

# SPECIAL—THE CLIVEDEN COMBINE!

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(SEE OUR COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY ON PAGE 233.)

The **Boys' Herald** 1<sup>d</sup>

EVERY BOY'S AND YOUNG MAN'S  
STORY AND HOBBY PAPER.

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EVERY WEDNESDAY—ONE PENNY.

WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 26, 1907.



Dereker bellowed like a bull-calf—not that the chastisement hurt him, for he was tough and the master was not an expert with the compass-ruler. The Form with one accord seized the lids of their desks at a sign from Taffy, and slammed them violently at every stroke Mr. Perkes laid on.



# The Cliveden Combine

A Laughable Complete School Story

By CHARLES HAMILTON



## The 1st Chapter. The New Boy at Cliveden!

"HERE he is!"  
"Oh, that's the rotter, is it? Sure and he looks as if he thought the whole place belonged to him, Dick."

"He'll find out his mistake before he's been at Cliveden long," said Dick Neville grimly.

Two juniors were leaning out of the window of a Fourth-Form study at Cliveden College, watching a youth who was crossing the Close from the gates.

He was a well-built lad, with a keen, intelligent face, a somewhat sharp nose, and pleasant, honest grey eyes. He was a new boy at Cliveden, but no one would have guessed that from his manner. He sauntered across the Close with his hands in his pockets, looking about him with an interested and perfectly self-possessed air, evidently not in the slightest degree afflicted with shyness or self-consciousness.

There was nothing that could be called cocky or consequential in his manner, yet there was some excuse for Micky Flynn's remark that he looked as if he thought that the whole place belonged to him. Certainly no new boy at Cliveden had ever shown such an absolute assurance before.

"That's the article," went on Dick Neville, "that has been shoved into our study! We've got to share our cosy quarters with that! The cheek!"

"Horrid! I really don't know what Rayne was thinking of," said Micky Flynn gravely. "He must know by this time that we expect to keep this study all to our noble selves."

"Oh, don't rot, Micky! This is serious."  
"Sure and I know it is, Dick darling. We've had this study to ourselves ever since the beginning of the term, and it will be simply beastly to have another fellow shoved into it now. There really isn't room for three in any of the Fourth-Form studies, and we've escaped having a third so far. I thought we were safe to the end of the term at least."

"Yes, and now this new kid comes from Chicago, or Milwaukee, or California, or somewhere, and gets shoved in," growled Dick. "We're not going to stand it."

Micky Flynn made a comical grimace.

"I don't see what we can do, Dick. The Head isn't likely to argue the point with us."  
"The Head oughtn't to have done it," said Dick, with an aggrieved look. "Why couldn't he have put this tinned-meat chap in Pankhurst and Price's study. They're only two to a room, same as we are, and it wouldn't matter so much if they were disturbed."

"They might think it did," chuckled Micky. "Sure, there's one thing we might do, Dick. We could give the Chicago spalpeen such a high old time in this study that he would ask to be changed into another."

Dick Neville looked thoughtful. A sparkle of fun came into his eyes, and he gave his thigh a resounding smack.

"My hat, Micky! You've hit it! Of course we've got no ill-feeling against the chap, but we can't have a third party here amongst us. That's the point. If he clears out of the study, we'll treat him well to make up for it afterwards; but until he clears out—"

"We'll give him beans."  
"Exactly. We'll give him— Hush! There's those two rotters!"

Crash!  
There came a violent shock at the study door, and the chums of the Fourth turned from the window as the door flew open. They needed no telling that Pankhurst and Price were there. It was Pankhurst's foot that had crashed the door open so abruptly.

Two juniors stood in the doorway. Both of them had sandy-coloured hair, and good-natured faces, now on the broad grin.

"Hallo, kids!" said Pankhurst. "I hear you're going to have company here. Some new critter from the Wild and Woolly West. I hope you'll like him."

"Hope you'll like him," said Price, who was a faithful echo of his chum and leader.

"There ain't much room for a new kid here,"

said Pankhurst, looking round the study. "You'll have to leave your feet outside, Micky Flynn, to make room for his box. Of course, that would make an immense difference."

"You let my feet alone!" growled Micky Flynn, turning red. Micky did not take the smallest size in boots, and he was rather sensitive about it.

Pankhurst grinned.  
"I intend to," he replied. "Wouldn't touch 'em with a barge-pole, dear boy. We thought we'd just look in to see how you liked the prospect of a new kid here, you know, when Grahame told us. Thought you'd be pleased to see us."

Dick Neville shook his head.  
"I don't see how you could think that, Panky," he replied. "If you want anybody to be pleased to see you, you will have to take to wearing a mask. You ought to, you know. Now, travel along, kids; your faces worry us."

"Now, don't get ratty about that new kid being stuck in your quarters," said Pankhurst, in a tone of remonstrance. "I hear that he comes from Chicago, and you'll find him useful when you're giving a study feed. An unlimited supply of tinned meat will—"

"Oh, travel!"  
"In all probability he's brought a spread with him in his box," continued Pankhurst. "If he stands a feed in the study, with some of the family tinned horse, you'd better invite everybody you've got a grudge against—"

"Are you going out by the door or the window?" roared Dick, getting exasperated.  
"Oh, we're just going! But, I say, before we go I've a favour to ask—don't—oh, don't ask me to that feed. I can't stand tinned horse!"

My constitution is a delicate one, and before I left home this term my grandmother placed her hand in mine and begged me, with tears in her eyes, to— Hands off, you horrid bounder!"

Dick Neville was making a frantic rush with a Greek lexicon in his hand. Pankhurst dodged out of the study, and Price followed fast, but the lexicon followed faster. Liddell and Scott can never be considered light, but they are particularly heavy when received in the small of the back from the hand of an experienced bowler. So Price discovered. The lexicon smote him with force, and he staggered forward and clutched hold of Pankhurst, and they went to the floor, Pankhurst on his face underneath.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shouted Dick and Micky. "Is that how you like it done, Panky?"

"You—you beast!" howled Pankhurst, getting on his feet. "Price, you howling ass, what do you mean by charging me over like that? Do you think you are playing rigger, you duffer?"  
"I c-c-couldn't help it, Panky," gasped Price. "He chucked something at me, and I was bowled over. It was that beastly lexicon. Let him have it back."

"My hat! I will!"  
Pankhurst clutched up the lexicon, and it went from his hand like a stone from a catapult. Dick and Micky dodged back into the study in time. But they say that every bullet has its billet, and certainly that lexicon had one.

A little fat gentleman with a pointed beard and waxed moustaches came round a corner as the lexicon flew past the door, and received it full in the chest.

"Mon bleu!" gasped Monsieur Friquet, the

French master at Cliveden. "Vat is zat Mon bleu, I am assault! I am knock over!"

He staggered back against the wall. A youth who was following him along the corridor gave a chuckle. It was the same youth whom Dick and Micky had seen crossing the Close with the air of one taking possession of it—the new boy at Cliveden.

"I guess you've got some lively kids here," he remarked, with a peculiar nasal drawl in his voice. "Hallo, they're gone! Waal, that was smart!"

It was indeed smart. Pankhurst and Price had required only one second to see what they had done, and to disappear round the nearest corner. The French master looked for his assailants as soon as he had caught his breath, but they had vanished.

"Mon bleu! It was zat ze book was huri at me," said Monsieur Friquet. "Did you see who vas trow zat book, Master Poindexter?"

"I kinder saw somebody making a break down the passage," said the new boy. "I guess I couldn't identify him, sir."

And Dick and Micky, who heard all within their study, exchanged a glance of satisfaction.

"I thought old Panky was booked for a row," murmured Dick. "The new kid is all right. He's not a sneak, anyway."

"Sure and he's not. He must have seen Panky and Price."

"Of course he did, but he doesn't mean to give them away. Hallo, he's coming here! Good-afternoon, sir!"

Dick and Micky looked as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouths as Monsieur Friquet came into the study with the new boy. The French master was still breathing rather stertorously. He looked keenly at the chums of the Fourth, but did not refer to the incident in the passage.

"I have brought to you your new study-mate, Neville and Flynn," he said. "It is zat I hope you will be very comfortable in the study togezer. Master Poindexter, zese are Masters Neville and Flynn, viz whom you will share zis room. Master Neville will show you zere to put your zings, and vat you vas to do."

"I guess I'm glad to make your acquaintance," said the American, holding out his hand in such a frank and friendly way that the chums had to take it in turn. "I hope we shall be comfortable here, and very good friends. It won't be my fault if we're not."

"Zat is right," said Monsieur Friquet, with a nod. "Little boys should love one anozer, and work togezer like brozers, and play ze football vizout quarrelling. I am sure zat Neville and Flynn will be mosh polite to ze new boy."

But from the glance he gave Neville and Flynn as he went out it might have been guessed that the French master had his doubts upon that point, in spite of his words.

## The 2nd Chapter. A Little Joke.

LINCOLN G. POINDEXTER looked round the study, and then crossed to the window, and glanced out at the old elms in the Close, now thinned of leaves. Then he turned back and regarded his study-mates.

Dick and Micky did not speak.

"I guess we can be pretty comfy here," the American remarked. "The place is small, and there isn't much room for one, let alone three; but I suppose we shall have to put up with that."

"Yes, I suppose so," murmured Dick.

This was not exactly the line he had expected the new boy to take, and it rather took him aback. A new boy was supposed to enter a study with a humble and apologetic spirit towards its occupants; but that was evidently not the idea of the new boy from Chicago.

"You can get used to anything in time," said Poindexter briskly.

"Yes, I've heard so," Dick remarked, recovering himself a little—"even to tinned beef."

Poindexter grinned.

"Oh, don't start on that!" he exclaimed. "I've only been a few hours at Cliveden, and I've heard of hardly anything but tinned beef all the time."

"Well," said Dick, "I suppose you're fond of it. It must seem homelike to you. You were brought up on it, I suppose?"

"That's where you make your mistake, I guess. You surely don't think we eat the stuff ourselves?" said Poindexter. "Not much, my pippin! We export it for you to eat in England, you see. I've never tasted it. You're satisfied with anything in this old country. Rather behind the times, ain't you? I find things slow here."

Dick and Micky exchanged a glance.

"You'll find 'em rapid enough if you go on as you've started," Dick observed. "When we get a new boy with too much nerve in him, we generally find a way of taking it out."

"Do you really? Well, I guess that would be interesting." The new boy glanced round. "Where am I to put my books, Neville? I've got some other things, too, that will have to be put somewhere—football, and foils, and my white mice."

Dick winked at Micky.

"Better show him where to put them, Mick," he said. "You know the room—No. 10. They have to be kept in No. 10, you see, Poindexter, as there's no room here."

"Right you are!" Micky chuckled.

No. 10 was the study belonging to Pankhurst and Price, and what they would do when they found the American boy's possessions there was a question.

"They're in the porter's lodge now," said the new boy. "He can carry the box up; but the other things I could manage, if you'll lend me a hand. But, I say, if we do our preparation here,



At that moment Poindexter came running round the corner of the building. "Hand over that cage," he said. "Rats! I— Biff! Jeffreys let go the cage and sat forcibly on the ground."



## THE CLIVEDEN COMBINE.

(Continued from the previous page.)

as I've been told, it will be a bit of a bother fetching the books out of another room."

"That's nothing to what you'll have to put up with here," said Dick. "You'll find all sorts of curious manners and customs at Cliveden, old chap."

"Waal, I guess I shall be able to keep my end up," said Poindexter, as he left the study with Micky Flynn.

Five minutes later, Dick Neville watched them carrying the American boy's possessions into No. 10, and he grinned hugely. He strolled down to the football field, where Pankhurst and Price were playing in a practice match with two junior elevens. Pankhurst was captaining one side, and playing centre-forward, and he was playing up well.

As Dick stood looking on, he was joined by Lincoln G. Poindexter.

"Jolly good game, that, I guess," the new boy remarked, as Dick glanced at him. "Bit different from our game. Do your fellows play football much?"

"Well, I should say so."

"That will suit me down to the ground. As we're to be in the same study, I don't mind chumming up with you; and you can put me on to the thing."

