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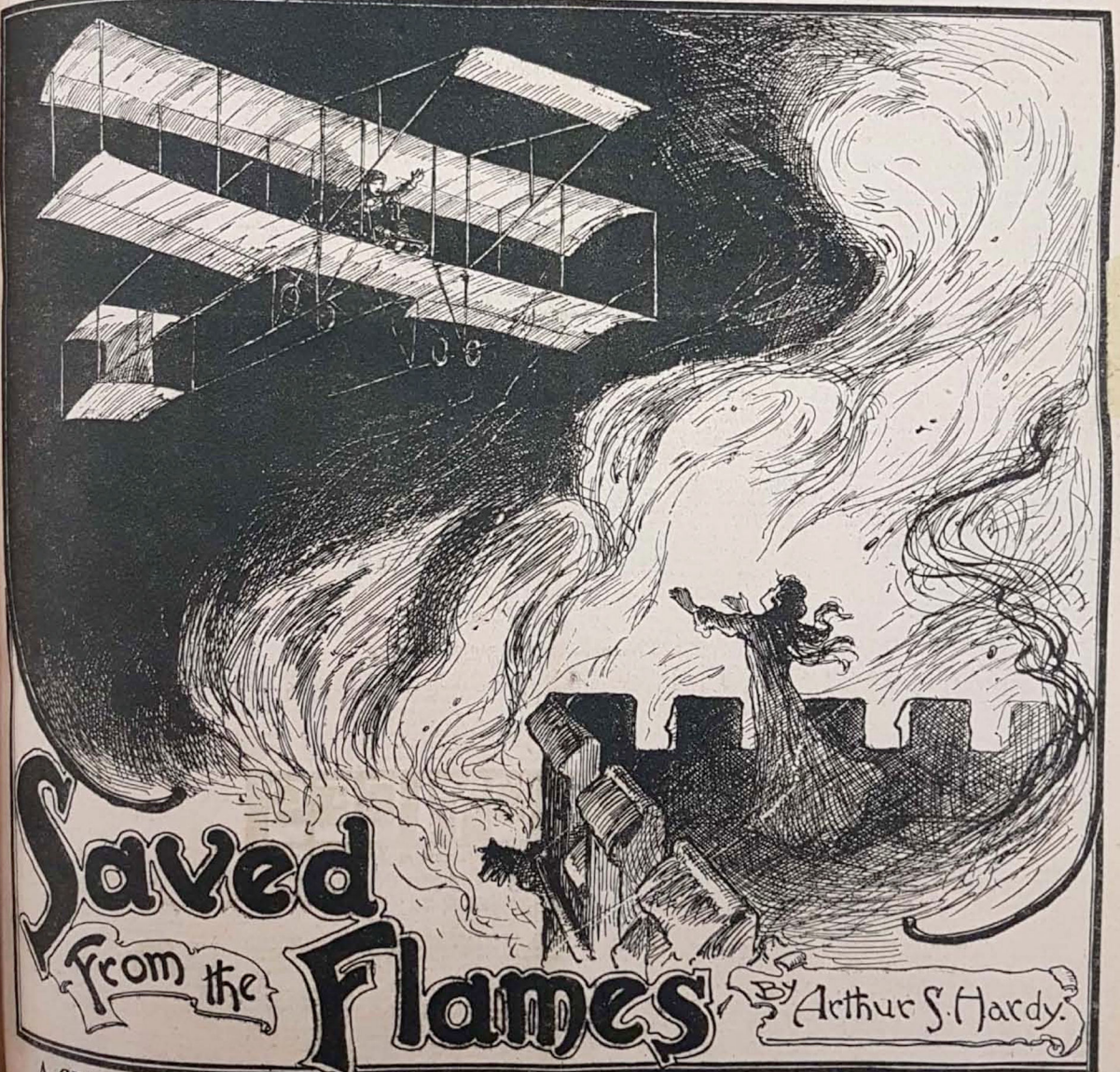
The Boys' Realm 1[¢]

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EVERY SATURDAY—ONE PENNY.

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Saved
From the
Flames

By Arthur S. Hardy.

A GRAND COMPLETE TALE OF HARRY ATKINSON, THE WORLD-FAMOUS AERONAUT.

