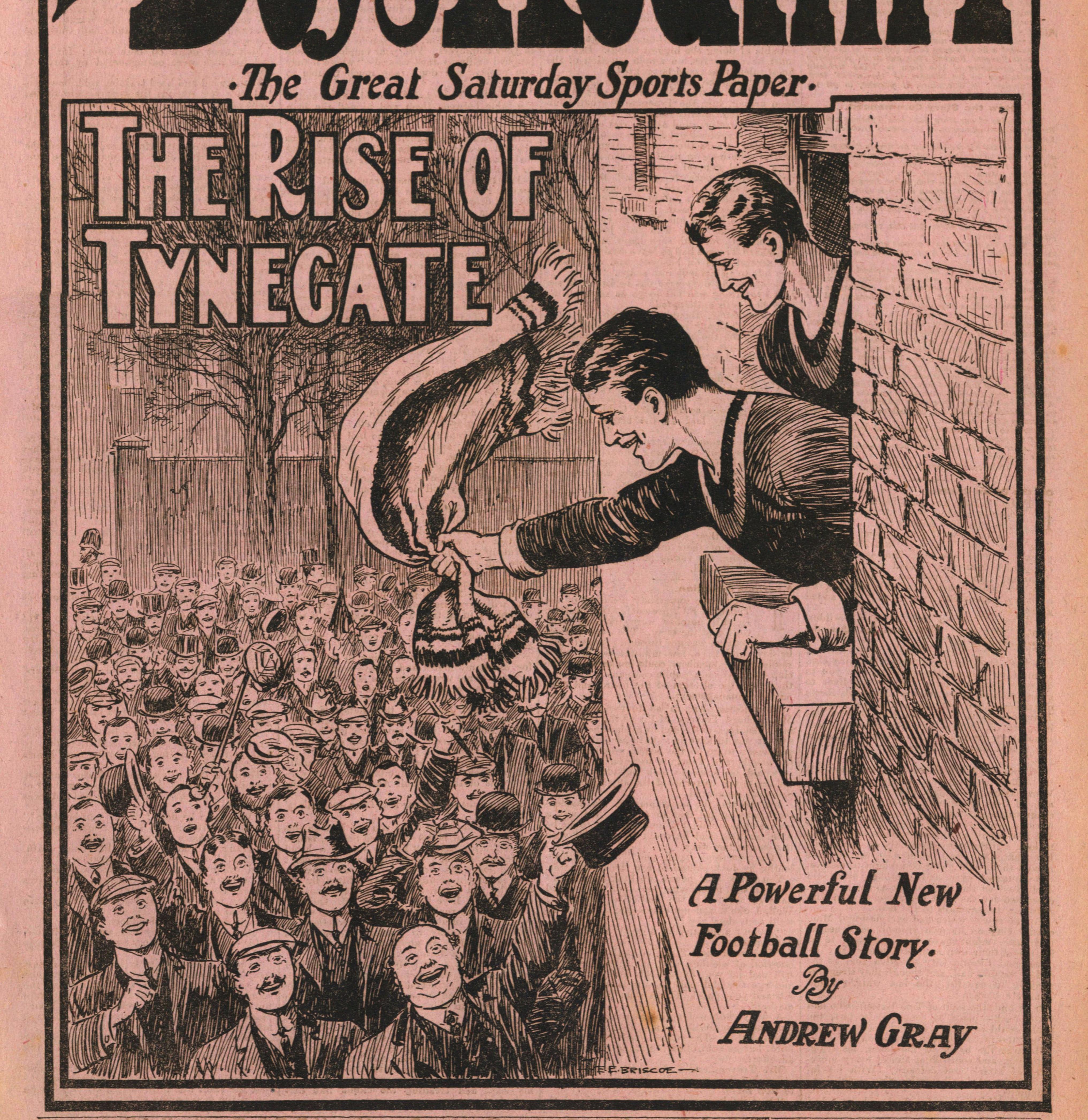
he Bays's Roams



THE OLD BOYS' MATCH

A Rollicking Long, Complete Tale of Jack Noble and Pelham School.



Amid irrepressible gusts of laughter, Mr. Slaney was hoisted up on the boys' shoulders, and solemnly carried out of the room.

THE 1st CHAPTER. Russell's Stickhard Cement-And a Use for It.

to a fiendish chuckle of delight, and | lad, came bouncing in. ing contents of a jampot, which was suspended | Mac. "We've been looking all over the place | the shiny, polished, wooden form. by a wire over the flame of a gas-jet in Jack | for you! Drake and McIlvaine are holding | Noble's study. Bob was an inventor in name a football meeting in their study, an' require of satisfaction. only. The previous creations of his brain had | the honour of your presence, old sons." eye on failure, and swivelled a glimmering his feet with a grin. orbit on the future success he hoped to attain.

He gave another scooping stir at his steaming concoction, and Jack Noble, the captain of the Pelham Third Eleven, who was busily engaged in jotting down on paper his team for the following Saturday's match, looked up with a sniff and a terrible frown.

"What the dickens are you up to, Bob?" he yelled. "For goodness' sake chuck that filthy | corner. muck out of the window! It's enough to choke a chap!"

Bob gave a snort of disgust, and then spluttered and sneezed, as a cloud of yellow smoke puffed up in his face.

"It's not a pleasant smell," he acknowledged bravely. "But then, one must put up with these little drawbacks in the all-glorious cause of science."

"All-glorious fiddlesticks!" growled Jack. "What is it? Another of your rotten inventions?"

Bob drew himself up haughtily.

"This," he snapped, pointing to the contents of the jampot, "is what is destined to be known in the world of trade as Russell's Patent Stickhard Cement. It'll stick anything from stamps to boiler-plates. A few drops on the hoofs of an elephant would hold the mighty It's wonderful stuff! It'd stick anything!"

you go and juggle with it somewhere else?" | Juniors.

covery I've made!" cried Bob angrily. | ing it was empty, stepped in, followed by his "Your feeble brain can't grasp the possibili- special cronies, Marker, Prince, and Bayne.

ing success, wasn't it? Give over, Bob, my stifle one. Hallo, what's this?" lad, give over! You know as much He stepped across to the mantelpiece and here!" lad, give over! You know as much He stepped across to the mantelpiece and here!"
about inventing as the lordly Clifford does picked up Bob Russell's cement. There was a He walked over towards the form Clifford had on his feet and bring him over here."

about football. Give it a rest." And Jack buried his head in his papers again.

