that. That would give the show away. Keep on munching the grub, and look as if you weren't up to anything."

Teddy and Ito heard these words without giving the slightest sign by look or movement. This waiting for the moment when he would begin to snort and splutter over the stinging and smarting mouthful which they had so neatly entrapped him into taking.

He raised the pie towards his mouth, looked at it, and then bit it with an air of appreciative relish. The two plotters watched him in delight, waiting for the moment when he would begin to snort and splutter over the stinging and smarting mouthful which they had so neatly entrapped him into taking.

But for a few moments the Bat munched on slowly, and calmly as an old cow chewing the cud. Then he suddenly laid the pie down, and looked at it with a more thoughtful than usual.

"What's the matter, Jimmy?" said Teddy. "I don't know," said the Bat, in a queer, shrill voice, which called the attention of everyone in the shop, and brought Mr. Goddle from behind the counter. "There's something very queer in this pie."

"That's rum!" said Teddy. "The pie ought to be all right! Where's Fat Bill, we'll ask him. And Teddy said out: 'Waste it!'"

The stout waiter, whom the boys called Fat Bill, came hurrying up.

"Look here, William," said Teddy, "you've served us with an uncommon queer pie. What have you been putting in it?"

Gibson and Palmer were in hysterics of delight in their shady corner. Their little joke was paying out ten times as much as they had expected. It would involve the whole shop now.

"That pie, sir," said William, in surprise, "there's nothing wrong with that! Nice little pie that, sir!"

At this moment the Bat let out an awful hollow groan, which went to the hearts of all who heard it.

"Oh-o-o-oh!" he moaned. "I f-f-feel queer! I feel horribly qu-queer! This was quite true, for in his bite he had really taken a little of Gibson's mixture. "Oh, I'm p-p-poisoned!"

The word rang through the shop, and thrilled everyone. Mr. Goddle rushed forward, and gazed in horror on the pale face of the Bat, who had fallen back in his chair, his squinting eyes rolling up in his head till little more than the whites were visible.

"He thinks he's poisoned!" chorried Gibson, in a gleeful whisper to Palmer. "What fun! Never mind, let him think so! He must be in a jolly funk!"

But little did they know the wily Bat. He was planning how to turn the suspicion of being the poisoners on the two enemies, when the waiter was taken clean out of his hands, and his brought about in a most effective fashion.

At the opposite side of the room, a stout, elderly lady had been placidly taking her tea. Her table was in shade of a large screen, and neither Gibson nor Palmer had noticed her. Now she bowed forward full of excitement.

"Poisoned," she cried. "I that poor boy poisoned! Oh, how dreadful he looks! Then that's the one who did it! He shot out a fat hand, and poked an accusing forefinger straight at Gibson. "I saw him myself go to that table, and put something on one of the plates. He did it when the waiter's back was turned."

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tried to gasp out an explanation, but the words would not come. He knew that the Bat was shamming illness in a most wonderful fashion, unless the Bat was poisoned, and that was not likely.

His mind turned swiftly to escape, and he turned and rushed out of the door.

"Stop him!" yelled Mr. Goddle. "Hold him!" and Mr. Pettifer yelled:

"Police!"

But the honours of the situation were carried off by Fat Bill. He had gone to the other side of the room, and had seen a stout man catch a schoolboy whose steps were winged with fear. But he whipped up one of the light, cane chairs, and flung it with such dexterity that it dropped exactly upon the man of the de- ing Gibson. The fugitive, unable to check himself, set one foot before the hands, tripped up, and came down with a crash.

He seized a table near at hand to save himself, but only succeeded in dragging it over, and bringing down contents on top of himself. The chief thing was a huge bowl of cup-custard, and this dropped on his head, and its contents were distributed on top of person.

At this instant a policeman hurried in the shop-door. He had been passing on the other side of the street, and had been called in by the young lady who was sitting at the table.

"Seize that rascal, constable!" shouted Mr. Goddle in a fury, and the policeman pounced on Gibson, and took a dollar in a second, and dragged him to his feet.

Gibson's appearance would have made an owl laugh, plastered as he was with food, and streams of yellow custard. Now he found his tongue.

"I tell you it's all a mistake!" he screamed. "I put nothing in the pie but stuff out of the cruet!"

"Oh, then you did put something in it," cried Mr. Goddle. "Now we're setting towards the truth."

Hitherto, Palmer had been a very uncomfortable spectator. He spent the time in watching the scene, and in getting towards the

"It's quite true what Gibson says," he blurted out. "He used salt, pepper, and mustard, and put it in the pies for a joke. Look at the cruet! See! The stuff's all gone!"

"Ah!"

The Bat heaved a long-drawn breath of relief. It was time to give up his performance, and resume ordinary life in order to enjoy the joke. Mrs. Pettifer was carefully examining and smelling the mixture in the tin.

"I don't know," she said loudly. "It might be that, or it might not! How do you feel, my poor boy?"

"I begin to feel all right again," said the Bat, in a feeble voice. "But it frightened me so much to see you, to taste that foamy stuff in a pie."

"Of course it did, poor lad!" said Mrs. Pettifer. "No wonder it gave you a turn."

The constable eyed him at once, and thrust his hands into his pockets. Mr. Goddle said the policeman, who had had a slightly coloured account of the affair from the young lady.

"Seems not," said Mr. Goddle. "It's this here Gibson who thinks we've served him with a dose of poison, you ain't so clever as that, Mr. Gibson. For one thing, you've got your nose into a very pretty mess. For another, you've got your nose for the damage you've done; and for another, I'm going to write to Dr. Baltham, and let him know about this game. And I'm going to send the bill to him, so that I shall be sure to get my money. Now, you clear out of my shop at once!"

"But look what a mess I'm in!" whined Gibson. "I'm clean mud all over, and I'm in a street."

"You won't do it here, anyhow," said Mr. Goddle. "Put him out, constable!"

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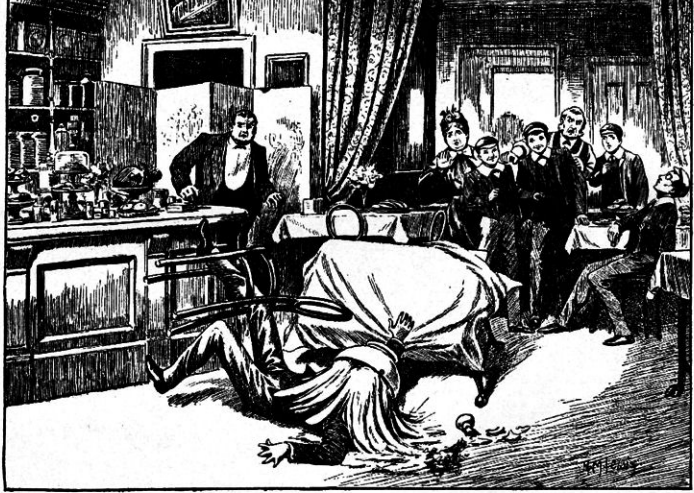
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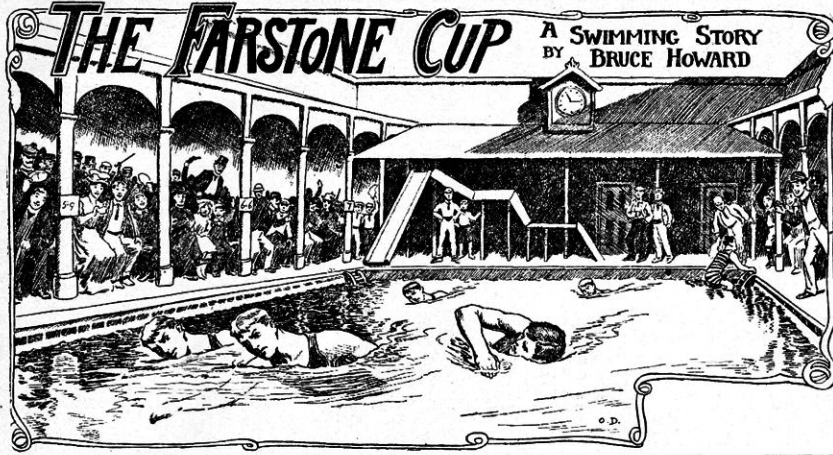
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Gibson tripped up and came to the ground with a crash. A huge bowl of custard dropped on his head and distributed its contents over his person.

(To be continued on Saturday next.)



Tom Sellon, all unconscious of the wicked scheme hatched by Hales, continued to strike out boldly; but to the onlookers it was clear that he and Hales were crowding the other man.

THE 1st CHAPTER.

Goals of Five.
"Hi, there's a fonder! Call that a dive? Like a stack of bricks tumbling in the water! Didn't you bring your baby brother to teach you? Swim like a stone, doesn't he?"

These and similar cries were addressed good-naturedly to each other by the lads who were departing themselves on the Sandmouth Sea Bath on a lovely Wednesday afternoon in the middle of July. The bath was inland, not built out in the sea, so that it served the purpose of an ordinary swimming-bath. It was open at the top, having no roof, and the swimmers had the advantage of sea water and fresh air without the danger of being carried out by the tide or of being buffeted by the breakers.

Most of the lads who were in the bath at that moment, either swimming or watching the swimmers, were all preparing for the annual aquatic entertainment, to be held in the bath a fortnight later. This entertainment was a great one in Sandmouth; the lads themselves were intensely interested in the various races, and each was doing his utmost to carry off a prize in some particular item of the programme, while the holiday visitors crowded to the bath to witness the show. For a week previous to the great day, the town was always thronged over the aquatic sports, and to be absent from the bath on that eventful afternoon was to miss a treat.

Wednesday afternoon was the weekly half-holiday, and the lads spent it in the sea-bath, practising for the races. There were about twenty of them there when Jacky Miller took his so-called "header" into the water, and he made such a terrible splash and fonder that he started the cry, and then they became general and good-natured, as one after another of the lads entered the water.

In spite of their interest in their own special exertions, the boys found opportunity to watch the evolutions and efforts of one of their number, who was a general favourite, as well as one of the most expert swimmers in the town. Tom Sellon gave abundant proof of good form, and staying-power as he shot swiftly and easily through the water in his regular, and endurance, and when he had completed the sixth length of the bath in excellent time, they could not refrain from giving him a hearty cheer.

"You'll win it, Tom! Harry can't beat that! You'll get the Farstone Cup!" cried the crowd, as they watched him splash out of the bath and draw himself out of the water.

It was pleasant to find that his companions placed his hands on the stone edging of the bath and drew himself out of the water. As such a high opinion of his chance of success against the only competitor who could hope to win in a contest with him, and he could not but smile at the gratification, but was very fortunate that Harry Hales pushed open the door at that juncture and saw the smile. He had heard the lads, and his heart remained more unwavering to him; they had reached his ears as he turned the handle of the door which gave access to what the boys called "the pool," and there had come over his face a scowl that was not agreeable to behold. The scowl deepened when he noticed that smile on his rival's countenance, and his heart throbbed more quickly as the desire for revenge took possession of him.

