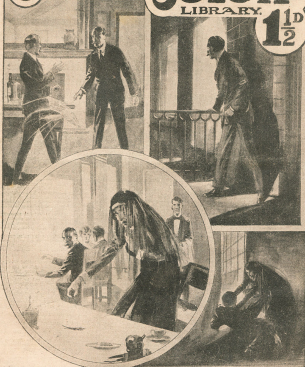


Blake and the "Bat" Meet Again. £300 Football Competition.

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## THE CASE OF THE BLACK FEATHER; Or, The Amazing Affair at the Hotel Magnificent.

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New Short Serial.

## FROM SCHOOL TO SEA.

By CHARLES HAMILTON.

## INTRODUCTION.

Between DIK, TREVELYAN, a boy of fifteen, and MR. GADSBY, his stepfather, there is a bitter feud—the boy's real father has died, suspected of murder, and Gadsby takes any opportunity of lambasting his stepson with this unpleasant fact.

Should Dick do a small fortune to come into the hands of Gadsby. The latter now courts a girl named—The boy's real father's name, CLIBBER, and the result, that Dick is transferred to the school of that gentleman, where he has an unpleasant time.

Dick runs away from the school, closely followed by SAMUEL CONWAY, son of the headmaster, and an army of boys. They both manage to get taken on a vessel. Several of the sailors on board mutiny, and are killed by young Gadsby. The mutineers get the upper hand, and Dick is placed in one of the ship's boats with the skipper and some faithful sailors. They are cast on an island, where Dick meets the father of one of his former school-fellows.

(Now read on.)

## The Wreck of the Boatload.

WE are lost," said Epperson earnestly. "We are lost," said, and she a merry laugh.

"You, you drunken boozer, you and your little one have brought us to this pass! If you had not the drink alone we should be safe as any man."

The crowd muttered a curse. "Who could guess that internal stone was coming on so suddenly? Arraway, it's no use the rowing now. We are lost, and I, for one, am going to make the best of it. Better do that now."

Yorke stood by the lashed boat. His face was wreathed with painful thought. All his plans had been spoiled by the mutineers getting out of hand.

There had now thrown off their first allegiance to their leaders. Yorke and Epperson had orders to have order in vain. And soon the struggle had yielded to temptation and joined in the drinking and brutal revelry.

Most of the time Yorke had been the only sober man aboard. The steers, unopposed from suddenly, found the Boatload utterly unmanageable.

The increased wind by the board. The captain was blown to seas. The rigger was in letters. The Boatload, helpless now even with a sober crew, drifted to her doom; and the crew drank only the more deeply to drown their fears.

"It's all over!" muttered Yorke. His man started moodily towards the lowering island. "It half an hour we shall be among the breakers. It was a bid for fortune, and it costs life."

The rickshaws had tugged on the mummy mummy with an eye to the contents of the steers in the captain's cabin, and taken for trading purposes in the northern sea. The money was in their hands now. It would go to the bottom of the sea with them, as was the irony of fate.

Business, rolling, pitching, the drunken crew, and the crew's noise and noise in the roaring breakers.

"We shall be drowned," groaned Epperson, clinging to the boatload. "I know we shall!" Yorke looked at him grimly.

"An' don't of that," he said. "But what matters? It will save you from the rope later."

But that did not console Epperson. From below came the sounds of revelry, clinking of glasses and peevish, stamping of feet, loudish rolling of a rickshaws chorus.

Crash! Yorke reeled, and stretched the boatload. "She's struck!"

Down came the masts with a crash. Heavy sea swept the deck.

Half a mile from the shore the Boatload had driven upon a broken rock, and as the

cried points here for timbers the waves beat and pounded him with giant blows.

The song broke off with gasping cries of terror and flight as the boat, feeling on deck, to be helplessly swept away by the billows that now made a clear beach over the ship. And below was no safety, for the water was pouring in fast through large gashes in the hull.

Yorke kicked at his boots. He meant to make a dash for it. A pair of hands stretched him convulsively.

"Save me! Save me!"

It was Conant, blind with fear. Yorke offered a curse, and would have shaken him off. But all at once his expression changed.

"After all, Epperson, bricker than water. Cling to me—would I'll save you. Conant, you halloo! Don't choke me!"

He snatched his opportunity. A large billow swept over the Boatload, and rolled on shoreward. Yorke let go, and went with it.

He had anticipated well. It carried him within a few feet's length of the beach before the force was spent. Then he leaped forward to win his way further.

