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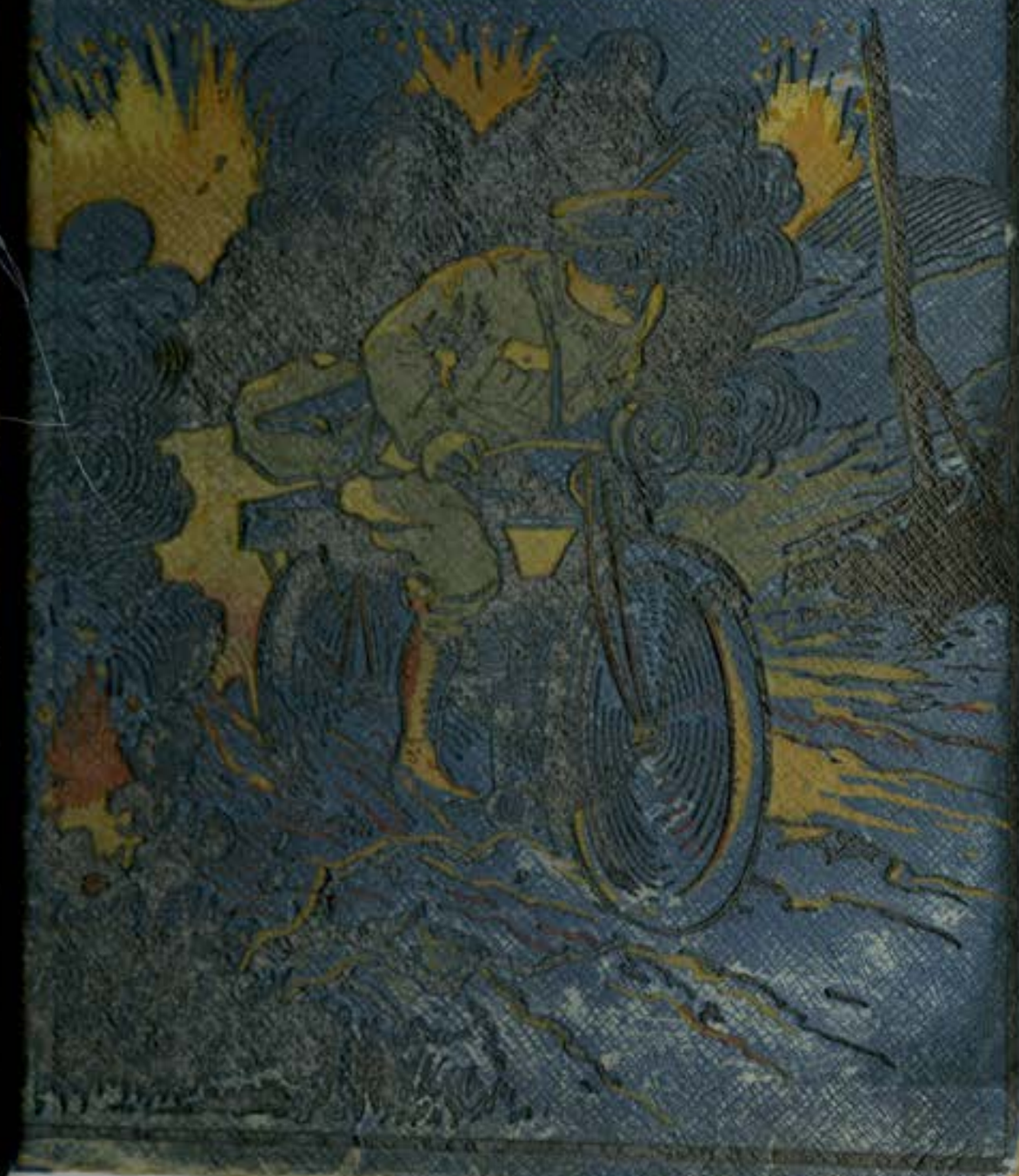

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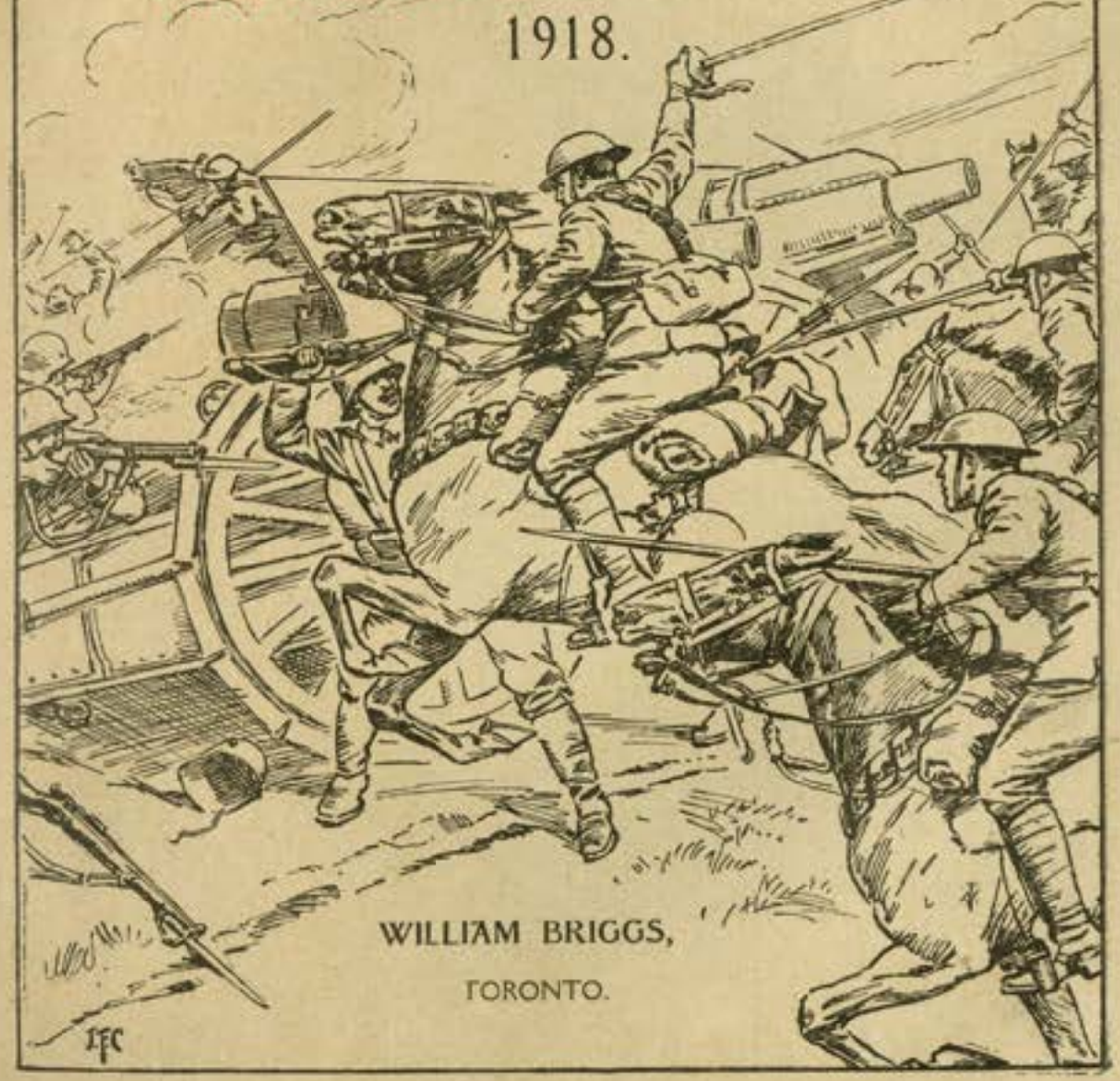
An Illustrated Annual

For Boys throughout the English-speaking World.

THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL VOLUME,

1918.



WILLIAM BRIGGS,

TORONTO.



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THE EDITOR TO HIS READERS.



AGAIN, with very great satisfaction, we are able to put before our readers a new Volume—another in the long series which, year after year, has been eagerly looked for by British boys in these home islands and in those "Britains beyond the Seas" which have been drawn so much nearer to us during these last four critical years.

The Volume is leaner than its peace-time predecessors. That was inevitable, for the simple reason that the full supply of paper had become unobtainable, and what was available could only be got at an almost prohibitive price. The wonder is, not that our Annual this year should be of reduced size, but that it should have been possible to produce it at all.

When once that fact has been realised, we think our readers will have nothing but praise for the treasure-store of good reading and beautiful illustrations which our contributors have enabled us to bring together. Some of the latter—drawings by Stanley L. Wood, Algernon Black, John Campbell, etc., picturing various features of the War—are exceptionally striking.

In our last year's introductory words we expressed the hope that before another Volume was completed the end of the present tremendous conflict would be in sight. That hope has not yet been fulfilled. At the time we write (the early summer of 1918) great issues seem impending, but fleets and armies are still arrayed against one another, and the great objects for which Britain went to war have not yet been attained.

Our readers, therefore, will not expect aught but a war-time Volume: one that will properly reflect what is going on in the various spheres of fighting. In this they will not be disappointed. Sometimes in story form and sometimes in ably written articles, and occasionally in graphic pictures by specialists, they will find much of intense interest concerning our glorious Navy and navy-men, the sturdy courage of our mercantile marine refusing to be daunted by the new terrors which strew the seas to-day, the intrepid patrol men and mine-sweepers, and the watchers of our coasts, whose obscure services call for such endurance and patience. They will learn of the things accomplished by our Naval Pigeon Post, and the help it has rendered in saving lives in peril; of the wonderful deeds of our airmen, who have achieved the same superiority in sky fighting and scouting as our sailors attained a century ago on the seas. They will read, too, of the truly wonderful daring—never surpassed even in the old Peninsular and Waterloo days—displayed by officers and men in the huge armies which Britain has put into the field, and the equally valuable stubbornness of defence and resistance which they have opposed to the enemy, even when he has attacked with overwhelming numbers.

Along with these stories will be found others concerning the splendid men who have come across the seas in thousands from Australia and New Zealand and Canada and South Africa and many a far-off island and settlement. Right valiantly have they assisted us, making an immortal name for themselves as first-class fighting men, and proving to all the world that the home islands and the widely separated Dominions stand or fall together.

But our readers will find in this Volume much that is independent of the War. Stories of adventure, romantic tales from History, scenes of travel, Nature studies, indoor hobbies—all are represented here. And so with the great games, too. Lord Hawke, President of the M.C.C., talks of boys' chances of getting into "big cricket"; football is dealt with by two or three prominent exponents, who give most useful advice. One of these Talks is by a front-rank player who has since given his life for the Empire in naval operations in the North Sea.

And so we commend this, our Thirty-ninth Annual Volume, with its record and suggestion of glorious hardihood and fidelity and devotion, to those who will be the men of to-morrow, and largely for whose safety and well-being their fathers and elder brothers are making so tremendous a sacrifice.

THE EDITOR.



'TWIXT RIVAL SCHOOLS.

By

F. L. MORGAN,

Author of "The Lost Medal," "Against Heavy Odds," "The Big House in the Wood," etc.

CHAPTER I.—*LYNWOOD MAKES A MISTAKE.*

"I'M just nicely fed up with this job!" said Lynwood, after the agonised moment following the contact of his thumb with the iron wrench that had served him as a hammer for the past half-hour.

"Well, we've about finished, I think," responded Macmillan, the partner of his study joys and sorrows—and also, be it known, the sharer of his hopes and fears and most other things, for the two were firm and tried friends.

Lynwood paused, gazing with an air of satisfaction around the roomy study which, under the combined efforts of the two, had rapidly assumed its usual term-time atmosphere, after the shrouded emptiness of the Easter holidays.

"What about a snack for the inner man," suggested Macmillan, falling back to see the effect on the wall of two new school photographs which he had had framed at home and had brought back with him.

Lynwood joined him for a brief survey of the Storr Cross first fifteen gathered stiffly round a silver cup of ugly design though of generous proportions.

"Horrible and hidjus!" commented Lynwood, with his head on one side. "Especially of me. Your old dial always comes out about the same, but Walters' unfortunate nose stands forth much too prominently, and the rest of us look like mental defectives!"

Macmillan was only half listening, but he laughed. "I was thinking," he remarked, "of what a chap who has a cousin at Redlands told me in the holidays. He said that Redlands will have the strongest eleven they've ever had, and that they'll carry all before them this season."

"I don't suppose they'll carry Storr Cross before them!" replied Lynwood calmly, adding in tones of reproof, "You shouldn't consort with chaps who have cousins at Redlands, and listen to gossip!"

"I didn't consider it gossip," returned Macmillan, who was captain of the Storr Cross first eleven. "I looked upon it as useful information from behind the enemy's lines. You see, with Dunstan and Maine gone we're not so strong as last year. Of course we've got you——"

"Ah!" said Lynwood.

"And there's me, of course," continued the cricket captain, calmly. "But at present the rest of the team are rather average, I'm afraid."

Lynwood went over to the window and shook his fist in a manner highly melodramatic at a large red-brick building that had been erected on a rising part of the country three miles away.

"Avaunt thee, Redlands!" he said, loudly. "Take thy great red bulk, blatant in all the coarse vulgarism of parvenution, and hie thee to the rush and bustle of——"

Macmillan, who had listened in some amusement, interrupted. "The coarse vulgarism of *what?*"

"Parvenution, I said, old son. Don't you consider the Redlands tribe are parvenus?"

"Oh, help!" exclaimed Macmillan.

At this moment the door opened suddenly, and a junior, apparently new and feeling strange, took a couple of steps into the room. The rather strained look on his face gave place to a smile of relief as his eye fell upon Lynwood.

Lynwood wheeled round sharply to face the newcomer. "What the blazes do you mean by coming in here without knocking?" he said.

The smile vanished from the face of the junior. "I—I wanted——"

"Don't you know," cut in the senior, calmly enough, but with cold distinctness, "that you belong to the junior school, and are supposed to stay there unless you're sent for? If not, it's time you learnt it. Clear out!"

The junior, with a queer little twist of his lip, went silently out of the room, closing the door carefully behind him.

Lynwood, whistling a little tune, came slowly back to the table where Macmillan was preparing tea. That is to say, the cricket captain was engaged in abstracting various eatables from the cupboard and placing them in a heterogeneous collection on the table, quite regardless of the general appearance of the meal so set forth. His face, during the few moments that the junior had been in the room, had not changed, but now it wore a rather peculiar expression.

"You were a jolly sight too rough on that new kid, old lad," he said, after a moment. "I wonder if these biscuits will be all

right — they're last term's."

"Kids must be taught their place," replied Lynwood. "Yes, I should think the biscuits would be eatable if they haven't gone soft. Were they in a tin?"

"Yes, but I don't fancy it's airtight; still, we'll try them. Of course, kids must be kept under, but it's a mistake to be too hard on new ones. That youngster looked a bit hipped—rather a decent-looking kid, I thought, reminded me of someone."

Lynwood laughed. "That's not surprising, considering he's my young brother!"

Macmillan looked up quickly, surprise and disapproval on his solemn face. He opened his mouth to speak, but closed it again, and in silence turned to give the necessary attention to the kettle, which had commenced to splutter.

Lynwood's whistle recommenced, and Macmillan, having difficulty in finding a clear place on the table large enough to admit the teapot, put it on the extreme edge of one corner. "Come on, let's feed," he said.

"My dear Mac," commenced Lynwood suddenly, drawing up his chair, "if you think that because I brought that kid back to Storr Cross with me I'm going to have him follow me about like a pet lamb you make a very great mistake. The kid has been cruelly coddled at home, and I mean him to get over it in his own way here at school."

Lynwood paused, and all Macmillan said was, "Have a bit of bread, Lynwood, or a biscuit? We must get heaps more stuff in before we're settled."

Lynwood took a biscuit. "I've made up my mind that young Christopher shall make his own way at Storr Cross like any other kid," he went on, still in the same argumentative tones. "Most youngsters have to settle down without help from senior brothers, and it'll be far better for him in the end."

At this point Macmillan's gaze might well have directed itself to the place of honour in the centre of the mantelshelf, where stood a photograph in a heavy silver frame. It depicted a Storr Cross senior in footer clothes. Tucked just inside the frame was a small snapshot of the same youth, very little older, but this time wearing the uniform of an officer in the Royal Flying Corps. There were the same straight brows, the same smooth black hair and wide-set grey eyes that belonged not only to Jim Lynwood, who was the present captain of Storr Cross footer, a prefect and a great and popular man in the school, but also to the new junior who had intruded and had been so summarily dismissed.

Macmillan might reasonably have reminded Jim of his own early days at Storr Cross, when Reggie Lynwood, the original of the photograph, had been a senior and a great man, for Macmillan knew that man a kindly deed and word of encouragement had smoothed the way for the then small and insignificant Jim. But Reggie had been killed in the war—dashed to earth from a height of ten thousand feet in an unequal fight—and, knowing the soreness that remained in Jim's heart, Macmillan, like the gentleman he was, refrained.

"The kid being your brother, you will treat him just how you like, of course," he said.

Lynwood moved irritably. "Then I should like, for a start, to forget him for a little while."

"Agreed. And let us talk about the great and all-absorbing topic, the one thing that makes the summer term interesting and precious above all other terms, *id est*, namely and to wit—cricket!"

"I can't see that there's anything to talk about at present," replied Lynwood perversely. For some reason, possibly accounted for in his conscience, he felt a trifle disturbed.

"Can't you, old lad?" said Macmillan, who, himself rarely ruffled, had wonderful patience with the varying moods and occasional wayward impulses of his more brilliant chum. "Well, then, let Uncle Mac explain a few of the one million points concerning the cricket season of the great Storr Cross!"

Lynwood grinned at Macmillan's soothing tones, and the two fell into animated discussion.

CHAPTER II.—*INTRODUCING LYNWOOD SECUNDUS.*

THE junior, still with the queer little twist in his lip, walked quickly along the corridor and out of the house. His aim was to get somewhere by himself, away from the other juniors and away from his brother Jim, whose attitude towards him was so peculiarly hostile and difficult to understand.

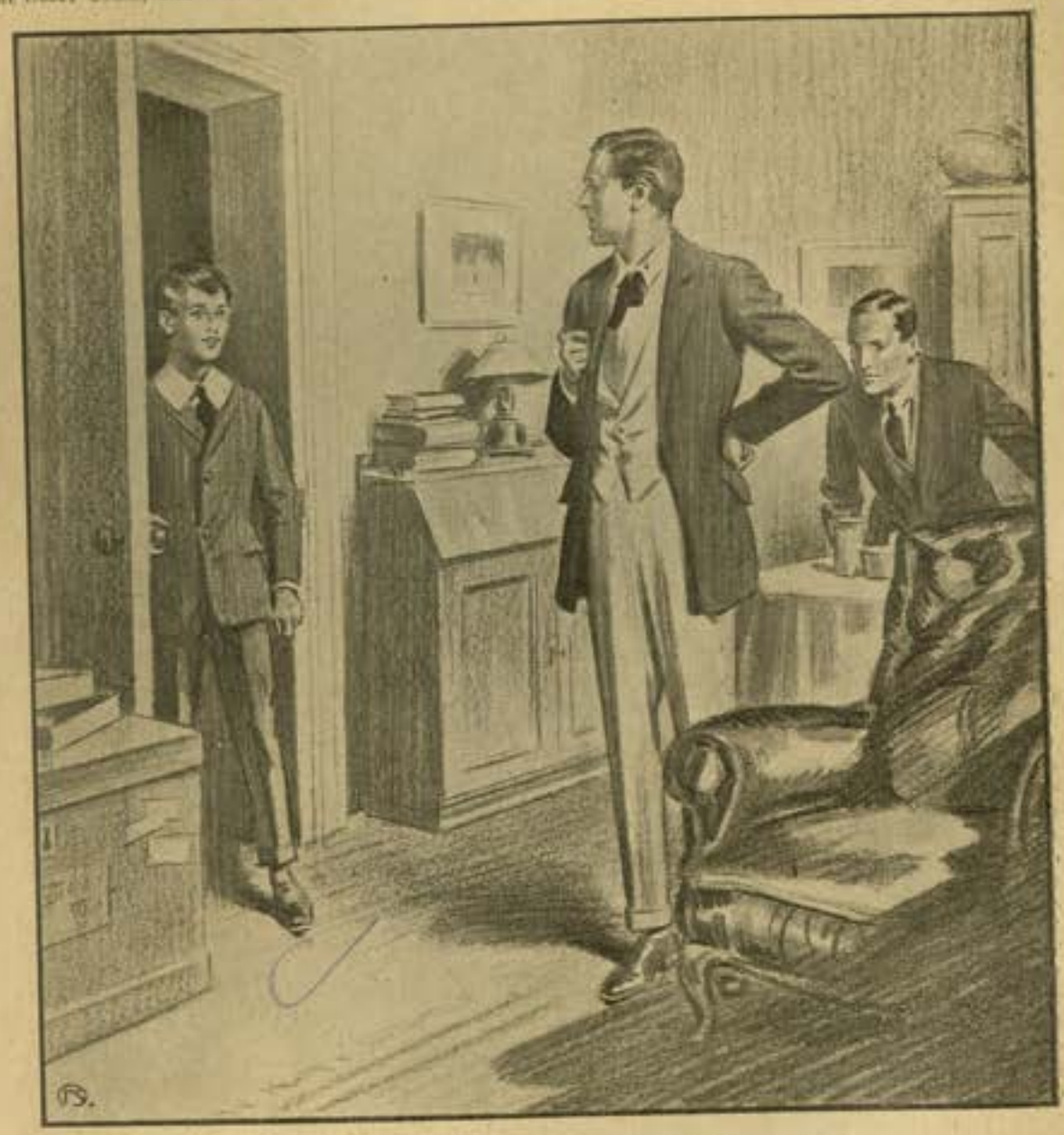
Lynwood Secundus was a small, slim youth, and his brother had spoken truly when he said that the youngster had been somewhat over-coddled and spoilt at home. A few years ago, when young Christopher was recovering from some childish ailment, an unwise and over-talkative doctor had murmured some meaningless nonsense about a delicate and enfeebled constitution, thus planting fear, the sole cause of more than half the ills that flesh is heir to, in the minds of the boy's parents. And, of course, Christopher had been forced to pay unwilling penalty.

From that time he had been held in bondage by False Belief, that old idol, so devoutly worshipped by most of us, whose laws for our undoing are second in illogical absurdity only to the means offered for our relief. For fear of cold the boy was overclothed, fresh air being administered only in small doses and well diluted. All the same, he frequently caught cold, which should have taught his parents that the trouble lay, not with the fresh air of heaven, but in the fear germs which darkened their own minds.

It was Jim Lynwood, home from Storr Cross for the holidays, who gradually inspired young Christopher with an intense dislike for the narrow bounds of his sheltered existence, and made him long to rush about in the keen air, clothed in shorts and a vest, to eat what was set before him and to sleep with his windows open all the year round. Baths from the cold tap had been his daily portion for weeks before his mother, discovering it, was forced to realise that Christopher, delicate no longer, was a normal boy, longing for freedom from fads and for a chance to develop his young energies along healthy and less restricted lines.

It was Jim also who had declared the time was over-ripe for Christopher to begin his career at Storr Cross, and well Christopher remembered the thrill with which he had looked forward to coming and with what high hopes he had set forth with Jim.

But now, his farewells to home, spoken so cheerfully and only two days ago, seemed ages past, for before the end of the journey the great disillusionment had begun for Christopher. For the first part he and Jim travelled together in utmost intimacy and friendliness, and this lasted until the train slowed down and deposited them at Barton Junction, where they had to change and take a branch line to Storr Cross. The platform was crowded with fellows for the school. Mountainous piles of luggage, under the guardianship of small and harassed juniors, formed a background for the animated scene of chum seeking chum, and the ever-growing number of groups, formmates and congenial spirits foregathering with the idea of travelling the rest of the distance in each other's company.



"LYNWOOD WHEELED ROUND SHARPLY TO FACE THE NEWCOMER."

Drawn by REX OSBORN.

One tall, rather solemn-looking senior had raised a hand in greeting to Jim, who replied similarly. Then, abruptly cutting into a remark that Christopher was eagerly making, the elder Lynwood said shortly,

"That's enough, kid—just dry up, will you!"

The next moment Christopher was surprised to find himself hurried over to a group of rather depressed-looking small boys, and to hear Jim say, unconcernedly, "Here, you kids, this is Lynwood Secundus—just take him along with you!"

With a nod and a cool smile Jim had then walked off to join his serious-looking friend at the far end of the platform, and that, so far as Christopher had been concerned, had been the end of Jim.

At this period Christopher was an imaginative sort of youth, in some ways unusually childish even for his twelve years; and, probably, he had pictured his life at Storr Cross with a jolly, companionable, and ever-protective Jim always in the background—the Jim, in fact, of the holidays, whom he had worshipped, second only to Reggie, who was now no more.

Bearing his strangeness and newness as well as he could, Christopher, at the end of the second day, became a prey to a violent attack of homesickness. The longing to see his brother would not be denied, and finding without difficulty the whereabouts of Lynwood's study, he had entered without ceremony, with the result that we have seen.

The twist in his lip began to tremble as he hurried away after Jim's rebuff. It certainly seemed to Christopher at the moment that the world was a howling wilderness, of which the desolate centre was Storr Cross. From a short distance he gazed blurringly up at its big greyness, and, his throat contracting with a painful gulp, he had perforce to kick violently at an unoffending tree-stump, in order to let out some of the agony of his mind.

But Christopher Lynwood was no coward. The spirit that had nerved young Reginald, the airman, one defender against three invaders, was the same that animated Jim in the field, when, though the day seemed already lost, his invincible cheer, untiring confidence and brilliant dash would actually snatch a win from an apparently adverse fate. And that spirit was not lacking in the third Lynwood. Pulling his cap over his eyes, he swallowed the offending lump in his throat, slipped his hands in his trousers pockets, and walked quickly out of sight of those overpowering school buildings. Later, Christopher grew to love every honest, moss-covered grey stone of Storr Cross, but to-day it loomed like a prison.

CHAPTER III.—*CHRISTOPHER MEETS THE PEWK.*

LYNWOOD SECUNDUS was a London boy. Though he had often stayed in the country and at well-known seaside resorts, nothing like Storr Cross had ever come within his experience. To begin with, the very earth was different, its rich red colour being strangely beautiful to him after the chalky downs that he had known; and he noticed ferns and plants growing wild in the utmost richness and profusion that would be considered at home to belong to the garden or greenhouse.

Taking a little red path to the left, he found himself going down hill steeper and steeper until, presently, pieces of rock jutting out of the pathway made the descent very rough. There were woods on one side of him and on the other high cliffs, on the top of which he could see one large dwelling-house, built all on the ground floor.

Full of expectation of he knew not what, Christopher went eagerly forward, and, as an unmistakable breeze greeted his nostrils, he rounded a sudden corner and came upon the finest view he had ever beheld in his life.

He found himself overlooking a tiny bay, on either side of which great rocks rose from the foot of the cliffs and jutted out of the water. Directly below him was a steep incline, shrubs and grass intermingled with patches of red earth, reaching almost down to the sands. The water, lapping softly in the little bay, was almost as smooth as glass, and showed clear and green in the afternoon sunlight.

With a snort of pleasure Christopher followed his little path, which was now so rough and steep that he had to use his hands as well as his feet in the descent. His goal was the stretch of sand below him, showing white and dry, except to the line caressed by the creeping wavelets, and there it glistened silver.

An unexpected sign of humanity met the gaze of the junior when he reached the end of the path, in the shape of a pair of small brown canvas shoes which reposed on the sands. As a natural sequence, Christopher's eye sought the owner, but there was no one to be seen.

Without further thought, and after another quick glance round, expressive of absolute admiration, the boy started to explore, first making, after the manner of his kind, for those particular rocks that looked most inaccessible and difficult to climb.

In the glorious minutes that followed he found little pools of clear water, with seaweed and sea-flowers growing in them, and in which scuttled quite fair-sized crabs. After thoroughly wetting through his boots and socks, Christopher decided to remove them, and, climbing on to a flat high rock to do so, there came within his line of vision a human head.

The head, only the crown of which was visible, was small and flaxen, and was some distance off, showing between and just above two rocks that were wet and slippery with a green, slimy seaweed. Two small hands were raised above the head, and were apparently striving vainly to get a grip. The water was not deep there, but the head bobbed continually, as though the owner was constantly trying to raise herself and constantly slipping back.

The junior, deeming it to be quite shallow water, leisurely took off his socks and turned up his trousers as high as they would go. Then, seeing something strained in the attitude of the small, clutching hands, he raised

his voice and said, "Hi! Want any help!"

"Oh, yes, please!" came the response, rather breathlessly.

It took but a short minute for Christopher to reach the spot, and one still shorter for him to effect the necessary rescue. Having hauled up the owner of the head (and, presumably, also of the brown shoes), and who fortunately proved to be very light in weight, by means of vigorous pulls and pushes, he deposited her in a place of safety behind him, and then leant over and surveyed the spot which had held her prisoner. It was an incredibly narrow space, but the water looked no more than two or three feet in depth.

"It's not deep," he remarked, without looking round.

"No," replied the small girl, "that's what I thought. But the sand is all soft, and I seemed to be sinking down in it!"

"A quicksand!" exclaimed Christopher with some excitement. "Lucky I came along!" He turned and surveyed his companion with more interest.

She was a small girl of seven or eight, the top half of her indicating that she was clad in a pink cotton frock. From the waist downwards, however, her clothing had been unceremoniously thrust into a pair of yellow mackintosh paddlers, from which practical but inartistic bulk issued a pair of slim brown legs which were plentifully covered with scratches gained in scrambling over the rocks. A wet, dark stain showed that she had been under water almost to her arm-pits. What seemed to Christopher an innumerable collection of ringlets, very light in colour, glistened and dripped over her shoulders and down her back.

"You were a pretty long time coming," she said in her high little voice. "I almost began to wonder if I was going to be drowned and pass over to my daddy."

"What do you mean! Is your father dead?" asked the new boy from Storr Cross, leaning over once more to gaze into the treacherous bit of sand, and wishing he had a long stick to test it with.

"No, of course he's not really dead. We know he's alive all right, but he 'passed on' in the war."

"My eldest brother was killed too," said Christopher, drawing back again.

"P'raps he's met my daddy, an' they're friends," responded the small girl with cheerfulness. "We've got a Victoria Cross at home," she added, a little shyly.

"Really!" said Christopher, but he spoke rather absently, the fact being that he was rather struck by the small girl's view of things.

Having shared poignantly in the grief occasioned by the tragedy of his brother's death, and witnessed the air of sorrowful finality surrounding his loss, the junior had never regarded Reggie as anything but irrecoverably dead, although, of course, he had been vaguely taught that those who die Christians will be raised to life again in some future state. But to think of dear old Reg as still enjoying a rational existence and meeting with pleasant people such as he was sure this little girl's father must be, was a most comfortable and cheering thought. Therefore Christopher dwelt upon it for some minutes, following in silence when his companion rose to her feet and commenced to scramble agilely over the rocks towards the dry sands.

"I say, d'you live near here?" he asked suddenly.

The small maiden nodded and smiled over her shoulder. "Mrs. Pewkastor is my mummy, and our cottage is only a little way off—just the other side of Mr. Saville's wood."

"Who is Mr. Saville?" inquired Christopher, waiting while the little brown shoes were assumed.

"He's a gentleman who used to live in India, an' so he built a bungalow to live in, 'stead of an ordinary house. He's got a lot of Indian animals, too, and a monkey an' snakes and heaps of curious things."

Christopher whistled in amazement as he remembered seeing the bungalow on his way down to the sea.

"Do you mean they're alive!" he asked.

"Well, the monkey's alive, and it's ever so tame, and runs loose all about the garden when it's fine."

"What about the other animals and snakes?"

"They're all stuffed, but they're just like live ones. They're in real cages and climbing up trees."

They ascended the narrow path up the cliff, and when the top was gained Miss Pewkastor, signifying her intention to take a short cut through the woods to her home, ran off without more ado, turning once to wave her hand to Christopher.

"Quaint little kid," remarked the junior to himself as he walked briskly schoolwards; "but very decent I should say. What was her name?—Pewk—well, it began with Pewk, I know. Jingo, I am hungry—I've a good mind to follow the Pewk and cadge a tea. I bet her mother's decent all right, too!"

As the school came into view Lynwood Secundus regarded it with a more friendly feeling. He had missed tea-time, but though his inside was empty his heart and mind were not so starving as they had been earlier in the day. The natural friendliness of the Pewk had soothed the cravings of the one, while the other was fed by lively speculations regarding the fascinating bungalow up on the cliffs which contained so many interesting and curious things.

(*Continued on page 50.*)

A WISE FARMER.

IT has long been known that birds are some of the best destroyers of insect pests, but it is all too seldom that we hear of farmers acting on that knowledge by encouraging the presence of these feathered friends and helpers on their lands.

A Rhode Island farmer deliberately cultivates and encourages birds on his farm for that particular purpose. Swallows, robins, orioles, and many other "feathered friends" were got to live within a few hundred yards of the house. As a result, there was not only plenty of sweet music, but in a year when the aphides ravaged the apple-crop, that farmer had a big yield of valuable fruit.

THE LOOKER FOR SUBMARINES.

By PATRICK VAUX.



WATCHERS of the shore, lookers for the lurking submarines, detectives of all spies and traitors along the coasts of the British Isles, the little-known Coast Watchers do their effective work in silence.

Only now and again, and that but very rarely, is there any mention of them, notwithstanding that theirs is the guardianship of the shores of the home isles. Whether they are men or women, girls or boys, they all have a hard time of it, the Coast Watchers, and all do their duty without flinching.

When the Fleet was mobilised, and most of the Coastguards went back to service on board ship—when Britain was stripped of her Army and of the Army Reserve, Territorials and all—when every heavy gun that could be spared was also sent overseas—when the New Army was being recruited, equipped, and trained—Britain was like to be a prey of the raiding enemy. It was then the Coast Watchers were formed to help guard the shore. And to them all the peril of war has given many an anxious hour, and great deeds have been done.

Some of those who wear the brassard bearing the letters "C. W." have undergone in the course of their duty sharp experiences along the shores of the British Isles that are stranger and much livelier than fiction. These stirring affairs take place for the most part away from the main lines of the defence, along lonely, dull lee-shore, and precipitous cliffs and rocky headlands where one false step, as the Watcher forges cautiously along, can bring sudden and awful death. Yet day and night, in snow and rain and storm, the C.W. carries on—ten miles up and ten miles down the beat.

There are, moreover, times when the C.W. spends night after night and day after day lying concealed on the edge of the cliff or foreland, keeping a lookout on the shore below for the arrival of submarine or spy. And the patrolling of lone cliffs, from which altitude a signal may be furtively morsed to a waiting U-boat, has its thrilling dangers and adventures.

The Coast Watcher of Britain is all eyes and vigilance. Though to-day the menace of a military raid or invasion is more removed than in the early months of the war, when less than three days' freedom in the North Sea would have brought a German Army to the rapine and slaughter of British homes, the alertness of the guardians of the shore is not lessened. Espionage has to be thwarted. Seaward lights and the movements of ships have to be noted, and the bases found out where the ubiquitous underwater craft of the enemy obtain the petrol and lubricating oil so necessary for their extended cruises.

A watch is kept upon the areas forbidden to shipping, for a shipmaster under one of the neutral flags may have been bribed to risk his vessel by straying, accidentally as it were, among the extensive minefields protecting our harbours, anchorages, and certain parts of the coast.

