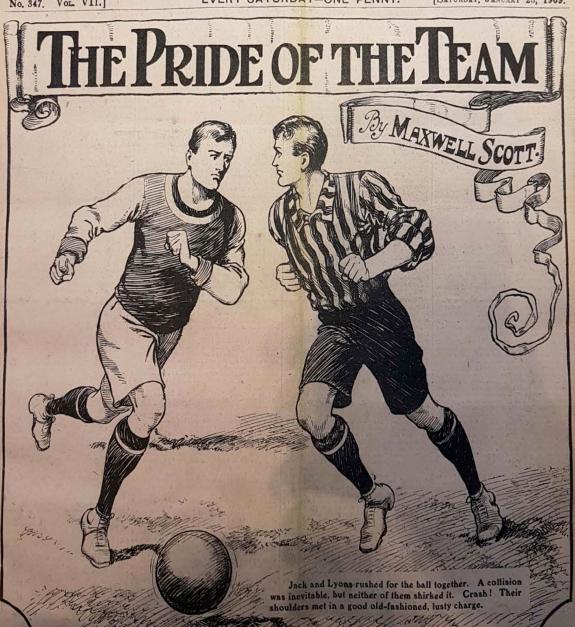
COMPLETE FOOTBALL TALE BY CHARLES HAMILTON. SEE WITHIN.



Vol. VII.] No. 347.

EVERY SATURDAY ONE PENNY.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1909.



# be Reform at

THE 1st CHAPTER.

I Case of Dry-Rot.

T S rotten!" said Montague.
"Makee us look such silly seece, you know!" remarked Verron.
"Blowed if I know what to do about it, ough," said the first speaker." It seems as a sort of rot has set in in this echocl."
"We used to play a good game—"
"Once upon a time," murmured Montague.
"And now—"
"I better" but had our elevent."

"Now we've just had our eleventh consecu-tive licking."

tree licking."
"It's rotten!"
"That ain't the word for it. Did you notice how the Updale fellows were chuckling after the game?
"Soale for nil! 'Nuff to make them chuckle!"

chuckle "
"Yans, by Jove!" said Vernon. "I never
felt such a silly ass in my life, you know. It
seems that we can't win.
" We'd better chuck up (noter, and take to
playing marbles, I think!" said Thurlow
despondent!.
And the committee of the Sixth Form at
And the ungathered together in Dick
Thurlow's atudy, looked at one another with
doleful clance.

doleful glances.

Matters were indeed in a particularly "rotten" state at St. Ronan's just then. Eleven consecutive defeats on the football-field, received by a college that had prided itself on the play, were enough to make the St. Ronanites pause and consider themselves.

They had attributed it to a run of bad luck at the start; but when the bad luck had lasted through three-quarters of the eason, they felt that they had to look further for the cause of it.

Although they did not like to admit it, they had a hazy feeling that the fault was in themselves. They liked footer. They played the game because they liked it, but they didn't like work.

the work.

There was one fellow in the Sixth Form at St. Roma a who played the game as it should be the shool had ever seen, and his name was Bob Yorke, and Bob Yorko had solemply withdrawn from the first cleven, and kicked the dast of the pavilion from his feet, so to speak, early in the senson.

Asked for his reasons, he had stated, in the plainest of plain English, that he didn't intend to play any longer with a team made up of lay dackers, who went out looking for lickings.

Tyrke was a North-country fellow, with huge limbs and a frank and honest nature, and he had a painful way of telling the plain, un-variabled truth at all times and on all occa-sions.

The truth from Yorke's lips had jarred on the nerves of the first eleven. They liked to play footer, but, then, they wanted to play in at easy-going, gentlemanly sort of way, with-out making any great efforts, or spoiling their

as easygoing, gentlemany sort of way, withopt making any great efforts, or spoiling their
roce jerceys.

Yorke, having expressed his opinion, and
vasied his hands of St. Ronan's football, was
occorfully left out of the elever; but after
constituted fellow as and he was the
best and the same the state of the state

A Football Tale By Charles Hamilton.

