

MAGNIFICENT SOUVENIR PHOTOGRAPH OF THE AUSTRALIAN TEAM!

ON PAGE 2.

The POPULAR

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2nd



“THE PICNIC RAIDERS!” Full-of-Fun Tale of The Rookwood Chums, inside!

Congo Foes!

BY
Charles Hamilton.

The Stolen Tusk!

N'KORO'KORO, the hunter, lay on the threshold of his hut, his black face set and unconscious, his eyes closed. There was a great bruise under his thick hair, where the butt of a spear had struck, knocking him senseless. He lay still, where he had fallen, and no sound came from him. But from the wife of N'koro'koro, who stood outside the hut in the blazing sunshine, came scream after scream that rang through the length and breadth of the native Baganda village and far into the forest beyond.

Long and piercing rang the screams of Masinda, the wife of N'koro'koro, rousing the whole village and drawing round the hut a crowd of Baganda. And the wild screaming reached the ears of the Popolaki Patrol, camping under the green canopy of the African forest.

Lyn Strong sat up and took notice. The Boy Scouts of Masumpwe were resting in the drowsy boat.

Fatty Page was fast asleep. Cecil Staepool was polishing his eyeglasses. Pip Parker was talking, which was one of his favourite occupations. He talked to Samut, the Dutchman—the silent one—who replied only with a sleepy grin and an occasional "Ja" or "Ach!"

Bobo, the Kikuyu, was cleaning Lyn's rifle. He was the first to hear the sounds of alarm from the adjacent village, but he gave them no heed. The screeching of a woman was an idle sound in the ears of the Kikuyu.

Lyn listened. Scarcely after a scream came pealing from the distance.

"Something's up," said the patrol leader of the Popolaki Scouts. "Do not your ears hear, Bobo?"

"Na'am, Bwana!" answered the Kikuyu. "My ears hear the crying of a woman. It is nothing."

"Nothing!" repeated Lyn.

"O Bwana, perhaps her husband is beating her with a whip of rhinoceros hide," said Bobo. "Or perhaps a crocodile has taken one of her small ones. Let the Bwana close his ears to this screaming."

Lyn rose to his feet. It was probable enough that the screaming of a native woman had little



cause; but he was not disposed to close his ears to it.

Fatty Page sat up and yawned. "What a frightful row!" he remarked. "What's it about, Lyn?" "Ask me another," said Lyn. "But I think we'd better look into it. We're law and order in this district."

Baganda gathered before a hut, and in the midst of them the woman screamed.

The Scouts entered the Baganda village; and as they came up to the through the general attention of the natives was turned to them, though the woman continued to scream as though her lung-power was inexhaustible.

The headman of the village came to Lyn at a sign from the patrol leader of the Popolaki Scouts.

"O man," said Lyn, speaking in the native tongue, who is this woman, and for what reason does she cry out in this strange manner?"

"O Bwana," answered the headman, "this woman is Masinda, the wife of N'koro'koro, the hunter, and she cries because a thief has struck down her husband, and taken from his hut a tusk of ivory."

"And is it known," asked Lyn, "who is the thief?"

"It is well known, Bwana," answered the headman, "for the thief is Kintambo, and all eyes saw him."

Lyn's eyes gleamed. It was to search for Kintambo, the outcast Baganda, that the Scouts had taken the trail. Kintambo was wanted for many thefts in Masumpwe and the plantations of the Popolaki River.

"And why did not the people of this

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The Popolaki Patrol Risk Their Lives

for an old ivory tusk!

"We are!" agreed Pip, with a grin. "Let's go and see."

"Let's!" said Staepool. "But if some coloured gentleman is administering correction with a rhinoceros-hide whip, I don't know whether it's the duty of a Scout to intervene in family matters."

"We'll see, anyhow," said Lyn. "Come on!"

And the Popolaki Patrol quitted their camp and started for the Baganda village on the edge of the forest.

The screaming continued without intermission.

As they approached the village the Scouts could see a great crowd of

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WHO'S WHO ON THE SOUVENIR "GROUP" PHOTO OPPOSITE!