But, above all, does the Coast Watcher look out for the submarine and her operations offshore. The binoculars are never idle with the C.W. as he or she plods onward, keen-eyed, sharp-eared, reading the earth, the sky, the waters, and their horizon. The U-boat that comes up, with her conning tower awash with the sea, to take a good look around for prey, is smartly detected by the Coast Watcher, and reported at once to headquarters. Signallers set to work, and the telegraph is busy. Speedily a pack of destroyers appears over the sea-line, and the trawlers, laden with the traps and gins for catching the "tunfish," crowd on the scene.

Once the hunters have picked up a trace of the marine Boche, there is some fair certainty that doom is approaching. The speed of the submarine under water is not great, and the trick of sinking to the bottom and lying quiet is by no means successful now. A depth charge or two—that is, powerful explosive set to burst at a given depth—when dropped in the vicinity of the submarine usually either crushes in her hull or causes such damage to it that she has to rise to the surface for very life's sake.

On more than one occasion a Coast Watcher has detected alarm among the fishing fleet plying their hazardous occupation within the waters marked out for them by the Admiralty, and through the C.W.'s speedy message the patrols have arrived on the scene in time to avenge the enemy's dastardly attack.

In winter, and in time of storm and fog, the post of the watcher of the shore is one of great and harassing anxiety. National safety may demand that while even human lives are standing into danger no signals be shown, no syrens sounded, nor gun warning fired. Sometimes, indeed, by secret orders, the whole coast is in darkness for several nights. At other times the lighting is normal, till it may come that sudden instructions are given, and the flashes and colours sent out by the lighthouses and lightships are then as extraordinary as they are surprising. For in war time the close keeping of the coast of Britain is interlocked with the control of the coastal lights.

But it is where the coast is honeycombed with caves and underground fissures that the Watchers find more than ample scope for their energies. For caches of petrol, heavy oils, and spare parts may be found cunningly hidden away against the time when the "unterseeboten" will come to replenish stores. According to report, there have been some daringly contrived bases discovered by the C.W. and other coast patrols. One in particular was found in a hollow under a jutting elbow of rock, almost half-way up a cliff that had been ceaselessly patrolled for many months. And, again, there is a story concerning an outlying reef where a great magazine of spare parts for U-boats was probed for and discovered.

Nothing daunts the courage and intrepidity of the Coast Watcher, whether on patrol in the open or watching in darkness, hidden in a honeycombed cliff, down by the edge of the sea, where in daytime one finds only the trace of seals, and bits of wreckage, and bones, or pieces of clothes, and at night the noises heard down there under the cliffs might appal even a stout heart.

A WELCOME HALT.



BRITISH TROOPERS WATERING HORSES IN A FRENCH VILLAGE.
Drawn by STANLEY L. WOOD.



SAINT·GEORGE·FOR·ENGLAND.

AN ANCIENT WAR CRY AND A MODERN NAVAL EXPLOIT.

IN the far-off centuries, that seem further off than ever since the present great war, and when the flag of England was a single red cross on a white ground, our battle-cry was known and feared by many a neighbouring nation. To the ringing shout of "St. George for Merry England!" our mail-clad knights rode knee to knee with lances levelled, our men-at-arms struck doughty blows with bill and halberd, and our victorious archers made ready to send their cloth-yard shafts whistling and stinging into the serried ranks of the foe. To that cry our hardy fellows rushed to the storming of many a frowning castle; and to it, in many a sea-fight in the Channel, their comrades raced and scrambled on to an enemy's deck, thrusting and hewing, till the foreign flag was replaced by the red cross.

It is a proud and glorious battle-cry, and rich with associations that we must never forget. But seldom if ever have men of the English breed set forth on an enterprise so daring, so high-spirited, so fraught with appalling risks as those who before dawn on St. George's Day, 1918, ran in to seal up the outlets of the great German submarine bases at Zeebrugge and Ostend on the Belgian coast.

It was just the kind of hazardous exploit that Drake, or Blake, or Nelson himself would have loved to undertake. Indeed, it recalls vividly some of the most intrepid feats of those old-time sea-kings. But it transcends them in this, that modern gun-fire and modern explosives are things of which those heroes had no conception.

In their days a coast fortress might bristle with guns, but oftimes it could be silenced by the broadsides of the attacking men-o'-war; and if the harbour were defended by a floating boom or other barrier, it might haply be burst through or butted out of position by a heavy ship running in before a strong breeze.

But of the tornado of shot and shell hurled seaward at any approaching vessels by a first-class modern fortress, or of the gigantic rending power of mine and torpedo, or of the blinding glare of searchlights destroying in an instant the friendly covering of even the blackest darkness, the Rodneys and the Boscawens, the Hoods and the Howes, and their intrepid tars knew nothing.

By so much, therefore, this affair of Zeebrugge transcends even the boldest "cutting out" feat of a century ago or such daring deeds as Drake's swoop on Cadiz Harbour to "singe the King of Spain's beard."

The object of the expedition was clear and definite. For three years and more the Germans have kept their grip on the coastline of the country they so ruthlessly overran, and have made of Zeebrugge and Ostend two formidable centres of submarine activity. What with quick-firing and long-range guns and deadly minefields, vigilant aircraft watching above and stealthy U-boats on and under the water, the former place especially had become a hornet's nest. Commerce-destroying submarines issued forth from it and fled home to it after their pirate voyages; yet to approach it, much more to attack it, meant running appalling risks.

Zeebrugge is the coastal outlet of the Bruges Canal. It is from Bruges that the light, swift raiders have come, which from time to time have made sensational dashes across to the Kentish litoral and tried to butt in on our Channel convoys. Up the canal come these "tip-and-run" visitors, passing out through the harbour of Zeebrugge, which is simply a large tract of 300 acres walled off from the open sea by a colossal mole or breakwater, a mile and a half long.

It is hardly necessary to say that from the very first this base has been from time to time heavily bombarded by our Fleet, but it had been found next to impossible by gun-fire to destroy its activity as a submarine base. In due course, however, it was determined by our Admiralty to take new and drastic steps to limit this activity, and an original and audacious plan was worked out which should effect this.

Briefly, the plan was as follows:

A flotilla of vessels of various sizes and many kinds was to approach Zeebrugge under cover of darkness. Six old cruisers, filled with cement, were to be manœuvred into position and sunk where they would be likely to obstruct the passages about the port.* A force of monitors, capable of throwing great projectiles, and many light motor craft, were also to be employed.

Light covering forces belonging to the Dover Command, and Harwich forces under Admiral Tyrwhitt, were to screen the expedition from being attacked in rear.

The operations were to be prefaced by an hour's intense bombardment of Zeebrugge. Then, to quote Sir Eric Geddes' review of the event in the House of Commons next day, "The cruiser *Vindictive*, with the auxiliaries *Iris* and *Daffodil*, was to run alongside the head of the mole, attacking with gun-fire as they approached; storming and demolition parties were to be landed. Meantime three block-ships, assisted by coastal motor-boats and motor-launches, were to make for the entrance of the canal to be run aground and blown up. Two old and valueless submarines were to run against the pile-work connecting the masonry portion of the mole with the shore, and, being filled with explosives, were to be blown up, destroying the pile-work connection."

Such was the plan of operation. Described thus, it sounds simple enough. In reality it was a delicate and complex business, dependent for success on almost clockwork precision, and fraught with most tremendous risks.

To ensure that success, many weeks of hard training and arduous preparation were necessary. Absolute secrecy had to be preserved, so that the advantage of surprise might be on our side. The vessels chosen to take part had to be carefully overhauled, and many of them had to be adapted to their new task. Every officer and man had to be minutely instructed in the part he was to play, and elaborate rehearsals were gone through.

Everyone knew that the perils to be faced would be of the most deadly kind, and it is therefore with pride that we record how, when the call for volunteers for the expedition was made, a far larger number of men stepped forward than could possibly be taken.

The men employed on the ships that were to be scuttled, and those that were to form the storming and demolition parties, were bluejackets and Royal Marines selected from a very large number of volunteers from the Grand Fleet and from all the naval and marine depôts.

The expedition was under the command of the Admiral at Dover, Sir Roger Keyes, himself a daring and intrepid seaman with a distinguished record.

It remained only to choose the night. Twice a move was attempted, but the weather proved unsuitable. That of April 22nd-23rd seemed to promise all that was needed, and the little fleet, steaming out into the darkness of the North Sea, formed up some fifteen miles off Zeebrugge.

The *Vindictive*, a 5,700-ton cruiser, which was destined to play the most prominent part in the great exploit, and to whose captain the now famous signal—"St. George for England"—had been flashed by Admiral Keyes on leaving, had behind her in tow a couple of Mersey ferry boats, the *Iris* and the *Daffodil*. These she now cast off to steam away on their own. Of the five obsolete cruisers, the *Intrepid*, *Iphigenia* and *Thetis* slowed down to let the first-named three get alongside the mole. The other two cruisers, *Sirius* and *Brilliant* turned away to Ostend, their destination, and the numberless destroyers and motor-launches dispersed to their appointed stations and allotted duties.

The night was overcast, with a slight drifting haze. But it was not dark enough to ensure success without the smoke screen, which, like the cap of darkness in ancient Greek fable, rendered the advancing ships invisible to the keen watchers on the Zeebrugge look-out. Forward it rolled, fanned by the north-east wind, till the *Vindictive* was almost at the mole. Then, the wind veering, it shifted and blew back, disclosing to startled eyes the presence of an enemy already in their midst.

Instantly a star-shell sped up into the night sky, and the whole shrouded coast blazed into sudden brightness. Then at once it seemed as if every gun along the mole and in the batteries ashore crashed and roared, wildly, blindly, savagely, in the frantic attempt to blot out the swarm of vessels which as if by magic had gathered to the attack.

Captain A. F. B. Carpenter, of the *Vindictive*, to whose coolness special tribute has been paid, got his ship's bows close up against the thirty-feet-high wall of the mole, and the gangways were lowered for the boarding parties. Of these the bluejackets were under the command of Captain Halahan, the Marines under that of Colonel Elliot. Ere the word of command could be given both these leaders were killed, and men were falling fast.

But every contingency had been provided for, delay was fatal, the task went forward. The behaviour of the men was magnificent under the hurricane of fire which was sweeping over and around them. A vivid glimpse of the situation is given in the official account:

* How satisfactorily this was done is evidenced by a statement in Parliament, as late as June 19, to the effect that the success of the operations was greater than was at first supposed. "Twenty-one torpedo-boat destroyers, a large number of submarines, and many other craft of an auxiliary kind were pinned in the Bruges Docks and Canal," and were subject, it may be added, to constant bombing by our airmen.

"The mere landing on the mole was a perilous business; it involved a passage across the crashing, splintering gangways, a drop over the parapet into the field of fire of the German machine-guns which swept its length, and a further drop of some sixteen feet to the surface of the mole itself. Many were killed, and more were wounded as they crowded up to the gangways; but nothing hindered the orderly and speedy landing by every gangway. Lieutenant H. T. C. Walker had his arm carried away by a shell on the upper deck, and lay in the darkness while the storming parties trod him under. He was recognised and dragged aside by the commander. He raised his remaining arm in greeting. 'Good luck to you,' he called, as the rest of the stormers hastened by; 'good luck!' The lower deck was a shambles as the commander made the rounds of his ship, yet those wounded and dying raised themselves to cheer as he made his tour. The crew of the howitzer which was mounted forward had all been killed; a second crew was destroyed likewise; and even then a third crew was taking over the gun."

The ferry-boat *Daffodil's* task was to keep the *Vindictive* pressed close against the mole, and nobly she did it, with straining engines under twice their normal pressure of steam. Meanwhile the storming and demolition parties had got on to the mole. The Germans there had fled landwards, leaving it to their batteries and machine-gunners to combat the attacking force, and speedily one after another of the sheds and hangars and machine-gun emplacements were destroyed or set on fire by our men.

Speaking of the behaviour of the landing party, Captain Carpenter said afterwards:

"The way the men got over was almost superhuman. I expected every moment to see them falling over, down between the mole and the ship, a drop of over 30ft. and the certainty of being crushed between the ship and the wall. I do not think one man fell. It was not a case of a bare-footed seaman running along the deck of a rolling ship, but of men carrying heavy accoutrements —bombs, Lewis guns, and other articles—along a very narrow plank of an exceedingly unsteady nature. They never hesitated, but went off and on to the mole with the utmost speed. Some 300 or 400 were on the mole within a few minutes, and at once fought their way along under cover of the barrages."

All this time the block-ships—the old cruisers laden with concrete, which were to sink themselves in such positions as would block up the waterways—were feeling their way in as best they could, now bumping into enemy barges, now grounding on mud-banks. The *Intrepid* and the *Iphigenia* reached the canal and were skilfully sunk. They lay in V shape on the muddy bottom, an effectual obstruction to any craft hurrying to get in or out of Zeebrugge. The crews of all ships thus sunk were smartly taken off by swift, busy, motor-launches that could be seen darting hither and thither like "water-boatmen" on a summer pool.

A few moments later, the obsolete submarine loaded with explosives that was to be driven into the wooden piles at the shore end of the mole and blown up, did her work, her crew getting clear of her just in time. "Officers who saw it describe the explosion as the greatest they ever witnessed—a huge roaring sheet of flame, that tore the jetty in half and left a gap of over 100 feet." The cheer that went up from the *Vindictive*, said her captain, was "one of the finest things I ever heard."

After that there was little to be done but get away with all possible speed and make for home. The *Daffodil*, which had been keeping the *Vindictive* pressed close to the mole, now towed her out, "a great black shape, with funnels gapped and leaning out of the true, flying a vast streamer of flame as her stokers worked her up—well-nigh a wreck though she was—to a final display of seventeen knots. Her forward funnel was a sieve; her decks a dazzle of sparks."

And thus in the early hours the victorious flotilla made its way back across the dark North Sea. Besides the vessels deliberately sunk by us to block the waterways, one destroyer and four motor-boats had not survived to make the return voyage.

Of the gallant company who had gone forth on that audacious quest, many had fallen, and many were desperately wounded. Judged by the standard of recent fighting on land, the casualty lists were nothing portentous—under a thousand killed and wounded. But, in proportion to the numbers engaged, the losses were undoubtedly heavy. It was bound to be so. What is more, every officer and man who volunteered for this enterprise knew it would be the veriest touch-and-go for him. As one survivor grimly said, "Not many in the whole shoot thought there was much more than a sporting chance of coming back. It is certain that those on the block ships did not."

The attempt to seal up Zeebrugge had succeeded: the attack on Ostend virtually failed. It was not through lack of skill or courage, but because the wind shifting untimely blew back the smoke screen that concealed the approach of our vessels, and the overwhelming gunfire from the coast batteries sank the two block ships before they could get into position.

How, a little over a fortnight later the battle-scarred *Vindictive*, filled with concrete, was taken across to Ostend, run close in between the piers of the harbour and successfully sunk across the entrance, cannot be told here; but that crowning feat forms the completion and sequel of the glorious story of what was achieved on St. George's Day which we have attempted to re-tell.



The Ally that Doesn't Talk.

By Nigel Tournebu.



As everyone knows, there is always a great danger of military secrets being revealed to the enemy through some chance conversation being overheard, or other indication given that is quickly and most mysteriously conveyed to the other side. But there is one Ally on our side who never chatters, and is seldom even indiscreet.

This Ally has extraordinarily keen qualities of scent and hearing, and its acute intelligence is sometimes more to be depended upon than that of any others. Indeed, as to hearing, not only do the members of this Allied force hear more quickly than others, but they also pick up sounds that are wholly inaudible to the human ear.

If the dogs at the front could talk, what astounding yarns they would tell, for the trained canine friends of the Allies have been in all manner of perilous places and have displayed prodigies of daring and endurance ever since the first German invaders swept into hapless Belgium.

Then, many of the dogs, great strong Mastiffs or Great Danes, fed on bread and horseflesh, that drew the machine guns of the Belgian Army, were able to get only an occasional nap by the roadside, for they were almost constantly in action.

Almost all the Allies make use of dogs for military purposes, but the Belgian dog is perhaps the strongest. Drawing light artillery, they have been of inestimable value to the Belgian forces; and very careful training has taught the war-dogs to lie down under cover, well to the rear, while their guns are in action.

On one occasion, during the retreat from Antwerp, a large body of the enemy suddenly appeared out of the fog close up to a war-dog machine-gun section, and the retreat was sounded. As the gunners hurried up to the dogs they gave the animals the signal to accompany them. But the dogs were in harness, and their masters had not brought their guns along. To the dogs, this was a great mistake, and one that had to be put right. Therewith they turned in a body to their guns, and dashed forward, barking loudly. As the German artillerymen were trying to turn these guns on to the retreating Belgians, they saw a pack of great ugly brutes tearing madly toward them apparently. With barely one moment's indecision, the Germans turned and fled for dear life.

Another fine story is told of a machine gun drawn by a pair of Mastiffs in the Belgian rear-guard during the same retreat. Time after time that gun crew halted, and firing hotly and accurately was able to gain a few precious minutes for the others' safety. Again and again the dogs had to gallop away with their gun to avoid capture, and, again and again, they and their masters held up the enemy.

For twenty-six hours they dragged that gun, without food, and only twice tasting water. At length one of the Mastiffs was shot. But the other struggled on with the aid of his wearied gunners till at last the rear-guard, or what was left of them, reached safety. Then, alas! the splendid animal dropped dead from exhaustion. It was given a military funeral.

The Red Cross St. Bernard dogs attached to the French Army have also been doing heroic work on the field. At the end of the second year of the war the French had more than 3,000 dogs trained for ambulance, and through their help a little over 11,000 human lives have been saved. Each dog wears, in addition to its equipment of first-aid necessaries, a white blanket on which the Red Cross is prominently displayed. They can make long marches without fatigue, and show a wonderful instinct in distinguishing the dead from the unconscious. Not till the fight is ended are they loosed off, and, sometimes, when the ambulance men cannot tell exactly by the low, mournful howl from the dog where it has found a man, the wise animal comes up to the station or the stretcher-bearers carrying the man's cap, or a bit of torn cloth, or other thing belonging to him.

Many a wounded soldier has thus been saved from a slow and terrible death by the sagacity of a Red Cross dog that has found him in crater hole or wooded country after all human effort has failed.

In the Maison Blanche, by Nogent-sur-Marne, where crippled French soldiers find a home, lives a dog that is the men's hero—the hero of its regiment, too. It lives there with a crippled Zouave, its master. He was serving in Algeria when his battalion was sent to the Western front, and he insisted on bringing his yellow dog to France with him, and to the front.

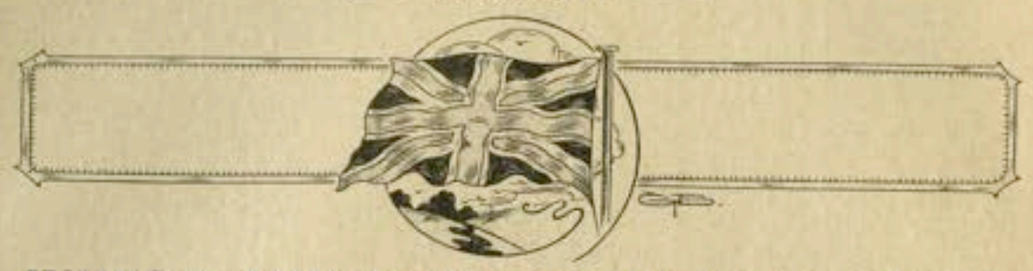
One night, when in the front line trenches, the Zouave, a sergeant, and seven men went out on reconnoitring duties. After they were in No Man's Land a heavy shell burst and buried the eight men under a mass of earth. When the next night came the sergeant's dog was also missing. It had slipped away, and by devious paths had found the place where its master was entombed, and had dug through the earth till it got down to the Zouave. It proceeded to lick the shrapnel wound on his leg, and after a time it crept out through the burrow it had made. Night was now dark over No Man's Land, and the dog sat and howled.

Now, this yellow dog was a mighty poacher, and cunning at catching hares, that were most acceptable for the mess pot. Some of its own men recognised the howling afar off, and heard the barking, and said among themselves: "Good! The sergeant's dog has got another hare. We will go out and get it." They

went, and, of course, found the seven men, and brought them all back safely into the lines. The surgeons afterwards said that only through the dog's licking of the sergeant's wound had gangrene been prevented, and the consequent loss of that limb.

Perhaps, though, best of all stories anent the war-dogs is that told of a certain Scots sergeant-major, hailing from Dundee, who before the war had been a thorn in the side of the police, as he pursued his occupation of dog fancier.

Not long ago a note was thrown across into the British trench, where the sergeant was on duty, presenting the compliments of the commando opposite and requesting the removal of the Scotsman because, by whistle and bark, and divers cunning lures, he had succeeded in enticing every war-dog out of that section of the German front.



WHERE THE EMPIRE'S FLAG IS MADE.

THOUGH at some date after the war it is probable that the British Empire will have a representative flag, at present the Union Jack supplies its place, the symbol not only of the power of the Mother Country, but that of her daughters as well far overseas from her, in addition to their particular flags. To ask the naval officer or seaman, however, what is our Empire's flag is to get back the very prompt and characteristically ingenuous answer that it is really the White Ensign, the distinctive mark of the vessels of the Royal Navy.

The chief centre for making the Union Jack and the White Ensign so far as the Royal Navy is concerned is established in the dockyard at Chatham, that oldest of our naval bases up the Medway, in Kent. It is here that great numbers of the flags for the use of the Fleet are manufactured by workwomen, who show singular deftness and skill at their very responsible task.

That the industry is at present an immense one, and the establishment most extensive, can easily be understood. Not only must every ship or unit in the Royal Navy require a large number of flags for signalling purposes, but she must have in her flag lockers complete sets of all foreign flags, as well as all the distinguishing flags of all diplomatic, colonial and consular officials. Even in a humble torpedo-boat the flags are counted in hundreds. Every ship uses annually thousands of yards of bunting in this equally useful and ornamental part of her equipment.

The material used is a very light, tough, and durable woollen material, which is cut and arranged as to size and colours with the utmost exactitude. The widths of the various crosses used in the Union Jack and of the borders are strictly laid down by the Admiralty, and never departed from. Thus the Admiralty regulation concerning the national flag of Britons gives its size as 15 ft. by 7½ ft., and lays it down that the Red St. George's Cross is to be one-fourth the width of the flag, and its white border one-fifteenth the width; the Red St. Patrick's Cross one-fifteenth, and its white border one-thirtieth; and the White St. Andrew's Cross one-tenth the width.

Ensigns and Jacks are issued in various sizes, but the larger ones are only supplied to certain ships, to be used on special occasions of ceremonial.

In addition to the White Ensign of the Royal Navy, there is the Blue Ensign of the Royal Naval Reserve. All the hired transports of Great Britain also show the Blue Ensign, but in their instance it is distinguished by a yellow Admiralty anchor displayed in the "fly." Technically that half of the flag which is nearest the mast or the staff is known as the "hoist," and the outer part as the "fly."

Another invariable distinguishing feature of our men-of-war is the pennant—that long, narrow, white streamer with a St. George's Cross in the "hoist," which every ship in His Majesty's Navy displays when in commission.

But by far the most numerous of the flags on which the nimble fingers and sharp eyes of the workwomen at Chatham are employed constantly are the signalling flags. Of these numeral and alphabetical flags there are twenty-seven, and in all five colours are employed—red, white, blue, yellow and black. These colours were chosen, not because of working out any decorative effect, nor at haphazard, but after long and careful trials extending over many years. Experience demonstrated that these are the colours which are most easily distinguished at a distance, and which keep their distinctive shade, despite wear and tear and bad weather and bleaching sunshine.

It may safely be said that no greater and more numerous mistakes are made than those perpetrated by civilian makers of flags and bunting. But wherever a flag is flown from a British man-of-war you may be sure that it is heraldically correct in every detail.



Drawn by] HERO-WORSHIP. [Stanley L. Wood

A Braw Scots Piper in the Streets of a French Town

How to Become Proficient at Half-Back.

By Dr. LEONARD Q. BULGER

(The famous Irish International of four remarkable years).

THE lad who would become proficient at half-back in the Rugby game must, it seems to me, consider well three important points. The first of these is as to what half-backs really have to do; the second is as to how they can best carry out those functions, and the third is as to what relation a half bears to the rest of the fifteen, whereby his part in its combined effort may be kept at its highest pitch.

I think it would be quite fair to describe the half-back as the pivot of the machine, as the middle-man of the team, as the active hub of the fifteen.

I have always contended that the half-back place is essentially the spot for the captain of the team to occupy, since nowhere else can he see so clearly what is wanted, what is being done by his own and the other side, and how to bring into play the various units of the fifteen so as to obtain complete combination. But that for the minute may pass; it is, perhaps, just outside our province for discussion here.

At any rate, there is no denying that the half is the hub of the company. You may safely take it that the scoring of tries will come from the forwards or the three-quarters, either in combined rushes or by sterling individual effort.

It is true that occasionally the half-backs will score on their own. Yet not only will this be rare, but the better the halves in playing up to what their position calls for in great games the less are they themselves likely to actually score, though most tries will come from movements they have started or carried well forward ere the finishing touches were put by somebody else.

The work of halves should be essentially *aggressive*. The half-back who is content to play on the defensive is usually a man in his wrong place, unless it be that his forwards are most thoroughly and decisively beaten. Even then, a valiant and big-hearted half will leave his forwards more or less alone and set forth on adventures of his own, quite independent of them, if he gets the ghost of a chance.

You see my point, boys? The half is a man bound to attack somehow or other, and to be always attacking.

How is this to be done? There are two specially striking methods. Firstly, the halves may back up the forwards who are pushing their way through their opponents, and going on with the ball at their toes. The halves may take a part in this rush onward by increasing the dashing pack by two, so to speak, and if any passing *does* take place in such a rush (which, however, isn't very likely to occur in a team that knows its worth) the two halves will share in the passing, and may even themselves get over the line with the ball.

Secondly, the halves may do their work behind the scrum by getting the ball quickly as it is heeled out to them, by eluding their opposing halves, and thus setting up a running and passing movement, with their three-quarters immediately after them, which will bewilder the other team, and result in a try scored by one of the threes who is speedy or particularly tricky when he has the ball under his arm.

In such an article as this we cannot but regard the half, however, as the middle-man; the one who acts as a go-between rather than as an immediate scorer; the player who connects the eight forwards with the five backs behind him, welding the whole thirteen men of his front and rear into a compact combination that works in all its parts like the wheels and cranks of a machine. If the half succeeds in this, his fifteen will win the match—almost certainly; if he fails, his team are nearly sure to lose.

So the post of half-back is tremendously important, but also very trying. Let us see, then, what qualities and abilities are particularly needed for the boy who would shine there.

Each half-back should be able to kick well with both legs. Then if he finds his own forwards are getting beaten by their rivals he can often kick the ball right over the latter's heads as they rush on towards him, and nothing so breaks the hearts of dashing forwards as this move.

The ideal half-back should not be too tall in build, nor should he be very heavy. He ought to be a lad of rather light frame, and extremely active on his feet, with an innate faculty for dodging and tricking opponents as to his intentions before he gets the ball, and still more when he has it! It seems a pretty tall order to find all these in one boy. But it is far yet from being a full record of what is essential in the half who aspires to greatness.

For such a lad must also have quick sight; his hands must be very mobile; he will need supreme courage; he must ever have a quick and clear understanding, not only with his comrade behind the scrimmage, but also with the threes behind them both. A nod, a wink, the slightest motion of his hand, or arm, or head must be able to convey to knowing men acting in concert with him exactly what he wants doing, or intends himself to do, when the ball comes his way. The lad who lacks one or two of these qualities may become a tip-top player in some other position at Rugby sooner or later, but unquestionably he will never play for any of the Unions in an international match as their half-back! Or, if he does so play once, by chance, he will never do it twice! For his failings will be apparent to everybody!

Another good tip for halves is

to get well to half-way up the field, if at all possible, before setting the passes in motion. This is not only a safer plan, but usually proves very encouraging to the rest of the fifteen, who feel they are really well off with the ball.

Why are such, and so many, items needed to make the ideal half-back?

Because nineteen times out of twenty, probably, his opponents will try to pounce on him immediately he gets the ball from the scrum. Halves and forwards of the other side will be on him like a flash when this happens. If he is too big a fellow, he will be easily grasped and held; it is the little chap, the slithery boy who gives scant space for being collared or held, who will best get off in such a trial.

His sight must be superlatively good, for he will have to watch that ball with even greater verve than the eager cat watches a mouse; he will have to keep it in sight amid a mass of whirling feet and shifting legs; he must be on it like lightning as it evolves from the scrum. And his hands must then be as sure as his eyes; there must be no fumbling with the ball, no expecting that he will have a minute or two to dispose of it from his hands or arms as he wishes. Not a bit of it!

The half should remember that if he is a second too slow, or undecided what to do when he gets the ball, he will be bowled over in a twinkle without ceremony by keen opponents who are waiting to take stern advantage of any such remissness. And his sight of the ball in the scrimmage must be keen indeed, because, apart from seeing it as it comes outward to himself, he should be able to tell exactly where it is if the opposing forwards are controlling it more than his own, so that when it is emerging from their feet to the rival halves he can hustle round like a hare and put a stop to their own intentions, place a spoke in the wheel of the opposing team's methods of try-getting, ere the ball shall get on its full way with the three-quarters of that side.

Considering how quick, how smart and precise, how certain, the passes of the half must be, to whomsoever they are made; remembering that he may have to throw the ball right across to his outside "three," as often as to the man immediately behind him, after it has once left the scrum; knowing that whilst some passes must be very high, others must be quite low, and that all must be swift and sure, one can hardly lay too much stress on the fact that "quick, safe hands" are an absolute necessity to the would-be great half-back.



DR. L. Q. BULGER.

(Photo by Talbot Studios, Richmond, S.W.

Again, the half must be able to run well, to get quickly over the ground. It is not, perhaps, so utterly essential that he shall be able to do "100 yards in 10 secs."—which is the ambition of all first-class three-quarters—but it will not do for the half to be a heavy, ponderous runner, or he can never get away sharply enough and far enough from the waiting foe to get in his passes efficiently to the threes who are waiting for the ball.

And he must be a dodgy player, a tricky youth, a lad with an active brain, ever plotting schemes and new plans which shall take his rivals by surprise and throw them off their guard. His wits must never fail him; indeed, he must also be able to change his plan like lightning if he finds his opponents have guessed or grasped it.

One more of his necessary capabilities. That is, his capacity to work in unison with his partner. Only those who have watched the performances of such pairs, past and present, as Varley and Barker for Liversedge, when that club was at its best; Stoop and Sibree for the Harlequins; Bush and Jones for Wales; Clem Lewis and Thomas for Cambridge, can have any notion of what a very tricky couple such pairs of halves are, and of how completely their perfect understanding of each other's play and intentions—without a single word being spoken—can nonplus even their most astute rivals!

Lastly, I spoke of the courage and daring required by every fellow who would make a name for himself at half. If you want to know more particularly what I mean by those qualities, I would like you to have to play in just one match against eight Irish forwards, with their two halves, when your own men are, for the most part, getting possession of the ball in the scrum, and heeling out to you—though, mind you, it is as likely to be vice versâ in an Irish match as not!

However, suppose the former is the case. What happens? Why, you will find a whole host of big, hefty men on you in a trice if you are the tenth part of a second too slow in getting rid of the ball well and safely; you will feel from sixteen to a score strong legs trying to kick away, drag away, push away the ball

which lies at your feet, or which you are vainly trying to retain; your courage will undergo a hard test indeed in such circumstances, when your shins are aching and your legs and hands being wrenched on all sides, I can assure you!

So, boys, you who wish to shine as halves at Rugby, you who have read this, will now have a clearer notion, I hope, of what it means to become proficient as a half, of what is needful if you are ever to appear in such excellent company as is included when one recalls two dozen or more of the great half-backs of past times.

Can *you* do it? Can *you* excel as a half? There is much hope of this if you possess the leading qualities here mentioned, and if you will practise long and persistently.

But you will require a vast reserve of patience and good temper. For the half who gets cross, flurried, and impatient because things are not all going as he hoped in the great game is not a man to be envied, nor one extremely likely to do well. Every real sportsman in any trying crisis must be able to control his temper, to restrain himself from annoyance, depression, or loss of confidence.

I often fancy this necessity arises in supreme force with the man who is a Rugby half-back. Perhaps because I myself have had so much experience in the post, and have so often felt this. However, cultivate the qualities just described, boys, and so prepare yourself eventually to shine in this, the most trying position of all on the Rugby field.

L. Quintin Bulger

HOW THEY KEPT THE SHIP AFLOAT.

A YARN OF THE NEW ENGLAND COAST.



AS we sailed in at close of day, with the long heave of the sea to remind us of a gale that had spent itself while we lay at anchor in the snug harbour of Hard Luck Arm, the skipper spun us a yarn.

He was the old skipper of Ruddy Cove, who, in his time, had been fisherman, trapper, sealer, whaler, cook, hand and master, and at the last, with white hairs and a jolly corpulency, had achieved a position of prosperity and widespread respect.

In the offing, far out to sea, where the dusk was creeping up with the mist, there was a long, frothy line of white; a shoal, upon which the seas were breaking. I was glad that it lay to windward.

"They calls it the Shoal o' Wrecked Ships," said the skipper.

"Then many a good craft must have——" I began.

"Aye, many a fine craft," he broke in, "has been lost here. 'Twas a fearful spot in the old days, when we used t' go t' the seal hunt in schooners. 'Twas in the deep water off that shoal that the old *Can't Help It* left her bones. To be sure, I knows that well enough, for I was aboard when she was wrecked—aboard o' that old topsail flatfish, lad, the last hand shipped from Twillingate, in the spring o' forty years ago, when the ice and wind sank many a craft o' the sealing fleet.

"'Does you want a berth?' says the cap'n.

"'What's your schooner?' says I.

"'The *Can't Help It*,' says he.

"'Can't help what?' says I.

"'Loading with fat every voyage,' says he. 'Come, now, will you ship?'

"'I will if I can't help it,' says I."

The skipper laughed again at the simple joke of that day, stuck a thumb in my ribs to make sure that I caught the point, gave a turn to the wheel, howled an order to ease the jib-sheet, and proceeded:

"Well, I couldn't help it. 'Twas the last berth in the last schooner, so I shipped. But she got no seals that year—nar a one. We lost the poor skipper off the jib-boom two weeks out, in a gale off the Gray Islands. Then we was in trouble. We couldn't agree on a skipper. Some of us wanted the first hand. 'Hut!' says the rest. 'He isn't fit t' skipper a paddle-punt.'

"So we knocked about the ice for a week or more without sighting a seal. 'Twas windy weather, with gales o' snow and high seas, and the crew got wonderful sulky. There wasn't a pelt aboard t' pay the men for the hard work they were doing, and there was a row in the forecastle every night. 'Twas not long afore there was nothing but scowls on deck and growls below. Believe me, sir, 'twas a most uncomfortable time. The willing hands worked the ship and the growlers stayed below.

"'Look here, men,' says I, one night, 'we've got t' have a skipper for this here schooner. I never heard tell of a schooner without one. Let's have the first hand. 'Tis his right.'

"'Not aboard a sealing ship,' says one. 'We'll choose our skipper.'

"'We'll not sail under Bowls,' says another.

"'You can sail under me or not, as you like,' says Bowls, 'but 'tis no place for a skipperless schooner. The best thing you can do is shape a course for home, an' get there quick.'

"They agreed; so we hove her to, meaning t' make sail for Twillingate in the morning if the wind was fair. It began t' blow hard afore midnight—blow a great gale, with the wind full o' snow. Afore dawn the ice closed in and nipped her. She was fast, with miles o' pack-ice grinding and groaning all round her.