JACK NOBLE'S SCOUTS

A Screamingly Funny Complete Tale of Pelham School.

THE 1st CHAPTER.

THEY had better have to do, Jack Noble said, with an air of finality, as he crawled round until you strike a trail.

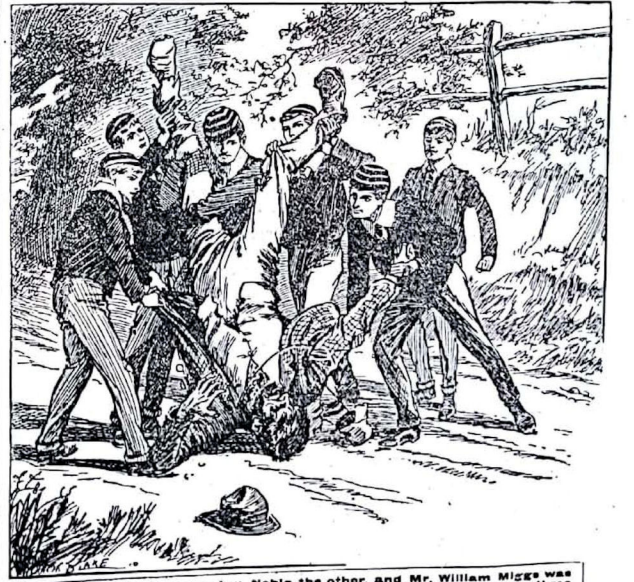
was put into his hand, and he looked from it to Noble. "What for?" he asked doubtfully. "We're going to scout for it," Jack Noble explained, "and you have to wear spiked boots so as to leave a trail. You mustn't tell any of the other chaps about it."

THE 2nd CHAPTER.

LITTLE Burrows halted on the edge of the wood that lay beyond the Pelham playing-fields, and looked about him. The importance of his mission was upon him, and he meant to make sure that there were no others of the boys about to see what he was doing.

"Can't tell me?" Mr. Miggs's expression once more grew stern. "I don't know as I oughtn't ter give yer in charge for damazin' yer go this time."

his knees and searching for the trail that Burrows had left. "Don't see the oddness of the ground, the others followed his example, and five boys were quickly searching for the footmarks that were to lead them to five shillings. Jack Noble and Russell went to the left, the others to the right.



Macalpine seized one leg, Noble the other, and Mr. William Miggs was stood bodily on his head and shaken. Out on to the road rolled three shillings in silver, and fivepence in copper.

"Who has found it?" he asked.

"Mebbie I thought that I had, laddie," Macpeline answered. "Just for the noo I considered it was under that tuft of grass; but it—"

"It is!" Burrows interrupted. "I thought it was a good place to hid your money, and five pairs of hands groped wildly for the money, but only to be drawn back empty."

"Look here, kid," Noble said sternly; "we don't want any ruttin' about. Where's the money?"

"There!" Burrows insisted, and the expression of his innocent face was so positive that the other boys could not doubt him. Again they searched, but naturally with the same result, at which no one looked more surprised than Burrows.

"It is—was there!" he stammered.

A terrible thought came into Jack Noble's mind, and he dropped to his knees and began once more to search the ground. In a few seconds he had struck the trail left by Mr. Miggs.

"Someone's been here and taken it!" he cried.

Burrows's jaw dropped, and he looked as if he wanted to cry.

"Oh, they couldn't," he said quickly. "They might have in the ordinary way, but as the man offered to see that they didn't, they—"

"What man?" Jack Noble demanded.

"He—no saw me hide the money," Burrows answered, "and he said that there were a lot of dishonest people about, and he'd watch it until you came."

"You chump!" Noble exclaimed.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Trail of Mr. William Miggs.

LITTLE Burrows stood facing the five chums, his knees shaking under him, and the truth suddenly entering his brain.

He remembered the ragged garments of the man who had offered to help him, and the fact that he had been so anxious for him to go, and he had no doubt—

"I'm thinking," Macpeline observed grimly, "that we'll be after doing a wee bit scouting in earnest."

"You mean?" Bob Russell cried.

Macpeline pointed to the trail that Mr. William Miggs had left, and his boyish face was set and determined.

"Mebbie we'll be able to track him," he answered.