Hales had cherished vengeful feelings against Tom Sellon for a long time, owing to the fact that Tom was very popular in the town, and he was not, but the seniors had depended very much during the preceding months because Tom had obtained a capital situation in the town clerk's office. Hales had also been a

candidate, and had made sure of getting the post. It was a terrible setback to him to be told that Tom was the better man, and he had cherished a desire to have revenge on Tom ever since the meeting had been made, and now he was likely to be beaten in the Farstone Cup, on which he had set his heart, and the lads were saying so openly. It was maddening!

Tom was vexed that Harry should have seen him smiling, as he did not wish to appear over-confident, and so smothered his antipathy, and turned and took a splendid header into the water, and commenced to gambol in the bath, as he often did.

A hush had fallen on the occupants of the pool as Harry entered. He was not liked, and scarcely anyone gave him more than a formal nod of greeting. They left him to do as he liked, while they proceeded to amuse themselves after their own special fashion. One of the features of the annual aquatic entertainment was a game of water-polo, and the boys had, contrary to regulations, taken a struggling, pushing, hustling and scrambling, in a state of wild excitement. It was no proper game, but a general scrimmage, and the shrieks of laughing lust from the lips of the players showed how immensely they were enjoying it. Tom Sellon was one of the foremost, and he was so engrossed in the play that he paid no further heed to Harry Hales.

The latter, brooding over what he had heard and seen, undressed, and got into bathing costume. He was a strong young fellow, and would have been prepossessing in appearance had it not been for his surly disposition, which impressed upon his otherwise good-looking features a forbidding expression which made most of the town lads fight shy of him.

He walked about on the stones and surveyed the players with an ill-natured air. His attention was directed towards Tom Sellon in particular, and a keen observer would have said that he was manifesting some evil designs against his popular rival.

So intent was he on what Tom was doing that he did not notice when his hands, and feet, and he came into violent collision with a smaller lad, who was standing, fully dressed, on the edge of the water, gazing with evident amusement at the scene which was going on.

This was Willie Sellon. Tom's much younger brother, who had been forbidden by the doctor to indulge in the exhilarating exercise of swimming because he was not strong enough to remain in the cold water.

Like a flash of lightning, Harry saw one opportunity by which he might be able to work off his spite on someone connected with Tom Sellon, and he did not care what harm it might do to Willie.

He asked a question quietly of the water. He asked a question quietly of Willie, the youngster who taken into one of the dressing-boxes, and the reply satisfied him that he had guessed correctly.

"You're right, Tom," said Dick Murray cheerfully. "He isn't hurt! We'll take off his clothes, give him a rub down, and put on some dry legs! Here, Jacky Miller, you run home, and get Mrs. Sellon to give you Willie's best suit!"

Dick Murray took the lead in attending to Willie, for he saw that Tom was boiling over with anger, and he fancied that it would be best for Tom to vent his righteous indignation in the proper quarter. Tom is not slow in doing this, as soon as he had seen his brother in safe hands. Striding up to Harry Hales, who was still skulking about on the stones, he faced him boldly, and demanded:

"What did you knock him in the water for, you coward?"

"What's the matter with you?" growled Harry, fuming up at the word "coward,"—probably because he knew that the epithet he deserved. "I'm not bound to answer your questions, am I?"

"Then I'll knock you in!" cried Tom, losing his temper, for a wonder, as he was usually so cool and collected. He shot out his fist, and gave Harry Hales a blow on the chest which sent him reeling. He threw up his arms in a blow of raising his equilibrium, and then fell backwards into the pool with a loud splash. Tom jumped in after him without thinking, and when Hales regained his feet they were facing one another in water up to their armpits.

Tom opened a novel "scrapping match," to quote Dick Murray's description, which was carried on under difficulties. The two lads squared up to one another, and commenced a pugilistic encounter, which was carried on under difficulties.

Everyone knew that water offers great resistance to a stroke from the arms or legs, and so it proved in this encounter. Blows were aimed with the arms slung high by the briny fluid, and they lost much of their force in consequence. When either of the young combatants tried to deal a blow of raising the arm clear out of the water, the effect was spoiled by the awkwardness of holding the arm in the air, and the water in the impeding way was also very difficult, and both the young fellows became tired before they had had a chance of doing much damage to each other.

The queer boxing-match was settled for the time being by Tom getting in a whack at Harry's left eye which sent that individual down and into the surface with a gasp. When he came up, he was too busily engaged in choking and spluttering to come up to the time before the bath-attendant entered with a bucket of importance, and insisted on all the boys leaving the bath.

"I'll take it out of him for that in some other way, and it'll be a day that'll bust him, too, or my name ain't Hales!"

So he snarled off without a word, and Tom Sellon and company made out and put him to bed, lest he should have taken cold. Willie had to be guarded against taking cold, for it was feared that he might develop pneumonia. The next morning Harry Hales avoided a meeting with Tom Sellon, who took his practice in the early morning and in the evening after work hours, and Harry Hales went to the same in ordinary circumstances, but he therefore obtained leave in the middle of the day to go to work, and he did not return until, however, until the following Wednesday afternoon that the lads even so much as saw one another, and then it was on the cliffs above the sea, where some hundreds of people, visitors and townsmen, had assembled to witness the practice of the crews who were to take part in the regatta.

It was a dull, cheerless day, with occasional showers of rain that seemed to chill the spectators, but they remained on the beach and the cliffs, where they were so numerous that it showed how intensely they were interested in mainly, health-giving sports and pastimes.

Many of the boys were there, as only a few could resist the attraction and go to the bath. Tom saw Hales and Dick Murray, while Jacky Miller and company were sitting on the beach on a neighbouring cliff. Some of them seated themselves on the grassy or rocky heights, while others, like Tom, roamed higher and thither from one point of vantage to another.

It was through this restless moving about that Tom suddenly discovered that he was quite close to the cliff, and that the cliff was stood high above all others. Only about half a dozen people, besides the two rivals, were on that point, which was generally regarded as somewhat dangerous in consequence of the crumbling of the earth and the very uneven and slippery surface.

"All well, and I want to have any quarrel with him just now," muttered Tom under his breath. "So I'll edge." This sport is too good to be missed, and he was not to be hindered, which, I don't want to have anything to do with him."

He moved away, but forgot Hales in the next moment as one of the boats made a fine effort. It commanded the admiration of all the spectators, and a cheer of approval went up. Many of the boys were shouting and cheering.

"That was good!" cried Tom excitedly. "Hurrah!"

Tom's hastily about, he found that his view was spoiled by a man who had got in front of him. He turned to the left, and then stood transfixed with horror as he saw a figure flung from the cliff and heard a scream of agony and fear!

In a moment everyone was on the alert. The lookers-on moved work, and gasped up at the cliff in anxiety; the people on the neighbouring cliffs either ran down in their directions, or they stood in great helplessness. The ladies clasped their hands, and some cried, and others wept silently.

"He's gone over! He's killed! He's dashed to bits! He's been brought to his last! Look, he's hanging by his coat! Good gracious, he'll drop! Can't he save!"

Tom's breath seemed to stop as he gazed at the unfortunate person had slipped, or that the earth had given way under his feet, and he had gone down the side of the cliff until, by some accident, he had caught on a bush, and had him suspended between life and death! Tom threw himself face downwards on the rocks, and endeavoured to get up to see the man, whom hanging by his jacket. Who was it? Why, it was Harry Hales!

Tom's breath seemed to stop as he recognized that the wretched fellow was his old enemy! He could not see his face, for Hales was suspended in such a way that his features were hidden from the spectators. He was hanging by the cliff, but Tom had not the slightest doubt of his identity.

"Tom's breath seemed to stop!" cried Tom Sellon, springing to his feet unthinkingly, and thereby narrowly escaping a similar fate. "He's gone over! He's killed! He's dashed to bits! He's been brought to his last! Look, he's hanging by his coat! Good gracious, he'll drop! Can't he save!"

He was full of excitement now. Dashing down the rocks, he saw a boatman kept a rope. Hurriedly explaining his errand, he quickly enlisted the aid of several other men, and together they toiled up again with the coil that was to be used in trying to rescue Harry Hales. That coil was heavy, and their progress would have been slow, had it not been for the aid of a dozen of the lads, who had come rushing from other parts of the cliff to this one. They were all anxious to help, and they were all among them, so that it was easy and quick work to get it to the top.

Tom's breath seemed to stop as he saw the nearest point at the bottom of the cliff in the hope of being of some assistance, but it was clear that the rescue must come from the top. Tom had to go up, and he proceeded to tie the rope round his waist as soon as he reached the edge, and called to the others to do the same. He was now at the point, and then lower him gently down the face of the cliff.

Tom's breath seemed to stop as he determined a tone that no one thought of contradicting, and a minute later he was dangling against the wall of earth, while the boatmen and the spectators were all looking on with interest and cheering his breath in suspense. Neater and nearer! Ha! Tom Sellon has

The Farstone Cup.

(Continued from the previous page.)

the unfortunate youth by the waist, and is passing a hanging end of the rope round his body! Hurrah! There they are, both hanging by the rope, and the string is being pulled in front of them up, inch by inch, to safety.

"Bravo! Hurrah! Bravo fellow! Give him three cheers! He's at the top! Look, the man there, and are taking the rope off! Hurrah, hurrah!"

"And, in the midst of all this excitement, what did he think of?"

"Confound him! I wish it had been someone else! Never mind, I know what I'll do to give the great friends of mine, and that will give me the chance to upset him next week, and send him into disgrace! Good idea, and I can do it right! They make him square for the town clerk job, which he did me out of! I'll pay him!"

THE 2nd CHAPTER
A Dastardly Trick.

HALES took no time in putting his scheme into practice. He took Tom's hand, and shook it fervently.

"Tom, I owe my safety to you!" he said, with a grateful expression of gratitude and frankness. "I'm sorry if we've been bad friends, and I'll do all I can to make it up, old chap!"

"That's all right!" returned Tom modestly, feeling quite taken aback by Hales's candour and offer of friendship. "Don't mention it! We were not bad friends, if you can understand one another! It will be different in future, won't it?"

"I'll" replied Harry Hales decisively. "And if there's anything I can do for you, you can rely on me!"

"That's" said Tom heartily. "And if I can do anything for you—"

"Look here!" said Hales, as a thought struck him. "Shall I keep out of the Farstone Cup?"

He knew well enough that Tom would not accept the proposition. He was right, for Tom shook his head vigorously, but could say nothing, because people were now crowding round the pair.

Tom was overwhelmed with congratulations on his bravery, which made him anxious to get away, and caused Hales to harbour still more bitter feelings against his rescuer. After having to submit to such indignities and expressions of commendation, Tom managed to slip away and go home.

During the succeeding week, Hales was constantly in Tom Sellon's company. They were to be seen in the baths—swimming in friendly rivalry—in the streets, or on the beach. The two people smiled and nodded. It was surprising, yet very pleasant, to see the two young fellows on such intimate terms. Hales was playing his part well, and Tom was completely deceived.

Dick Murray began to be noticed as a prominent competitor in the great 200 yards event. Dick was a good swimmer, but it was generally considered that he had no chance against Sellon and Hales, if those two were in good form. Hales, however, never expressed any opinion that presented itself in order to praise Dick, and expresses doubts of the chances of Tom and himself against his competitor. Hales went to practice very skilfully and cunningly, and within three days, there was a common opinion that Tom Sellon and Harry Hales were not in such good form, after all, and that Dick Murray was certainly in the running. One was said in the swimming, but his joke was voted extravagant, and he was promptly bonneted by Jacky Miller.