"Her rudder was crushed and her bowsprit broken; but whether or not her timbers had been started we couldn't say. Whatever, 'twas a bad lookout. The pack was running like mad straight out t' sea. If the old schooner leaked, she would fill and sink when the pans fell apart. If she was tight she would be swamped or broken up by the big seas, for without a rudder she was unmanageable.

"'I'm thinking,' says I t' Bowls, 'that neither she nor we will want another skipper.'

"'Still,' says he, 'we might get clear.'

"By night the wind veered t' the nor'east and drove the pack inshore. Then I began t' hope that we might escape over the pack t' the rocks; but when I looked about at dawn I made ready t' die. The pack was drifting over the Shoal o' Wrecked Ships, and the breakers were pounding it t' slush as it passed. 'Twas but a matter o' two hours afore the turn o' the ship would come. She was fair in the path.

"I sung out for all hands, and up they tumbled. I'm not telling you what they said when I pointed t' the breakers. 'Twas a sight t' break t' nerve o' the bravest, an' I'll name no names. To the last man aboard we gave ourselves up for lost. Some of us prayed, and some didn't; and some of us cried, and some laughed. But 'twas not long afore we was all alike—a group o' dazed sailormen, shivering in the bitter wind, waiting for the end of life.

"'The wind's hauling round t' the east,' says Jim Bowls at last.

"If the wind hauled far enough, if it hauled soon enough, we might drift clear o' the shoal. We knew that, and we watched the wind.

"'Tis veering fast,' says Bowls again. 'Maybe we'll go clear!'

"An hour later we scraped past the norther' end o' the shoal. The schooner was safe for the time; but when the wind fell and the ice went abroad, as it did at dusk, our case was hard as ever.

"The *Can't Help It* leaked. We turned to, to pump ship with a will, but the most we could do was t' keep the water down. The working crew was lashed t' the mainmast, and the rest kept below.

"By and by the men began t' get seasick. One after another they fell back in their bunks and vowed they couldn't work. By morning each of the rest of us was doing two men's work. 'Twas hard, 'twas nothing for it; and 'twas a wonderful sight harder when only Bowls and I were left t' keep the *Can't Help It* afloat.

"'Bowls,' says I, 'we can't do it.'

"'Tom,' says he, 'we'll try.'

"The water gained on us inch by inch. By night I was beat out and Bowls was almost ready t' give in.

"'Come on,' says he, 'an' we'll have a word with that fo'c's'le crowd.'

"But not a man would stir from his bunk—not a man! They were so sick that they didn't care whether they went t' the bottom or not.

"Well, we turned to again and kept the pumps going for an hour. The sea was quieter then, and I thought that we might stir up a man or two of the crew t' help us. So down we went.

"'Men,' says Bowls, 'if some o' you don't lend a hand, she'll sink.'

"'I'm too sick!' whines one.

"'I can't stand up!' whimpers another.

"'You go, Bill,' says a third.

"There they were, lying like logs, sick enough, I'll be bound, but not too sick t' strike a blow for their own lives—not too sick t' lend a hand t' two beaten men.

"'Pump away!' says one. 'We'll come up in the morning.'

"'Men,' says I, 'I'm beaten out.'

"'Men,' shouts Bowls, losing his temper, 'I'm not, but I'll sink afore I'll do another stroke t' save the lives o' such curs as you!'

"Nor would he. We crawled on deck, and I staggered t' the pump.

"'Come on, Bowls,' says I.

"'Not a stroke!' says Bowls. 'Let 'em die!'

"I kept the pump going alone until I fell flat on the deck. 'How many hours will she float, Jim,' says I.

"'Four, I 'low,' says he.

"'Twill be morning then,' says I.

"With my ear t' the deck I could hear the water sloshing about in her hold. I knew she was filling by inches, and would wobble and sink all of a sudden. But I was too tired and sleepy to care much about that. By and by I fell asleep, while Bowls paced the deck, muttering. I felt, before consciousness left me, that sleep was near, and I was glad that the *Can't Help It* would take her last plunge before my sleep was over.

"But in that I was mistaken. The dawn was breaking when I awoke. The rail was then within a few inches of the water, and Bowls was fast asleep on the main-hatch. Off the port quarter, with her sail all set, was a trim little fore-an'-after, bearing down.

"Her skipper told us, when he had us safe aboard, that he had sighted the *Can't Help It* when he rounded Long Cape—the land off our stern, sir, as the ship lies now—and had made haste to our rescue. We said we were glad he had happened around just at that time.

"'Look, boys!' says one of our crew. 'There's the last o' the *Can't Help It*.'

"Down went the old topsail flatfish, and her bones now lie somewhere t' the west o' the Shoal o' Wrecked Ships.

"'Ugh!' says Bowls, looking that man square in the eye.

"None o' *that* crew," the skipper concluded, "was ever shipmates along o' Bowls and me again." Then, with a roar, "Hands on deck and stand by! We'll hang her down in Deep Cove for the night."

Norman Duncan.

Some Beautiful Minerals.

By E. T. Ellis, F.R.H.S.

"When I was a boy I used to care about pretty stones. I got some British diamonds at Bristol and some dog-tooth opals in Derbyshire; my whole collection had cost probably three half-crowns, and was worth considerably less, and I knew nothing whatever rightly about any single stone in it: could not even spell their names; but words cannot tell the joy they used to give me."—Ruskin, in *Fors Clavigera*.



Copper pyrites is certainly one of the minerals we can call beautiful, especially when it is crystallised. My specimen is crystallised, and lies on quartz crystals, and the copper ore when the light shines on it shows many colours of the rainbow. Copper pyrites is found in Cornwall, and in many places where the rocks are very old, and is used in smelting to obtain copper.

Another mineral which can look very beautiful when in small crystals is iron pyrites. It is quite goldy as the light falls on it, and it has often been mistaken at first sight for gold. It is very heavy, and it is a very common mineral. It is found in veins traversing many rocks, and also in nodules in clay, and in a clay which is not quite so old geologically as the chalk of our cliffs. It is not of great value as an ore of iron, but is chiefly employed in the manufacture of sulphuric acid, and of a pungent gas called sulphur dioxide. It is found in many parts of England, also in Switzerland, and many other European countries, as well as in Australia.

Then there is fluor spar. This remarkable mineral crystallises chiefly in large cubes, and these may be white, green, yellow, purple, or blue in colour, but most frequently the colour is a rich blue. It is also to be found in irregularly shaped masses, parts of which, when broken up and ground down polish very well. Fluor spar is rather brittle, and is not at all difficult to scratch. It is used chiefly as a flux (and so is common limestone) for the smelting of iron ore. It is found chiefly in Derbyshire, and in Cornwall, and in many places abroad. In some places it is found filling large faults in the limestone, along with galena, calcite, and iron pyrites.

The next beautiful mineral we must name is quartz. This occurs in a very great number of forms, and I have a good many in my collection.

One of the chief forms is smoky quartz, which occurs in large hexagonal prismatic crystals, and is found in the Lake District, and in Cornwall in the old rocks, in Switzerland, and in other places, and in South America (Brazil). This mineral is hard, and can only just be scratched with a very sharp, tough steel penknife. The other form is rock crystal, which occurs in Wales and in the places named above. This form is transparent and glassy; it breaks with a concoidal fracture, and the points of the crystals are often very sharp, so that with care it may be used for cutting glass.

Another form is the common opaque quartz, which cannot be called a beautiful mineral. It occurs very frequently in the older rocks.

The quartz group includes a large number of the precious stones, such as jasper, agate, etc., but as these are, strictly speaking, not minerals, we do not deal with them in any detail here.

Some people may say that hæmatite or iron oxide Fe_2O_3 is not a beautiful mineral, but when it is in the form of kidneys, or if it be crystallised amongst other minerals, such as calcite or quartz, it looks quite pretty. Kidney ore is found in the Furness district, north of Barrow, and of course hæmatite is found in many other places, both in the British Isles and abroad.

We next come to the carbonates, and of these calcite or carbonate of lime takes the first place. It is found in a crystallised state as dog-tooth spar, as Derbyshire spar, as stalactite and stalagmite (in caves), as spar in the coral rag near Oxford, as veins of calcite traversing beds of coal in coal mines (it is then very thin, however), and in many other beautiful forms which we have no space to describe.

Carbonate of lime is virtually the sole component of all true marbles, such as the white Carrara marble and the beautiful Emperor's red marble, quarried in France, etc., and it is the sole component of the mineral arragonite, which occurs in caves. Arragonite, by the bye, although it has precisely the same chemical composition as calcite, is quite a distinct mineral.

Dog-tooth spar and many beautiful forms of calcite occur largely in Derbyshire in the limestone, and good specimens are often easily chiselled out. Very often calcite is found along with fluor spar and galena (lead ore), and I have in my possession a small hand specimen of all these minerals associated together.

For stalactite and stalagmite you must go into the Derbyshire or other limestone caves—such as the Caverns of Castleton, in North Derbyshire. There you will see them hanging from the roof, or rising up from the floor, in white amorphous, or crystalline masses. Both are formed by the action of dripping water, surcharged with lime.

Calcite is a fairly soft mineral; it may easily be scratched. It is used for very many purposes, from a surface coating for garden paths to a flux in iron smelting.

Another very beautiful carbonate is malachite. This is a complex carbonate of copper, and the formula given by authorities for it is $CuCO_3 Cu(OH)_2$.

When polished this mineral is a magnificent green colour, and is used for indoor work in decorating churches and magnificent public buildings. My own specimen of it is not crystallised, and crystals of it are, I believe, rare. It is fairly soft and easily scratched. It comes from Siberia and other places, and is found in limestone of the Permian age.

We must now pass on to the group of sulphates, and of these barytes or barium sulphate takes the first place. This is a very heavy mineral, the beautiful forms of which are the crystallised and the amorphous. The amorphous form is found in Derbyshire in brown pieces, which when ground down take a very good polish. Barytes is also found near Whitehaven, in Cumberland, and in Hungary.

Another common sulphate is calcium sulphate. This occurs in the forms of alabaster, gypsum and selenite, all of which can be reckoned beautiful minerals. White alabaster comes from Derbyshire, Karnac, and many places; and gypsum is often associated with other minerals in veins traversing the carboniferous limestone. Gypsum may be transparent and of an indefinite water colour or white, or it may be yellow. Gypsum also occurs very frequently between beds of salt.

Native copper sulphate is a mineral of a light-blue tint, not often seen. It is found along with other ores abroad in the north of South America. Another mineral which is, however, a much more brilliant blue is linarite; it is comparatively rare. Chemically it is a basic sulphate of copper and lead, and has been found at Roughton Gill, near Keswick.

Other beautiful kinds of the rarer sulphates include crocoite and wulfenite.

The phosphates include a large group of beautiful minerals, such as apatite, pyromorphite, and turquoise.

Apatite is a beautiful blue-purple mineral of complex composition. It is a phosphate chloride or phosphate fluoride of calcium. It is found in several forms; if in crystals, it may be green, blue, violet, or brownish, or it may be colourless or white. It is found in Saxony, Norway, Canada, and other places.

Pyromorphite is a beautiful green mineral, very heavy. It is used as an ore of lead, and is found in Cornwall, in Baden, and other places; and turquoise, a precious stone, is found in Persia, and in the western States of America.

Finally, there are the silicates. They form an enormous group, and I can only here enumerate a few of the beautiful commoner ones.

In the felspar group we have Orthoclase Felspar, a mineral which crystallises nicely, and is obtained in pink and brown crystals and white crystals. It is found in the Urals, in Egypt, in Norway, and in other places. It is used for the manufacture of the glaze for good porcelain. Labradorite is a mineral of a perfect sky-blue colour; my own specimen comes from Switzerland, but large pieces of it are found frequently on the coast of Labrador, from which it takes its name. Other members of the series include microcline (greenish) and anorthite (light pink).

Minerals of the amphibole group include dark-green minerals, of which the typical specimen is hornblende. Another beautiful green mineral is nephrite. This last has been quarried in the Kuen-Lun Mountains, in China, for very many years. Hornblende is found in Norway and other places.

Augite and diopside are two members of pyroxene group of silicates. The common form of the first is greyish-black, and the second is green. Augite is found in Bohemia, and is, of course, seen often mixed with other constituents in rocks such as basalts. Diopside is found in Piedmont.

The sodalite group has two chief members, sodalite (white) and lapis lazuli (sky blue). These are, however, not very common minerals.

The chief members of the garnet group are, of course, the garnets. My own specimens, which show weathering, came from Piorra, Canton Ticino, Switzerland, but garnets are found in the old rocks in many places. Another member of this group is staurolite, a small mineral crystallising in crosses, found in Italy, etc.

We next come to the mica group, which includes the many micas. Of these Muscovite mica, the colourless mica, is perhaps the best looking, but we can hardly call it a beautiful mineral. The mica schists are in reality rocks not minerals, but they may well be included here; they are made up of thin alternating layers of quartz and mica. Mica schist is found in the very old rocks; some fine material was obtained from the centre of the Simplon Tunnel when this was being bored.

Serpentine, as far as I know, does not belong to any definite group of silicates. It is a complex hydrated silicate of magnesia. With it are dealt with those two very unbeautiful minerals, meerschaum and talc. Serpentine is, however, a very beautiful mineral and takes a magnificent polish, and this polish brings out all the colours very well. It is rather a hard mineral, used for decoration and various other purposes, and it is of moderate weight.

The best specimens of English serpentine come from the Lizard, in Cornwall, but good serpentine-pebbles can be picked up in Switzerland (one in my possession came from the Rhone Valley), and serpentine also occurs in parts of Silesia. The Swiss pebble that I have is a light green, but that from Cornwall is prettily marked with many colours.

Such are some of the more common kinds of beautiful minerals. The subject is a very big one, and it is impossible in a few hundred words to deal fully with it.

Let me say one thing more. Readers of this article, after they have got some few bits of knowledge such as I have tried here to set down, will learn a great deal more by going out on Saturday afternoons into mining and limestone districts and studying the minerals and rocks as they lie than by reading any number of books on the subject.

Against the Enemy, in East Africa.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTERS OF A MEMBER OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

FIRST LETTER.

"Central African Contingent,
"German East Africa,
"1st January, 1917.



OUR corps left Potchefstroom on the 26th Oct. 1915, and proceeded via Durban and Chindi to Central Africa—I only had a week at home after my return from the South-West campaign.

We left Chindi on the 2nd November, and went up the Zambesi River in barges towed by river paddle-boats. The trip was most enjoyable, as we were fairly comfortable and the scenery was pretty and ever changing. The lower reaches of the river are very densely wooded, with cocoanut palms topping the jungle here and there.

The men were allowed ashore two or three times for short spells during the day; then there was usually a scramble for cocoanuts, pau-paus, etc. Native villages are dotted along the banks of the river, and from the inhabitants of these we were able to procure eggs, fowls and fruit for a very small price.

The natives here seem to live—or exist—on fish caught in the river and fruit. They don't seem to go in for cultivating the land much—probably they don't like hard work! They can be seen all day plying their way up or down or across the river in their canoes, which are made by hollowing out a fairly big tree-trunk.

We amused ourselves by taking pot-shots at crocodiles and wild ducks, etc., on the banks of the river, but very few hits were made, probably owing to the uneven motion of the boats and barges.

Every now and then we would pass a family of hippos. These only showed their heads above water for a moment whilst close to the boats, but played about on the surface of the water when some distance away. Our Doctor was fortunate in being able to shoot a leopard one evening. The brute had come down to the water's edge to drink, and did not get away quick enough.

The river is very shallow in places at this time of year, hence we were frequently stuck on sand-banks, sometimes for two or three hours at a stretch; on these occasions all the men would strip, and, getting into the water, would pull the boat off by means of a rope.

We disembarked on the seventh day, and then had a train journey of twelve hours' duration, which brought us to Limbi. From there we had to march forty miles to Zomba, the capital of Nyasaland.

The march was interesting, as there was always something new to wonder at. A very unpleasant smell was the cause of much conjecture as we marched along. Every half-mile or so we marched into it. Eventually it was discovered to be caused by a large black ant, about three-quarters of an inch in length—there are a great many of them, and their unpleasant odour is decidedly pronounced.

We remained at Zomba for some six weeks, then were marched up to Lake Nyasa, a distance of 86 miles. On the march up I did quite a lot of shooting, as by 10 a.m. we had usually finished our march for the day, having started at 3 a.m. to avoid the tropical sun. Buck were plentiful, also wild pigs. On three occasions I followed the spoor (tracks) of lions, but every time lost trace after an hour's tracking.

The lions, I may say, could be heard at night, but made themselves scarce during the daytime.

After reaching Lake Nyasa, which is a wonderful sheet of fresh water some 380 miles in length by 50 in width, we went aboard the small gunboat *Gwendolen* and steamed for two days. The voyage was pleasant, albeit we were somewhat crowded and the weather was wet. However, I had been soaked to the skin so often since arriving in Central Africa that I hardly noticed the wet.

We landed well up the Lake, near the enemy border, and formed a camp. The spot was most unhealthy, as there is nothing but swamp for miles, but it was the best to be had. We had not been ashore more than a week when the men commenced dropping with malaria, and fifty to sixty per day went into hospital for short spells—from three to ten days. I was lucky in escaping it.

We were stuck at this place until after the rainy season—about three and a half months. During this period our time was occupied in patrols to the enemy border and over.

This patrol work, by the bye, was not agreeable, as we had to march through pestilential swamp most of the time. Owing to the density of the thick, tall grass we were compelled to follow the paths made by elephants. We waded along up to the knees—and often up to the thighs and over the waist—in slimy, black, vile-smelling mud, with myriads of mosquitoes biting lumps out of us all the time. Every now and then one of us would step into a deep hole, formed by an elephant's dainty little foot. Occasionally one of us came a cropper, and then the remarks were more than usually uncomplimentary as regards German East and its inhabitants.

The heat was awful on these patrols, as the sun beat directly down on us, and the tall grass prevented any breeze from getting through. Our only relief was the flowing streams and rivers we had now and then to cross. This cleaned off a little of the filthy mud, and at the same time was cooling. At night we camped on some rising

ground, and were again chewed up by mosquitoes.

It is no wonder that many men got sick and that so many had to be sent back to South Africa, medically unfit, after having been in this country only some three or four months. Almost every night the rain came down, as it only can in the tropics. I would wake up and wonder if I was in a river, and with a sigh think of the comfy bed left empty at home whilst I am out serving my King and country.

Some nights the storm would start while we were at our meal, and in an amazingly short time the tent would be inches deep in water and the plates floating around merrily, and the vivid flashes of lightning would show up a state of chaos truly appalling. However, it is all in the day's fun.

There are all sorts of insects to contend with. The jigger fleas are the chief pest. They get into one's toes and fingers, under the nails, and cause much irritation.

They have to be removed as soon as possible, and the natives do this with a pin or needle, digging them out.

Great care must be exercised when removing the jigger flea to avoid breaking the bag of eggs which it has deposited under the skin. If this breaks suppuration sets in and causes any amount of trouble.

It once happened that I had six of these jiggers taken from my foot. This occurred just before a long forced march, and walking was an agonising business.

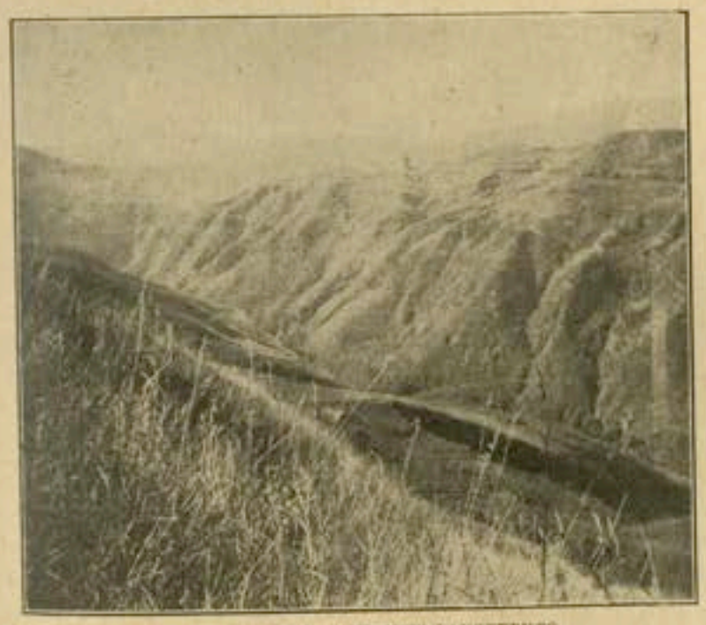
There is also a fly which stings and deposits an egg which turns into a worm about half an inch long. I have escaped this so far, but have seen worms taken from the arms and legs of the other men. Then there is the Tsetse fly, which causes sleeping sickness, and many other insects which bite and sting, not forgetting the myriads of biting ants, which are met with everywhere.

Truly it is a fine country to be out of, but South Africans are more fit for this climate than men from the Mother Country would be, and so I console myself with the reflection that it is only right I should be doing my bit here.

Next week I will give you a short account of my experiences from the time we left our standing camp on the shores of Lake Nyasa, and moved forward into enemy territory. H.



ON THE ROAD, FLORENCE BAY, LIVINGSTONIA.



BETWEEN MASSOKO AND NEW LANGENBURG

WE are glad to be able to give to our readers these letters from one who took part in the operations against the Germans in Africa. The letters make it clear how arduous and terribly difficult was the work that had to be faced. It is not surprising that the campaign was not finished till the end of 1917.

Wild Flowers on Old Battlefields

OF THE GREAT WAR.

By Vernon Millward.



FEW facts have been made more familiar to us who have read the war correspondents' descriptions of the war-zone on the Western front than that of the hideous grey expanse of mud and slime which meets the eye wherever it wanders. Here and there that expanse is broken by some ruined village or heap of shattered bricks and mortar, but in Flanders, at least, it is the grey horrible mud that all through the winter months makes up the landscape.

But there comes a time when Nature does her best to break this dreadful monotony and add some decoration of her own. And thus we find allusions, many and appreciative, both in private letters and newspaper despatches, to the gay wild flowers which in places overrun the bare earth with a veritable riot of colour.

They make splashes of red and blue and yellow and mauve along the outer face of the trenches, and the walls of shell-craters, and dapple the dreary littered spaces of "No Man's Land," and make an embroidery of living jewels along the rutted roads. Even to eyes that are almost too intent on the grim business of war to notice anything else, they are a grateful sight; while in the man who at home in peace-time seldom gave any thought to such things their beauty makes itself felt.

What flowers are they that thus try to break the dreariness of the war-zone?

Well, the variety is considerable. Take, for example, the battlefield of the Somme. Some fourteen or fifteen separate species were noted by one visitor to the front, and a list was published in the *Kew Bulletin*.

One of the commonest, and certainly the most noticeable, is the scarlet Poppy, which at home makes so many of our cornlands

"Like a field which the fire runs through."

Out there on the scene of fierce encounters and terrible sacrifices it is painfully suggestive of the precious blood which has been spilt in capturing or defending those long lines of broken earthworks.

Another red flower is the Scarlet Pimpernel, with its petals so sensitive to the approach of rain that they close as the skies grow overcast, and even before the storm heralds itself. Unlike the flaunting poppy, it nestles humbly on the ground, and therefore attracts less notice.

Blue flowers are many. There is the Cornflower, loved alike by us and by our arch-enemies, who have made it almost a national emblem, thanks to some early monarch of the House of Hohenzollern having had a fondness for the flower.

Then there is the Forget-me-not, a flower which seems inseparably associated with love and sentiment, for its name has, I believe, the same meaning in almost all Continental languages. In how many thousands of our young fellows from rural England must the sight of that little blue golden-eyed flower have stirred happy and tender memories!

Yet another blue flower growing there is the Speedwell, the lowly wild flower of our English lanes, that so frequently spreads among the grass and leaves of the hedgerow banks, and was beloved of the great poet Tennyson.

Of blue flowers shading into purple which have been noticed on the old battlefields of this long-drawn-out war several may be mentioned. The Clustered Bell-flower is one. It is a most handsome plant, budding at intervals up the stem, and crowned with quite a bunch of almost stalkless bell-shaped flowers at the top. It is, of course, one of the numerous *Campanula* tribe, of which the dainty, fairy-like Harebell is the best-known example.

The Nightshade has been seen springing there, and the rosy-purple flowers of the Hemp Nettle. Far more beautiful and pure in colour is the Scabious, so associated with the chalk lands of our southern counties, with its pincushion-like centre "rayed round" with clean mauve petals, a charming decoration in the crown of summer.

All these Nature brings forth from her abundant store. Of golden colours she is equally lavish in these ruined tracts of France and Flanders. The pale yellow of the Charlock or Wild Mustard is there, just as in our country it spreads over whole fields of root-crops. Another yellow is that of the Sow-thistle, which thrives in cultivated ground, and often reaches the height of three or four feet when it loves the soil—a rank weed indeed.

Then there is the yellow and white of the Camomile, which in so many suburban neighbourhoods is the first flower to run riot in a new villa garden, and will even grow luxuriantly among the burnt clay of many a brickfield.

These and many other well-known wild flowers have been seen both on the Somme battlefield and other parts of the fighting line, where otherwise all is desolation and ruin.

To what cause are these eruptions of starry blossoms to be attributed?

I have read somewhere that in the summer, after the Battle of Waterloo, there was a noticeable upgrowth of blue forget-me-nots, and the explanation given was that so many of the brave fellows who fell in that decisive conflict had sprigs of the flower hidden about their person as keepsakes given by gentle hands in England, and these were buried with their owners.

Probably a less romantic cause could be assigned. The seeds may have been in the soil, and the tearing up of the surface by shot and shell, by the hoofs of the cavalry, and the spades of the burial parties brought the long-hidden seeds to the surface. That was undoubtedly the explanation of another recorded fact—namely, that when part of the field of Waterloo was ploughed up there sprang forth a superb blaze of scarlet poppies.

A more ancient battlefield, Towton, in Yorkshire, still produces a certain species of wild rose, suggestive of the fierce combat (1461) between the adherents of the rival roses, when Yorkist lance and sword smote the Lancastrian ranks in the whirl and smother of a March snowstorm.

One more instance let me quote. It is that of the purple-blue blossoms of the Clustered Bell-flower which decorate the tumuli or burial mounds of the Danish invaders of Cambridgeshire, and are locally known as "Dane's blood."

How such a name as that carries us back to the troubled days before there was a united England—days absolutely devoid of security, when every fen-man and coast dweller, hunter and fisherman had to keep his weapons handy to answer at any moment the alarm bell that told of the black grim galleys of the Vikings creeping up the sedgy waterways from the wild North Sea!

IN THE DELIMARA CAVE.

A STORY OF A BOY'S HOLIDAY IN MALTA.



SLEEP was impossible to Dick Marston, so hot and airless was the night. Although doors and windows were all open in the bungalow house in Malta, where he was spending his holidays, not a breath of air stirred the mosquito curtain above his bed.

His father, Major Marston, commanded a company of artillery stationed at Fort Tigné, and he himself had been sent to school at Repton. He was not a brilliantly clever boy, yet at fourteen he found himself in the Lower Fourth by dint of hard work, and so pleased was his father by his success that he allowed him to come out to Malta for his summer holidays, in spite of his mother's faintly uttered fears that the heat might be bad for him.

"Nonsense, my dear," Major Marston had said decidedly; "the boy will be all the time on the water or in it, and the hot weather won't hurt him, and you know we can't get home this year."

And it had happened as his father had prophesied, for Dick had bathed and yachted all the day long, and was dreading his return to England and school life after a holiday that had been in every way delightful.

Such a holiday as Dick had had this summer in Malta surely no mortal boy had ever spent before. He had made friends with the men of his father's company, and had been initiated into the mysteries of military life under the charge of Gunner Macqueen, an old soldier, who was as straight as a lath and as honest as the light.

Macqueen was an excellent specimen of the best sort of old soldier, whose associations and inclinations would not permit him to take the stripe, since doing so would place him immeasurably above his old friends. But when Dick had questioned him on the topic, Macqueen had adopted an air of mystery that had enveloped him from head to foot as he sat on his bed-cot polishing his side-arms.

"No, Master Dick," he said. "I'm not saying that I shouldn't have made the very best of N.C.O.'s—a remarkable influence with the youngsters and rookies I should have had, too—but there was Jem Royce, and we joined when we was lads, and I promised Jem I'd never rise above him, and bless'd if he didn't go and cultivate a likin' for drinks as was stronger than lemonade, and it took me all my time to see after 'im and keep 'im straight, let alone keepin' up the credit of the company as the best-turned-out gunner in it."

Dick, a slim schoolboy in flannels and a blazer, received as gospel every word that his friend had spoken, and, perched opposite to him in the deserted barrack room on an inverted pail, had led Macqueen on to weave marvellous stories of his prowess in the days before "the Major" came to the company, bringing stricter rules and habits in his train.

When Dick had announced his new friendship at the lunch table Major Marston said little, but caused strict investigation to be made as to Macqueen's private and public character, and the result was so satisfactory that the gunner was tacitly admitted as Dick's guide, philosopher, and friend through the devious ways of regimental existence as shared in by an outsider.

The boy was thinking of him now as he lay awake in the creeping dawn of the August morning, and when at last the light began to creep up the white-washed walls opposite his bed he felt that he could wait no longer, and, rising, slipped into his clothes and out into the garden. His father and mother were asleep in the next room, and from the little chamber in the turret leading to the roof he could hear the stentorian snores of the soldier-servant, making the most of his well-earned rest.

Dick opened the door leading

out on to the straight, white road, then closing it behind him, ran noiselessly in his white canvas shoes up the hill into the fort. He knew that no alarm would be raised as to his absence, for his parents were quite accustomed to his solitary rambles, considering him old enough to look after himself and sensible enough to keep out of unnecessary danger.

Thus it was that, unmolested and expectant, Dick ran past the guard-room and out on to the square just as the bugler took up his station on the steps of the fort to sound "Reveille."

Dick, from the shelter of the verandah of the opposite hut, watched him silently, for he had never been out so early in the morning as five o'clock, or watched the day rise out of the sea. It came at last, the red flame of the sun slipping out of the flashing blue waves, to turn the cool of the drowsy dusk to the brazen glory of the summer day, and Davy Holton set his bugle to his lips and blew the call sweet and true. Over the island it rang, from barrack to barrack, cliff to cliff, till at last the echoes died away on Citta Vecchia hill, and the world was awake!

The sleepy men on guard turned out, and the fresh guard relieved them with the usual ceremonies.

Dick waited until Macqueen had gone yawning back to his barrack-room, then went and intercepted him on the steps.

"Oh, Macqueen, don't go to bed. I want to row out to Delimara in one of the company's boats, and we must make haste to get back before it is very late or mother might be vexed."

For one instant Macqueen contemplated refusal, for he was tired, and had scarcely recovered from a late night at the canteen twenty-eight hours earlier that had nearly ended in a well-earned repose in the guard-room, but one look at the boy's longing face settled the matter once and for ever.

"All right, sir," he said sternly, "I'll just sluice my head in a bucket of water, sir, for that there guard-mountin' is most confusin'."

Dick sat waiting until Macqueen returned with two steaming cups of cocoa and some "hard tack."

"Nothin' like this 'ere cocoa stuff, sir," he said cheerily as they sat and ate their repast, with the sun rising slowly into the blue of the heaven, setting the sea in a blaze of gold, and flashing on Etna as the topmost peak of the volcano pointed to the sky. "If more in the regiment was fond of this there'd be no need for the guard-room," Macqueen added, sententiously.

The sea was as calm as the proverbial mill-pond, and when they were once afloat, having stopped for a few moments to press an unwilling gunner, also off guard, into the service, a few lusty strokes sent the pair-oar swinging round St. Elmo Point with Dick in the stern sheets.

Conversation was quite impossible until Delimara was reached and the two exhausted gunners drew up the boat on the beach, and sprawled beside her in various ludicrous attitudes of repose.

"Macqueen," said Dick, addressing an individual with his face muffled in his straw fatigue hat.

"Aye, sir!" was the answer.

"Do you know that somewhere under this cliff there's a wrecked Spanish ship, laden with treasure, and that sometimes on quiet days you can see her topmasts sticking out of the water?"

"So I've heard, sir," said the gunner cautiously; "though I'm not saying whether it's true or it isn't."

"I am going to find that ship, Macqueen, to-day. We shall be glad of the money at home, for father wants a polo pony and mother wants so many things."

"Right you are, sir," said Macqueen, sitting up and apostrophising Dennis as a lazy lout who was never happy unless he was sleeping—a remark which Gunner Dennis did not in the least resent, but merely dragged his exhausted limbs to a clump of olive trees, and composed himself in the shade to rest while Macqueen and Dick went off in search of adventure.

The first thing to be done was to discover further supplies, and a battered sixpence from Dick's pocket produced a loaf and a flagon of milk from a little Maltese farmstead on the road; and a cautious remark as to old legends connected with the cliff brought a grin to the wide mouth of the bare-legged Maltese girl.

"Aye, there is treasure somewhere off the Black Cave," she said with a shrug, "but as the Devil guards it himself, what good is it to any man?" Only a few years ago Spiro Axisa had gone in search and had never come up, though they heard his screams for many minutes, but when they tried to go down in search there was no trace of him.

Something complimentary as to Maltese courage Macqueen murmured under his breath, but, politely asking the way to the Black Cave, Dick drew him away across the short grass and on to the cliffs. They scrambled down on to a goat-path that led down the sheer face of the rocks, and for an instant Dick paused to wonder at the blue of the summer sea beating so far beneath them, then, led by the cavernous thunder of the surf, that seemed to rush up some blow-hole and retreat, sucking its way back, they followed until the track grew fainter, and Macqueen grew nervous.

"We'd better come back now, Master Dick," he said coaxingly, as he clung to a clump of yellow samphire and surveyed his companion, agile as a young goat, climbing from ledge to ledge. "It'd mean three days' cells for me if the Major was to see you here, no better than a limpet and twice as dangerous, and it's gettin' on in the mornin', too, Master Dick, and we've a long row back again."

"Nonsense! Come on!" Dick called back. "I have found the cave," and with a despairing groan the gunner followed him round the corner of the point and on to a safer ledge, where they could stand upright and not scramble on hands and knees.

The mouth of the cave was hidden by long trails of capers, bushes of wild olives, and scrub that had grown so thickly over the aperture that it was a work of some difficulty to push them aside and make their way through the gap on to the rock floor of the cavern.

The damp of the atmosphere, after the heat of the day outside, struck coldly at them.

Dick took from his pocket—from among a heterogeneous collection of valuables, such as a clasp knife and two farthings, a lump of twine and a square of toffee—a portion of candle, which he proceeded to light with a box of matches, while Macqueen looked on in blank amazement at his forethought.

The cavern, illuminated, proved to be a dreary hole, with water dripping from every point in the roof. There was a further aperture at the far end to which Dick walked cautiously over the slimy weed.

"Come on, Macqueen; there's a way down—sort of broken steps," he said excitedly, and, as if in a dream, the gunner followed, feeling his way with the expression of a man who fears to be launched into eternity at every step. He would not have accompanied Dick had not his conscientiousness forbidden him to forsake the Major's son even for a moment; but as he went a feeling of excitement caught him in its grip, and he began to wonder, like Dick, what they should discover at their journey's end.

The flight of steps seemed endless, as Dick's candle flared dully on the lichen-stained walls, but although they were broken and dangerous, yet they continued without interruption until a shaft of daylight in the distance proved that their expedition was coming to an end.