Dick Neville looked at him.

"I'd better have a little talk with you," he remarked. "The fact is, Master Pointer—"

"Poindexter, please—Lincoln G. Poindexter."

"Pointwister, then!" said Dick. "The fact is, that that study you've been shoved into belongs to Flynn and myself, and we don't want anybody else in it. We don't want to be rude, you know, but we want the place to ourselves."

"I'm not surprised at that, I guess. It's a fearfully small place for three."

"So under the circumstances we want you to change your quarters. You might be able to change into some other study if you asked the Form-master."

"But I've been told that that's the most comfy study in all the Fourth."

"So it is—that's one reason why we want to keep it to ourselves."

"I guess it can't be did."

"You won't change?"

"I don't suppose I could if I tried—and, anyway, I'm not going to try. I'm willing to make myself at home and chum up with you—"

"It takes two to make a bargain—three, in this case."

"My dear fellow, I rather like the looks of you two," said Poindexter, unheeding. "I think we could pull together well if we made an effort, you know. We could form a combine—"

"A what?"

"A combine—that's an alliance, you know, against all outsiders. Of course, I should be head of the concern—"

Dick Neville gasped.

"Well, of all the cheek!"

"I don't see it. But if you don't like the idea, just as you please. I'm in the study, and I'm going to stick there—that's settled!"

And the American boy strolled away, with his hands in his pockets, whistling.

Dick Neville looked after him with a rather dubious expression. The chums of the Fourth usually had things their own way, and they were a power in the Form. Pankhurst and Price were their great rivals, but Dick and Micky kept their end up pretty well. Now it looked as if they had got hold of a tougher customer. The more Dick saw of Lincoln G. Poindexter the more he realised that the American boy was a hard nut to crack.

And that thought was more than sufficient to get Dick's back up. It was bad enough to have a new boy put into his study, but to have that same boy wanting to run the place was intolerable.

"We shall have to put him through it, Micky," Dick remarked. "He wants putting in his place awfully bad. We'll give him a lesson."

The football finished, and the players came off the field. Pankhurst and Price walked away to change, and then they went up to their study. The chums of the Fourth kept an eye on them from the distance.

Pankhurst stared as he entered No. 10.

"My only pyjama hat! What's all this?"

"What the dickens is it?" echoed Price.

They had cause to be astonished. Their books and papers had been shifted off the table, and in the place was a pile of property of various sorts. Bundles of books, a hat box, a case of foils, a football, and a punching-ball, a cage of white mice, and various other articles, crammed the table to its full capacity.

Pankhurst and Price stared at the pile, and then at each other.

"What does it mean?" asked Pankhurst.

"Is it a present for us, or what?"

Price grinned.

"I think I know. Look at the name on that box."

"Lincoln G. Poindexter!"

"It's the new kid's stuff, and it's been shoved in here by mistake."

"Then it will get shoved out again," said Pankhurst grimly. "More likely a joke of somebody than a mistake. Give me that rope!"

"What are you going to do?"

"You'll see in a tick."

Pankhurst took the rope and fastened the end to the cage. Then he began to fasten all the other articles on the rope, at intervals of about a foot apart.

Price grinned again as he saw his object, and lent a hand. In five minutes the work was done; and then Pankhurst opened the window, and the string of property was let out.

It hung down from the sill, dangling outside the lower window, the cage nearly touching the ground at the bottom.

Pankhurst closed the window and jammed it on the cord.

"Now there's room to do our beastly prep. for to-morrow," he remarked. "If Lincoln G. Pincushion wants his property, he can hunt for it."

Tap!

It was a knock at the door of the study as Pankhurst put his books on the table, and the American boy came in. He seemed surprised at not seeing his belongings.

"Hallo, kid!" said Pankhurst affably. "We can't come."

"Eh?"

"I'm sorry, but we can't come."

The American boy looked at him in astonishment.

"You can't come where? What are you driving at?"

"Oh, I thought you had come to invite us to the feast of potted beef in No. 4!" said Pankhurst. "My mistake."

"Ha, ha, ha!" cackled Price.

"Nothing of the kind!" said Poindexter.

"I've got something better than potted beef, as a matter of fact; but as you won't come, I won't ask you."

"Oh, I say, I didn't mean—"

"Nuff said; I'm not going to ask you! Where are my things?"

"What things?" asked Pankhurst innocently.

"The things I left here on the table. Neville says there is some preparation to be done this afternoon, and I want my books."

"Well, go and get them."

"I left them here. Neville says they are to be kept here."

"Oh, he does, does he? And are you ass enough to think that a fellow can keep his books in another fellow's study?"

A light dawned upon the American boy. He grinned.

"Oh, I see! It was a joke. They don't want a new-comer in the study."

"And we don't want one here," said Pankhurst. "We're going to do some work. Close the door."

"But where are my books?"

"I can't see them," said Pankhurst, looking round the study. "Can you, Price?"

Price looked under the table and into the ink-pot.

"No," he said solemnly; "I can't see them."

The American boy seemed to grow somewhat restive.

"I can't go without them," he said. "Where are they?"

Pankhurst shrugged his shoulders.

"You'd better ask Neville and Flynn. Travel now; you're interrupting the washing!"

Poindexter looked at them dubiously, and, then departed. He returned to No. 4, and found Neville and Flynn rocking to and fro in their chairs with laughter. They became suddenly grave as he entered, but it was too late.

Poindexter smiled grimly.

"Hallo! Got the books?" asked Dick pleasantly.

"No. They've been shifted out of No. 10," said Poindexter. "Where are they?"

"How should we know? You'd better ask Pankhurst and Price."

"I've asked them, and they've referred me to you. The things aren't in No. 10. I understand the little joke; but now—where are the books?"

"Is that a conundrum?"

"No. It's a question, and I want it answered."

"I see, you're looking for trouble," Dick remarked. "If you knew Cliveden better, you'd know that this was just the place to find it. If you—Hallo! What's that row?"

It was the sound of voices from the Close. The juniors ran to the window and looked out, and a curious sight met their gaze.

## The 3rd Chapter.

## Micky Has an Idea.

A DOZEN or more fellows were standing below, staring at a rope hanging out of one of the study windows, upon which hung a variety of articles. Poindexter uttered an exclamation.

"They are my things!"

The chums of the Fourth gave a simultaneous chuckle.

"Ha, ha, ha! Better go out and collect them, young Tinned Beef," said Dick.

Some of the fellows looked up at the chums as Poindexter hurriedly left the study.

"I say, what's the little game?" called out Jeffreys, of the Fourth. "What are those things hanging out of Pankhurst's window for?"

"I expect they're to be given away," said Dick blandly. "Take anything you like, kids; they don't belong to me."

"My hat! I'll have the white mice, then!" said Jeffreys; and he unfastened the cage from the end of the rope.

Poindexter came running round the corner of the house.

"Here, I guess that is my property!" he said.

"Leave it alone!"

"Who the dickens are you?"

"Lincoln G. Poindexter."

"Well, Lincoln G. Bonetwister, you can buzz off. I'm going to—"

"Hand over that cage."

"Rats! I—"

Jeffreys let go the cage, and sat on the ground. He didn't know exactly what had happened, but he had a pain in his chin. He stared at the American in blank astonishment. Poindexter began to remove the property from the rope.

"That was neat, Pointshifter," said Dick Neville from above; "very neat."

"I guess so," said Poindexter. "But, say, I usually knock spots off fellows that can't pronounce my name. That's a hint."

"I'm sorry for that Pointshaker. It's a pity, Puntbuster. For I'm sure I shall never be able to properly pronounce that horrid name of yours, Bonetwister."

"I guess I shall have to teach you," said Poindexter.

Jeffreys got upon his feet. He did not seem inclined to push matters with the new boy. Poindexter unfastened all the articles within his reach, and then shook the rope and called out to Pankhurst. But the window where the rope was fastened remained shut.

"Let that rope down!" shouted Poindexter, shaking it.

Pankhurst's window did not open, but the window below it did, for the punching-ball fastened on the rope flapped against the glass as Poindexter shook it. An angry prefect looked out.

"Hallo!" murmured Dick Neville. "That's Grahame. If Pointbuster cheeks him there will be a row."

Grahame was the worst-tempered prefect in Cliveden. He was down on Studies 4 and 10, with a big and heavy "down." To disturb him by flapping a punching-ball on his window was a sin past the possibility of forgiveness.

"What are you doing there?" he roared.

Poindexter looked up at him.

The new boy evidently was not aware of the awful majesty of a prefect, for his glance was quite cool and calm.

"I'm shaking this rope, I guess," he replied.

And he shook it again, with the result that the punching-ball flapped in Grahame's face, which was now in place of the glass, and knocked the prefect back into his room.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Dick.

Grahame did not appear at the window again. He was making his way downstairs to interview the new boy in the Close.

"Look out, Tinned Beef!" called out Micky.

"Sure, and Grahame will skin you for that if he gets hold of you."

"I guess he won't. I say, up there, let this rope down!"

Grahame came upon the scene, white with fury. He dashed up to the American boy, and caught him by the collar.

"Now, you cheeky young hound—"

At that moment Pankhurst's window opened.

The end of the rope shot out, and the whole string of articles came slithering to the ground—or, rather, upon the heads of Poindexter and Grahame, who were standing below the window. Grahame gave a fearful whoop as a bundle of books lighted upon the bare head and another on his back, and he staggered against the wall.

"You—you young beasts!"

"I guess that wasn't my fault," said Poindexter, rubbing his head where a parcel had hit him with considerable force. "I calculate I shall make somebody sit up for this. Here, what are you doing, mister?"

Grahame had seized him by the ear, and was twisting it with energy.

"You cheeky young hound, I'll give you a lesson!"

"Let my ear alone!"

"You—you whelp! Don't you know I'm a prefect! I'll—"

"I don't care if you're a prefect or a whole party of prefects," said Poindexter, with a flash in his eyes. "Let my ear alone, or I shall get riled!"

Grahame was not likely to desist for that. He gave the ear an extra spiteful twist, and Poindexter uttered a gasp of pain. The next moment he had closed with the prefect, and Grahame lay on his back in the Close—laid there by a wrestling trick he had been far from expecting from a junior.

Poindexter collected up his property and walked into the house. Grahame, who had had most of his wind shaken out by the concussion upon the ground, rose slowly to his feet. He boxed the ears of several grinning juniors; then he, too, entered the house.

"My hat," said Jeffreys, "there's a warm time coming for Lincoln G. Boneshaker, and serve him jolly well right, too!"

Poindexter made his way to No. 4 Study with as much property as he could carry. The chums of the Fourth looked at him dubiously as he came in.

"Where are you going to put all that rubbish?" asked Dick.

"I guess it isn't rubbish," said Poindexter; "it cost dollars. I'm going to put it here. Who was that fire-bug who started twisting my ear?"

Dick giggled.

"That was Grahame, the prefect. You'll get into hot water over that. You mustn't hit a prefect, whatever he does. It's against the rules."

"That so? I don't know the ropes yet, you see; but I guess I'm not going to allow anybody to twist my ear like that," said the new boy.

"Seems to me that your prefects want teaching manners."

"You'd better give 'em a lesson, Pointwiper."

"Guess you've forgot what I said about pronouncing my name," said the American boy.

"No, I haven't, Puntshifter."

"I guess I'll trouble you to put up your fists, then," said Poindexter. He came towards Dick Neville, looking decidedly warlike.

Dick put his hands in his pocket and laughed.

"My dear kid, I'm the best boxer in the Fourth, and I could knock you into the middle of next week, and not half try," he said. "Better keep off the grass!"

"Thanks! But I'm going to give you a lesson in pronunciation."

"Very well," said Dick resignedly. "I'll have the gloves on with you after tea, if you like. I

don't want to hurt you. Now I'll show you where to put your things, if you're going to stay in the study. Get in the rest of them."

"Right you are!"

Poindexter left the study to fetch the rest of his belongings, and Micky Flynn came towards Dick with a glimmer of fun in his blue eyes.

