

GREAT RAILWAY DETECTIVE TALE!

STARTS IN
THIS ISSUE

The Greyfriars



Herald

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THE
MYSTERY
OF THE
MIDNIGHT MAIL

AN AMAZING DETECTIVE TALE WHICH STARTS IN THIS ISSUE



The Staff

Editorial
By Harry Wharton.

THE CONVERSION OF THE CRITICS!

My Dear Chums,—I want to express my great appreciation of your kindness in writing so many letters to me lately, and my pleasure that you find THE GREYFRIARS HERALD so agreeable to you in its present form.

Even the critics who said that nothing but Greyfriars stories should be published seem to have been converted. They still have those two tit-bits, the "Police Court" and the "Weekly Interview," on pages 10 and 11, and I'll warrant that they'll enjoy every word of that thrilling detective tale, "The Mystery of the Midnight Mail," by popular W. Murray Graydon, which starts on page 12 of this issue.

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(Author of the famous Rookwood school stories appearing weekly in the Boys' Friend)

CHAPTER I.

No Flutter For Tuckey!

POM-pom!
Pom-pom-pom!
The dull beating of the tom-tom echoed far and wide on the broad Savannah, outside Port of Spain.

Jack Drake and Dick Rodney looked round them with interest. They sat in the buggy with Arthur Cazalet, their West Indian chum; Mr. Cazalet, the sun-browned planter, was driving. It was a half-holiday on the school-ship, and Drake and Rodney were enjoying a run ashore; the last, probably, before the old Benbow lifted her anchor and steered westward.

Along the road from Port of Spain, innumerable vehicles were passing, and still more innumerable pedestrians tramped. To the juniors it seemed as if most of the population of Trinidad was converging towards the race ground.

White men, and brown and black and yellow, crowded the road and the Savannah. Loud music—more or less musical—came from a huge merry-go-round, with shrieks of laughter and excitement from festive negroes and mulattoes. By the roadside a white-haired African was beating a tom-tom, and a dozen blacks were dancing round him. Evidently it was a day of festivity for the coloured population.

"What a thumping row!" remarked Jack Drake. "Those fellows seem to be enjoying it, though."

"They enjoy most things," said Arthur Cazalet, with a smile. "The blacks take life pretty easily. Hallo, there are some of your school fellows!"

He nodded towards three fellows in straw-hats who were strolling by the group of negroes, glancing at them curiously as they passed. The three were Daubeny, Torrence, and Egan, of the Shell.

Drake waved his hand to Daubeny. "Cheerio, Daub!" he called out.

Vernon Daubeny glanced round and waved a neatly gloved hand back to him. Torrence smiled, and Egan frowned. The latter slipped his arm through Daubeny's, and drew him quickly away.

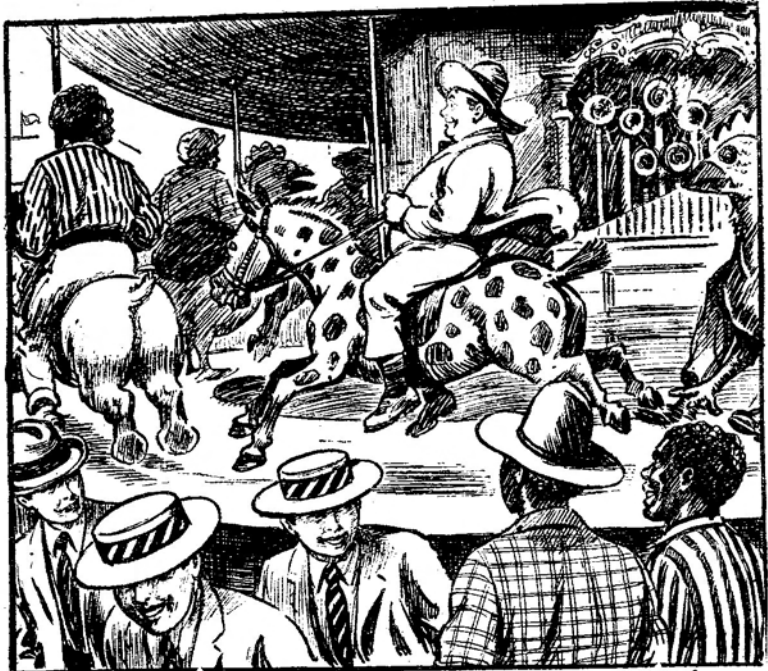
"Come on, Daub!" the juniors in the buggy heard him say.

Vernon Daubeny hesitated, but he walked away with his companions, and the trio disappeared in the crowd.

Jack Drake knitted his brows for a moment.

It was pretty clear that Egan wished to keep Daubeny at a safe distance from the Fourth-formers.

The buggy rolled on as fast as the crowded state of the road allowed, and the thumping of the tom-tom became duller behind. The raucous strains from the merry-go-round grew louder



The roundabout started with a whirr and a clatter. Then Jack Drake and Co. disappeared far from Tuckey's pursuit.

and sharper. The buggy stopped at last, and Mr. Cazalet turned to the three boys.

"I'll put you down here," he said. "I can trust you to look after yourselves for a time, I suppose?"

"I hope so, sir," said Drake.

"There is a fair here, as well as the races, as you see," continued the planter. "Plenty for you to see, without getting into mischief. You will find me in the grand stand when you want me."

The chums alighted, and walked along the booths, where voluble negroes and negresses were offering articles for sale, in a constant clatter of tongues. Coolie pedlars, with olive East-Indian faces, displayed trays of their wares. Silent, sedate Chinamen moved about, surveying the animated scene with grave almond eyes—some of them with their wives bedecked in the most striking finery. The grand stand was crowded with the wealth and fashion of Port of Spain. The endlessly varying costumes in the crowd struck the school-boys most of all; above all, the finery of the more wealthy black ladies, some of whom were clad in expensive Parisian "confections," which must have been extremely uncomfortable under the blazing sun of Trinidad.

"Hallo, old tops!"

A fat hand was laid on Jack Drake's sleeve.

It belonged to Tuckey Toodles.

The fat junior grinned affectionately at the chums of the Fourth, and gave Cazalet a careless nod.

Drake and Rodney did not look very affectionate. They could easily have dispensed with the society of Rupert de Vere Toodles.

"Hallo! You're here after all!" grunted Drake.

"Certainly, old fellow. Dr. Pankey's brought a crowd of the chaps to see the sights," said Tuckey. "I came with the rest. But I've dodged away. I'm not going to have the merry medico watching me all the afternoon."

"Better get back to the party, hadn't you?"

"My dear old fellow, not at all. I spotted you, and ran you down; surely you didn't think I would desert you?" said Toodles affectionately. "Besides, the fact is, old scout, I'm going to have a flutter."

"Fathead!"

"There's a horse they call Christobal Colon—after old Columbus, I suppose," said Tuckey. "He's a goer! He's going to win the five o'clock."

"How do you know, you ass?"

"Well, Egan thinks so," babbled Tuckey. "Egan knows a lot about horses. You know, he often used to win when he plunged at St. Winny's. Daub and Torrence generally lost money, but Egan often brought it off. I remember you remarking on it when you used to go into that kind of thing with them, Drake."

Drake flushed red.

He would gladly have forgotten that there had been a time when he had been foolish and reckless in company with the Bucks of St. Winifred's. But Tuckey Toodles was not famous for his tact. If ever there was anything better left unmentioned, Tuckey could always be relied upon to mention it.

"You silly goat——" began Rodney.

"I'm backing Egan's fancy," said Toodles, unheeding. "I'm going to

have a quid on Cristobal Colon. You fellows come along with me and I'll introduce you to a bookie."

"You silly owl!" exclaimed Drake.

"I say, old fellow—"

"If I see you speaking to a bookie, I'll give you my boot!"

"My dear chap, we're quite safe here," said Toodles fatuously. "Old Pankey can't have his eye on us all the time. Perhaps it would be a bit too conspicuous to go among the bookies. But it's all right—there's the captain."

"What captain?"

"Egan's friend—Captain St. Leger," said Tucky Toodles. "He's a regular sportsman. He's here, you know. Army man, you know; he doesn't look much like an Army captain, but he says so. He takes bets. Egan's betting with him, you know. He'll give us the odds. I say, will you lend me a few pounds, Drake? I'll hand it back this evening, out of my winnings, and stand a feed on the Benbow, 'oo."

"You born idiot!" gasped Drake.

"If you've got a quid or two to spare, Rodney—"

"Rats!"

"I think you're jolly mean!" said Toodles. "I've just given you a tip worth no end of money. I say Cazalet"—Tucky Toodles turned his sweetest, fat smile upon the planter's son, whom he had hardly noticed hitherto—"I dare say you've got a few quids about you!"

"Quite so!" said Arthur drily.

"Lend me some!"

Jack Drake interrupted Tucky Toodles at that point by smacking him forcibly on top of his hat. Tucky was sporting his big Spanish sombrero which was too big for him, and the smack on the high crown drove the sombrero down over his ears, and Tucky was buried to the chin.

"Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Groogh!" came in muffled accents from the interior of the sombrero.

"Yow-ow! Pull it off, you rotters!" Tucky struggled with the sombrero. But it was jammed down quite tightly, and it was no easy task to get it off again. While Tucky was engaged in that interesting task, Jack Drake and Co. walked away at a good pace, leaving him to it.

When Tucky's flushed and wrathful face emerged from the sombrero at last, the chums of the Fourth had disappeared.

A Row at the Races!

ARTHUR CAZALET was looking rather thoughtful as he walked away with his friends from the Benbow.

Drake and Rodney felt extremely uncomfortable.

Tucky's fatuous babble had been very exasperating. The Benbow fellows were on the Savannah that afternoon to enjoy themselves; but Master Toodles evidently had an eye to personal profit—not that he was likely to bag any profits by speculations on horseflesh. But if he had lost money, Tucky would have had the consolation that it wasn't his own.

Arthur smiled as he found Drake's glance turned on him.

"That chap Toodles is rather original," he remarked.

"He's a born silly ass!" growled Drake. "I'm sorry I didn't kick him now! Who's this Captain St. Leger he was speaking of? Have you ever heard of him?"

Arthur nodded.

"A rather shady character of Port of Spain," he said. "He's no more a captain than he is a field-marshal. He lives on races and billiards. The fact is, my father saw one of your fellows talking with him in Frederick Street one day and chipped in. He thought he ought to put the kid on his guard."

"Quite right. It was Egan, I suppose?" said Drake, rather anxiously. He could not help thinking that perhaps it was Daubeny.

"Yes, Egan," said Arthur. "He took what my pater said in good part; otherwise, I think dad would have felt bound to mention the matter on the Benbow. That man isn't fit for a fellow to speak to."

"I suppose he's here to-day?"

"He's always at the races; it's his living."

Drake looked round him, with a clouded brow.

He had little doubt that Vernon Daubeny would make Captain St. Leger's acquaintance that afternoon, if he had not made it before. He knew that Daub's half-hearted efforts at reformation would fail, if Egan had his way.

"There he is!" added Arthur.

Near a corner of the grand stand, behind the building, three Benbow juniors stood chatting to a horse-looking man who had the half-fashionable, half-hangdog look of the professional punter.

"So that's Captain St. Leger?" muttered Drake.

"That's the man!"

Drake eyed the bogus captain with a glance of strong disfavour, from his carefully polished boots to his dyed moustache and sharp black eyes. "Sharper" was written all over the man's keen brown face; but the Bucks of the Benbow seemed quite satisfied with him. The four were talking together earnestly.

Vernon Daubeny had his pocket-book in his hand. He started as he saw Jack Drake near him, and flushed hotly.

Drake stopped.

"Wait a minute for me, you fellows!" he muttered. "I want to speak a word to Daub!"

Without waiting for Rodney or Cazalet to reply, Jack Drake walked quickly towards the group by the grand stand.

"Even money!" the captain was saying, as he came up.

"Done!" said Egan.

Egan gave Drake a bitter look as he arrived. The captain glanced at him, and nodded carelessly—a salute of which Drake did not take any notice. He had not politeness to waste upon a gentleman who lived by his wits. He touched Vernon Daubeny lightly on the arm.

"What do you want?" exclaimed Daubeny irritably.

"Your company, old chap," said Drake amicably. "We've got seats in the grand stand—Cazalet's got them—

and we can make room for you. You'll come, won't you?"

"Not now."

"The races begin pretty soon," said Drake.

"I know."

"Daub's with us, Drake," said Egan, with a dangerous look. "What sort of a bouncer do you call yourself to wedge in like this?"

"Do you think I don't know what your game is, Egan?" exclaimed Drake his eyes flashing. "You're getting Daub to play the goat again in your rotten way!"

"Fair words, please!" said Egan, between his teeth.

"Plain English is good enough for you!" said Drake scornfully. "You are a rotter and you're playing a rotten game! Daub, old chap, come along with us now!"

"Daub isn't exactly a kid in leading strings!" said Egan derisively. "Are you going to feed him and put his bib and tucker on?"