Left to right, back row: S. McCabe, A. Hurwood, T. Wall, P. Hornibrook, E. A'Beckett, C. Grimmett, W. Oldfield.
Left to right, bottom row: D. Bradman, W. Fensford, V. Richardson, W. Woodfull, C. Walker, A. Jackson, A. Fairfax!

village seize the robber?" asked Lyn. The headman rolled his eyes. "O Bwana, Kintambo is a very fierce and dangerous man," he answered. "It is well known that he is a very terrible man indeed!" "And he has not slain N'boro'koro," said another voice. "It was only with the butt of his spear that he has driven away his senses. But he has taken the elephant tusk that was worth many dollars, and it is for this reason that Masinda complains."

Masinda was still screaming. Lyn intervened hastily. "Tell this woman, O N'goko, that we will follow Kintambo, and give him over to the white man's justice," he said; "and if it be possible, we will find the tusk he has taken, and bring it back to the house of N'koro'koro."

"O Bwana, these words will be sweet to the ears of Masinda," said N'goko. "For if her husband should die under the blow of Kintambo, she may find another husband among the Baganda; but a tusk of ivory that is lost is lost for ever. I will tell her the Bwana's words, for indeed her screaming is a trouble to my ears."

And the Bwana's words being repeated to Masinda, the hunter's wife took comfort and ceased to scream; and being comforted, she proceeded to give her attention to the unfortunate man who still lay senseless on the threshold of his hut.

Lyn Strong asked hurried questions, and learned from the villagers the way the robber had gone. And the Popolaki Patrol left the village and marched into the forest on the track of the thief.

The Mysterious Fee!

CRACK!

"Look out!" shouted Lyn.

"Great Scott!"

"Who the thump—"

The broad-brimmed hat spun on the head of Lyn Strong. Suddenly, swiftly, the bullet had come from the bush, followed by the ring of the rifle.

Instantly the Scouts flung themselves on their faces.

They were following a narrow bush-path in the forest, a couple of miles from the Baganda village.

Into that path many eyes had seen the fugitive, Kintambo, disappear, and the Scouts followed the path, watching for sign to tell them whether the thief had left it and taken to the untrodden forest.

And then came the shot startling and surprising the Popolaki Patrol more than it alarmed them.

There was a bullet-hole through the brim of Lyn's hat. The lead had whizzed within an inch of his head.

Lying in the grass, their rifles extended before them, the Scouts watched for the enemy ahead.

But there came no sound from him, whoever he was, no movement. Deep silence followed the ring of the rifle as it died away.

"What the thump!" said Pip.

"A white man," said Lyn. "But why he should fire on us is a mystery. It's not Kintambo. He has no rifle, and most likely would not know how to use one. If it had been a spear—"

He broke off.

The happening was amazing. If it was a white man who had fired, it was inexplicable why he had pulled trigger on the Boy Scouts of Masumpwe.

Lyn waited a few minutes. But there

was no sign from the man who had fired from the bush ahead.

"Keep in cover," said Lyn.

He rose to his feet, staring towards the narrow walls of high bush that closed in the path ahead on either side. Those thick walls of grossery hid the man with the rifle.

"Ho, there!" shouted Lyn. "Who are you? Why did you fire? We are friends, if you are a white man!"

There was no answer.

"Gee, perhaps!" murmured Pip. Crack!

Lyn uttered an exclamation as the bullet came. It grazed his shoulder, tearing a rent in his shirt.

He dropped at once into cover again. "You fool!" muttered Pip. "You might have bagged that one in the crumple. See how you are!"

Lyn set his lips.

"I can't make it out, unless the man's mad!" he muttered. "He's in cover ahead, watching the path. He's there to stop us. Goodness knows why!"

"A confederate of Kintambo?" suggested Fatty.

"Looks like it. And yet—" Lyn shook his head. "It's no good. I can't make it out. But we've got to get to the bottom of this, and teach him manners, whatever his game is. Bobo!"

The Kikuyu's eyes gleamed.

"O Bwana, let this Kikuyu creep like a leopard through the bush," he said, in a whisper. "For I will come upon the unseen one as silently as a snake, and slay him with my spear."

"You will not slay him, Bobo," said Lyn. "But you will seize him with your hands and hold him fast, that he may not use his rifle."

"My ears hear, Bwana," said the Kikuyu.

And from the path the native crept on hands and knees into the almost impenetrable bush.

The Scouts waited.