Just at that moment the study door opened, OB RUSSELL, the eccentric inventive and Macalpine, Pelham Third's right-back, cement, slapped a thick coat of it along the genius of Pelham School, gave vent Valence, and Murphy, the irrepressible Irish Form with the brush.

stirred vigorously at the evil-smell- "Oh, here you are, you bounders!" cried almost colourless, and showed hardly at all on

"Right, my bonnie haggis! Lead on MacMac of MacMacville!"

the mantelpiece, and the five went clattering | and be sawn out." down the corridor.

was pushed open, and Clifford, of the Shell, and his gang of infants come in!" said Clifpoked his long nose cautiously round the ford. He made a grab at the pot of cement,

ball Eleven at Pelham, and, as such, had against him. Clifford staggered, and over always treated the members of the Third Form | went the cement, a sticky stream gushing down with scant respect. However great their right on to the seat of Mr. Slaney's chair. ability, he would never select any of them to play for the junior team. This unfair treat- aghast. "Look what you've done! By jingo, ment had excited the anger and indignation there'll be no end of a row! If old Slaney gets of Jack Noble and his chums to such an extent | stuck down he'll raise the roof! Come onthat they had formed an eleven of their own.

The Third Eleven, as it was called, soon made a name for itself on the football-field, of the pot of cement and the brush, and, with | cemented to his seat. The captain of the Juniors and eventually challenged the Juniors to a his three chums at his heels, dashed out of the match.

This challenge Clifford had at first refused to accept, but at last circumstances compelled a defeat for his team by the odd goal in three.

Since then the Juniors and the Third had | in. always been at loggerheads, and Clifford and quadruped as though rooted to the ground. his cronies seized every opportunity to wreak have to stand down on Saturday, Valence, and captain of the Junior Eleven. "I can't move their spite on their younger rivals, but with | --- " He broke off short. "What the dickens I'm stuck!" "Well, I can't stick the niff of it, at any very little success. Jack and his merry chums is the matter with you, Bob?" Can't move-stuck? Rubbish! Fiddlerate," coughed Jack Noble. "Great Scott, it's were not easily to be caught napping, and Bob Russell, a puzzled look on his face, was sticks! Get up at once!" enough to peel the paper off the walls. Can't generally managed to turn the tables on the sniffing at the air.

"You don't realise what a wonderful dis- | Clifford glanced round the study, and, see-

"Rats to your inventions!" broke in the sniffed the captain of the Juniors. "Like a brought it in here with you?" through the room. Third Eleven captain rudely. "What about | blessed soap-factory! I always said the dirty |

the light, Clifford read the rudely-printed in- then let out a wild howl of rage. scription on it. he shouted

hat, another of that young ass's rotten inven- stickhard an' smeared it all over our seat!"

again, and found it stuck as hard as iron. He | corridor." stared at it open-mouthed for a second, and delight.

Prince, Bayne, and Marker, scenting trouble | over our form!" for someone, grouped round expectantly. "What's the matter, Cliffy-what's the

wheeze?" "Out with it, old son! Don't keep it to

yourself!"

"What's the giddy jape?"

Clifford gazed vacantly at the ceiling. "It's just struck me," he said, with a slywink, "that our venerable young friend Rus-

sell is a very clever child, and ought to be encouraged in his scientific researches. I am sure he doesn't realise what an excellent cement he has concocted, and I think it is our duty to open his eyes to the fact."

His three chums looked puzzled. "What do you mean?" Prince asked. Clifford gave another chuckle.

"Well, we're due for mathematics in another twenty minutes," he continued, "and the Third take them with us under old Slaney. Noble, Russell, Mac, and Valence all sit on the same form-the front one on the left-hand side, opposite us."

"What the dickens are you raving about?" snapped Marker. "I fail to see what that has to do with young Russell's stinking cement."

"Come along with me, and I'll show you," grinned Clifford, picking up the pot of stickhard, and also the broad, flat paste-brush. "Let's get down to the Form-room before any of the others turn up."

THE 2nd CHAPTER. Fun in the Form-room.

quarter of an hour would find it tenanted by | thought, on the fatal form. He nudged Bayne, several dozen intelligent and industrious scholars, being drilled in the rudiments of geometry by Mr. Slaney, the quick-tempered | their studies, improving the shining hourmaster of the Third Form.

"This is the form where Noble and his mouldy crew sit," grinned Clifford, with a wave of his hand, when they had gained the around. room. "Don't you chaps think it could do with a coat of varnish?"

Prince, Marker, and Bayne looked at one | seats!" another, and a broad smile spread simultaneously over their faces.

"My hat, you're a genius, Cliffy!" "Great Scott, what a howling good jape! Ha, ha! I can see young Noble's face when he sits down!"

"Jemima, it's a champion idea!" Clifford blushed beneath this volley of praise, and then, uncorking the pot of stickhard

The cement was thin in consistency, and

Clifford surveyed his handiwork with a look

delightedly.

"It won't do their bags any good, at any rate," smirked Prince. "They'll either have not yet realising what was the matter. Bob carefully placed his precious cement on | to leave them behind, or call the carpenter in

"Come on, we'd better shift off now. We Several minutes afterwards the study door | don't want to be found here when young Noble which he had stood on Mr. Slaney's desk, and Clifford was the captain of the Junior Foot- at the same moment Bayne knocked clumsily

"You walloping great idiot!" cried Clifford, quick! Barge off!"

The Junior captain grabbed up the remains

They were only just in time, for no sooner had they vanished than footsteps came clatterhim to do so, and the result of the match was | ing down the corridor, and Jack Noble, Mac., Russell, Murphy, and Valence came rushing

"That's settled, then," said Jack. "You'll

earth is it? Seems familiar to me somehow. | dismay as a loud rending sound echoed through I can't—"

"Why, it's your rotten cement!" cried Jack | evident.

label on the jampot, and, turning it round to so carefully prepared, sniffing all the time, and

"'Russell's Patent Stickhard Cement!' My frenziedly. "Some rotten cad's pinched my

tions. Phew, it niffs like bad drains!" "What a dirty trick!" yelled Valence Clifford smacked a small quantity of the angrily. "Who the dickens did it?"

cement on the mantelpiece, and then placed "I'm thinkin' that's not hard to guess," put the jampot on it. The look of surprise on his in Mac quietly. "I saw Clifford and his gang face was acute when he tried to pick it up come out of here as we came down the

"Right first time, Mac!" cried Jack indigthen suddenly gave vent to a quiet chuckle of | nantly. "The beastly sneaks! They must have pinched it out of the study an' smeared it all

> "I'll wring Clifford's rotten neck!" bawled Bob, positively dancing with rage; then he suddenly stopped, and a slow smile crept over his freckled face. "No, I won't," he said with a quiet chuckle-" no, I won't! Ha, ha, ha!" And he suddenly burst out laughing.

Murphy touched his head pathetically. "Poor beggar, the shock's turned his brain!

Stark, staring mad!" "Mad your grandmother!" scoffed Bob.

"I'll soon show you whether I'm mad or not! Which form do Clifford and his crew sit on?" "That one!" said Jack, surprised at the

sudden question. "Well, supposing we change forms with 'em?

Exchange is no robbery, eh?" "Ha, ha, ha!"

As the others caught the gist of Bob's idea they burst into a roar of laughter, and Jack smacked his chum on the back.