On the morning of the great day, Hales took care not to be seen in the great 200 yards event, regarded as a prima-favoured by Tom and himself, but added he thought they could do the trick for Dicky. In that artful way he prepared the people for what he intended to do

against Tom Sellon, and he went to the baths in the afternoon with a glow of satisfaction pervading his being.

Dick Murray was also exhilarated. He had entered for the Farstone Cup in order to make a good time record for himself, rather than for Tom Sellon. He was sure that either Tom or Harry should not be in good form, he would win a prize, but that did not appear probable when he made a good time record. It seemed that both were out of form. Why, he might win the Farstone Cup!

Tom Sellon had said very little. He had heard Hales's statements, and he began to have some misgivings about his own powers. Nevertheless, he determined to strain every muscle to the utmost, and to emerge as a swimmer in Sandmouth, and it would be a blow if he did not win the cup, which was being given for the first time by Lord Farstone.

The bath enclosure was now crowded on that occasion than ever before. In order to provide accommodation for guests it was necessary that a table be brought, stools, and chairs to be ranged along three sides of the water; but on the present occasion there was not enough room, either sitting or standing, for the number of people who came to witness the different events. Steps and short ladders were requisitioned from neighbouring shops, and the younger visitors used these as seats or stands. It was a quaint sight to see the bath enclosure crowded in that manner, and a glance would have shown the spectators, for they included all sorts of people, townfolk, and visitors, from the highest to the lowest, with many of the latter, and the many and the owner of half the town, in a prominent seat.

The dressing-boxes were at one end of the enclosure, and that was the part which had been the most popular for the spectators. They were arranging the sports were on that end.

The entertainment commenced punctually at half-past two, and the minor events went off first. They were interesting, and the style and prowess of the competitors received their due notice. The programme went off, and it was noticeable that Tom, Harry, and Dick had reserved themselves to great extent, for the Farstone Cup. Dick Murray came out the winner in the 120 yards, however, and that made everybody take a still more favourable view of his chances in the bigger race, although it was considered that he had no Tom Sellon or Harry Hales to meet in that shorter struggle. Tom and Harry took no notice of the obstacle race and in the endurance test, which latter meant fishing for tin plates thrown into the water by the steward. It was won by Tom, and he was more than water longer, and fished up more plates than either of the competitors. This success on Tom's part, who was the correct and the only spectator, only the increase of the latter's determination to carry out his wicked scheme.

"That's the last time he'll crow over me!" he muttered savagely, although Tom Sellon had really behaved with the utmost modesty, and had not exhibited any undue sign of pleasure at his success. He was in a peculiar situation, he went on, hugging his old, fancied grievance, "and he'd most likely beat me for the cup, but he won't win it, for I'll be there!"

He was recalled to a sense of his surroundings by the warning from the steward. It was time to prepare for the great event, for only one item now remained before time would be up for the Farstone Cup race, if I was not disappeared in one of the boxes to undress.

Tom was also preparing, and although he could not tell why, he felt uneasy.

"I fancy I'm going to come out of this rather badly!" he muttered, as he slipped off his things and got into the bathing-cosette. "I don't know why I'm like this today, but I don't seem to be able to shake it off. I say, it will be a take-down if I lose, for everybody seems to be looking at me, and I don't feel like a good swimmer as they have supposed me to be all along. Oh, bother! I mustn't funk it, or I shall lose!"

Time was at last called, and the competitors

came out. Tom gave a quick glance round the bath, and shut his mouth firmly. He meant to win the Farstone Cup, and he was sure that there were six competitors in all, and three of them, not being regarded as extra good swimmers, had thirty or forty seconds' start. Harry Hales and Dick Murray also had a start, for Tom Sellon was the best man. Dick had ten seconds' start, and Harry had five.

Only the immediate friends of the three outsiders paid any attention to their efforts; the general interest was centred in the remaining six competitors, and the first two of the seconds had been ticked off, and Dick Murray made the plunge. That was the real beginning of the great race, and every spectator became silent.

Dick made the most of his time, and then a splash told him that Harry Hales was coming for him with a powerful overarm stroke. Five seconds more, and Tom Sellon went into the water in grand style, and forged ahead with a strong breast-stroke. He was not only a powerful swimmer, but also showed grace of movement, which was not so noticeable in the others.

Steadily, but surely, the last three swimmers overhauled the first and passed them. Dick Murray was the first to do it, as one might expect, and Harry Hales was not far behind, having decreased the distance gained by Dick during the five seconds. Tom Sellon, however, showed the greatest improvement in that time, and he was nearly as fast as even that worthy individual imagined.

The three lads, now well in front, had done their best, and they were within thirty yards, or one-third of the entire length arranged for the race. The bath was wide enough to allow the swimmers to take a short rest, but without convenience, so they did not hamper their less fortunate competitors by forging ahead.

During the third length the excitement augmented considerably. Slowly the three had changed their original positions, and, as the end of the bath was still three toms from the stone at the same time. A shout arose from the townpeople, and a murmur from the more fashionable visitors, as they followed completely the fourth length abreast.

"Go it, Tom! Keep it up, Harry! Pluck on you, Dick! You'll win if you stick! Go it—go it!"

From all sides came encouraging cries that made the blood tingle in the veins of the three chief swimmers. A laugh that rippled through the ranks of spectators, and Tom almost fell into the dressing-box and shut himself in. He had been given up. The remaining two hung on pluckily, but they had no chance.

The swimmers felt that a great effort to be made. Dick was swimming in good style, and keeping up the pace. Harry Hales was also doing well, but he made more splash than the water than the other two. He tried all kinds of strokes, and showed good form in the overarm; but did not cut through of a figure with the true overarm style.

"Bravo, Tom; you're in front! Keep there!" shouted some of Tom's friends, as he crept away from Dick and Harry. Hales made a terrific splash, and also got in front; and then the three turned for the fifth length.

Tom Sellon swam for all his worth, but he felt that he was not staying the race. His wind was not so good, and he felt just a little fagged; nevertheless, he kept on as hard as ever, although the judges could see that the race was taking more out of him than they would have expected. He kept in front, and that was the great thing.

Hales got in front, but the judges began to knit their brows as the lads went along the bath for that length. Harry was making a great splash, and Dick Murray seemed to be trying to pass him without being able to do so. As each second went by, it became more and more apparent to the spectators, as well as to the judges, that something was wrong. Every time that Dick Murray made an attempt to get past, Hales and Tom Sellon were in his way, and they would hinder him. The two swimmers, who were toiling along bravely, but hopelessly. What was the matter? The bath was getting smaller and smaller.

Round for the final length, the last forty

yards. Tom Sellon, all unconscious of the wicked scheme hatched by Hales, continued to swim as hard as he could for his own sake. He was clear that Hales and he had tried the old trick of crowding a man so that he could not forge ahead. Hales had executed his plan with a skilful hand, and he was sure that Dick Murray would actually have won the cup is exceedingly doubtful, for Tom would have been a long way behind. Dick had done well, but Hales made this supreme effort unnecessary on Tom's part. He was killing Dick's chance.

As they neared the end of the length the crowd began to judge many sensations of encouragement to Tom, left off, and gave place to murmurs of indignation. As Tom, breathless and scarcely able to put his head above water, was struggling with the wind-stones, and expected to hear the customary applause, he was staggered by the prolonged hissing, and by the indignation of "Shamo" which greeted him. In a dazed kind of manner he saw Hales and Murray get out of the water; he heard a judge remark, "downright wickedness," and he saw that the crowd was playing that tingled in his ears, and made his cheeks flush red and hot, and then he heard Hales speaking.

"Fill one of 'em, Yes, we did play the trick! We didn't intend to let him win! Sellon and I agreed to do it; but we played the game too clumsily, and we've spoiled ourselves. And what of it?"

THE 3rd CHAPTER.

THE rage of anger which followed this brazen-faced confession was enough to annihilate with shame even the most generous of men. Hales and Tom almost fell into the dressing-box and shut himself in. He had been given up. The remaining two hung on pluckily, but they had no chance.

Tom was unable to utter a word in his own defence, the fact that he was not in first-class form, the amount of Dick's chance of success, and Harry's own admission of inferiority—all were against him! How angrily it had all happened, and how much Tom had been hurt had he spoken. All the circumstances were against him—the great friendship of the past few days, the fact that he was not in first-class form, the amount of Dick's chance of success, and Harry's own admission of inferiority—all were against him! How angrily it had all happened, and how much Tom had been hurt had he spoken. All the circumstances were against him—the great friendship of the past few days, the fact that he was not in first-class form, the amount of Dick's chance of success, and Harry's own admission of inferiority—all were against him!

He could imagine what had taken place, although he had not seen it. Dick Murray had been declared the winner, and Tom had been ordered out of the bath; and both Hales and himself had been warned not to enter again. He had heard the judge say that would they think! Luckily, neither was present, for his father was away, and his mother too ill to go to the entertainment. Poor Willie was there, and he struck within himself, and covered his face with his hands.

Tom Sellon wandered aimlessly about at the far end of the beach among the rocks. He had been at home until he felt calmer and could think.

"I can't stay in the town unless I can clear myself, and I don't see what I can do in that way," he said to himself wearily. "Hales made a confession, so they won't believe me, and I have no proof. I shall lose my position in the town, and I shall have to leave it."

He could not pursue his meditations in that direction; it was too terrible! He sat down on a rock, and resting his face with both hands, tried to think of something else.

He did not remember how long he had thus sat on the rock when he thought that he heard a cry for help. He paid no heed at first, but the cry was repeated, and he stood up and glanced round him. Gracious! The title was on a rock, and he saw that it was some one who was in a worse plight.

An elderly man was standing on a piece of

(Continued on the next page.)

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

SECTION 1.—SWIMMING.

To any reader up to the age of 16 who can swim 100 yards will be awarded a handsome Diploma and a Medal, and a League of Young Athletes. In addition, a BOYS' REALM Third Class Standard Medal will be awarded to any reader who can perform one of the following feats:—Swimming 200 yards in 4 m. 40 s. or less, and a First Class Medal for 440 yards, in accordance with the conditions stated at foot.

Age 12-15.		Age 16-18.	
APPLICANTS MUST SWIM—		APPLICANTS MUST SWIM—	
40 yards in	- 14 secs.	40 yards in	- 30 secs.
100 yards in	- 1 m. 35 secs.	100 yards in	- 1 m. 30 secs.
300 "	- 4 m. 44 secs.	220 "	- 3 m. 40 secs.
440 "	- 6 m. 30 secs.	440 "	- 8 m. 30 secs.
880 "	- 2 m. 35 secs.		
One mile	- 5 m. 30 secs.		

SECTION 2.—RUNNING.

Age 12-15.		Age 16-18.	
APPLICANTS MUST RUN—		APPLICANTS MUST RUN—	
100 yards in	- 14 secs.	100 yards in	- 12 secs.
300 "	- 44 secs.	300 "	- 38 secs.
440 "	- 60 secs.	440 "	- 57 secs.
880 "	- 2 m. 35 secs.	880 "	- 2 m. 15 secs.
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higher rock, much larger in extent, about twenty yards farther out. The water at that point, as Tom knew, was deeper than where he himself stood, and it was evident that the man was in a very anxious state of mind. His waving hand, as he stood erect, and shouting for assistance.