To rush the position of the unseen rifleman was asking for death for at least two or three of the party, if the man chose to shoot to kill. Hidden in thick bush ahead, his rifle commanded the open path.

But the Kikuyu, accustomed to worming his way through the thickets, could approach the rifleman from another direction, as silently, as he said, as a snake.

Bobolobo vanished into the jungle, and after he had disappeared no sound came from him.

But the Scouts knew that he was making a detour through the bush, and that he would come on the rifleman from behind.

They listened intently.

But no sound reached them, either from the Kikuyu, or from the man who had fired on them.

Lyn wondered as he waited.

Both the bullets had gone very close to him, yet neither had struck him. And he wondered whether they had been intended to hit, or whether the rifleman was merely trying to frighten back the patrol.

The latter, he thought, was more likely, for the shooting down of a member of the Popolaki Patrol would have raised a storm, and the murderer could hardly have hoped to escape the fierce pursuit that would have been made for him. Not only the Scouts, but the Government Askaria, would have combed the forests for the assassin.

Long minutes passed.

The silence lay heavy on the tropical forest, broken only by the buzzing of innumerable insects, buzzing and whirling in the shafts of sunlight that came

through the canopy of foliage overhead. Over the narrow path the branches met and interlaced, and even at noon it was dusky there. Now the dusk was deep, for the sun was setting in the west, sinking towards the far lands of the Congo.

The Scouts waited patiently.

The silence was suddenly broken.

There was a shout, a sound of struggling and scuffling, and the crashing of thickets.

Lyn leaped to his feet.

"Come on!" he panted.

"Bobo's got him!" chuckled Pip.

Evidently the Kikuyu had crept on the unseen man, and seized him by surprise. And the sound of furious struggling showed that the man was resisting desperately.

Lyn raced up the bush-path, his comrades at his heels.

The rifleman's cover, in a thick, thorny bush, was only twenty yards from the spot where the Scouts had halted.

The bush was swaying and crashing, as the Kikuyu and the hidden enemy struggled within it. But, swift as Lyn Strong was, the sound of the struggle ceased before he reached the spot.

He heard a groan, and a heavy fall; then a rustle; and there was silence as he reached the spot and plunged into the bush.

"Bobo!" he panted.

He almost stumbled over the Kikuyu. Bobolobo lay on the ground, without motion—by his side a rifle, which the unseen man had dropped. But of the rifleman there was no sign. It was plain that he had fled into the jungle after striking down the Kikuyu.

"Bobo!"

Lyn dropped on his knees beside his faithful friend. For a terrible moment he feared that Bobo had been slain, and repeated his order to the Kikuyu not to use his spear.

But a groan from Bobo showed that he was still living.

His black eyes opened, and stared up at Lyn. His hand went to his head. He had been stunned for the moment by a heavy blow.

"O Bwana!" panted Bobo.

The Scouts came up with a rush, trampling in the thicket. The enemy was gone, leaving behind him his rifle. Broken twigs and trampled bush showed the way he had fled into the jungle.

"He's got away!" exclaimed Pip.

Bobo rubbed his bruised head. He had had a severe blow; but the head of the Kikuyu was hard. He gave the Bwana a reproachful look.

"Thank Heaven you live, Bobo!" panted Lyn. "I feared—"

"O Bwana, had I been permitted to use my spear, the Mzungu would now have been with the ghosts!" said Bobo.

"A Mzungu—a white man!" exclaimed Lyn.

"Na'am, Bwana! Yes, lord!" said the Kikuyu. "It was indeed a white man, and I came on him silently from behind, as he watched the path with his rifle in his hands. And I seized him, as my lord had me, and he turned on me like a leopard, dropping his rifle. But, behold, he was but a small man, and my hands were too strong for him."

"But he got away!" said Stacpool.

"It is true," said Bobo, "for suddenly he drew from his belt a small gun and struck this Kikuyu with the butt, and then my eyes did not see him any more."

Lyn gritted his teeth.

"The scoundrel! But he can't be far ahead—and we'll get him! We'll give

Kintambo a rest, you fellows, while we get after this rascal."

"Likely enough to find them together I fancy," said Bobolobo.

"Follow me!" said Lyn.

And he plunged into the jungle in pursuit of the man who had fled, and his comrades followed him fast.