"Come along, Macqueen," called Dick triumphantly as he leaped the last step, and emerged into a cave on a level with the sea that had a small window of light in the bare rock face bright enough to show the gunner and his companion that the place on which they now stood was a rock platform surrounding a black pool of water that evidently communicated below high-water mark with the sea, for every now and then, as the water surged against the cliff outside, the surface of the well at their feet swirled up with a sudden boiling sound of foam and angry water, flinging the spray to their very feet.

Macqueen called to the boy to come away in tones that were very unsteady. But his protests failed to move Dick, who had drawn close to the pool, and was looking down into its depths with fascinated eagerness.

"Macqueen, come here! Come at once! I can see something down there—something that looks like a boat, only it must be miles below the surface."

Thus adjured, Macqueen advanced with the assurance of a cat on hot bricks, and craned his neck over the side.

"Sure and I see somethin', Master Dick," he said with sudden eagerness. "The topmast of a Spanish galley, I'm thinkin', as ye said yourself not so long back. But who's goin' to get hold on it?"

As he spoke the tide surged in with a booming roar through the aperture, and a column of water leapt up in the well, spattering them with water until they were wet to the skin, but when it retreated there lay upon the edge close to Dick's foot something that glittered on the wet rock face. Dick sprang upon it with a cry of wonder and held it up to the light. To Macqueen's astonishment it proved to be a heavy bracelet of red gold in which shone several crystals that looked, even to his ignorant eyes, the valuable diamonds they were.

"Eh, Master Dick, whatever shall we do next?" gasped the gunner.

"Find some more, of course. I think, Macqueen, that you'd better dive into the pool," cried Dick triumphantly. "You are such a good swimmer that it would be no difficulty to you."

"*Me*, sir?" echoed Macqueen. "Me to go into that nasty, God-forsaken place! I'd rather be excused, Master Dick."

"Well, then, let us see if the sides of the well are hollow. There may be other ornaments and precious things hidden away on some ledge that we could reach," said Dick, keen with the delight of his treasure trove and the expectancy of further discoveries. "We don't know how many things may not be thrown up at every movement of the tide, for, of course, when the sea rushes in through the small opening at the bottom of the pool, the force of the water displaces whatever is lying loose on the rock floor."

"Of course, sir," said Macqueen, with an air of vast wisdom.

Dick approached cautiously, and, kneeling down, bared his arm to the elbow to thrust it into the pool below him, but as he did so a huge black feeler darted upwards with the swiftness of an arrow, and waved horribly and uncertainly in the air within an inch of his shoulder, while a sharp black beak that appeared for an instant above the ledge spurted a stream of black fluid at his face, missing him narrowly.

"Master Dick!"

Macqueen's voice was sharp with an agony of fear as he clutched at the boy's arm and dragged him away from the well.

"What is it?" said Dick, shaking with terror and disgust at the memory of the bloated horror he had so narrowly escaped.

"It's the Devil himself, Master Dick; this is a bad place. Come back with me."

He pulled Dick to the entrance of the cave, and together they stumbled up the stairs, not pausing to light their candle or to care that they were badly bruised by falling over the broken steps in their upward flight. When at last they gained the upper cave, and stood looking at each other in the broad daylight, the look of absolute fear on Macqueen's face brought to Dick a sudden desire to laugh.

"Why, Macqueen," he said, "it was an octopus. I know now, for I saw a small one in the harbour the other day."

Macqueen shook his head as he pulled Dick up the side of the cliff. In his belief it was no squid, but the Evil One himself.

Dick's mother has the bracelet now, but often when she looks at it she shudders at the thought of her bright-faced boy's adventure with the giant octopus, and the boys at Repton College are never tired of hearing the wonderful story of those six weeks spent in the Island of Malta, which seemed to have embraced in their forty-two days every conceivable form of adventure.

FIGHTING A LAMMERGEIER.

A TRUE STORY OF THE SARDINIAN MOUNTAINS.

By GEORGE GALE THOMAS.



THERE lived, many years ago, in a village by the mountains of Eglesias, in Sardinia, three brothers, intrepid mountaineers, full of courage and daring.

One day the eldest of them, Paolo, a young man of twenty-two, in wandering among the mountains, found himself on a narrow path unknown to him. It became rougher and narrower as he followed it, continuing on a ledge which afforded little more than the barest foothold.

On one side the rock rose in an almost perpendicular wall, while on the other there was a sheer precipice, leaving only a few inches of perilous standing ground for the mountaineer. Like most daring men, he had a great dislike to going back, and so continued on the ledge, looking soon to find a way to an easier path.

But in this he was disappointed. After clambering with great difficulty around a jutting corner in the hope of seeing open ground beyond, he found himself in worse case than ever. The ledge ended abruptly. It was impossible to go forward, and, when he looked at the boulder around which he had clambered, he found that, difficult as it had been to pass it in coming, it was still more so to return.

"Now may the saints preserve me," said Paolo, looking around him anxiously, "for I am in a pretty fix!"

And indeed he was. Unable to go either forward or backward, he was in a situation where many a bold man would have quailed and, losing his nerve, have fallen headlong into the depths below. But not so Paolo.

Looking carefully around, he found that at a distance of some twenty feet above him there seemed to be a sudden end to the slope, which gave indication of a wider ledge, sure to lead on to open ground again. Searching keenly with his eyes, he saw that there were small projections and clefts here and there in which, with hands and feet, he might climb up the slope, and he set to work to do so.

He had accomplished more than half the distance, when a shrill cry came down to him—*pui—pui*. There was a sudden movement in the air. A shadow fell on him, and like the rush of a whirlwind a great mass swept by, almost touching him. The disturbance was so startling that he nearly lost his hold, but recovered himself in time.

Turning his head he saw, with a thrill of anxiety, one of the great bearded vultures that are objects of hatred and dread to the mountaineers. Noted for their ferocity, as well as their great strength and size, being often nine feet wide from wing to wing, they are well known under the name of "Lämmergeier" in some regions of the Alps, and have often carried off animals bodily.

Paolo had heard that they would sometimes attack animals or men when they were on the edge of dangerous slopes, and seek to drive them over the precipice, so that they might feast on the mangled corpses below. So he summoned up all his courage to withstand the enemy.

By this time the great bird had turned and made for him again, flapping its enormous wings in his very face as it flew by. The young man reached for the hunting knife at his belt, and prepared to defend himself. He struck out at the bird as it passed again, but it kept out of reach, and he seized the short intervals between its sweeping rushes in order to clamber higher on the mountain, and then turn, ready to defend himself again.

Each time as the bird of prey came near, with its wings ready to drive him from his hold, he struck out afresh, but it avoided the weapon. Thus, step by step, the Sardinian fought his way up, until at length he gained the topmost ledge and could stand firm again.

The vulture still circled around, but as the man reached open ground the savage bird found itself baulked of its intended victim, and soared again into the heights.

The adventure had made a deep impression upon Paolo, who vowed that he would not rest until he had traced the bird of prey to its eyrie.

For a week he watched in vain, until early one morning he saw the vulture in the distance and, following afar off, marked that it ended its flight by entering a cleft on the side of an inaccessible precipice. Then he returned to the village with the first part of his task accomplished.

Early next morning the three brothers set off together to the mountains. Paolo carrying with him a sabre which their father had brought home from the wars. Watching from a distance, they saw two great birds soar in the air from above the precipice and make their way over the mountains until they were lost to sight.

The way was now clear, and the young men quickly reached an overhanging spot above. Paolo unwound a long rope from his body, and, tying a loop carefully around his waist, helped his brothers to secure the other end to a jutting pillar of rock. Then, after he had given them final directions, he was let down carefully over the ledge.

Now that he felt himself hanging in mid-air over the dizzy abyss, he half repented of the expedition, accustomed though he was to the risks of the mountains. But it was too late now,

for he was slowly descending inch by inch into the depths.

Down—down—down he went, searching every cranny with his eyes until he found a large cleft in the side, and gave the signal to those above to stop. It was a dark hole, and at first he could see nothing within by contrast of the dark interior with the glare of the radiant Southern sunlight without. But as soon as his eyes had grown accustomed to it, he could see a great nest of sticks.



"THE REMAINING BIRD ASSAILED HIM STILL MORE FIERCELY."

He swung inwards and grasped the rock, gaining a foothold in the cleft. Within the nest, among a multitude of twigs and branches, were two small vultures. Despite their cries of protest he secured them, and stowed

them away, one in each of the great pockets of his rough jacket. Then, after scattering the nest to the four winds of heaven, he gave the signal to be drawn up again, and commenced his ascent through the air.

Inch by inch he mounted slowly, and was beginning to congratulate himself on the success of his hazardous adventure when there was a shout from above. A shadow fell upon the rock beside his own, and a great vulture was sweeping down towards the eyrie, followed by its mate.

He had barely time to draw the old sabre from its scabbard before the birds had turned in fury to attack the spoiler of their nest. Now was Paolo in dire peril. The attackers were in their native element, while he was at a grave disadvantage as he swung there over the abyss at the end of his frail rope.

Screaming with rage and flapping their great wings, the vultures circled around, trying to dash him from his hold into the depths. Paolo struck out boldly with his sword, and kept them at bay while his brothers pulled him steadily inch by inch higher. Being only two, they could not pull him rapidly, nor, if it were possible, would it have been safe, for fear of cutting the rope with the friction of the rock.

The vultures returned to the charge, and after a few seconds Paolo succeeded in disabling one of them by a sword-cut, and it fell into the depths. But the remaining bird, excited by the cries of the nestlings in the Sardinian's pockets, assailed him still more fiercely with beak and wings. The man warded off the blows, and then, watching his opportunity as the vulture rushed towards him, swung round his sabre, and brought it down with a crashing blow on the enemy's head, smashing its skull. The bird fell, and at the same moment the Sardinian, with a sigh of relief at his escape, felt the rope shaking violently.

He looked up, and the blood seemed to freeze in his veins with horror.

The rope was cut three-fourths through!

In his last sweeping stroke the sabre had cut it above his reach, so that only a few strands held—and at any moment these might part. He looked down, and could see the cruel rocks a thousand feet below. He realised with a feeling of horrible apprehension that perhaps in a few moments he would be falling, falling, down into the awful depths.

A cry of agony came from his lips—a cry that reached his brothers. The head of one of them appeared against the sky over the edge above him.

"Gently, Pietro, for the love of God," called Paolo, "the rope is nearly cut through. It will break in a few moments."

The brother saw, and together the two above pulled steadily on in terrible anxiety, expecting every moment to feel a sudden release of the weight as the rope parted.

The air was full of brightness. Far away the smiling vineyards stretched down to the deep blue of the Mediterranean with its waters shimmering in the summer sunlight.

Paolo saw it all in one hasty glance around; then his eyes were fixed with a fearful anxiety on the rope above him. It still shook violently, and every moment seemed to threaten his doom. The sweat stood in cold beads on his forehead while, with straining eyes, he watched the thin cord. It seemed as though some invisible weight were pressing on his shoulders and striving to push him down. Oh! that he could make himself light as air!

He kept his limbs rigidly still for fear that the slightest movement should strain the rope. Thoughts of his past life came upon him with sudden flashes. Trivial things that had happened years before, and long since forgotten, crowded into his mind. His thoughts wandered to them as though he were someone looking on at a play.

All this had taken but a few seconds, and then, suddenly, like a knife cutting through his vitals, the recollection of his awful position came to him again. Higher and higher he mounted, but the strain of agony was so great that to his disordered brain it seemed that the strands of the rope were beginning to part.

He could see it all in his mind with the minute observation of a microscope. One strand parted, and only two remained. Then slowly but surely one of the others seemed to be giving way, and he was hanging by but a single thread!

Would it hold? He prayed with an intensity that he had never known before.

Horror! It was giving way!! As his frenzied eyes glared upwards the last strand seemed to be visibly breaking. And then—with an indescribable feeling of terror, he felt himself falling down—down, into the abyss, and he knew no more!

The rope had held, but when the two young men above pulled their brother over the brink into safety he had fainted, and for a week later he lay unconscious, tossing to and fro in a delirium.

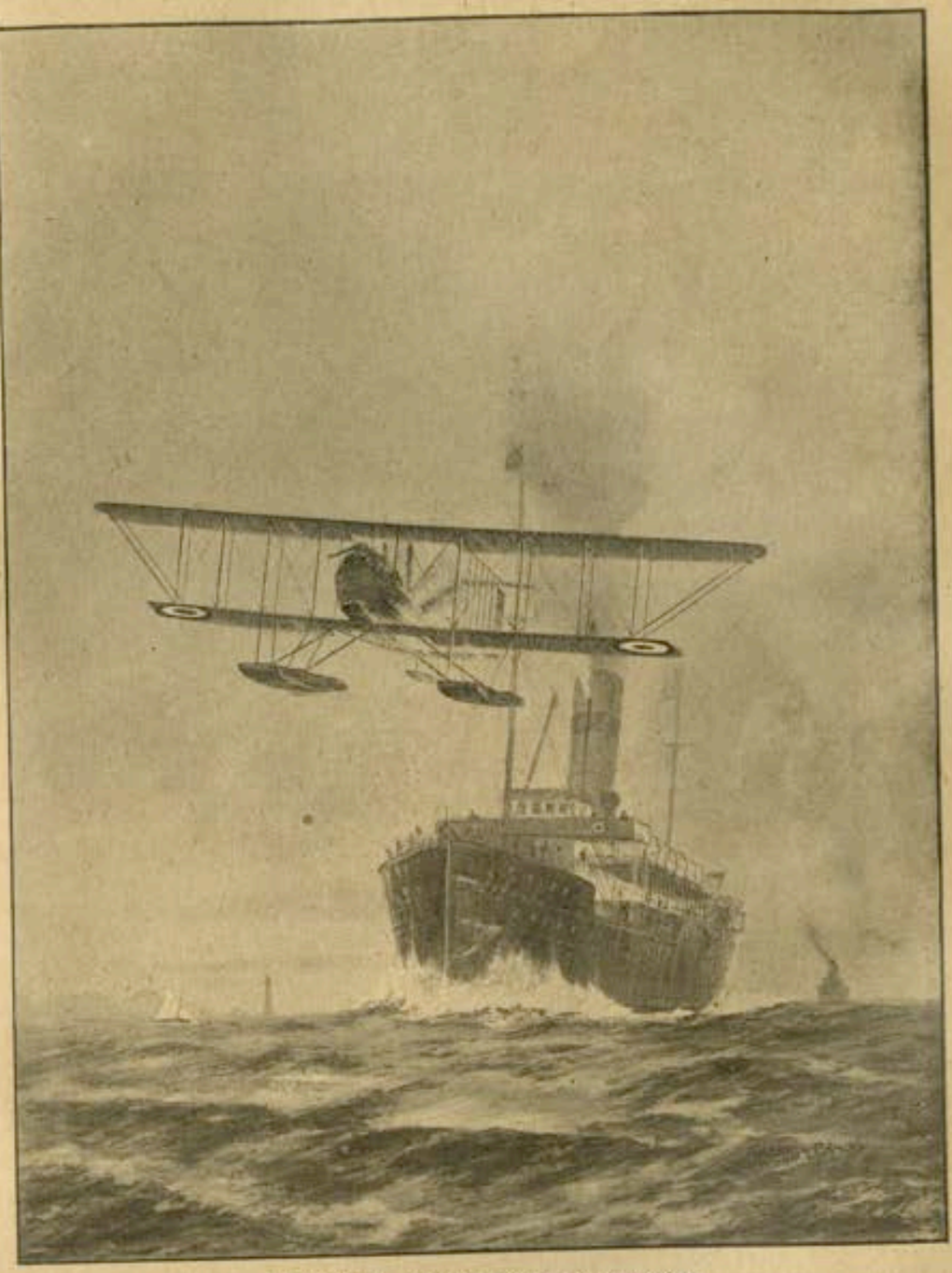
From the time when Paolo had been let down over the precipice on his fateful quest until his return only a short half-hour had elapsed.

But it was the face of a man prematurely aged that his brothers saw when they drew him back again into safety, for in that time *the hair of the young Sardinian had turned white!*

THE LINER AND ITS AIRCRAFT ESCORT.

WE all know how immensely valuable have been the services of our airmen in the land warfare, especially on the Western front. Thanks to their observation our gunners have been able to train their guns on enemy positions far behind the lines with incredible and almost uncanny accuracy.

But the Navy, and especially our splendid mercantile marine, have benefited too. For it has been discovered that the airman can detect from his lofty perch the presence of a submarine better even than the look-out man stationed at his post of watch on the destroyer or other floating escort as it goes racing along over the waters.



A TYPICAL SCENE IN THE CHANNEL.

Ocean Liner with its Aeroplane Escort.

Drawn for this Annual by Algernon Black.

Flying Men of an Earlier Day.

By W. A. Atkinson.



WE all know that "there were brave men before Agamemnon," but a good many people do not know it is also true that there were intrepid flying men long before the gallant members of the R.F.C. and the R.N.A.S., whose feats have won our admiration in the present war.

Their flight, it is true, was of a very different kind from that of a modern airman, but there must have been more than a spice of the modern airman's pluck in the hearts of these early "flying-men," for they took risks recklessly, and their feats frequently ended in disaster.

In 1733 there was something like an epidemic of "flying-men," and the sport was taken up by all sorts of people. The "flying" consisted in sliding down an inclined rope attached at one end to the top of a church steeple, and anchored, or otherwise fastened, to the ground at the other.

In 1732 a "flying-man" gave an exhibition at Derby. He fastened his rope to the top of All Saints' steeple, and stretched it to the bottom of St. Michael's, eighty yards distance horizontally. A sort of little sledge was arranged to fit the rope with a groove, and the performer tobogganed down the inclined rope with his breast resting upon the sledge, and his arms and legs extended. The descent occupied no more than five or six seconds, and the car smoked with its rapid friction upon the rope. The man fired a pistol and blew a trumpet in his flight.

Having made a descent, he climbed slowly back, performing many tight-rope feats on the way, so that the ascent occupied him more than an hour. He then descended as before, and with that concluded the day's performance, the whole of which he repeated on the following day.

In the following year another "flying-man" gave a similar exhibition in the same town. He stretched his rope twice as far as the performer of the preceding year, that is from All Saints' steeple to the bottom of St. Mary's Gate. He, like the celebrated Blondin of a later time, wheeled after him a barrow containing a little boy.

He had also arranged that a donkey should slide down the rope astride a little car, and having its feet weighted with lead. He had got the donkey up into the steeple—by what means can hardly be guessed—and it duly set off upon its flight in the presence of a large crowd of sight-seers; but when the ass was nearing the end of its journey the rope broke, and the animal dropped into the crowd. Many people were injured, but no lives were lost. The ass escaped unhurt, as it deserved to do. The rope broke near its upper end, and did some damage in its fall.

These exhibitions sometimes ended fatally. A "flying-man" named Robert Cadman lost his life while performing at Shrewsbury about this time. He had attached one end of his rope to the highest window in the spire of St. Mary's Church, and, carrying the other across the river, he fastened it to a tree in the Gay Meadow. When he took his flight the rope snapped, and he dropped near the gateway in St. Mary's, Water Lane. The ground was frozen hard at the time, and his body rebounded several feet. His wife witnessed the catastrophe.

Another "flying-man" who lost his life in a rather curious way was Thomas Pelling, who was killed at Pocklington, Yorkshire, in 1733. He was a native of Burton-on-Stather in Lincolnshire, and he was touring the country and giving exhibitions of these flights from church towers.

He had given a successful demonstration at Knaresborough, and had then gone on to Pocklington. In the latter town he fixed one end of his rope to one of the pinnacles of the tower, and passed the other end round a windlass placed near to the Star Inn. Two iron rings were arranged to run on the rope, and to these were attached strong straps, one of which was fastened round the man's chest and the other round one leg, the remaining leg and both arms being left free.

The man had got into his straps and cast himself off, when he felt the rope slacken. He called to the men at the windlass to tighten it, but they unfortunately misunderstood him, and turned the windlass the wrong way. The rope slackened so much that the performer came in contact with the battlement at the east end of the chancel and fractured his skull, death being instantaneous. He was buried exactly under the place where he died.

The performances of the travelling acrobats were imitated on a smaller scale by the venturesome youths who witnessed them. Hutton, the historian of Birmingham, records how he and a few companions got hold of a scaffold pole, and laying it with one end in the churchyard and the other in the bedroom window of a house which was being built close by, slid down it time after time until the pole was polished like a looking-glass, and their clothes were torn to rags.

A number of young men in Derby who had practised this art of "flying" until they thought they were adepts, obtained permission to give a performance in Kedleston Park for the amusement of Sir Nathaniel Curzon. They fastened one end of the rope to the roof of the hall, and the other across the stream which flows through the park. But the principal performer in his flight dropped into the stream, and this misfortune damped the spirits of the young men so much that they retired ingloriously.

Although, as already said, there was something like an epidemic of these exhibitions about this time, they were not an entire novelty. Such performances had been given long before this. When Edward VI. was crowned in 1547 a man descended from the battlements of old St. Paul's on a cable, the lower end of which was made fast to an anchor near the Dean's Gate. He descended on his breast, spreading out his hands and feet on either side. He afterwards ascended to the middle of the cable and performed a variety of acrobatic feats. He was a foreigner, probably a Spaniard.

A few years later there was a similar exhibition when Philip of Spain passed in state through London.

THE EMPIRE'S FARTHEST SOUTH.

By Nigel Tourneur.

BLEAK islands of hills and immense peat bogs and marshes, grassy stretches with the most singular kind of vegetation, but never a tree, and few shrubs higher than the golden furze of the British Isles. Islands of furious storms and tempests, and where it rains or rather drizzles, for 290 days in the year. Islands where the schoolmaster and the tailor go rounds, going from settlement to settlement, and where the mails are received in the farther isles of the group only once in the three months. Islands of horses, sheep, and millions of penguins, the eggs of which form quite a considerable export, together with the wool, skins, and tallow from the sheep.

Such are the Empire's farthest possessions in the South—the Falkland Islands, off Cape Horn, where purer and more classical "Broad Scots" is spoken today than in any part of Scotland.

Lonely and desolate in situation as they are, they have played, and still play, a part in the great European War, for off the East Falkland Vice-Admiral Sir F. D. Sturdee's squadron, on the forenoon of December 7, 1914, sank the crack gunnery ships of the German Navy and their light cruisers, and reversed the defeat of gallant Craddock and his squadron, sunk—all save H.M.S. "Glasgow"—by the German Admiral von Spee off Coronal, with all hands, on November 1, 1914.

From August of that year down to the present day the Falkland Islands Volunteers have kept vigilant guard over this far-off outpost of Empire, and Port Stanley, the one town of the group, and seat of Government, affords an important rendezvous for naval forces patrolling the western waters of South America.

This little known group consists of two large islands, the East and West Falklands, and a number of smaller ones around their coasts. It is a curious historical fact that the Falklands have been successively inhabited by the French, the Spanish, and the British, and many of the bays and coves still preserve the names given them by their previous possessors, such as Port Louis, Rincon Grande, Salvador, Bougainville, and others.

Many of the words and phrases used by the islanders are of Spanish origin, though almost all the folk are British, and, for the most part, Scottish in origin, owing to the great emigration scheme that was carried out by free passage and grants to many a crofter from the north and west of Scotland some two generations or less ago.

Blank and dreary though the islands appear, many a Scotsman has made a happy home there. As one says in a letter to the writer, "I have been and am happy with my lot. I've got a good home, plenty to eat, plenty of clothes, a house rent free, and a good house at that. You would be surprised how quickly the time has passed in this lonely clime since leaving the Western Isles I'll never see again."

His is the typical case of life and work in the Falklands, for though Port Stanley, East Falkland Island, with its 800 inhabitants, has shops and churches, post-office and bank, a doctor, a Governor and Executive Council, the greater part of the 3,000 islanders lead a more or less solitary life in the interior and on the islets. Here are a few facts by a resident:—

"One of the clergymen in Port Stanley visits us once a year. He examines the children, and does the christening, if any, and anyone who intends to get married must wait until the minister comes round to his house or settlement, or go into Port Stanley and be married there. I fancy there are no larger parishes, or more difficult to the minister, in all the world. Between East and West Falkland the distance is only some ten miles in places, but full of dangerous reefs and currents, so the minister goes about from harbour to harbour in one of the three sailing schooners belonging to Port Stanley, and she often has to take shelter from the weather for a week. To reach us in West Falkland she has to sail 150 miles around the coast.

"On the Islands we have travelling schoolmasters stopping two weeks at every house, so by means of this my children get two months' teaching out of the twelve months. The teaching fee is paid by the Government, and board and lodging is given to the masters free at the houses. The travelling tailor, however, each house pays, and as often as not provides the cloth, which we spin ourselves out of the sheep's wool.



"THERE ARE MILLIONS OF PENGUINS."

Drawn by SCOTT HANKIN.

just as my mother once did so far, far away in the old shieling."

It is owing to the remarkable kinds of grass covering the greater part of the coasts and hills, and many of the islets entirely, that the Falklands are islands of sheep-runs. For sheep there is no finer pasturage than that obtained on the Falklands. Much of the interior is covered with long, white, wiry grass, which the shepherds set fire to in the spring, and then the young shoots spring up green and juicy, and the sheep, cattle and horses thrive upon it.

In many places of the larger islands the tussac grass, dark green and luxuriant, growing best where there is a depth of wet, peaty bog, forms a remarkable feature of the country. Round its roots it grows in immense balls, often rising from five to six feet above the ground, and as much, too, in diameter. On the top of these balls the tussac throws out stems and long leaves that hang down all around, often to six and seven feet in length. These heaps grow within a few feet of each other, so that in walking among them one is hidden from sight, and the entire tussac patch, which may extend to the breadth of half a mile, forms a perfect labyrinth.

The roots of it are pleasant to eat, much resembling in flavour the heart of the cabbage palm, and the leaves are chopped and mixed with the stiff tenacious clay forming the subsoil of the islands, and the whole used for building purposes in the settlements and elsewhere.

Numerous are the sheep-runs of 36,000 to 38,000 sheep on East and West Falkland Islands. These sheep feed, summer and winter, all over the hills and such parts of the interior as are safe for them. Wild in the real meaning of the word, they are gathered in flocks off the hills for shearing in November, when the weather is mild.

Then it is that the settlement or headquarters of the ranch is very busy. At this time, too, the sheep which are too old to grow wool are picked out and killed, their carcases being boiled down into tallow and sent with the skins to England, by the sailing schooners to Port Stanley, and then by the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's monthly steamer to Liverpool or elsewhere.

Shearing lasts about two months. After this season loneliness settles down once more upon the distant shepherds and the settlement.

All travelling from place to place is done on horseback, and all the necessaries of life and articles of export are borne by the pack-horses or "cargeiros," for roads are unknown in the Falklands. The great extent of marsh and treacherous bog-land, from which, if a person or animal stray from the narrow winding ways, rescue is nigh impracticable, renders the building of highways impossible. From the more "weathered mosses" the fuel of the islanders is obtained, the peat being cut and carted just as in the Highlands of Scotland.

The flora of the islands is extensive, but with the striking feature of having no perfume in the flowers.

This stilling or deadening of Nature's perfection is also noticeable in the subdued music of the birds, of which the blue linnet and the wren are the sweetest songsters.

The best time to visit these practically unknown islands of the Empire is in the summer, from December to March. Even at that season it blows hard every day, but the anchorages being good there is no risk for ships, and a tug is always kept ready in Port Stanley to assist or bring vessels in if they should be disabled.

But the weather is very changeable. Often it is summer in the middle of winter and winter in the middle of summer, yet, as a rule, the winters are very mild, with less wind than at other seasons. It is then that the days are so short and the nights are so long; and the settlers on the isles gather round their fire of peat and driftwood, and tell again the traditions of the islands.

Such tales will include the famous landing of escaped convicts from Chilean territory, or the ancient stories of the argosies of Spain that dashed their ribs to matchwood against the reefs, to leave there their costly cargoes from the silver mines of Peru. For so the stories have run, generation after generation.

HOW TO MAKE A BAROMETER.

By GEORGE P. MOON.

WHEN, soon after the outbreak of the present war, it was decided by the military authorities to suppress the publication of weather forecasts, a great many people were sadly at a loss to know what the day or the morrow had in store for them, of rain or shine, of wet or dry.

A large proportion of homes in this country do not contain a barometer at all, and in those that do the weather-glass hanging in the hall is often a doubtful and unreliable guide.



Fig. 1.

It may not be unseasonable, therefore, to suggest that if, with a little trouble and expense, a dependable barometer can be *made*, it would be a peculiarly acceptable addition to the house.

Some boys may consider the making of a barometer a rather ambitious venture — one, indeed, just a *little* too difficult for hands that are not particularly clever. But let these directions that follow be adhered to faithfully, and the difficulties will be found to melt away, for care has been taken to describe a form of instrument of simple construction.

And the cost? Well, the trouble is that you will need to reckon an increase on most of the prices I shall name, which are based on pre-war conditions.

The main cost is the mercury, or quicksilver, 12 ozs. of which will be needed. Four shillings ought to cover all. And for this sum you should have a barometer which will not only look well on the hall wall, but will give every indication of coming weather as accurately as one costing pounds.

Fig. 1 shows our instrument when finished.

A mercurial barometer such as this consists of five parts: a board to support the various portions which go to make up the instrument, a glass tube closed at the top extremity containing mercury, a cistern in which the lower end of the tube is inserted, a scale divided into inches and tenths, and a pointer or indicator to mark the position of the mercury at any particular time of the day.



Fig. 2.

The board is, of course, the first part of the instrument that we should take in hand.

This measures 35 in. long and 4 in. wide at its widest portions at the top and bottom, the middle part being 2 in. only. As for its thickness, ½ in. will be all right. Any kind of wood will suit if it is of smooth surface; for though walnut, mahogany, and such-like fancy materials would, of course, look very well, plain deal may be stained, or, better still, enamelled some art colour, and will give all satisfaction.

The length of the wide portion at the top should be about 8 in.; that at the bottom 4 in.

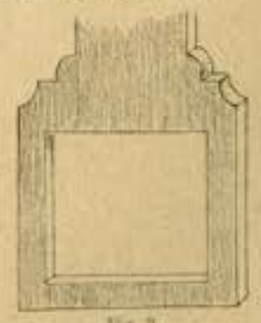


Fig. 3.

It may be cut out with a keyhole saw.

Let a pencil line be drawn down the centre from top to bottom. A quarter of an inch from this line, on the right of it, commencing 2 in. from the top, a slot must be cut for the indicator to work up and down in. First of all make a few gimlet holes close together in a line, to enable the point of the keyhole saw to be inserted. Once this is effected the rest of the work will be easy enough, for it is merely a question of sawing a straight length 4 in. in extent. Fig. 2 illustrates the result.

A 2 in. square is next sawn out of the lower wide part, so that we have something like Fig. 3. What is this for? It is to provide a recess for the cistern which holds the mercury, for we do not want it to project too much in front, or the wood slab which

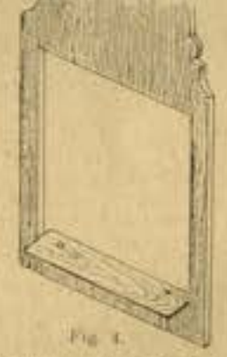


Fig. 4.

covers it would have to be of awkward thickness. A little shelf to hold this cistern is provided by gluing or nailing a piece of ⅛ in. wood, 2 in. long and 1¼ in. wide, to the lower border of the aperture, as depicted in Fig. 4. It should project ½ in. in front.

We have supposed that our cistern is a glass or porcelain jar or wide-mouthed bottle, measuring 1¾ in. in height and 1¼ in. in diameter. Of course, it is not necessary to stick at these dimensions exactly; if it be a little larger or a little smaller it won't matter at all. But the size mentioned is very convenient, all circumstances considered.

Well, the recess thus made needs covering in, back and

front. For the former we must procure a 3 in. square of wood, ⅜ in. thick, and scoop it out at

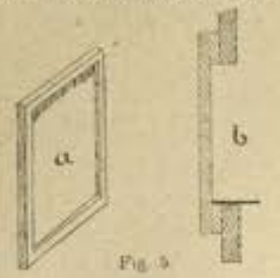


Fig. 5

one side with chisel or red-hot poker to half its thickness, so that it constitutes a sort of lid, *a*, Fig. 5. It is shown sectionally in *b*, Fig. 5, in position. It should be glued on, and if we were to add a couple of screws it would not be amiss.


Fig. 6

The front covering is similar to the back. But the wood in this case is ⅜ in. thick and 3¼ in. square; and, for the sake of appearance, the edges are bevelled, as the first Fig. shows. The depth of the scooping is ½ in. The bevelling is performed with a chisel; but a penknife may be utilised in place of it if we do not possess this tool. A good rubbing on sand-paper will finish it off and leave the angles straightly and cleanly cut. Put it on one side.

The board is next taken in hand and smoothed down carefully with fine sand-paper, to remove any roughnesses. Then on the back, at the top, a circular piece of ½-in. wood, about 2 in. in diameter, is screwed for the

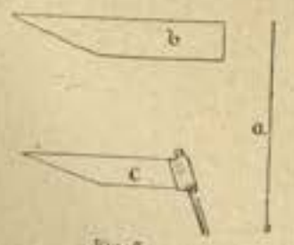


Fig. 7

purpose of making the instrument hang straightly, for, owing to the projecting cistern cover at the back, it would not otherwise do so.

To enable the barometer to be attached to a nail in the wall, an oblong strip of tin, say 1½ in. by 1 in., should be next obtained, and three holes punched in it—two at one end for the small screws by which it is fastened to the instrument, and one larger at the other extremity to take the head of a good-sized nail driven into the wall wherever the barometer is meant to hang. Fig. 6 illustrates the situation of the tin screwed to the upper margin of the circular piece of wood we have just fastened to the back.

At this stage the pointer and its attachments should be constructed and added to the instrument.

A piece of straight wire of the thickness of a thin knitting-needle, 10 in. long, will be our first demand. One end of this is bent into a little loop (Fig. 7*a*). To the other end is fastened the pointer—a bit of tin 1½ in. long, and shaped like Fig. 7*b*. Its greatest width should be about ½ in. I do not advise plain tin, for this, after a time, gets rusty, but a piece cut out of some canister which is gilded or japanned some pleasing colour.


Fig. 9

Nowadays we have a pretty large choice; but if such is not get-at-able, use plain tin and enamel it, or gum tinted paper over it. A squeeze with a pair of pincers will unite it and the wire securely. Pass the pointer through the slit in the instrument from behind, and let the wire extend downward in a line with the slit. Secure it in this position with a couple of U-shaped bits of wire—stout pins with heads removed will do well—one of which must be driven into the wood close to the bottom end of the slit, and another 4 in. lower. Fig. 8 will make this description understandable. The object of


Fig. 8

this arrangement is to allow the wire and pointer to move up and down to the extent of 4 in. And, therefore, the little staples must not confine the wire too closely, or its freedom of movement will be hindered. When the instrument is erected the weight of the wire should be sufficient to bring it down as far as it can go.

But, you may ask, how is the pointer moved up and down and retained in the position we place it?

What follows will answer this query.