Daub made an angry movement.

"Look here, Drake, I'm with these fellows!" he said. "I suppose I can look after my own affairs!"

Drake checked the hot words that rose to his lips.

"Dr. Pankey is about the place somewhere, Daub," he said quietly. "If he should spot you playing the goat like this, you know what it means when you get back to the Benbow!"

"Are you goin' to tell him?" sneered Egan.

"Hold your tongue!" said Drake savagely. "Daub, won't you do the sensible thing? Come along!"

"I won't come!" muttered Daubeny.

"If you're seen with this man—"

"Are you alluding to me?" struck in the captain, coming a pace forward, and taking a grip on the cane he carried under his arm.

Drake eyed him fearlessly and contemptuously.

"Yes," he answered. "It doesn't need more than one look at you, Captain St. Leger, to see the kind of man you are!"

The tint in the captain's brown cheek deepened.

"You cheeky young cub!" he began.

"What the thump do you mean, Drake, insultin' my friends?" broke in Daubeny angrily. "Mind your own business, bother you! What the dickens do you want to meddle with me for?"

Drake bit his lip hard.

"Well, I won't meddle any further, if it comes to that," he said. "If you choose to play the goat, it's your own look-out, I suppose."

"Go and eat coke!"

"And take that to remind you of me!" said the captain, giving Drake a light cut across the shoulder with his cane.

Drake's eyes flamed.

The worthy captain certainly could not have anticipated the result of his action, or doubtless he would have kept his cane under his arm.

Drake sprang forward, with his hands up, and before the captain knew what was happening, a hard set of knuckles crashed upon his rather bulbous nose.

Bump!

Captain St. Leger went down on his back with a shock that made him

gasp, and a nose more bulbous than ever.

"By gad!" he gasped.
 "You rotten ruffian!" shouted Egan.
 "How dare—" He broke off, and backed away, as Drake turned on him with flashing eyes.

Rodney and Cazalet came up with a run. The captain was struggling to his feet, his face pale with fury.

There was every prospect of a terrific row; but a tall, broad-shouldered coloured policeman came elbowing through the buzzing throng that gathered immediately about the spot.

The sight of the officer of the law was enough for the captain—and for his friends, the Bucks, too. Captain St. Leger melted away in the crowd, and Daubeny and Co. disappeared as quickly as possible. Arthur put his hand through Drake's arm and drew him away. By the time the tall policeman was on the scene, all was over.

Drake's lips were set, as he hurried away with his friends. He had very nearly figured prominently in a race-course row, which might have ended in the whole party being marched off to the police-station. He shivered as he thought of that. He was not likely to waste much further thought on Vernon Daubeny that day.

Daub's Luck!

"HALLO, dear old tops!"
 It was Tuckey Toodles again.

He joined the trio about half an hour after the scene with the captain, as they were making their way towards the entrance of the grand stand. The afternoon racing was about to commence, and the throng on the Savannah was thicker than ever.

"Oh, buzz!" snapped Drake. His temper was still a little ruffled.

"I say, I'm sticking to you for the rest of the day," said Toodles cheerily.
 "Too bad my missing you before, wasn't it? I say, I left my cash on board the Benbow, somehow, and I haven't even been able to go on the roundabouts. Have you fellows been on?"

"Bother the roundabouts."
 "You don't seem in a very good temper, Drake. I say, I heard Sawyer major say you'd been mixed up in a row with some racing roughs. Is it so?"

Drake compressed his lips. Evidently the scene with the captain had been witnessed by some of the Benbow fellows from afar.

"Bother Sawyer major!" he said.
 "Bother him to bits, if you like!" answered Toodles. "He's an awful cad! He wouldn't lend me a miserable quid when I asked him. You fellows going into the grand stand? All right, I'll come!"

Drake paused.
 "You haven't been on the roundabouts?" he asked.

"Not yet."
 "Come on, then."
 "Good old fellow," said Tuckey affectionately. "I'm your man."

Drake walked the fat junior away to the merry-go-round, put him on a wooden horse there, and paid for him. The roundabout started, with a whirr and a clatter and a crash.

"Ain't you having a ride?" shouted Tuckey Toodles.

Drake smiled and walked back to his friends. The merry-go-round was going fast, and Tuckey Toodles was safe for three minutes—till it stopped. In that three minutes, Jack Drake and Co. disappeared into the grand stand, far from Tuckey's pursuit.

When Rupert de Vere Toodles alighted, he looked for his school-fellows, and found them not. They had escaped again.

"Rotters!" murmured Toodles, and he went to look for Sawyer major again in the faint hope of "touching" that young gentleman for his further "exes."

Drake and Rodney and Arthur found their seats, rather low down in the stand, at the end of a row. Under the awnings, shaded from the sun, they had a good view of the course. The first race was already in progress when they settled down, and Rodney looked at his card.

"Hallo, Cristobal Colon's running in

From the tense expression on Daub's face, it was easy enough to see that he had backed Cristobal Colon heavily—more heavily, probably, than even the wealthy Daub could afford.

Drake looked at him rather grimly, but Daub did not glance up. The expression on his face grew more and more eager as he saw Cristobal Colon draw ahead of first one and then another of his competitors. Then dull angry despondency settled on his features as the horse failed to make any further gain.

Drake heard him mutter savagely—it sounded like a curse—as the intervening heads blocked his view of the horses.

Jack Drake had lost his interest in the race now.

Merely as an exhibition of horsemanship, it was exciting enough; but it was certain that there were few who looked on the racing merely as a sport. The inseparable betting and blackguardism were there; the galloping horses were little more than an animated roulette-wheel to the eyes that watched.

Rodney touched his chum's arm, and Drake looked up quickly.

"How's it going?" he asked.
 "Been asleep?" said Rodney, with a smile. "It's over!"

"My hat! Who's won the thing?"
 "The chap in the green jacket!"
 "Not Cristobal Colon?"

"Last but one!" said Arthur, with a smile.

Jack Drake glanced down at the fellow leaning outside. Daubeny was standing with a white face and clenched hands, staring straight before him. He made a sudden movement, and strode away into the crowd.

Drake started to his feet.
 "Daub!" he called.

The Shell fellow did not hear. He strode away blindly, and his last look at Daub's face haunted Jack Drake.

"What's the matter" asked Rodney, glancing in wonder at Drake's troubled face.

Drake made a gesture towards Vernon Daubeny, who was just vanishing in the throng. Rodney glanced after the Shell fellow he could see only the back of his head; but the droop of Daub's head showed what he was feeling like just then.

"It's Daub!" muttered Drake.
 "He—"

"Hard hit?" said Rodney.
 "Looks like it!"

"It serves him right!" he said.
 Jack Drake made no reply to that.

Rodney was right enough; but his opinion was that of a fellow who had always been strong enough to go straight, and who felt as much scorn as compassion for wanderers from the right path. But Drake had recollections of his own, which made him judge Daubeny more gently. It was not so very long since his own good-natured carelessness, and the influence of evil counsellors, had landed him in just such a scrape.

"You're not going?" asked Arthur.
 "There's several more races to be run yet."

"I'll come back," said Drake.
 He quitted the stand with the intention of seeking Daubeny in the crowd. Dr. Pankey was in the stand,



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this!" he said. "Blue and white—that's the gee Tuckey fancied, the ass!"

"There's six runners," said Arthur, his eyes on the race. "Blue and white don't seem to me to have much of a look in."

The juniors watched the race with interest. It was exciting enough; and thousands of eyes were upon it, and there was a ceaseless boom of shouting and yelling from the negroes. Cristobal Colon, the horse fancied by Master Toodles, on Egan's authority, was last of the six, so far, and it was not till the end of the second lap that he pulled ahead a little. Drake, who was at the end of the row of seats, heard a muttered exclamation as the horse began to gain, and looked round. Outside the stand, below him, leaning against it, was Vernon Daubeny.

He did not see Drake, or know that he was at hand; his eyes were glued upon the race.

as he noted, with a crowd of Benbow fellows, watching the show. Behind the stand there was solitude, as the view of the races was there shut off. Only a big negro, full of new-rum, was lying on the ground, insensible, with innumerable flies and mosquitoes buzzing over him. Close to the building, as Drake came round, there was a sound of excited voices.

Daubeny was there, with Egan and Torrence. Torrence had a pale, troubled look; his straw-hat was pushed back from a perspiring brow. Daub and Egan seemed to be engaged in a hot dispute.

"I can't do it, I tell you!" Egan was saying. "It's not my fault the dashed horse has lost, is it? I can just get through—just! I tell you I can't spare a red cent for anybody else!"

"You—"

"I would if I could. You know I would," said Egan. "I can't, and there's an end. How are you fixed, Torrence?"

"Stony!" was Torrence's laconic reply. "I've paid up, and it's cleared me out!"

"What am I goin' to do?" Daubeny's voice was low and husky. "I tell you I can't settle! You idiot, Egan, with your dashed dead certs! The horse was no good!"

"See the captain, and make an arrangement with him," said Egan. "He's a sport."

"A blackguardly racing tout, you mean!" said Daubeny bitterly.

"Whatever he is, you were willing enough to bet with him, and take his money, too, if you'd won!" said Egan tartly. "It's no good cryin' over spilt milk. He will make some arrangement. He knows you can get money. Tell him you're expectin' a remittance from home."

"He knows the Benbow sails in a few days."

"We'll see him."

Jack Drake came up. He gave Egan a glance of angry contempt, and called to Daubeny.

"I say, Daub—"

"Hallo, you again!" said Daubeny, with a sneer. "Have you come to give me some more good advice? Go and eat coke!"

He strode away before Drake could reply.

Deserted!

"TIME we cleared!" remarked Dick Rodney.

The racing was over, and the chums of the Fourth were strolling round the Savannah, taking a last look at the crowds in the red glow of the setting sun. The beating of the tom-toms was more frequent now; and in a score of places, negroes were dancing in dozens. Banjos twanged, and somewhere a violin shrieked out of tune. Carriages and buggies were driving away back to the town, or to the pleasant villas that lined the country roads.

"I suppose we'd better clear," agreed Drake. "Dr. Pankey's gone with his little army. They'll have to tram it back to the harbour. We're in luck. I'm sorry the Benbow is sailing next week. I wish you were coming up the Orinoco with us, Cazalet."

Arthur smiled.

"I wish I were," he said. "I'll see

you again if the Benbow touches at Trinidad. Are you looking for somebody?"

Drake's glance was wandering over the Savannah; he was thinking of Daubeny of the Shell, for the moment.

"Nobody in particular," he said hastily. "I suppose your pater will be ready to start. Let's see, anyhow."

They found Mr. Cazalet with a buggy, a couple of negroes putting the horse in. He greeted his son and the schoolboys with a smile.

The juniors stepped in, and the planter drove away, in the midst of a stream of other vehicles.

At the Cazalet's house the planter alighted, leaving his son to drive his guests down to the port. He shook hands warmly with the schoolboys, and bade them a hearty farewell. The buggy bowled on towards Port of Spain, Arthur handling the reins.

There was a sudden call from among the pedestrians by the roadside, under the trees.

"Hallo, Drake! Give us a lift, will you?"

It was Torrence of the Shell. Egan was with him, but Vernon Daubeny was not to be seen.

Arthur glanced at Drake, and drew in by the roadside.

"We can find room, if you like, Drake," he said.

Drake's feelings were not exactly amicable towards Daub's pals, but they were Benbow fellows, and he was willing to help them along.

"Jump in, Torrence," he said.

"Thanks! We couldn't get a cab back. Riches take unto themselves wings, you know, and fly away," said Torrence, laughing.

"You coming in, Egan?"

Egan hesitated a moment or two, reluctant to accept a favour from Jack Drake. But it was a long and weary walk back to the quay, and he was already tired; and the juniors had to report on the school-ship by sunset. He nodded, and followed Torrence into the buggy. Arthur drove on again.

"Daubeny gone back already?" asked Drake.

Torrence coloured a little; Egan affected not to hear the question.

"I—I think not," stammered Torrence.

Drake opened his eyes.

"He's not staying on the Savannah, surely?" he exclaimed. "He won't be back on the Benbow for calling over, at this rate."

"I—I dare say he'll follow on," said Torrence uneasily. "Not my fault, Drake. He wouldn't come. You—you see poor old Daub went in rather deep. We all did, for that matter. I'm stony. And Egan is bust to the wide, ain't you, Egan?"

"Yes," came the reply, in a growl.

"So is Daub," said Torrence. "But Daub went in too deep. We were so jolly certain that dashed horse would win; and, of course, Daub's got plenty of money. Only he hasn't got it on him, you know. He can get a remittance from his father, but that means delay. As we sail so soon, there won't be any more remittances to Port of Spain; and the next won't be till we get to Boliver, in Venezuela. That means that Daub's stony broke for some time to come."

"Well?" said Drake impatiently.