Hunted Down!

NIGHT lay black and dense on the African forest.

A myriad brilliant stars scintillated in the sky, but hardly a gleam of starlight reached the dark smokes of the forest through the massive canopy of branches and foliage.

Dark as it was, the Popolaki Patrol had not camped.

They were weary, but angry and determined. Bobolobo, who seemed able to see like a cat in the dark, led the patrol by a game-path, and the five white Scouts trailed after him, their rifles under their arms.

The man who had fled after striking down the Kikuyu had been lost in the jungle. For some distance the Scouts had followed its trampled track in the bush, and then it had vanished.

But they were determined not to rest till they had found him, if finding him was humanly possible.

But as they tramped by the game-path, following the dim form of Bobolobo, they realized how unlikely they were to find the man they sought unless they were favoured by fortune. But there was a chance, for at night the man would camp, and if he camped, he certainly would light a fire to scare away the wild beasts—for in the Mbiri forest lion and leopard and hyena prowled and howled in the hours of darkness. There was a chance—and the Scouts hoped for the best.

Bobo halted suddenly and turned back to the patrol.

"O, Bwana!" he breathed.

Lyn's eyes gleamed.

"What is it, Bobo?"

"My eyes see light, Bwana," answered the Kikuyu. "Lo, there is a fire in the forest!"

"Good luck!" murmured Pip.

"Lead on!" said Lyn.

The Kikuyu pressed on, and the Scouts followed him, forgetful now of fatigue.

The game-path they were following, trodden by the feet of innumerable wild animals, evidently led to water, and by the water was a likely spot to choose for a camp.

And that the Kikuyu was not mistaken was soon proved, for soon all the Scouts could see the dancing reflections of a fire amid the darkness of the trees.

Silently, their rifles ready, the Popolaki Patrol pushed on.

The game-path ended on the bank of a little stream, that murmured softly under the dark trees. At a little distance from the path—well out of the way of beasts that might come to drink—the camp-fire burned.

Lyn made his comrades a sign to halt, and they scanned the camp before

emerging into the radius of light from the fire.

A hut built of branches and leaves stood there, backed against a huge tree that rose to a height of a hundred feet amid the other forest giants. It was such a shelter as might be thrown up in an hour, and was evidently of recent construction. Before it, the fire burned a few paces from the opening of the hut.

No one was to be seen; whoever had camped there was in the interior of the hut and out of sight.

But whoever he was, the Scouts had him now, if they wanted him. For the Simey hut was no protection against bullets, and a volley would have searched it through and through.

"We've got him!" murmured Fatty Page.

"If it's him!" said Pip.



Lyn almost stumbled over the figure of the Kikuyu. "Bobo!" he gasped. There was no movement from the native.

"Look!" said Lyn.

As the Scouts gazed at the hut, a man emerged from the opening and lifted an armful of sticks from a stack of firewood to replenish the fire.

He was a man of slight but wiry build, clad in cotton shirt and shorts, with a revolver in his belt.

Lyn touched the Kikuyu's arm.

"Look with your eyes, Bobo," he said. "Is that the Mzungu with whom you fought in the bush?"

The Kikuyu's eyes were flashing fire, and his grasp was convulsive on his spear.

"O, Bwana, that is the Mzungu whom I found crouching like a hyena by the path, and who struck me down with his little gun," he answered.

"Good!" said Lyn.

He signed to the patrol, and the Scouts advanced towards the camp. The white man who was building the fire had not glanced towards them, and was not yet aware of their presence.

But he became aware of it suddenly as they advanced. The firewood

dropped from his hands, and he grasped the revolver in his belt.

Lyn's voice rang out sharply.

"Let that gun alone, or you're a dead man!"

The man glared at him savagely across the fire. His hand still gripped the revolver, half-drawn. But the rifles of the Scouts were looking at him, and he did not venture to draw the weapon.

Slowly his fingers relinquished it.

He stood with clenched hands, his narrow eyes glinting, his thin lips drawn back in a snarl from teeth discoloured by tobacco. The Scouts heard his quick, hard breathing as they advanced.

"What do you want?" he snarled. "Who are you—and what do you want with me? I guess a man's camp is his own, ain't it?"

Lyn pointed to the hut.