Three-quarters of an inch from,

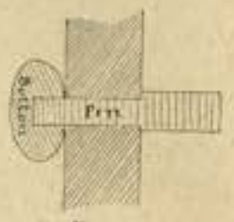


Fig. 10

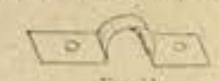


Fig. 11

and on the left of, the pencil line we traced on the tube support, and 1½ in. below the slit, make a hole with a gimlet ⅛ in. in diameter. Through this, from the back, push a wooden pin or shaft, as it really is, shaped like Fig. 9. This is 1⅞ in. long, ⅛ in. wide in one part, and ¼ in. in the other. This thicker portion is ½ in. long As indicated in the diagram, the other end is squared, and this fits into a hole made in a ½-in. disc or button cut out of ½-in wood. A bradawl will enable this hole to be made. The whole arrangement is illustrated in Fig. 10 in section. Remember the pin must so closely fit the hole in the instrument that it does not turn freely. A piece of linen thread connects the loop of the wire and the projecting por-

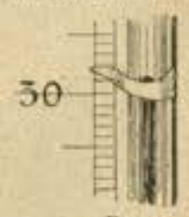


Fig. 12

tion of the pin behind, passing through a hole bored in the latter, and being retained by a knot. As will be plainly seen, the rotation of the button (and consequently the pin) causes the wire and pointer to rise or fall according to the way it is turned—to right or left.

The instrument should now be suspended from a nail, and stained or enamelled as the taste of the maker prompts.

While it is drying we take in hand the most difficult part of the whole operation—namely, the filling of the tube with mercury.

The tube can be purchased from any good chemist. It measures 33 in. long and ¼ in. in diameter. Select one perfectly straight, and get the chemist to seal up one end, by melting it over a spirit flame. He will do it for a couple of pence, or for nothing if he is good-natured.

A little piece of paper is made into a filler, with an orifice small enough to enter the mouth of the tube; and sufficient of the mercury is poured in to quarter fill the tube. On examination, the mercury thus poured in will be found to be filled with air bubbles, which must be expelled by boiling, or our instrument will not work properly. And this boiling is the task which needs care.

Hold the tube obliquely over the chimney of an ordinary paraffin lamp, at a distance of 18 in. above it. Then bring it gradually closer till the closed end is immediately above the chimney, and so hold it till the mercury is in agitation, and the bubbles are seen to move upwards. When the lower portion is quite clear of them tackle the next higher; and so proceed till all have disappeared from the mercury. Then, *when the tube is cool*, add another quarter of the heavy metal? and repeat the operation. Thus the tube is filled.

The remainder of the 12 ozs. of mercury is next poured into the cistern, and the open end of the tube is deftly turned into it, without a particle of air passing up, which would be fatal. And how shall we do this? If the cistern were wide enough we should press the forefinger over the open end of the tube, and only remove it when the tube was deep in the quicksilver. But, in our case, no finger can be made use of; so, instead, we stretch a piece of kid over the orifice to prevent the escape of mercury, and entrance of air, during the "turning movement," and only withdraw it when the tube is well beneath the surface of the metal.

Tube and cistern are then carefully carried to the instrument; the latter is placed on its stand, and the former is secured to the middle of the wood by a couple of tin staples, represented in Fig. 11, which should be made some time before. They fit the tube tightly, and are constructed of pieces of tin measuring 1½ in. by ½ in.

One should be screwed at the very top of the tube, which must be lifted till its lowest end is elevated about ¼ in. above the bottom of the cistern; the other is placed close above the square aperture in the board. Let the inside of each staple have a touch of thick glue before they are screwed over the tube, for this will prevent the latter falling to the bottom of the cistern again.

The presence of the tube and lowest staple will require a small cutting to be made for them in the top of the front covering of the cistern, or it cannot be brought in contact with the board. Let this front be glued on.

The face, or scale, claims our attention next. This is in two portions—one for each side of the tube, as shown in Fig. 1. Smooth white card should be procured, and a couple of pieces measuring 6 in. by 1½ in. cut from it and rounded at top and bottom.

In one—that meant for the right of the tube—a very narrow slit is cut with a penknife 4 in. long, ⅛ in. from the left margin. This slit corresponds with the slit through which the pointer projects. In neat lettering put the following words, to extend nearly from the top to the bottom:—

RISE
for
NE—NW—N—E
Dry
or
Less Wind.*

FALL
for
SW—SE—S—W
Wet
or
More Wind.*

* Except wet from NE.

Let this card be glued in position, the two slits coinciding.

The second card contains merely the scale of four inches—from 27 to 31, divided into tenths. But before we use the pen on this we must manipulate the pointer, which at present sticks outward perpendicular to the board, and is of no use as an indicator. Bend it to the left to embrace the tube so that its point may almost touch the scale when that is in place (Fig. 12).

Then we consult some barometer in our neighbourhood, take note of the height of its mercury, and immediately move the indicator of our instrument till its top coincides with the top of the mercurial column.

Thus, for example, if the barometer which we have consulted reads 29 inches, we know that the scale to which our indicator points must also be 29 inches. The two readings must be taken pretty much at the same time, for the mercury occasionally rises and falls a good deal in half an hour.

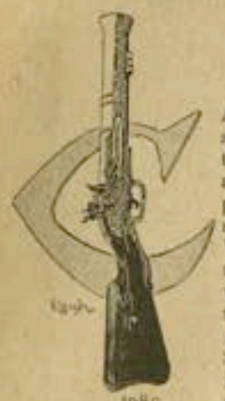
Well, here we are at the end of our labour, for when we have placed the left cardboard momentarily in position so that its top is level with the top of that on the right, and marked with a pencil the situation of 29 inches, we have only to ink the scale (in the manner depicted in Fig. 12) and glue the card to the instrument for the business to be done.



HOW WILL'M GOT HIS CHANCE.

A STORY OF A NIGHT PATROL.

By PATRICK VAUX.



"AN'T you see, mother, that's not all! The point is, should Will'm go to sea with me in the *Polly Ann!*" said Skipper Liddiard, pushing his plate forward for his fifth fried herring, then presenting his empty cup for more tea, just as if telling his great news had added to his usual good appetite. "It's a ticklish job she has now—you'll say so, too, w'en I tell ye of it, though I don't want any better in these times."

"I know what it is, dad. If you take me, I'll promise you to——"

"Speak when you're spoken to, Will'm," Mrs. Liddiard snapped sharply; then, as if sorry for showing she was deeply troubled by the skipper's news, she piled the lad's plate with muffins, hot and comforting, out of the oven near by.

"Should Will'm go to sea with you, John!" she continued, talking very quickly, and now obstinately staring at the gas jet blazing over the kitchen mantelpiece, and flanked on each side by two white china bluejackets dancing the hornpipe. "He is our only son, but a big strapping lad for his age; and, hard as it is for his mother to say it, if Will'm can do his part and bravely for the country, then Will'm had best do it. Mayhap it comes that he does summat good for you, too, as well as against the Garmans."

The skipper looked at his son, who was a well-built, hefty youngster of nearly seventeen, broad shouldered, and with clear brown eyes in a round brown face. Will'm demolished another muffin with much gusto, and smiled at his father.

"You'll feel safer with me aboard, dad," he said confidently. "Who was it that said I have the truest eye of all in the old hooker?"

"'Twas said just to please you, son Billy," was the sarcastic reply. "You! You couldn't hit a haystack wi' your old blunderbuss. Finished your supper, have ye? Then you go aft, into the parlour, and get on with your 'Stoker's Manual,' so that you ain't no green 'and w'en you join the Navy come March next year."

Before the war few tugmasters were better known from Dover to the Scilly Isles than Skipper Liddiard and his *Polly Ann*, that hailed from a certain south-east English port. Short-funnelled, stumpy, and very wheezy at times in her engine-room, often she had dragged a big sailing ship out of the very teeth of a raging gale, or had hauled a 6,000-ton ocean tramp from dock into fairway, and occasionally salved a dangerous derelict, bringing in a good round sum to all concerned, as the comfort of the skipper's cottage testified.

When, however, war broke out, and the enemy commenced to sow the Narrow Seas with floating mines, the Board of Admiralty in Whitehall put on their thinking caps in order to devise a plan by which the treacherous tricks of the Germans could be defeated. One result of their cogitations was that the *Polly Ann*, like most of her sister-craft, became a unit of the Auxiliary Fleet, which is made up of innumerable trawlers, drifters and small patrolling craft. She was quickly painted navy grey, numbered on her bows and funnel, and her crew of six and a cook-boy were drawn into the great and wide-spread net of the British Navy.

The night before the *Polly Ann* first went out to sea on her patrol duties Will'm spent in carefully oiling and polishing up his blunderbuss; sitting in the stores-shed till his nose was blue with the cold, and his feet felt half frozen.

"Drat that boy," Mrs. Liddiard exclaimed, "I can't get him in, father. He's a-sittin' out there, busy as a bee on his great old gun. Says if it saved gran'father's life w'en he was a-fightin' his lugger against the French, it may save yours and all on the *Polly Ann* some time or other."

"Bill! Oh, he's a bit crazy on the old cannon," laughed the skipper, kicking off his heavy sea-boots. "If the time comes, it won't be him and it that'll save us. Bill! He couldn't hit a four-storeyed house, and him twenty feet away. His job is a-heavin' coals, and he is wun'erful at that. I'll have to see he keeps the 'buss stowed away. He won't have no call to shoot, I reckon, and, if he does, I'm goin' overboard for safety. Don't you be scared, mother!"

So the *Polly Ann* went out on her new duty of night patrol within her designated area of sea. Hers it was to destroy the lurking mine along the face of the waters, driven hither and thither by wind, wave and current to do its deadly work on merchantman and warship alike.

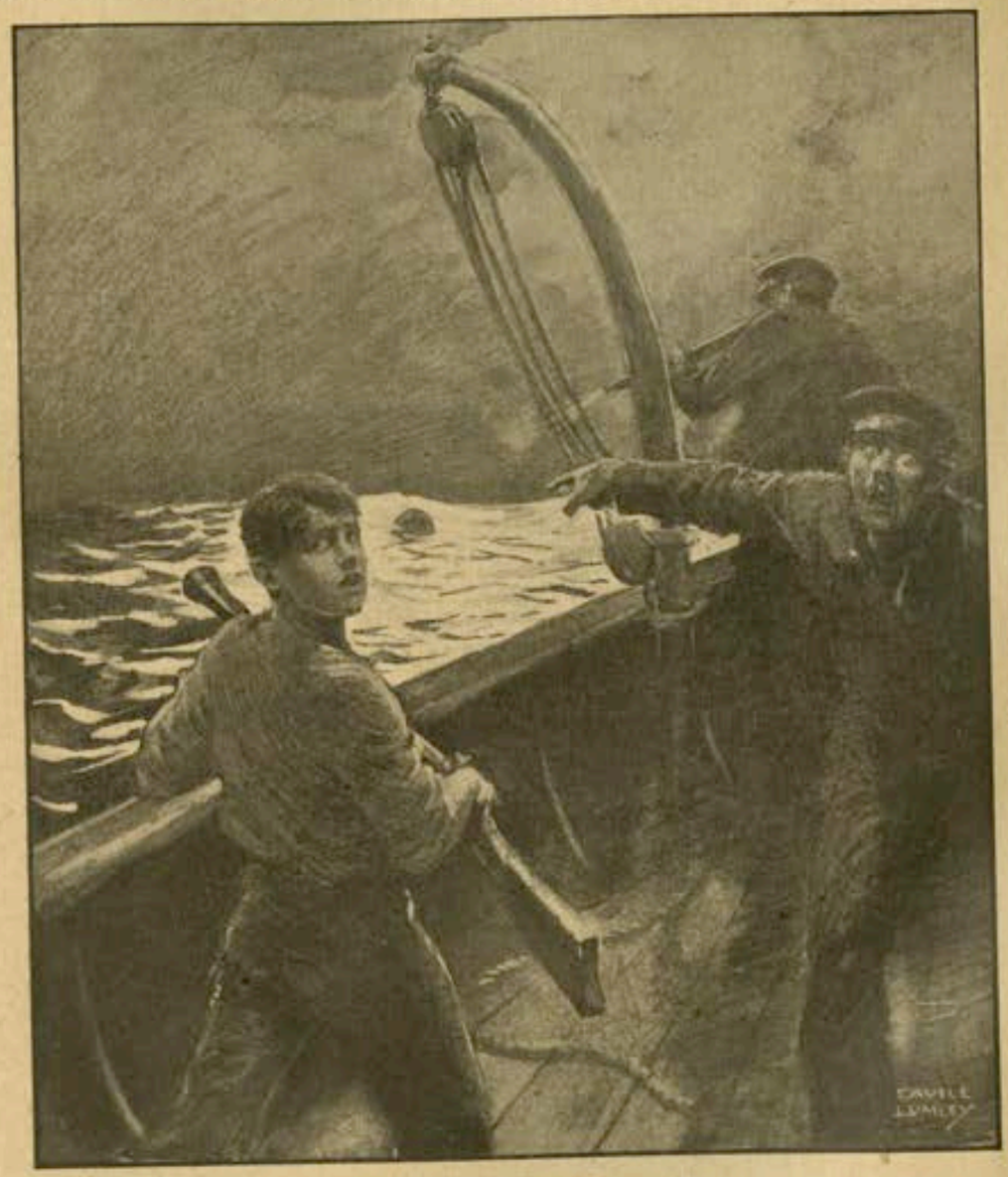
Not till Will'm had come off his watch in the little cramped stokehold, had ravenously devoured great chunks of cold boiled bacon and bread washed down by tea made in the kettle placed on the little stove of the little galley, did he undo the many folds of wrappings protecting his grandfather's weapon.

"What's this?" asked the third deckhand, who was also off watch, as he scrutinised the ancient and very heavy firearm, with its thick stock and big bell-mouthed barrel. "Use un for firin' rockets, Billy, if we be 'ad by a bloomin' mine!"

"'Tis the gun that saved gran'father and the *Rose o' Kent* a hundred years ago," Will'm replied. "The skipper ain't that fond of un, though. It do scatter shot!"

"I believe you, sonny," snapped the deckhand, jumping from his bunk, and dashing out on deck; "an' don't you point un at me for goodness' sake. Put un away, Will'm, put un away in one o' the bunkers. I ain't a-goin' to turn in 'longside o' that *Look-at-me-an'-I-go-off*. Stow un away, Billy, or I'll raise the Bridge on ye, an' your dad'll make ye smart!"

So then Will'm, breathing with gusty indignation and wrath, reluctantly withdrew below to the port bunker, where, as it opened direct into the fire-room, the fireman of the watch by means of his smoky flare was soon to see him lying sound asleep on the coals, with his weapon alongside him.



"MAY I SHOOT, TOO?" SHOUTED WILL'M.

[Drawn by SAVILE LUMLEY.

As the patrol craft surged along her beat it was felt by all that life was full of great possibilities that night. On deck the skipper, the mate, and the deckhand on watch kept their eyes strained on the dark waters ahead, astern and all around.

"Us'll go sky-high in less than a jiffy, if she do bump a mine, my sons," were the skipper's warning words.

When, however, Will'm came on duty again at four o'clock in

the morning he found the *Polly Ann* had had to anchor while her engineer wrestled with an erring eccentric-strap of her compound engines. The moon was now shining brightly, and under the rising wind the sea had grown choppy, the inshore current running strong as the tide ebbed.

Uneasily the patrol-boat plunged and rolled, dragging her anchor a little as if she scented coming danger.

With a grunt of despair at their situation, Will'm dropped through the narrow stokehold hatchway, and, "devil" in hand, proceeded to clear his four furnace fires of clinker. It was just then the third hand, keeping lookout forward, shouted desperately.

The skipper leant out over the bridge rail and stared madly.

The mate grabbed hold of the rifle kept near by in the wheelhouse, and swinging himself over the weathercloths gained the deck and hurried forward.

"There! There!" the lookout yelled to him, pointing over the bows.

Black in the moonlight, and bristling with detonators, a huge globular thing was heaving ominously nearer, carried onward by the tide-rip.

"Shoot, Dan," the skipper roared down, "shoot an' hit her, or she'll bust us for dead sartin."

The mate, excited and trembling, took careful aim, and began firing with his magazine rifle. But he found the sinister object bobbing among the hillocky waters was no easy thing on which to lay his "sights" as the vessel lurched and heaved under foot.

"Dog-on't, can't ye hit her?" roared the skipper from the little bridge, as he clutched hold of the second rifle; "I'll have a try. Lay aft, lads, and get the boat into the water 'fore the bump comes."

He also began firing.

Yet still the dome of death, carelessly lolling and dipping, drifted nearer, coming down inevitably on the *Polly Ann's* port bow.

Every man felt that her doom was sealed.

Will'm, standing half in and half out of the stokehold hatchway, watched as if fascinated by the catastrophe and death at hand. Suddenly he dropped down the short steel ladder, then some seconds later jumped out on deck, and darted to the port rail.

"May I shoot, too?" he shouted, levelling his blunderbuss.

"Ay, sure. You, too," the skipper cried in disgust; "better ye throw bits o' coal at un, Will'm! . . . Smartly with the boat, boys, and we'll get off in time."

That second there rang a dreadful bang, and, to the mighty kick of the ancient weapon, Billy found the deck with the back of his head.

But the gun had done its work. Brighter than any of the stars flashing into his eyes was the flash that lit up the sea. A geyser of brown smoke and seething water leapt up seventy feet high, and fell back over the wildly tossing patrol.

"Well, I'm blowed," the skipper exclaimed, finding his feet again, and wiping the water off his face, "if Will'm hasn't hit it—hit it right properly, too, with his little ol' gun. Whewoo! A close call, lads, but all in the night's work."

"Cheero, dad," cried Bill, now triumphant, as he rubbed the back of his head, "that's a bit of 'summat good' done, as mother said. Didn't I tell ye ye'd feel safer with me aboard the *Polly Ann?*"

"Ah, ye've saved the ship wi' gran'father's little ol' gun," replied Captain Liddiard gravely. "I'll own up to it—it's your triumph over them Garmans, and none o' ours. A proper Navy chap you be, Will'm, my son!"



HUNGRY CROCODILE: "HAPPY TO MEET YOU, SIR. I FELT SURE IT WAS GETTING NEAR DINNER-TIME."

SOME HISTORICAL POSTAGE STAMPS.

By Thos. H. Hinton.



FEW readers of this Annual need to be told what a fascinating hobby Stamp Collecting is, and how easily that hobby can be run. In previous volumes the reader has been provided with ample and detailed information on the stamps of the various countries of the world. In this article I only intend to treat of a few that have become historical.

We begin with the portrait of Sir Rowland Hill, reproduced in the commemoration card of 1890. He was the founder of penny postage, and the issue of the penny black stamp in 1840 laid the foundation of our hobby. This stamp was also prepared for official use with the letters V.R. in the top corners, but was never put into circulation.

Next we have the penny red in a variety of types, and perforated and imperforate, in use from 1871 to 1880, in which year (1880) it was overprinted for use in the Island of Cyprus, on our taking over the government as one of the results of the Treaty of Berlin.

The Ionian Islands stamps, issued in 1855, remind us of their cession to Greece in 1864. Heligoland came into the possession of Great Britain in 1807, stamps being issued in 1867, and continued in use until 1890, when the island was ceded to Germany in exchange for certain concessions in Africa.

Transvaal stamps form a most interesting historical set, commencing with the stamps of the first Republic, issued in 1869, which remained in use in a variety of printings until the first British occupation in 1877. They were then surcharged V.R. Transvaal in many varieties of type, and were followed by the Queen's head issue in 1878. Some of these were surcharged for use by the second Republic in 1882, and the old type of 1869 was again reissued, followed by the permanent type of 1885, which, including many surcharged provisionals, continued in use until 1894, when a new type appeared, first with the wagon incorrectly drawn with shafts, which was soon corrected to a wagon with pole.

Stamps of this issue found in stock on the British occupation in 1900 were surcharged V.R.I. Some few values of this type were issued in 1901, surcharged E.R.I., and these gave place in 1902 to the issue bearing the portrait of King Edward VII.

Then, of course, there are the stamps issued by the various Chartered Companies who undertook the government of vast new territories in South Africa and elsewhere until the Imperial Government was ready and willing to relieve them of that responsibility.

Turning to the stamps of France, we commence with the Republic of 1848, which first issued stamps in 1849. The 1852 issue marks the rising fortunes of President Napoleon, speedily followed by the Coup d'Etat and Empire issues. The laureated head issue, 1863-70, marks the zenith of his power; then comes the war with Germany, his downfall, a Republic once more, and the temporary employment of the 1848 type of Head of Liberty roughly lithographed. As the country gets settled down after the war the engraved stamps of the same type are issued. By 1876 there has been time to consider fresh designs, and the familiar clock face or Arts of Peace type appear, followed by the present-day issue.

The 1866 issue of Mexico, bearing the portrait of the unfortunate Emperor Maximilian, gives us the sad story of his abandonment by France in the hour of his need, whilst the military issue of Germany in 1870 for the provinces and departments of France in their occupation tells the story of the war, and their victorious march on Paris.

Crossing the frontier to Spain, we take as our starting point the abdication and flight of Queen Isabella in 1868, the stamps then current being surcharged in various types "for the use of the nation" ("Habilitado por la nacion"). In 1870 we have the republican issue of Head of Liberty.

However, the various factions could not agree very long, and the majority thought they would again try a Monarchy, so in 1872 we have the portrait of Prince Amadeus of Italy as King. But the Spaniard likes not the foreigner, and in 1873-74 we again have stamps of the Republic. In 1875 these are again succeeded by a Monarchy—King Alphonso XII. having come to the throne.

During this unsettled time the Carlists were vainly endeavouring to come into power. They issued stamps in certain provinces where they were in the ascendant. From 1875 Spain has been a Monarchy, though a troubled one, and we conclude our brief description of some of her stamps, merely noting the War tax and her last issue for Colonies lost during her war with the United States in 1890.

We will now finish this short sketch with a glance at a few interesting issues of our cousins who belong to the vast and growing Republic across the sea, the United States. Benjamin Franklin (born 1706, died 1790), printer, diplomatist, man of letters, and postmaster in the Colonial days, was one of the founders of his country's greatness.

Next to Franklin are George Washington, the Father of his Country, and his wife Martha. Here, too, we have Honest Abe Lincoln, whose words and actions have been alluded to so frequently on both sides of the Atlantic since the outbreak of the present Great War as an example of wise, courageous statesmanship in a time of national crisis. Next we have Jefferson Davis, his great adver-

sary and leader of the Southern Confederacy, who lived to a green old age and lived, too, to see the North and South once more united after the long and bitter conflict they had passed through.

I need hardly add a mention of the War stamps which are figuring so prominently now in the shop windows of the postage-stamp dealers. Every boy collector will be keen to secure as many of them as he can, although the prices of many are inflated beyond the reach of most junior philatelists. But, in a sense, all the present-day stamps of those Powers whose armies and fleets have taken part in this War may be called Historical Stamps, or will be regarded as such by boys of the next generation. T.



CAUGHT IN THE BLIZZARD.

A TRAPPER'S TALE FROM THE GREAT NORTH-WEST.

"DON'T worry if you don't see me again for three months." Uncle Horace said to us one morning, when he went out from breakfast.

Milly and I had noticed for some time that he was growing restless. We knew the symptoms. He had been with us at our new mill in the Peace River country for nearly two years, and that was a good while for Uncle Horace to stay in one place.

He did not tell us where he was going; he simply went. But about a week before, he had been talking about hunting musk-ox on the Barren Ground, and having winter coats for all of us made of musk-ox skins; and he had spread the maps out on the shack table, measuring off the distances from Great Slave Lake up to Clinton Golden Lake and the Barren Ground.

That afternoon, as we learned later, he made his appearance at the Mastermans', and stayed overnight with Quinby and Welcome. He did not tell them where he was bound for; but he had talked about musk-ox there, too, and the next forenoon he took the fur company's little steamer down the Peace River, bound for Fort Vermilion. So we had little doubt that he was heading for the Barren Ground up in the far north.

July passed, and August, then September, and then October and November; and it was nearly Christmas, with not one word from Uncle Horace. We really began to be alarmed about him.

But one dreadfully cold afternoon in late December we heard a jingling outside the shack door, and Milly, who was sitting by the window, gave a little scream of delight. "Uncle Horace has come," she cried, "with a sled and three dogs! And oh, he looks like Santa Claus!"

He was wrapped in furs from top to toe, and had a big pack of skins on his sled.

But when we got him indoors and unwrapped him, he looked terribly the worse for wear. For he was without two fingers of his left hand, and the end of his thumb; he had lost a toe, a piece off the side of his nose, and the top rim of his right ear!

"Goodness me, Uncle Horace!" Milly exclaimed, after his fur hood was off and we had looked him over. "You look as if the white bears had been making a meal off you!"

Uncle Horace laughed and laughed again. He was in a jolly mood now, glad enough to get home.

Yes, he had been up to the Barren Ground, in company with a Scotsman named McCune and a half-breed hunter they called Michel; and he had a lovely brown prime musk-ox hide, to make a winter coat for Milly. They went fifty miles north of Clinton Golden Lake, and in October they fell in with *la foule*.

And what was la foule? La foule? Why, the greatest sight to be seen on the face of this earth to-day! Not even Africa could show anything like la foule in the way of game.

Uncle Horace talked steadily. The following is but one of a number of the adventures he told us.

McCune, too, had gone up there to hunt musk-ox. From what Uncle Horace said of him we gathered that he was a manly young fellow, but quite without practical knowledge of the country.

At Fort Resolution they bought a large canoe, and ascended Lockhart's River, passing from Great Slave Lake up into Clinton Golden Lake; from there

they journeyed to the Barren Ground.

As far north as Aylmer, Mackay and Clinton Golden Lakes there is forest—willow, birch and poplar scrub, with considerable stunted pine. But north of these lakes the timber soon dies out, and one enters a vast stretch of flat country, extending for three or four hundred miles to the Arctic Ocean. This is the Barren Ground. Little grows here save moss and mosquitoes. But the moss is the natural food of the caribou and the musk-ox. Of the musk-oxen they saw but few, and shot only four in all.

Of caribou, however, there was an enormous number. In the early part of the summer the caribou migrate far north on the Barren Ground, where their young are produced. During July and August they are found scattered over this entire vast region in little squads and herds of from five to twenty. But in September and October they gather in larger herds, collecting from all quarters, over thousands of square miles, banding in one vast drove, getting ready, as winter approaches, for their southward migration to the forests below the timber-line.

Then the migration begins, thousands on thousands of deer moving slowly down the country day after day, swimming the rivers and smaller lakes, overrunning everything in their course, even the camps of hunters. This is la foule.

Uncle Horace asserts with the greatest confidence that he saw at least fifty thousand caribou in one migration.

Following this enormous throng, chasing, yelping and worrying deer along the flanks and outskirts of the herd, were scores of wolves, lynxes, wolverenes and foxes.

This vast cavalcade of wild life was three days in passing; then Uncle Horace and McCune broke camp and followed la foule southward.

It seemed to them that all the caribou in North America must have passed by! But there was another great herd from still farther north coming on behind, with which they were fated to have a curious experience—one which I will relate, as well as I can recall it, in Uncle Horace's own words:

"That big herd was moving about eight miles a day, mossing as it went on. Just a little snow had come, two or three inches. Ice formed at night, but it was not very cold; and we followed with our sled, shooting what venison we wanted, and knocking over a wolf or a lynx now and then. The caribou were fat.

"At a distance we saw smoke, where parties of 'Yellow Knife' Indians were hunting and curing meat, and putting up fat in skins for winter use. La foule is the main dependence of all these northern Indians, as well as the Barren Ground Huskies. Hundreds of deer were slaughtered every day, either by Indians or wolves. But still the great herd drifted on without seeming to pay much attention to its enemies. They would shy off a little when we fired among them, but it did not make much impression on the herd. They moved on just the same.

"We followed them eight days, till the 19th of October. Up to that time the weather had not been cold enough to be very uncomfortable. But that last day, October 19th, there was a decided change. The sky looked different, too; it was exactly the colour of sheet lead all over, with the low-running sun hardly showing its face. Toward noon we began to notice little icy particles, like dust, floating in the air.

"Michel grew alarmed. A *'pouderie'* was coming, he said, for that is the name for a blizzard among the half-breeds. He declared that we must start for the timber at once and travel as fast as we could, so as to reach shelter in the woods before the gale struck.

"The dogs—we had nine—knew what was coming; they barked and howled, and as soon as they were hitched up to the sled they struck out on the run. We found, too, that la foule knew it. The whole vast herd set off on the canter that day. Hitherto they had strolled slowly along, mossing as they went. Now they were going five or six miles an hour, and travelled away from us, making for the timber as fast as they could.

"We had gone about twenty miles, I think, when the *pouderie* overtook us—a raging gale, with fine-driven snow so thick you could not see ten yards in any direction, and so perishing cold that the very marrow in one's bones seemed to shiver!

"The only thing to do was to camp and rig some sort of shelter as quickly as we could. McCune had never seen anything like this before; he was frightened. We had got down among birch copse already, with here and there clumps of willows round the frozen ponds, and soon we came to a few stunted pines on the south side of some low, rocky hills. Here we determined to camp and try to weather the blizzard.

"At first I attempted to cut fuel and pitch our tent, but had to give that up, the wind blew so hard and the snow was so thick. It was so cold, too, that we found we were freezing. But shelter we must have, and what we did there in that gale was to rig a sort of low shed of pine poles on the lee side of some rocks three or four feet high. On these poles we spread the tent and threw on pine boughs, with more poles and stones to hold it down. All the while we were nearly freezing, and we crept under as quickly as we could. It was not more than three feet high. The dogs, too, were crazy to get under. They crawled in, all whining at once.

"The gale increased, and it grew even colder. That fine snow drove and sifted in at every chink. We took the hides off the sled and made a second shelter over our bodies, inside and beneath the tent and boughs.

"In that confined space it was quite impossible to kindle a fire, make tea or cook food. We lay there, shivering under those hides, as snug as we could get to each other, and tried to keep from freezing.

"By three o'clock it came on dark, and grew colder still. McCune now quite lost his self-possession. 'I'm freezing!' he cried. 'I'm freezing stiff! My blood's turning to ice!' And then he would crowd frantically under me, trying to get into my warm spot. He was wild with fear. I couldn't keep him from rolling me over and getting in my

place under the skins; and that let the fine snow down on us, for we were now drifted completely over.

"Nothing that Michel or I could say would quiet McCune. He was quite crazy—from the extreme cold, perhaps. After every few minutes he could begin a frantic struggle to get into a warmer spot under us. The dogs, too, were constantly trying to crawl in under the hides beside us. But for the dogs and McCune's foolishness, we should have got on better by lying still and keeping our warmth.

"Nor was that the worst of our plight. As night advanced, we began to hear the peculiar grunting of caribou and the clatter of their feet. Even above the howling of the blizzard we could hear the strange coughing sound those deer make. For a time we thought that the great herd had turned back—lost in the storm, perhaps. But soon we found that the deer were all coming from the north, drifting before the gale, and we concluded it was another herd, a belated one, behind the first, which had gone on southward.

"Judging from the sounds, they were in no great numbers at first; but the clatter and grunting swelled in volume, till even the howling gusts were drowned in it. That night, too, these deer made another sound, half-way between a bleat and a moan—a strange kind of note that rose and fell like the moaning of the sea. The poor creatures were suffering terribly, perishing as they tried to push on to the timbered region for shelter. It was a truly dreadful sound to hear, it betokened such real misery.

"Before very long, too, we had our own share in it. A stray deer came stumbling over the low rocks, and fell headlong upon our shelter, over which he shuffled violently. The poles were hardly sufficient to support the animal's weight; tent, boughs and snow came down on us, the dogs barking and howling. Then, indeed, we were in a bad way.

"The deer, however, soon cleared himself and made off. Raising on hands and knees, we then tried to lift the shelter off our bodies. But this let in the cold air and snow. Soon, too, another caribou came tumbling over the rocks, then sprawled and scrambled over us. Its great foot-pads were thrust down between the poles, fetching snow with them; and this was but the beginning of our troubles there. More than twenty deer floundered over us. We would no sooner hoist up and free ourselves a bit from the pressure of the snowy mass than another deer would come scuffling over our heads.

"Hundreds, probably thousands, of caribou were passing, and after every few minutes one or more of the poor, bewildered creatures would fall foul of us and make a lively scramble over our heads. What little warmth we had under the hides only went to melt the snow that slid down. Oh, but we did have a wretched time of it, the worst night I ever passed in all my life! It was from reaching up in the snow, trying to lift the poles and tent, that I froze my fingers. I have no doubt that a thermometer would have shown it to be forty degrees below zero. One breath of that gale would freeze the flesh on your face or hands.

"Yet what were our sufferings compared with those of that great herd of deer, drifting before the gale all through that inclement night! We got some idea of it when at last daylight came, and the wind died down so that we could put our heads out and look round. And I tell you, it was a sad sight! There they lay, hundreds of those deer, for miles around, half-buried in snow, frozen stiff and dead. No wonder they moaned and groaned. I shall never forget that sound—that dumb appeal for pity where there was no pity for them.

"Only the hardiest and most vigorous of this belated herd survived the *pouderie*. We could still see a few floundering on through the snow to southward of us. These probably reached the woods, where they could browse and find shelter."

The weather continued bitterly cold, but the gale had ceased. By noon that day they were able to hitch up their dogs again, and before night they had the good fortune to fall in with an encampment of Yellow Knives in the pine woods, north-west of Mackay Lake. These Indians were on their way south to the trading post; and from this point down to Fort Resolution our musk-ox hunters journeyed with them.

Uncle Horace had had quite enough of the Barren Ground; yet by another spring, I dare say, the restless fit will be on him again.

W. Woodbridge.

SOME CURIOSITIES OF CATALOGUING.

WE have all heard of the country bookseller who bracketed in his catalogue one of the works of John Stuart Mill and a familiar novel of George Eliot, thus:—

Mill On Liberty
" On the Floss.

The *Publishers' Circular* once gave some further cases. "King Solomon's Mines," by Rider Haggard, has been included among books on Old Testament history, whilst "Albert N'Yanza," by Sir S. Baker, figured as a work of biography, and "Moths," by Ouida, as a book on entomology.

Where the scribe is ignorant he is pretty sure to run into some delightful blunders. For example, words with similar spellings may easily prove a pitfall, if knowledge be slight. Here is a case in point; it is surely hard to beat:

Lead Poisoning
" Kindly Light
" Metallurgy.

Sometimes it is mere muddle. The writer remembers hearing how an inquiry from Mr. Gladstone for a History of Corfu resulted in his having sent to him Doran's "History of Court Fools."

At other times it is the illiterate customer, as in the case of the man who ordered Kipling's "Tea-Pot Metal Ditties" for "Departmental Ditties," and another who wrote down "Dan Leno's Hymn Book" for "Dan Leno, Hys Booke."

ELEPHANT CATCHING IN SIAM.

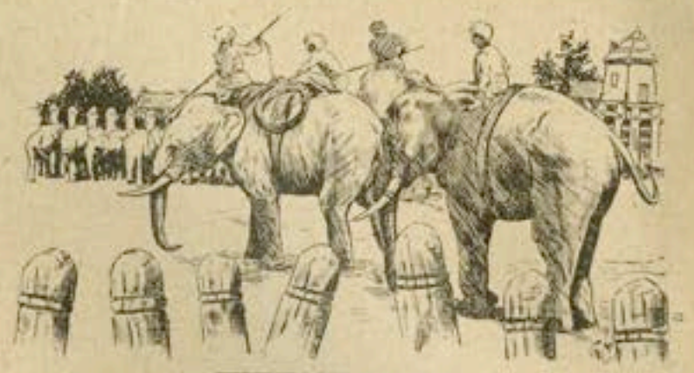
Written and Illustrated by E. C. MANSELL.

THE usual fate of wild elephants is to be shot—sometimes for ivory, more often for sport. In Siam, however, they manage things better. Yet the Siamese get both their sport and their ivory by letting the animals die a natural death, while at the same time they put the enormous strength of the great beast to a useful purpose.