"And I'll come with you," little Burrows put in, anxious to help. "I should know him."

"You've jolly well got to," Noble muttered, and stepped off along the trail left by the tramp. On the soft ground it was easy enough to follow, and even when the road was nearly lost, the marks were plain enough to be seen without effort.

"Come on!" Noble cried. "We'll have him yet!"

Along the road went the boys at a good pace, helped by the mudiness of the ground, which made the footprints quite simple to follow. They reached the village, and passed through it, but on the other side Bob Russell paused.

"I say, you chaps," he said, "we're out of bounds already."

"So are the five bob," Noble answered calmly, and pushed on.

Possibly Mr. William Miggs had thought it likely that he would be followed. Anyway, his trail led on steadily for another three miles, until he was drawing dangerously near, so that if the boys were to get back in time for tea they had no time to lose. It was just as this thought occurred to them that the track halted by the wayside, and a piece of paper, some crumbs, and a shred of tobacco showed them where Mr. Miggs had halted to refresh himself, probably with food purchased with their money.

"The beast!" Bob Russell growled.

"It's tanner gone, at least," Noble answered.

"Mebbie we'll get the other four-and-six if we hurry," Macpeline put in, and all thoughts of being late vanished from the boys' minds. Behind them was a certainty of a carting by the Head himself; but the possibility of getting some of their money back quite outweighed that consideration. Only little Burrows hesitated, thinking of the prep. that was still unshod.

"I'll—I'll be going back," he stammered.

"Begorra, but ye won't!" Murphy assured him. "It's your evidence that's goin' to do the trick."

"But I really must—please!" Burrows persisted, only to find that with Russell taking one of his arms and Murphy the other, it was impossible.

Mr. William Miggs settled himself more comfortably on the bench outside the Blue Dragon, Tadbridge, and sighed with content. On the table before him was an empty beer mug and he was leisurely unscreeving the paper of tobacco that the landlord had brought out to him. It was not often that Mr. Miggs purchased anything, usually waiting round on the chance of someone buying beer for him, and in consequence the landlord eyed him curiously from the doorway.

"Bin left a fortune, Bill!" he asked.

Mr. Miggs carefully filled his stumpy clay pipe and lit it before answering, then he winked through the smoke.

"I've taken up a noo line, guv'nor," he answered.

"Work?" the landlord suggested, but with a view of conviction in his tone that was very suggestive.

"Work—what's that? An 'erb'?" Mr. Miggs sniggered. "Don't yer get tryin' ter be funny like that! I'm a scout!"

Mr. William Miggs enjoyed the joke that he nearly rolled off the bench with laughter, ending up with a fit of coughing as a whiff of smoke went the wrong way.

The landlord looked annoyed, for by nature he was an inquisitive sort of man. Life in the village had made him thin that way, for if he had not had his neighbours' affairs to discuss, existence would have been too dull to be supported.

"New, look here, Bill," he said sharply, "it ain't no good you tryin' to kid me. It's the first time in five yer I've known you to pay for a drink, and I not so sure as you ain't pinched the money."

"Pinched—the money?"

Mr. William Miggs straightened himself up on the bench, and his expression of righteous indignation was worth going miles to see.

"Pinched the money?" he repeated, in a shocked voice. "I'd like to see the cove what would say that to me seriously. I ain't above takin' a joke, but there's jokin' as an innervation of someone buyin' beer for his empty mug—and some of 'em a man ought ter be ashamed to besmirch 'is lips with."

The landlord, seeing that he had hit on the wrong tack, tried diplomacy. He picked up the empty mug, retired to the inn, and returned with it filled.

"Mind you, guv'nor," Mr. Miggs added graciously, after blowing the head off the beer, "I know as you ain't the sort ter accuse a innervation of a 'ord thing—"

He stopped abruptly, his eyes turned in the direction from which he had come, and his jaw dropped.

In the distance he could make out the figures of six boys and a dog that they wore were of the same pattern that he had seen on the head of the youngster who had hidden the money. He rose abruptly to his feet, and finished his beer at a gulp.

"Slings," he said hesitantly; "may be round again afore."

"But—the scoutin'!" the landlord called after him.