But with the help of Epperson clinging to him like a limpet to a rock, what was his chance of winning his way through that dim channel?

Epperson, blinded, hung to and fro by the shifting waters, his arms left limp, and he sank into black oblivion.

"I can see a swimmer, captain!" Dick cried suddenly.

"Epperson Conway snatched.

"Epperson Conway snatched.

Yorke they plunged into the foam. Conant, seen from Yorke by the beam of the sea, was at the last gasp when strong arms seized him and bore him to the beach.

But Yorke—where was he? As they stood anxiously watching the sea a white-topped wave came sailing in from the beach, and there a body afloat at their feet.

"It is Yorke!" cried Dick. "And he is dead!"

Captain Conway bent over him.

"Dead! No, but at death's door! Help me carry him to the hut!"

The Mystery Solvers—Homeward Bound.

DAVID TREVELYAN opened his eyes and started Dick at the beach's head.

"Dick Trevelyan! Good morning!"

"How do you feel now?" Dick asked gently.

"I feel that I have not time to live."

There was silence for some minutes. Then Captain Conway said gently:

"I will not withhold the length from you. You have had a short time to live."

"It was in fact, a marvel that Yorke still breathed. The force with which he had been dashed upon the beach would have killed almost any man. His spine was fearfully injured."

"Epperson" murmured Yorke. "So this is the end of it! It never was right—it serves me right! Dick Trevelyan, come here! I've got a good deal to say to you."

Dick, wondering, stepped nearer.

"You're wondering why I took your part on board the Boatload. You wondered how I knew your face when we met. Well, I had a reason. I knew your father. I recognized him."

Dick looked at him.

"Do you remember the murder of Vincent Epperson—the crime of which Mr. Trevelyan was accused?"

"The boy started. What did Yorke know about that, then?"

"I remember it," he said in a low voice.

"Mr. Trevelyan was acquitted by the jury, but he was believed guilty by many people in spite of that."

"And it killed him."

"Yorke gave a gasp.

"Yes, and I know it! Haven't I inferred before of someone else? I never meant that he should be accused?"

"You—but you?" stammered Dick.

"I was the guilty man?"

"Good Heaven!"

"My name is not Yorke. It is Roger Clarke. I am the brother of Elisha!"

Elisha was lost in amazement.

"I never accused it! I was the least guilty of the three! I swear that!" roared the dying man.

"The three? What three?"

"Gadsby, Elisha, and myself!"

"What had Mr. Gadsby to do with it?"

"That the story, I killed Vincent Epperson on the Bedford Road. I had robbed him! He trusted me then, and I killed him! I must have been mad when I struck the blow. Heaven knows how I repented it! I did not mean to kill him—a moment of madness made me a murderer!"

"Elisha and Elisha knew of my guilt. I believed it was Epperson's duty to offer to help me to escape. The deed done I was helpless, overpowered with remorse and terror. With the horrible image of the pitiless eye before my eyes, I was as wax in their hands. I did all they told me."

"You know that story. They cunningly contrived to cause suspicion to be directed against Robert Trevelyan. Gadsby and Elisha were very brave for standing. From the papers—first I was far away by that time—"

"I learned of Robert Trevelyan's arrest and trial. And I dared not speak his hearing from me."

"He acquired some of a great skill to me. I left England then. Two years later I came back. I saw Elisha. Then for the first time, from his lips, I learned Gadsby's motive. How he hated Robert Trevelyan, and had set himself to ruin him; and how Trevelyan had escaped the hangman only to die of a broken heart."

"Then I made a resolve. I wrote out a full confession, explaining and detailing my own guilt and that of Gadsby and Elisha. It was sealed and placed in charge of a lawyer at a bank, giving his instructions to open it in the event of my death, or if two years should elapse without his hearing from me. It was the only statement in my power. I dared not face the public. But after my death the name of Trevelyan would be cleared."

"Dick's face brightened.

"And this confession still exists?"

"None."

"How he prayed? My father's name will be cleared at last!"

"The steersman was rapidly sinking. His face was the last to leave the water."

"Can you forgive me? I have striven to help you to atone for the wrong I did your father. Can you forgive me?"

"It was only for a second that Dick Trevelyan hesitated."

"Do not forgive you!" He took the almost Elisha's hand in a firm grip, as if he believed his father would if he were here."

"And in a little while the eyes of Roger Clarke closed, and his spirit fled to meet its Judge."