"Ha, ha, ha! By jingo, you're a marvel, Bob, old son! We'll hoist Cliffy & Co. with their own petard. They'll only have themselves to

Working with feverish activity they dragged the heavy forms across the room, and soon had the cement-besmeared one placed ready for Clifford, Bayne, Marker, and Prince.

A few seconds later the tramp of many feet approaching down the corridor, gave notice of the advent of the rest of the mathematics' class. Jack and his chums darted to their seats, and were each deeply engrossed in a book when the door opened a second later to admit the rest of the Third and the Fourth, including Clifford N mystified silence Prince, Marker, and & Co. The captain of the Juniors cast his beady Bayne followed Clifford down the cor- eyes keenly around the room as he entered, and ridor to the Third-Form class-room. It a cunning gleam of triumph shone therein as he was empty at the time, though another | noticed Jack Noble and his chums seated, as he

and smothered a chuckle of delight. "Diligent youths!" he sneered. "Wrapt in

rotten lot of prigs!"

At that instant the door opened again, and Mr. Slaney stalked in, and threw a sour glance "Silence!" he cried. "Kindly note that this is a class-room, not a bear garden! To your

With many an ill-concealed grin Jack and his chums watched Clifford, Bayne, Marker, and Prince plant themselves unsuspectingly on the prepared form—the form which they themselves

were supposed to be adorning. Mr. Slaney donned his mortar-board, and

leaned back in his chair.

"Open your books at page sixteen," he bade. "Clifford, kindly go to the board and solve this problem for the edification of your fellow students. If two straight lines intersected by - Did you hear what I said, Clifford?"

Clifford had heard what Mr. Slaney had said, and tried his best to carry out the Formmaster's orders. But Bob's stickhard cement had got to work with a vengeance, and the form "Well, if that don't surprise Noble & Co., I | and the seat of Clifford's trousers had sworn failed lamentably; but Bob turned a stony | Jack grabbed up his papers, and sprang to don't know what will!" he grinned lifelong friendship, and were locked in a loving and inseparable embrace. Clifford writhed, twisted, tugged, and grew very red in the face,

"Let go my bags, you fathead!" he hissed, turning furiously on Trimble, a fat, lazy Fourth-Former who sat behind him. "Don't play the giddy goat; let 'em go!"

The guileless Trimble, whose thoughts were far away, centred on the contents of the school tuckshop, turned a pair of surprised eyes on

"Your bags-your bags!" he stammered. "What do you mean? I haven't touched them!"

Then blank, horrible realisation suddenly dawned on Clifford, and his eyes nearly goggled out of his head in mingled rage and chagrin. His splendid joke had miscarried-in some inexplicable way the forms had got jumbled up, and here he was caught in his own trap, securely nearly choked with anger, and made another ineffectual effort to free himself, but with no

"What is the matter with you, Clifford?" roared Mr. Slaney, banging his fist on his desk. "Do you refuse to do what I tell you? Get up at once!"

"I-I-I can't!" stammered the unhappy

Clifford, stung to desperation, gave a terrible "Funny-sniff-smell," he said. "What on wrench, and then sunk back with a yell of the room. Something had torn, that was

ties of my invention. It's--" A roar of laughter echoed

"Of course not, ass!" retorted Bob. "I left | "Clifford!" snapped Mr. Slaney, the Formyour patent football-boot? That was a howl- little beasts never washed. It's enough to it on the mantelpiece in our study. And yet it's master sarcastically, "since you are unable to just like it. By jingo, it seems stronger over | rise unaided, perhaps Bayne and Marker can assist you. Bayne, Marker, kindly set Clifford

"Kit of the Fifth," a Rattling New School Tale. See "The Boys' Herald"—1d. THE BOYS' REALM, March 12, 1910,

with no result. They, too, were glued firmly this matter is sifted to the bottom." to the seat.

"I-I can't move!" gasped Marker at last. "Nor can I!" echoed Bayne, in horrorstricken tones. "There's something wrong with the seat!"

Mr. Slaney reddened with rage.

howled, and then sprang to his feet. Up the short flight of stairs they carefully

Taking into account the energy which Mr. climbed, Mr. Slaney rocking like a ship at Slaney put into his vehement upward bound, it sea, and along the studies' corridor to the would not be exaggerating to say that his leap | master's room. ought to have landed him well out into the the last moment Mr. Slaney decided to take down the corridor. his chair with him.

gave one.

The truth of the matter was the chair refused | cheeks. to be left behind. It clung to Mr. Slaney like a leech, considerably impeded his movements, Bob hysterically. and wilfully mixed itself up with his legs.

The Form-master strove manfully under these adverse circumstances to retain his balance, but without success. He bounced from the platform, the chair in tow, ricochetted into the big blackboard, which fell to the floor with a crash, and then came to rest, seated upright in his chair, in the centre of the class-room.

nothing. He was flabbergasted, astonished, garments with all the speed he could muster struck dumb with surprise, overwhelmed, up, and with many a growl and threat. chaotically bemazed, and in the midst of all "And all through that rotten Noble

for supremacy.

with him.

Meanwhile, roar after roar of laughter was know. in his seat like a wet sack, Jack was almost had not yet arrived. hysterical, Murphy in convulsions, and Mac and Valence suffocating with mirth.

"Go on, Cliffy!" grinned Bob. "Help Mr. Slaney up! Have you forgotten your manners, penned in Mr. Slaney's writing. or do you value your trousers more?"

with rage, "I'll break your confounded neck!" the captain of the Junior Football Eleven hurled it blindly at Bob. But Clifford's aim was evidently affected by his rage, for the volume missed its mark by a good six feet, and struck Mr. Slaney fairly on the side of the head, sending his mortar-board skimming across the room.

Mr. Slaney was by no means in a good temper. Seated there, an object of ridicule in the centre of the floor, he was only too eager to seize the opportunity to wreak his wrath on someone, and Clifford sprang into the breach like a lamb to the slaughter. From his sitting position Mr. Slaney directed the batteries of his anger upon him.

"Get up, sir-get up!" he roared, shaking his fist helplessly. "Get up at once and go to my study. I'll settle with you later on. Do you hear what I say? Get up at once!" "I can't get up!" snarled Clifford sullenly,

like a jackal at bay. Mr. Slaney seemed to be on the verge of an

apoplectic fit. "Noble, Russell, help Clifford up! Do you hear what I say? Pull him from that seat!"

Jack and Bob sprang from their seat with grins of delight. "Yes, sir!" they cried. And, moving over to the helpless Fourth-Former, seized him by

the arms, one on either side. "Leave me alone, you cads!" barked

Clifford, struggling desperately.

"Now, then, all together!"

Bob and Jack heaved, Clifford yelled, something gave way with an ominous tearing | and with a few deft strokes altered the date sound, and the captain of the Junior Eleven was free. With a very red face he clutched desperately at the seat of his trousers, and glared around at his laughing companions.

"Now go to my study, sir!" barked Mr. Slaney. "Go at once, and wait there till I come to you. You shall be severely punished!"

Clifford backed towards the door amid

fresh howls of mirth.