"I say, Dick darling," he whispered, "sure and I've got an idea."

"An idea for getting rid of that obstinate boulder, Micky?"

"Yes, that's it. He won't get out of the study, but we can make it too hot for him. And I'll tell you how. We'll go mad."

Dick stared.

"Eh?"

"We'll go mad and frighten him out of his wits. Not really mad, you know, but we'll put it on, and make him think we're not safe."

"Well, you won't have to put on much, Micky, as you—"

"Oh, don't rot! Is it a go?"

"Yes. It will be funny, anyway. He—Hush!" Dick broke off, as he heard the sound of Poindexter's returning footsteps. "Here he is!"

## The 4th Chapter.

## The Maniacs.

WAAL, I guess that's peculiar!" Lincoln G. Poindexter stood in the doorway, staring into No. 4.

It was certainly a peculiar sight that met his gaze.

Dick Neville had picked up a Greek lexicon, and was slowly and steadily masticating the title-page as if he enjoyed it.

Micky, with his eyes fixed on vacancy, was slowly turning round on his right foot, round and round like a dervish fanatic.

Poindexter's eyes nearly started from his head as he looked.

"Waal, waal! What on earth are you doing, kids?"

The chums made no reply. Each continued his curious occupation, apparently being quite unaware of the presence of the new boy from Chicago.

Poindexter put a hand on Dick's shoulder and shook him.

"What are you up to?"

"Aha! Unhand me, castiff!" said Dick, in a deep, sepulchral voice. "I am dining."

"Do you usually dine off a dictionary?"

"Aha! This is prime tinned beef."

"You must be a silly ass! What are you turning round like that for, Flynn?"

"Don't interrupt me," said Flynn, in a mysterious whisper, "I'm a dervish."

"A what?"

"A dervish. I'm a giddy—I mean a dancing dervish."

"You'll be giddy if you keep on like that."

"Hush, hush! Depart!"

"I guess I'm not going to depart," said Poindexter. "I don't know what the game is, unless you're barmy on the crummet; but you can keep it up as long as you like."

"Hush! Depart!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Shall we slay him, Richard?"

"Yes, Michael, let us slay him horribly. Let him die the death!"

The chums made a sudden rush at Poindexter. In a twinkling he was on his back on the carpet, and Dick was sitting on his chest, pinning him down.

"Aha! Bring me the axe!" yelled Dick.

"Bring me the meat-axe, that I may behead him!"

"You're mad!" gasped Poindexter. "Mad as a hatter!"

"Yes, that's right, we're mad—fearfully mad. You'll be slain if you come near us. Bring me that axe, and let him die the death!"

"Here's the poker!" exclaimed Micky. "I'll bash his brains out with the poker!"

"Good! I'll hold him while you bash."

Micky swung up the heavy iron poker with both hands with such a determined expression of ferocity upon his face that the new boy squirmed with horror.

"Here, stop! Get up! I—"

Crash!

The poker came down, missing Poindexter by about a foot, and smashing up a box of books belonging to him. Crash it came down again, in the same place.

"Ass!" howled Dick. "You've missed! Slay him! Ha, ha, ha! We're mad!"

"Let me go—I—"

"Slay him!"

Crash!

The poker came down again, this time on a chair, which was shivered at the blow. It fell towards Dick, and he got a blow on the elbow that made him wriggle.

"Ass!" he shouted. "Keep off! I will slay him myself! Wait till I get my pocket-knife opened! I'll cut him into ribbons!"

He fumbled desperately in his pockets. He dragged out his pocket-knife and opened the biggest blade.

Poindexter made a terrific effort, and pitched him off, and sprang to his feet. Right at him the chums dashed, with the poker and pocket-knife brandished aloft. Poindexter bolted out of the study like a hare.

Dick Neville and Micky sent a fearful yell after him, and then slammed the door, and collapsed upon the floor, shaking with laughter. The new boy went along the passage like lightning. Then there was a sudden collision.



staggered against the wall, but in a moment he had seized the new boy.

"You young rip, what do you mean by bashing into people like that?" he roared.

"Let me go!" gasped Poindexter. "They're mad!"

"Mad! Who are mad?"

"Neville and Flynn. I've nearly been murdered!"

Pankhurst jammed the breathless youth against the wall and held him there.

"Now just explain what you mean, before I knock your head on the wall," he commanded.

"What do you mean by saying that Neville and Flynn are mad?"

Poindexter gasped out an explanation. Pankhurst and Price were startled for a moment, but the next a chuckle broke from Pankhurst.

"I think I can see the game." Then he became grave again at once. "Price, old fellow, we ought to look into this."

"Certainly," said Price.

"If they're mad, they must be seen to. First of all we must bathe their heated brows with nice cold water. There's a couple of hot-water cans in the bath-room. Come on!"

"Look here," exclaimed Poindexter, "do you mean to say—"

"I don't mean to say anything, except that we must aid those poor fellows, and you had better help us."

"But is it—"

"Oh, come on!"

The cans were soon secured and filled with cold water. Then the three juniors hurried back to No. 4. The real facts were dawning upon Poindexter now, for he was no fool, and he entered with zest into the "cure" proposed by Pankhurst and Price.

As the three drew near the door of the study a muffled sound was heard proceeding from within—a sound of merriment. Poindexter turned red.

"They're giggling," said Pankhurst solemnly; "a very bad symptom. Come on!"

He threw the door open.

Neville and Flynn were sitting on the floor, their arms clasped round their knees, rocking to and fro with laughter. They started as the enemy came in.

"Mad as hatters!" gasped Pankhurst. "Bathe their fevered brows, poor dears!"

In a twinkling he had inverted his can over Dick, while Price did the same for Micky Flynn. The chums of the Fourth, drenched to the very skin, uttered simultaneous yells.

They scrambled up, breathing vengeance, but the three had them down again in a flash. Three to two were irresistible odds, and the chums were powerless. They were pinned down, struggling furiously.

"I'll break your neck for this!" howled Dick.

"Let me get up, Price, you beast!"

"Can't! You're mad!"

"Lemme gerrup!" roared Micky Flynn.

"Can't!" said Pankhurst. "You're mad!"

"I'll mad you! I'll—"

Poindexter chuckled.

"They're mad as hatters!" he declared. "They told me so, and said they weren't safe. Hold them while I tie up their hands. Then I'll put a label on them, so that the rest of the school may know they're dangerous."

"Ha, ha, ha! Good wheeze!"

"Good wheeze!" echoed Price.

"We'll break your bones if you do!" yelled Dick. "We're not mad—we were only pretending. We did it to frighten you out."

Poindexter shook his head.

"Too steep, kid. You're mad, right enough."

"I tell you we're not—we—"

"You must be. You said you were, and I guess I couldn't doubt a gentleman's word. Yes, you're mad. Hold the lunatics tight!"

"Right-ho! We'll do that," grinned Pankhurst and Price.

Poindexter soon had the hands of the chums tied together behind their backs. Then he fastened their ankles together, so that they would be able to hobble along, but not more than that. Then Pankhurst and Price allowed them to rise.

"Let us loose!" roared Dick, beside himself.

"Can't! You're mad!"

Poindexter was busy writing on two pieces of cardboard at the table.

"Here are your labels."

He pinned the pieces of cardboard to their neckties. Each bore the inscription, in bold, black letters, "Mad! Dangerous!"

"There, I guess that will do," said Poindexter, surveying his handiwork with great satisfaction.

"Now we can turn them loose. What do you think, gents?"

Pankhurst and Price were hoarse with laughter. Dick and Micky, drenched and dirty and ruffled, with flushed faces and tousled hair, and the absurd placards affixed to them, looked as ridiculous a sight as could be imagined.

"Certainly," said Pankhurst. "Ha, ha, ha! Kick 'em out!"

"You're—you're not going to send us out like this!" gasped Dick.

"Sure, and you can't!" sputtered Micky Flynn.

"Must," said Poindexter. "Guess I can't have a couple of dangerous maniacs in my study. It's asking too much of any fellow. Chuck them out!"

Dick and Micky were hustled out into the passage. They made a desperate resistance, but, of course, without avail. Poindexter locked the door, and put the key in his pocket.

"Now I guess you can take a little run," he remarked, walking away.

Pankhurst and Price, yelling with laughter, followed him. Dick and Micky stumbled along the passage. They were red with rage.

"This—is this is awful!" gasped Dick. "I—I can't get loose! We shall have a crowd round us in a minute. Oh, my hat!"

"Hallo! Hallo! What's all that?"

It was Jeffreys, of the Fourth. He stared at the chums in amazement.

"Here, let us loose!" gasped Dick. "Let us—"

"Ha, ha! You're mad! I'm not going to let dangerous lunatics loose!"

"If you don't I'll—"

Dick hobbled towards Jeffreys, who fled, yelling with laughter. His shouts soon brought a crowd of boys to the passage, and laughter rang out on all sides. Dick and Micky were as red as poppies, and in their rage and confusion they looked really almost as though the placards were needed.

"Mad!"

"Dangerous!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let us loose, some of you!" yelled Dick.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Help us, confound you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's get to Trevelyan's study!" murmured Dick. "Those rotters won't let us loose, and there will be a master on the scene soon. Come along!"

Trevelyan was captain of Cliveden, and Dick was his fag. The captain of the school would doubtless laugh, but he would set them free. Dick and Micky hobbled away through the grinning crowd, who did not feel inclined to spoil the joke by letting them loose. They stumbled downstairs, and Dick lost his footing half-way and rolled to the bottom. As he picked himself up Monsieur Friquet came out of his study.

The French master stared at him in amazement.

Dick was hardly recognisable in his present

state, and Monsieur Friquet was a timid little man. He started back in horror.

"Mad! Dangerous!" he gasped. "Mon bleu!"

He bolted back into his study and slammed the door, and the chums heard the key turn in the lock. Then they heard the Frenchman pushing the table against it.

"Come on!" growled Dick. "We shall alarm the whole house soon."

He stumbled against Trevelyan's door. He could not knock, but he bumped his knees against the lower panels.

"Come in!" called out the cheery voice of the captain of Cliveden.

Dick could not open the door. He bumped at it again.

"Come in, I say!"

Bump, bump!

Trevelyan opened his door rather angrily. He stared at the two strange figures before him in blank amazement.

"Who the—what the—why the—"

"It's me!" said Dick, energetically if ungrammatically. "It's me, Neville! I've been tied up like this. Get us loose, Trevelyan, for mercy's sake!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Won't you get us loose?"

"Sure you're not dangerous?"

"Yes, yes! Please let us go!"

Trevelyan opened his knife and cut the cords.

"Thanks!" gasped Dick. "My hat! We'll make that American bouncer sit up for this. Thanks!"

They left the study. They hurried back to their own. Poindexter was sitting calmly at

the table at work with his books. He looked up as the chums came in.

"Hallo," he remarked, "I see you've got your labels off! You want a wash, and no mistake."

Dick Neville gave him a withering glance.

"I said I'd have the gloves on with you after tea," he exclaimed. "On second thoughts, we won't have gloves on. I'll give you the licking of your life in the gym after tea."

"Right-ho!" said the American cheerfully.

"I guess you'll find me all there!"