"Well, he owes Captain St. Leger money on his bets," said Torrence reluctantly. "He would give him a note, to be met later, but—but—"

"But what?"

"St. Leger don't trust anybody out of his sight," said Torrence. "He—he thinks that once the Benbow's sailed, Daub would laugh at his claims; of course they can't be enforced legally."

"If—if Daub doesn't pay by tomorrow morning, Captain St. Leger is coming aboard at ten. I dare say he thinks Daub can get the money from somewhere, if he tries. Anyhow, that's what he's told Daub. And—and Daub daren't face it. If—if it came out what he's done, it's as likely as not that Mr. Vavasour would send him home to England by the next steamer—practically expelled. Poor old Daub can't face it. So—so he's not coming back to the Benbow, he says."

"Not coming back!" exclaimed Rodney.

"So he says. He can't face the row."

"And you left him to it—you, his pals!" said Drake savagely.

"What else could we do, when he wouldn't come?"

Drake touched Cazalet on the arm. "Hold on a minute," he said. "I'm getting down. I'm going back for Daubeny."

"Not alone," said Rodney quietly. "I'll come."

"More fools you!" said Egan, with a sneer. "You'll never find him. I know I'm not goin' back."

"No good, that I can see," numbled Torrence. "It'll be dark by the time you get back to the race-ground, and goodness knows where Daub will be. And there's a lot of roughs about after dark after the races!"

The buggy stopped.

"You two fellows are going back to look for your friend?" asked Arthur.

"Yes," said Drake.

"Then I'll drive you back—and help!"

"I—I say, that's jolly good of you," said Drake, hesitating. "But—but you can't be troubled like that!"

"That's all right," said Arthur, with a smile. "These chaps can jump down; it's not much of a walk to the tram-line from here, which will take them to the quay."

"We know our way," said Egan sullenly. "Come on, Torrence!"

Torrence hesitated; but he followed Egan.

Arthur Cazalet turned the buggy in the road, and drove back in the direction of the Savannah. Drake gave him a grateful look. The young West Indian's help was invaluable in looking for the hapless Daubeny, and it was evident that he was heartily ready to render any service he could. The buggy bowled along under the purple sunset, till the sun's rim dipped at last, and the darkness of the tropical night fell like a cloak of black velvet. From the darkness of the wide Savannah came the glimmer of bonfires, with shadowy wild figures dancing round them, to the dull, beating drone of the tom-toms.

THE END.

Next Tuesday's long complete tale of the school-ship will be entitled: "For Daubeny's Sake!"



FOR CLUB AND THE CUP!

Our splendid sporting serial of trials and triumphs on the footer field

By **WALTER EDWARDS**

READ THIS FIRST.

Jack Denyer is left the chief interest in a professional football team called Norchester United, which is being managed by an uncle. Jack obtains proof of a great slackness among the players, and he dismisses his uncle and appoints himself manager and centre-forward to the team. Martin Denyer, Jack's uncle, plots to get even with the youngster. While the Norchester United team are on their way by train to play Sheffield Wednesday, the footballers in Jack's compartment commence coughing violently. Suddenly Jack sees a tube from which is issuing a thin cloud of yellow vapour. "It's gas—poison gas!" he gasps.

The Voice in the Darkness.

JACK DENYER had been sitting in the seat opposite the tube through which the insidious gas had crept upon its sinister mission, and a sudden current of air, catching the fumes, had whirled them straight into the youngster's face.

And the gas had done its work only too swiftly and too well, for the young player-manager had crashed to the floor of the carriage, and his features were now twisted in a paroxysm of agony, and his breath was coming in painful, sobbing gasps.

Mallison, taking the situation in at a glance, acted without hesitation. He realised that death—and a terrible death, at that—lurked in that enclosed compartment, and he took the situation in hand at once.

"The windows!" he cried hoarsely; and at the same time he sent the window nearest him running down with a force which threatened to shatter the glass.

A cold blustering wind had been blowing when the train left Norchester, and it was to guard against this that the windows had been closed.

No sooner had Mallison lowered the window than he reached up for the communication-chain and once his strong fingers found it, he pulled with a vigour which threatened to snap it. Nothing happened for a long moment, then there came the grinding of brakes hurriedly applied, and the train commenced to slacken its speed.

A moment later it ran out of the cold light of day and came to an

abrupt standstill in the gloom of a tunnel.

And then all was confusion. Windows were let down all along the train, inquisitive faces peered into the shadows, and a babble of frightened and excited voices echoed and eddied through the dark tunnel—voices which sounded eerie, weird, and hollow.

"What's the matter?"

"What's happened?"

Breathless questions were upon every lip, but Mallison and his companions were too busy to volunteer any information.

The big inside-right dropped lightly to the metals, whilst the other players lowered the unconscious form of Jack Denyer into his upstretched arms. It was no easy task, but Mallison managed it, and it was when he had completed it that the guard, breathing heavily and looking very important, suddenly put in an appearance.

He came to a halt beside the group of players, who, pale-faced and anxious, were clustered round their youthful skipper.

"Hallo! What's the matter here?" he demanded gruffly. He looked down at Jack Denyer. "What's happened to this chap? Did he fall out? Is he ill?"

He shot a suspicious glance at Mallison who was supporting Jack's head upon his bent knee.

Mallison snorted, and shot a withering glance at the railway official.

"No," he answered, with heavy sarcasm, "he did not fall out. He simply stepped out of his carriage so that he could go to sleep on the sleepers. See the idea? And as to his being ill"—Mallison paused and looked down at the pallid features—"well, that's a superfluous question, isn't it? Doesn't my friend look the picture of health?"

The guard flushed a deep crimson and bit his lip.

"Anyway, what's happened?" he demanded roughly. "You're liable to a penalty of five pounds for pulling that chain and stopping the train."

"Yes; and there's a man in the train who's liable for attempted murder!" interposed Mallison quickly.

The guard looked incredulous, bewildered for a moment, and then a vacuous smile appeared on his face.

"Do—do you mean it——" he began; and Mallison, who was holding his temper in hand with an obvious effort, burst out:

"Of course I mean it, you congenital idiot! Some kind person tried to gas everyone in our carriage, and if you look slippery you may find him!"

"But where is he?" demanded the guard helplessly.

"In that carriage, I should imagine," returned Mallison and he nodded towards the compartment next to the one which he had just vacated.

"Do you mean that the scoundrel is still in there?" demanded the official, who was beginning to get a grip upon the situation.

Mallison nodded.

"It's more than likely that he's got away by now, but you can have a look," answered the footballer.

The guard lost not a second, but hoisted himself to the footboard and opened the door of the carriage. He was a thoroughly conscientious, if somewhat dull-witted, servant of the company, and he did not lack courage. He swung the door open and stepped boldly into the compartment which might have harboured a potential murderer.

He gave a swift glance round, and then bent down and peered under the seats.

But there was no sign of anyone. The carriage was empty!

He glared round angrily, his face mottled with hot blood, and then he stepped to the door of the compartment.

"What cock-and-bull story's this you're giving me?" he demanded, his angry gaze fixed upon Mallison. "There's nobody here, and I don't think there ever has been! This job'll need a lot of explaining away, my man!"

The footballer nodded wearily; he was anxious about Jack Denyer.

"Don't worry your fat head about that," he said, with a glance at his skipper's pallid features. "Just jump round the cage and see if there's a doctor on the train."

The guard's rugged face flushed anew, and a suitable retort flew to his tongue; but before he could say a word a voice came from out the gloom.

"I'll get a doctor," it said; and a second later the footsteps of the speaker could be heard walking along the tunnel. And even as the owner of the voice retreated, Jack Denyer's heavy eyelids fluttered, and finally opened. The youngster gazed fixedly at Mallison, and moved his bloodless lips as though trying to speak. Time and again he tried, but no sound rewarded his efforts. His eyes brightened with excitement as he struggled to articulate, but his efforts were in vain.

"What is it, old man?" asked Mallison, with deep concern. "Don't try to talk, there's a good chap; just remain perfectly still. A doctor'll be here in a moment!"

But Jack Denyer did not hear the words, for he had already drifted into unconsciousness once again.

Two, three minutes passed, during which time Mallison told the guard the whole story, but at the end of that time there was no sign of a doctor or of the man who had volunteered to find one.

Mallison looked puzzled.

"It's jolly strange that that fellow hasn't come back," he said, his brow wrinkled in perplexity. "What can have happened to the chap?"

"It certainly is strange!" agreed the guard, who was obviously impatient to get away. "Still, I can't wait any longer. You'd better get your friend back to a carriage and find a doctor when you get to Sheffield. It's only half a mile outside this tunnel." He raised his voice and started to walk towards his van. "Take your seats, please!"

Jack Denyer was hoisted into the train again, and within a minute or so the carriages were gliding over the metals and heading for Sheffield.

Once outside the tunnel Mallison cast a perplexed look at Jack's immovable features. The young player-manager was breathing steadily now, and a tinge of colour showed in his cheeks.

"I wonder what he wanted to say just now?" he mused half aloud. "He seemed jolly excited about something all of a sudden."

Bickley nodded.

"You're right," he said. "Still, perhaps he was wandering in his head. Gas is funny stuff. Anyway, I expect Jack will tell us when he comes round."

The words had hardly passed his lips than Jack gave a little groan and roused himself—as from a deep slumber. His eyes opened slowly, and he looked round at the anxious faces of the assembled players.

He gave a wan smile.

"You all look jolly serious, he said slowly; "just like a crowd of funeral mutes, who mean to be thoroughly miserable. What's the matter—has your pet rabbit died or something?"

Mallison and the others grinned in sheer relief.

"No—er—well, hang it!" stammered Bickley awkwardly. "Well, you see, you've been dozing for some time, and—"

"You thought I might doze too

long?" put in Jack, who understood why the players looked so glum. "I suppose that whiff of gas, or whatever it was, did make me sleep pretty soundly."

"It did, old man," put in Mallison. "It must have been pretty deadly stuff to have got you like that. And in the excitement of the moment we've not given a thought to the fellow who is responsible for the dirty, underhand trick. The next carriage to ours was empty when the guard searched it."

"I expect the chap got out of the opposite door," hazarded Mallison. "perhaps—"

His voice trailed away as a curious expression upon Jack's face checked him. The youngster was looking puzzled, his smooth brow was wrinkled in concentrated thought, and his eyes held a troubled, faraway look.

There was silence in the carriage for a full minute and the players regarded their captain with an air of expectancy. They guessed what was coming.

And at last Jack burst out excitedly:

"I've got it! I remember now!"

"Remember what, old man?" questioned Mallison eagerly.

"I remember the voice," said Jack Denyer, the troubled look fading from his eyes. "It happened when I was in the tunnel. I remember suddenly waking up, and the voice—"

"The voice of the chap who volunteered to look for a doctor?" Bickley put in, and Jack nodded his head and went on:

"Yes, and it was the voice of—"

"Who?"

The question came from all sides of the carriage.

"The voice of Mills!" announced Jack Denyer; and his features set in that hard, graven manner which transformed them into his fighting face.

"The day of reckoning will come," said the youngster steadily; "and when it does, I shall show Mills no mercy! He shall pay to the full for to-day's villainy!"

More than one player in the carriage, looking into Jack Denyer's set features, felt convinced that he would keep his word to the very letter.

And they could find a grain of pity for Mills when the day of reckoning arrived.

Once the train arrived at Sheffield, the players lost no time in getting to the ground, where Jack put himself into the capable hands of the club doctor.

The medical man was given a brief description of what had happened, and then examined the youngster. The inspection over, he shook his head and made a wry grimace.

"There'll be no football for you to-day, my boy," he declared decisively. "You'll have to take things easy for the next few days, or you'll collapse all of a sudden."

Jack grunted.

"That would be nice," he said whimsically.

His face fell, nevertheless, for he really believed himself sufficiently recovered to turn out against the Wednesday.

"But——" he commenced; and the

doctor held up his hand. He was adamant.

"You simply cannot play—I won't allow it," he said, with a smile. "It would be positively dangerous for you to turn out. As I said before, you've got to rest up for a bit. You'd better watch the game from the club-house."

And with this Jack Denyer had to be content.

The Norchester fellows were almost as disappointed as Jack himself, for they were the first to admit that the youngster was a born leader; without him the team was like a ship without a rudder.

"Never mind, chaps," said Jack, with a cheery smile, as he watched them changing in the dressing-room. "Just play up for all you're worth, there's not the slightest reason why we shouldn't pull through. Freeman will turn out at centre, of course, and if he can only manage some of those curling specials of his—the tricky chaps that just curl under the cross-bar—he'll have the Sheffield goalie guessing in next to no time."

Freeman, a youngster of eighteen, blushed.

"I'll do my best, Jack," he said.

"I know you will," returned the player-manager. "And now it's time for you to get out, I think. Here's the referee."

Norchester received a rousing reception when Mallison led the team on to the field; and Jack Denyer, sitting on the balcony of the club-house, felt a pang of anguish at not being in the midst of his men, who looked trim and smart in their spotless red-and-white shirts.