**Lonan's** 

played eleven matches, and counted up eleven defeats. No wonder that even the easy-going Thurlow was disposed to be enappy. The first devented just come home from a match—the evented just come home from all was rather; a severe defeat, even for St. Ronans, and the fellows were worried a little about it.

nii was raine: a severe occas, even for St. Ronans, and the fellows were worried a little about it.

Ronans, and the fellows were worried a little about it.

In the seven of the seven the seven the seven in the record half of the game. Without making efforts, they had succeeded in walking over the St. Ronanites in an easy sort of way.

It was not only the defeat that rankled; but the first eleven felt their pride touched. They were all fellows of the Fifth and Sirth—the wind in the seven of the seven felt their pride touched. They were all fellows of the Fifth and Sirth—the dignity in the eyes of the youngster.

Fourth-Formers and Shell chaps had greeted them on their return with impertinent questions. The juniors did not ask. "How did it go?" They knew beforehand how it was certain to go. They asked. "How many goals were you licked by?" which was a painful way of puting its no use cuffing them. As Montague pathetically complained, the more you cuffed them the more they shricked at you from inaccessible corners—shrinks about lickings and slackers and muffs, which were exasperating to the high and mighty seniors of the Fifth and Sirth. The meeting of the foot-ball committee in his study. They came in with downcast faces. They found a notice pinned on Thurlow's door in the scrawling hand of a fag. It ran:

By order."

This little joke of the face did not increase the good - how the good direw it into the fire let a crowd of juniors were yelling with laughter outside the study window, and be could not throw them into the fire too. It was pretty would have to be done, if the senior Forms were not to be laughted out of the school.

Bob Yorko was not a.

Bob Yorko was not a.

the school.

Bab Yorke was not a member of the committee. He had resigned his place there, and first cleven, Yorke had been hard up for footbal, but he put in a good deal of practice by and and cli, helped the junior Forms a great deal, and claim in the neighbour harder of playing in a train in the neighbour harder of playing in a train in the neighbour had expected him to come back and ask for his place again; but he hadn't come back, and she for his place again; but he hadn't come back, and he showed no intention of stoing so.

of doing so.

The committee met with glum faces. They all agreed that it was rotten, that it was leady, that it was intolerable, and that something must be done; and there they stuck.

Something certainly had to be done; but what it should be remained a mystery. Thurlow had an idea in his head, which he hesistated to communicate to the rest. He waited till they had all spoken; but nobody had anything to suggest.

tated to communerate to the rest. He was estill they had all spoken; but nobody had anything to suggest.

"Well," said Thurlow at last, "are we going to dieband the Sixth Form Football Club, and drop the game of axistence" said Montague. "This is better than that, though things are bad enough now, goodness knows!"

"You don't mean to say you have an idea?"

"A sort of one," said Thurlow slowly,"

"Then get it off your chest, old chap!"

"Look here, the fact is, we haven't played hard enough. It was true what Yorke told us to our faces—
"He had a doocid unpleasant way of puttin' retribute he had; but it was true. We've been slacking. We don't take the game

Eleven are open to exchange footballs for marbles and pegtops!— By order."

"Notice to the Lower orms.— The First leven are of the colored with the co

4E 2nd CHAPTES.

"PRO Consonts.

OU'RE joking, I suppose?", said

Montague at last,
Thurlow shook his lead,
"I'm not joking. I mean what

Anurous account of the property of the propert

matter. I've thought it out.
been slacking—"
"Oh, come, old chap; don't begin to talk like