Tom plunged into the sea without hesitation, all dressed he was, and swam out to the man. The lad was not much more than coming in full dress, as that had been one of the experiments occasionally made in the bath. He was as soon at the man's side on the slippery rocks.

"My lad, I thank you," said he gravely, and with an air of distinguished courtesy. "I was poking around the post, but the strength of the rock by the last tide, hunting for specimens of shell-fish and other things, and I forgot to notice what the tide was coming in. I can't swim!"

"That's all right, sir!" returned Tom cheerily. "Here," he added, turning towards the land again, "hold on to me!"

"The water has got you," cried the elderly gentleman, "and deaf. I should have understood if you had not turned your face in the other direction just then."

Tom nodded. "You repeated his words in a loud voice, and dropped into the sea with the stranger did not hesitate to follow, and Tom struck out for land, the gentleman just keeping himself afloat by holding Tom's coat."

"As soon as they were near enough to the beach to be able to stand and wade, the stranger breast the waves, and they walked for some time, the strength of the rock by a couple of words, the stranger led the way to a house only a few yards off, where he lodged, and where they were both accommodated with rooms in which to undress and dry themselves."

"I'll do as I was told: I'll get fresh togs," said Tom, so he jumped into the bed and made himself comfortable.

It was about half an hour later when the deaf gentleman entered; he was beaming with a benevolent smile as he seated himself by the side of the bed.

"So you are the celebrated young swimmer of Sandmou—oh!" he remarked pleasantly. "I was already acquainted with you at the afternoon entertainment in the bath. I suppose you won—ah?"

"I was almost as much for poor Tom, and he flushed to the temples."

"They played me a trick!" he blurted forth finally, but in an ordinary tone. Then he repeated the matter in a more serious tone, and was about to shout an answer, when the stranger stopped him by raising his hand.

"I know what you said," he returned, just a trifle more seriously than he had been speaking on your mind! Tell me all about it, my lad. I often set things straight. He, he! That's part of my business in life. I have money and influence, and they begin not to set a great many things right."

He laughed and rubbed his hands. It seemed to be a veritable pleasure to him to set things straight, as he called it, and Tom could fancy that he was one of those kindly persons who are always on the look-out to aid those who are in trouble. So Tom let himself go, and told the whole story in as few words as possible.

"The elderly gentleman listened attentively. When Tom had concluded the recital of the wrong done to him, the stranger laughed and rubbed his hands."

"You can call me Mr. Sternbridge," he said kindly. "This is just the sort of thing I want to make my little bludge pleasant. Ho, he! I have a couple to refer to, and that's part of my mission, you know. Let me see. How can I manage to set you out of this, now?"

"Mr. Sternbridge seemed to be building over with good intentions."

"I don't understand how it is, sir, that you can tell what I am saying, and yet you don't hear?" he queried anxiously.

"Oh, easily enough!" was the smiling rejoinder. "I may miss a little, but not much. Well, it's like this—I have learned to understand, and know by the movements of your mouth, assisted by the expressions that pass over your face and by your gestures, what you are saying. It comes strange, but you can't see. Let me see, how can I manage to set you out of this, now?"

"Tom could not help feeling more cheerful. Mr. Sternbridge seemed to be building over with good intentions."

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with him, so to say. You must ask why he did it, and so on. You must get him to stand, so that I can see him from a distance. He will sneer at you and triumph over you; he will be so elated that he will say many things to spite you. If you are defective with me, and I will tell him what he has said, because there will be nobody within hearing. He will be so surprised that he will win you."

"What a wonderful!" cried Tom, scarcely able to believe it.

There was a knock at the door, and a servant brought in a dry suit for Tom. A messenger brought him a letter, which he said, because there will be nobody within hearing. He will be so surprised that he will win you."

"I have satisfied your mother that all is well, and that she is not to believe all she hears until she sees you. Your brother has not said anything at home yet; he was waiting for you to return. He is outside, so you can send him with a message to Hals, to say that he must be here."

"That was done, and Tom went to the place, and waited with beating heart for Hals. If he had not been so well, but suppose he did not come?"

Mr. Sternbridge was right in his surmise, Hals went to the place because he thought he could crow over him, and he did so.

"Well," he sneered, as he came up, after looking to see if anyone was near enough to hear. "What harm have I done you?"

"I want to know why you acted the rascal this afternoon," denominated Tom, pretending to be very wrathful, in order to excite Harry to talk. "What harm have I done you?"

Hals laughed and sneered alternately, but finally laughed out into a tirade in which he gave himself away completely. Tom did not know whether to be angry or pleased; but ultimately pleasure gained the upper hand, for he felt that Mr. Sternbridge could now clear him.

"Is that all you can say to me for?" asked Hals, with a wicked smile. "Well, I have had my revenge, and have told you so! Ta-ta!"

"He hurried away, and Tom hastened to his friend."

"That will be all right, my lad," chuckled the stranger. "He, he! I can set things straight. To be started to-morrow afternoon, and I shall be there. You must come."

Tom would not have gone alone, for even now he could not face the people, he did not know the truth; but his friend called for him.

They entered the hall together, and everybody stared. Tom started to be asked to distribute the prizes, started more than to anybody else.

"I say, Jack, what's the matter?" he cried, addressing Sternbridge familiarly. "What on—"

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Sternbridge, standing by the side of Lord Farnstone, "my old schoolfellow, Lord Farnstone, asks for an explanation. I will give it. A great wrong was done publicly to my nephew yesterday, and I have been able to set it right. I think that the redress should be as public as the scandal."

And then he told the story, while Tom stood by, very red face, and watched the effect on the assembled people. Nobody appeared to have any doubt about it. All the townfolk were glad, because Tom was a favourite, and they liked to think that he was a sterling fellow. The audience stood up and cheered, and the enthusiasm was raised to its highest pitch when Dick Murray went up to Tom Sellon and shook his hand heartily.

"I should 'n' believe it, old chap, and I'm glad it isn't true!" he cried warmly.

And then how everybody cheered. It really seemed as if the roof would be lifted! But that was not all, for when he could get a hearing Lord Farnstone said:

"I am sure I'm very pleased that my old friend, Lord Sternbridge, has cleared up the mystery, and I think I shall have to give two cups the year, one to Sellon and one to Murray!"

Then the cheering became almost unbearable.

Tom Sellon went back to his desk in the town clerk's office, and there is little doubt about his being town clerk himself one day. As for Hals, he left the town; but it is pleasing to record that he was very respectable, and that he had done, and resolved to strive to build up a good name for himself in the future.

The latest news from South Africa show that he is carrying on this resolve.

THE END.

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 Non-Fido Football Leagues throughout the country. Secretaries of Leagues desirous to possess one of those 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. The 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 engaged 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.

LEAGUE RESULTS.

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, Carnarvon House, Carnarvon 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—NORTH. DIVISION TWO—SOUTH.

Finalists (Senior and Junior) of each Division to play each other at Close 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, embracing 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.

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" 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 clubs make application to 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 at 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 a list of their engagements, with the average age of members of the opposing clubs, and a letter from the president of the club, to the Secretary, BOYS' REALM entering clubs, 2, Carnarvon House, Carnarvon Street, London, E.C., as soon as possible.
(c) The cups will be presented at the end of the football season to the clubs in each section which Your Editor, the Secretary, and another referee, consider 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 as follows: Two for a win, one for a draw; the points to be counted as in the First and Second Divisions of the Football League. If two or more clubs finish with an equal number of points, the goal average shall decide the order. The decision of the referees (Your Editor, the Secretary, and another) on any question of dispute in this competition shall be final.
(d) After the contest has started we shall, from time to time, publish tables showing the positions of the clubs at the time of going in press. Secretaries must, therefore, send in each week the full result of their matches. Each 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 no later than the Tuesday morning following the match.
(e) Strict investigation will be made by the controllers of the League into the bona-fides of the entering clubs as to their standing.
(f) All matches to be played under the Rules of the Football Association.
(g) 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.
(h) 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 members agree to conform to the conditions governing the contest, and to abide by the decision of Your Editor, the Secretary, and a referee in any case of dispute.
Secretary's Name
Address

Next Week the FIRST GRAND FOOTBALL NUMBER OF THE BOYS' REALM

will be published, containing the Opening Chapters of Mr. A. S. HARDY'S

ENTHRALLING NEW FOOTBALL TALE.

ORDER YOUR COPY TO-DAY. PRICE ONE PENNY.

First Great Football Number on Saturday Next.



The Meeting on the Cliff.

A KIND of litter was made up by the boys, who tore down some branches for the purpose, and sorrowfully enough they wended their way back to the school.

They chanced to meet with the inspector of the police, who ran off and summoned some men who were roving in a field.

"Take the lads up to the Ten Bells," he said to the men. "The inquest can be held there."

Bob bestowed a thankful glance upon him, and then turned sadly away with his chums. School was just over as they entered the house, and the boys shouted: "Any news of Ricketts?"

"Yes," Jack replied; "the very worst of news. Where is Mr. Bonington?"

"I am here. Jaunty replied the head-master, opening his study door. "Come in, what of Ricketts? Has he returned with you?"

"He is dead, sir," said Jack; and told the headmaster all he knew.

The news spread like wildfire, and nothing else was talked of that day but the fate of Mark Ricketts. The next day the magistrates met, and Pinnick was brought before them.

To the surprise of everybody in court no prosecutor appeared, and, after some delay, the magistrates discharged the prisoner. The surprise increased when Mr. Belton met him outside and walked with him to his cottage.

"Pinnick," he said, "I have kept my word, and now you may sleep easy."

Pinnick fetched a crowbar from a little back room and began to work at the doorstone.

"I put the bundle of letters here for safety's sake," he said. "I found them—Hallo!" he 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!"

Mr. Belton was inclined to think that he had been duped, but the suspicion left him when Pinnick, falling upon his knees, tore at the earth and rubbish like a terrier, frantic with excitement.

"I've been robbed, swindled, cheated!" he bawled. "I meant to keep the letters until the Jaunty chap was of age, and then strike a bargain with him."

"Having a footstep, Mr. Belton turned, and saw the Stranger standing in the doorway.

"I have just run over from the Bow," he said, "to give Baxter a few commissions to see the jaunty, and thought I would like to tell Pinnick that he need not trouble to find the letters, as they have been in my possession for a long time."

"The following is another long list of clubs which have been admitted to our football league."

Chesham Rovers F.C. (Pinnick), United Methodist F.C. (Manstetter), Lily A.F.C. (Camberwell), Moor-street Crusaders F.C. (London), United F.C. (Dartmouth), Hearts F.C. (Scotland), Malvern United F.C. (Southampton), South F.C. (Southampton), Trinity F.C. (Claremont), Bitterne Park Athletic F.C. (Southampton), St. Barnabas F.C. (Southampton), West Bank F.C. (Southampton), Wokingham F.C. (Southampton), Clapton United F.C. (Clapton), Wellfield A.F.C. (Warrington), Inver A.F.C. (Southampton), Leighton F.C. (London), Charterhouse Swifts F.C. (Holloway), Oswestry United F.C. (Leeds), Thistle F.C. (Glasgow), Scotland United F.C. (Manchester), Church Chalmers F.C. (Lancashire), A.F.C. (London), N. H. A. F.C. (London), A.F.C. (Newbury), St. Andrew's A.F.C. (Durham), Gosport Thistle F.C. (Scotland), B.D.A. Juniors F.C.