To the young player-manager soccer was the beginning and the end of all things; it was something he lived for, a passion and obsession that had been bred in him by the greatest sportsman of his day—his father. And now his father's mantle had fallen on his shoulders, now he had taken the reins which death alone was able to gently disengage from the able fingers, the youngster felt that he had a duty to perform.

John Denyer's one ambition had been to raise Norchester United to the coveted position of Cupholders, and to this end he had spent his modest fortune. Furthermore, he had not spared himself in any way; he had sacrificed his health and money on the altar of an ideal, and as a consequence he had "died in harness," working for the club to which he had devoted his life.

Jack Denyer, on the balcony of the Sheffield ground, was thinking of his father and of the ambition that was never realised, and there welled up within him a burning desire and a grim determination to succeed where his father had failed. He would lead the United to victory! The youngster's face flushed at the very thought.

He would lead his men from one round to the next, right to a glorious final, when the English Cup should be taken back to Norchester in triumph!

It was little more than a dream, perhaps, yet Jack felt within himself that it was not an idle dream. Anyway, it was something to work for, an ideal to be attained, and in that moment the youngster vowed to himself that one day his team should win the Cup. It had to be. It would be a fitting

tribute to the memory of the man who had lived and died for the club—his father.

Jack Denyer's reverie was shattered by a roar of welcome that greeted the home team when it took the field, and the youngster settled down to watch the game.

The United started off in great style, playing with a fire and dash which could not be denied, and a corner was forced in the first minute of the game. Nothing came of it, however, for Freeman, over-eager, sent the leather flying over the crossbar, at the same time wringing a fervent sigh of relief from the lips of the local supporters.

The left-back placed the ball, and the Sheffield goalkeeper, kicking with perfect judgment, dropped the leather on the toe of his outside-left, who trapped the ball with nice dexterity, swung round in a flash, and darted off down the line, beating the Norchester outside man and Bickley with seeming ease.

He had a fine turn of speed, and it was not until he found himself confronted by the visiting back that he parted with the ball. He sent in a perfect centre, which fell at the feet of the home inside-right.

And this player made no mistake, for he got his boot to the ball and had slammed it into the net before Jackson realised that his goal was in danger.

The crowd seemed equally surprised at the rush of events, for a dead silence greeted the shot which had threatened to break the rigging. And then, in striking contrast to the calm, a burst of deafening shouts welled up from all sides of the enclosure.

It was first blood to Sheffield!

Jack Denyer, watching with almost feverish interest, smiled reassuringly.

"The game's scarcely started," he told himself consolingly. "The boys will get into their stride later on."

But the boys did nothing of the sort. If anything, they appeared to get consistently worse—showing scarcely any combination. What is more, Freeman, who was palpably nervous, became a mere passenger, and the play of the whole team seemed to fall all to pieces.

The United missed their leader.

Half-time found the home team winning by four goals to nil.

Jack joined his men in the dressing-room and found them looking depressed and disconsolate.

He laughed aloud at the sight of their lugubrious expressions.

"Don't look so down in the mouth, my merry men!" he cried heartily. "One would imagine you'd already lost the game. Why, anything may happen in the next half."

"You're quite right, Jack," agreed Bickley, in funereal tones, "anything may happen. They'll probably get about another dozen goals for luck. Why, we all seem to have forgotten how to kick the blessed ball. I think I'll give football a miss and take to ping-pong."

"Don't talk such a lot of rot!" laughed Jack lightly. "You'd better play centre in the next half, Mallison, and let Bickley come forward to inside-right. Freeman can take Bickley's place. Perhaps the change will make a difference. Anyway, we can try."

Mallison nodded, and looked as

though he would burst into tears at any moment.

"I know what's the matter with the team, Jack," he said. "We miss you, and that's all there is to it."

The big footballer suddenly looked vicious, and his fists clenched in a menacing manner.

"I should like to have a couple of minutes with Mills at this moment," he said, between his clenched teeth. "I'd—I'd pulverise him! I'd give him gas, the unsportsmanlike beauty! Why, his own mother wouldn't recognise him after I'd finished giving him a lesson!"

"Hear, hear!" said Bickley, who also took on a warlike air at the mentioning of Mills' name. "I'd—I'd—gorrrh!"

His vehemence got the better of him, and everybody laughed.

"I believe you would smack him, old man," grinned Jack Denyer. "But now it's time to get out again, so you'd better assault the Sheffield goalie. Just bombard the beggar till he can't stand!"

with the ferocity and determination of a charging bull.

It was a splendid goal, and the vast crowd gave throat in no uncertain manner. The supporters of the visiting team, who had travelled from Norchester, were especially jubilant.

"Where did that one go to, Herbert?" queried a wag behind the home goal.

"Well—done, Mallison! Let's have another, my bonnie boy!"

"Don't forget that your Uncle Jack's lookin' at you!"

Mallison, somewhat winded, but thoroughly happy, extricated himself from the goalkeeper's loving embrace, and gave the player a helping hand. Both men were grinning ruefully, but they did not say anything for the simple reason that neither of them possessed enough wind at the moment to inflate a penny air-balloon!

Jack Denyer had followed the whole scene with sparkling eyes.

"Good lad, Mallison," he muttered; "we may make a draw of it yet!"

But it was not to be, for that goal



The goalkeeper, the ball, and Mallison went tumbling through the mouth of the goal.

The Norchester Eleven were in a happier frame of mind when they lined up for the resumption of hostilities, and the good sense of Jack's rearrangement of the team was at once apparent.

Mallison felt more at home with Bickley as his partner, and five minutes from the kick-off he received a perfect pass from his inside-man and took a pot-shot from five or six yards outside the penalty area.

The power behind the punt was positively tremendous, for the ball travelled straight as an arrow and took the home custodian completely by surprise. He made a wild leap for the leather and succeeded in arresting its flight, but that was all. The ball wriggled and grated in his gloved hands for a second or two, and then the goalkeeper, the ball, and Mallison went tumbling through the mouth of the goal and thudded to the turf.

For the Norchester centre-forward had followed his kick up and had taken no chances. He had dodged the opposing backs like an eel, for he possessed a rare turn of speed, and then he bore down upon the goalie

appeared to spur the home team on to truly herculean efforts. From now onwards they played as men inspired—their passing was accurate, their shooting deadly, their attack always dangerous, whilst their defence was practically impregnable.

They already had a very comfortable lead, and so they played with confidence and a certainty of victory which means so much to a team.

Norchester, on the other hand, appeared to be lethargic and dejected, and they had all their work cut out to keep the leather away from their territory. For the last half-hour of the game they played purely on the defensive.

Mallison and Bickley certainly essayed to break away once or twice, but they were well held, and their attacks were never really dangerous.

Norchester missed their youthful skipper, the youngster to whom they were wont to look for guidance. He was the spirit of the team, and the players missed him.

Another splendid, long instalment of this grand footer serial will be given next Tuesday!

THE GREYFRIARS POLICE COURT

A vivid account of the latest charges and convictions

LAUGHTER IN COURT!

Amazing Story of a Junior's Flirtation!

At the Dormitory Assizes, on Wednesday evening, a grinning youth named Peter Hazeldene was brought up for trial.

Mr. Robert Cherry, K.C., for the prosecution then rose. Flicking a fly off his forehead, he addressed the Court:

"Prisoner is charged with holding a clandestine meeting—"

Magistrate (faintly): A what?

Mr. Cherry: A clandestine meeting—a secret meeting, if that suits you better—with a young lady, name unknown. This Court does not encourage flirtations, and I submit that prisoner be given a dozen biffs with a broomstick.

Magistrate: Sit down, varlet! It is not for you to pronounce sentence. Where's the first witness?

Detective-Inspector Penfold then gave evidence, as follows:

"On the night of the umpteenth instant, your worship, I was in Friardale Lane, disguised as a hedgehog, when I saw prisoner meet and greet a young lady. I distinctly heard the sound of a kiss."

Magistrate: Can you describe the sound to the Court?

Witness: It was like a cork being drawn from a champagne-bottle, your worship. (Laughter.)

Magistrate (to prisoner): Do you deny the accusation which the inspector has brought against you?

Prisoner: No, your worship.

Magistrate: You admit meeting, greeting, and keeting—I mean kissing—a member of the other sex?

Prisoner: Yes, your worship. I might mention, however, that the young lady in question happened to be my sister Marjorie.

Magistrate: Then the case for the prosecution falls all to pieces! In the language of the classics, it's a wash-out. You are discharged. And—er—should your sister desire any further demonstrations of affection, perhaps you would be good enough to refer her to me! The majority of maidens would, I know, greatly appreciate a magisterial kiss. (Laughter.)

Prisoner said he would see what could be done.

REPORT IN BRIEF.

Three headstrong youths, named Percy Bolsover, George Bulstrode, and Donald Ogilvy, were charged with biffing the jurymen with bolsters during the Court proceedings.

Magistrate: Really, I had no idea that this has been going on! I am quite in the dark—"

"Hear, hear!" said Wingate of the Sixth, as he stepped into the dormitory at this juncture and extinguished the lights!

CHEERFUL CLARENCE AND FAT FRED, THE FAM

Special permission has been granted to "The Greyfriars Herald" to reproduce



1. Here's a picture of strenuous physical strenuosity, boys and girls. You see, Clarence had been calling Fred a ponderous old porpoise with bones of butter and muscles made of margarine. "I may be plump, rosy and good-looking," said Fat Fred, "but I'm as strong as glue." So our two screams had a tug-of-war to settle the issue.



3. And as Clarence attached the other end of the rope to the forty donkey-power Rolls-Ford, there seemed to be a good chance of some fun in about half a jiffy. Then the car started, and—

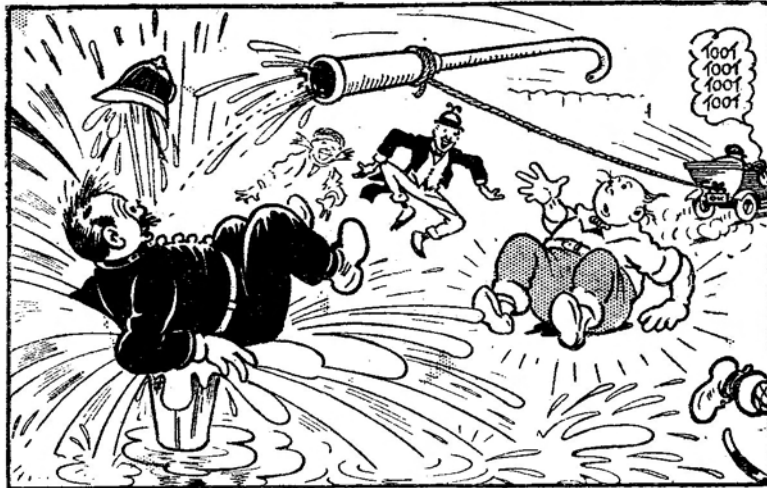


5. And while P.-c. Barges performed stunts on the merry water-spout, our priceless pair improved the shining hour down below. "All the proceeds for this unique show go to two deserving orphans, kind people all," chortled Clarence as he and Fred did the hat-trick.

HEROES OF THE BLITTERGRAPH FILM COMPANY
 gs of these two gloom-dispellers! Introduce your chums to the noble lads!



2. Meanwhile, P.-c. Barges, who had only been left out of the police Olympic tug-of-war team because his face was so useful for frightening burglars from his beat, felt constrained to issue a challenge on his own account. "I'll take a hand in this, tee-hee!" chortled the mischievous lad as he fastened the rope to the merry old water-pipe.



4. Woof! Away went the pipe, used for filling the local water-carts, into the next borough. "Great Scotland Yard!" howled the cop, as he fell back on to the water-spout. "I'm torpedoed in the main-brace!"



6. Then the ladlet turned the water off, and the cop came to earth with a bump. "Oh, Fred, me perennial old prune!" gurgled Clarence. "Last night I had a beautiful dream. I saw luscious eel-pies garnished with parsley. Do dreams come true, Frederick?" "They do," gurgled Fred.

My Weekly Interview

By the Special Representative of
 "The Greyfriars Herald."

This week:

PETER HAZELDENE

"WHERE'S my pipe?" I halted in profound astonishment outside the door of No. 2 Study in the Remove passage. I had been sent thither to interview Hazeldene, and it was Hazel who had asked that extraordinary question.

"Anybody seen my calabash?" Yes! There was no doubt about it. Hazeldene was about to smoke a pipe!

And then other voices came to my ears—the voices of Tom Brown and Bulstrode, who shared No. 2 Study with Hazeldene.

"I've got my briar all right," said Bulstrode.

"Same here," said Tom Brown. To say that I was amazed was to put it mildly. I was disgusted, too. Pipe-smoking in a junior study was more than a bit thick. It was the absolute limit! And Tom Brown and Bulstrode had always professed to be dead against smoking. What hypocrites the fellows were!