The door closed behind him, and Bob and Jack transferred their attention to the glowering and helpless Mr. Slaney.

"Shall we help you up, sir?" inquired the

youthful inventor meekly. "Me-I? Certainly not!" replied the Form-master nervously, gripping the arms of

A muffled titter ran round the room. inquired Jack politely. "You can't go up- so fiery as when Clifford had last seen him.

-carry you up, sir?"

Mr. Slaney hesitated, and then flushed glanced at his watch.

hopefully.

"Yes, I think that is the best thing to be that perhaps you had some provocation for room I think I could-er-get rid of this-er you so severely as I had intended doing, but watch.

Bayne and Marker rose with alacrity; at | -impediment. It really is most unaccount- | will want to see three hundred lines of Virgil least, they tried to rise, but their effort met able. I can't make it out. I shall see that by lunch-time to-morrow."

Valence and Murphy came to their chums' Bayne glared accusingly at Marker, Marker assistance, and the blackboard easel was glared at Bayne, and Clifford glowered at both | passed under the seat of Mr. Slaney's chair. | of them. What a horrible fiasco! What a Then, amid irrepressible gusts of laughter, sterner, and he adjusted his pince-nez. terrible humiliation! And then Clifford sud- the Form-master was hoisted up on the dealy thought of Mr. Slaney's chair. What of | boys' shoulders, and solemnly carried out of the room.

It surely was the funniest procession that ever passed along the corridors of Pelham School. Mr. Slaney clung to his chair like the class-room, Clifford?" continued the undergrim death, palpitating with nervousness, and | master. "Do you know anything regarding | centre. Just as the coin was being still spun Jack and his fellow-beasts of burden could | the coating of a form and my chair with some | in the air, there was the rattle of wheels in "How dare you shilly-shally with me?" he | hardly walk straight for their stifled mirth.

Jack and his chums placed chair and occucentre of the room. This doubtless would have | pant on the floor inside the door, closed it happened had it not been for the fact that at | without waiting for any thanks, and sped | about it, sir."

Once round the corner, they fell into each At least, that is the impression appearances other's arms with howls of laughter, and shrieked until the tears ran down their

"Don't speak to me. I shall bust!" panted

"Leave me here to die!" sobbed Jack. "It was a champion wheeze," put in Mac faintly, holding his sides. "And Clifford ought to have a putty medal for originating

And the others thoroughly agreed with him. Meanwhile, Clifford, after being ordered from the class-room by Mr. Slaney, rushed up To say that Mr. Slaney was amazed, is to say to the dormitory, and changed his nether

these conflicting emotions, blind anger struggled | crowd!" he snarled. "By George, I'll get I've settled Bob Russell's hash as well!"

even with the beastly cads!" Mr. Slaney panted, Mr. Slaney puffed, he. Then, remembering Mr. Slaney's injunctugged and he pulled. But no, the chair was | tion, he hurried along to the Form-master's not to be got rid of so easily. It had got a study, by no means pleased with the prospect | Slaney, he was to be vastly disappointed. strong hold on the little Form-master, and of his impending interview. Mr. Slaney was seemed very much averse to parting company no tyro in the art of manipulating the cane

ing to bring the roof down. Bob had collapsed entered, to find it empty. The Form-master truthfully denied having had a hand in the

He strolled across to the window, and as he passed Mr. Slaney's desk his eye caught an open letter lying on the blotter, and

Clifford was troubled with very few scruples, "You rotten cad!" yelled Clifford, purple and blessed with inordinate curiosity. Without a second's hesitation he picked up the Grabbing a heavy dictionary from his desk, letter and glanced through it. It read as follows:

"Dear Burchell,-Lecky being away at present, he has entrusted to me the task of seeing to all the football correspondence, and has asked me to write and let you know that the date he has selected for the match between the First Eleven and the Pelham Old Boys is the 21st ult. A brake will meet you and your team at the station .- Very sincerely yours, "PETER SLANEY."

As Clifford read the letter through a sudden cunning gleam came to his eyes as a plan flashed into his mind. Burchell, he knew, was the secretary of the Pelham Old Boys'. Football Club, and Mr. Slaney's letter was to acquaint him with the date upon which the match between that club and the Pelham First was to be played. As the Form-master said in his letter, Lecky, the big-hearted and all-round sporting captain of Pelham, was away for a few days.

"The 21st," muttered Clifford. "By jingo, what a chance to get even with old Slaney! There'd be no end of a shine, an' he'd get all the blame. Let me see."

He drew out a little football handbook from his pocket, and rapidly turned over the leaves.

"Next Saturday, the 14th-Pelham First versus Bramall School-away. Good! thought so. My hat, this is a great wheeze!"

With a chuckle the captain of the Junior Eleven picked up a pen, spread out the letter, therein from the 21st to the 14th. Mr. Slaney's handwriting was very scrawling, and his twenty-one very closely resembled an illformed four.

Clifford glanced at his handiwork with a

grin of cunning delight. "By jingo, I can imagine the Old Boys' faces when they arrive next Saturday an' find

no match for 'em! Ha, ha, ha! Old Slaney'll get the dickens of a wiggin'!" Clifford replaced the letter as near as possible where he had found it, and then scurried across to the other side of the room

as footsteps approached down the corridor. The next instant the door-handle turned, and Mr. Slaney came jerking in. The Form-master had managed to sever his his chair. "Certainly not! I refuse to move | connection with the chair, and that it had not

from my seat-in fact, I-er-er-I can't been an easy matter was evident by the fact that he was wearing another pair of trousers. Mr. Slaney had also had time to cool down "What are you going to do then, sir?" somewhat, and his temper was by no means stairs as you are. Perhaps we had better-er | He plumped himself down on a chair, after carefully feeling the seat of the same, and

"After due consideration, Clifford," he said "I think you had better," he said nervously. | pompously, "I have come to the conclusion

"Thank you, sir!" snapped Clifford ungraciously; and turned to go. "One minute, Clifford; I haven't finished with you yet." Mr. Slaney's voice grew

Clifford stood at attention. He knew what his trouser-pockets. was coming, and his cunning brain was working swiftly.

"Do you know anything about the disgraceful affair which took place this afternoon in sticky, tenacious solution?"

Mr. Slaney gazed at him sharply.

"I repeat, Clifford, do you know anything | the pavilion. regarding this matter?" "No, sir-yes, sir!" faltered Clifford. "I

-I think Russell could tell you something "Ah, Russell! Well, suppose you send

Russell in to me as you go out, Clifford."

Clifford turned towards the door with a gleam of triumph in his eyes. "By the way, Clifford," called Mr. Slaney,

"if you are going down the corridor you might as well drop this letter in the post-box for me."

He seized an envelope, hastily addressed it, and, picking up the letter to Burchell which was lying on the desk, folded in up, sealed the envelope, and handed it to the waiting Fourth-Former.