### The 5th Chapter.

#### How the Combine Was Formed.

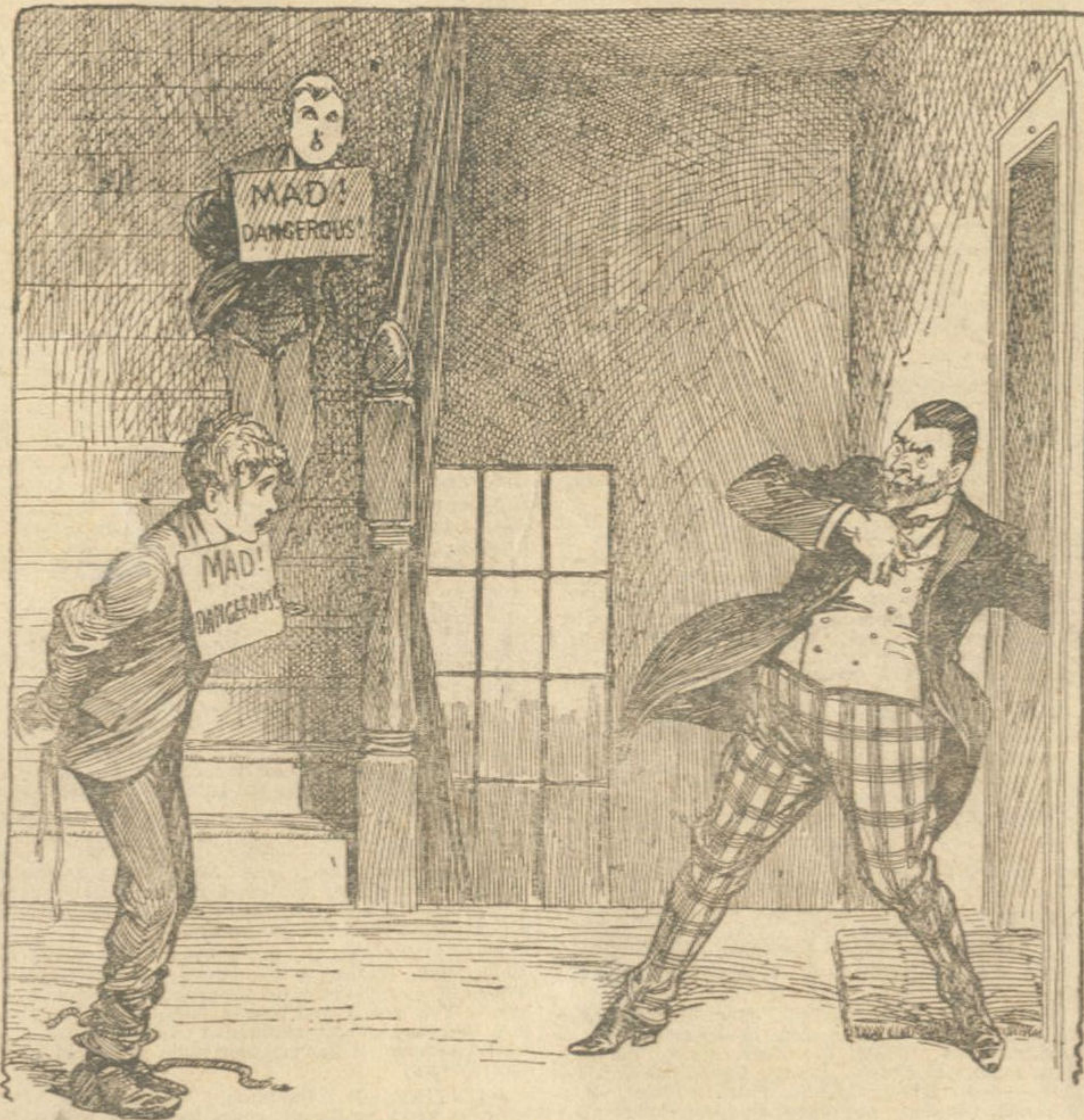
TEA in No. 4 was usually a cosy meal, but this time it was not exactly enjoyed.

The presence of a stranger destroyed the cosiness, and the incidents of the afternoon had not added to the gaiety of the chums of the Fourth.

It did occur to Dick that the new boy would not have been a bad ally in the perpetual warfare which reigned between No. 4 and No. 10, but it was too late now to think of making a chum of him. A fight was arranged to follow tea, and neither Dick nor the new boy felt in the least inclined to back out of it.

Poindexter added liberally to the supplies of the table, and had his tea with them. Hardly a word was spoken during the meal, and soon afterwards the three juniors adjourned to the gym.

They met Pankhurst and Price as they went



Dick and Micky hobbled away through the grinning crowd. Halfway downstairs Dick stumbled. As he picked himself up Monsieur Friquet came out of his study. "Mad! Dangerous!" gasped the French master, and then bolted into his room and locked the door.

in. The two auburn-haired youths nodded to them with derisive grins.

"Hallo! Recovered already?" asked Pankhurst.

"That shows the efficacy of prompt treatment," said Price. "They might have been raving at this present moment if we had lost time about it."

"Ha, ha! They look rather wild now, as a matter of fact. I say, Pointshaker, do you feel safe with those two lunatics?"

The American grinned.

"I guess so!" he replied. "I'm just going to fight with Neville, and—"

"Are you? Lick him, and I will give you a kiss upon your baby brow. He has been asking for a licking for a long time."

"Thanks, I won't trouble you. I shall lick him if I can."

"That's the cheese, Punpointer."

"And when I've licked him, I'll lick you, if you give us any more variations on my name!" said Poindexter. "That's a point I'm very particular about."

"Yes," said Pankhurst, "I can see you licking me, Panchbouncer! Yes, rather—Oh!"

The American's left came out with a sudden movement, and Pankhurst sat down in the doorway. He hardly knew how he got there.

"My hat," said Dick Neville, whistling. "that was neat! I shall look out for that, young Tinned Beef."

"It's the Poindexter left-hander!" said the new boy carelessly. "I expect you'll know what it's like soon. I say, we'd better have the gloves on!"

"Oh, if you like—I don't want to hurt you!"

"Rate! I was thinking of you."

"Well, don't think of me, please," said Dick turning red. "I can take care of myself, thank you. We'll have it out without gloves, and if you lick me, I'll—I'll—"

"If I lick you, will you stop this rot about getting me out of the study, and chum up like a Christian?" asked the American.

They were walking on into the gym. Pankhurst was sitting on the floor, staring after them and rubbing his chin in a dazed manner.

Dick Neville sniffed contemptuously.

"If you lick me," he said, "I'll chum up with you—or with anybody you like. I'll—I'll make you a present of my head to use as a football."

"That wouldn't be any good; I guess it would hurt my toes to use a wooden football."

Micky Flynn broke into a chuckle. Dick gave him a withering glance.

"I can't see what you're cackling about, Micky! I suppose you're considered fearfully smart in Chicago, young Punjabber?"

"I guess I'm reckoned all there," said Poindexter. "It's a go, then. If I lick you, we stop this silly wrangling and form the Combine, as I suggested—us three against the rest."

"Sure, and it's not a bad idea, anyway!" remarked Micky Flynn. "Sure, a combine is a really illigant idea, Dick, and the new kid is the kind of chap to chum with, too. The three of us would make a jolly strong team."

"That's my idea," said Poindexter. "As a combine, I guess we should be able to keep our end up against Pankhurst and Price, or any other firm in the whole of the Fourth."

"Maybe!" agreed Dick. "If you lick me—"

"Well, I'll try."

"My dear kid," said Neville compassionately, "you don't know what you're going to try to do. There's only one fellow in the Fourth can stand up against me, and that's Pankhurst. I'm not bragging, you understand, but stating a fact."

"It's right enough," said Micky.

The American looked reflective.

"You say Pankhurst is about your match, Neville?"

"Yes, something like it."

"Waal, I guess it's a bad way to start chumming, by pommelling one another," the new boy remarked. "Suppose I fight with Pankhurst instead of you, and if I lick him the arrangement holds good."

Micky Flynn chuckled involuntarily. The new boy certainly did not lack coolness and an original turn of mind. Dick stared at him.

"It seems to me a good plan," Poindexter observed. "If we're going to be chums, where's the sense of slogging one another? Then, if I lick Pankhurst, it will prove as much as if I lick you. And if we're going to form the Combine, I'd rather not lick you, or be licked by you, whichever way it turned out. What do you say?"

"But—"

"Sure, and here comes Pankhurst," ejaculated Micky Flynn, "and from his looks there won't be much choice for you about the matter."

Pankhurst was coming up, evidently in a state of towering fury, with Price and nearly a dozen Fourth-Formers at his heels.

"Here, you Yankee bouncer—"

"Hallo, that's me!"

"You—you had the cheek to hit me—you outsider—me—me, the cock of the Fourth Form!" exclaimed Pankhurst. "Are you going down on your beastly knees to beg pardon, or would you prefer to be smashed up into little pieces?"

"I guess I'll take the smashing up."

"Then take off your jacket, and come on!"

"You bet!"

The American winked at Dick Neville, who was a little nonplussed.

"That settles it," whispered Poindexter. "Now, if we're in that combine, I'm against all rival firms all the time, including the firm of Pankhurst and Price. Is it a go?"

"Yes," said Dick at last, "it's a go! If you lick Pankhurst, the Combine is the thing, and we'll take you in on equal terms."

"Shake on it."

They shook on it. Then Dick Neville helped the new boy off with his jacket. Lincoln G. Poindexter rolled up his shirt-sleeves, and revealed some muscles which excited admiring remarks among the juniors. Pankhurst followed his example.

"Are you ready, young Pointpusher?"

"I guess so."

"Here, what are you kids up to?" exclaimed Trevelyan, the captain of Cliveden, pushing his way through the crowded ring of juniors. "What's the trouble?"

"The Yankee kid has been looking for trouble, and he's found it," said Pankhurst. "I'm going to give him a little lesson, that's all, Trevelyan."

"That's all," echoed Poindexter. "Quite simple."

The captain of Cliveden smiled.

"I have no objection to a fair fight," he said, "but you must have the gloves on. There is no need for brutality. Come, the gloves!"

"But—"

"You will do as I tell you, Pankhurst!"

"Oh, all right Trevelyan!"

The gloves were speedily procured, and the two youngsters faced one another, Trevelyan, who was a great boxer himself, standing by to keep time. He knew that Pankhurst was a big fighting man in the Fourth, but he fancied that there was a surprise in store for him in the person of Lincoln G. Poindexter from Chicago.

"Time!"

The adversaries shook hands, and the fight commenced immediately. Both combatants opened cautiously, but Pankhurst soon rushed in to finish.



## The Cliveden Combine.

(Continued from the previous page.)

He finished in a way he little anticipated. Poindexter's left came out like a flash of lightning, and it caught Pankhurst under the chin.

The self-styled cock of the Fourth went down in a heap. Poindexter stepped back. He had not been touched yet. Price helped his principal up and sponged his heated face. Pankhurst blinked at him.

"I wasn't looking for that," he said.  
"You'd better keep your peepers open," said Price, "or you'll get some more you're not looking for, I imagine."

"Oh, rats!"

"Time!" said Trevelyan.

The adversaries took the line again. This time Pankhurst took more care. He did not give the new boy any chance to get in one of the "Poindexter left-handers," and the round ended in about an equal amount of punishment to each. Both juniors were looking flushed and warm when the round closed, and but for the gloves both of them would certainly have been considerably hurt.

Dick patted the American on the shoulder.  
"Good old Tinned Beef! Keep that up and you'll do."

"He's jolly tough," said Poindexter. "Think I shall lay him out?"

"I think so, if you keep it going."

"I guess I'll try."

The third round was equally indecisive, but at the end Pankhurst was certainly shorter in the wind than his opponent was. The fourth round was rather in Pankhurst's favour, the new boy going down heavily under a powerful right-hander.

But he came up to the scratch again gamely. And in the fifth round he drove Pankhurst up and down, and round and round, under a tattoo of blows.

"Bravo!" shouted Dick Neville, quite forgetting his own disputes with the new boy in sheer delight at a fine exhibition of boxing. "Good old Chicago! Go it!"

"Arrah, and he's winning!" cried Micky Flynn.

"Buck up, Panky!" said Price anxiously.

Pankhurst did buck up. He made a desperate attempt to recover his ground, and again a terrible left-hander caught him under the chin. He measured his length on the ground, and lay dazed. In spite of the glove, the blow had been a telling one. Price picked him up, and he collapsed on his second's knee. The juniors exchanged glances. It was pretty clear that Pankhurst was done.

"Time!"

Pankhurst started up, and made a plucky attempt to face his opponent; but he staggered, and Price caught him in time. Trevelyan closed his watch and put it away.

"That finishes it," he said. "You're done, Pankhurst."

"I'm not—I—"

"Yes, you are. Now, my advice to you youngsters is, to shake hands and be friends, as decent fellows should be after a fair stand-up fight."