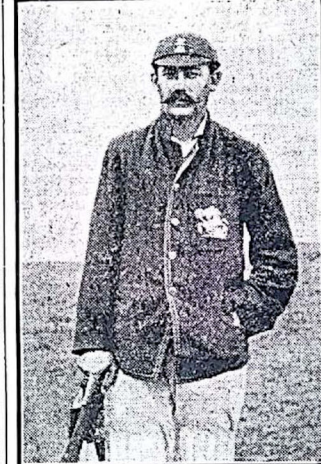
"Hang the scoutin'!" Mr. Miggs growled

under his breath, and quickened his pace as he saw that the boys had broken into a run. It had never occurred to Mr. Miggs that the boys would follow him so far, and the prospect that confronted him filled him with alarm. The moment he was hidden by a corner from the landlord of the inn, he broke into a run, the landlord of the quick patter of feet behind him, told him that he was not to get away without a struggle. He turned to see the boys coming on an instant, and caught sight of the boys coming full pet after him.

Noble, Mr. Miggs had never been what could be called an athlete, and already he was beginning to pant with the unwanted exertion. Beginning the sole of his right boot, which had fastened to the upper by a piece of string, had come loose, and more than once it nearly threw him down as he went on at a shuffling run through the mud and the puddles.

"Come on!" Noble shouted; "but there was no need for him to spur his companions on. Ahead of them was their five shillings, or whatever was left of it, and they needed no more encouragement than that."

With a last desperate effort Mr. Miggs spurred but to the sole of his boot caught in a stone, and he went flying forward on to his face. When he had recovered himself sufficiently to sit up the boys were standing over



ERNEST G. HAYES (Surrey and England XI's.) who contributes a splendid Cricket Article to this week's BOYS' REALM.

him, as grimly determined as any men could have been.

"Where's the five shillings?" Jack Noble panted.

Mr. Miggs rose rather shakily to his feet, and carefully felt himself all over as if to make certain that his precious person was still intact.

"What five shillings?" he demanded.

"The money you took from under the grass," little Burrows answered.

"Took from under the grass?" Mr. Miggs's face expressed absolute horror.

Mr. Slaney withdrew, but Burrows persisted, "and no one else could have taken it."

Mr. Miggs looked as if he was going to sob at such an accusation being levelled against him, but he contented himself by shaking his head reproachfully at the boy.

"I'm a poor man," he said solemnly, "but I wouldn't demean myself by so much as liftin' a wurzel that weren't doin' nothin'."

Jack Noble looked at his companions with a look of his jacket, and the others looked determined.

"Together!" Noble cried.

With a jump the boys were at the alpine was sensitively rolling over the top of the hill, and all of them on top of it went as if they would fly. Noble, who was at the head of the line, seized one leg, and the other boys on to the road, and there three shillings and fivepence in centers.

One more shake of the alpine, and Mr. Miggs was washed out of the mud. More money was distributed, and the feet he looked triumphant, but it was the attitude of the boys behind him that made him groan.

"I'm a poor man," he groaned.

Jack Noble counted out the coins that had been recovered, and dropped them into a pocket.

"If I were you I should do a good deal more meaningfully, and Mr. Miggs, raising the volume of the advice, shuffled away towards the road."

"Scoutin'!" he muttered sarcastically, and shook his fist at the retreating figures of the boys. "Ain't that the meanest ter be. Blow me if an invasion wouldn't do me as 'appy."

He stopped to adjust the sole of his boot that had flapped loose.

"Scoutin'!" he said again, "ought to be stopped by Act of Parliament!"

"We're in for it!" Jack Noble groaned gloomily as they trudged, very tired and out of the school, to the inn.

"Perhaps old Slaney is out, and he's hopefully," "It's not so very late yet, and I'm thinking we ought to be back by five."

What little horse sense Mr. Miggs had as they met Mr. Slaney, who was sitting in the hall. He eyed them very keenly, noting the muddy state of their garments, and the generally dishevelled appearance.

"May I ask where you have been?" he asked sternly.

"Scouting, sir," Jack Noble answered. "We've read a lot about it, and we'd like to try it."

"You had better go to your dormitories and make yourselves presentable," Mr. Slaney said, the flicker of a smile in his eye. "I'll well for you that the Head cannot see you hurried up to the dormitory, and they're strangely silent as they changed into their garments."