The elephant kraal (the Siamese term is paneat) at Ayuthia twice a year is a spectacle to be witnessed nowhere else in the world. Travellers desirous of seeing this wonderful sight should be in Bangkok late in April, for the last drive of the season takes place in the late weeks of that month or the first week in May.

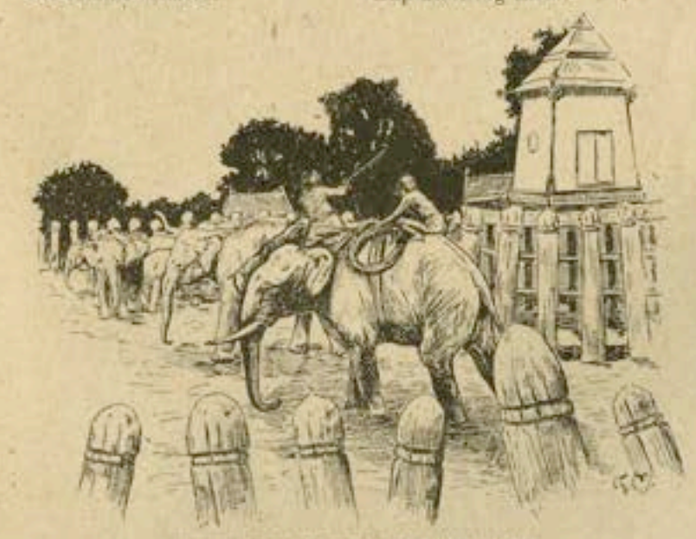
Keddah operations, as they are termed in India, commence when the first rains of the season have fallen. The herds are collected for a specified day under orders from the Elephant Department in Bangkok.

The servants of the department spread themselves over the vast stretch of delta land from the Menam to the Bangpakong River, and almost from Bangkok to the Korat foot hills, a distance of about thirty miles by fifty, and begin to bring the herds towards one common centre.



ENTERING THE STOCKADE.

On the day appointed for driving them into the paneat the herd will number about 200 animals. Ayuthia, the centre of operations, is an ancient capital of Siam. Here assemble thousands of spectators, many Europeans as well as all the inhabitants. Everyone is in a great state of excitement and expectancy. About two miles away is a belt of bamboo bushes, out of which a solitary elephant, an enormous tusker, mounted by two men, slowly emerges. He is the decoy, and he quietly leads the whole herd, which is following but a short distance behind, into the trap awaiting them.



WITHIN THE STOCKADE OF TEAK POSTS.

Soon the bushes seem alive with elephants as they splash their way along. Several of them are mounted by men with long spears: these form a guard to prevent the herd from breaking back.

Down the river bank slides this black avalanche. How the animals enjoy the cool water after their long, hot journey! On goes their decoy-leader up the opposite bank. Some hesitation is shown by the front rank to leave the water, but, yielding to the pressure behind from those anxious to get away from the armed natives, the whole herd follows.

Slowly and carefully the mounted animals press the herd on towards the trap of great teak posts which forms a large square inclosure. Through an open gateway to the right the decoy leads into a second inclosure, which narrows to an exit of about 9 feet in width. Once the guard elephants are within this inclosure the gate is closed.

The paneat is surrounded by a wall 12 feet thick and 10 feet high. In the wall is an opening 9 feet wide, and there is no alternative for the herd but to go on. Pushing, squeezing, roaring and bellowing, urged on by spears from the sides, they eventually go through. All sizes of elephants, from full-grown ones down to calves no bigger than a retriever dog. Once through this passage the herd finds itself in a huge

stockade of teak posts with a curious wooden tower in its centre, from which the master of ceremonies directs operations.

The first day's work is now done, and the terrified animals are fed with tender branches of bamboo, and left for the night. The huge tusker that decoyed the herd has previously made his exit through the wicket-gate.

The following day is given up to noosing the animals which have been picked out as suitable ones, and of taking them to the stables. The sport is not all over yet, as there are usually some very exciting times while the captives are being ignominiously dragged off to the royal elephant stables. There they are kept for about three years, for it takes about that time to train an elephant to perfect docility.

The sun having now become very hot, the herd is allowed to pass down to the river to take a bath, and shortly before sunset are driven again into the paneat, there to pass the night, awaiting a day similar to the one just passed before being again escorted out to the open plains and left at liberty for another twelve months.

The elephants that are retained are chiefly used upon Government work, while others are employed to move timber in the extensive teak forests of Northern Siam and Burma.

ON A WATERLESS SHIP.

A NAVY STORY OF SEVENTY YEARS AGO.

ONLY those who have gone through the dreadful experience can realise what it means to suffer the torments of thirst on a waterless ship in mid-ocean. But a good many writers, in prose and verse, have attempted to depict such a situation. Best known of all these attempts is, of course, the famous passage in Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," in which he describes the doomed mediæval ship lying idle on the tropic sea:—

> "Water, water, everywhere,
> And all the boards did shrink:
> Water, water everywhere,
> Nor any drop to drink!"

It frequently happened so in the old, old days. For the ship's supply was kept in water casks, which were apt to leak or get stayed in during rough weather. Moreover, a vessel was then dependent on winds and tides, and could not, as nowadays, rush under steam from one port of call to another, renewing her supplies of food and water.

Even as late as the sixteenth and seventeenth century our ships were none too well equipped for being long absent from a friendly port. Comforts and safeguards were few, and scientific appliances were poor and primitive, though we learn that in the year 1593 Elizabeth's great admiral, Sir Richard Hawking, known as "the complete seaman," had a distilling apparatus on board his ship, and found the water so distilled to be "wholesome and nourishing."

Strange as it may seem, our sailors, even in the middle of the nineteenth century, seldom had such a standby, and often suffered through the lack of it. A former midshipman in the British Navy recalls, in an article in *Macmillan's Magazine*, the suffering endured during a cruise of H.M.S. *Xenophon* in the South Seas some seventy years ago.

"For sixteen days," he says, "we remained becalmed within sight of land, drifting to and fro, crossing and recrossing the equator with wearying iteration. The sun stared vertically at us from a steel-blue sky, and even under the double awnings the pitch ran liquid from the seams, so that it clogged our feet as we walked the deck.

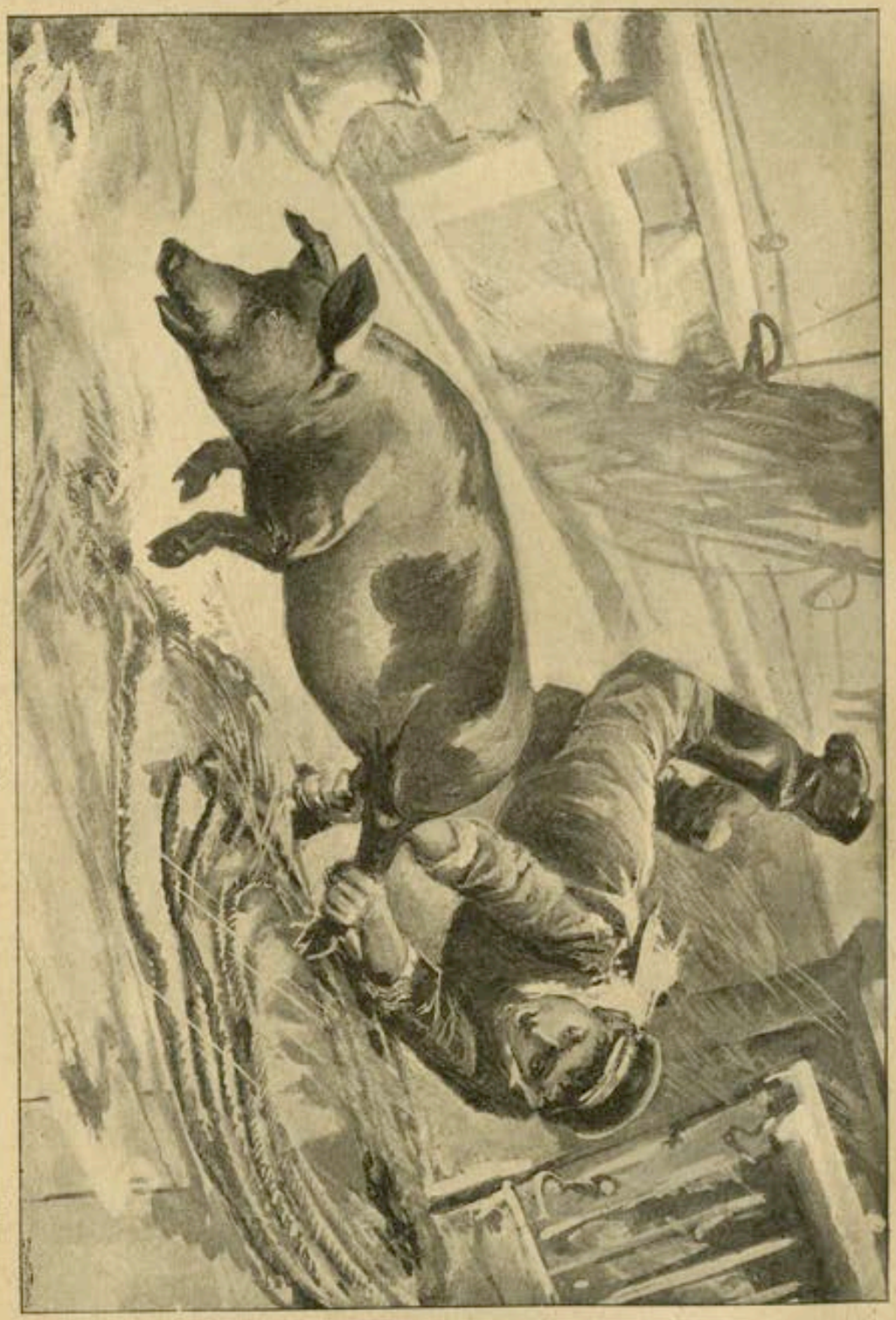
"In the midst of these surroundings the order was given to reduce the allowance of drinking water to one pint per day for each officer and man.

"This meagre allowance was served out in one issue at noon during the men's dinner hour. The meal consisted of salt junk, which had been so long in brine and was so hard that it would take a handsome polish in skilful hands, or of pork that shrivelled in the boiling to little more than hard rind. Of course the result of such a diet was that when dinner was over not a drop of water remained to the poor fellows for the next twenty-four hours of burning heat. The few who tried to save some found it impossible, for they had no place in which to secure it from their improvident shipmates.

"In this strait the men fell back on vinegar, of which each mess had a liberal allowance, but in their raging thirst they were not satisfied merely to moisten their mouths with the strong acid; they mixed it with salt water and drank it in large quantities, and the terrible effect may be imagined. The men were fairly knocked over by this horrible mixture, and rolled in agonies in the forecastle.

"At last, on May 20th, we sighted the anchorage of San Blas, and the order was immediately given to serve out a gallon of water to each man.

"Discipline was forgotten in the wildest, most joyful confusion as it was issued. And so, ninety-three days after leaving Callao, our privations came to an end. For the last seventy-seven days of our voyage we had averaged a speed of just one mile an hour, a record for slowness which I scarcely think the annals of sea life could beat."



TOO PRECIOUS TO LOSE.

W. W. Denslow.



By F. L. MORGAN,

Author of "The Lost Medal," "Against Heavy Odds," "The Big House in the Wood," etc.

CHAPTER IV.—*A SENIOR FROM REDLANDS.*

THE coast at Storr Cross was broken into a series of small rock-bound bays, overlooked by high cliffs. From the top of these a gentle grassy slope led down to Storr Cross village, with its cluster of tiny white cottages thatched with brown, and its small square-built church.

Storr Cross School, old, grey and rambling, was about half a mile inland from the village, and for a couple of centuries had flourished in a peaceful fashion, taking life calmly on the whole, but keeping brightly burnished its established reputation, second to none in the south-west of England, both in the tortuous paths of learning and in all manner of sport and physical contest.

When, some ten or twelve years before this story opens, there appeared on the top of a neighbouring hill a great modern, red-brick building intended for a sanatorium, Storr Cross School was distinctly annoyed. It had been monarch of all it surveyed for so long that it strongly resented the intrusion. But when, owing to change of plans and ownership, the said new building resolved itself into an educational establishment for boys, the feelings of Storr Cross, ancient and classical, had better be left to the imagination of the reader.

But Redlands College, while lacking the dignity of age and experience, was decidedly efficient in what it set out to accomplish. From its glaring red-brick buildings to its prospectus, which made a special feature of the fact that boys were trained for business and commercial life, Redlands stood for everything that was modern, up-to-date and strictly practical. And though it hustled, it hustled methodically and to some purpose, taking its sport as it took its commercial education—that is to say, with strenuous earnestness. The result was that Storr Cross for almost the first time in centuries was laid low in the field on more than one occasion by an unknown upstart school.

Storr Cross felt the humiliation deeply, and henceforth Redlands, blatantly visible from every west window of the older school, became a thorn in their flesh of quite serious proportions. To beat Redlands in the field thoroughly and *always* had become an exceedingly important item in the mental fixtures of Storr Cross sportsmen, far more important than they would have dreamed of admitting to one another, for Storr Cross was proud with the pride of ages.

"We only just licked 'em last cricket season," said Macmillan casually, sticking down the envelope that contained the usual arrangements for two matches with Redlands College.

"And we lost one to them at footer, last term," supplemented Lynwood, who himself captained the first fifteen. "We shouldn't have done so if Courtier hadn't had such filthy luck in getting crocked at the start."

"The Reds were quite sporting over it," said Macmillan.

"Yes, dear old lad, they were. But I would suggest we do them down thoroughly well this summer. We don't want to establish any precedent on the share and share alike basis with Redlands. The 'halves partner' attitude has its limitations, I take it, and——"

"Yap-yap-yap!" interrupted the cricket captain, with scant politeness. "Coming up to the nets?"

Lynwood rose to his feet and put on his cap. "Let us go first to the post with your challenge," he suggested; "and then to the village to order in some stores, after which a wee drappie at the usual tavern would not be a bad idea, for ever since the Old Man's exceedingly dry peroration on our Greek history I've been possessed of a consuming thirst."

The place styled by Lynwood as "the usual tavern" was a small, low-pitched, double-fronted shop in the straggling little street that ran through the centre of the village. One window was devoted to a display of cakes and sweetstuffs, the other side having the appearance of a dairy with eggs and butter. Devonshire cream was represented by a large ticket which informed those interested that you could send it by post from there. Inside were a number of small tables, and at one of these a large freckle-faced youth, with red hair and honest blue eyes, was seated eating an ice-cream with obvious relish.

The two Storr Cross seniors, with one brief glance in his direction, took possession of a table near the door and ordered two home-made lemonades.

The red-headed one got up to pay for his ice, and, with recognition in his honest eyes, turned to the two seniors.

"Hallo, Lynwood!" he said civilly.

Lynwood looked up in surprise, cold aloofness in face and voice. "I beg your pardon? Do we know this chap, Macmillan?"

"Well, you ought to!" replied the first speaker with a quick change of tone, and flushing red. "We licked you on your own ground last term!"

"Oh, then you're from Redlands—I thought so! Can't mistake the breed, Mac!" said Lynwood coolly, turning his back.

The man from Redlands, fury in every line of his face, had perforce to swallow the insult and his rage and take his change from the outstretched hand of Mrs. Bell, the owner of the shop. And when he turned again Lynwood and Macmillan were engaged in conversation of a lively nature, and had apparently forgotten his existence. With a tightly set mouth and a dangerous glitter in his eyes, he of the freckles strode out of the shop and quickly away.

Macmillan, whose heart was where his body longed to be, took his drink in two gulps. "Come on, man," he said, "don't let's get late."

"I'm not going to choke myself, dear old boy, even for you," replied Lynwood. "Besides, I want one of those buns."

"Great Cæsar!" exclaimed Macmillan, reaching over to the little counter for one of the buns in question. "Why the dickens can't you feed yourself at the proper times? Here you are—now then, eat up!"

Lynwood despatched the bun in record time, and as the two walked up the street at a quick pace Macmillan remarked, "I bet Jennison doesn't come to Mother Bell's again in a hurry!"

"I hope not," replied Lynwood. "But I dare say Redlands' hide is too thick to feel a snub of ordinary proportions."

Macmillan grinned at the remembrance. Ever slow of speech himself, he had a deep and honest admiration for Lynwood's quick wits and ready tongue, an admiration that never appeared on the surface, however.

Just at the entrance to the field the two fellows were met by Burt and Morton, also of the sixth form, and both members of the first eleven.

"I say, Lynwood, what's it all about?" said Morton, as the four joined forces and crossed the field together. "Uncle Saville has been in, and he and our Old Man have been chin-wagging no end, with the result that the Old Man has called a Big School directly after supper. According to rumour, Saville is going to give us a sermon."

"In which case it would seem more fitting if we foregathered in the chapel," suggested Burt.

"Uncle Saville is a very nice old gentleman," said Lynwood, "but the Christian charity and brotherly love with which he is abundantly filled oozes out of him in the wrong places, and makes him unattractive. But I would forgive him all if only he would cease his efforts to bring us and Redlands together in unity and fellowship——"

"Saville's all right," interposed Macmillan. "He's very decent to Storr Cross. He's practically thrown open his house and grounds to us."

"Yes, *and* to the unspeakable Reds!" said Lynwood. "Consequently none of us care to go there. Of course, I know the juniors are taken in batches to see the stuffed menagerie and to pore over the cases of birds' eggs and sea-shells in the museum, ending up with tea with the monkey——"

"Oh, shut up, Lyn—don't be so beastly sarcastic!" said Macmillan, amidst the laughter of the others. "Come and sweat some of your cleverness out of you at the nets!"

CHAPTER V.—*LYNWOOD SECUNDUS ASSERTS HIMSELF.*

"OH, I do feel sick!" murmured Bates of the lower fourth as Big School trooped out of the Lecture Hall that evening.

"Do you?" said Lynwood Secundus, with ready sympathy. "How's that, then?"

"Well, don't *you?*" was the somewhat ambiguous response.

"No," replied the new junior, "I'm all right."

Bates turned his head with a slightly contemptuous expression. "Chalmers," said he, over his shoulder, "do you feel sick?"

"Yes, rather!" replied Chalmers heartily, though his healthy countenance belied it. "I should think we all do!"

"Lynwood Secundus doesn't!" said Bates significantly.

Whereupon Christopher realised that the sickness alluded to was a mental disorder, apparently brought on by the preceding half-hour in the Lecture Hall, and that he himself, by not experiencing it in common with his fellows, had placed himself still further beyond the pale of their good-fellowship. So far Lynwood Secundus had not succeeded in penetrating into the good graces of Storr Cross juniors, who, mistaking his reserve for timidity, failed to understand him.

For his part the new boy felt himself getting on, but it was rather uphill work. Take, for instance, this evening. Christopher had been quite eagerly interested in the whole proceedings. Mr. Saville was a tall, sallow man, with thin white hair, restless eyes and a nervous manner. In his remarks he made frequent appeals to the good feelings and better natures of his hearers. In fact, so plaintive did he become at times that on one occasion the great Lynwood whispered to Macmillan, "I shall sob aloud, Mac, if this continues!"

However, it was not a very long speech, and the gist of it was made perfectly plain. Mr. Saville desired to inaugurate a competition and to declare his generous decision to present a valuable prize to the boy who, by

a certain date, had made the best collection of a useful, instructive or ornamental nature. Any boy was free to choose for himself his subject, the only condition being that it must be a bonâ-fide collection made by himself. Neatness and suitability of arrangement would be taken into account when deciding the award.

The competition—and here could have been distinctly heard a smothered groan from somewhere in the vicinity of the sixth form—the competition, declared Mr. Saville, was open to all boys under sixteen years of age belonging either to Storr Cross or to Redlands College, and had the approval and support of both head masters.

In B2 dormitory adverse criticism and a lively contempt were freely poured upon the idea of the competition, enough, one would think, to drown any spark of interest it might have aroused.

"Did you hear?" said Bates, bending his back and twisting his fingers in very fair imitation of Mr. Saville. "Boys' natural instinct for collecting should not be allowed to waste itself in senseless whim, but should be directed into useful and instructive channels."

"Yes," answered Chalmers, as he carried out his invariable custom of folding each garment neatly on the chair by his bedside, "I tried not to listen, but it was so funny I had to!"

"Tram tickets," went on Bates, still in the Saville manner, and to a hushed and appreciative dormitory, "*and* the travesties of art misnamed pictures that one discovers in packets of cigarettes are of no real value either as mental exercise during the period of collection, or—my golly, does the old blighter think we collect tram tickets?"

A roar of indignation came from the attentive juniors, all the louder from the fact that most of them had faint but none the less convincing memories of having, each one in his day, been ardent collectors of the harmless 'bus or tram ticket.

"The only decent thing about it is the prize," said young Bolingbroke as he jumped into bed, having first, as his invariable custom was, scattered broadcast the garments of Chalmers, which had been so neatly folded.

"Yes, the prize is good enough," agreed Bates. "That's right, Chalmers, give him snuff!"

Chalmers, having sat on Bolingbroke and pummeled him violently, again collected his garments and arranged them as before.

"Prizes are generally awful rot," went on Bates. "But to choose anything—ab-so-lute-ly any mortal thing we like up to five quid—my hat, some prize! If I get it, I shall have a folding camera and stand!"

Christopher Lynwood, who had innocently believed that the competition was far too unpopular for anyone at Storr Cross to enter for it, couldn't contain his surprise at this point.

"What, are you going in for it, after all, then?" he asked.

"Well, I s'pose someone'll have to, you silly little cuckoo," replied Bates, "or else one of those Redlands kids will get it."

Christopher retired under the bedclothes to give due consideration to this aspect of the case, just as a junior near the door said, "I say, hop in everybody—a prefect!"

Prefects frequently, for no apparent reason, passed through the junior dormitories on their way to their own or to studies. The juniors, having a pretty shrewd idea that there was method in this silent policing, were careful to appear asleep, even if they were not so, until the footsteps had passed through and died away. On this occasion the sounds were still some distance off and the owner of the steps might not come in at all.

"I believe it's Lynwood—I know his step," whispered Chalmers.

A sudden spirit of daring, born of a desire to assert himself in the eyes of his fellows, seized Christopher. "If it's my brother, I've a jolly good mind to chuck a pillow at him!" he said.

Bates sat up instantly and stared incredulously at the new junior. "You wouldn't dare! Besides, not a pillow; he'd find out whose it was."

"Well, anything then—give me something and you'll see!" replied young Lynwood in an urgent whisper, for the steps were undoubtedly drawing nearer. He was more than ever determined now to throw something at Jim, if it should be he, realising rather vaguely that it was an act of daring likely to impress his fellows even more than he had supposed.

Bates sprang lightly out of bed and returned in one brief moment. "Here, my sponge-bag—there's nothing in it but a sponge! Don't let him see you do it!" he breathed.

When Lynwood entered the dormitory there was only the sound of breathing to be heard, though a convulsive movement here and there beneath the bedclothes denoted that there was something unusual in the air. Lynwood walked leisurely and quietly on, and was nearing the door at the other end when something whizzed by his head. A piece of cord attached to the object gave him a nasty sting on the ear in passing.

Lynwood swung round, but too late. All the occupants of the beds were well beneath the coverlets. Picking the article up from the floor, the senior returned to the middle of the dormitory.

"Whose sponge-bag is this?" he asked, in tones that caused every junior but one to experience an internal quiver.

At the first sound of the prefect's voice a general rustle had exposed to view the wideawake faces and alert eyes that had apparently been so sound asleep a moment before. There was absolute silence.

Lynwood had a strong personality, which was none the less strong because he was now angry. "I should advise whoever owns this bag to speak up," he said, very distinctly.

"Please, Lynwood, it's mine," said Bates in a very small voice, but with eyes that couldn't hide their owner's enjoyment of the situation.

"Oh! Did you throw it, young Bates?"

Bates hesitated an instant before answering. "No, Lynwood, I didn't."

"Who did throw it?"

There was no answer. The situation was full of that electric kind of enjoyment that is flavoured by a spice of danger.

Lynwood walked slowly up to Bates' bed and tossed the sponge-bag thereon. "I will give the kid who threw it one minute to own up—after that, if he does not, I shall thrash you, Bates, my child, as the bag is yours," said the senior, taking out his watch.

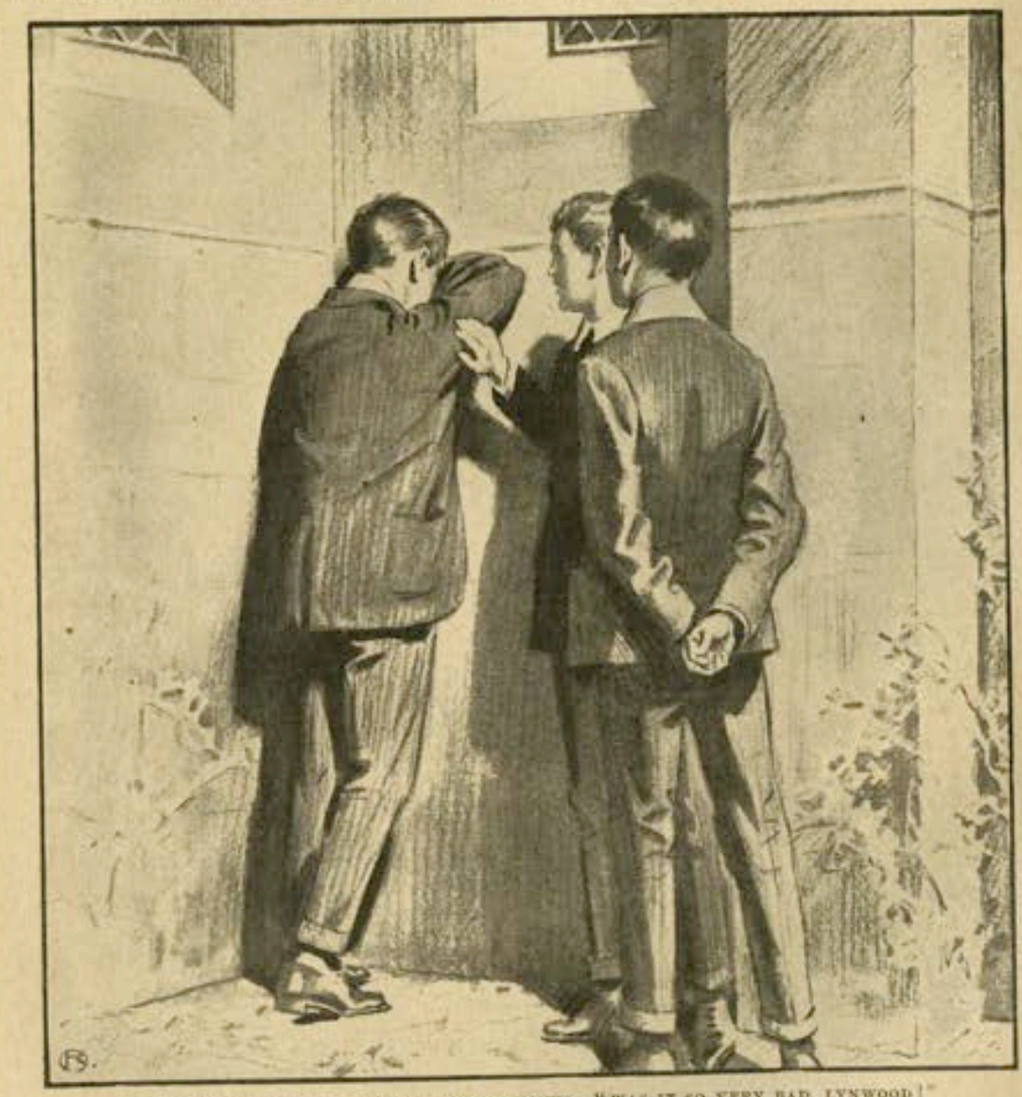
Every junior showed forth in his countenance that he considered this ultimatum a glaring and outrageous injustice. Not one of them so much as glanced in the direction of the real culprit, who began to feel a trifle apprehensive for Bates. His brother had not looked at him at all, but young Lynwood found his eyes glued to Jim's stern, uncompromising countenance. Realising little, as yet, of public school discipline, Christopher could scarcely believe that the threat would be carried out.

Bates, his face very flushed, commenced to whistle under his breath. Evidently he did not intend to give the new junior away.

Lynwood put his watch back in his pocket. "Time!" he said, looking up. He went over to the corner and fetched one of several light sticks belonging to different juniors which were conveniently standing there.

As he turned Christopher sat up and opened his mouth. "I threw it, Jim," he said clearly.

Lynwood dropped the stick and turned towards the door. "Very well. You will come to my study directly after school to-morrow," he said quietly, and walked out of the dormitory.



"I SAY!" MURMURED CHALMERS IN LOW TONES; "WAS IT SO VERY BAD, LYNWOOD!"

Drawn by REX OSBORNE.

"He'll lick you, Lynwood," whispered Chalmers, immediately the door was closed.

"I don't care if he does!" replied Lynwood Secundus loudly.

Bates, who had regained his normal colour, pulled the coverlet over him and turned over, his face towards the new junior.

"Shut up, everybody," he said. "Lyn Secundus is all right and a jolly good sport. I don't suppose his brother will lamm him much—anyway, he says he doesn't care. Good-night, young Lynwood!"

"Good-night, Bates!" replied Christopher, blissfully conscious that he was no longer an outsider, that he was henceforth to be accepted by Storr Cross juniors as one of themselves. He was far too happy to trouble about what might happen to-morrow, and he certainly didn't believe that Jim would thrash him.

CHAPTER VI.—*CHRISTOPHER PAYS IN FULL.*

IT was with rather conflicting feelings that Lynwood Secundus made his way to his brother's study the following afternoon. He did not feel very apprehensive, though he was beginning to realise that Jim at Storr Cross was very different to the Jim of the holidays. He was able to view the incident in the dormitory in its true light and he decided to apologise handsomely to his brother.

"Come in!" said a strange voice in answer to his knock.

Christopher entered, and beheld the friend of his brother, Macmillan, the captain of the first eleven. There was gradually being instilled within the new junior a wholesome awe of important seniors, and he hesitated on the threshold.

"Come in, youngster," said Macmillan, encouragingly. "Do you want Lynwood?"

"Yes, please—I—he told me to come after school," replied Christopher, rather nervously.

"I see. Well, you can sit down and wait. He won't be long, I expect."

The junior did as he was told, his eyes wandering appreciatively round the room, which contained many a familiar object. After a rather prolonged gaze at the photograph in the centre of the mantelshelf, he directed his attention to Macmillan, who was seated at the table writing a letter.

"Well, how do you like Storr Cross, kid?" asked the senior, looking up suddenly.

"Oh, all right, thanks," replied Lynwood Secundus with politeness.

"Any good at cricket?" next asked Macmillan, privately noticing how astonishingly alike were all the Lynwoods.

Christopher moved slightly. He found Macmillan extraordinarily kind and pleasant. His reserve suddenly fell away from him, and his words came eagerly. "Well, I don't know if I'm any good here, of course, but I can bowl a bit. I'm not so good at batting, though my brother Jim used to coach me for hours in the holidays——"

The door opened to admit Jim Lynwood, and, for some inexplicable reason, the junior's voice trailed off into silence, and he knew on the instant that his apology would have no chance of acceptance.

"Hallo, old son," said Macmillan. "If it's family matters with this youngster, Lyn, I can easily finish this letter elsewhere."

"It's not," replied Lynwood, shortly, taking a swagger stick from behind a picture. "This kid knows what to expect, and what for. Come here, Lynwood Secundus, and take a much-needed lesson in manners towards your seniors!"

It did not take long, and when it was over and the door had closed quietly on a white and perfectly silent junior, Macmillan, who seemed to have difficulty with his letter, threw down his pen impatiently.

"Lynwood," he said, looking up, "you are on the wrong tack with that young brother of yours."

Macmillan spoke the truth, very simply and clearly, but Lynwood failed to recognise it, his mind's eye being blinded by a theory of his own.

"I just hated doing it, Mac," he replied frankly. "But any other kid would have got it, and so he had to have it."

"The youngster is as game as ever I saw one," went on Macmillan, irritably. "He never uttered a sound during that first-class lamming you gave him. Any other kid, almost, would have howled the place down!"

Lynwood reached up for some books and slammed them on to the table. "I know he's game," he replied quickly. "I didn't in the least expect him to squeal."

"Well, it's your business, Lynwood," said Macmillan, "but I tell you I think you're making a mistake!"

"I'm treating him as I would any other kid, Macmillan—that's all!" responded Lynwood, finally, and all the more obstinately because of an uneasy stir in his conscience.

Meanwhile Lynwood Secundus, in a secluded corner behind the chapel, leant against the wall, with his face hidden in his arms, and gave way to bitterness and grief.

Two juniors, waiting sympathetically at the end of the corridor, had followed him after a few moments, and now came up alongside. Hearing their footsteps, Lynwood Secundus tried vainly to regain his self-control, which, having stood him in such good stead during his punishment, now seemed utterly lost.

"I say!" murmured Chalmers in low tones; "was it so very bad, Lynwood?"

Unable to speak, Lynwood Secundus kept his face hidden, and only kicked the wall in response.

"I know," said Bates, gruffly. "Lynwood gave me a lickin' once, and it was pretty bad, I can tell you!"

Chalmers, ever tender-hearted, put his arm round the afflicted one's shoulders, and whispered in the region of his ear, "Cheer up, Lyn, and let's go and get some tuck!"

But Lynwood Secundus was unable to accept anything in the way of outside help just yet, and he wriggled away from the kindly arm as another deep sob rose in his throat.

"Let's leave him alone," said Bates, after a moment. "He'll be all right later. Cheer up, young Lynwood. We're going to get some tuck, but we won't have it till you come—to-night in the dorm, p'raps. Come on, Chalmers!"

After they had gone Christopher felt a little better. Their genuine sympathy had crept in and cheered him, although they had not understood his grief. The two juniors had naturally concluded that Lynwood was suffering from the physical effects of the thrashing he had received, whereas that, in reality, was the smallest portion of his trouble. It was Jim's attitude towards him that hurt so unbearably.

Presently he pushed off from the wall and turned round. He stood there, kicking his heels and staring at nothing in particular for a few minutes, and then, with a final polish up, he stuffed his handkerchief in his pocket and walked off quickly. Tea in company with the rest of the juniors being out of the question, he decided to pursue once more the little red path and follow it down to the sea.

The possibility of again meeting the small girl crossed his mind not unpleasantly. She was only a very small kid, of course, but she seemed to know a lot of quite interesting things. He had thought of her a good many times since that day, and she had become firmly established in his mind under the discriminative appellation of the Pewk, that being the only portion of her name that he remembered.

The afternoon was warm and sunny, and the beauty of the little bay struck him afresh, as he came upon that first sudden peep of it. When he reached the end of the path and stepped on to the powdery sand he saw the Pewk. She was paddling in the bay, and save for the fact that the upper part of her denoted a blue instead of a pink frock she looked the same as before.

Lynwood Secundus, hands in pockets, strolled slowly forward, then stopped suddenly. For, beneath the shadow of a rock, surrounded by a basket, a parasol, some needlework and a book, was seated a lady dressed in a pale grey dress.