been slacking—
"Oh, come, old chap; don't begin to talk like
Yorke!"
If is the plain truth. The job's too big for
me, and I chuck it up. If you like to ask
Yorke to be captain, there's a chance for the
"I don't like the means and dissolve it."
I don't like the mean of asking him." said
Norton; 'the will be also and asking him." said
Norton; 'the will be also and asking him." said
Norton; 'the will be also and asking him." said
'Yorke's not the sort to crow over anybody."
"Well, I'll do him that justice."
"Well, I'll do him that justice." agreed
Vernon. "The only fault I have to find with
him is that he has such a doocid uppleasant way
of—
"Only, mind, if we ask him, and he consents,
we've got to play the game," said Thurlow.
"Only, mind, if we ask him, and he consents,
we've got to play the game," said Thurlow.
"There can be no backing out afterwards.
"There will be obeyed."
"Yes, but the said to play the game," said to be obeyed."
"You know my opinion. Take it or leave it.

"You know my opinion. Take it or leave it.
I tell you plainly, I've had enough of this rot-

I tell, you plassing, a tell miss did to the could be firm sometimes, on rare occasions—and it was one of those rare occasions—or. There were those rare occasions never. The occasions the control of th

was lost. He realised it himself, too.

The football committee looked at one another.

The task of asking Yorke to be their captain
was not a pleasant one. But they didn't-like
to oppose Thurlow; and, besides, they felt that
it was the only thing to be done. The suggestion had come as a surprise; but after the first
surprise had worn off, most of them saw it to
surprise had worn off, most of them saw it to
surprise had great the surprise had great the surprise

Exp. algebras at the groupoubstells; was the

Exp. algebras at the groupoubstells; was the

be a good idea, and the only possible way of saving St. Ronan's.

For, slackers as they undoubtedly were, they were good fellows all, and they had the honour of their school very much at heart. Things had goin a way of drifting, that was all, and had gone from bad to worse, for want of a tight hand on the ragreed" said Thurlow.

"Yea-e-as; I suppose so."

Thurlow rose briskly enough to his feet.

"Then let's get along and ask Yorke."

"All of us?"

"Yes, certainly. It will look like a deputation, and Yorke will see that we are all going to back him up, if he accepts.

"Oh, very well."

"Oh, very well."

"Oh, very well."

"Oh, very well."

"Oh, very pally belowed the belooked up as the fellows came in, and nodded rather grimly.

"We've come to see you, Yorke—"

"We'l, here I am."

"We've just played the Updals fellows—"

"We'l, here I am."

"The deputation of the Sixth Form blushed visibly.

"No," said Thurlow; "we lost—five to

visibly. "No," said Thurlow; "we lost—five to nought. We've come to ask you to rejoin the first cloven—" Can't be did."

"But—"
I told you what I thought about you when I left. Do you want me to repeat it."
"N-no; but—"
"Don't be so doccid unpleasant, Yorke, old

"I don't want to be unpleasant. But I'd rather play in a faga' eleven than in a team of slackers."
"Wa want you to rejoin as skipper," said

"You want to resign the captaincy to me?"

York want to resign the captaincy to me?"

"Yes; and I'll back you up."

Yorke was silent for a few moments, evidently, yory much taken by surprise. The deputation watched him annicusty.



The members of the First Eleven at St. Ronan's found a notice pinned en theriows door, written in the scrawling hand of a fag. The gist of the notice brought a flush of anger and mortification to their faces.

I suppose you've thought and talked this of "said Yorke, at last." Yes, rather! We want you to captain us." I'd do it willingly, Tharlow, only-". Yes you've not going to refuse!" No. I'm going to accept, if I can accept on own terms. If I captain the eleven, the real has got to win the next match, or I'll with reason why." We want to win, of course," said nagoe.

"We want to win, of course," said Montagon.
"But do you want to do the work that's necessary to win!" said Yorke practically." Think it over before you make me captain. If I become your captain, I shall make you play the rame. I shall keep you at it. I shall make you work. There won't be any more slacking—any more missing practice because it's cold, and lounging is-hand the clims, smoking organicities."

At least one of the Sixth-Formers blushed at

At least one of the Sakin-remera cuasion at the imputation.

The deputation looked at one another.

The deputation looked at one another.