"Are you alone here?" he asked.

"Sure!"

"Keep your paw away from the revolver," said Lyn quietly. "I fancy you know what we want, my man."

"You've got me beat!"

The Scouts eyed him curiously. His language and his nasal voice told them that he was an American. A white trader of the roughest class was what he looked.

"O Bwana," said the Kikuyu. "This is the Mzungu who struck me down with his little gun; and it is in my mind to slay him with my spear."

"Say, you got me guessing!" said the man, staring at Bobo. "I guess I've never seen you before. Say, what's this crowd anyhow?"

"We're the Boy Scouts of Masumpwe," answered Lyn. "And we came out from Masumpwe to hunt for a Baganda thief named Kintambo. And we were fired on in tracking him—and you are the man who fired."

"Guess again," said the trader, coolly. "I've sure never seen your outfit before."

"O speaker with a false tongue," exclaimed Bobo. "Did not my hands seize you in the bush, and did not my eyes see you?"

"I reckon your nigger's making a mistake, young man," drawled the American. "I've never seen him before. Why the thunder do you reckon I'd want to fire on you?"

"Who are you?" asked Lyn.

"I guess I ain't ashamed of my name," answered the trader. "You can call me Eben Hackett, and you'll get there all right. I guess I'm a trader—and fairly well-known from the Congo to Zanzibar. And I guess

if you start anything here in my camp, I'll put in a word with the Commissioner, and you'll be sorry for yourselves."

"We'll chance that," said Lyn. "I'm taking my Kikuyu's word that you are the man who fired on us. Who's in that hut?"

"Nobody! I've told you I'm alone here."

"Tell us another, old bean," said Pip derisively. "Haven't we told you we're Scouts; and anybody but a blind man could see a native's trail round your camp-fire?"

Hackett started, and his sharp eyes flashed round him at the earth before his hut. The print of his own boots was repeated in many places there; and among the boot-tracks, were the prints of a naked foot. The Popolaki Scouts had discerned them at once.

Lyn stepped towards the hut.

"Look out!" yelled Skacopole. From the opening of the hut bounded a tall, powerful Baganda, shield on arm and spear in hand. Lyn leaped back from the flashing spear; and at the same moment, Bobolobo bounded forward. The Kikuyu's spear crossed that of the Baganda, and the next moment, Bobolobo and Kintambo were fighting furiously.

The two natives, the brown and the black, circled round one another, with movements so swift that they could scarcely be followed by the eye.

There came a bowl of triumph from the Baganda. His spear had touched the brown shoulder of the Kikuyu, and the blood flowed. Lyn caught his breath.

But it was barely a scratch, from the cutting edge of the broad blade of the spear; Bobo warded with his shield in time.

He leaped at the Baganda, his eyes blazing. There was a crash as shield met shield; a crash as spear struck spear. For a second, the fierce combatants were breast to breast, then they leaped apart again; and Bobo, as he leaped, caught his foot in a trailing root and staggered.

With a yell of ferocious triumph, the Baganda was upon him, slashing with his spear.

But Bobo twisted snake-like, and the deadly slash grazed him, and his own spear struck at the same moment.

"Oh!" panted Lyn.

With one groan, the Baganda fell. Bobolobo stood panting, leaning on his reddened spear. The fierce fight had left even the brawny Kikuyu breathless. At his feet lay the outcast

The trader's eyes glittered. He was powerless in the midst of the Scouts, but he made an effort to resist. The effort was in vain; his arms were dragged behind him and bound, and from a leathern wallet that hung to his belt, the Kikuyu drew a tusk.

He handed it to Lyn.

The scout glanced at it. It was not a large tusk, and it was yellow with age. Its market value could not have been more than a few pounds, and Lyn was puzzled. It was strange enough that even a lawless and unscrupulous ruffian, as Hackett evidently was, should have leagued with a native thief, for so small a plunder. But as he looked at the tusk, Lyn saw that there were markings on it, cut into the ivory with a sharp knife. The graven marks were old, and unless they were some sort of native ornamentation, they had no meaning to Lyn's eyes.

The American trader panted hoarsely.

"Give me that tusk!" he said. "I own up—I set the Baganda to take it from N'koro'koro. I'd have bought it if the nigger would have sold it, and given him more than its value, too. But he wouldn't part, and I had to have the tusk. Give it to me—I tell you, I'll pay the nigger for it, all that he asks."