And the captain of Cliveden walked away. Poindexter came towards Pankhurst and held out his hand. He had taken the gloves off.

"I guess that's good advice," he said. "I don't bear any malice, old fellow, and I hope you don't. It was a fair fight, and I don't think I could have stuck out another round, and that's a fact. There's my fist if you choose to take it."

Pankhurst hesitated for a moment; but, to do him justice, it was only for a moment. He took the American boy's hand in a hearty grip.

"That's all right," he said. "No malice on my side. Help me on with my jacket, Price. I say, I never felt so used up in my life."

"Here's your jacket, Poindexter."

Dick Neville was holding it. Poindexter slipped his arms in.

"I say, the Combine goes, then?" he said.

Dick patted him on the back.

"Yes, rather! From this minute forth we're a united team—the Great Combine of Study No. 4. Shake on it!"

Poindexter, Dick, and Micky solemnly shook hands on the compact.

"I guess we'll have a feed in the study to celebrate the occasion," said Poindexter. "I've got a pile of tomy in my box, and there's no canned beef among it. And what do you say to asking Pankhurst and Price, to show there's no ill-feeling?"

"Jolly good idea!" said Dick and Micky together.

So Pankhurst and Price were invited, and they came willingly enough. It was a spread such as had seldom been seen in a Fourth-Form study at Cliveden, and the five juniors enjoyed it immensely. Poindexter's supplies seemed to be boundless, and when Pankhurst and Price rose to depart they were looking and feeling extremely satisfied.

"By Jove," said Pankhurst, "you're the real article, Pointbuster, and no mistake! If you feel inclined to change into our study, we won't say no, will we, Price?"

"Not much," said Price.

"Here, what's that?" exclaimed Dick Neville. "Pointplunger isn't going to change into any old study, Panky. He's a fixture here!"

"Sure, it's a fixture he is!" said Micky. "We can't spare him."

Poindexter laughed.

"Good-night, kids!" he said. "I'm going to stick here, and to-morrow we'll give you the first taste of the quality of the Combine! Good-night!"

THE END.

Another story of Micky, Dick, and Poindexter next Wednesday, entitled  
"THE FOURTH FORM FOOTBALL CLUB."

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PHOTOGRAPHY.—L. H. Kildgrove. To speak from your dark-room to someone indoors would be impossible with only a copper wire and a parchment drum. A speaking-tube is the only way. Is it necessary you should have this? You could make enlarging dishes out of cardboard box-lids, but why not use an old pie-dish?—T. C., Lincoln. Write to the Cunard Steamship Company, Trafalgar Square, London, enclosing stamp, and stating your wish to purchase a photo of the Lusitania. They may be able to supply you direct, or to tell you where such is obtainable.

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PROFESSIONAL DANCING.—S. C., Southport. I should be glad to publish an article on this. Perhaps some reader acquainted with the subject will see this note and write to me on the matter.

BOOKS.—F. I. Rees, Pembroke Dock. John Locke's book you mention is of no particular value, as it is a sixth edition. Only first editions are valuable—apart from their literary contents.—H. J. Freeman, Bargoed. Do you mean works of fiction dealing with detective life? If so, read "Union Jack," "Sherlock Holmes," Gaboriau, Voltaire's "Zadig," etc. This last would suit you splendidly.

PANPIPES AND SQUEAKERS.—W. E. Grant, Old Bushey, Hamley's toy-shop, Ludgate Hill, London, would supply you with both. Yes, most Punch and Judy men speak through squeakers, though some by long use can dispense with them.

STAMP COLLECTING.—E. P. Pardoe, Gloucester. Your Hobby Club number is S316.—P. S., Highgate. Whitfield King's catalogue, published at Ipswich at 1s. 6d., is one of the best for beginners.—G. V. Norman, Wolverhampton. Coupons sent in must be of the same date as the paper last issued to make sure of an advertisement appearing.

FRETWORK.—"Hag," Streatham. Am afraid readers would not care for fretwork and metalwork designs every other week, but I intend to publish one occasionally.

THEATRICALS.—W. J. H., Roath, Messrs. French, Southampton Street, London, W.C., will supply you with make-up, etc. Write for list, enclosing stamp. With regard to Jewish dialogue, they might be able to tell you of one of their sixpenny plays wherein a quantity of such dialogue occurs.

PRINTING.—A. W. B., Billingshurst. Write to Messrs. John Haddon & Co., Salisbury Court, London. They will send you price list for printing press and lead type. You would find new materials costly. Why not buy secondhand materials? Look through the advertisements in the printing trade papers in your local library.

PAINTING.—D. Swainson, Walthamstow. For painting upon cardboard, cover the latter with thin coating of size before applying the oilpaints. If this would be too much trouble, paste strong, thin paper upon the cardboard. This would prevent the colour running through.

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## Why Not Become a Fretworker?

Hints and Advice on this Fascinating Hobby.

By VIVIAN STEWART.

FRETWORK is a hobby which is not half so much practised as it should be, considering the comparatively small expense it entails to turn out such valuable work, which would easily fetch a price amounting to five or even seven times the actual cost of making.

In time past it was considered a mere recreation for schoolboys, but now it has risen to a much higher degree, as one will recognise when one sees such things as overmantels, book-cases, tables, cabinets, and suchlike pieces of furniture, made in this way.

And the beginner has every inducement to cause him to commence. He can obtain his wood planed and made perfectly smooth, all ready upon which to paste or trace the pattern. Tools of the best British make can now be procured, and the beautiful designs seen are a still greater inducement to the would-be fretworker to make his start.

However, in spite of all these advantages, many a beginner is often discouraged owing to the breaking of so many saws, which makes it seem to him that he has nothing else to do but keep on buying these necessities. He has scarcely gone a quarter of an inch when "bang" goes the saw. He quickly threads another, but only to meet with the same misfortune.

But this is more often than not due to the fact that the worker is too eager to see some of his work done, and consequently in too great a hurry. Nevertheless, he will soon gain experience, and follow the tortoise's example, and things will appear brighter when he notices he has only broken two saws in a quarter of an hour instead of ten. Slow but sure is undoubtedly the keystone of fretwork.

Or, again, a novice, having exhausted his stock of saw-blades, "gives his work up," to continue it another week, which only means that he will lose all the experience already gained.

There is no need to commence on some elaborate design, but to first of all master all the lines and curves which go to make the beautiful frets seen in so many homes. A straight line will not appear at all easy to an inexperienced cutter, and he will find it still harder to turn a sharp corner. When he has had sufficient exercise at these, the anxious worker may then venture to take a pattern in hand.

A favourite way of making a start is to purchase a few cigar-boxes, knock these to pieces, and upon them draw several lines and curves which are to form your first pattern. The wood will be found to be easier to cut than any other, and there will be less broken saws to dishearten the perplexed beginner.

And now to discuss the various tools required. They are not extra expensive, so the beginner will find it prudent to obtain good and reliable ones at the commencement.

The apparatus which the fretcutter cannot do without are a hand-frame, in which to fix the flimsy saw-blades, a drill, and couple of bits (in preference to a bradawl), saw-blades, two or three files, and a cutting-board and clamp. And afterwards, as time goes on, a sand-papering block, a light hammer, small plane, glue-kettle, small screw-driver, and several other sundries which are occasionally required by fretworkers.

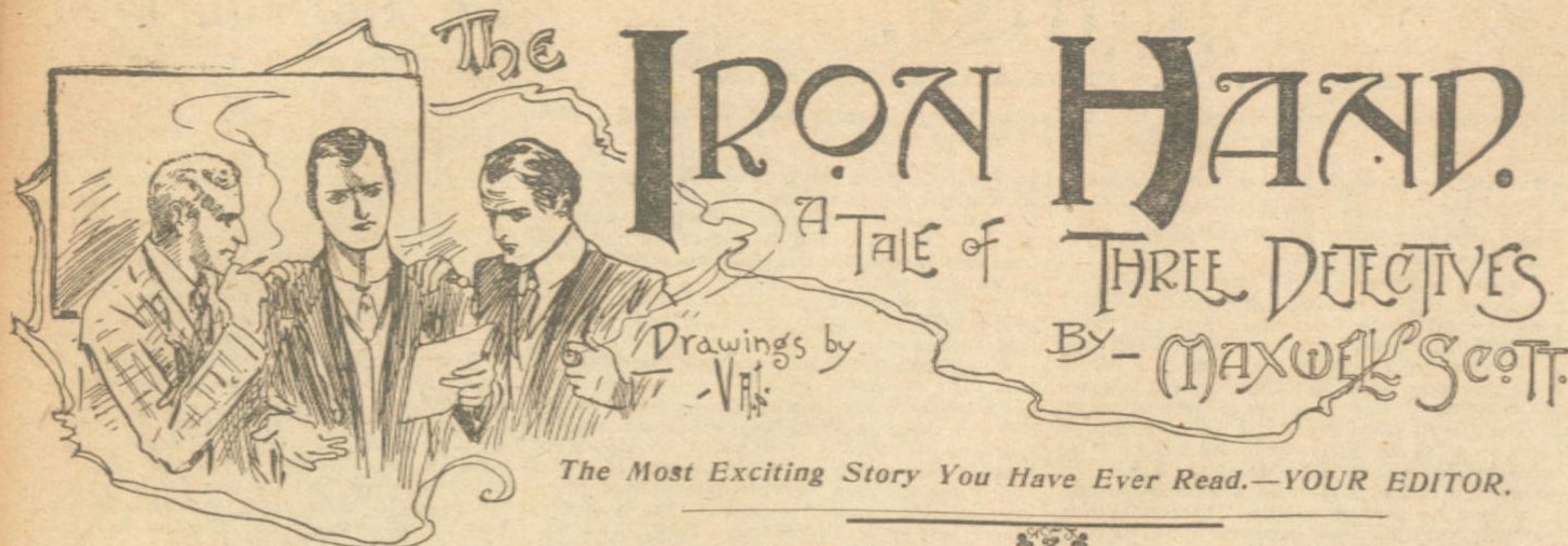
The first and undoubtedly most important tool to consider in a fretwork outfit is the hand-saw frame, and should therefore be chosen with the greatest of care. As regards the length, it depends entirely on the worker, but one about fourteen inches long will be found sufficient to meet the average requirements. A good many workers obtain two, one about twelve or fourteen inches long to suit ordinary work, and another about nineteen or twenty for extra large patterns, which is a very good plan for those who can afford the extra outlay.

After having procured a good hand-frame, the next move must be to obtain the flimsy saw-blades, upon which all the works depends. There are several foreign makes now on the market to choose from, but very few British. However, the American Star seems the greatest favourite among most fretcutters, and can be obtained at 4d. per dozen at nearly all iron-mongers.

The drill is next a very important tool, and I strongly recommend one in preference to a bradawl. The uses of both are obvious. When an interior piece has to be cut out it is apparently necessary to bore some small hole, through which to thread the saw-blade. This is accomplished now by means of a drill. And although drilling is a very common performance of a fretworker, nevertheless, it should in no way be done carelessly or off-handed, as it is often responsible for the breaking of many a beautiful article.

(This interesting article will be continued in next week's BOYS' HERALD.)





The Most Exciting Story You Have Ever Read.—YOUR EDITOR.

(New readers will find a summary of the opening chapters at the foot of the next page.)

### An Infamous Scheme.

CUNDLE stared at them in open-mouthed curiosity. As the reader will remember, Fairfax was the only living man who knew that Herman lived another life as "Squire Mandeville," of Hartop Manor. He was also the only man who knew that Paul Herman, alias Squire Mandeville, was Number One.

Often as Cundle had met Number One, he had no idea that Number One was Paul Herman, the well-known millionaire of Curzon Street. As for Squire Mandeville, Cundle had never even heard of such a man.

"Artop?" he growled. "Where's that? And why is it the very place for us?"

Herman winked at Fairfax before he replied; then he laid his hand on Cundle's shoulder.

"Up till now," he said, "you have only known me as Number One. I am now going to take you into my confidence and tell you who I am."