I tried the door, but it was locked. The reason why it was locked was only too obvious!

My conscience then told me that I had a stern duty to perform. Fellows who smoked pipes behind locked doors deserved to be sacked from the school. It would not be sneaking, I reflected, to inform the authorities of what was going on. It would be acting in the best interests of the community. Having arrived at this decision, I went along to Wingate's study.

"I have a painful duty to perform. Wingate," I said. "Three fellows are smoking pipes in No. 2 Study!"

"Wh-a-at!" Wingate picked up an ashplant, and strode away to the Remove passage. I followed.

"Open this door!" thundered the captain of Greyfriars, rapping on the door of No. 2. The door was duly opened, revealing an extraordinary spectacle.

Hazeldene, Tom Brown and Bulstrode, attired as sailors, were seated on the table with pipes in their mouths, Hazel having found his calabash.

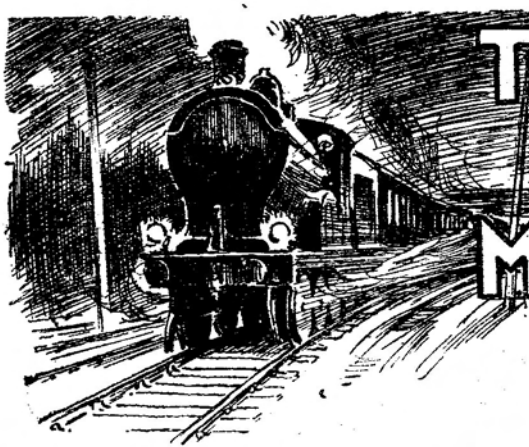
"What does this mean?" demanded Wingate sternly.

And then Hazeldene explained that they were rehearsing their parts in a play that was about to be performed by the Remove Dramatic Society. The pipes were merely a part of the make-up, and there was no tobacco in them. Neither did the three amateur actors have any intention of smoking.

I saw that I had jumped too hastily to conclusions, and with a gasp of dismay I turned to flee. And as I went, Wingate caught me a real stinger with his ashplant.

Alas! This weekly interviewing job is anything but a bed of roses.

THE END.



THE MYSTERY OF THE MIDNIGHT MAIL

An amazing new detective tale from the annals of Raymond
Steele and his young assistant, by that popular author,

W. MURRAY GRAYDON

CHAPTER I.

Shadowed From America—Tricking the Villains—A Futile Attempt.

THE big liner Tauranic, which had arrived from New York that afternoon, lay at her dock at Southampton, her polished brasswork glittering in the warm rays of the September sun. The passengers had gone through the customs, and the most of them were on the train that was waiting in the railway-station across the quay, and was shortly to start for London.

Peter Chumleigh, a handsome, sturdy youth of sixteen, with fair hair and a ruddy complexion, was seated in a corner of a first-class compartment, thinking of a former trip to England with his parents five years ago. And standing on the platform, just outside the open door of the compartment was William Gregg, a lean man of middle-age, with clean-shaven features and dark hair streaked with grey, who was in the service of Squire Marmaduke Chumleigh, of Chumleigh Hall in Devonshire.

There was an anxious expression in his eyes. He was gazing to his left, furtively and intently watching two men who were looking at periodicals on a bookstall that was within twenty yards. Both men were well-dressed, and were between thirty and forty years of age. One had a black moustache, the other a tawny moustache and a pointed beard.

"Get in Gregg," bade the youth, "we'll soon be off. What are you waiting for?"

The servant put a finger to his lips. "I am watching two men who are at the bookstall yonder," he replied in a low tone. "It is just as I feared, sir. I didn't tell you because I wasn't quite certain, but I am now. You remember the police saying that before your father's former butler, Herbert Sleath, disappeared, he was seen in company with a rogue of the name of Flindt, who had a tawny beard and moustache?"

"Yes, Gregg, I remember. It was those two chaps, the police believe, who tried to kidnap me in Central Park in New York that afternoon."

"Exactly, Master Peter!"

"And what is the trouble? We haven't been followed from New York, have we?"

"We have been, sir. Amongst the

passengers was a man with a beard such as the police mentioned, and my suspicions were drawn to him by the fact that he was always hanging about us during the voyage, as if he were trying to listen to our conversation. I kept my eyes on him to-day. I watched him leave the vessel, and when he had crossed the quay he was joined by another man who answered to the description of Herbert Sleath, except that he has grown a moustache. They both booked to London, and they are standing yonder now with their heads together."

"And you think they are Flindt and Sleath, Gregg?"

"I haven't a doubt that they are, Master Peter, and that they have designs on you."

Peter Chumleigh's face flushed with anger, and a look of scorn flashed in his eyes.

"I am not a bit afraid of them," he declared. "They won't dare to molest me!"

"No telling what they may do, sir," William Gregg replied. "They are bad enough for anything."

"But we are in England now, not in America. Call a constable, Gregg, and have those rascals arrested!"

"No, no, Master Peter, there is no evidence against them. It is not a matter for the police at present."

"Well, take your seat and don't worry. I am not going to."

"You are in my care, sir, and it is my duty to protect you. Once we are in London I shall feel easier, and meanwhile something must be done to—"

The servant paused abruptly

"The men are moving this way," he said. "They have stopped at the third carriage behind us. They are getting into it. I know what we will do. We will trick the rogues by—"
He paused again. "Get out, Master Peter, and follow me," he added. "Be quick. There is no time to waste."

The lad promptly obeyed. He descended from the compartment, and darted along the platform with William Gregg, who hastened forward to the luggage-van.

"We have changed our minds," he said to the attendant in charge. "We are going by a later train. Let me have those two bags, please. The square, leather ones just to your left, on top of the black trunk."

The bags were handed to the servant, and with Peter Chumleigh at his heels he whipped to a waiting-room that was near-by. They took shelter there, and peered warily from a window. They were none too soon. Porters were hurrying from carriage to carriage, slamming the doors shut. The guard waved his flag, and the train began to move. With increasing speed, faster and faster, it rolled out of the station.

"That was neatly done," said the youth. "I wonder if the men saw us here?"

"It isn't likely, sir," William Gregg answered. "No, I believe we have deceived them. They have left us behind, at all events, and that is something to be thankful for."

"And what now, Gregg?"

"We will ask about the later trains at the inquiry office, Master Peter, and then we will go into the town and get something to eat."

The servant picked up the bags as he spoke. He was still apprehensive, and with good reason, though he had got rid of the men he feared. But Peter Chumleigh, who was his father's son and a true young Briton, rather enjoyed the situation. He scarcely knew what fear was, and the spice of danger, the prospect of adventure, appealed to his strong and sturdy nature.

It was ten o'clock at night, and the fast express that had left Southampton more than an hour before, with a number of passengers from the Channel Islands, was drawing near to Basingstoke on its way to London. Peter Chumleigh was fast asleep in a corner of a first-class compartment, a rug thrown over him, his head pillowed his bag. Opposite to him sat William Gregg, awake and alert, ready if need be to protect his young charge with his life.

He was satisfied, however, that there was nothing to be feared at present. He had no doubt that the men, Flindt and Sleath, were in London, watching and waiting for the arrival of the lad. He would have to be on his guard at Waterloo, he reflected, and if all went well there he would take measures on the morrow to avert the threatening danger, and ensure the safety of himself and his companion during the journey to Devonshire.

"I shall be glad to get back," he

thought. "It has been a hard strain on me. But there will be constant danger, even down at Chumleigh Hall, until those two scheming villains have been arrested."

Drowsiness presently crept over him. His head nodded, and he was dropping off to sleep when he was roused by a shrill, shuddering whistle from the engine. The brakes were sharply applied, and a moment later, as the speed decreased, there was a violent jolt that shook the carriage.

Springing to his feet, Gregg stepped to the corridor, and gazed from a window into the darkness. Other passengers were looking from other windows. The train stopped, but after a brief delay it moved on again. The guard came by, and Gregg spoke to him.

"What was the trouble?" he asked. "We have had a narrow escape, sir," was the reply. "Some miscreant put a sleeper on the line. The engine struck it, and fortunately threw it off."

"It was an attempt to wreck the train, of course!"

"Yes, it must have done with that intention, sir. It would have been of no use to search for the scoundrel. I don't suppose he was anywhere near."

The guard passed on, and Gregg returned to his compartment and sat down. He glanced at the youth who was still sleeping soundly, and shook his head gravely. He was at a loss to account for what had occurred.

"It was the work of those two scoundrels," he said to himself. "Not a doubt of that. I will take Mr. Howland's advice, and call on the detective the first thing in the morning."

Raymond Steele at Home—A Visit From William Gregg—Mr. Vanderling's Will.

RAYMOND STEELE, the private detective, whose amazing skill had won for him an international reputation, lived in a modest set of chambers in Welbeck Street, Manchester Square, London. And with him lived his young assistant Oliver, a bright, clever, keen-witted youth of sixteen. A waif of the streets abandoned by heartless parents of whom he had only a vague recollection—a human derelict adrift in the great city of the world, he had been found starving in Whitechapel some few years ago by Steele, who, prior to adopting him, had taken him to a near-by restaurant for a meal. And when the lad had eaten as much as he could hold, and was gorged to repletion, he had calmly pointed to his plate and asked for more; which clearly explains why the detective had then and there given him the name of Oliver.

The sun was streaming through the big windows into the consulting-room in Welbeck Street, shining softly on the massive furniture upholstered in Spanish leather, the Persian rugs of curious patterns, the rare prints and engravings on the walls, the shelves filled with books of reference, criminology, chemical analysis, travel, and various other subjects, the writing-table of black oak with its silver ink-stand flanked by a Chinese tobacco-jar, the mahogany pipe-rack holding

half a score of blackened briar-roots and bronzed meerschaums, and the cabinet containing numerous souvenirs of crime mysteries that had been solved by the famous detective.

Breakfast was over. Oliver was pasting clippings in a scrap book, and Raymond Steele, having read his letters, was seated in an armchair by the fireplace scanning the morning paper. He was a man of forty, with the lean, wiry frame of an athlete, keen blue-grey eyes, and clean-shaven features of a rugged, masterful type.

"I see there was an attempt to wreck a train from Southampton to London last night," he presently remarked.

"Some scoundrel placed a sleeper across the line near Basingstoke."

"What for?" Oliver absently inquired.

"For no particular motive, I dare say. Merely from a fiendish desire to —"

Interrupted by a rap on the door, Steele put the paper aside

from an American correspondent, that dealt with Mr. Vanderling's will, Squire Chumleigh's grandson, and the attempt to kidnap the youth made by two men whom the police believed to be Jason Flindt and Herbert Sleath."

"Well, sir, you were quite right," the servant answered. "Those men are now in England. Flindt crossed on the same boat with us, and Sleath met him at Southampton. We tricked them there. They went up to town by the boat-train, thinking that we were on it. But we travelled by a later train, and the villains tried to wreck it near Basingstoke."

"I have just been reading of the affair. So you were on that train?"

"We were, sir, and we had a narrow escape from death."

"There can be no doubt, I suppose, that it was those same men who put the sleeper on the line."

"None at all, Mr. Steele, to my mind. They must have committed the outrage."



Steele's assistant climbed over the coal-bunker and descended to the footplate. "I've come to report, guv'nor," he said.

and rose to his feet. The landlady opened the door, and drew it shut behind a tall, slim man of middle-age, with greyish hair and clean-shaven features. He stepped forward, his hat in his hand.

"Good-morning, Mr. Steele," he said. "I have called on business. You were recommended to me by Mr. Howland of New York!"

"Ah, yes, Mr. Geoffrey Howland, the lawyer," the detective replied. "I am acquainted with him. And you, sir?"

"William Gregg is my name, and I am in the service of Squire Chumleigh, of Chumleigh Hall in Devonshire. I have just returned from America with the squire's grandson, young Peter Chumleigh."

"And some danger threatens the boy, I presume. Am I right?"

"You are, Mr. Steele. But how did you know?"

"It was only a guess," said Raymond Steele. "Several weeks ago I read an article in a London paper,

The detective nodded, and, bidding William Gregg to be seated, he sat down opposite to him, and spoke briefly of what he remembered of the article he had read in the London journal.

"I have a pretty clear comprehension of the case already," he said. "It appears that a number of years ago Squire Chumleigh's son, Robert, went to America and engaged in business in New York, where he married the daughter of Mr. Jacob Vanderling, a gentleman of great wealth. The couple had one child, the boy Peter. Both of his parents died a year ago, and the boy went to live with his maternal grandfather. Mr. Vanderling died three months ago, and left his estate, of the value of one million pounds, to young Peter Chumleigh, with the stipulation that if the youth should die before reaching the age of twenty-one the money was to go to Mr. Vanderling's nephew, Ralph, a man of forty, with whom he was not on particularly good terms."

"Just so," the servant assented. "Such were the terms of the will."