THE SCHOONER ON THE CLIFF.

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

"What!" roared Pinnick, starting to his feet. "Are you the thief?"

"The thief!" the Stranger repeated contemptuously. "Dare you speak to me in such terms, you robber of the dead, you monster in human form!"

"I'll have my rights!" Pinnick cried hoarsely. "The letters were worth a thousand pounds to me. Terrapin would have found the money, I know, but I kept the secret—"

"Which is the only good thing you did," the Stranger interrupted. "You took your rights, and you shall have them! You have had a lucky escape in being discharged from goal. Take care, my blustering friend, that you don't go there on another charge."

Pinnick covered before him like a cur under the lash. "How did you know that I had the letters?" he asked.

"I saw you take them. I caught you at your work, rifling the dead, and you fled, thinking you had a footstep. It was mine, not I let you go, determined to thwart you in my own way. The lightning revealed your form to me as plainly as I see it now, and just as plainly as you were making merry at the Mornaid, I paid a visit to this hovel, and a spirit in my feet seemed to lead me to the place where you were the wretch. What have you to say to this, you hound?"

Pinnick said nothing. He stood still and gaped until the Stranger, losing command over his temper, seized him by his throat, and shook him until his teeth rattled in his head, and then he bowed.

"Mr. Belton," said the Stranger, "Jack Jaunty is coming over to the Bow this afternoon for a quiet talk with me. To-morrow my house will be open to all, when I will declare who I am, and you will know the reason why I have so long kept my name a secret."

He continued shaking Pinnick and thumping him, and beat against the wall, and all the time he was speaking, and then suddenly throwing all his strength into one effort, picked up the ruffian and hurled him into a corner, where he lay stiff and dead, with his arms outstretched, and the Stranger and Mr. Belton had left the cottage.

When Pinnick thought that he was safe from further ill-treatment, he slipped out of his pocket with his hands deep in his pockets, and a bang, and a hand saw upon him.

"I thought," he held the trump card, "he would," and he was laughing in his sleeve all this time; and now the Stranger comes to me to say that the game was in his hand all the time. Oh, what a fool I have made of myself!"

He gave his head a sounding blow, as if it had not suffered enough, and walked aimlessly about, now going inland, now turning towards the sea.

"What's this feeling that has come over me?" he said, stopping suddenly. "I feel as if I was drifting out of the world without being ill! Ugh! The very hand of death seems to be on my shoulder!"

He reached the very spot where Terrapin had stood at bay, and then disappeared so mysteriously. Pinnick descended into the valley, and sat down near a hillock covered with gorse and brambles, and he watched the sunset air was very still—so still, indeed, that the foliage of the bushes scarcely quivered.

Suddenly Pinnick heard something stirring near him. At first he took it to be a hare or a rabbit scampering about, but the sound increased until it resembled some large animal working its rubber of the dead under the ground.

Pinnick's hair stood on end, and his throat grew hot and dry. His eyes were fixed on a lump of brambles, which, to his terror, became violently agitated.

A cry of horror burst from his lips as the head and shoulders of Terrapin appeared. What a spectacle of despair the man presented! He had lain hidden night and day upon a bed of thorns. His hands and face were torn and scratched; his eyes were hollow and gleaming; and when he spoke his voice seemed to come from the depths of the vault.

"Pinnick," he said, "am I so altered that you don't know me?"

"I know you, but I don't want to have anything to say to you!" Pinnick gasped. "Everything is in the hands of the Stranger; he has told you who Jack Jaunty really is from the very first, and the secret will be out this afternoon and all over the place."

Terrapin turned livid as this information was imparted to him, for he very well felt upon his ears like a death-knell, and his beads of perspiration started out upon his brow.

"If this is the case, I must get away," he said. "I will come to your house to-night, and you must get me away in a boat when all is quiet. My son must go, too."

"Yes, son, you are right," Pinnick replied. "You'll never see me again, unless you look in at the Ten Bells."

"What do you mean? What has happened to you?"

"He is dead!" Terrapin started, and a look of anguish fell upon his face. He rose slowly and beckoned Pinnick to follow him.

After they had gone some distance, Terrapin suddenly pulled up, and for quite a long time he stood motionless, his arms outstretched. What passed between them does not concern us; but when the sun had set, the two villains lit their pipes and made off at a quick pace, and were they ever seen near Stencraig again.

Where they went no one ever knew, but the village folk were content that they were gone. With their after-life they were not concerned. It was the old story of "Good riddance to bad rubbish," and no one ever troubled because they had vanished from the district.

Clearing Up of a very Extraordinary Mystery.

THE Seaman ran over to the Bow in fine style, and Jack, leaping ashore, ran up to the Stranger's house, to find the owner anxiously waiting for his appearance, and fully prepared for him. To Jack's astonishment, the bundle which his friend had always covered with papers, some of which were crumpled and shrouded as with the content of salt water.

"Jack," the Stranger said, "help yourself to some lemonade. I have a rather long story to tell you, and I should not feel surprised if you should be asleep by the time I am done. But, you had better stay, for what I have to say to Jack is for your ears also."

Bob ran his fingers through his hair, and planted himself on the Bow in imitation of a grandfather's clock, and refusal to be seated until the Stranger insisted upon his sitting in a manner that admitted of no argument.

"Some years ago," the Stranger said, gathering the papers together, "a certain young man living in the village of Devonshire was in love with the vicar's daughter."

"There is nothing strange in that, for people are falling in love with vicars everywhere all over the wide world; but this story has a romantic ring about it, as you shall hear."

"The vicar was poor, and proud, and did not favour the young man's suit, for he by the time was poor; but the young lady—I will call her Ethel Dalmeny—gave all the love of her pure and beautiful nature to the man who paid court to her. My hero must have a name, so we shall know him as Algron Welleley Parleton."

Bob Baxter, remembering that the Stranger's luggage on the Bow took possession of the Bow was marked A. W. F., indulged in a gasp, and in the attempt to suppress it, choked and turned purple.

The Stranger paid no attention to this interruption, but took the first document in his hand. It was a sheet of pink paper with words printed on it, and he was about to use in days gone by, and filled with writing, the ink having faded.

"Parleton," he continued, "went to the vicar and asked him to give him in the light of his future son-in-law. 'Give me time,' he urged, 'to go abroad to win a fortune for your daughter. She is willing to wait a reasonable time.'"

"The vicar treated the matter very coolly. He did not believe in young men who wandered about the world, and he was not at all in love with the young and hot-headed. He told the vicar that he had no right to thrust Ethel into the matrimonial market, and left him in a passion."

A few weeks afterwards there came to the village a young fellow reported to be immensely rich. It was whispered about that he was the possessor of a tremendous fortune as the possessor of a Mexican mine. His name was Mark Ricketts."

Jack Jaunty started violently, and Bob Baxter laid hold of the arm of his chair and held it fast.

"Yes," continued the Stranger, "his name was Mark Ricketts, and with him was his trustee, a lawyer named—"

"And, bless my heart, sir, you are Algron Welleley Parleton!"

"Yes," he said, "and since you have guessed so far correctly, I will make my story as short as possible."

"Mark Ricketts became my rival. He paid court to Ethel, and the vicar encouraged him in every way, sounding his praises, and scouting me as an adventurer. Now that I come to look back, I can hardly blame him; but he broke up the match, and I was left with my friend's aid in the scheme, and circulated a tissue of lies about me in a manner that was almost unbearable. At last, after, and wrote me a letter hiding me adieu."

"On the night following the receipt of the letter I paced up and down my room, entranced, both hearted and despairing, and with a very flood in my heart. The tempter whispered in my ear that Mark Ricketts had robbed me of my love, and that I should never see my girl again; but the voice of my guardian angel prevailed."

"I called myself a coward and a villain, and I was heartily ashamed of myself, and left the place. I went to America, but it was with no idea of making money now. I cared for nobody and nothing, and yet everything I touched turned to gold, almost in spite of myself. I won the respect of the people around me."

(To be concluded on Saturday next.)

FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

Applications for admittance to our football league still continue to come in, and there can be no doubt that this year our scheme is going to be a greater success than ever. It is quite evident that the news of what THE REALM is doing for junior footballers is spreading all over the country, and that the boys flocking round us because of the great facilities we are offering to them. We are glad to think that this is so, and it is just what we are aiming at. We want every junior footballer to look on THE BOYS' REALM as a beneficial journal in which he can obtain the doings of his club, and from which he can at all times obtain advice and help.

The following is another long list of clubs which have been admitted to our football league:

- Chesham Rovers F.C. (Pinnick), United Methodist F.C. (Manstetter), Lily A.F.C. (Camberwell), Moor-street Crusaders F.C. (London), United F.C. (Dartmouth), Hearts F.C. (Scotland), Malvern United F.C. (Southampton), South F.C. (Southampton), Trinity F.C. (Claremont), Bitterne Park Athletic F.C. (Southampton), St. Barnabas F.C. (Southampton), West Bank F.C. (Southampton), Wokingham F.C. (Southampton), Clapton United F.C. (Clapton), Wellfield A.F.C. (Warrington), Inver A.F.C. (Southampton), Leighton F.C. (London), Charterhouse Swifts F.C. (Holloway), Oswestry United F.C. (Leeds), Thistle F.C. (Glasgow), Scotland United F.C. (Manchester), Church Chalmers F.C. (Lancashire), A.F.C. (London), N. H. A. F.C. (London), A.F.C. (Newbury), St. Andrew's A.F.C. (Durham), Gosport Thistle F.C. (Scotland), B.D.A. Juniors F.C.

BLACKBURN AND DISTRICT LEAGUE.

St. George's Secretary, Mr. J. Sharpe, 12, Pine Street, Blackburn.

NORTH LIVERPOOL LEAGUE.

St. J. J.'s Secretary, Mr. B. Wall, 15, Webster Road, Liverpool, E.

EBBW VALE AND DISTRICT LEAGUE.

Beaumont Lillywhite Secretary, Mr. B. Reynolds, Walsall Works, Beaumont, Walsall, Staffs.

SECTION 2.

Rats have been awarded to the following clubs, these having, in your 22nd's opinion, put up the best show on Saturday, August 1st.

JUNIOR DIVISION.

OAKLEY C.C.—Secretary, Mr. A. H. Mitchell, Penrith, Beaconsree Road, Leytonstone.

SENIOR DIVISION.

HOLMESDALE C.C.—Secretary, Mr. A. H. Leppard, 61, Bungalow Road, South Newark.

LEAGUE TABLES UP TO AND INCLUDING SATURDAY.

Table with 5 columns: Club, P., W., L., D., Pts. for Blackburn and District League.

ST. CLARE C.P. CRICKET LEAGUE.