Clifford grinned to himself as he closed the

door behind him. "Oh, yes, I'll post the letter!" he laughed. "There's not much doubt of that. I think this will about square accounts, Mr. Slaney. You just wait till Saturday! And I dare say

But if Clifford hoped to get Bob Russell into trouble by his sneaking evasion of the true state of affairs, when questioned by Mr.

Bob soon proved his innocence to the undermaster, and Jack Noble and his chums were as the Fourth-Former had good reason to only too ready to back him up. That the cement was of his own composition the popular echoing through the spacious room, threaten- | Clifford knocked at the study door, and | Third Eleven centre half admitted, but he smearing of it over Mr. Slaney's chair and Formers, and then Mr. Slaney stepped forover the form.

Mr. Slaney had no reason to doubt Bob's word, and, no solution presenting itself, the matter was dropped.

THE 3rd CHAPTER. Scratched-And a Scratch Match.

Y only hat!" Jack Noble flung himself down into a chair, and his usually cheery face was a study in disgust as he gazed at the letter he held in his hand. It was the Saturday morning following the laughable cement incidents.

"What's the matter, old son?" inquired Mac, looking up from an impot. he was scribbling for Mr. Slaney. "Bad news fra' the old folks at hame?"

"Bad news right enough, but not from home. This letter"-Jack waved the sheet of paper above his head-"is from the secretary of the Nomads' team, and it expresses their sorrow-I don't think-at being unable to play us this afternoon. They've scratched!"

"What?" "The rotters!"

"Great Scott, no match to-day!"

A groan ran round the study, and Bob Russell positively danced with uncontrollable

"What a beastly shame!" he snorted. think they might have had the decency to let us know earlier so we could have arranged a game with some other team!"

"Hear, hear!" growled Drake. "Fancy Saturday afternoon and no match!"

"It is a bit rotten," admitted Jack moodily. "I suppose the best thing we can do is to pick sides and play a practice game."

"The First are playing away to-day," interjected Lawson minor. "We can play on their ground, an' get Slaney to referee for

"Good idea, my son!" cried Jack. sha'n't fare so badly after all. Hallo, there goes the old bell, confound it! Come along, chappies!"

After morning school Jack and his chums dashed up to their dormitory to get their football-kit, and then started off for the First Eleven ground. Mr. Slaney, who was in a very amiable mood that day, joined them at | the quad. gate, and walked up with them, when

sides were picked. Jack was elected to captain one side and Bob fairly evenly-matched elevens were speedily got together.

As they emerged from the dressing-room Jack cast a glance around the field, and then gave vent to a whistle of surprise.

"Hallo!" he cried. "There's the lordly Cliffy and his gang! What the dickens are they doing up here? Looks as if they've got some rotten wheeze on!"

Standing in a bunch just inside the entrance gate, were the captain of the Junior Eleven and his special cronies-Bayne, Marker, Prince, and Carroll. A broad grin was visible on the face of each, and Clifford kept casting | sealed on his desk. furtive glances up the road which led to the done. If you could only get me up to my your impudence. I shall, therefore, not punish | village, and he glanced once or twice at his | may have been, he kept them to himself. He

"It ain't often they honour us with their company as spectators," grunted Valence; "unless they think we're going to get a lick-

"They probably thought the Nomads were going to turn up, an' came down to cheer 'em," put in Mac drily, shoving his hands in

A second later, giving them no further time for speculation on the point of Clifford and his chums' unlooked-for presence on the ground, Mr. Slaney, muffled up in overcoat and scarf, whistled the two captains to the the road without, a cheery shout, and a large Clifford flushed, and hung his head, and brake containing twelve sturdy lads swung through the entrance-gate and drew up outside

"Here they are!" choked Clifford, turning to Marker. "Now, we're going to see some fun. Wait a bit, and watch old Slaney's

Jack and his chums stared in speechless amazement at the brake and its occupants.

"Great Scott, what on earth does this mean?" gasped the captain of the Third Eleven. "Do you see who they are, chappies? It's the Old Boys' team.

"My aunt," cried Bob Russell, "so it is! What-what are they doing here?" The twelve new-comers sprang from the brake, and, with their bags in their hands,

advanced towards the centre of the pitch. "I say, you chaps," cried Melton, a big, sturdy 'Varsity Blue, and the captain of the Pelham Old Boys' Eleven, "where's Lecky? Where's the First Eleven? We're a bit late -I thought they'd be dressed and out waiting

for us!" "Bit late-what? My hat!" gasped Jack. "Bit early, you mean, don't you-about seven days too early? The First Eleven are playing

away this week!" Melton gazed at Jack as though he was of the impression that the junior had taken leave

of his senses. "Look here, young 'un!" he cried. "What on earth are you babbling about? First Eleven playing away? Why they're playing us to-day-the Old Boys!"

A gasp ran round the crowd of Third-

"I'm afraid you've made a slight mistake," he said smilingly. "Next Saturday's the date arranged for the Old Boys' match-the 21st. I am certain of the fact, for I arranged it myself, and notified you accordingly. Didn't you get my letter?"

Melton, whose face was a picture of angry

indignation, nearly exploded. "Look here; is this meant for a joke, or what?" he blurted. "'Cause, if so, it's a jolly rotten one! You don't think we're going to be dragged all this way down here for nothing. Of course, I got your letter, an' it says as plain as punch that the date arranged for the match between the Pelham Firsts and the Old Boys is the 14th. To-day's the 14th, an' here we are; an' now where is the First Eleven?"

"But I tell you the 21st was the date I gave you in my letter," reiterated Mr. Slaney confidently-"not the 14th. If you had the missive here you could see for yourself that I am right."

"I have got your letter here!" cried Melton triumphantly, and with a flourish he produced an envelope from his pocket. He drew out a sheet of paper, and spread it out in his palm. "There you are, in black and white-the 14th!

What did I tell you?" Mr. Slaney grabbed the letter from the Old Boys' captain, and his eyes almost bulged out of his head as he scrutinised it.

"Good gracious-good gracious!" he stammered. "Really-really, this is inexplicablemost extraordinary! I am certain, positive that I put the 21st-absolutely certain; and yet here, as you say, it has the 14th. I am at a loss to understand, I-I--" He glared at the letter again, and then a look of anger slowly overshadowed his perplexed counten-

"The audacity of it, the impudence, the unprincipled and brazen effrontery!" he jerked. "Look-look, this date has been altered; you can see plainly; some miscreant has altered it from the 21st to the 14th!"

"Impossible!" said Melton. "How could it have been done, an' who could have done it?" "But I tell you it has been done!" vowed Mr. Slanev. "There is not the slightest doubt about it. Who has done it I really cannot say-I do not know. Unless-"

Mr. Slaney stopped short as his eye fell upon Clifford and his cronies, who were leaning over the fence convulsed with laughter. As Russell the other, and in this manner two he saw the master gazing at him the captain of the Junior Eleven straightened up, and assumed an air of careless indifference.