"My real name is Mandeville," he continued. "I live at Hartop Manor, in Surrey. It is a big house—bigger than Rycroft Hall—with extensive grounds. All my servants know that I am Number One, but I need hardly tell you that nobody else in the village knows. To everybody else I am known as a wealthy young squire, of blameless character."

Cundle chuckled and rubbed his horny palms together.

"Then you're goin' to take us to 'Artop Manor now?" he said.

"Yes," said Herman. "When we arrive, we'll descend in a secluded corner of the grounds—I know the very place—and in the course of the next few days my servants shall help us to build a shed for the airship similar to the one at Rycroft Hall. I will then show you and Mr. Fairfax how to navigate the airship—which is very, very simple, when it's explained—and as soon as your education is complete we'll give the public something else to talk about."

"For the League of the Iron Hand isn't done with yet," he continued, with flashing eyes. "Rockstro is gone, Sir Edgar is gone, Fairfax here is an outlaw, and Rycroft Hall is now in the hands of the police. But, despite Mr. Nelson Lee and Mr. O'Brien and their allies of the police force, we'll show the world that we're still a power to be reckoned with."

"Ay," he concluded, slaking his fist at the shed far down below, "even if they capture every member of the league except us three, we'll still be able, with the aid of this wonderful vessel, to reap such a harvest of plunder as no men ever reaped before."

"And we'll do it!" said Fairfax enthusiastically. "By gum, we will!" cried Cundle, tossing his cap in the air.

Smiling at his companions' enthusiasm, Herman started the screws again; and an hour and a quarter later, after an uneventful flight, the airship gracefully settled down in a secluded corner of the grounds of Hartop Manor.

Eleven days had elapsed since the escape from Rycroft Hall—eleven days during which Herman, Cundle, and Fairfax had not ventured outside the grounds of Hartop Manor.

A shed had been built for the accommodation of the airship, and Herman had carried out his promise to instruct his two companions in the art of managing the vessel. Both had proved apt pupils, and on several occasions they had manoeuvred the airship round the grounds—at dead of night, of course—without assistance from Herman.

It was now Thursday morning, and breakfast was just over. Herman was sitting in an easy-chair in front of the breakfast-room fire at Hartop Manor, smoking a cigarette and reading the "Morning Post." Fairfax, on the other side of the fireplace, was reading the "Times." Cundle was standing at the window, gazing out into the grounds, with a somewhat discontented expression on his coarse-featured face.

"Look 'ere, guv'nor," said Cundle, suddenly turning to Herman, "if you an' Mr. Fairfax ain't sick of this 'ere life of idleness, I ham! I want to be doin' something. Yer said as 'ow we'd give the public something to talk about as soon as you'd learned us to manage the airship. When are yer goin' to do it?"

Herman laid down his paper and inhaled a mouthful of smoke before he replied.

"How curious that you should ask me that question just now!" he drawled. "By a strange coincidence I've just this very minute decided that we'll take the airship into action to-night."

Fairfax glanced up from his paper with a look of eager expectancy.

"You mean that?" he said.

"I do," said Herman.

Cundle came over from the window and planted himself with his back to the fire.

"That's the best bit of news I've 'eard since

we left Rycroft," he said. "Wot's the idea? Wot are we goin' to do?"

Herman picked up his paper again. "Listen to this," he said. "It's a paragraph from the society announcements in the 'Morning Post.' His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has intimated his intention of being present at the performance of 'Colonel Newcome,' at His Majesty's Theatre, this evening."

"Well, wot of that?" said Cundle, as Herman laid down his paper again.

Herman rose to his feet and stretched his arms in a real or simulated yawn.

"We'll kidnap him!" he said, in his laziest drawl.

"Kidnap who?" growled Cundle.

"The Prince of Wales, of course!" said Herman.

"Kidnap the Prince of Wales!" gasped Fairfax and Cundle in the same breath.

"That's what I said," said Herman. "We'll kidnap him as he comes out of the theatre, carry him off in the airship, and hold him to ransom!"

### Herman Explains His Plan.

FOR a moment the two men gazed at Herman in speechless astonishment. Then Cundle found his tongue.

"If this ain't a joke—" he began, when Herman interrupted him.

"I was never more serious in my life," he said.

"But—the thing's impossible!" stammered Fairfax.

"On the contrary, it can be done as easily as this," said Herman, flicking the ash off the end of his cigarette with the tip of his little finger.

Fairfax shook his head, as if he doubted his leader's assertion.

"I shall take a lot of convincing of that!" he said. "However, I'm always willing to learn. What's your plan?"

Herman turned to Cundle. "In the first place," he said, "you must leave here by the half-past six train this evening, and go to London."

"London!" said Cundle, making a wry face. "Then I may as well wish yer both a long good-bye!"

"Why?"

"Becos," said Cundle, "there's 'ardly a cop in London wot doesn't know me by sight; so it's ten to one I'll be reckonerised and nabbed afore I've been there 'arf an hour."

"Don't be an ass!" said Herman impatiently.

"D'you think I'm such a fool as to propose that you should show yourself in London undisguised? I shall disguise you, of course—I've all the materials here—before you leave."

"Sorry I spoke," said Cundle. "That puts another complexion on the affair, as the lady said when she painted 'er face. So I'm to go up to London by the six-thirty? An' wot am I to do when I get there?"

"You know Marx & Co.'s, in Pinfold Lane?"

"D'yer mean the blokes wot supply street-awkers with toys an' puzzles an' collar-studs, an' things like that?"

"Yes. You know their shop?"

"Yes."

Herman thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out an electric pocket-lamp, consisting of a small dry battery enclosed in a silver-mounted lizard-skin case.

"You know what this is, I suppose?" he said, pressing the button on the side of the case, and thereby causing the little lamp to send out a momentary flash of bright white light.

"Of course," said Cundle. "I used to 'ave one myself when I was in the 'ouse-breakin' trade; but it wasn't such a swagger thing as that, and it didn't give such a good light. It was a cheap thing, in a imitation leather case, and cost me ninepence 'apenny."

"Well, if you go to Marx & Co.'s this evening," said Herman, "they'll supply you with half a gross at the wholesale price of fivepence each."

"'Arf a gross of wot?" asked Cundle.

"Of cheap pocket electric lamps, such as you have just described."

"But wot on earth do I want with 'arf a gross of electric lamps?" demanded Cundle, in a bewildered voice.

"They will also supply you," continued Herman, ignoring the question, "with a hawker's tray and a strap by which to suspend it round your neck."

"But wot—" began Cundle again.

Then a sudden light dawned on him.

"D'yer mean," he asked, "that I'm to go to Marx's an' buy 'arf a gross of cheap electric lamps, an' 'awk 'em about the streets of London?"

"I do," said Herman.

"Wot for?"

Again Paul Herman ignored the question.

"If you leave here by the six-thirty," he said, "you'll be in London by eight. Marx & Co. keep open until nine, so if you go straight to their shop from Waterloo you'll be in ample time to purchase your stock-in-trade before they close. You must then start hawking your lamps at the end of Pinfold Lane, and gradually work your way West, by way of Fleet Street and the Strand. You must regulate your rate of progress so as to reach Trafalgar Square about half-past ten, and by eleven o'clock at the latest you must be hawking your lamps in the Haymarket, outside His Majesty's Theatre."

He handed his own electric lamp to Cundle, who took it with the air of a man who was utterly and completely mystified.

"Now, when a gutter-merchant plies his trade," continued Herman, "he usually adopt some plan for attracting the attention of the passers-by. For instance, if he is hawking mechanical toys, he winds up one of the toys and sets it down on the edge of the pavement to perform its antics. You must do the same. That is to say, in order to advertise your lamps, you must keep on flashing."

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that lamp which I've just given you, first in one direction and then in another.

"In Fleet Street, the Strand, and Trafalgar Square, you need only flash the lamp from side to side, and in front of you and behind you. But when you reach the Haymarket, where you must remain until after the Prince has been captured, you must raise the lamp above your head, about once a minute, and send a single flash up into the sky."

Fairfax, who had been listening with absorbing attention, nodded his head.

"Ah, now I begin to understand!" he murmured, half aloud.

"Do yer?" growled Cundle. "Then you're cleverer than I am, for I'll be 'ung if I can see wot he's driving at."

He turned to Herman. "Wot's the hidea?" he asked. "Wot 'as all this got to do with kidnappin' the Prince of Wales?"

"You'll see in a minute," said Herman, lighting another cigarette. "In the meantime, let me finish giving you your instructions."

"As I've already said, you must reach the Haymarket not later than eleven o'clock. You must continue to hawk your electric lamps, and all the time you are doing so you must keep one eye on the main door of His Majesty's Theatre. You must also continue to flash that lamp from side to side, and at intervals of a minute, as I said just now, you must point the lamp upwards and send a flash into the sky."

"As soon as the performance is over—that is, as soon as you see the audience begin to leave—you must plant yourself in such a position, opposite the main door, that you can see into the entrance-lobby; and the moment you see the Prince of Wales and his suite coming down the stairs which lead from the Royal box, you must hold that lamp above your head and press the button three times in quick succession. Then, after waiting a second, you must press it twice; and then, after waiting another second, you must press it three times again. In that way you will send up into the sky three flashes, two flashes, three flashes."

"As everybody outside the theatre will be staring at the door, in expectation of seeing the Prince of Wales come out, it's a hundred to one that nobody will observe your action. If they do—well, you will have been doing the same thing—or apparently the same thing—many times before, so that no importance will be attached to your action."

Even Cundle, dull-witted though he was, now began to see the drift of Herman's orders. Ere he could make any comment, however, Herman turned to Fairfax.

"You and I will leave here in the airship about half-past ten," he said. "We will keep above the clouds until we reach the neighbourhood of the Haymarket, which will probably be a few minutes after eleven. We will then descend and hover above His Majesty's Theatre—too far above it to be seen by those in the street, but near enough for us to see the flashes of Cundle's electric lamp."

He turned to Cundle again. "So, now, perhaps, you can guess why I have given you that lamp of mine," he said. "It is much more powerful than the cheap things you will get from Marx & Co., and consequently its light can be seen at a much greater distance. In other words, we shall not need to bring the airship so near the ground as we should have to do if you signalled to us with one of Marx & Co.'s lamps."

"Whilst you are hawking your lamps outside the theatre," he continued, "Fairfax and I will be poised two hundred feet above your head in the airship. So long as you only send single flashes up into the sky, we shall know that the performance is not yet finished; but the instant we see three, two, and, three flashes, we shall know that the Prince of Wales is on the point of leaving the theatre. The airship will then drop down from the skies with the swiftness of a falling star; and before the bystanders have recovered from their stupefaction we shall have snatched up the Prince of Wales, and the airship will have shot up again and disappeared!"

Cundle chuckled and rubbed his hands. "That sounds like a bit of orl rite!" he said. "An' wot am I to do when you and Mr. Fairfax 'ave vamoosed with 'is Royal 'ighness?"

"In the excitement and confusion which will ensue," said Herman, "you will quietly stroll away, walk to Waterloo, and take the next train back to Hartop."

"It's a daring scheme," said Fairfax. "With a bit of luck it ought to come off."

"It's bound to come off," said Herman confidently. "I've only given you a rough outline of my plan, but I've got all the details arranged in my mind, and you can take it from me that success is absolutely assured."

"Will you bring the Prince here?" asked Fairfax.

"No," said Herman; "we'll take him to Curzon Street."

"Curzon Street!" gasped Fairfax. "Then do you propose to let him know who you are?"

"Not likely!"

"But he's bound to know who you are if you take him to your house. Remember, he has been there before."

"I know. But he has never been in that underground vault where the records of the league are kept. After we have captured him, and got him safely aboard the airship, we'll bind and blindfold him, and we won't remove his bandages until he's safely in that vault. Tomorrow we'll open negotiations with the Government for his ransom; and when our terms have been accepted and the money has been paid, we'll blindfold him again, take him away at dead of night, and set him at liberty in the middle of Hampstead Heath. In that way he will never know where he was imprisoned, and consequently

he will never know the name of the man who kidnapped him."