Table with 5 columns: Club, P., W., L., D., Pts. for St. Clare C.P. Cricket League.

SUNDERLAND AND DISTRICT NON-CONFORMIST LEAGUE.

Table with 5 columns: Club, P., W., L., D., Pts. for Sunderland and District Non-Conformist League.

OUR CRICKET LEAGUE.

Prize lists have been awarded to the following clubs for the best performance on Saturday, August 2nd:

SECTION 1.

MERSBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

AVONDALE C.C.—Secretary, Mr. J. E. Clay, 33, Boldon Road, Wainwright, Mersby, Yorks.

DENDER AND DISTRICT LEAGUE.

CLEFFORD BANK C.C.—Secretary, Mr. C. Ayling, c/o Miss Peterson, 14, Rosedale Street, Dunder, Yorks.

SUNDERLAND AND DISTRICT LEAGUE.

St. George's Men's Own C.C.—Secretary, Mr. J. Jefferson, 29, Corporation Road, Sunderland.

LEAGUE TABLES UP TO AND INCLUDING SATURDAY.

Table with 5 columns: Club, P., W., L., D., Pts. for Blackburn and District League.

ST. CLARE C.P. CRICKET LEAGUE.

Table with 5 columns: Club, P., W., L., D., Pts. for St. Clare C.P. Cricket League.

SUNDERLAND AND DISTRICT NON-CONFORMIST LEAGUE.

Table with 5 columns: Club, P., W., L., D., Pts. for Sunderland and District Non-Conformist League.

CYCLING : SWIMMING : CHARITY CUP : CRICKET :

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

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

Mr. G. L. E. COVERDALE, Hon. Sec. East Riding of Yorkshire F.A., tells readers how to found a Charity Cup Competition.

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

Practice on the Track.

THERE are several useful hints which I would direct the attention of young riders in their initial preparation. At first of all, the rider has to be led forward to the kind of track you will have to ride on in your races. If you are a metropolitan, or belong to a club in a metropolitan, or belong to a club in a metropolitan, no doubt most of your racing will be on a banked cinder track, and your practice should be on a banked track, to accustom you to it. On the other hand, it may be that your racing will have to be done on grass, and your practice should therefore take place on a grass track. If you wish to get used to both kinds of track, you will find the level grass inside most cinder tracks of admirable use to this end. All the metropolitan tracks, when practising for a country meeting, forgo the cement for the grass, in order that they may not feel strange on the latter.

Even cinder tracks differ, and have been riding recently on the celebrated Parc de Princes track in Paris. This track is oval in shape and was made for speed, and is not so good for paced races. The length of the finishing straight is 155 yards, which is considerably more than any of our British tracks. Most cinder tracks have the same length, and are far better at home than away; but if more attention was paid to getting used to all sorts of conditions, the rider would be a good deal grumbling and much more success achieved by those who followed out this plan.

It is always a good idea to ride far different things from riding in short distance handicaps. To become a successful pace follower one must have had a goodly experience of path riding, besides possessing a cool head and a strong determination beyond the ordinary. It is unwise for the younger rider to take up this class of work, as he should wait until he has had time to develop and his skill and judgment in riding become more matured. The rider has to be able to pick up his pace, and to do so is no easy task. He must be able to hang on when the tick-up has been made, and his display of steering must be of the very best, if accident is to be avoided.

I have done a fair amount of riding behind pacers recently; in fact, my debut as a professional was made in this way, when, behind a motor, I won a three-cornered match at Canning Town early this season. My

One mile British record

and the track record were also made behind motor pacing, and I was successful in beating several of the Continental one mile records, at the track, at the Buffalo Velodrome, Paris, a little while ago, but, then, I have had the benefit of that excellent schooling to be obtained only in handiicap and scratch races, and I have had to contend against both small and large fields of competitors.

John Meredith, the hundred-kilometres amateur champion of the world, is a very successful pace follower over long distances. He always had much experience in handicaps and scratch races, although he finds that training for short distance scratch races interferes with his pace following efforts, the methods of which are being used by the best of us. The distance scratch race consists of a crawl over the greater part of the distance whilst

Jobbing for position.

and ending up with a wild burst home during the last two or three hundred yards. Pace following requires steady, consistent riding throughout the whole of the journey, a keen eye to the avoidance of mishaps, and a spur now and again when necessary. On the Continent the pacers are usually men of position, and that which is obtained in England. For one thing, there is more demand, and to cope with this demand the professional trailer or pacer has been created, and the amateur pacer is held in much esteem. A few weeks ago Darragon, the world's professional champion in one hour at public dinner in Paris, presented his pacemaker, Andreu, with a gold medal as a recognition of services in connection with the many victories gained behind the scene.

Like pace following, long distance road racing should not be attempted by

the very young.

If it be his ambition, then he must first of all set about making himself a fit subject to successfully stand the strain which it entails. Many of the well-known distance riders in the early stages of their career spent a goodly portion of their time afield, gradually inuring themselves to withstand the rigors of the same time gaining experience which in after years enabled them to overcome the many little troubles and surprises that may be achieved, having details of the difficulties of the road, and other things, that were encountered and overcome. tyre troubles, bad weather, bad roads, a strong wind blowing against the rider, a slight collision, an unlucky fall, are but a few of the mishaps which may be met with, yet it is only by the time that the rider acquires the interest in these long rides against time.

(To be continued.)

Training.

SEVERAL of my readers have asked for a little advice on the subject of training for races. I shall try to supply this want, and do all I can to help them to become strong for the sport they desire to follow. In the first place, they need not bother their heads about diet. That will always be attended to by their parents or the staff of the school to which they may belong. No advantage is gained by boys in the study of lists of digestible and indigestible food, but they should remember that the most suitable time for a swim is about one and a half hours before or after a meal. To go for a swim just after a meal is the right way to encourage cramp and other bad results. They should avoid bathing when exhausted by some vigorous exercise, when after perspiring, or when shivering. To enter the water when hot will not be harmful, provided the swimmer takes great care to undress quickly.

rub the body briskly,

and at once dives in. To stand or wait at the water's edge until the warmth of the body has passed off is harmful, and accounts for most of the colds that are contracted when bathing. After diving into the water when hot, it is best to get out and get a good rub over the body with a dry towel, and rub through the skin, but this rub should be of short duration, and, when finished, a swim may gain an advantage by indulging in. The main principle of all training is to get the body into the best possible condition, and in that state as long as possible; and this is a non-sense made the primary object of all the efforts to attain this condition. It is better not to over-train at all than to do it by spasmodic means, and to overtax the strength.

If a swimmer wishes to improve his success, he must cultivate regular habits, living plainly, and avoid smoking. To smoke is harmful to the swimmer, and generally causes short breath, and a loss of power. It is a vital requirement of a world-beater to avoid smoking and irregular habits must be avoided. Before speed can be expected, staying-power must be developed, and to attain this long distance swimming must be practiced. "Long distance" I do not intend to imply that several miles should be swum at a time, as that would be wrong, and unreasonable; but for the novice my advice is that he should commence with, say, a hundred yards, and swim this distance daily for a week, the next week increase the distance to two hundred yards, and so on, as he feels capable up to four and five hundred yards, taking care to swim straight and with ease. These practice swims all speed should be avoided, as these are only intended to develop proper breathing and staying-power.

Speed and Staying-power.

After each swim, avoid standing about, but rub the body vigorously till dry, dress, and take a short rest, and then get on for the practice he has had. In order to gain speed the various strokes will have to be performed in faster time, and therefore the first attempts at speed should be made over a distance of thirty yards. When this distance is finished, breathe the water and breathe freely. When easy taking has returned, half the distance at top speed may be tried, after which rub down, dress, and go home. On the next visit, swim the same distance, but with a different stroke, a spurt, taking care to swim, say, four to five hundred yards at least twice a week. By these methods speed and staying-power will be gained, as also a knowledge of one's ability to put on a spurt, which will be of great advantage when engaged in an actual race. The swimmer should also remember that to attain a speed a vigorous body is essential, and to acquire a vigorous body regular practice is most necessary.

(Next week an article on "Fancy Swimming" will appear.)

Conclusion of Rules.

12. The semi-finals and final shall be played on grounds chosen by the committee. The net receipts of these matches to go to the charity fund.

13. A day shall be appointed by the committee for the decision of the matches in each round, and all draws must be decided on the date chosen, unless the specification of the committee is obtained for a postponement. All applications for an extension of time must be made fourteen days before the date for the match selected by the committee.

14. In the event of a draw, the referee shall order further time of not less than fifteen minutes each way, except in the final tie.

15. The duration of each match shall be one hour and a half, and the referee shall deduct any time which he considers has been wasted either owing to accident or other causes.

16. Any club intending to scratch must give information of its intention to do so to the secretary of the committee, and also the secretary of the opposing club, at least seven clear days before the date agreed upon for playing, or such club shall be reported to the committee, who shall determine to compel such offending club to pay the expenses incurred by their opponents, or shall take such action as they may deem expedient.

17. In the event of a draw as per rule 15, and the two clubs failing to agree to replay the match within seven days, the committee shall select a date for the contest.

18. No alteration may be made to these rules except at the annual general meeting, and the members of any club at a special general meeting called for the purpose of altering the bye-laws and seven days' notice of such meeting shall be given to all competing clubs.

19. All questions of the committee, and the secretary, in this direction every day as good. Do not attempt to catch with one hand fully extended, snapping at the ball, until you have had a good deal of experience, and trade with Denton and others you will sometimes see their left hand about and intercept the ball, and you will see that there are very few indeed who can do this with the right hand, and perhaps one in a thousand with the left. It is very easy to

use your hands

unless you allow the ball to fall well into them, and nearly all of our best long fielders take the ball in this way. The idea is that in this way the hands are more under control, and the ball is nearer to the line of sight, and it is easier to see the ball, and to do himself full justice as a batsman, always used to delight the Essex country by reason of his wonderful batting, and he made a mighty drive, which looked as though it was going out of the ground. Sewall happened to be on the boundary. The ball dropped very shortly from a great height, and everyone was applauding the batsman for

mighty stroke.

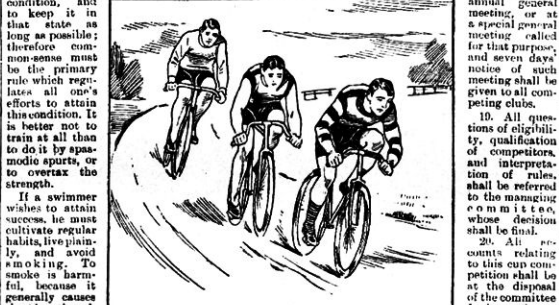
Sewall ran about twenty yards, shot out his left hand, hit the ball up in the air, and then gathered it with both hands. The spectators rose one by one, and many of them were in performance again and again. Those are the moments worth living for in a cricketer's life. It is not very often that you see a batsman do as have mentioned are often included in a side simply for their fielding abilities. Jessop and Fry were undoubtedly in the Test Match team because they were known to have experience they would save dozens of runs, and they very quickly showed that their prowess in this respect was not merely a matter of theory. Astonishingly would I urge my young friends to try and excel in this position; if they do, they will give delight to those who are no longer players, and will give them a great deal of interest to their side. Many a time have I seen

wild overthrows

simply because men got nervous after making a mistake. (One of our best long fielders, in order to become a good catch, used to keep wicket to fast bowling for a quarter of an hour day, and then would go and stand in the long field. What you should try to do is to watch one of the great men, and see how they do it, and then ask yourself whether you hold your hands in the right or wrong way. Remember, too, that to be a good fielder, you must be all, and consequently added to natural ability, is a great strength, and power to concentrate your attention on every ball. Only as you do this are you likely to be in any way successful.)