For the advantage the wreck of the Boatload had provided the means of safety."

Among the wreckage cast up by the waves was the longest, steepest, and most much damaged, but capable of repair."

"You its repair they busily set to work."

"On the mutineers of the Boatload many were washed up by the sea, but all were Elisha before they were dead before."

"At length, a week's delay, the boat put off from the shore, well-stored with such provisions as the island afforded."

"They steered for Australia, and upon the fifth day the smoke of a steamer was seen before the island, the ship."

"The boat's sails were up, and the crew, gathered over the many waves, nearer and nearer to the steamer."

"We are saved!" It was Captain Conway who cried out the words in words of joy.

"His is heading for me!"

"Hail an hour later, Captain Conway and Dick, Denton and Gadsby were reaching the peak of the sea, Captain Castle, homeward bound."

**Old House Again—The Threading of  
Edith—Edith M. Gaskoy—Continued.**

**"PERRY CONWAY"**  
"Yes, sir!"  
"Come here!"

Perry rose from his seat and advanced reluctantly towards the desk of Mr. Carter.

Edith held a cane in his hand, and was making it dash through the air with the sound so well known to the ears of the boys of Old House.

"My things tell me that you are in trouble."

"Yes, sir," said Perry helplessly.  
Edith always said that when he was in a special mood and looked a haggard creature for expending his spirit upon the boys.

"Ah, so you do not even deny it! You deny it, it probable! You wish to act as a sample of ability and distinction to your fellow-students! I have lost my own eyes just because you deny it!"

With the patience of long suffering, Perry quietly stated:  
"Thank, thank!"

A low cry of pain followed the first cut. Then a disturbance at the closed-door door made Edith glare and startle.

Two persons had entered—one a tall gentleman looking like a doctor; the other—Dick Trevelyan!

The former was making big strides towards the schoolmaster, his face dark with pain.  
**DR. TREVILYAN**  
Perry, looking at him, uttered a cry of joyous amazement.

"Father!"  
"It is I, Perry! What is this sound?"

Edith recalled before the threatening aspect of the order.

"I—I—**Edith's companion,**" he stammered.

"You deny?" cried Dick. "You were at Perry's, so you have done!"

"Mr. Carter," said Captain Conway very quietly, "give me that cane!"

"Edith!"  
"Give me that cane!" roared the captain. Mr. Carter looked round helplessly, like an animal seeking an avenue of escape.

In a moment the captain's grasp was upon his wrist, and the cane was wrested from his hand.

"Now," said Conway calmly, "I am going to give you the scoundrel threading your own hair in your hair!"

Edith vainly wrangled in his grip.

"I'll have the law of you!" he screamed.

Edith! Edith! Edith!

The schoolmaster tilted pills that were positively headless.

He struggled, advanced, stood, threatened—all in vain! Still the pitiless rain of blows descended.

The boys of Old House had never seen anything like it before—certainly not anything they enjoyed or saw.

It was not until the captain's arm was fattened that he desisted.

Then he bang down the curtain, weeping softly.

"Dick! Perry! Come!"

Edith was still struggling and moaning when they left the school-room.

"So you have come back!"

Mr. Gaskoy fixed his eyes upon his stepson with an expression of malignant satisfaction.

Dick Trevelyan nodded.

"Yes, I have come back!"

Mr. Gaskoy glanced at Captain Conway and Perry, who had entered the library at Trevelyan's summons along with Dick.

"And them—**Edith's companion,**" he began.

"Are my guests," said Dick calmly.

A cold snarl crossed Mr. Gaskoy's face.

"Indeed! But—"

"But now the question is—how are you going to get out?" said Dick. There are two ways of exit, Mr. Gaskoy. Which do you prefer—the door or the window?"

"Why, you select—"

"Listen, Mr. Gaskoy," Roger Carter had condensed the truth about the number of Vincent Beverley, and the plot to throw out money upon my father."

"Indeed! But—"

"Tomorrow there will be a warrant out for your arrest as an accessory after the fact. Perhaps you wonder why I tell you as I have my choice of fire that you should go to prison. But your punishment would not benefit your victims now, and I have decided to content with clearing my father's name. That will be done completely, and you—**you are free to go if you so wish.**"

And Mr. Gaskoy was, without a word of thanks he left Trevelyan's library for ever.

He crossed the sea for safety, as Edith Carter also did, and both of them passed out of the life of Dick Trevelyan.