"Mr. Geoffrey Howland, the lawyer of Broadway," Steele continued, "was appointed executor of Mr. Vanderling's will. Shortly after the latter's death, an unsuccessful attempt was made by two men to kidnap young Peter Chumleigh in Central Park, and the police had reason to suspect that one of the men was Herbert Sleath, an Englishman who had formerly been employed as butler by Mr. Robert Chumleigh, and that the other was a friend of his, Jason Flindt by name. Meanwhile, Squire Chumleigh, having been informed of the death of Jacob Vanderling, and of the attempt to abduct the boy Peter, sent you to New York to fetch his grandson to England."

"Yes, Mr. Steele, those are the facts. I had an interview with Mr. Howland before Peter and I sailed on the Tauranic, and he advised me to appeal to you should I have any reason to think that the boy was in danger. I have told you of all that occurred after we landed at Southampton yesterday, so you will understand why I came here this morning."

"I am glad that you did, Gregg. Very glad. It was the proper course to take."

"And will you see that no harm befalls young Peter, sir, during the journey to Devonshire? When he has safely arrived at Chumleigh Hall, the squire will have measures taken for his protection."

"Yes, Gregg, I will look after the boy. Should any further attempt be made it will be frustrated, you can be sure."

There was a short interval of silence while Raymond Steele considered the matter. The task he had accepted fitted in, as it happened, with another affair that had been entrusted to him. A royal personage from the Continent, who was on a visit to England, was going to Cornwall that night, and the Government, having reason to fear that a political enemy from his own country had designs on his life, had requested the detective to accompany him on the journey, and had arranged for him to take the place of the driver of the train.

"Are you certain that it was Jason Flindt who crossed on the Tauranic with you?" Steele said at length.

"I don't think there can be any doubt," William Gregg replied. "He was just as the police described him. A man of medium height, with a tawny beard and moustache."

"And the man who met him at Southampton, Gregg?"

"I am sure that he was Herbert Sleath, sir. He, too, answered to the description given by the police, except that he had grown a moustache."

"I dare say you are right. It would seem that Sleath came over to England before his accomplice to make arrangements of some kind."

"So I judged, Mr. Steele."

"And the motive for the men is, of course, to demand a large sum of money for the release of Peter Chumleigh should they succeed in getting him into their clutches."

"Exactly, sir! That would be their object."

"By the way, Gregg, what of Mr. Vanderling's nephew, Ralph, who is the next heir to the estate?"

"I have never seen him, sir, and I know little or nothing of him. He lives in New York, but he has not been on the best of terms with his uncle."

"There are no grounds for suspecting Ralph Vanderling, I suppose? And now tell me where you are staying, Gregg?"

"At the Walgrave Hotel in Jermyn Street, sir. I left the boy there with instructions to stay in his room until I returned, and to keep the door locked."

Raymond Steele reflected for a moment.

"Very well," he said, rising as he spoke, "you can trust everything to me. Do not go out during the day, Gregg. Remain at the hotel, and be on your guard. I will call there for you and young Peter in a cab at ten o'clock to-night, and we will all travel down to Devonshire by the mail train that leaves Paddington at midnight. This lad, Oliver, is my young assistant. He will be in the same compartment with you and the lad, and I shall not be far off."

The interview was at an end. William Gregg departed in cheerful spirits, satisfied that he would have nothing more to fear. The detective dropped into a chair and lit a pipe.

"Well, Oliver, what do you think of it?" he asked.

"If you want my opinion, sir," the lad replied, "I should say that when those men tumble to the fact that you are on to their game they will throw up the sponge, and do a bunk back to America."

Raymond Steele shook his head.

"I doubt it," he declared. "No, I'm inclined to think that this case will not end with the safe delivery of young Peter Chumleigh at his grandfather's home in Devonshire. The men Sleath and Flindt are playing for a high stake, and if they are the daring conspirators I believe them to be, they will show fight instead of beating a retreat. They know where Squire Chumleigh lives, and the fact that Sleath came over here before his accomplice suggests that his object was to—" The detective stopped abruptly, and glanced at his watch. "I'll be off to Paddington, now. I have some final arrangements to make. You might call at the Walgrave Hotel," he added, "and get acquainted with young Peter."

"Right-ho, gov'nor," Oliver promptly agreed. "I know hardly any boys of my own age, and I would like to have a chum I could write to, and see now and again."

On the Night Mail—Steele at the Throttle—The Warning Light—A Plunge to Death!

WHEN the night mail pulled out of the vast terminus at Paddington, sharp at twelve o'clock, the weather had changed for the worse, and a September storm had begun. The sky was masked by inky-black clouds. A chill, biting wind was blowing from the north-east, and rain was falling in a steady drizzle.

Raymond Steele was driving the powerful engine with the assistance of the stoker. In cap and overalls, his hands and face grimy, he was at his post of duty on the footplate, conscious of the many lives that were in his care.

In a first-class compartment that had been reserved for them were William Gregg, Peter Chumleigh, and Oliver. The two lads had become acquainted during the day, and had taken a liking to each other. That Oliver was the assistant of the famous detective made him somewhat of a hero in the eyes of young Peter, and that the latter was heir to a million, and was in danger from a couple of conspirators whose object was to kidnap him for ransom, bade Oliver take pride in the thought that he was helping to protect him.

They were well in the front of the train, and at the rear of it, in the last but one of the carriages, was the royal personage with his suite. He was serenely ignorant of the measures that had been taken for his protection. Nor, indeed, was he in any real danger, the Government's fear of an attempt on his life having no foundation other than rumour.

William Gregg was in low spirits, nervous and depressed. Safe-guarded though he and his young charge were, he was gripped by a premonition of evil which he could not banish. He sat looking gloomily from the window while the golden glitter of the great city merged into the twinkling lamps of the suburbs, and melted into the blackness of the open country. He had not sent a telegram to Squire Chumleigh, the detective having advised him not to do so.

"It is going to be a bad night, Master Peter," he said. "I hope we will be able to get a conveyance at Newton Abbot."

"And I am hoping the weather will be fine to-morrow, Gregg," the youth replied. "I want to have a crack at the rabbits and partridges, I have been to Chumleigh Hall before, Oliver," he added. "It is the jolliest kind of a place, with woods and game preserves all round it. I'll have my grandfather invite you down for a week or so. You will come, won't you?"

Oliver nodded and smiled. "I should like to awfully," he said. "I haven't had a holiday for a long time, not since the gov'nor and I went for a walking tour on Exmoor."

The storm grew worse. The wind blew great guns, and the rain poured in torrents, while the train went roaring and crashing through the pitch darkness, reeling the miles behind it, thundering by towns and villages, and slumbering farmhouses and mansions, defying the raging elements that seemed to be trying to wreak their fury on it.

And on the footplate of the engine stood Raymond Steele, alert to his responsibility, frequently straining his eyes into the murky gloom ahead. Yet he was easy in mind, believing that he had stolen a march on the two plotters. Perhaps he had not. If the men had discovered where Gregg and the youth were staying, as possibly

(Continued at foot of page 13).

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR FOOTER!

By JOE McCALL

The Popular Captain of Preston North End and Half-Back of International fame

No. 1.—The Half-Back Game

I DO not suppose there is any real necessity for me to dwell for long on the importance of the half-back line. It is perfectly obvious that the three men in the middle, who form the connecting link between attack and defence, must be strong, capable players.

When their side is attacking, the half-backs are really a part of the attack, and when their side is defending, then this middle trio are, or should be, part of the defensive organisation. To put the matter briefly, it amounts to this:

Three super-players in the half-back line may make a winning team even if the rest of the players are only moderate, but you will never get a winning team without strength in the half-back line, no matter how wonderful are the forwards, or how sound the defence.

That is all that need be said about the importance of the half-backs. Now let us go on to consider some of the things which should, and should not, be done by the half-back who wants to be a successful unit in a successful side.

Having their places in the middle of the field, it follows that to the half-backs the ball ought to come more than to the players in any other department. Therefore it is safe to say that there are two all-important



distinct. In regard to tackling, however, there are one or two useful things which the young player should bear in mind.

In the first place, tackling does not consist in merely going bald-headed for the man with the ball. Strictly speaking mere wild dashing into the other fellow is not tackling at all, and although by this means a player may get the ball occasionally, the time will surely come when he will meet a clever opponent who will dodge his dashes, and having thrown his whole body into the tackle the half-back will find it impossible to recover quickly enough to stop the forward carrying out his designs.

Tackle steadily, methodically, while retaining you balance, and keep well at the feet of the man you hope to dispossess.

Moreover, you should contrive as far as possible to bar the way to your own goal, and by that means, of course, tackling a player from the front and not from behind.

Tackling from behind is a very doubtful procedure. It means that you have to try to hook the ball from your opponent's toe by sending your leg round him. At worst, you might get a nasty kick in your shins for your trouble, and at best, you will probably only succeed in fouling your opponent, and thus giving away a free kick against your own side.

You may object to this free kick, and say that you made a genuine attempt to get the ball. So you did, but that doesn't absolve you from the penalty of a free kick against you if you only succeed in tripping up your opponent.

In the interests of your side it does not pay to give away free kicks, and I could tell you of many first-class matches which have been lost because a half-back has tried to pull up an opponent from behind, and has merely tripped him. Hence I say that as far

as possible in tackling keep in front of the man you have to stop.

Worry him persistently, compel him to pass quickly and before he has a chance to make a good pass. The same care, not to give away a free kick, should be taken when jumping into the air at the same time as an opponent. It seems the most natural thing in the world to "help yourself up" by putting your hands on the back of the other fellow, but this, of course, is not allowed, and the young player should make a practice of going for the ball head up while keeping his hands well down.

Having got the ball, how are you to part with it to the best advantage? I shall have something more to say on this topic later, but meantime, the golden rule is—along the turf as far as possible. Pick out the forward who is in the best position for receiving the ball, and then struggle all you know to give it to him along the ground.



When trying to head a ball from behind an opponent the tendency is to place your hands on his shoulders—another means of giving away a free kick.

In doing this it is a mistake to use the toe of your boot too much. The inside of the boot is much better. That way you push, rather than kick the ball, and the side of your boot covers a much greater area of the object, and you can better direct its course.

Joe McCall

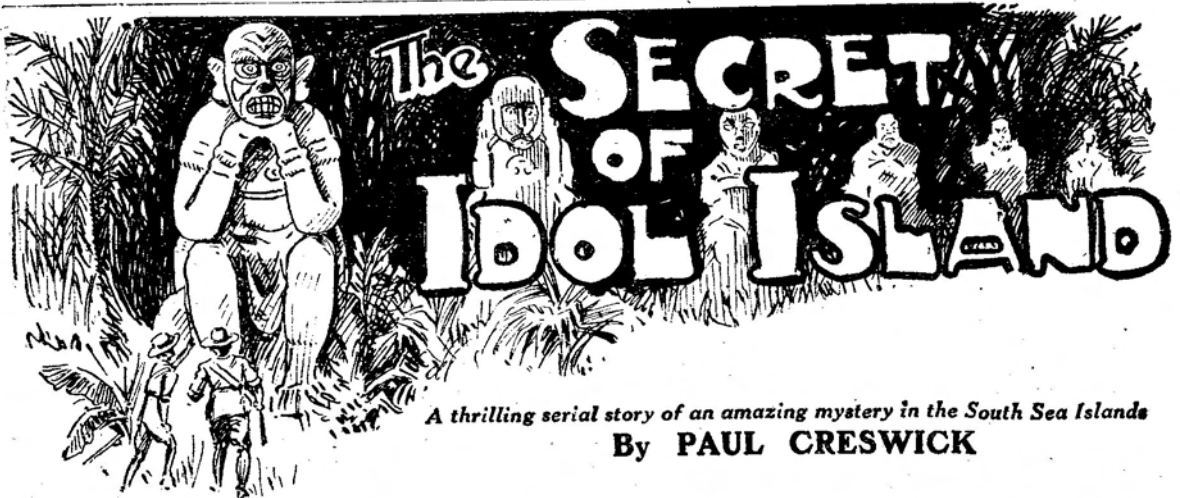
Another splendid instructive article will appear in next Tuesday's "Greyfriars Herald." Please introduce this grand series to your chums.



Tackling from behind is a dangerous procedure, as by that means you may foul your opponent by tripping him.

things for the half-back to learn—how to get the ball, and how to part with it.

The art of getting the ball consists partly of intelligent anticipation, and partly of knowledge of how to tackle. The first of these, anticipation, can scarcely be taught. It is largely a matter of thought, experience, or in-



A thrilling serial story of an amazing mystery in the South Sea Islands
By PAUL CRESWICK

The Fate of the Sea-beast!

DUMNOFF—if he it was in command of the submarine—knew what had to be done. The boat sank again.

“Guess he’s going to try a torpedo,” said Armstrong.

“It will be an easy target,” Curly said, with a half-nervous laugh.

“Look! Quick!” cried Cordelia, who had stood up again. “Don’t you see the track of the torpedo? Along there—to the left! A thin, white line of foam!”