"Shut up, you asses!" he hissed to his companions. "Pull yourselves together. Look at old Slaney glaring over here. I believe he

suspects me!" And that is just what Mr. Slaney did do. The little master was quite capable of putting one and one together and making two, and he remembered that it was Clifford who had posted the letter to the Old Boys' secretary for him, and also that the Shell boy had been in his study alone with the letter lying un-

But whatever Mr. Slaney's suspicions had no desire to make a scene in public on the

football-field. The matter could be fully gone | strong points, and they fully proved it that into later on in private. For the present he afternoon. Only once more did the Old Boys contented himself by making an ample apology | break through during that half, and the interto the Old Boys' captain for having brought him and his team so many miles all for nothing on a fruitless errand.

"It certainly is rather rough on us!" said Melton glumly. "We were all looking forward to the match like anything. Hallo, what's the matter with you, young 'un?"

Jack Noble had stepped forward with shining eyes and flushed cheeks. A sudden idea had flashed into the Third Eleven captain's brain—an idea so audacious as to almost take his breath away. But it was a feasible idea if nothing else, and Jack quickly put it into words.

"I-I say, as you haven't got a match, as the First aren't here to play you, why not play us? We're the Pelham Third Eleven, and we haven't got a match either for this afternoon. We're a Pelham representative team, an' I think we could give you a good game. I know it seems a bit cheeky on my part suggestin' this, but there's no harm in it!"

Mac, Bob Russell, and the rest of the Third Eleven clustered around eagerly as they heard their skipper's words, and Melton stared at the sturdy little Third-Former aghast.

He shook his head dubiously "I'm afraid it wouldn't do, young 'un," he said slowly. "We're a lot too heavy for you, an' we don't want to have any accidents!"

"Accidents be blowed!" cried Jack, forgetting everything else in his eagerness. "You needn't be frightened of that. We're used to hard knocks. An' in any case, I've played for the First myself, as you can see." Jack pointed to his cap, with its little silver tassel, which he was more proud of than anything else on earth.

Melton opened his eyes at this, hesitated, and then conferred with his men for a few minutes. "Right you are, young Noble," he said, at last. "We'll play you if only for the sport of the thing. Now we've come all this way we don't want to go back without having had a game. Just wait half a jiff, while we go an' change."

Meanwhile, Clifford and his cronies watched events with ever-widening eyes. They saw the Old Boys retire to the pavilion, and nearly fell over in astonishment.

"Great Scott, I believe they're going to play | in another second the leather was in the net. young Noble's gang!" gasped Bayne. "Did natural?"

"My only hat, they'll get massacred, pulped, pounded to a jelly!" 'An' serve 'em jolly well right!" growled |

Clifford, with a scowl. "Hallo, here they come!"

The Old Boys swung out of the pavilion at a carried the ball almost to the halfway-line. trot, looking equal to a First League team. A twenty-two players lined up. The Old Boys seemed like giants beside their youthful opponents, dwarfing them in comparison. Mr. Slaney phipped the whistle, and Jack, quivering with eagerness, swung the ball out to Drake. That worthy started off along the touchline in his usual tempestuous fashion, and was surprised when burly Garrick, the opposing forward, robbed him coolly, with a grin.

The Old Boys swung to the attack like a welloiled machine, passing faultlessly and imperturbably. Mac made a gallant effort to clear, but Melton swerved round him, and shot from thirty yards' range. There was a terrific force behind the ball, and it was in the net almost before Taffy Evans could move an eyelash.

The Old Boys had scored in the first twenty seconds of the game!

Clifford nearly choked with malicious delight, and fell off the fence in a paroxysm of mirth.

Eleven was in no way dismayed by this early | their turn, had defeated the First Eleven the reverse. He spoke a few words to his forwards | preceding season by the odd goal in three. as he prepared to kick off, and his advice filtered back to the defence.

Valence minor, on the right wing, knew what over the opposing outside-left's head, and, like | never fear." a flash, speedy Valence was off and around the latter in a twinkling. Just on the line he gathered the ball, made two yards, and swung it right across to the opposite wing. Drake made no mistake this time. He dodged Garrick like an eel, and pelted off, swerved around the back, and centred to the toe of his skipper. The Old Boys' centre-half was hot at Jack's heels. and as the ball came diagonally across the field he stuck out his foot, and deflected it across to the left-back. That worthy lobbed it well up- came by word of mouth of Marker. field, and in a second the Old Boys' forward line was in movement again.

Grimes came pelting out like a bulldog, and in doing so he stumbled, and Burchell, coming up behind, sent a stinger right into Taffy Evans's hands.

The Welsh boy staggered beneath the impact, recovered himself, and seeing his forwards scattered and unprepared, lobbed the ball into

touch. The Old Boys gained possession from the throw in, and then commenced a merciless bombardment on the Third Eleven's goal. Evans was kept bobbing about between the posts like an indiarubber ball; but he was in splendid form, and played like an International. So hot was the pressure, however, that at last his defence was worn down, and a ricochetting live, stinger from the foot of Garrick found the net in a far corner.

up like Trojans. Their defence was one of their levery Thursday.)

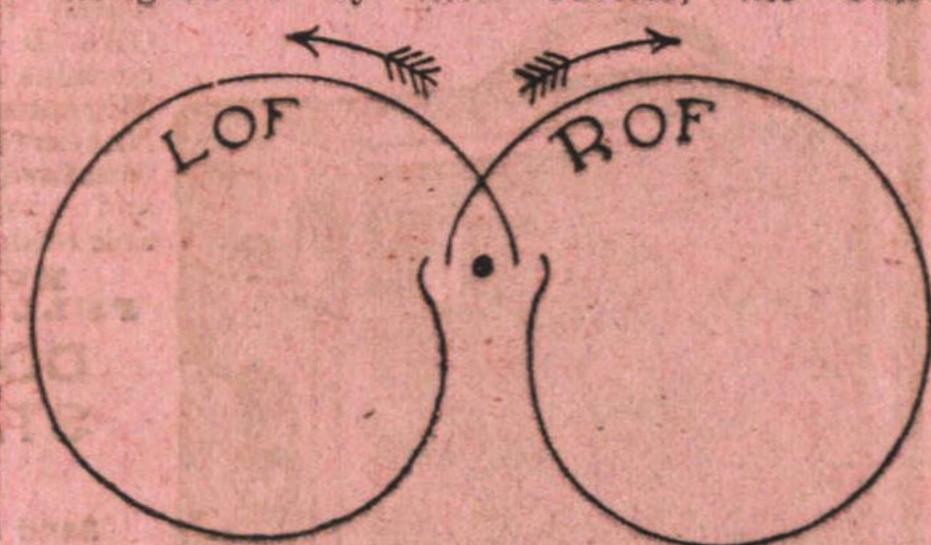
val found them with a lead of three goals, which might have been thirteen.

Dusk was closing in when they took the field again, for they had started fairly late in the afternoon.