At a lightning hour justice could no longer remain the guardian of the heir of Trevelyan's estate, the Court of Chancery appointed Captain Conway in his place, mainly by Edith's desire.

Edith Dick and Perry have taken to the sea as a profession, under the guidance of Captain Conway, and Trevelyan's estate is their home whenever they return from a cruise.

THE END.

(Next week appears a sensational long Detective Story of Mystery and Adventure, entitled **"THE BIRD WITH FEATHERS,"** the Star of the day Detective, also the opening of a Thrilling New Serial, introducing Nelson Lee and Nipper, by the Famous Author of the "Nipper of St. Angelo's Street.")

# OUR FOOTBALL COMPETITION OFFER. £300 MUST BE WON!

## ONLY TWELVE MATCHES.

SCOTTISH AND IRISH READERS MAY ENTER. NO ENTRANCE FEES.

£300 will be Paid for Correct Forecast or NEAREST.

Below you will find a coupon giving twelve matches which are to be played on SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd. We offer the sum of £300 for a correct or nearest forecast of the results of these matches. No goals are required.

All that competitors have to do is to strike out, in ink, the names of the teams they think will lose. It is the opinion of all competitors, my opinion, or opinion, will be chosen, the names of both teams should be left unaltered.

The competitor who succeeds in accurately forecasting the results of all the matches on one coupon will be awarded the sum of £300. If no one forecasts the results of the twelve matches correctly, the money will be paid to the reader whose forecast is nearest. In any case the full amount of £300 must be won.

Coupons, which must not be enclosed in envelopes containing offers in other competitions, must be addressed to:

**FOOTBALL COMPETITION No. 13,**  
Gough House, Gough Square,  
LONDON, E.C. 4.

and must reach that address not later than THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd.

This competition is run in conjunction with "Answers," "The Family Journal," "Homes Companion," "Woman's World," "The Marvel," "The Butterfly," and "Answers' Library," and readers of these journals are invited to compete.

### RULES WHICH MUST BE STRICTLY OBSERVED.

- 1. All forecasts must be made on coupons taken from "Answers," "The Family Journal," "Homes Companion," "Woman's World," "The Marvel," "The Butterfly," "Answers' Library," and "Union Jack," dated February 1st, or the names of these journals dated February 2nd, and it is essential that the names of teams shall be struck out in black ink. The underskating at the foot of the coupon is to cover the Editor's decision as to final result also be signed in black ink, and the names clearly given.
- 2. Any alteration or substitution of the coupon will disqualify the offer.
- 3. The price of £300 will be paid to the competitor who sends in a coupon the correct results of all the matches. Should no competitor succeed in doing this, the prize will be awarded to the one

sending a coupon showing the nearest number of correct predictions. In the event of the prize will be divided. In any case the full amount of £300 will be paid, even should any of the matches be abandoned. If that should happen, such matches will not be taken into consideration in the adjudication.

4. The Editor reserves the right to disqualify any coupon for which in his opinion, is good and sufficient reason, and if in a definite case of entry that the Editor's decision shall be accepted as final and legally binding in all matters concerning this competition.

5. No correspondence may be received with the coupon, and none will be entered into. Entries will be ignored unless granted.

6. Entries will be accepted until THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd. Any received after that date will be disqualified. No responsibility can be undertaken for any theft or other loss, mislead, or damage. Proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of delivery. Unanswered or insufficiently stamped efforts will be returned.

## Football Competition No. 13.

Matches Played SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd.  
Closing Date, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd.

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| WEST HAM UNITED   | a. BRIGHTFORD        |
| TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR | a. FULHAM            |
| CHESHAM           | a. MILWALL           |
| SHEFFIELD         | a. COVENTRY CITY     |
| SHIRLEY TOWN      | a. BIRMINGHAM        |
| LEITCH F.C.       | a. HULL CITY         |
| BLACKBURN         | a. STOCKPORT COUNTY  |
| BERNLEY           | a. MANCHESTER UNITED |
| WREXHAM           | a. LIVERPOOL         |
| MILWAHOCK         | a. BRADFORD          |
| WOLVERHAMPTON     | a. TRINITY LANSAR    |
| WALSLEY           | a. CLYDEBANK         |

I enter Football Competition No. 13 in accordance with the Rules and Conditions stated above, and agree to accept the published decision as final and legal. WIVES.

Signed.....

Address.....

O.J.....