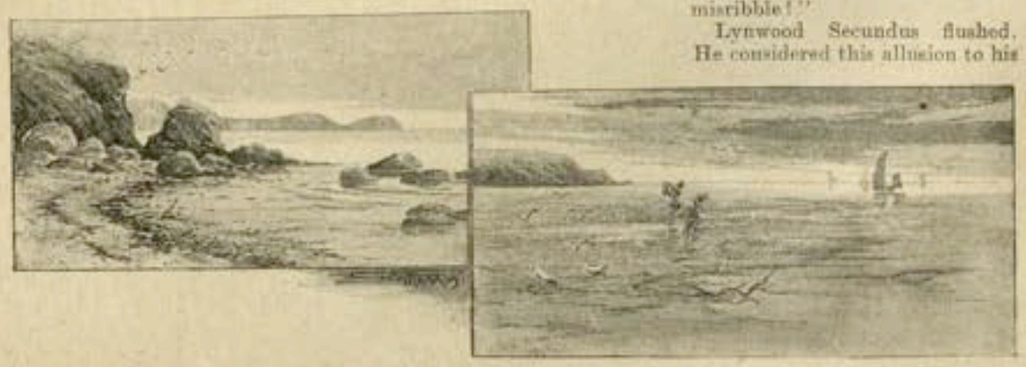
Having no desire to intrude, Christopher would have changed his direction, but the Pewk had already seen him, and, waving her arms, she came running towards him.

"Mummy," she called, turning her head, "here is the boy!"

The lady evidently knew to what boy her daughter referred, for she smiled a welcome, and Christopher was obliged to go forward and be presented. The lady had a nice face, one of the nicest he had ever seen, Christopher decided before he had been in her company for long. She was kind and jolly, and, without asking any questions, managed somehow to administer a sense of peace and comfort where before he had been conscious of disturbance and depression. She produced sandwiches and cake and a bottle of milk from the basket, and insisted on the Storr Cross boy joining in the meal.

"We always bring enough to share, don't we, kiddums?" she said.

And the Pewk had replied, "Oh yes, just in case!"



In the course of conversation, which flowed briskly, the junior told them about the Collection Competition, and was quite flattered by the interest shown by the Pewk's mother. Altogether it was an exceedingly pleasant meal, and Christopher felt a new man when it was over. He helped to pack up and afterwards carried the basket to the top of the cliff for Mrs. Pewkastor. Then he went down again to join the Pewk, who had begged to stay on the sands a bit longer.

"I say, this is a topping place," he said, with a sigh of contentment. "It's miles prettier than the other bay where all the chaps are allowed to go and bathe."

The small girl was sitting on the sand clasping her knees. "I call it the Secret Cave Coombe," she said.

Christopher dropped down beside her. "Why?" he asked curiously. "Is there a cave anywhere?"

The Pewk nodded mysteriously. "Yes, and it's my own cave. No one knows about it but me—at least, I don't *think* anybody does!"

The junior sprang to his feet and laughed. "I bet I'll find it soon enough!" he said, going a few steps.

The small girl did not move, but still sat in the same position, gazing out to sea. Christopher stood looking at her for a moment, then he said casually, "Well, I suppose I don't want to find it if it's really your secret cave."

The Pewk looked up. "I was going to show you, anyway," she replied calmly, "because I could see you have been misribble!"

Lynwood Secundus flushed. He considered this allusion to his

private troubles rather out of place. "Well, what about the secret cave?" he said, a trifle shortly.

The Pewk got up and shook her curls out of her eyes. "This way," she said. "But if I show you, you must promise not to tell anyone else."

Christopher promised. "I tell you what," remarked the Storr Cross junior suddenly, as they trotted to the far end of the bay, "I wouldn't mind collecting shells for the prize. They're jolly pretty, and I should think you could find heaps of interesting ones in a place like this!"

CHAPTER VII.—*THE MANNERS OF REDLANDS COLLEGE.*

SEVEN small boys, harmlessly thinking and talking about the pleasant afternoon they were about to have, were walking innocently and decorously along a public road of rather narrow dimensions. There was no need for speculation as to their destination or the nature of the proposed pleasure, for towels, hanging around their necks or rolled up under their arms, plainly indicated that the sea was their immediate aim and to bathe their unquestionable intention.

Hid in the impenetrable mysteries of the future were two incidents—the first being almost upon them—both of which were to make this afternoon a memorable one.

A bicycle bell, from some distance behind them, sounded twice, politely but firmly, and one of the seven turned his head for an instant.

Then he said quickly, "I say, you chaps, close up a bit more, and don't look round! It's a big pot from Storr Cross!"

The other six obligingly drew near together, arranging themselves so that they made a most effectual barrier across the road, as they strolled slowly on, chatting easily and amiably amongst themselves.

The bicycle bell rang again, less politely and more insistently.

"Who is it, Perry? How d'you know it's a big pot?" asked one of the seven.

"He's captain of the footer—I recognised him—don't know his name. He's getting in a fearful hate!" said Perry happily, as the sound of the now frantic bell became almost continuous, and the cyclist had perforce to slow down to a walking pace a few yards behind what the law would undoubtedly term a wilful obstruction.

Perry's estimate of the Storr Cross senior's state of mind was correct, and Lynwood, for he it was and no other, was by this time considerably annoyed. He could not very well charge on his machine into the mass formation so irritatingly strolling ahead, however much he felt so inclined. He ceased his bell-ringing and raised his voice, which was of the stentorian order.

"Make way there, you boys, will you, or it will be the worse for you!"

The boys in question, whose covert smiles to each other but feebly expressed the joy that was theirs, merely linked arms in several cases and slackened their pace to a degree of tardiness that caused Lynwood's front wheel to wobble unpleasantly as he crawled in the undignified rear. The moral force and other mighty powers with which he was endued at Storr Cross School were absolutely useless in this instance, for the seven juniors, as the astute reader has already divined, belonged to Redlands College.

The senior from Storr Cross, regarding the seven round, close-cropped, innocent-looking heads with a truly awful malevolence, was about to dismount and cuff his way, with no light hand, through them, when a big freckle-faced fellow, with red hair and honest eyes, stepped out of a gap in the hedge just in front of the procession.

He had no need to speak, for at first sight of him the mass formation broke, a right of way was established, and Lynwood rode through. As he passed the Redlands senior he turned his head, saying in tones of cold contempt:

"It's a pity there's no one to give a lesson in manners to those ill-bred little swine; but I suppose such superfluities are neither understood nor considered necessary at Redlands!"

Jennison had no time to reply, even if he had thought of something to say, which he had not. He turned to the juniors angrily.

"I shall report the lot of you!" he said, being half inclined for a moment to inflict instant punishment himself. But at Redlands seniors had to report junior wrongdoings to headquarters.

The seven juniors, well knowing that Jennison, when roused, was quite capable of taking matters into his own hands, assumed various expressions of humility, contriteness and general submission, and went on their way, confidently hoping that the senior would either forget to report them or change his mind.

We must now go back to Jennison, whose way also led to the sea, though not to the Redlands bathing beach. Jennison, having discovered several summers ago an aged man of Devon who possessed a fairly presentable boat and was willing to let out the same at a ridiculously low rate of hire, was in the habit of indulging in a quiet and private row on occasional free halves, when he could get away by himself.

This afternoon the Redlands senior pushed off rather viciously, for Lynwood's sneer still rang in his ears. The attitude of lofty high-and-mightiness adopted by Storr Cross seniors in general and by Lynwood in particular towards Redlands was exceedingly galling, and Jennison, though perfectly aware that neither himself nor Redlands merited the contempt they received, yet writhed in mental helplessness every time Lynwood levelled at him one of those cool, speculative glances or, worse still, treated him to one of those cutting little speeches which rendered the slow-tongued Redlands senior dumbly furious.

However, by the time he had pulled round the bend the Redlands cricket captain had quite recovered his usual good nature. His present goal was a small bay he knew of, fringed on either side by many rocks, and seldom frequented by any of the other fellows. He intended to pull ashore here and read a chapter or two from a book by G. K. Chesterton, who, while he puzzled our stolid friend profoundly, yet interested and amused him vastly at the same time.

Neatly landing and beaching his boat, Jennison became aware of the presence of a small fair-haired girl, no stranger to him, for he had seen her several times before. She was kneeling on the sand with her back towards him, and as he made for the shade of a big rock quite near her, the small girl, with a startled glance round, promptly sat down, carefully spreading her short skirts round her to their fullest extent.

Jennison reached his shady corner, threw himself down and pulled out his book with a sigh of contentment. For some few minutes silence reigned in the little bay save for the faint sound made by the lapping of the water.

The small girl remained seated in the same position, with her eyes regarding Jennison fixedly. The instant he looked up from his book she spoke.

"I didn't want to interrupt you," she said very politely, in a clear, high little voice, "but, are you going to stay here long?"

"I don't know," said Jennison gravely, but rather amused. "Why?"

"Oh, it doesn't matter, thank you," replied the small girl, with a sigh that denoted obvious disappointment.

"Would you like me to go away, then?" demanded the red-haired one, indulgently.

"Yes, please," was the prompt answer. "At least, if you're ready," she added, evidently for the sake of politeness.

"Why?" asked Jennison again, still more amused. "Can't you play about the same as if I were not here? I'm not interfering with you."

The small girl considered him gravely, then, evidently concluding that he was a person to be trusted, she said: "There is something here you must not see. Nobody must see it—at least, only the—the person it's meant for!"

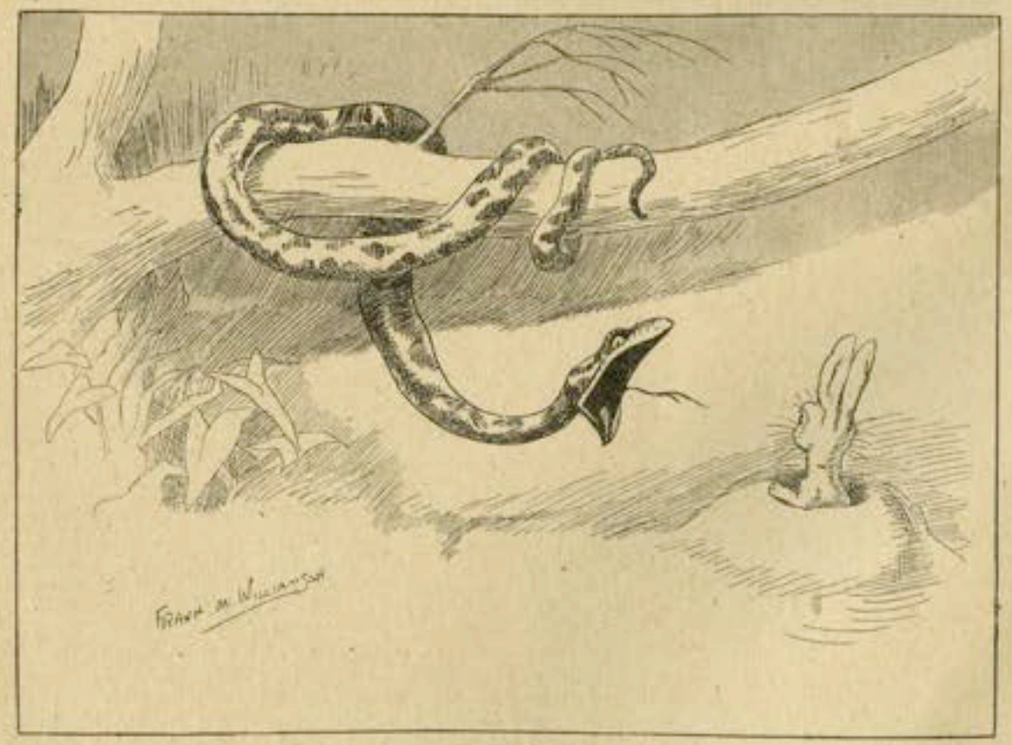
"Oh," said Jennison. "That sounds very curious. May I ask where it is hidden?"

"It isn't hidden exactly," replied the small girl sweetly, and with a smile that few people would care to resist. "You see, you came and interrupted me, and so I—I'm sitting on it!"

Jennison laughed outright. "I see," he said, slowly getting up. "Well, of course, in that case——"

And the senior from Redlands, credited by Lynwood with having no manners, put his book in his pocket and walked down the sand to his boat. He little thought as he pulled easily through the smooth water of the bay that this little adventure, trifling and unimportant though it seemed, would return to his mind later on, full of significant meaning.

(*Continued on page* 81.)



A FUNK HOLE.
Drawn by FRANK M. WILLIAMSON.

LOST ON A GLACIER.

A BOYS' HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE IN SWITZERLAND.

"WHAT fools we were to have come!" Jack said.

Ray's only answer was an incoherent mutter. As the instigator of the expedition, he felt loth to join in its condemnation.

"Fools!" said Jack again.

"It would be all right," answered the other, "if there weren't such a confounded lot of clouds about!"

"Yes—*if!*" Jack snorted. "We can't see a dozen yards before us, and even if we could, we don't know which way to turn."

Ray hacked at the ice with his alpenstock, and chipped off a bit here and a bit there.

"What's the good of that!" Jack growled.

Ray shrugged his shoulders. He stopped hacking, and looked round him. They were certainly in an awkward predicament. To an expert Swiss mountaineer the Blauenegg Glacier would have offered no difficulties. He would probably have found it as easy going as a ploughed field, but the boys had no knowledge of mountain lore to fall back upon. They had only been across this Blauenegg Glacier once in their lives before, and then they had a guide.

"The other day, you know," Ray said, "anyone with half an eye could have found his way across!"

Now, alas! it was not so simple. Before them, an ice slope; behind them, a frozen sea, split and broken into a thousand clefts and crevasses. Fearsome-looking crevasses they were, too—bottomless gulfs between two jagged walls of ice.

They turned to go back along the track by which they had come, but the clouds, which all day long had been hovering like ghosts in trailing garments over the tops of the mountains, had swooped down upon the rocks and the glacier, and hung like a white mist over the frozen sea. It was growing thicker and more fog-like every moment.

Jack hesitated.

"Come on!" said Ray. "We can't stay here all night!"

"Look out!" Jack shouted after him. "Don't jump into a crevasse."

"Crevasse, you idiot! You call everything a crevasse. That's only a crack in the ice."

Jack followed, but the crack, as Ray called it, though it was narrow enough, and he jumped it easily, was not unlike a crevasse after all. As he jumped, a stone or a bit of ice was dislodged, and fell clattering down into the cleft, further and still further, with a hollow sound, till at last it reached the bottom—or, *had* it reached the bottom? Jack stopped to listen. Was it not falling still? He fancied that it was.

"That crack, as you call it," he shouted after Ray, "is hundreds of feet deep."

"Look here!" Ray answered. "We shall have to go back. We can't possibly get over here."

They had come to one of the glacier streams. The water was racing along deep down between two walls of ice.

"It's getting lighter," Jack said. "That's one piece of luck, at all events!"

The wet, white fog of clouds had lifted perceptibly. They could see the rocks over there on the moraine looming like shadows through the mist, and the moraine at least was dry land on which there were no bottomless abysses and impassable rivers of melted ice.

"It's some way off," Ray said, "but let's make for it."

Easier said than done! For ten minutes or so they managed to clamber along, jumping now and again over a yawning cleft, or climbing up a frozen slope, hacking out footholds for themselves in the ice with the sharp points of their alpenstocks, but this was slow work. Moreover, they were haunted by the feeling that the way they were going was *not* the way they had come.

However, there were no landmarks—none at least that they, unaccustomed as they were to glacier scenery, could recognise.

"Come on!" shouted Jack, who was on ahead. "We are getting there at last. And, anyway, it's much easier going. There aren't half so many crevasses and things about. Great Scott!"

"Hullo!" cried Ray. "Look out!—Jack!"

But Jack had gone, and the snow under him had gone, and Ray's shriek of fear had rung out unanswered over that frozen sea like a voice in the desert.

Ray knew what had happened. He had heard of those snow bridges that covered the opening of a crevasse, making it wholly invisible. Half a minute ago he had seen Jack walking along over what he had taken to be an untrodden track of smooth snow. A bit of it had fallen in like a trap-door. Jack had thrown up his arms, making one frantic effort towards saving himself, but whatever he had caught hold of had given way with him, and in a moment all was over.

Ray sprang forward, and then checked himself. Whatever happened, he must not follow in Jack's footsteps. Jack must be saved somehow, though *how* he could not tell.

"Ray! Ray!" The cry came again and again in a voice that was sharpened by terror. Thank goodness! It did not sound so very far away.

Ray went cautiously to work, taking a step at a time, and testing the stability of the ground in front of him with his alpenstock. A ridge of half-frozen snow fell in with a thud close to the place where Jack had disappeared. Ray thought he heard a muffled groan. He caught his breath, and stood still with a sickening shudder. Was it possible that the fallen snow had buried——?

But in another moment Jack's voice reassured him.

"Hurry up!" he shouted. "I'm freezing stiff down here while you are knocking that snow about. I can't move an inch. I'm jammed somehow in the ice. Can't you hack me out a step or two?"

Ray had got there at last. Jack, looking up, saw him lying face downwards, staring over the edge of the crevasse with eyes full of horror.

Yet Jack was not so very many feet down—six or seven, maybe, or perhaps eight—but wedged between two narrowing cliffs of ice. He was held fast from the waist downwards, and all he could do was to move his arms, and those only within a limited space. He was striving to get a hold in the slippery wall to hoist himself up by, but the smooth, glittering ice of wondrous transparent blue was as unyielding as polished marble, and as pitiless.

Ray leaned over as far as he dared, and stretched out his alpenstock. Jack seized it frantically, and clung to it desperately, trying to pull himself up; but it was no good, the stick was not long enough, and as Jack pulled Ray lost hold.

"A rope is what we want," he said.

"Cut me some steps!" Jack muttered, and his voice sounded hoarse and strained.

Ray did his best, but step-cutting with only the point of an alpenstock is difficult work, if not almost impossible. Besides which, Ray could not reach beyond a certain point, and, moreover, all the steps in the world would have been of no use just then, for Jack was less able to move than ever; his hands were numb and stiff with cold, his arms felt powerless.

"Wait a bit!" Ray called to him. "Don't give up! We will find a way out of this somehow!"

He got back to firmer ground, and, taking off his coat and then his waistcoat, tried to knot them together into some semblance of a rope; but with such clumsy materials the result was practically useless.

It was, he reflected, all very well to try and cheer Jack up with words of encouragement, but goodness only knew how they were to get out of this predicament. They were alone there on the deserted glacier amongst the shifting clouds.

Ray shaded his eyes with both his hands. It was certainly lighter than it had been. The rocks on the moraine were not so far off after all, and two black moving specks arrested his attention. Could it be? He went a little further on to make sure. Yes, there was no doubt about it. He shouted back the good news to Jack, and, flinging down his cap to mark the spot, and keeping the rocks in view, he made straight for the place where he had seen the two men moving.

How he got there he never knew. He scrambled and leapt, and slipped down and up again, and every now and then shouted to attract attention. At last someone shouted back. In the silent air the voice sounded quite close to him, and in another moment he was face to face with its owner—an Englishman by the looks of him—but it needed no words on Ray's part to warn the two men of his errand.

What he blurted forth was, indeed, almost unintelligible even to his countryman, and the guide did not stop to listen. He had seen the way the boy had come, and, glancing in the direction in which he pointed, he started off, the other two following.

Meanwhile Jack had given himself up for lost. He had heard Ray's voice; the parting shout came like an echo from afar off, and not a syllable of the words could he understand. He called to him again and again, but there was no answer. Could it be that Ray, too, had fallen into another of these horrible death-traps?

The very thought of this ghastly possibility numbed all remaining hope within him. Already his limbs felt stiff and frozen and strangely heavy. There was no good in struggling any longer to free himself. Besides, why should he struggle? He began to be strangely indifferent to it all, and hardly to realise what had happened.

His thoughts ran riot, as thoughts do on the borderland of sleep. He fancied he had turned into the statue of Sir Amos Burd in the School Chapel at home. He had always thought the niche where he stood too small for him, and now he knew that it was. But it would be awful to fall over and smash into small pieces on the cold marble floor below; but fall he must; he could not help it.

There was a crash, a roaring in his ears, a sudden rush of air. He felt himself bound and fettered, unable to move; and what a lot of voices there were all round him, and all speaking at once. They must be piecing the statue together again, but how it hurt! The pain was agonising.

"Bravo!" said a cheery voice. "He's coming to! He will be all right again directly."

And Jack opened his eyes, and watched with vague interest a coil of rope that was lying by the side of him. He shut them again, and the roaring in his ears grew louder.

"Give him some more," said a voice; and some hot, stinging stuff that all but choked him was poured down his throat.

"It was a narrow escape!" said the man with the glass. "Hullo, you!" he went on, "we shall have to be dosing *you* next!"

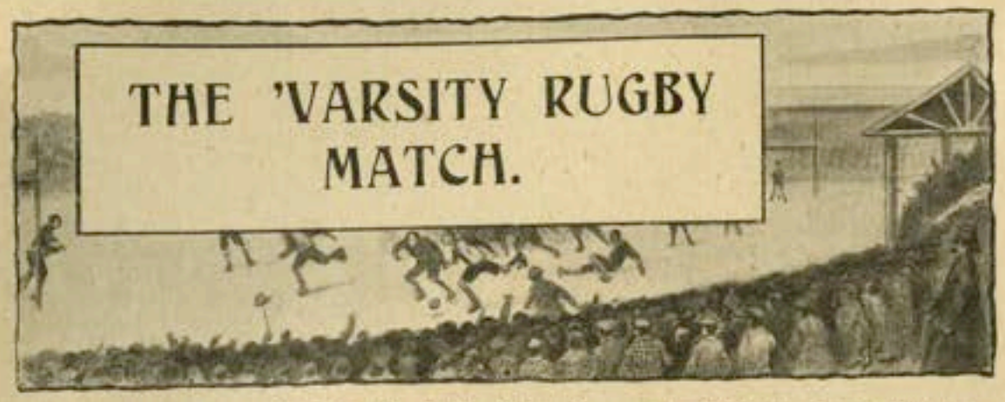
"Oh, I'm all right!" came Ray's voice; but it sounded rather queer and choky, and his face was white and drawn.

"I was thinking," he said, "that if anything *had* happened, it would have been all my fault. It was I, you know, who made him come."

"Oh, well!" said the Englishman, "you've learnt a lesson."

And Ray felt, and later on, when he was in a condition to do any thinking, Jack felt, too, that it was a lesson learned for a lifetime.

A. S. R.



THE 'VARSITY RUGBY MATCH.

By ALFRED F. MAYNARD (Cambridge University and English International Forward).

[The following article was written before the War caused a suspension of the famous December match, which, let us hope, will ere long be resumed. The writer, Mr. Maynard, has, since, alas! made "the supreme sacrifice," dying, as so many other YOUNG ENGLAND contributors have died, in the great cause. He was, as many of our readers know, one of the principal exponents of forward play, both in England's International teams and in Cambridge University games. On two occasions he played in the 'Varsity Match for the Light Blues and was on the winning side.—ED.]

IT has often seemed to me that each of the chief 'Varsity annual contests has a special interest and attraction in itself. The three leading items amongst the sports wherein Oxford and Cambridge oppose one another each year are, of course, the Boat Race, the Cricket Match, and the Rugby game. It happens that these three, being in different University terms, do not clash, and thus each of them in due order becomes the central feature of sport for its term.

With the Boat Race and the Cricket Match I have nothing to do here, however, excellent and interesting as they always are. My purpose just now is to write something which may interest you with respect to the famous Rugby struggle between the two 'Varsities, that stern yearly struggle at Queen's Club, Kensington, at the beginning of December. I hope to show you why this contest always proves so attractive, so exciting, so popular, and so interesting, not only to the Rugby men in Oxford, Cambridge, and the Metropolis, but to thousands of other folk far and wide who have never seen Queen's Ground in their lives, and know nothing of what the game is, as played on the University grounds.

Rugby football has seemed, for some years at any rate, to monopolise the interest of sportsmen during the winter term at Oxford and Cambridge. It has temporarily driven the Soccer game into the shade. Whereas we can rely on hundreds of undergraduates, often thousands, being present to watch the teams play their matches at the Universities, in preparation for the eventful contest in December, it is unusual to find as many tens paying to see a Soccer game there. The sporting undergraduate has for some time taken the Rugby game to his heart, and is ever ready and anxious to encourage its players, whether these form the separate college fifteens or the 'Varsity team itself.

There is, of course, keen competition, amongst men who can play really well in any position in the game, to secure a place in the final fifteen chosen to represent the 'Varsity at "Queen's" in December. The captain (who has been appointed by the 'Varsity club's members well in advance of the start of each season) will give full and effective trials to all likely players, seniors or freshmen, who show any ability at the game.

After watching scores of men perform in college matches the 'Varsity captain is in a position to select some twenty-five to thirty players, the pick of the lot, from which to choose his final team for the great match. These two dozen or so will all get several chances of proving their worth and skill; and generally, as December 1st draws nearer, it is not by any means an easy task for the captain to decide between the claims of two or three men who may be fairly equal for this or that position in the team.

Naturally, there are, in certain years, far more vacancies than others. When a captain finds himself with seven or eight "Old Blues"—that is, men who have already played in the 'Varsity match—he has, if these men keep their form, a much easier job to make up his fifteen, for they form an excellent nucleus for it. No captain is obliged to play "Old Blues" again; indeed one often finds that freshmen come up whose skill is far superior in certain positions at Rugby to that displayed by the "Old Blues."

But one must ever remember that, in the great contest itself, "nerves" play an important part. And the player who is most likely to keep a cool head, to know what to do and when to do it, to be least disconcerted by the big crowd, the excitement, and the importance of the occasion is he who has played in the same match once or twice before.

Hence an Old Blue is not to be lightly discarded, even if a new man at the 'Varsity does prove himself just the least bit superior in this or that department of the game. He has to be definitely superior, and often very much so, to make the captain cut out an experienced and tried player on his account. Which is right and proper, too.

Despite what you hear people declare now and then, I think I am fairly correct when I say that favouritism in picking any 'Varsity team is almost a thing of the past, whether the game be football, cricket, hockey, or any other. However prone a captain might be to such objectionable conduct, he would hardly dare to do it, for the outcry in his University would be so great. Each 'Varsity is keen for its honour, keen on finding the very best possible players to take part in these great contests, and woe betide any captain who did not do his utmost to get the best team together that was possible, irrespective of friendship or favouritism.

So you can take it from me that, if any man is left out whom the critics or general public think ought to be included, it is because in the deliberate judgment and fair opinion of the captain—often aided by the other chief players, too—that man is not really so eligible for the position as he who is finally chosen. But there have been and are occasional exceptions to this, and the captain who has been influenced in his choice by other motives has suffered and always will suffer socially.

Now what are the things, in addition to those already mentioned, which make the Rugby game so interesting, so alluring, so popular each December? Let me try to explain a few of them here, just as they strike me.

First, the great crowd of our supporters, and of enthusiasts in the sport, know that each team will go all out to win. They know for certain that this game will not only be fought out strenuously to the finish, but that not a man will spare himself in any way whatever in his efforts to gain the victory for his side. They know that, however some games, especially in professional football, may give one qualms as to their being "sold"—suspicious as to dubious practices and unworthy tricks to win—none of these will have the least countenance in this struggle at Queen's Club. Folk know that, owing to the keen feeling of rivalry which exists between Oxford and Cambridge in matters of sport, the game will be assuredly one wherein the earnestness and genuine enthusiasm will last right from the kick-off to the end.

Excitement and thrill pervade the Rugby match each December at Kensington in a way that can hardly be possible with respect to other fights between the 'Varsities. The area covered by the Boat Race crowds, and the fact



A. F. MAYNARD.

that only a small proportion of such crowds see all the contest; the comparative apathy of the mass of ladies who watch the cricket match, owing to their lack of knowledge of the fine points of the game; the long distance covered by the men in the cross-country race; these are factors tending to lessen thrills and enthusiasm as compared with those one obtains during the Rugby contest.

In this latter case you have anything from fourteen to twenty thousand folk compressed into a very narrow area, a throng of enthusiasts who know the sport well. For even amongst the fair ones watching the Rugby match it is astonishing how many of them know all about the game just as well as their male companions. This tremendous crowd, too, has come to see *the game*. It is not out for a picnic; it is standing in the cold, perhaps in the rain, and certainly on damp ground, for the most part. The environment is nothing—the spectacle is everything.

The locale of "Queen's," too, certainly tends to make our annual Rugby match most successful and popular. Kensington is a place easy to get to from Central or West London; it is a ground with which most 'Varsity men are already extremely familiar, as so many are themselves members of the famous club there. You have only to notice the extraordinary number of motor-cars visible in all the surrounding streets and squares on that eventful afternoon in December, motors waiting for their owners or hirers after the match is done, to know at a glance what an extremely popular affair this game is, not only for social London in winter, but for the busy City man, or the lover of genuine sport of any kind.

When one sits down to calculate the respective chances of the teams, the previous matches of the season which each team has fought are little to go by. "Form," as we call it, so often is badly upset ere the match is even half over. This particular game is a sort of law to itself, and more than once has teemed with surprises. A fifteen which has gone through the term without a single loss finds itself being beaten by a team which has lost more games than it has won! There is no saying what may happen (till it *has* happened!) in the Rugby match at "Queen's."

Hence, from start to finish, every player and spectator is kept on the tenterhooks of expectation. You feel sure that every man engaged in the struggle will continue to fight to the last blow of the whistle; you feel that a try may come at any moment, often when least expected; you feel that the game is never lost till it has been finally won. You are kept for a solid hour and a half or so on the tiptoe of anticipation.

Then the enthusiasm! There is nothing like it anywhere else at a Rugby match. Even England *v.* Wales at Cardiff, with the volatile Welsh spectators singing and cheering their hardest, does not excel a "Queen's" crowd for enthusiasm. You see, every man and woman present has come to cheer—not merely to watch—but to cheer and shout for Oxford or Cambridge, according as their fancy or interest dictates. Clergymen, barristers, doctors, schoolmen, all manner of professional folk, thousands who have been at the 'Varsities, make their way—often with their families—to Kensington, with full resolve to do their part nobly in encouraging the Light Blue or the Dark Blue to victory, as the case may be. There are no "walkers on," no "silent members," no "passengers" on that Oxford *v.* Cambridge Rugby afternoon.

"Hullo, there's Tommy!" exclaims one undergraduate to his friends on the mound, just as they have got settled down. "Let's make him know we're here!"

Shouting will be of no use, the noise and chatter and cheering of hundreds of folk is so great. Moreover "Tommy" is inside the ropes, on a seat there. So the breezy three on the mound throw a walking-stick at "Tommy's" head, just to tell him they're there! It misses "Tommy," but knocks off the hat of an old gentleman near him! You can imagine the scene which follows! And when "Tommy" at length grasps what it all means, he hoists his coloured scarf on his own stick, and waves it frantically, as he shouts "Cambridge for ever!" or "Oxford! Oxford!"

It is the excitement, the historic traditions, the memories of past great fights, which bring such crowds into a comparatively small space, which set tongues wagging and minds revolving, in order to relate how "Poulton scored that wonderful try"; how "Basil Macleod did the trick for Cambridge"; or how—"Stoop and Munro! Ye gods, what a couple they were behind the scrum!"

And last, but not least, the twenty thousand who line up to watch a fierce fight at "Queen's" all know they'll see every player doing his very best. They know it will be a perfectly fair and open struggle. No underhand tricks; no paltry dodging; no unworthy attempt to take a mean advantage. The men from the 'Varsities will be all out to bring the honour of victory to the Cam or the Isis, as the case may be. But better a defeat, boys, far better a defeat, than a victory ignobly gained, a triumph not fairly won.

The 'Varsities, as I think all will allow, "play the game" in the best sense whenever they fight against each other. And that is why their struggles are so popular with the public. For all true Britons love to see a match contested in the proper spirit, and in a way befitting the traditions of the race. And it is pleasant to know that Oxford and Cambridge always try to carry on their rivalry in that spirit.

Boys, I don't wish to preach, not a bit! But there's a grand lesson in that last paragraph, if you're sensible enough to see it and to learn it.

Alfred F. Maynard

HELD UP BY A BUFFALO BULL.

A TALE OF THE OLD EMIGRANT DAYS.

I HAD ridden at least five miles from the waggons, when I heard, coming to me from over the ridge I was ascending, the bellowing of buffalo bulls intermingled with occasional quick, clashing shocks.

I halted, listened, and went on cautiously to the crest. In the valley beyond a cloud of dust was rising about two great bulls in a fierce fight. No others were in sight, either in the valley or on the prairie beyond.

I halted to see that the cap was on my rifle, and rode on, sure they would not heed me; but as the wind was blowing freshly toward them, and the sun threw my shadow between them, they separated and ran from me.

Still, they did not run as if badly scared, but rather as if indignant at being disturbed. Every now and then both came round with short turnings, snorted, eyed me, and pawed the prairie violently. Once or twice I fancied they were about to charge back upon me, and if I had not been well mounted, I should have kept my distance for a while, for a more formidable pair of bulls I had never seen.

As it was, I galloped up to the nearest, and fired. He fell to his knees, rose, spread out his legs as if to prevent a second fall, rocked from side to side, came again to his knees, and after staying so while I charged my muzzle-loader, rolled over on his side.

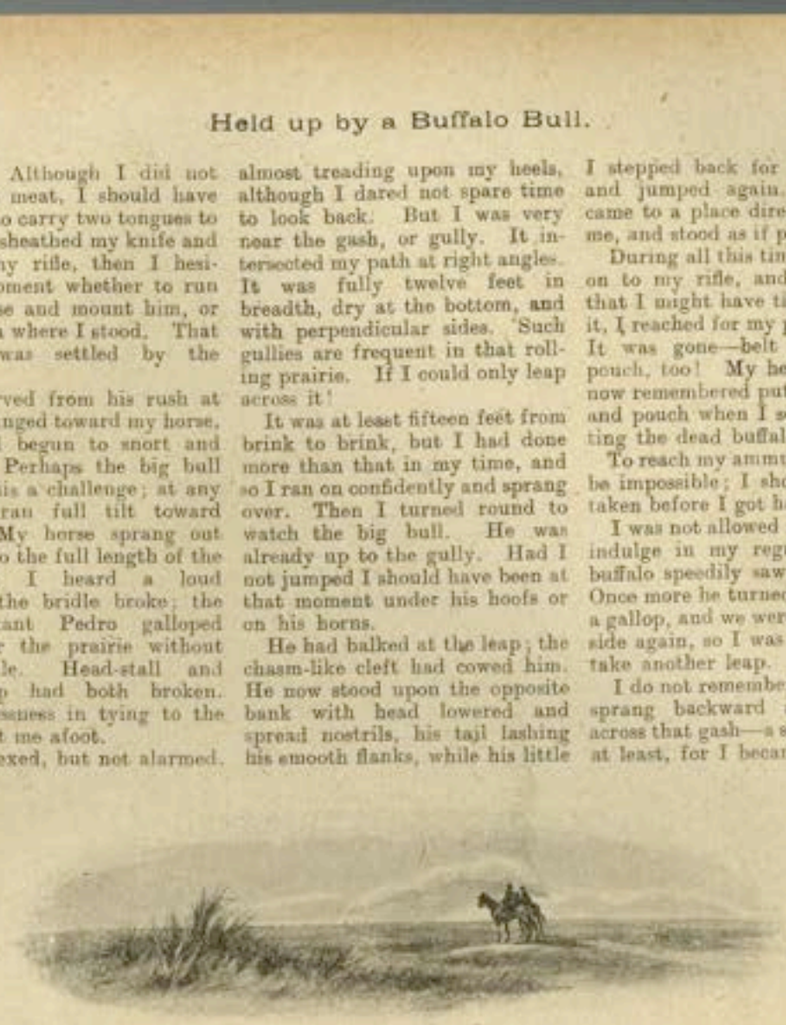
Meanwhile I let the other bull go, for I could not stop him with an empty rifle. Away he lumbered over the next crest, and I did not care to follow him, as it would cost me a sharp gallop to come up with him again; so I alighted to secure some hump and tongue.