THE END.

(Next week some clever football articles by famous internationals will appear.)



Rounding a bend (see column 1.)

ABOUT FORM E.

The rules have been approved by the committee of the charity competition, application for sanction from the County Association must now be made on Form E, which is as follows:

- 1. Name of proposed charity competition.
2. Object.
3. Name and address of secretary.
4. List of clubs forming the competition; the number in each of the club, name and address of secretary of the club, and of the district or district association to which the club belongs.

After official sanction has been obtained, everything should be plain sailing, and the secretary of the competition should do all in his power to induce clubs to enter and make the competition a success. The works expenses of the competition should be practically nil, and it always must be remembered that it is in the cause of charity.

The English F.A. now allows persons other than players to kick-off in charity matches, and, if possible, the president of the competition, or some notable gentleman, should be invited to kick-off in the final match; if this is done, it will no doubt help, by drawing more spectators to swell the funds of the competition, and thus there will be a good sum to hand over to charity at the end of the season.

THE END.



Rudge-Whitworth Britains Best Bicycle

BLUSHING. FREE. To all sufferers, purchasers of a grovel home treatment...

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

ADDITION TO STANLEY F.C. (average 17) have a few dates open, home or away. Also one for Boxing Day...

BASTWELL ETURIANS (average age 18-19) want matches home and away for season 1907-8 in Blackburn and district...

TRAFALGAR R.F.C. (average age 15, medium) have the following dates open for home and away matches...

BARTMOTTE F.C. (average 16) require matches with respectable clubs, away only. Also two good backs...

CHAPELTOWN CORINTHIANS A.F.C. (average age 16-18) wants fixtures. All dates open, within 9 miles radius...

WANTED, home and away matches from Nov. 30 till end of season by Newbury United F.C. (average age 18)...

STANLEY A.F.C. (average age 13, weak) have all dates open. Only 100 yards from Hon. Secretary...

WINDMILL F.C. (average age 16, weak) require matches for coming season, home and away. L.C.C. ground Woodwood Scrubs...

ST. MARY'S ABOYLE F.C. require matches for the coming season. Nearly all dates open. Also a few good players...

BARTSFIELD F.C. would like dates for opening season 1907-8. Write to Hon. Secretary, Phillip Johnston, 107, St. James's Road, Glasgow...

NEWPORT RECREATIVES (average age 20, medium) require a couple of fixtures in Bristol during the coming season. Write guarantee if possible...

ROSEBOROUGH F.C. (average age 15) require matches home and away. Ground near Steeple Green, 45, Port Street, Steeple, E.

BARNSHURST UNITED (average age 17, weak) require matches for Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 6, 13, 20, 27, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 7, 14, 21, 28, 4, 11, 18, 25, away...

RAVENSWOOD F.C. (average age 17, medium) have the following dates open for home and away matches. Clubs only need apply to Hon. Secretary, R. Woodard, 54, Trenton Street, Southfields, S.W.

EVERLEY F.C. (average age 16) require away matches for coming season. Apply to Hon. Secretary, W. S. Roll, 10, Queen's Road, Lyngstone.

CYLLAINS UNITED F.C. (average age 16) have all dates open; away matches preferred within a radius of 4 miles from Farnborough Hill. Apply to Hon. Secretary, H. E. Tomking, 130, Elthorne Road, Upper Holloway, N.

LILLEY ATHLETIC F.C. (average age 15, weak) has all dates open, and are willing to meet all comers. Apply to Hon. Secretary, W. Harrison, 1, 15, Wakefield, Newmarket Road, Harlow, Essex.

BERKLEY ATHLETIC AND F.C. (average age 15, weak) have the following dates open for home and away matches. Apply to Hon. Secretary, T. White, 45, Red Lion Street, Clerkenwell.

BRECHFIELD F.C. (average age 16) require home and away fixtures for next season, within 9 miles radius of Lancaster. All dates open except September. Apply to Hon. Secretary, A. Paine, 35, Coverdale Road, Lancaster.

BYRNLAND FOOTBALL CLUB (average age 15, strong) have the following dates still open: Sept. 28, Oct. 5 and 19, Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, and 28; Jan. 11, 18, and 25, all February, Mar. 14 and 28, and all April. Write to Hon. Secretary, H. A. Wallis, 47, Upper Belmont Road, St. Andrew's, Bristol.

BARKING CRUSADER require matches for the coming season; home and away dates till end of Sep. 7, 24, 28, Oct. 5, 26, Jan. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 6, 13, 20, 27, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 7, 14, 21, 28, 4, 11, 18, 25, all February, Mar. 14 and 28, and all April. Write to Hon. Secretary, H. A. Wallis, 47, Upper Belmont Road, St. Andrew's, Bristol.

NEWTON VIKES (average age 16, weak) want matches for season 1907-8 for home and away, within 9 miles radius of Newbury. Apply to Hon. Secretary, 85, Granton Street, St. Helena, Lancs.

THE GREAT GERRERY BOYS' F.C. (age 16) are 160 yards to play matches home and away, within 9 miles radius of G. Gherbery. They particularly wish to play respectable Gherbery teams; all dates open.

EDMUNDSON ABERDEEN F.C. require fixtures for coming season; North London only; also a good goal-keeper in England. Apply to Hon. Secretary, A. H. Hitchinson, 31, Baya Avenue, Upper Edmonton, London.

OSWALD UNITED (average age 17) has open dates. Write to Hon. Secretary, L. Barclay, 33, Oswald Terrace, Golderd Road, Leeds.

VICTORIA ROAD INSTITUTE A.F.C. (average age 18, medium) have open dates for home and away matches; small sub. Apply to Hon. Secretary, E. Humphreys, 49, Bymington Street, St. James End, Southampton.

JANVILLE F.C. (average age 15) have open Jan. 11 and March 7 (home), and Oct. 26, Nov. 9, 23, 27, Feb. 20, March 6, 13, 20, 27, 4, 11, 18, 25, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 5, 12, 19, 26, 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 6, 13, 20, 27, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 7, 14, 21, 28, 4, 11, 18, 25, away...

OSBORNE RANGERS RESERVES (age 14-15) require matches with good gentlemanly teams in London and district. All dates open. Applications not accepted. Apply to Hon. Secretary, Osborne Rangers A.F.C., H. J. Legg, 78, Aislelie Grove, West London, Newmarket Road, Harlow, Essex.

ST. ALBAN'S F.C. (average age 16) require matches for coming season within 3 miles radius. Apply to Hon. Secretary, 72, Merlake Road, Histon, Cambs.

FIXTURES WANTED for the following season: 1907-8. Home and away, ground within 7 miles of Ashton-Lynde (average 15-16). Apply to Hon. Secretary, Ben Hadfield, Stamford Square, London, N.W.

LOUGHTON FERNDALE F.C. (age 18) require matches for following season (home and away); new ground. Apply at once to Hon. Secretary, Arthur Keef, Loughton, Essex.

A LAD (age 17, height 5ft. 5in., weight 1st. 7lb.) would like to join football club. Can play any position forward. Write to Hon. Secretary, J. W. Dixon, 45, Port Street, Steeple, E.

GOSWELL UNITED (average age 14, weak) require players for all positions, age 18 to 18. Also all dates open away. Apply between Oct. 18 and 8 o'clock to Hon. Secretary, 2, Mulberry Place, Gillingham, Kent.

Advertisement for Rudge-Whitworth bicycles, featuring an illustration of a bicycle and text describing its features and availability.

Advertisement for 'The Boys' Friend' magazine, featuring an illustration of a boy and text about its content and subscription information.

Advertisement for 'The Card of Blakes' boot protectors, featuring an illustration of a boot and text about its benefits for footwear.

Advertisement for 'A Nice Moustache' hair product, featuring an illustration of a man's face and text about its effectiveness.

Advertisement for 'Free to All Cyclists' trade terms, featuring an illustration of a bicycle and text about the benefits of the service.

Advertisement for 'The Stolen Submarine' book, featuring an illustration of a submarine and text about the author and the book's content.

WANTED, a position as goalkeeper for next season. Apply by letter, or call, S. Lester, 25, Higher Ardwick, Ardwick, Manchester.

KIRKDALE AND DISTRICT JUNIOR LEAGUE. Vacancies in above for good junior clubs (average age 15-17). Apply at once to Hon. Secretary, W. A. Crawford, 20, Howley Street, Kirkdale, Liverpool.

A YOUTH (age 17), height 5ft. 5in. would like to join a respectable football club in the S.W. district as centre-forward; a league club preferred. Full particulars to G. F. Rowman, 67, Hantley Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.

PLAYERS (age 16-18) wanted for new club. All positions; small subscription. Home or away. Play Saturdays afternoons. Write or apply, after 7.30, to Hon. Secretary, G. H. Goman, 7, Drydams Lodge, Crouch End, London, N.

A RESPECTABLE LAD (age 14) wishes to join a football club in or about Westminster, is willing to pay a small subscription. Write to Vincent, Victoria Yard, Broadway, Westminster, S.W.

A FEW PLAYERS (average age 15-17) wanted to join football club in or about London. Write to Hon. Secretary, Charles Simmonds, 174, Coventry Street, Bethnal Green, London, E.

PLAYERS WANTED (age 15-18) for new club. Letters only. Matches also wanted, home and away. Full particulars to Hon. Secretary, 20, Windmill Lane, Deptford, S.E.

A GOALKEEPER wishes to join a gentlemanly football club within three miles of Aldrich or Margate. Willing to take small subscription. Apply to Russell Taylor, Cox Lane, Timperley.

ANY RESPECTABLE BOYS (age 10-17) desirous of joining a football club in Bethnal Green, apply to Hon. Secretary, Charles Simmonds, 174, Coventry Street, Bethnal Green, London, E.

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WITH PICK AND LAMP.

(Continued from the previous page.)

"If you'd been with us here from the beginning, you wouldn't ask," replied Roddy. "I'm queer like you, and some days, perhaps, I'll tell it you, sir. Hallo, there's Dafydd! I must introduce to Dafydd; he's our best of the three, and I dare say he'll come in, too."

Dafydd did. He learned the great news on the way, and rejoiced hugely. "The dark journey by good luck, without any adventures," Mr. Warrington was escorted in the boat hotel at Aberford. An hour afterwards the boys were back at Bryn y Garth, dog-tired, but happier than they had yet been in their lives before.

The Hand of Fate.

It was barely seven o'clock next morning, the young partners being at their busiest, good and full of coal, and some of the horse-gin and baskets they were working would be done away with for good as soon as the present contract with their Aberford customer was worked off, that a shrewdly-eyed and sharp-looking man with a very business-like air turned up at the cottage and asked for the boys. They were, of course, most interested.