The deputation looked at as Vermon often remarked, as "doesed marked as "doesed as "does

THE 3-6 CHAPTER.

THE 3-6 CHAPTER.

Bomething Like a neform.

VINE had said that he would make the food of the state of the food of the fo

result.
Vernon, for instance, had a way of staying in bed till the very last possible moment. Yorke had often smiled at him, in his "doord" un-pleasant way, but had never interfered with him. Now he was football captain, however, it was his duty to interfere, and Yorke was the duty to interfere, and Yorke was the door of his duty, though the skies fell. He door of the door of the door of the stay in the said craphy, on Monday morning.

"Get up?" he said craphy, on Monday morning.

ing.
"Aw-yaw!" said Vernon. "I'm sleepy."
"Get un!"

"Get up."
"Who the dooce are you ordering about?"
demanded Vernon, starting into broad wakefulmess in his amazement.

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No. 72\_

## THE COSTER KING.

A Thrilling Tale of Sexton Blake, the Famous Detective.

3<sup>D.</sup> Price Bach. "I'm ordering you about. I'm your football

"I'm ordering you about. I'm your football capain,"
"You'll be haping it mode of non minutes."
"You'll be haping it mode of ten minutes."
"Rats! I'm not going to get up."
York bit hot reply. It took a jug of rold water, and inverted it over Vernon's head, and the slacker jumped up with a fenduly by!!
"On! Os.ow! O.o.o.oh!"
"On! Os.ow! O.o.o.oh!"
"On! Os.ow! O.o.o.oh!"
"On! Os.ow! the fenduly by!!
"On! Os.ow! the fenduly by!!
"On the specific properties of the fenduly of the fenduly by!!
"On the specific properties of the fenduly of the fend

came upon Norton one alternoon, smoxing a cigarette behind the pavilion, his brow grew black at night.

"What's that!" roared Yorke.

Norton felt a slight inward tremor, but there were fellows looking on, and he wan't going to show the white feather.

"That! It's a fag," he drawled.

"That It's a fag," he drawled.

"Take it out, old chap," muttered Montague.

"Hanged if I will!" growled Norton, turning red with anger. "I'm not going to be bullied."

"I'm captain of the first eleven," said Yorke. "I warned you beforehand that I was going to be a real captain, and not an imitation one."

The ity own will be, and rou've got to have some wind when you're there. You ought to be ashamed of these filly tricks, anyway; and as long as you're a member of my team, I'm going to cure you of them. I warned you that you weren't to smoke."

"I shall smoke if I like!"

"Take that cigarette out of your mouth!" thundered Yorke.

you weren't to smoke."
"I shall smoke if I like!"
"I shall smoke if I like!"
"Take that cigarette out of your mouth!"
thundered Yorke.
"Sha'n't!" he said.
Yorke strode towards him. Norton receded
a little, and took the cigarette out of his
mouth; being afraid, as a matter of fact, of
having it knocked down his thoat. Yorke
threw his cap and jacket on the ground.
"Put up your hands!"
"But—but—what do you mean!"
"I ham joing to thrash you."
"Oh. I say, hold on!" said Montague. "A
fight between two of the Sixth—it won't do,
Yorke."
"It will have to do. Norton has set himself

"It will have to do. Norton has set himself up against his captain. If he doesn't put up his hands, I'll sling him over my knee and pank him."

You won't do that," said Norton, between

"You won't do that," said Norton, between his teeth.

And he put up his hands. Fellows gathered from far and near to see the fight. Norton had no chance from the first. In a few minutes he was puffing and blowing, and he would have given worlds to have that eigerette unamoked at that moment. He wanted every ounce of at the moment. He wanted every ounce of hadri't any to speak of. He was a norty fellow, and he had plack enough. But that only made his punishment more severe. He stood up to Yorke till he could stand no longer. The football captain slegged him right and left, and the mutineer received such a terrible thrashing that he bore the marks of it for weeks. When, at last, he lay on the ground, and couldn't even get on his feet without help, Yorke desisted. Norton admitted that he had had enough. "I'm sorry," said Yorke; "remember, I'm "I'm sorry," said Yorke; "remember, I'm

had enough.
"I'm sorry," said Yorke; "remember, I'm captain next time, won't you, old chap!"
He really looked sorry, and Norton grinned faintly through a mask of bruises.
"I'll remember," he gasped.
He did remember. He had smoked his last cicarette.