It was barely possible to distinguish it; but Cordelia was right. A Whitehead torpedo—material sent by Britain to Russia during the war—was slipping through the sea, with a nasty direction upon it for the blind, stupid monster coiling about on the surface. The watchers guessed the impact—they saw the sudden spout of water and blood; they heard the furious, snorting yell of the great prehistoric sea-beast; they saw the sea beaten into a perfect whirlpool of foam.

Then the brute somehow gathered sense of the submarine, and hurled itself in pursuit. The four upon the break-away saw the boat rise to note the effect of its stroke, and they simultaneously shouted to its unhearing commander to be on guard. He saw the peril instantly, and again dashed forward—on the surface now—to the neck of the pool.

It was a close race, and a difficult one for the submarine. The narrow entrance to the pool was fraught with dangers. Sunken rocks had to be avoided as well as those projecting from the sea, and the tide was running out of the pool at a goodish pace. But the boat managed to shoot its way into the little land-locked harbour almost as its dying enemy was upon it.

Then the reptile dashed against the rocks. Cordelia sat down hurriedly, pale and sick and shaken. A wave of nausea passed over them all. But they knew that one of their troubles had gone. It still writhed and smote the sea and the rocks with its monstrous body; still hated and hissed, in its blind rage. The sea-beast’s hour away from its deep-sea lair had been brief—and it had come to an end.

The Peril of the Night!

THE party on the break-away returned to their old problem of trying to reach the top of the cliff. The break-away was most irregular, and covered with short vegetation and such flowers as bloomed at this season. The professor stopped to gather one.

“A thirsty little blossom this,” said he, holding it out to them. “It could not live without water. Therefore it follows that we shall find a spring.”

This gave them renewed hope. They were all feeling played out. A few more moments saw the professor’s prophecy come true. Cordelia splashed into a hidden brook—green with weeds, and dotted with the little flowers which had promised relief for their parched throats.

“Follow the course of the water,” counselled the professor. “Let us see whence it comes, before we drink.”

They traced the brook upwards under the bushes and scrub until they came to its source. The water ran, clear and sparkling, from over the top of a dark red rock—spurting out with a very cheery splash into a rocky basin at its foot. Jack Armstrong stooped to taste the water.

“It’s rather queer tasting stuff—but not bad,” he decided.

The professor sampled it critically. “Carry on,” said he. “It’s a bit tonic—but all the better for that. This rock is ironstone.”

Having quenched their thirst they felt very much refreshed and were able

to toil ever upward over the rough ground.

At last they managed to win to the top; and then discovered that the way down must be made to the beach whereon Curly had first seen those strange lights which had begun their adventures. By dint of slipping and sliding and going warily, the little party got back to straight going at last. Another toilsome journey brought them to Stone Houses and chance of the rest.

It was like coming home.

So they cooked and ate a very late breakfast, and afterwards sat around and lazed. Jack Armstrong bathed his foot, and Cordelia went off with her father to a sheltered part of the shore, and had a dip in the blue invigorating sea.

There was no sign from the Bolsheviks when the four friends prepared for the night.

“To be on the safe side,” said Curly, rather sleepily, “perhaps one of us had better mount guard all night?”

“Leave it to me,” Armstrong answered. “I sha’n’t get much sleep with this old hoof of mine. I’ll call you, Curly, when it’s your turn.”

Soon the other three were sleeping heavily—thoroughly tired out. Jack Armstrong seated himself outside Stone House, with the gentle night about him. He thought of many things—of their plucky new companions; of the happenings of the past few days. He felt that there was some strange secret in this old, old island—a secret very remote from the ordinary affairs of life.

The night softly closed down on Easter Island, as he brooded there, a sentinel off his guard.

But suddenly he was alert, keen—forgetful of his injured foot. A faint noise on the shingle aroused him. A dusky shadow approached—then halted uncertainly. It was one of the Polynesian natives, carrying his spear and shield. Behind him were others, whispering together.

Armstrong stood up and challenged them.

“What do you here, Men of the River?”

For answer a spear whizzed past him and blunted itself against the granite walls of No. 1, Stone Houses.

READ THIS FIRST.

Jack Armstrong and Curly Walker, two wireless operators stationed on the Easter Islands in the South Pacific, meet Professor Cordwell and his charming daughter, Cordelia, who have journeyed to the island to study the extraordinary stone idols. To their astonishment they discover, installed on Idol Island, a gang of Russian Bolsheviks, who have several submarines at their disposal. A volcanic disturbance occurs which casts up from the bed of the sea a great prehistoric beast supposed to be extinct. Then one day the sea-beast encounters a submarine controlled by Dumnoff, the Russian leader.

A Strange Request!

FOR a few moments Jack Armstrong was at a loss. He thought he knew the natives. Never once had they shown any sentiment towards him other than a respectful fear. There was the defection of Mambese, of course, but even that was not open hostility. And Mambese had been coming back.

Sharp action had to be taken with this knot of foolish creatures. He advanced to meet them, with a hand on the shooter in his pocket which Curly had handed over, fully loaded, before turning in. Armstrong faced the fellow who had flung the spear.

"Speak, Man of the Swamp!"

The natives dropped their spears. They were not a very plucky lot. They hung back and seemed in a mind to retreat. Their comrades had not returned from the inland pool, and these were not the pick of the tribe. One of them replied sulkily.

"Him make magic. Much kerosene. Little old chief allee same devil-man, savvy?"

"No, I'm hanged if I savvy!" Armstrong's first feelings of anger and alarm changed into mirth. He heard his friends coming out of Stone Houses. At sight of the professor, the native who had answered Jack Armstrong set up a jabbering of pidgin-English and Polynesian lingo—pointing excitedly at Professor Cordwell.

"Dear me!" said that excellent old gentleman. "I seem to have done something very wrong. Something to do with kerosene."

"That's their talk for fire, or light, or sun and moon. Anything bright, you know!" Thus Curly explained it. "Let me grapple with them, Jack, while you all go in. They like me a little, I fancy!"

He showed his chum that he had a pistol.

It was the wisest thing to do. Behind the men were some of their women—a sure sign that nothing very murderous was afoot. There were the two Polynesian girls, and the dog and cat came out to greet them. Armstrong and the professor went into No. 1, Stone Houses with Cordelia.

A great pow-wow commenced, with Curly in the thick of it, thoroughly enjoying himself. It was quite correct that the Polynesians liked him, but their gestures and chatter and continual "savvys" proved that they had a difficulty in expounding their grievance. In the end of it Curly made them hand over their spears, and then they all sat round him in a ring. He questioned them one at a time, while his chum watched closely from the shadow of No. 1, Stone Houses for any act of treachery.

The moon was up by now, and it was a queer sight to see them all so seriously squatting round the young Englishman. He had them well in hand, and got at the trouble bit by bit. Presently he stood up, and, bidding them wait his return, moved slowly towards his friends.

He was struggling to keep from laughing, yet in his heart he knew it was no laughing matter. Foolish as these natives were they had the capacity for mischief, if he did not satisfy them.

So Curly presented a straight face and walked very gravely and thoughtfully into Stone Houses. He held up his hand to warn the others.

"Don't laugh and don't shout. You're in an awkward mood. It's they, sir, they're after." He turned towards the professor, dimly visible in the shadows. "They say you have offended the idols and brought their anger upon the island."

"I only tapped them gently with my hammer," began the professor.

"It seems that you hammered the Big Chief Idol, the one we thought was a queen. The one that fell down when the landslip shut you two into the cave."

"I thought she was coming in after us," said Cordelia.

"Well, I had to promise you'll re-

way and another. They outnumber us somewhat, even if they are cowards."

"We'll put the queen right end up in the morning," said Armstrong. "Tell them so, Curly, and let's get a little rest!"

"I have told them," answered Curly. "Then give them the dismiss, hang 'em!"

Curly went back to the silent circle of Polynesians. He managed to persuade them that all would be well with their river, and they solemnly departed.

The four friends at Stone Houses went back to bed, to sleep on his new complication. What with Dumhoff on one side and the natives on the other—Easter Island was becoming rather too small for our quartette.



A spear whizzed past Jack Armstrong and blunted itself against the wall of the house.

move the 'magic' you have put on the lady or gentleman, whichever it is. We have got to put her on her feet again."

"Whatever for?" said Armstrong; "it's preposterous!"

Curly shook his head.

"It's idiotic, but it has to be done. I have promised them. You see, the eruption or earthquake business has rather messed things up. It has made a volcano of Palm Tree Hill. It has closed down our wireless on Bluff Point. Also, these young fellows inform me, it has dried up their river!"

Armstrong whistled softly.

"Then they have no water?"

"There's some sort of trickle left, but it's all muddy and, to use their own expressive word, kerosene," said Curly, with a forlorn chuckle. "They sent their braves after you into the inland pool, and dropped on to the Bolehies instead. I haven't said much about that episode. They partly believe that their braves are still searching for us. It's all pretty rotten, one

Jack Has An Idea!

THE morning brought beautiful weather—and no sign of Dumhoff and his crew. This was perplexing; but Armstrong didn't believe in meeting trouble half-way. The four of them managed to get a dip in the sea, and the professor had a shave—which vastly improved his appearance.

"You know, daddy, you were getting rather like a wizard," Cordelia teased him.

She looked fresh and pretty in her change of uniform. She had got on a khaki drill suit and had cleaned her high boots till they fairly shone in the sun. She made the place so cheerful that they forgot all about their problems.

"Of course, we shall get the Val-paraiso folk sending out before long," Armstrong stated with conviction. "They'll wonder what on earth has got at our old Double-O-Seven Bluff Point."

"Then there's my friend, Mr. Temple, who will be coming back in a few days' time," said Cordelia. "He promised me!"

"What kind of a plane has he got?" inquired Curly.

"Don't ask me!" Cordelia made a gesture with her capable hands. "It's right up to date, and can carry three people, and drop eight bombs—four aside. That's all I know, except that Mr. Temple, the aviator, is a very jolly sort!"

Thus they were all in high spirits when they did at last start out to Bluff Point. There was a pleasant breeze and the bathing had done them all good. In this shallow water there was no fear of sharks—indeed, the sea-beast seemed to have eaten most of those equally voracious brutes round about.

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good," laughed Curly, when Jack Armstrong gave out this idea. "I wish he had eaten the Bolsheviks, too!"

But the sea-beast had made things very awkward for the Russians, as they were presently to learn, even if he hadn't devoured Messrs. Dumnoff and Co.

When they reached Idols' Parade they perceived a very marked change. Few of the idols were erect, and all had taken on an even more disagreeable expression—so it seemed to Cordelia. They were positively bristling with anger, she decided, and the blood-red stone, broken and jagged where they had fallen, gave them the appearance of wounded, furious gods, ready to get their own back, at the very first chance!

"Well, well," said the professor, regarding the fallen queen, or Big Chief, "You'll just have to sit up again, old lady. Although how exactly I'm going to make you, isn't clear." He walked round the image as far as possible, while the rest looked on thoughtfully. "She's practically in the cave, Jack, and I dug all round her,

trying to get you two out. I reckon she's some weight."

"It's her own cave, perhaps?" suggested Armstrong.

"If you three could haul on a rope from the beach, down below. I can prise her up with a pole. Lever and fulcrum idea, what?"

It was no use staring at the thing. They had brought a rope with them from Stone Houses and an axe. Curly cut down a young tree from the weather-blown forest higher up the island, and the four of them lugged it along to Idols' Parade. This took the best part of an hour, and the pole snapped like a carrot directly they tried to lever up the idol with it.

"This will make me angry in a minute," said the professor, wiping away the perspiration. "Bother the natives and their old Big Chief! Let them come and put him, or her, back themselves!"

"They won't come here, sir," Curly reminded him. "This place is taboo to them."

Meanwhile, Armstrong had been thinking things over.

"What about moving another of the idols along into her place? We can use the bits of our broken pole as rollers, and perhaps we can bluff them."

"Bluff Point, eh?" cried the professor brightening at once. "Splendid scheme! We'll try it!"

They found one of the squatting idols loosened from its age-long hold on the rock, and by dint of pushing, and pulling, and hauling and making a few remarks to it, they did actually get it into the Big Chief's place.

"Being just in front of where he's trying to back into the cave, you know, will hide him properly," Curly argued. "I consider this a very pretty bit of work. Suppose we have a rest, and some lunch?"

"Carried!" said Armstrong.

They returned quite merrily to No. 1, Stone Houses. From that point of

view the newly erected idol was a great success.

"His own mother wouldn't know the difference," said Curly.

On the principle of not crossing a bridge until they came to it, the quartette took matters easily, and did little for the rest of the day. They were all secretly worried about Dumnoff and his horde of ruffians, but these were singularly quiet and remote—so much so that one might have thought them far away from Easter Island and its idols.