From the start the Third Eleven adopted the kick-and-rush game, and sped about among their big opponents as agile as cats. Ten minutes from the start they pierced the Old Boys' defence, and Jack, by some miracle, found himself with an open goal before him, and the ball at his feet. He shot true and hard with all the strength of his leg, and aided by the wind behind it, the leather sphere whistled under Ratlin's arm like a cannon-ball, and found the net.

The Third Eleven broke into a wild cheer of delight, which was swelled by the stentorian voices of their opponents, and Clifford scowled.

"Little reptiles have scored!" he snarled. " believe the Old Boys let 'em do it on purpose Invigorated by their success, the Third



A Figure 8, Described On Outside Edge. (See "The Art of Rinking" on this page.)

Eleven flung themselves about with tremendous zest and energy.

Out of a struggling throng came Bob Russell like a weasel, the ball at his toe. Straight and true it sped to Drake on the wing, and from there across to Valence. Valence put his head down, and pounded off with his charge, determined to do or die. He completely outran the back, swerved in, and shot. Ratlin fisted out easily, but the ball was spinning like a top, and twisted off his knuckles straight to the foot of Jack Noble. Jack was ready and waiting, and

The Third Eleven had scored again, and were you ever hear of such colossal cheek in all your only one goal behind. And only ten minutes to

> From the kick-off, the Old Boys were predominant. Three times Evans saved in wonderful fashion, and the fourth time he was compelled to concede a corner. Garrick took the kick, and as he did so a strong gust of wind

The Third Eleven were after it like a pack of coin was tossed, Melton called correctly, and the hares, backs and forwards as one. Sturdy Fighting Mac, racing with the ball at his toe, saw Mr. Slaney glancing at his watch, raise his whistle towards his mouth.

> Gritting his teeth, Mac made a terrific lunge at the ball. As it shot away, darkness seemed to descend like a pall.

> Ratlin, in goal, saw the crowd of players clustered in mid-field, stretched his arms, saw something crawl past him, and then he heard the whistle shrill. A casual glance behind, and his eyes almost fell from his head, for there, nestling in the meshes of the net, lay the ball!

> Mac's haphazard shot, unbeknown to him, had scored on the nick of time, and the scores were level-three goals all.

"It's a goal—it's a goal!" frantically shouted Ratlin, pounding up the field. "It's a goal!" And Jack and his chums fell on Mae's neck with a howl of hysterical delight. They, the Pelham Third Eleven, had played a drawn game But the plucky young skipper of the Third | with the redoubtable Pelham Old Boys, who, in

"Good little men!" cried the Old Boys' skipper, pumping Jack's hand. "You're all a credit to Pelham, and as long as the old school to expect. The ball sped from Jack's foot well has such fellows as you playing for it, it need

> Jack Noble and his gallant team swaggered back to the school as though they were treading upon air, and Clifford, whose underhand trick had miscarried so dismally, slunk back with his | beat. But it is no use—in present day football, tail between his legs, so to speak, and with rage and chagrin in his heart.

> The Junior captain was very ill at ease. He was momentarily expecting a summons to go to dribble across the ground, instead of from goal Mr. Slaney's study, and he was not disappointed, to goal. That is all wrong. Pass effectively, for at length, just after tea, the dread summons

need not be gone into fully. Suffice to say, that | a chance of darting through. under cross-examination, what little spark of The half-back should practise heading. in the most miraculous manner in the world honesty and uprightness that remained ingrained This is the method I should suggest he should scooped the sphere from Melton's toe. But in Clifford's character came to the fore, and he adopt: confessed to his having altered the date in Mr. | Find an empty fives' court, an empty room, Slaney's letter to the secretary of the Old Boys' or even a plain blank wall, and start by

grieved. It says much for his leniency that the this every day until he finds he can keep it affair never reached the head-master's, or, for up for several times consecutively. As soon as that matter, anyone else's ears. He took the he can do this let him chalk up several marks law into his own hands, and a cane was brought on the wall at different points, throw the ball into very active use, and in very close con- up as before, meet it with his head, and try nection with the captain of the Junior Eleven.

and his chums cheering the First Eleven on to | headache at first; this will soon wear off, and victory in their match with the Old Boys, and he will be surprised at the progress he will a very gallant victory it was by the odd goal in | make.

THE END.

From the kick-off the Third Eleven played in this week's "BOYS' REALM" Football Library-id.

Hints on How to Practise "Footer."

He will not be content to continue his football week after week and never become any more clever. He will want to be the best player in his team; and if he is to attain his ambition he will have to practise hard whenever he has the opportunity. Unfortunately, too little time is given to practising. Lads play in their weekly matches, and never touch a football at any other time. No wonder they don't show signs of improvement.

Forwards should practise taking pot-shots for mean that they should put the ball down on a ease. given point and then, whilst it is motionless, take a running-kick at it and send it hurtling towards the net. The veriest novice may find is absolutely useless. Instead, the forward are the basis of all figures. should run down the field, evading his scratch opponents, and then from a difficult angle, and while there is still danger of his being robbed, let him send in a pot-shot, and endeavour to beat the goalie. That is the sort of practice which will be of real value.

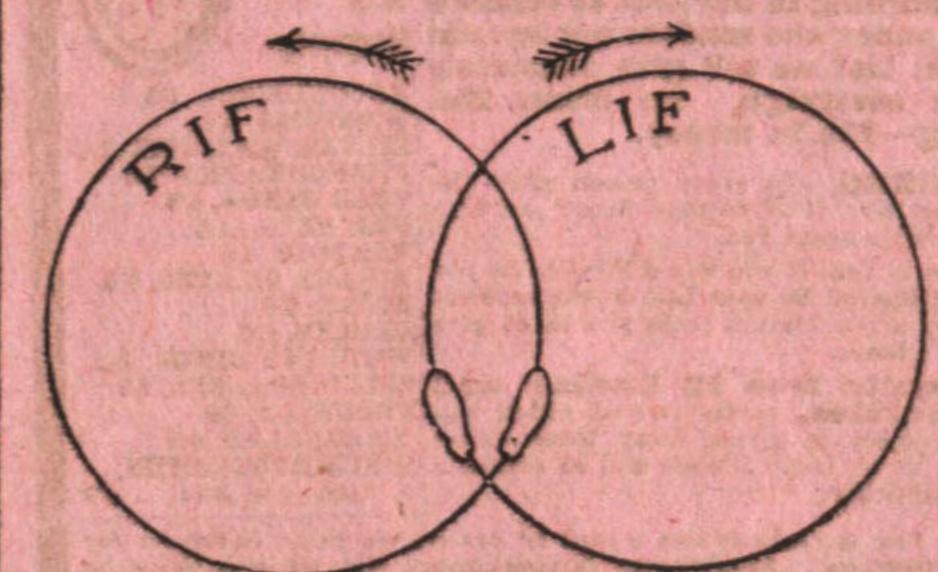
A wing-forward should be able to centre instantly without slowing down. He should also practise taking a pass on the run, and the art of passing on the run.