ENTER OUR GRAND CRICKET COMPETITION.

The two cricket bats (autographed by the Australian touring side) will be awarded to the two readers who correctly, or most nearly correctly, solve the complete series of forty pictures, i.e., ten in each part. The six other bats (autographed by Walter Hammond) will follow in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to divide the value of the prizes in the event of a tie, but no competitor may win more than one prize or share of a prize.

Readers who so wish may make more than one attempt, but each effort must be separate and complete, consisting, that is, of a complete series of the Entry Forms Nos. 1-4.

RULES (which must be strictly)

inclusive, on which the solutions are filled in IN INK.

The Editor's decision on all matters relating to the contest will be final and binding, and no correspondence will be allowed. Efforts bearing alterations or alternative solutions will be disqualified.

Proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery, and the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for efforts lost or mislaid in the post or otherwise.

Employees of the proprietors of THE POPULAR and of "Modern Boy," whose readers are also taking part in this contest, must not compete.

The Secret of the Tusk!

"O H, my hat!" panted Pip. "Stop!" shouted Lyn. "Kintambo, lay down your spear, or we will shoot you down like a hyena!"

The Baganda did not heed.

He was a big, powerful man, as brawny and muscular as Bobo; and his face, black as tar, blazed with fierce rage, his eyes burned and glittered. His attack was fierce and vengeful; and even Bobo, a mighty man with the spear, was driven back a few paces.

But he rallied, taking the fierce slashes of the Baganda's spear on his strong shield of rhinoceros hide, and slashing back with mighty blows.

And the Scouts standing round rifle in hand hesitated to fire; for the two natives leaped, and dodged, and circled, changing their positions swiftly and incessantly, and it was not easy to pull trigger on the Baganda without danger of hitting the Kikuyu.

The Scouts watched the fierce struggle almost spellbound.

Lyn raised his rifle, and lowered it again. The Baganda was an outcast, and a thief, wanted for many robberies on the plantations and in the native villages. And it was clear that he would not allow himself to be taken alive if he could help it.

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Baganda, the spear gripped in his hand—still!

Bobolobo turned to the Scouts. His eyes gleamed, and his brown face was flushed with triumph.

"O Bwana!" he exclaimed. "Many times have I dressed myself in monkey skins, to follow my lord on safari; but never have I fought so terrible a fight as this. And it is not true, lord, that the arm of Bobolobo is strong, and that his spear is terrible!"

"It is true, O brave Bobo!" answered Lyn; but his face was overcast as he looked at the Baganda. For it was a prisoner he had sought to take away to justice; and it was a dead man that lay at the feet of the triumphant Kikuyu.

Lyn turned to the trader with a grim brow.

"You scoundrel!" he said, between his teeth. "A better man than you has died fighting; but you shall go to the prison that waits for you. Bind his hands."

The American trader shrugged his shoulders.

"I guess you're wasting time," he drawled. "What have you got agin me? I fired on you in the bush to frighten you off—I guess the lead would have got home if I'd wanted. You was close behind the nigger, and I gave him a chance to run."

"And the tusk he stole from the house of N'koro'koro?" said Lyn. "Where is that? Search him, Bobo."

Lyn stared at him.

"This tusk belongs to N'koro'koro, the hunter," he answered, "and to him it will be given back."

"I tell you it's no value to that nigger," started Hackett. "But it's worth a fortune to the man who can read what's carved on it. Give me that tusk, and I guess I've a thousand dollars in my belt that you can share."

"That's enough," said Lyn, curtly. "Bind him to a tree, Bobo, and when the morning comes he will march with us a prisoner. Not a word more you scoundrel, do you think you can bribe a patrol of British Scouts?"

"I guess—"

"Hold your tongue, or the Kikuyu shall gag you."

And the trader snarled and was silent. Lyn placed the carved tusk in his wallet, the trader's eyes following it wolfishly. And a strong cord bound him to a tree, to keep him in security while the Scouts of Masumpwe slept round the campfire.

THE END.

"THE FORTUNE TUSK!"
NEXT WEEK'S ROARING
TALE of the CONGO SCOUTS!