He did remember. He had smoked his last cigarette.
Yorke's drastic measures could not be called popular. But he knew very well that he would be popular enough if victory once more favoured the St. Ronan's colours. Besides, he didn't care whether he was popular or not. He knew his duty, and he meant to do it; and he would have fought the whole first eleven in a body rather than have given way an inch on a single point.
And it could not be denied that the new training was making a difference to the eleven. Fellows who had been unable to sprint round the Close without puffing and blowing, found that they could run miles without getting exhausted. Fellows who could not kick a ball straight learned to dose when they were kicking at every available hour during the day. Yorke the training the contract of the risk of overdoing it. They gradually settled he risk of overdoing it. They gradually settled he risk of overdoing it. They gradually settled he had been command, their reward in deeper breathing heart of the reward and strong nervee.

"I's enough to make us jolly wet."
"You can change your clothes, I suppose."
"You can change your clothes, I suppose."
Yorke looked him up and down. Some of
the onlookers expected him to trust Wavasour
she had treated Norten and Wavasour felt
a tremor. But Vorke did. I have been notice
to very well, he sail, "I have been notice
to very well," he sail, "I have been notice
to very well," he sail, "I have been notice
to very make a suppose and I had been turning
to a tripman incer, and I had been turning
to a tripman incer, and I had been turning
the a round suppose the tree with the sail.
"For to-day, do you mean."
"I mean for the rest of the eason."
Varasour change of the cason."
Varasour change of turn me out of the
eleven." Be exclaimed, hardly able to believe
had to be the suppose of the sail.

his ears. "You're turned out already," said Yorke,

his ears.

"You're turned out already," said Yorke, turning away.

"Look here; "Ill come—"

"I Look here; "Ill come—"

"I Look here; "Ill come—"

"At you have the said of the first he was in earnest, but it proved that he was. Robinson, of the Fifth, was given his cap for the first team, to his huge delight.

Several of the eleven, monastrated. Yorke was asked in com. His reply was direct.

"You can turn mo out if you like," he said.

"You have the choice of keeping me for your captain, or kicking me out. I'm ready to go.

"We don't want you to go," said Montage. "Of course we don't; don't be so doceid unpleasant, so long as I remain captain, Yavasour won't play for the first eleven. The sabject's closed."

And that settled it. Strange to say, chafing as they were feeling the benefits of Vorke. They were feeling the benefits of Vorke. They were feeling the benefits of Vorke. They were feeling the benefits of the regime. They began to feel a strong admiration for Yorke. They were feeling the benefits of the regime. They began to feel a strong admiration for Yorke. They were feeling the benefits of the regime. They began to feel a strong admiration for Yorke. They were feeling the benefits of the regime. They began to feel a strong admiration for Yorke. They were feeling the benefits of the regime. They began to feel a strong admiration for Yorke. They were feeling the benefits of the regime. They began to the so hopeless an affair as their last.

their last.

The forthcoming match was with Turberville, a neighbouring school. They had met Turberville on a laredy, and had been hopelessly leading the last of the last of

And so Thurlow had thought a fortnight be-fore! But now a change had come o'er the spirit of his dream.

And so Thurlow had thought a fortnight before! But now a change had come o'er the spirit of his dream.

When, after school on the Friday before the match, the cleven turned out for a final practice, those who came to watch were amuzed. The compared with what it had been a few weeks ago. The backs seemed to be able to stop the ball—a thing backs are generally supposed to be able to do, but which the St. Ronan's back had never quite managed. The goalkeeper kept the goal clear against really ripping shots, and was only beaten when the shooting was next door to irresistible.