"My name's Hooker," he said, slapping a card down on the table, "and I want to know how you'll take a order for about 10,000 tons of this coal of yours, and sign the agreement here on the spot! Nothing like hunting in business—no dawdling! I want an exclusive contract. What do you say?"

He named a price that made Tom prick up his ears, so generous was it. But, naturally, neither of the boys assented at such an offer after what they had decided the night before.

"You're too late," said Roddy; "we're full up."

"Full up? Nonsense!" said the man, and then he gave an explanation. "Why, you don't mean that you've had a visit from that swindler who calls himself an agent for the Admiralty, have you? Well, my good lads, he's a swindler. He'll do you out of a deposit, and then you'll hear no more of him. You look through this contract, and you'll see it's a very bad one. I've been over it. I want your coal, and I'm willing to pay for it, so let's get the thing fixed up. I'm glad I'm in time to save you from the impostor. By the way, I've been as long as a field, but Roddy looked at the man thoughtfully.

"There are a lot of impostors, it's true," he said. "Let me see, will you say you represent?"

"No firm; myself only. I'll take this coal, and pay for it."

"That's a good-sized lie, for a start. You represent Kenyon Price & Co., for I've seen you at their Cardiff offices. You thought you could get us out, didn't you? Well, you can tell your boss, as he doesn't know it, that you weren't in time. Our contract is fixed with the Admiralty."

"How dare you use such language to me, you cut!" cried the visitor hotly.

"That's quite enough," said Roddy. "Your game is blown, and my advice to you, Mr. Hooker, is to be as good as your name for once, and book it. Off with you!" he said, and only waiting down the hillside.

"Who! Then K. P.'d rather buy our coal himself than let us get a job?"

"Buy? Not much buying about it. They'd have contrived to dilute us out of the money. But I think we've been at it long enough not to be caught by that sort of chaff."

"I'd give me the odd shillings when he said Mr. Warrington was a fraud."

"Not much in that, for if I'm not mistaken, there is something in the matter."

"It was Mr. Warrington indeed, and he brought with him three other men—a colliery expert, a well-known engineer and geologist, and a private secretary."

"He greeted the boys warmly, and introduced his companions to make the inspection," he said. "If you're agreeable."

"Rather," said Roddy. "You're just in time, sir, he said, laughing. And before the others he described the visit of Mr. Hooker."

"The important reason," exclaimed the Admiralty agent, "is that those people are smart for it." However," he added, with a

smile, "I think I can convince you I'm the genuine article. Shall we get to work?"

Roddy put the control of the coal-getting into his head-viewer's hands at once. Pat Lloyd had been promoted to that job, and the boys devoted themselves entirely to Mr. Warrington and his companions.

The examination took three whole days, the Boroboles were sunk in many places, experiments were made, and the thing was done most completely and exhaustively. At last Mr. Warrington delivered judgment.

"There was no doubt of it from the first," he said, "but it's even better than I thought. There are at least two seams, nearly as rich as the one you're working now, underneath at a greater depth. We have proved those, my lads, nothing remains to be done but to draw up and sign that contract, and then get right to work on the coal."

Great news it was for the boys. Mr. Warrington was absent a day or two in London, and when he returned, with a Crown lawyer, Mr. Wynn Williams was called in on behalf of the boys, and had what Tom called the "fattest job" their good friend had seen for many a day. Mr. Rodwell Owen and Mr. Thomas Hughes, of Bryn y Garth, were appointed to supply his Majesty's Navy with coal till further order, the Admiralty contracting to furnish the necessary machinery to start with.

Then followed the great triumph. Such a change came over Siarnac's Farm as had never been dreamed of. A second shaft was sunk on the most scientific principles, two great stagings and winding-engines reared their heads by each shaft, houses and sheds sprang up like mushrooms, and a whole army of men were

"He's up to something. He's not the man to take a thing like this lying down," said Roddy. "Well, we're out of his reach now, anyway. Why, Bryn y Garth 'll be as big a concern as the Coed Coch itself. In another year."

"And the Coed Coch is ours, too, remember that. Tom, we owe everything that we've got to good old Matt, and I'm not going back on our promise to him. Now things are going smoothly, we'll get on the warpath again."

"Always glad to see you, Mr. Glass," said Roddy warmly. "This is like old times—"

"I think I ought to tell you, sir," said the manager, "that I believe there's a spy in the pit."

"A spy! Whom?"

"That I don't know; but you can guess. This I don't want going wrong, and it takes me all my time to put them right. Somebody's got with much success as yet. And everything we do is known outside, even secret things, almost before it's settled here."

"Ah!" said Tom pensively. "So I've thought lately. Whom do you suspect?"

"Can't get an inkling, sir. And yet I keep an eye on everybody. It's one of the hevers, I'm pretty sure, that's all."

Roddy sat down and pondered for some time.

"I don't like the look of this, Mr. Glass," he said; "but I think I'm as quick to spot anybody as the next man. I shall go into my work as a hever, for a week, and keep my eyes about me."



"You are badly hurt, my poor fellow, I fear," said the rector gently. "But you shall not despair. There is hope yet, surely!"

"All right, sir," said Mr. Glass, without much surprise, "and you'll be as good a hever as we've got among three hundred, too."

"Drop the 'sir,' Glass, there's a good fellow. We're too old pals for that. It's settled, I go down to-morrow morning."

Roddy was as good as his word. For four days he worked in the pit with his own men, and what those who recognized him thought there is no saying. He himself said very little.

"Two days he hewed, in different stalls each shift, selecting them himself, and two days he passed as an under-viewer."

"Well, odd chap!" said Tom, on the fourth night, at supper, to which Mr. Glass was invited.

"Who's that hewer in No. 40, with the grimy brown beard and long, thin hands?" asked Roddy.

"That's John Hammond. He's been with us a fortnight," said Mr. Glass—"a very good hever. I know all about him. He's a new man in Aberford, and lives at Vachell's Bent. A good hever, but not very strong."

"I'll work in his stall to-morrow," said Roddy, with a pause; "and quite alone with him, please."

Mr. Glass nodded, and arranged it. For two days Roddy hewed the coal in No. 40, in company with John Hammond. Of what passed in the stall he said nothing; but each night Tom found his partner was away for an hour or more, while Roddy, as yet, explained the reason.

It was on the fourth day that Rodwell, having been up nearly all night, and working all day, found himself nodding with sheer fatigue in a pause of the work, and all but fell asleep. He was in a stall, and with a jerk started up, and saw the bearded pitman Hammond standing behind him with uplifted pick, a strange gleam in his eyes, and his hands half-lightened with beads of perspiration standing on his griny forehead. Roddy sprang up, and the man gave back a step, with a dry noise in his throat.

"No, no," said Rodwell quietly, pointing to the pick; "not that way, man. You haven't reason in your head, nor nerve. You thought you had, but you've not."

The pitman's breath came quickly, and he hesitated, a hunted look in his eyes, and his hands gripped the pick. He was so convulsively, so that his knuckles grew white.

"It isn't at all a bad leg get up," continued Rodwell, in a low, mocking voice. "It took me several days to make sure I was right, without letting you know it. Is this your last card, Mr. Sully?"

He took a step forward, and with a quick movement grasped the hever's beard and jerked it. It came away in his hand, revealing the man's face, lean features of the ex-viewer of Coed Coch.

Sully gave a hoarse cry of mingled fear and anger. As Rodwell stepped forward with his pick, the man's face turned white, and he fell back, frantically, hysterical force, thinking he was about to be attacked.

"He's up to something. He's not the man to take a thing like this lying down," said Roddy. "Well, we're out of his reach now, anyway. Why, Bryn y Garth 'll be as big a concern as the Coed Coch itself. In another year."

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"I'll work in his stall to-morrow," said Roddy, with a pause; "and quite alone with him, please."

Mr. Glass nodded, and arranged it. For two days Roddy hewed the coal in No. 40, in company with John Hammond. Of what passed in the stall he said nothing; but each night Tom found his partner was away for an hour or more, while Roddy, as yet, explained the reason.

It was on the fourth day that Rodwell, having been up nearly all night, and working all day, found himself nodding with sheer fatigue in a pause of the work, and all but fell asleep. He was in a stall, and with a jerk started up, and saw the bearded pitman Hammond standing behind him with uplifted pick, a strange gleam in his eyes, and his hands half-lightened with beads of perspiration standing on his griny forehead. Roddy sprang up, and the man gave back a step, with a dry noise in his throat.

"No, no," said Rodwell quietly, pointing to the pick; "not that way, man. You haven't reason in your head, nor nerve. You thought you had, but you've not."

The pitman's breath came quickly, and he hesitated, a hunted look in his eyes, and his hands gripped the pick. He was so convulsively, so that his knuckles grew white.

"It isn't at all a bad leg get up," continued Rodwell, in a low, mocking voice. "It took me several days to make sure I was right, without letting you know it. Is this your last card, Mr. Sully?"

He took a step forward, and with a quick movement grasped the hever's beard and jerked it. It came away in his hand, revealing the man's face, lean features of the ex-viewer of Coed Coch.

Sully gave a hoarse cry of mingled fear and anger. As Rodwell stepped forward with his pick, the man's face turned white, and he fell back, frantically, hysterical force, thinking he was about to be attacked.

"He's up to something. He's not the man to take a thing like this lying down," said Roddy. "Well, we're out of his reach now, anyway. Why, Bryn y Garth 'll be as big a concern as the Coed Coch itself. In another year."

"And the Coed Coch is ours, too, remember that. Tom, we owe everything that we've got to good old Matt, and I'm not going back on our promise to him. Now things are going smoothly, we'll get on the warpath again."

"Always glad to see you, Mr. Glass," said Roddy warmly. "This is like old times—"

"I think I ought to tell you, sir," said the manager, "that I believe there's a spy in the pit."

"A spy! Whom?"

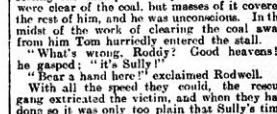
"That I don't know; but you can guess. This I don't want going wrong, and it takes me all my time to put them right. Somebody's got with much success as yet. And everything we do is known outside, even secret things, almost before it's settled here."

"Ah!" said Tom pensively. "So I've thought lately. Whom do you suspect?"

"Can't get an inkling, sir. And yet I keep an eye on everybody. It's one of the hevers, I'm pretty sure, that's all."

Roddy sat down and pondered for some time.

"I don't like the look of this, Mr. Glass," he said; "but I think I'm as quick to spot anybody as the next man. I shall go into my work as a hever, for a week, and keep my eyes about me."



"You are badly hurt, my poor fellow, I fear," said the rector gently. "But you shall not despair. There is hope yet, surely!"

"All right, sir," said Mr. Glass, without much surprise, "and you'll be as good a hever as we've got among three hundred, too."

"Drop the 'sir,' Glass, there's a good fellow. We're too old pals for that. It's settled, I go down to-morrow morning."

Roddy was as good as his word. For four days he worked in the pit with his own men, and what those who recognized him thought there is no saying. He himself said very little.

"Two days he hewed, in different stalls each shift, selecting them himself, and two days he passed as an under-viewer."

"Well, odd chap!" said Tom, on the fourth night, at supper, to which Mr. Glass was invited.

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