"I hadn't thought of that underground vault," admitted Fairfax. "As you say, we could work the trick in that way without much difficulty. But what about the airship?"

"What about the airship?"

"Well, after we've kidnapped the Prince, you say we'll take him to Curzon Street. The airship, I suppose, will descend in the yard at the back of the house?"

"Of course. It will be pitch-dark at the time, so that nobody will see her descend."

"But they'll see her next morning, for the masts are considerably higher than the walls of the yard."

"But she won't be there next morning!"

"Oh! I thought you meant to keep the airship at Curzon Street until the Prince had been ransomed."

"Not at all. After we've taken the Prince to my house, and carried him down to the vault, I shall leave you in charge of him, whilst I re-embark on the airship and navigate her back to this place. I shall then leave the vessel here, and return by train to London, and rejoin you at Curzon Street. Have you any further objections to urge?"

"No," said Fairfax. "You seem to have thought of everything. One point, however, suggests itself. Ought we not to let the servants at Curzon Street know that we are coming there to-night?"

"Most decidedly! I must not only warn them of our coming, but I must see that the vault is prepared for the Prince's reception."

"Does that mean that you will go to Curzon Street before we kidnap the Prince?"

"Obviously. It is now half-past nine. I shall leave here for London by the ten-thirty train, go to the Centurion, doff my disguise, and go to my house in Curzon Street. After I have given the servants their instructions, I shall return to the Centurion, resume my disguise, and leave for Hartop by the three o'clock train from Waterloo."

"I shall be back here by five o'clock at the latest. Half an hour will suffice to disguise Cundle. He will leave Hartop for London, as I said before, at half-past six, and four hours later you and I will leave in the airship."

"That is my plan," he concluded, "and it only remains to ask if you are willing to help me to carry it out."

His two confederates replied in the affirmative; and after half an hour's further discussion Paul Herman—still disguised as Squire Mandeville, of course—left the manor, walked down to the village station, caught the ten-thirty train, and departed for London.

### The Kidnapped Prince.

AS the reader may remember, Paul Herman was a twofold member of the Centurion Club, in Piccadilly. That is to say, he was a member under the name and in the character of Paul Herman, the famous millionaire of Curzon Street, and he was also a member under the name and in the character of Julian Mandeville, the handsome young squire of Hartop Manor.

As the reader may also remember, "Mr. Herman" and "Squire Mandeville" had each a private suite of rooms at the club. The two suites, which had originally formed part of one large suite, adjoined each other and communicated with each other by means of a pair of folding doors. The key of these folding doors was kept by the steward, who, if he had been asked, would have said without a moment's hesitation that the doors were never unlocked.

As a matter of fact, as the reader knows, Paul Herman possessed a duplicate key, which enabled him to pass from one suite of rooms to the other whenever he wished. If, therefore, he desired to transform himself from Paul Herman to Squire Mandeville, he had only to go to the club, enter Herman's rooms, lock himself in, pass into the adjoining suite, disguise himself, and reappear as Mandeville. Contrariwise, if he wished to change from Mandeville to Herman, he had only to reverse the process by going into Mandeville's rooms, doffing his disguise, and coming out of Herman's rooms.

It was the latter course which he adopted on the day whose events we are now chronicling. Leaving Hartop, disguised as Squire Mandeville, at half-past ten in the morning, he arrived at Waterloo a little before noon. From the station he drove to the Centurion, where he sauntered

### THE OPENING CHAPTERS REWRITTEN.

The League of the Iron Hand is a band of reckless scoundrels with members in every part of London, and amongst every class of society. At their head is Paul Herman, millionaire, with several aliases. He is known in the league as Number One. The only remaining member of the Ruling Council now is Mr. Willoughby Fairfax.

These scoundrels learn that a young inventor, Donald Stuart, has succeeded at last in perfecting his airship. The inventor is arrested and imprisoned—accused of the theft of most valuable jewels, but is subsequently released on evidence of his innocence secured by the detectives, and the league takes advantage of his absence to steal his airship.

Herman, in rescuing from Dartmoor a convict named Cundle by means of the airship, has its suspensory mechanism injured by a bullet from Nelson Lee's revolver.

Herman gets all the electrical engineers who are members of the league to try to repair the airship, but every one fails. He therefore, with Cundle's assistance, kidnaps Donald Stuart. Stuart refuses, even when he is cruelly tortured; and

upstairs and let himself into Squire Mandeville's private room. Twenty minutes later the door of Paul Herman's private room opened, and the well-known millionaire walked briskly downstairs, entered the dining-room, and ordered lunch.

At the conclusion of lunch he sent for a hansom, and drove to his palatial mansion in Curzon Street. As he stepped out of the hansom, two seedy-looking characters, who were loafing on the other side of the road, exchanged significant glances. A moment later Paul Herman had dismissed the hansom and had entered the house, little suspecting that the two men on the opposite side of the road were Nelson Lee and Derrick O'Brien.

What happened inside the house need not be described at any great length. After Paul Herman had called the servants together, and had told them of his plot for kidnapping the Prince of Wales, he accompanied two of them down to a small underground vault, whose principal contents consisted of three large fire-proof safes. Two of these safes contained counterfeit money and forged banknotes, which were waiting to be put into circulation. The third contained the membership roll of the League of the Iron Hand and a large collection of books and papers relating to the proceedings of the league.

After Herman had given the servants instructions as to how this vault was to be converted into a temporary residence for their illustrious prisoner, he requested them to accompany him to the yard at the back of the house—a large, square, stone-flagged yard, surrounded by high walls. On one side of the yard were a pair of big wooden gates, pierced by a little wicket. These gates, it may be added, led into a narrow side street running out of Curzon Street, and known as Albany Terrace.

"Now, I want you to pay particular attention to what I'm now going to say," said Herman to the servants, when they reached this yard. "Mr. Fairfax and I will probably arrive here in the airship with our prisoner about half-past eleven. At quarter-past eleven, therefore, not a minute later, you must lock those gates and extinguish all the lights at the back of the house."

"In order that the airship may descend into the yard without accident, it is necessary that I should have some means of ascertaining the exact position of the yard. For this purpose you must station four men in the yard, one at each corner, and each man must be provided with an electric torch, which he must hold above his head in such a way that I can see the four points of light from the airship's deck. Is that clear?"

"Quite, sir," said one of the servants. "Must nobody else, except those four, be in the yard when you arrive?"

"That's immaterial," said Herman. "All the servants can be in the yard, if they wish, but only those four must have lights. When the airship has safely descended, we'll leave the vessel in the yard whilst we carry our prisoner down to the underground vault. Mr. Fairfax will then remain with him whilst I take the airship back to the place from which it came."

"And where is that, sir?" asked one of the servants eagerly. "Where is the airship now?"

Herman turned to the man and regarded him with a cold and steely stare. As the reader will remember, all the servants at Curzon Street knew that Paul Herman was Number One, but none of them knew that he was Squire Mandeville, of Hartop Manor. They were as ignorant as the public, therefore, as to where the airship had gone, after its escape from Rycroft Hall; and they were equally ignorant as to where Paul Herman, Fairfax, and Cundle had been hiding for the last eleven days.

"That is no concern of yours," said Herman, in answer to the servant's eager question. "Your sole business is to obey my orders, and to ask no questions."

The servant mumbled an apology, and after Herman had given them some further orders he left the house and walked back to the Centurion. Having disguised himself at the club as Squire Mandeville, he drove to Waterloo, caught the three o'clock train to Hartop, and was back at the manor by a quarter to five.

When he had explained to Cundle and Fairfax the arrangements he had made at Curzon Street, the three men adjourned to a little room on the first floor, in which was a large and varied collection of costumes, wigs, false beards and moustaches, and so forth. Here Herman assisted Cundle to disguise himself; which done, the

knowing that Donald is very fond of his young brother Jack, Herman decides to kidnap Jack as well, and to torture the boy until Stuart agrees to repair the airship. He does so, taking Nipper, Nelson Lee's pupil, also a prisoner.

Nipper, however, though he escaped, has suffered from loss of memory caused by a blow upon the head, and goes wandering about with a hawker of chairs and wickerwork baskets. Then, a week later, his memory returns to him, and the boy at once, rushes to Nelson Lee's rooms, tells him his story, and the detective, together with O'Brien and Nipper, set out for Rycroft Hall.

In the meantime Paul Herman endeavours once more to force Donald Stuart to repair the stolen airship. Herman threatens to kill Stuart's brother Jack unless he consents.

What could Donald do but consent? He repairs the airship, which is on the point of starting when Nelson Lee and O'Brien burst into the shed. The scoundrels, however, make good their escape.

(Their next daring exploit, to capture the Prince of Wales, is now about to be told.)

ex-convict trudged off to the station and left by train for London.

It was then half-past six. At eight o'clock Herman and Fairfax dined. At half-past nine they went up to the little room already described, and disguised themselves. At ten o'clock they strolled down to the shed in which the airship was housed, and half an hour later, with Herman and Fairfax aboard, the airship shot up through the open roof and turned her head towards London.

It was a quarter-past eleven. Outside His Majesty's Theatre, in the Haymarket, a small knot of people had collected in expectation of seeing the Prince of Wales come out. Down the middle of the road stretched a long line of waiting cabs and hansoms.

In front of the theatre door stood a modest-looking brougham, drawn by a pair of well-groomed horses, whose silver-mounted harness bore the crest of the Prince of Wales. A coachman, attired in the Royal livery, sat on the box, and a footman, also in the Royal livery, stood beside the carriage door, ready to open it the moment the Prince appeared.

"Ere yer are! The litesst wonder of the ige! Yer press the button, and the helectric current does the rest! Sixpence each—only a tanner apiece—for the litesst wonder of the ige!"

In and out amongst the little crowd moved a ragged street hawker with a trayful of cheap electric lamps suspended round his neck. As

(Continued on the next page.)

## A Quick Route to Strength

By EUGEN SANDOW

I have just received a long letter from one of my readers, which again opens up a subject upon which a good deal has been written and upon which many misleading statements have been made.

As the subject is a very important one from an athletic point of view, I propose giving an extract from the letter, and hope I shall be able to dispose of this bogey once and for all.

My correspondent writes: "I am glad to be able to tell you that I have received considerable benefit from the regular performance of your exercises, and can safely say that I have never felt so fit in my life; but whilst talking to a friend of mine the other day—who, by the way, does not believe in Physical Culture—he happened to say that the more I developed my muscles the slower and less active I should become. In fact, that the stronger I got the more clumsy I should be. As I am an enthusiastic footballer, possessing a very good turn of speed, I should be glad if you will give me your opinion on the matter, as I should be sorry to gain strength at the expense of ability."

Right here I may say once and for all that such statements are absolutely false—in fact, wicked—for it is by such statements that Physical Culture is kept back from the premier position it should occupy in our daily life, and the health of our youth endangered by the bogey of clumsiness.

By the aid of Physical Culture, and by its aid alone, the mind is made complete master of the muscular system, and the more control the mind has over the muscles, the quicker will they respond to the action of the mind, and the more rapid will they become in action.

I hope none of my readers have been persuaded to discontinue these exercises through fear of becoming "slow," for I can assure them they have no cause for alarm.



Ex. 5.—READY POSITION.

Stand erect, arms extended in front of the body.

MOVEMENT.

Bring the arms slowly backward in a line with the shoulders, inhaling steadily all the time the hands are travelling. Make a momentary pause, brace up the chest, bring the arms forward again, exhaling to the utmost all the time that the hands are travelling. Breathing movement slow. Muscles: Deltoid, Pectorals, Rhomboids, and Trapezius.

Every reader may obtain a free copy of the new edition of "Sandow's Way to Strength" by writing to No. 6, Sandow Hall, Burleigh Street, Strand, London, W.C.

This book shows how I obtained my great strength, and how readers can make themselves physically perfect.

### A WONDERFUL BARGAIN.

All who apply for my world-famed approval sheets and enclose 1d. stamp for postage will receive a wonderful packet of 100 different stamps FREE, including Guatemala, Herzegovina, Transvaal (obsolete), Orange River Colony, new issue Hyderabad, &c. Write at once, as only a limited number will be given away. Don't forget 1d. postage.—H. C. WATKINS (Dept. H. B.), Granville Road, Barnet.