And the juniors of St. Ronan's back and spend when the shooting was next door to irresistible.

And the juniors of St. Ronan's back, and was no longer vielled "Hurray" at the top the strength of the shooting was next door to irresistible.

The first eleven was playing a scratch tean, and knocked them into a cocked hat. And the first eleven came off the field feeling a little more satisfied with their leader, and extremely satisfied with themselves.

Thurlow thumpled Yorke on the back as they left the field, you do fellow," he said; "I hought it would work out like this, Bob Yorke laughed.

"Yes, and I fancied at first that the rot had gone too far; but we've pulled up," he said. "All's well that ends well."

"If we win to-morrow, you will be able to do what you like with the team."

"We shall win to-morrow, or there will be a deuce of a row," said Yorke.

THE 4th CHAPTER

The 4th CHAPTER.

The Result.

RIGHT and early the next afternoon the St. Ronan's first was on the Turberville ground. The kick-off was at three, and in time for the kick-off was at arrived a goodly rowed of spectators. Not only the Turbervillians were there, as was natural, bright of the state of fellows of all Forms had walked or riven over from St. Ronan's.

The Turbervillians were developed for a victory to change the diepy wildly hoped for a victory to change the diepy mid bad level that had ballers.

The Turbervillians were grinning when they lined up.

The Turbervillians not be rude, but they couldn't help it. They half expected St. Ronan's to find some excuse for scretching the return match. The "check" of the St. return match. The "check" of the St. sight, bruced muscles, and strong nerves.

A week after Yorke had taken command, there was a change in the first eleven that was plain to the most casual glance. There was discontent, too, and in the second week of the reformation Vavasour went on strike. Vavasour had had enough of eternal spirnting, and kicking, and heading, and when ordered to turn out for an early morning practice, he declined.

Yorke glanced out of the window.

1d. Every Saturaay But somehow it didn't work out like.

The game had not been started five before they realised that there was, his

The game had not been award out the part of the part o

performances of St. Ronan's first, rubbed to greater than the second of the second of

the nome crows accered with renet
"Goal!"

"Goal"

"Goal"

"Goal"

"Goal to the two
before expiring, only followed, but they we
taken by St. Ronan's men; and the home but
calised that their only hope was to pack as
goal and defend, and cut down the marge
defeat as much as possible.

And they did it—but even a stream
defence could not save them from Bo Are
and his merry men. Right through them
and his merry men. Right through them
St. Ronanies crashed, once, twice, es a
welcome whistle went, and added two goal
the score. the score.

St. Konanites crashed, once, twice, en swelcome whistle went, and added two goa's the score.

Six to one!

The players went off the field breshing ha after a gruelling game, the Turbervillasu in amazement, the St. Ronanies chadra with glee.

In the dressing-room the victors guben from the conceal his satisfaction; his boosel kew recethed in smiles. Thurlow thumped het be the conceal his satisfaction; his boosel kew were the distribution of the conceal his satisfaction; his boosel kew "I'vo brought you up to time, you read the "Tvo brought you up to time, you read we were ather took Turberviell by surprise as shouldn't have licked them so availy bole we rather took Turberviell by surprise as shouldn't have licked them so availy bole to the conceal his satisfaction. I'vou'l jolly well find us backing you along the lime," said Montague. "My What will they say at St. Ronana," "Two yhad much to say at St. Ronana, I'vou'l jolly well find us backing you along the lime," said Montague. "My What will they say at St. Ronana, I'vou'l jolly and much to say at St. Ronana, I'vou'l jolly work on the player; was Bob Yorko who came in for the years of the contain, as the victorious team can't here were cheers for all the player; was Bob Yorko who came in for the years of the capitain, who had ruled his you'll have been supply the post of the player; was law among the footballers of St. Roman's from the "rot," and from that by said to win-and the history of different for history of its beginning— could to be whenced the said to be white years. The country of the country of

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