"I suppose they'll just carry on with what I've planned," said Armstrong. "They were a fairly intelligent lot, as regards mechanical work, and all the parts of the wireless were numbered plainly, so that it's only a question of fitting one to another. They have enough to keep them employed for a day or so in the bare assembling. Still, I can't help wondering—"

"Don't," said Curly, stretched out on the beach in front of No. 1, Stone Houses. "You can't wonder in this place. It's too exhausting."

The professor was smoking his everlasting pipe, with eyes half-closed. Cordelia was paddling about in the sea, her boots on the beach, keeping down her stockings from being blown away. There was quite a lively breeze.

"Too much wind," the professor declared, suddenly waking up; "and there's a flavour of the South Pole in it. Do you chaps feel anything? A sort of faint tremor?"

The three of them remained very still.

"Nothing," said Curly, definitely.

"Not a little quivering sensation of the earth?" persisted the professor. "Lie flat with your ear to the soil and tell me!"

Another instalment of this fine tale of adventure will appear next week.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MIDNIGHT MAIL

(Continued from page 14.)

they had, they would have set a watch on the Walgrave Hotel during the day.

"If they are amongst the passengers they are powerless to do any harm," Steele reflected. "We may have left them in London, or they may have gone down to Devonshire by an earlier train. Wherever they may be, however, it is not at all likely that they will be abroad with evil intent on so wild a night."

There was a stop at Taunton, and another at Exeter, the old cathedral city which is called the Gateway of the West. The train resumed its journey, and it had gone a few more miles when Oliver climbed warily over the coal-bunker and descended to the footplate.

"I've come to report," he said. "All's well, guv'nor. I've been from carriage to carriage, and looked in every compartment."

"And you have seen nothing of Flindt and Sleath?" asked Steele.

"No, I am certain they are not travelling with us," the lad replied.

"I didn't suppose they were. They are probably still in London."

"I dare say they are. We have nothing to fear from them. The next stop is Newton Abbot, isn't it?"

"Yes, and we will soon be there. And now go back to your companions, my boy."

"Right you are, guv'nor. See you later."

Oliver had returned as he had come, and the detective, relieved by what he had been told, drove swiftly on, buffeted by the gale and pelted by the rain. He did not relax his vigilance. He felt that there might still be some cause for anxiety. The train hit a sharp curve, and as it swung round it a blazing object lit up the darkness some yards in front.

"It is somebody waving a burning paper," said the stoker.

"What can it mean?" asked Steele.

"It must mean danger, sir. There is an obstruction on the line, I should think."

"Or the heavy rain may have

caused a wash-out. That is more likely."

The blazing signal drew rapidly near, Steele reversed the throttle, and decreased the speed. Suspicion flashed to his mind as he perceived a couple of dusky figures behind the light, and of a sudden he saw, to his horror, that the metals were sagging, crooked and twisted, over the edge of a steep embankment on the left.

The next instant there was a violent jolt, and the engine leapt into space, dragging the carriages after it. Steele jumped for his life, and was hurled through the air, and flung heavily into a clump of bushes. His senses swam, and the rest was a blank to him. There was a grinding, crashing, rendering sounds followed by a few seconds of hushed silence. Then were heard shrieks of terror and anguish, and the hiss of escaping steam; and amidst the wreckage of the mail train curled red tongues of fire, seeking what they might devour.

Another long, powerful instalment of our magnificent new detective serial will be given in next Tuesday's "Greyfriars Herald." Order your copy now!—Editor.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DR. JOTSON!

Our Great New Series dealing with
the Amazing Adventures of

HERLOCK SHOLMES
DETECTIVE

Written by

PETER TODD

I.

MY amazing friend, Mr. Herlock Sholmes, generally enjoyed the best of health. Even after his most strenuous mental aberrations, he would come up smiling. During the period of our residence at Shaker Street, I never knew him to be ill, until the occasion of which I am about to speak.

I was, of course, glad that my friend enjoyed robust health. But my satisfaction was mingled with a little friendly disappointment. Nothing would have pleased me better than to have cared for him in sickness—my medical skill was entirely at his service, and I would have operated upon him at any time with pleasure.

Indeed, at one time I suspected appendicitis, and offered to remove his appendix; of course, without charging him any fee. Sholmes declined the offer, rather hastily, I thought. Perhaps seeing my disappointment, he offered to allow me to remove the appendix from any volume in his bookcase. I explained that this was quite a different matter; but wonderful as my friend's intellectual powers were, for once he did not seem quite to comprehend, and the subject dropped.

It was after his solution of the "Trunk Mystery" that my amazing friend was laid up; and sad as it was to see him stretched upon the bed of sickness, I will not deny that I felt a certain gratification in at last being able to attend him as a doctor instead of merely as a faithful and admiring follower. I assumed my well-known bedside manner at once, and soothed him gently; for Sholmes, brave as a lion in health, seemed now under the influence of some strange fear.

"At last, Sholmes," I said, "my dear fellow, rely entirely on me. You know my skill."

"I do!" said Sholmes, with a gasp.

"An operation will, I fear, be necessary," I said, as I felt his pulse. "You know how successful my operations are. I have never had a failure. Not one of the patients upon whom I have operated has ever complained afterwards—"

"Perhaps he couldn't!" remarked Sholmes, with what seemed to me a rather ghastly smile.

I did not quite follow the drift of this remark.

"Lie quite still, my dear fellow," I said. "I shall, of course, use anaesthetics. You will never know what has happened to you—"

"One moment!" gasped Sholmes. "Before you begin, take a message for me, my dear Jotson, in case of accidents!"

"There are no accidents when I

operate, Sholmes," I said, with some severity. "I will send it by Mrs. Spudson."

"As a last favour, Jotson, I beg you to take the message personally," said Herlock Sholmes, writhing upon his bed in a really alarming way.

I consented.

It was, perhaps, weakness on my part, but my friend was growing so excited, that I felt it better to humour him.

I brought him paper and pencil, and he scribbled a few lines, which he sealed in an envelope.

"Take it immediately, Jotson—and personally!" he said feverishly. "Mind, personally—no other messenger will do. Mrs. Spudson can remain with me while you are gone. Hurry—hurry!"

"I will fly!" I said.

I lost no time; I could see that Sholmes was anxious for me to return and operate.

A taxi bore me swiftly to the address on Herlock Sholmes's letter.



Sholmes was under the influence of some strange fear.

The house was situated in a somewhat unsavoury quarter of Limehouse. I knocked at the door.

It was opened by a bull-necked man with one eye, who glared at me in what I thought a rather ferocious manner.

"A letter from Herlock Sholmes!" I said.

The bull-necked man took the letter, opened it, and read it, while I stood in the doorway.

Then he gave me a very peculiar glance.

"Please step in, sir!" he said.

I stepped in, and the bull-necked man closed the door.

Then, to my utter amazement, he suddenly seized me in a pair of very powerful hands and rolled me down a flight of steps into a cellar.

By the time I gained my feet, a door had closed on me, and I heard a key turn in a lock.

I was a prisoner!

II.

I CANNOT describe my anguish of mind during the days that I remained a helpless prisoner in the cellar at Limehouse.

My best friend—the amazing Herlock Sholmes—lay upon a bed of sickness, and I was not there to attend him. His faithful Dr. Jotson was far from his side in the hour of need.

I may say with truth that I thought more of Sholmes than of myself during those terrible days of anxiety. What would happen to him if the operation was not performed at once? Without my pressing solicitude, it was doubtful whether Sholmes would submit to an operation at all. I knew that he was prejudiced on the subject—for some reason I could not grasp, he attached more importance to the recovery of the patient than to the success of an operation.

In vain I told my rascally kidnapper that Sholmes's life was at stake. He replied that he was aware of it, and that that was why I was kept a prisoner—an extraordinary statement, which I can only account for by the fact that the ruffian had been drinking.

My release came at last.

One morning the door flew open; and instead of the bull-necked ruffian, it was my amazing friend, Herlock Sholmes, who stood before me.

"Sholmes!" I gasped.

"Here we are again, Jotson!" he said genially.

"You have found me?"

"So it appears."

"And your health?"

"Quite restored."

"But the operation?"

"Prepare yourself for a shock, Jotson! I recovered without an operation!" said Sholmes.

"And in spite of that you are in health!" I exclaimed in amazement.

"Because of that, my dear fellow," he said, with his inscrutable smile. "But come, you must be tired of these uncomfortable quarters."

And hooking his umbrella gently in my ear, Herlock Sholmes led me out to freedom.

III.

"SHOLMES!" I exclaimed, when we arrived at Shaker Street. "How—"

Sholmes shook his head.

"For once, my dear Jotson, I cannot give you the full details of the case," he answered. "Enough to say, that immediately I recovered my health, I sought for you, and found you. There is an old proverb that he who hides can find. Once more we are re-united, my dear fellow, never to part again unless I should be ill—I mean—ahem!" Sholmes seemed a little confused for a moment. Then he smiled. "My dear Jotson, you shall operate on your kidnapper when I find him."

But this proved to be the only occasion upon which I ever knew Herlock Sholmes to fail. He did not find the kidnapper.

THE END.

Another screamingly funny adventure of Herlock Sholmes will appear in next Tuesday's "Greyfriars Herald."



OUR TUCK HAMPER
AND
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Prizes for all Contributions
printed on this page.

For the best storyette printed on this page a hamper crammed full of delicious tuck will be awarded. Money prizes will be given for all other contributions used. When more than one reader sends in the same acceptable storyette, the prize is awarded to the first read. Remember your joke should be written plainly on a postcard, and addressed to "Greyfriars Herald," The Fleetway House, Farrington St., E.C.4.—Editor.

Breaking It Gently!

"Pa," murmured Willie, "you'd be surprised to hear I've broken a record in balancing, maybe?"

"Indeed!" said pa indulgently. "Yes; you see, pa," said Willie, as he edged through the door, "the one I broke was the new Missouri Waltz record!"—Sent in by L. G. Brooker, 5, Dorset Road, South Lambeth, S.W.8.

Disappointing!

The aged supporter knit his brows in deep thought as he regarded the load of bricks which had been dumped on the football ground in preparation for some repair work.

"What's worrying you, Abe?" demanded the club secretary, noticing the old fellow.

"Why, I was just thinkin'," said Abe, "that half-bricks would ha' been handier."

"Handier!" exclaimed the secretary. "Why, man, we couldn't repair the pavilion with half-bricks!"

"Oh, the pavilion!" sighed the old man. "I thought they were for the referee!"—Sent in by G. Peet, 1, Kirkless Street, Wigan.

More Below!

Martha (taking her first holiday by the sea): Ain't it astonishin', Garge? Who'd ha' thought theer could be as much water anywheer as that?

Garge (wisely): Yes; an' remember, Martha, ye only see what's on top!—Sent in by G. Hall, 3, Wellgate, Lanark, Scotland.

OUR TUCK-HAMPER PRIZE STORYETTE

A FEARFUL FACER!

Little Eleanor gazed long and thoughtfully at the foppish youth with the short moustache and eyeglass who was calling on her big sister Ethel.

"Well, my little dear," smiled the young man, who was anxious to make a hit with the family, "is it my monocle you are so interested in?"

"No," replied little Eleanor; "I was looking for the word."

"The word! What word!" inquired the puzzled visitor.

"Why," answered Eleanor, "I heard Ethel say this morning that if ever a man had the word 'idiot' written all over his face, it was you!"—Sent in by W. Russell, Ross Cottage, Chapel Hall, Airdrie, to whom a hamper crammed full of delicious tuck has been despatched.

A Gentle Hint!

Mother was giving a dinner to a number of friends, and it was not until the desert course was served that little Winnie was brought down and introduced to the guests. The child was given a place at the table, and in the conversation that followed her mother clean forgot to give her anything to eat.

At last Winnie could bear it no longer. With a sob rising in her throat, she raised her plate as high as she could and demanded, in a loud voice:

"Please, does anybody want a clean plate?"—Sent in by Mrs. W. Barnes, 5, Grange Street South, Grangetown, Sunderland.

A Higher Reason!

Mistress: Well, I'm sorry you want to leave me, Mary. What is your reason?

Mary kept silent.

Mistress: Something private, perhaps?

Mary (proudly): Oh, no, mum, he's a lance-corporal!—Sent in by Miss Marian Browne, 5, Salisbury Gardens, Belfast.

And Missed His Train!

"That is the sword of my great uncle, General Dasher," proudly remarked the host, as he conducted his guest through the gallery of relics. "He lost his arm at Waterloo!"

"Yes, it's a terrible place for losing things," responded the guest genially. "I lost a suit-case there only last week."—Sent in by G. Thomas, 13, Tysoe Street, Rosebery Avenue, Clerkenwell.

How He Lost Time!

Police Inspector: Why didn't you report to me at eleven, as I told you? It's after twelve now.

Detective: The fact is, sir, I didn't know the time. One o' those pick-pockets I was shadowing stole my watch!—Sent in by G. Mell, 51, Cumberland Street, North Road, Darlington.



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