"We'll be gated," Noble said gloomily, he pulled on his boots.

"If I were you I should do a good deal more meaningfully, and Mr. Miggs, raising the volume of the advice, shuffled away towards the road."

"Scoutin'!" he muttered sarcastically, and shook his fist at the retreating figures of the boys. "Ain't that the meanest ter be. Blow me if an invasion wouldn't do me as 'appy."

HARD HITTING.
By ERNEST G. HAYES (Surrey and England XI's.)

DURING the whole time I have been playing cricket I have repeatedly heard the cry for reform. Enthusiasts on all sides held that cricket is doomed because it is such a terribly slow game, and that the actual support given to our county clubs will dwindle away until there will be nobody to keep first-class cricket alive. Personally, I believe that if more boys were put into the game it would be far more exciting than it is, and would consequently equal football in point of attraction. Free play has a wonderful effect upon the crowd, as may be seen from Mr. Slaney's playing a few innings; and if only some of our big men took a leaf out of his book, it would, I believe, result in cricket's popularity going up by leaps and bounds.

But first-class cricket is not everything. It is the cricket of our junior clubs, played upon the commons and public parks, which really counts. Nevertheless, the same argument applies, and even in our boys' games we must make

a bid for attraction and popularity.

Somehow, the youth gets into higher-grade cricket generally only aspires to his head

that careful stonewalling tactics are the methods he must go in for; but let me assure my young readers at once that this is a very great mistake. Certainly, to the first-class cricketers you must have a fair amount of defence, but I cannot tell you too strongly that hitting is part of the correct game, and that, no matter what other strokes you have, it is one of the greatest mistakes to let your hitting powers run down.

Young men who play the game on more or less rough wickets will do well to cultivate hitting more than they do, for I can assure you that on the pitch it is not at all that is desired, hard hitting is about the only safe way to play. Those who are not over robust must not imagine for a minute that hard hitting is entirely a matter of strength. As a matter of fact, timing, or the impact of bat and ball at the right moment, does far more in sending the ball

well out of the ground

than brute strength.

What is the best way to hit, you ask? Well, I don't think I can advise you better than suggest that every time you attempt a big hit a great effort must be made to get at the pitch

of the ball. If you cannot do this, you may be quite sure you will fail as a hitter, because in getting at the pitch of the ball you can get well on top of it, whereas hitting at it at a yard or so after it has pitched will, in all likelihood, result in a weaker and more lofty stroke. And the greatest mistake you have to guard against is the tendency to begin the stroke a trifle too soon.

Now, when you practise hitting, be very careful not to half draw away as you make your shot. If you do, it will result in a miserable weak affair, and, in addition, you will be playing with a "cross-bat," the very worst enemy to proper hitting. If you feel your right shoulder dropping, remember that you cannot make the stroke properly in that position. If you hit with a dropped shoulder, the ball cannot possibly be driven along the ground.

As to the proper balls to hit, I should say, on a rough wicket, any to which you can get at the pitch, although all off balls are fairly dangerous unless they are well up. A half volley, very wide of the off-stump, had better be left alone, whilst a dead slow, or a lob, can be hit with more advantage upon the full than in that position. If you hit with a dropped shoulder, the ball cannot possibly be driven along the ground.

I have often been asked by youngsters whether they should use a light or heavy bat for hitting. It must be obvious to all that to get plenty of force behind a ball

with a bat with plenty of wood is needed, but this need not necessarily be a heavy bat, as a piece of the most puzzling things about a piece of cricket is that whilst it is in reality lighter than another, it is in reality heavier. This can be accounted for by the balance; and I strongly advise the player to perfect their hitting by using a bat with which some of the present-day players use. Of course, in their present state of preparation, bats as used by the present-day players are much heavier than those of old times, weighing nearly twice as much as used at the present time, but it is well used to get a bat with plenty of wood, and a blade, and which will "come up" as the old time "light-weight."

With my last few words I would like to mention that the "finer" bat is used upon the young players, more than upon the few really good ones. It is an order to get a really good one, and the money saved in the end, for it will last as long as a cheap one, and will give you the means of adding to your securing

Ernest G. Hayes
"How to Score a Century."
By J. B. HOBBS.