### A NICE MOUSTACHE

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**THE IRON HAND.**

(Continued from the previous page.)

he cried his wares he kept flashing the rays of a lamp from side to side; whilst ever and anon, at intervals of a minute, he raised his hand and flashed a solitary beam towards the shy.

"Move on, there!" ordered a gruff-voiced constable, as the hawker paused for a moment to peer through the theatre door.

Cundle—for such it was, of course—shuffled away to the edge of the crowd, where he took up a position from which he had an uninterrupted view of the theatre door. Scarcely had he done so ere a sudden stir was observed amongst the officials and attendants in the entrance lobby, followed, a moment later, by the distant clatter of many feet, as the occupants of the gallery swarmed down the stairs and out into the street.

"Ere yer are! The litesst wonder of the age!" chanted Cundle, as he raised himself on tiptoe and gazed earnestly through the theatre door. "Yer press the button—"

The rest of the sentence was drowned by a shout from the crowd.

"Here he is!" The Prince of Wales, accompanied by his equerry and a man in the uniform of an admiral, was seen to be crossing the entrance lobby on his way to the door.

As the crowd pressed forward, to get a nearer view of his Royal Highness, Cundle raised his hand and pressed the button of his lamp three times, twice, and three times again. At the same instant the footman threw open the brougham door and stood stiffly to attention.

"Three cheers for the Prince of Wales!" cried somebody in the crowd, as the Prince stepped out on to the pavement.

The cheers were given with a will. Obviously gratified by this spontaneous tribute to his popularity, the Prince paused for a moment, before entering the brougham, and raised his hat in acknowledgment of the cheers. Even as he did so the hum of rapidly revolving screws was heard, and the next instant, to the horrified consternation of the spectators, the airship swooped down from the skies, like some gigantic bird of prey, and came to a standstill just over the Prince's head!

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that for a moment everybody in the street, including the Prince himself, was paralysed with stupefaction. Ere they had time to regain their presence of mind a man sprang to the airship's side with a coil of rope in his hand. It was Fairfax, and the rope he held had a running noose at the lower end.

With the swiftness of a lightning-flash he flung the rope overboard and dropped the noose over the Prince's shoulders. And the next instant, almost before the bystanders had realised what was happening, the noose had been drawn tight, the Prince had been jerked off his feet and had been hauled aboard the airship!

Then at last the spectators awoke from their stupefaction. But it was then too late, for even as they rushed towards the airship, with a roar of indignant fury, the vessel leaped upwards like a thing alive; and in less time than it takes to tell it had soared above the theatre roof and had disappeared from view.

**The Unseen Watcher.**

It has already been related how Nelson Lee and O'Brien agreed to keep watch on Paul Herman's house in Curzon Street, and how for nine days their watching yielded no result.

On the tenth day, immediately after breakfast, the two detectives repaired to Curzon Street again, disguised, of course, and took up their usual positions in front of Herman's house. For four hours their watching proved as fruitless as before, and Nelson Lee was on the point of suggesting that one of them should go for lunch, when a hansom drove up to the front door, and Paul Herman stepped out.

"At last!" muttered Nelson Lee, with a sigh of relief. "Cut after that hansom, quick, and find out, if you can, where Herman has come from."

The two detectives, it will be remembered had seen nothing of Herman, and had been unable to obtain any news of him, except that he was "away from home," since the night when the airship had escaped from Rycroft Hall.

O'Brien hurried away in the wake of the vanishing hansom, leaving Nelson Lee to keep watch on the house. Over half an hour elapsed without any further incident; then O'Brien came back.

"Well, did you overtake the hansom?" asked Nelson Lee.

"Yes," said O'Brien. "I ran it to earth on the rank at Hyde Park Corner, and I got to know all I wanted to know for the price of a quart of beer."

"And where has Herman come from?"

"From the Centurion Club."

"The Centurion!" repeated Nelson Lee. "Is it possible, then, that Herman has been living at his club ever since that affair at Rycroft?"

"It looks like it," admitted O'Brien. "It's rather a pity I gave up my post as waiter at the club so soon, isn't it? Has anything happened here since I left you?"

"Not a thing," said Nelson Lee. "Herman is still in the house."

The words had scarcely crossed his lips ere the front door opened and Herman came out. As the reader knows, he had finished giving the servants their instructions, and was now going back to the Centurion, to resume his disguise as Squire Mandeville.

"One of us must shadow him, whilst the other remains here to watch the house," said Nelson Lee hurriedly. "Will you shadow him, or shall I?"

"I will," said O'Brien; and without another word he glided after the unsuspecting Herman.

There is no need to devote any great amount of space to recording the result of O'Brien's shadowing. The reader, indeed, has probably guessed already what happened.

The Irish detective followed Herman to the Centurion Club, and saw him go in. During the next half-hour he saw several members of the club come out, and amongst them he saw Squire Mandeville. But it never occurred to O'Brien, of course, to suspect that Squire Mandeville was Paul Herman in disguise.

The result was, that whilst Herman was journeying back to Har-top, whilst he was disguising Cundle, and whilst he and Fairfax were kidnapping the Prince of Wales, O'Brien was cooling his heels outside the Centurion, waiting for Paul Herman to come out.

In the meantime, Nelson Lee was keeping unwearying watch on the house in Curzon Street, making careful note of everyone who called at the house. For nine hours after O'Brien left to shadow Herman, nothing happened that calls for description; then, about five or ten minutes past eleven, a constable strode up to Nelson Lee and flashed the light of his bullseye into the detective's face.

"Now, look here, my fine fellow," said the constable, "I've had my eye on you for the last half-hour, and you haven't moved twenty yards away from the front of this house all the time. If you don't clear off, and pretty quick, too, I'll take you into custody for loafing with intent!"

Mumbling something about not knowing he was "doin' any 'arm," the detective shuffled across the road and turned into Albany Terrace, intending to remain there until the constable took his departure, and then to return to his former position in front of the house.

As he shuffled down the narrow side-street, however, he heard the constable following him; and, in order to escape his unwelcome attentions the detective, acting on the impulse of the moment, opened the wicket-gate which led into the yard at the back of Herman's house, and slipped inside, closing the gate behind him.

"I'll wait here until he has gone past," he muttered to himself, "and then I'll go back to my post."

Crouching just inside the gate, he heard the constable's heavy footsteps approach the gate, pass it, and gradually die away in the distance. But just as Nelson Lee was about to open the wicket-gate and slip out into the street again, the back door of the house was suddenly flung open and a crowd of male servants trooped out.

Owing to the intense darkness of the night, and owing also to the fact that all the lights at the back of the house had been extinguished, the detective's presence escaped the notice of the servants, who were only visible to Nelson Lee by the light which streamed through the open back door. When this door was closed, as it quickly was, the yard was once more plunged in inky darkness, and the presence of the servants was only revealed by their footsteps and their voices.

"Now then, you four, away to your corners!" he heard one of the servants say. "I'll lock the gates."

All this took place so quickly that Nelson Lee had barely time to fling himself face downwards on the ground ere a man strode past him in the darkness, jingling a bunch of keys, and locked the gates.

"I'm fairly trapped now!" groaned Nelson Lee, as he pressed himself a little closer to the inside of the yard-wall, in order to minimise the

torches are meant to serve as beacon-lights, to guide the airship into this yard. Paul Herman is Number One, as O'Brien and I have long suspected, and he's coming here to-night in the airship."

Whilst the detective was musing thus, the servants had grouped themselves about the yard, and were conversing together in low whispers. In vain the detective strained his ears to catch some fragment of their conversation. He could hear the murmur of their voices, but was unable to distinguish what they said, until suddenly he heard one of them exclaim, "Listen! They're coming!"

"I don't hear anything," said another.

"But I do," said the first. "Listen! Can't you hear the humming of the screws?"

Nelson Lee had already heard it, and a few seconds later everybody in the yard could hear it, for all the world like the droning of a swarm of bees, growing nearer and more distinct every moment.

As the reader may guess, Nelson Lee's excitement was now at fever-heat. He forgot that he was in a trap from which he might never escape. He only remembered that his surmise was correct—that the airship was coming, and would presently descend before his very eyes.

"I see it!"

The exclamation burst in low, stifled voices from half a dozen servants at once; and a moment later the dark form of the airship was seen, slowly settling down towards the centre of the yard.

"Stand clear!" The voice came from the airship's deck. The detective recognised it at once. It was the voice of Paul Herman.

The servants drew back to the side of the yard—fortunately to the opposite side to that where Nelson Lee was lying face downwards on the ground. Amid breathless silence the airship sank lower and lower, till at last its keel rested on the ground.

"Bring those electric torches here!"

Again Paul Herman spoke. The four men who had been standing at the corners of the yard advanced towards the airship, and by the light of their electric torches the detective perceived for the first time that there were two men aboard the vessel. Despite their disguises, he recognised them at a glance as Paul Herman and Willoughby Fairfax.

At a sign from Herman the rest of the servants flocked to the airship's side, and Nelson Lee heard one of them ask, "Have you got him, sir?"

"We have!" said Herman, with a triumphant laugh. "Here he is, underneath this tarpaulin. Help me to lift him out."

Scarcely daring to breathe, the detective crawled a few feet nearer to the airship, and saw the servants lift out a man, who appeared to be bound, gagged, and blindfolded. There was something about the man's appearance which struck Nelson Lee as familiar; but never for an instant did he dream that this helpless prisoner was King Edward's eldest son and the Heir Apparent to the Throne of Great Britain.

"Now then, into the house with him!" commanded Herman, as he sprang down from the airship, with Fairfax at his heels.

With Herman and Fairfax at their head, the servants carried their illustrious prisoner into the house, and a moment later the detective and the airship were the only occupants of the yard.

Never for an instant did Nelson Lee hesitate how to act. He did not know, of course, that the prisoner he had just seen carried into the house was the Prince of Wales; but he knew that Herman and Fairfax were in the house, and the airship was in the yard.

"I must go to Scotland Yard at once," he decided. "When I've told my story to the Chief Commissioner, we'll return with a large body of police, surround the house, arrest all the inmates, liberate the prisoner, and secure the airship."

Fired by this hope, he rose to his feet and glided towards the gate. It was locked, but in little more time than it takes to tell he swarmed over the gate and ran swiftly down the deserted street.

At the bottom of Curzon Street he fell in with an empty hansom.

"Scotland Yard, quick as you can!" he cried, as he sprang on the hansom step.

"Ere, not so fast!" growled the indignant cabby, regarding his disreputable fare with evident disfavour. "I'd like to see the colour of yer money afore I takes yer on!"

By way of reply, the detective whipped out his purse and thrust a sovereign into the cabby's hand.

"I'm Nelson Lee," he said simply.

The mention of his name proved more effective even than the golden coin. Without a word the cabby whipped up his horse, and a moment later the hansom was rattling along Piccadilly as fast as the horse could gallop.

(Did Nelson Lee succeed in capturing Number One? This question will be answered in the next instalment of this grand detective story.)



**HOW THE PRINCE WAS KIDNAPPED!**

A man sprang to the airship's side with a coil of rope in his hand. It was Fairfax. With the swiftness of a lightning-flash he flung the rope overboard. The next instant the noose had been drawn tight, the Prince of Wales had been jerked off his feet and had been hauled aboard the airship.

risk of discovery. "If these fellows find me, I shall have a pretty rough time, no doubt. However, I don't know that I'm sorry I came in here, for it's evident that something's going to happen. Why have all these servants flocked out into the yard at this hour of the night? Why have they locked the gates? What did that fellow mean by ordering four of them away to their corners? Why—Hullo! What's the meaning of that?"

Four points of light had suddenly cleft the darkness, one in each corner of the yard.

"Electric torches," muttered Nelson Lee, "One man in each corner, each with an electric torch in his hand. By Jove, I believe I'm on the brink of the biggest discovery I've ever made since I started my campaign against the League of the Iron Hand! I see everything now. Those

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