I am sure that insufficient use is made of captive balls; in fact, football practice is in nearly every respect carried on to too little an extent, and what little is done is done in far too careless and haphazard a fashion.

A ball suspended from a bar, after the manner of a punching-ball, but with the connecting strand long enough to allow it to roll along the ground, is very useful in giving a man occasional practice. The thing a back wants to do to-day is to make himself as perfect with one foot as with the other, and with a captive ball he is able to get in a wonderful amount of kicking practice, while he can learn to take the ball on the ground or in mid-air, at any angle, or at any height. It is a good plan for backs to practise kicking the ball in every direction. There is no limit to the opportunities which full-backs can get of obtaining football practice. Two men, one at each end of the field, can give each other unlimited opportunities of getting in kicks of all kinds.

Another great thing for a back to learn to do is to get in a good, low drive, and to avoid ballooning the ball. The latter is a great evil in modern football, and should be avoided.

When practising football the young player should try to learn to dribble. No harm will



come about if in practice my readers occasionally try the adoption of selfish tactics, because they will never learn to dribble if, the moment the ball is passed to them, they pass it to someone else. Both in practice and in real matches don't always get rid of the ball immediately. And don't shirk a shot at goal when you have a good opportunity of scoring. You may miss, of course; but more likely you won't. Anyway, to pass the ball rather than shoot is, under such circumstances, sheer cowardice.

Just occasionally see how many men you can at any rate—to make rings round a man, as the term is, and yet fail to make headway with the ball. You frequently see a man loose the ball if you see a man better placed than yourself; but don't, for goodness' sake, What transpired in the under-master's study loose the ball in front of goal when you have

throwing a ball against the wall, and meeting Mr. Slaney was angry, but at the same time | it with the head. The half-back must continue and place it first on one mark, and then on The following Saturday afternoon found Jack | the other. He must not be put off by a slight

By thus practising hard at heading the ball he will soon discover that his cranium is almost as useful to him on the field of play as a third foot would be.

THE END.

IMPROVE YOUR PLAY. THE ART OF RINKING.

By an Expert Roller Skater.

VERY young footballer, if he is worth his salt, wants to improve his play. with the knees knocking together, and the arms waving about wildly. But this soon passes.

The first thing to do is to learn to walk with your skates on. Although the action of walking has little in common with that of skating, this gives you confidence in the strength of your own ankles, and in your ability to keep your balance.

Once a little confidence has been gained, all the beginner wants is plenty of space in which to throw himself about. Very soon a desire will be felt to accomplish some of the graceful goal from every conceivable angle. I do not | figures which others are executing with so much

The Key.

The key to figure-skating is simply an underthis a good plan; but to a lad of experience it standing of the various curves and turns which

Now for hints. First of all, see to it that your skates are attached to your boots so firmly that they are, to all intents and purposes, a part of them. Next, remember always to look in the direction in which you are travelling, with your head turned forward if you are travelling forward, and backward if you are travelling back-

There are six directions in which the skater may travel-namely, straight forward, straight backward, forward with curve to the right, forward with curve to the left, backward with curve to right, backward with curve to left.

In taking a curve forward to the right on the right foot, you travel on the "outside edge"; while taking the same curve on the left foot necessitates travelling on the "inside edge"; and so on through the other movements.

In the diagrams on this page, R O F stands for right outside forward; R I F, for right inside forward; LOF for left outside forward; LOB, left outside backward, and so

Because in skating on the inside edge your unemployed foot is in a good position to be immediately placed on the ground in case of emergency, forward curves on this edge are fairly easy. Start with the body leaning slightly forward, and begin with the right foot, stiffening the knee as soon as the rollers touch the floor, and placing the shoulders as nearly as possible in a line with the employed foot-right shoulder forward, left well back. The push-off is given from the inside edge of the left foot. which is held before starting immediately behind the right, across the heel. Immediately after the push-off the left foot should be brought into position behind the right.

In changing from one foot on to the other, remember that the change of balance is made, not by the arms and legs, but by the body-by the shoulders and hips being brought with an easy swing into the new position.

When the inside-edge forward has been practised—and a very good way to practise all curves is by taking them on alternate sides of an imaginary straight line-it will be found comparatively easy to make a figure 8.

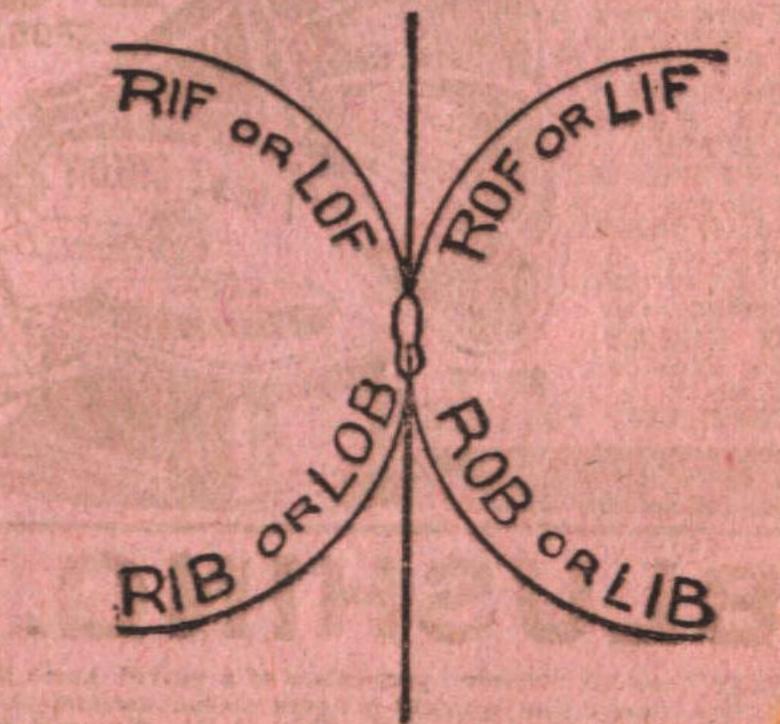
Before the outside edge is mastered, the skater will probably have several falls; but he need not be discouraged. A little more confidence is all that is necessary.

Gaining Confidence.

A good way to gain confidence in taking the outside edge is to start with both feet on the floor. Push away with the left, say, keeping the right on the outside edge, and from time to time raise the left, as long as you can keep the edge. You will in this way be able to make circle after circle. Practise in the same way with the left foot.

In order to learn how to get along backward, take a few strokes forward, and then allow yourself to run along, with both feet on the floor, and the body full face to the front. Allow the weight to rest on the forward rollers, and then, raising the heels, make a turn either to the right or to the left, and you will find yourself travelling backward.

Next, turn the ankles in, and put the weight upon the right foot, while pushing with the left; then vice-versa. After some practice, you may allow one foot to follow the other alternately, and it is surprising how clever you'll look. You will be travelling first on the inside edge of the right with the left, following on the outside edge, and then on the inside edge of the left with the right, following on the outside



The Key to Figure Skating. (See above.)