One tree, a small cottonwood—there were three distinct bluffs of cottonwood in view—grew not twenty yards from the carcase. I led my horse to it, as I could not trust him to stand, and tied him with my trail-rope, making one end fast to the bit-ring and the other to the tree. I then went back and began to cut into the buffalo, but had not been two minutes at the job when a low bellowing startled me, and up over the ridge came the very same buffalo bull that had run away. Down the slope he came, straight toward me.

This rather pleased me for the moment. Although I did not want more meat, I should have been glad to carry two tongues to camp, so I sheathed my knife and took up my rifle, then I hesitated a moment whether to run to my horse and mount him, or to fire from where I stood. That question was settled by the buffalo.

He swerved from his rush at me and plunged toward my horse, which had begun to snort and plunge. Perhaps the big bull thought this a challenge; at any rate, he ran full tilt toward Pedro. My horse sprang out instantly to the full length of the trail-rope; I heard a loud *pluck* as the bridle broke; the next instant Pedro galloped away over the prairie without any bridle. Head-stall and check-strap had both broken. My carelessness in tying to the bit had set me afoot.

I was vexed, but not alarmed.



My horse would follow back his own trail, and at worst I should only have to walk to camp. But first to stop the buffalo, for he was coming at me again, and plainly meant business. Stop him I must, and with one bullet. If left able to run he would overtake me in three minutes.

I had no time for reflection. The brute was within ten paces of me. I raised my rifle, aimed to smash his fore shoulder, and let go. To my dismay he neither fell nor stumbled, but charged furiously on.

To reload was impossible. My pistols had gone off with my horse and holsters. The buffalo was between the tree and me, but right in the opposite direction was a gash in the prairie that I had noticed earlier. To it I turned and ran.

I can run as fast as most men, but had not been two minutes at it when I knew the buffalo was almost treading upon my heels, although I dared not spare time to look back. But I was very near the gash, or gully. It intersected my path at right angles. It was fully twelve feet in breadth, dry at the bottom, and with perpendicular sides. Such gullies are frequent in that rolling prairie. If I could only leap across it!

It was at least fifteen feet from brink to brink, but I had done more than that in my time, and so I ran on confidently and sprang over. Then I turned round to watch the big bull. He was already up to the gully. Had I not jumped I should have been at that moment under his hoofs or on his horns.

He had balked at the leap; the chasm-like cleft had cowed him. He now stood upon the opposite bank with head lowered and spread nostrils, his tail lashing his smooth flanks, while his little glaring black eyes expressed his baffled rage. I saw that my bullet had hit him in the shoulder, as the blood trickled there, but the bone had been unhurt.

I had almost begun to congratulate myself on having escaped, when the bull began looking to the right and then to the left. He was studying the topography. I had not expected that.

On both sides of us, at a distance of less than fifty paces, the gully shallowed out into the plain, where it ended. At either end it was, of course, passable. I had known this when I ran for the middle of the gash, but I never imagined the bull would be so shrewd as he proved.

Suddenly turning away from the brink, he ran along the edge of the chasm, evidently with the intention of turning it, and in less than a minute's time we were once more on the same side. My situation was as bad as ever, but I stepped back for a short run and jumped again. The bull came to a place directly opposite me, and stood as if puzzled.

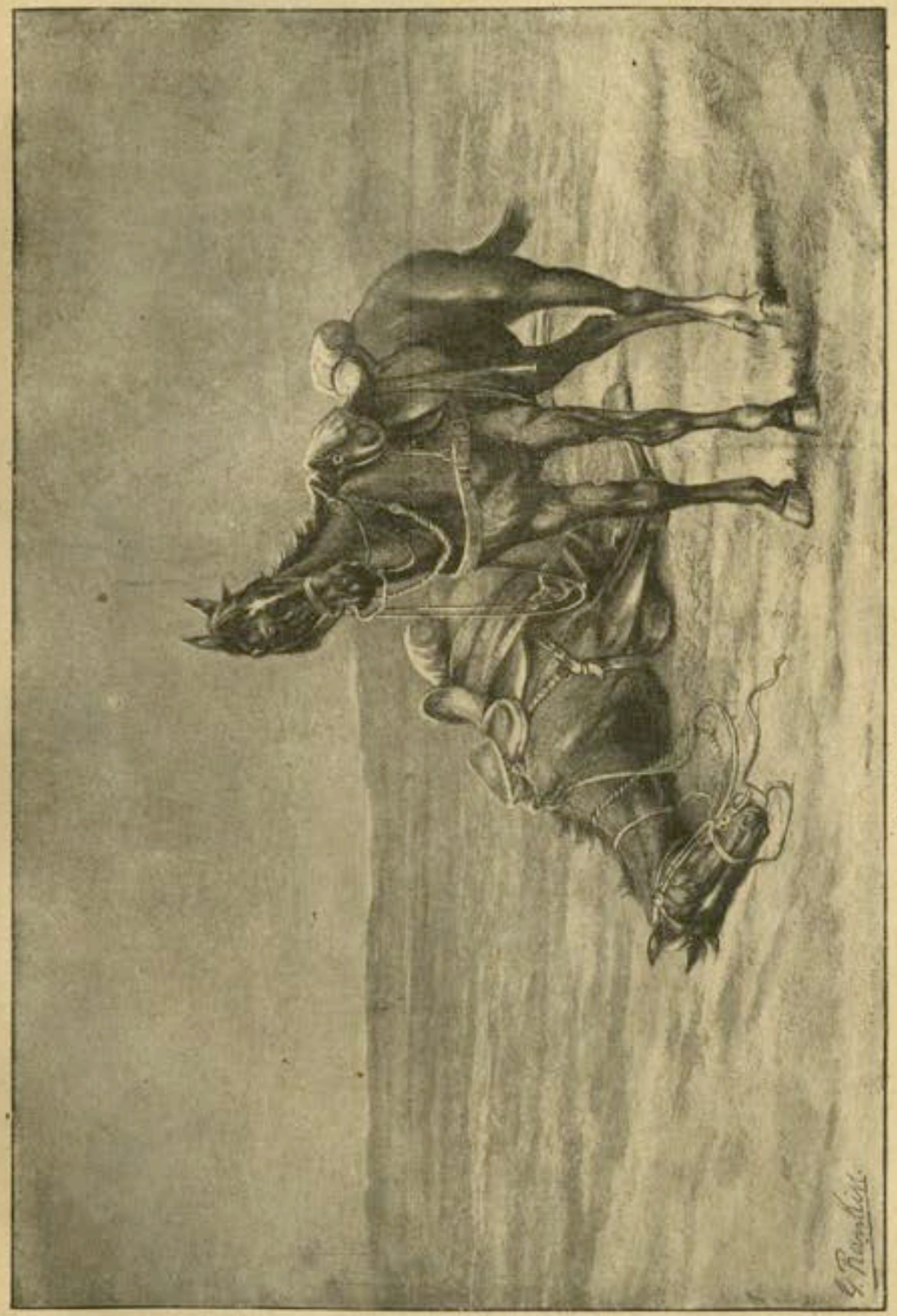
During all this time I had held on to my rifle, and seeing now that I might have time to reload it, I reached for my powder-horn. It was gone—belt and bullet-pouch, too! My heart sank. I now remembered putting off horn and pouch when I set about cutting the dead buffalo.

To reach my ammunition would be impossible; I should be overtaken before I got half-way to it.

I was not allowed much time to indulge in my regrets, for the buffalo speedily saw what to do. Once more he turned the ditch at a gallop, and we were on the same side again, so I was compelled to take another leap.

I do not remember how often I sprang backward and forward across that gash—a score of times, at least, for I became tired with the exercise. The leap was nearly as much as I could do at my best, and as I was growing weaker at each jump, I saw that I should soon leap short and fall to the bottom, and perhaps be hurt. The bull could then easily reach me by entering at either end, and I thought he knew it, for he pounded around the ends with scarcely a pause.

I had looked all around for some place of better security. There were trees, but the only near one was the small cottonwood to which my horse had been tied. It had no branches near the root, but I knew I could clamber up it by embracing the trunk, which was not over eight inches in diameter. If I could but reach it, it would surely shelter me better than the ditch, which was fast wearing me out. But could I reach it before the buffalo? It was about three hundred yards away. By start-



COMRADES. Drawn by GEORGE HANKIN.

ing when the bull was on the side farthest from the tree I got away fifty yards ahead of him.

But it was a close race after all. The hot breath of the buffalo steamed after me as I climbed, and the blow of his heavy skull against the trunk almost shook me back upon his horns, but I succeeded in getting up to the branches.

I was now safe from immediate danger, but how was the affair to end? I knew the sulky bull might stay for hours by the tree, perhaps for days. I was already hungry and very thirsty. The sun, the dust, the violent exercise had put me into such a state that even then I would almost have risked life itself for a draught of water.

I had but one hope—that my companions would come to my relief, but that could hardly happen before morning. No doubt my horse had returned to the camp, but they might not be seriously alarmed about me till near evening, and then it would be too late. In the darkness they could not follow my trail. Could they do so in the light?

I was in a condition to look on the dark side of everything. They might not be able to find me at all. There were numerous horse-trails on the prairie where Indians had passed. Rain might fall and obliterate all tracks. My friends were not likely to find me by chance. A circle of ten miles' diameter is a large tract in a rolling prairie of many ridges with valleys between. My tree stood near the bottom of a valley; it could not be seen from any point over three hundred yards distant. Searchers might pass within hail of me without perceiving either the tree or the valley.

For a long time I was busy with such gloomy thoughts and forebodings. Night was coming on, but the obstinate brute stood stolidly beneath me, watchful as ever, or walked round and round, lashing his tail and uttering that snorting sound which so resembles the sniffing of scared hogs.

While watching my enemy I frequently noticed the trail-rope left by my horse, one end of it fastened round the trunk by a firm knot, the other far out upon the prairie where it had been dragged. Now and then the buffalo sawed at it, but I had no thought of using it for escape, until all at once a bright idea flashed upon me.

Then I saw a plan so feasible that my heart fairly leaped with hope.

The first step was to get hold of the rope. This was the hardest matter. It was fastened around the tree, but the knot had slipped down the trunk and lay upon the ground. I dared not go down for it.

Necessity soon suggested a plan. My "picker"—a piece of straight wire with a ring-end—hung from one of my breast buttons. This I bent into the shape of a grappling-hook. I had no cord, but my knife was still in its sheath; with this I cut thongs from the skirt of my buckskin shirt, and knotted them together until they formed a string long enough to reach the ground. To one end I tied the picker, and then I began fishing for the rope by throwing the picker out and then dragging it across the rope. Soon the hook caught, and I pulled the line up the tree.

I held the loose end in my hands, with the broken bridle. Then I made a running noose on the end, for I meant to lasso the buffalo. The bridle I carefully detached and placed in safety on a branch.

I could depend upon the rope. It was raw-hide, and a better was never twisted, but I felt that this might be my last chance for life, and so I spliced the eye of the noose very carefully and made the knot as firm as possible. Then I reeved the loop through and the thing was ready.

I could throw a lasso well, but the branches prevented me from circling it overhead for a cast, and so it was necessary to get the bull in a certain position under the tree, which I did by shouting and teasing him with slashes of the rope.

When he stood almost directly below me I shot the noose around his neck, and with a quick jerk I tightened it. The moment he felt the pull upon his throat he dashed madly out from the tree, but did not go quite far enough to be brought up with a round turn. He was at the end of the lariat, though, and thus held he began running in a circle about the tree.

My position was rather an unsteady one, for the branches were slender and the cottonwood was shaking, but now I felt confident enough. The bull was tethered, and it only remained for me to get out beyond the length of his tether.

Waiting until the animal, in one of his circles, had got down to the opposite side, I slipped down the trunk and ran for my rifle.

I knew the trail-rope to be about twenty yards in length, but I ran a hundred before stopping. I had even thought of running right on, as I could not help some misgivings about the strength of the rope, for the buffalo was one of the largest I had ever seen.

The rope might break, the knot on the tree might give way, or the noose might slip over the bull's head; but when I looked round I saw him stretched on the plain. The rope was as taut as a bow-string, and the bull's tongue was protruding. He had rushed after me, and was now strangling because of the sudden check.

The idea of carrying in two tongues for supper now returned to me, and I meant to eat a piece of that very tongue which I saw stretching out; so I picked up my rifle, loaded it, and then put the struggling buffalo out of his pain.

I had the tongue from between his teeth in a twinkling, and then I took that of the other buffalo.

Being too tired to think of carrying a heavy load, I started for camp with only the two tongues slung over the barrel of my rifle. The moon had risen, and I had no difficulty in following my own trail, and presently I met several of my companions, who had turned out in search of me hours before, when my horse reached camp.

Two who had a particular relish for fresh meat galloped back to strip the buffaloes of the remaining tidbits, but before midnight all had returned, and as the hump cooked in the cheerful blaze I told the details of my adventure.

F. Lobdell.

A CORNISH FISHING NIGHT.

By LEON A. PAVEY.



T was a glorious evening in September—a year or two before the War—when we waved good-bye to the fishergirls on the stone head of the jetty and rowed out through Looe harbour-mouth. When we got on board the *Mayblossom* the sun was shedding his last gleam in a perfect sky, and Looe and the hills slipped out of sight in a sort of golden haze.

We followed the *Janie* through five miles of still water, and the darkness was beginning to settle down fast when we reduced to half-speed and began to pay out the great net. With each length heaved overboard a cork went into the water, and at every tenth length a bladder went in with a great "plop!" These corks and bladders, of course, were to keep the top of the net near the surface of the water, and, all the bottom being weighted, our catch would be made by fish swimming into a vertical wall of meshes.

The whole scene was one of peculiar beauty. The moon was just rising. Below it shone one brilliant star, while in a far-stretching semi-circle around us were dotted the lights of the little fleet. And suddenly, right on the horizon, a flash—darkness—a flash again, and there was the Eddystone sending out her welcome and her warning.

The paying out of the big net was a long business, and when at length the boat was stopped, three-quarters of a mile of cork and bladders led away into our wake.

Then for a time we tried line-fishing, but found our hooks going fast. "The 'dogs' are out to-night," we were told. With later attempts we caught them—awful-looking creatures and tremendously strong, with fins like sharp knives. It was always a case of 'ware fingers when a "dog" appeared. We left the killing to our friends, who seized them cleverly below the fin, and finished the business with a quick wrench. All dog-fish are killed by fishermen—they are of no value commercially and are enemies to the edible fish.

We soon abandoned the attempt to keep our books, and filled in our time more profitably in the queer-shaped little "cabin." To get there, by the way, we had to climb down a vertical steel ladder, not an easy matter for novices. We drank hot tea, without milk, and ate our grub to the slow and musical Looe dialect and the gentle lipsc-lapse of the waves without.

After listening to the skipper's rhapsodies on the beauties of the oil-engine—not at all an impressive-looking object to the outsider—we were told the tale of the Great Catch.

Be it known that in sea-fishing, although tidings from incoming boats are occasionally worth following up, there are no very workable laws. The skipper, as a rule, simply tries his luck in what he thinks to be a likely place. Yet in one short August night, while boats near by got practically nothing, seventy-three thousand pilchards and mackerel had found the net of the *Mayblossom*, and the dead-tired but joyful crew had spent all the following day in helping the women to sort and count them. The skipper chuckled hugely over that great stroke of luck. It is the hope of this sort of thing that keeps fishermen going during bad times.

When we got "up top" again we found the men there hailing their friends over miles of water. "Ha'ee caught en-nee?" sang out the *Mayblossoms*. But it seemed that catches were small all round. "Heard 'n rattlin' round he-ere, though," came an answering shout from one or two boats to the west of us, "they're goin' your way."

Sure enough, it was soon our turn to "hear 'n rattlin'," and it was an experience wonderful enough. Suddenly breaking in on the deep quiet, and growing louder and louder every moment, there came a sound like a rushing river. We put our hands over our ears, to make shells of them, as it were, and the noise increased then to the roar of tremendous falls. The sea just under the surface was alive and bubbling with fish. Pilchards at play, we were told—we could see thousands of them, and each one white in the clear water.

Below and around those must have been countless thousands more. In their wake the sea was dotted with little green lights, indescribably wicked-looking. These were the eyes of the chasing dog-fish, and the most experienced men on the boat told us that the sight always gave them the same creepy horror.

But to see pilchards so does not necessarily mean that the catch is going to be good. Rather the reverse, indeed, for when they are "larking" on the surface, they are most likely to miss the net. As a matter of fact, the catch this particular night was small, but nevertheless, to us, wonderfully interesting. Squatting in the circle of the lantern swinging on the mast, we watched, fascinated, the hauling in of the net.

"Dogs—dogs—dogs," was the cry as length after length came up. The ugly strong-backed creatures were jerked from the meshes straightway and twisted to death, or slung, very much alive, in a heap by the side of the boat.

The pilchards did not live a quarter the time that the dog-fish did, and the pretty glistening colours of the mackerel faded very quickly indeed. Half-fish there were sometimes, where "dogs" had snapped at their prey as they lay helpless in the meshes, and in doing so had found their own destruction.

The wet decks, littered with the growing piles of fish, glistened in the circles thrown by the swinging lantern, and, turning outboard, we found this picture fronted with one more impressive still—a stretch of sky and sea showing only the stars, the lights of the little fleet, and the Eddystone flashing miles to the westward. But before long the gulls, first in scores and then in hundreds, laid siege to the *Mayblossom*. Soon they became bold enough to sweep within two or three yards of the growing piles of fish, and the air was filled with their incessant clamour.

The edible catch was poor—less than six hundred pilchards and barely a hundred mackerel—so we set off to seek luck in other waters.

It was a most wonderful run that we had then through the Cornish seas as we went westward to speak to the Polperro boats. Every now and again as we leaned over to watch the phosphorescent waves curling back continually from our bows, somebody would cry, "Hear 'n rattlin'!" Then would come the same rushing sound, low at first, then louder and louder, louder and louder, until clouds of milky white would burst beneath us and break into thousands of little streaks that darted by the boat and dazzled the eyes that tried to follow them.

One great tract of the sea appeared to be solid with pilchards. We had only to stamp about in the bows for the rushing to become louder than ever. Again and again these great shoals crossed our course, and always the breaking of that milky-white cataract was absolutely thrilling.

We spoke to two Looe boats on our way to the Polperro fleet, and they confirmed the news that luck was bad all round. So, matters being slack, we went down below to discover two of the men "taking it out" in great sandwiches and saffron cakes and steaming tea. On that short voyage, it seemed to me, our Cornishmen ate very heartily and very often. The boy had finished this particular repast, and all that was discernible of him was sticking out of a hole in the wall of the cabin where he had clambered in for a nap.

When we went up again we were right abreast of the Polperro light, but the Polperro boats were yet a long distance off. We learned that they usually fished off Fowey, and, being small family boats, their crews of two or three men depended mainly on line-fishing for a livelihood.

It seemed to us, when we spoke to the Polperro boats, that the crew of the *Mayblossom* had some miraculous means of recognising Tom, Bill and Jan in the dark, for all that we could see of the vessel was a blur near by. Luck was out with them, too, and we decided to rest content with our small catch and put back to Looe. So we did not see the casting of the net again, although on nights when circumstances justified the labour, it had been out, we learned, three and even four times.

We travelled steadily back, past the Polperro light again, sweeping out of our straight course to avoid the Udden Rock, a half-hidden terror of which the crossing carries too many dangers for the fishers to attempt, but where the higher tides defeat their own ends by ringing a warning bell.

We had now been eight hours on board the *Mayblossom*, and found it quite necessary, as the others did, to go below for hot tea. When we reached the deck again we thanked our lucky stars that we had brought our heavy coats with us, for the deep chill of that September morning was surprising. Yet that was a fine calm voyage, and the previous afternoon had been a regular "scorcher."

I could not help wondering what sea-fishing was like in winter with a rough sea. I asked the look-out man and he, with one leg flung carelessly over the tiller to guide the boat, told me tales that I shall not easily forget.

They were tales of voyages through sleet and snow to other waters along the coast, and of fishing under enormous difficulties off Brixham, Plymouth, and Torquay. For one whole week once they had been forced to stay in a strange port with no chance of getting home through the huge seas and icy gales. And, at the end, no fish to show for it all!

Unlike many landsmen, my fisherman did not boast of liking heavy weather. No, the best time of a trip, he admitted frankly, were the hours spent in talk and songs over the stove in the tiny cabin below. He was telling me the tale of the French captain who on a perfectly clear and calm night wrecked his boat—a fine brig—off Downderry, through mistaking the lights for those of Plymouth, when we saw the harbour lights of Looe, though yet some distance off, beaming a welcome home.

We kept out round Looe Island, for the "in" course is too dangerous, and suddenly here the breeze, already chilly, grew northerly and very, very bitter. It was the morning land wind from the Looe Valley, always very keen and cruel, and invariably the worst Looe fishers have to experience. Yet everybody, including the boy, who had been hauled out of his hole by his sea-boots, was very cheerful. Looe meant home! It is worthy of note that when he is cheerful the present-day West-coast fisherman sings the latest London music-hall ditties!

We were in for one more sight. About half a mile from the harbour there was a sudden eerie swishing noise at the side of the boat, and a mass of black lolloping creatures passed us, tumbling out to sea. A school of porpoises, no less!

There was just one light at the pier-head, but before we could get to it we had to cruise round slowly, nipped by that intense cold, to pick up our row-boat in the dark. And when at last we found it, and got under way, the rowing of our twisting course through the crowded harbour-mouth, and dead against a bitter breeze, needed more than ordinary skill and pluck. Yet to the crew of the *Mayblossom* it was, of course, an every-day matter, and they took it cheerfully enough with "The top o' the marnin'."

A silent, muffled man was waiting on the quay for our catch, and there, after packing some mackerel in a kithag, we said good night to friends we had known for this one memorable night. We went through Looe at 2.30 in the morning, and it looked a veritable town of the sleepers. It was very beautiful

and very silent, with the everlasting hills shutting down on either side. Our fisher friends had seen it on many such returns, and no doubt at all hours of the day and night.

We walked home in the half-light through lanes we had last traversed in hot sunshine. Our watches said it had been just ten hours before, but you cannot measure such a time as we had by watches. We plunged down the home valley and across the stone bridge after the most wonderful view we had had that summer.

I like to remember the hour before that September dawn. We were poised on a height. Below us wreaths of mist were swirling over the valleys and making one vast plain with the sea itself. And right away, at the farthest limit of that grey stretch, a sudden flash, then darkness, and again a flash—it was the good work of the Eddystone still going on.

Against the Enemy, in East Africa.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTERS OF A MEMBER OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

SECOND LETTER.

"Central African Contingent,
"German East Africa,
"10th January, 1917.



WE left our camp on the shores of Lake Nyasa on the 9th April, and were not at all sorry to do so; our numbers had been sadly reduced owing to so many men having been invalided back to the Union, unfit, after several doses of malarial fever.

We went right up the German East border until we reached Fife, in Northern Rhodesia, a distance of some 105 miles. Here we stopped for three weeks, then crossed over into enemy territory and attacked a couple of fortified hills.

The hills were a few hundred yards apart, with a communication trench between. We invested the place, and the enemy held out for three days. On the morning of the fourth day it was found that the enemy had evacuated his forts and had got away through the thick bush. We had a few casualties, but nothing to speak of.

We were all naturally "fed up" that they had escaped under the cover of darkness and bush, as we had considered them our prisoners, but we felt much better pleased when we were promptly ordered to give chase.

We started on a forced march of three days, covering some seventy miles, over huge mountains all the way. Sometimes we were about 8,000 feet above sea level. It was exceptionally tiring, as the ups and downs were very steep. In spite of our strenuous efforts we did not see the Huns again, and reached New Langenburg* on the fourth day. Here another of our forces (the other half of my regiment) had chased the enemy out.

We had two days' rest at New Langenburg,* and then moved on again—as a whole regiment this time. We had to do some more mountaineering for a few days, and drove the enemy from several good positions, with losses to them of food, men, baggage, etc.; we had one or two wounded, and one of my friends died of black-water fever.

At Buhora we remained some time; this place is alive with game of all sorts and sizes, from elephants downwards. Our officer shot four large tuskers (elephants) with five consecutive shots, which, needless to say, takes a lot of doing. The place is absolutely infested with lions. At night they used to sing us to sleep—a new kind of lullaby!

The Mechanical Transport followed us here, and after we moved off they decided to bag a lion or two.

One officer climbed a tree early one night, after having previously tied a sheep at the foot of the tree as a decoy. On the same night a few of the Mechanical Transport men also set a trap-gun with a sheep as bait.

At about 5.30 a.m. there was a loud bang, and the Mechanical Transport men turned out greatly excited, under the impression their gun had shot a lion. They rushed to the spot, and there found the sheep. It had got loose and had set off the trap-gun! They then decided to visit the officer in the tree and find out what luck he had met with. They found the sheep half eaten—and the officer fast asleep up the tree!

We attacked another enemy position near here, and after taking it found one of two of our men whom the Germans had taken prisoner the previous day tied to the wheel of a field-gun with seven bullet wounds in him. The second man had escaped. Before being driven from their position some of the enemy native soldiers (Askari) had shot this poor chap; he was not quite dead, but died twelve hours later.

It is not exactly pleasant fighting against such an enemy; some chaps suffer from nerves, owing to this bush fighting. The bush is so thick that one never knows when one may bump into the enemy to be fired at from apparently nowhere.

But I am more interested in studying Nature than thinking of Huns in hiding. The ants up here are always a source of wonder to me. There are some long-legged, red-brown chaps who live in trees. They pull the leaves of a branch together, and make a nest of them by weaving them together by means of a very fine webbing. We were always

* See the snapshot illustrations by the author, on pages 25 and 97.

under the impression that these nests contained spiders, and I was told the same thing by old inhabitants of the country, but one day I jabbed my bayonet into one and tore it open. Then there was a fine fuss. The ants ran down my bayonet, and attacked me by thrusting their nippers into my arm, and I found it necessary to quit.

I returned after a while and watched them reconstructing their nest; it was marvellous to see the way they drew the leaves together by working in unison and by sheer weight of numbers.



"THE PLACE IS ABSOLUTELY INFESTED WITH LIONS."

There is also a fairly big black ant which goes out on marauding expeditions, marching out in column of fours, with scouts out and everything beautifully correct from a military point of view. Some time afterwards they return with their mouths full of white ants (termites), which evidently are their prey. If disturbed they run about madly and make a hissing noise, and if the disturber does not make himself scarce quickly they run up his legs and make themselves felt.

Our next scrap was at a place called Malangoli. Here we had about seventy casualties, but the enemy suffered more heavily before they bolted and left their 4.1 howitzer in our hands. It was this gun which had caused most of our casualties. After this scrap we expected to be home in about three months; but we were wrong, as seven months have gone by and we are still here.

The country is fairly flat around here, and therefore more adapted for mechanical transport. This corps has done really wonderful work considering the nature of the country, and the Engineering Corps also deserves great credit for the making of the roads, whereby cars are able to climb over ranges of mountains thousands of feet high.

Sometimes there is a sheer drop of hundreds of feet on either side of the road, and the drivers of the cars have very dangerous work, especially in wet weather. One driver was killed owing to his car going off a narrow bridge, but there have been some wonderful escapes. A car slipped off the road and dropped thirty feet, but the two occupants were only a little scratched; another car took a double somersault down a slope, but the driver and others were merely bruised and badly scratched.

Two of our signallers were on a hill working when a small patrol of the enemy Askari came up to within seventy yards of them and fired about twenty rounds without hitting either of the signallers.

These native soldiers seem to be rather bad shots; when they are being fired upon they usually let their rifles off into the air, being afraid to expose themselves by taking aim. Some of them are quite good fighters, but these are the exception.

They are all armed with 11 millimeter mausers, which fire a soft leaden bullet. Anyone hit by one of these bullets has very small hope of recovery, as the bullet "mushrooms" upon striking, and tears a ghastly hole. If it strikes bone the bone is shattered, and it means the loss of a limb.

General N—— has done excellently, considering the small force at his command. At one place, where it was possible, the motor transport was utilised

to bring troops into action, and this was so efficacious that the enemy bolted in no time, leaving behind them many casualties and a big gun.

On one occasion the motor convoy was stopped by elephants. The men had to leave the cars and run into the bush. After the elephants had inspected the cars, and, incidentally, had bent the mudguard of one, they strolled off, and our men were able to resume their journey.

One of our car drivers almost drove into the enemy camp, but saw his mistake in time. He turned about and drove away, but before going very far he found the road held by two lions! He was placed in the awkward position of having the enemy behind him and the lions in front. He decided to make for the lions, and drove towards them. They refused to get off the road, and galloped along in front of the car like two huge dogs. The driver put on speed, and only when his "Tin Lizzie" (Ford car) was almost touching the lions did they deign to get out of the way, each jumping to either side of the road, and being almost brushed by the car as it passed them!

The driver says his hair was standing on end, and he does not want any more such thrills.

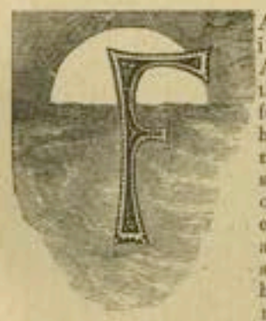
One of our worthy despatch riders rode straight into a German camp. We later captured one of the Germans of this party, and he told us that the despatch rider rode into the camp and dismounted from his machine. He then suddenly realised that he was in an enemy camp, and spoke to four Germans who were having coffee. It was impossible for him to get away, so he said, "You are Germans—well, I am English!" One German thanked him for the motor bike, and he replied, "Oh, don't thank *me*—that is a present from the Union Government." He was then asked to sit down and partake of a cup of coffee, which he promptly did. He is still in the hands of the enemy.

Four hundred of our men surrounded and captured four hundred and seventy of the enemy at a place called Kimbo. We had a good many maxims, but the enemy had a howitzer (4.1). They fired a hundred and fifty-five shells without scratching one of our men. Then they blew up their gun and surrendered.

H.

THE CLIPPER SHIP'S DEFIANCE.

A STORY OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR.



AR off in the Atlantic, some fourteen hundred miles south of the equator and seven hundred miles east of Brazil, rise the ragged peaks of an island known to few landsmen until Great Britain took possession of it a decade or two ago; but to every mariner who has rounded Cape Horn it is familiar as Trinidad, a famous guide-post of the southern ocean.

It is a very picturesque isle, six miles in circumference, and rising eight hundred feet. Alongside the eastern end the "Monument" forms a high-walled harbour, while it lifts twelve hundred feet above the water, and buries its peak in the clouds.

These peaks, which can be seen at a great distance, lie directly in the track of passing ships. Hence it has been the time-honoured custom of sea-captains who have rounded the Horn and are preparing "to make the land," to sight this island and verify their chronometers—a thing easily done, since its location is accurately known.

Aware of this practice, the Confederate cruisers in the American Civil War at one time chose Trinidad for a lurking-place. In the little harbour, facing to the east, the cruiser could lie completely concealed until a watchman on the heights spied an approaching sail. When the craft came near enough, the cruiser would shoot out, send a cannon-ball skipping across the water under the stranger's bow, and so force the unarmed merchantman to lay to.

If she proved to be an American vessel, with an American cargo, she was taken and condemned, but if she were an American vessel with an English cargo, she was "bonded"—that is, the captain signed a bond that the owners of this vessel would pay the captors a stated sum whenever the Confederate States should have secured their independence. This was done because the vessel could not be destroyed without destroying the cargo; and as the Confederacy was anxious to secure the recognition of England, the property of Englishmen was treated with the greatest respect.

One bright Sunday morning, in the summer of 1862, the ship *City of Bath*, Capt. Wilder Cooper, was running before a stiff trade-wind on her way to Europe.

As she approached Trinidad a steamer was seen coming out from the island, and the spyglass showed that she flew no colours. The mate suspected the character of the craft, and advised the captain to "keep away"; but the old mariner picked out the stranger for an English-built vessel, and felt secure.

As the steamer advanced she displayed the English colours; but when she had come to within easy range of the merchant ship her flying bunting dropped, and the flag of the Confederacy, which had been slyly hoisted in a ball behind the cross of St. George, was flung to the breeze, just as the bow gun ordered the ship to lay to. The steamer was the cruiser *Georgia*, and the victim could only submit.

In a few minutes a boat put off from the steamer. As she came alongside the *City of Bath* a dozen men sprang over the rail.

Fierce enough they looked in their Greek caps, red shirts, and belts of revolvers. No man thought of attempting resistance.

But there was one recognised member of the crew who objected to yielding without a struggle, and that was the captain's dog, Rose.

The moment that she saw the sacred precinct of the quarter-deck invaded by a stranger, she displayed a supreme contempt for the uniform which proclaimed the invader a lieutenant in the Confederate navy, charged instantly, and began chewing fiercely at the back of the young officer's coat.

He shouted with fear and rage, and ran about, trying to shake off the infuriated animal. The captain promptly forced the dog off, and that night the sailors robbed themselves to give mess-dainties to Rose.

When the Bath ship reached the little harbour behind the "Monument" she found there a Boston vessel, the *Constitution*, which had been captured two days before the arrival of the men from Maine; and on the second day after their capture the men of the *City of Bath* sighted a clipper ship, evidently on her way home from the East Indies. These clippers were built almost entirely for speed, their carrying capacity being small; but they were the predecessors of the ocean steamer, and flourished at a time when to be the first in port with a cargo of the new crop of tea meant thousands of dollars profit.

Clippers like the *Flying Scud* and the *Flying Cloud* are known to have often run from four hundred to four hundred and forty-three miles in a day. They were veritable racing yachts, the hull lines being fine and easy, and were sparred to spread an immense amount of sail.

It was one of these sharp-nosed fliers that, under a cloud of canvas, came booming along that day, all unsuspicious of the enemy waiting behind the crags of Trinidad. No opportunity was given the prisoners to warn off the stranger, for the eyes of the Confederates were upon them, and death might have been the punishment of any attempt to give the alarm.

The great ship came on as if impatient to enter home waters, until the *Georgia* darted out, with steam hissing from the safety-valve of her straining boilers, and soon threw a cannon-ball by way of ordering the clipper to lay to.

The ship, which was so distant that those on the island could not read her name, was evidently commanded by a man who knew her abilities and meant to give the steamer a race.

In a moment everything was life in the rigging of the distant vessel. Out went the weather studding-sails, down between the yards dropped yard cloths, to prevent the escape of breaths of wind that might slip between the sails; from the bowsprit head fell a great "bull-driver"—a sort of square sail rigged across the martingale—and whips were run aloft to raise buckets of water for wetting down the sails to make them impervious to the air. Then, flinging out the Stars and Stripes from every peak until his vessel seemed alive with bunting, the Yankee laid his course with the trough of the sea.

As his beautiful vessel bowed down before the powerful beam wind, which made every inch of canvas draw its best, he saucily invited his pursuer to the chase. It was steam against wind, but wind having one of the finest devices of man's ingenuity to work upon.

The Yankee, by laying his vessel in the trough of the sea, handicapped his enemy badly; for, while the clipper's lofty sails steadied her, the waves, taking the steamer in the side, caused her to roll heavily.

Time after time the bow gun of the *Georgia* threw its heavy missile, to "wing" the flying craft, but the tapering spars and slender rigging escaped injury. Gradually the clipper drew away, although the steamer was a fifteen-knot boat and doing her best. Still she clung to the chase, and the pair approached the horizon.

Now the *Georgia* had neglected to put a prize crew aboard either of the vessels lying in the harbour. No sooner had the captain of the *Constitution*—a Scotsman, who owned one-quarter of his ship—seen the gunboat miles away than he suggested that the Bath men should assist him in getting sail on his vessel, in the hope that he might slip away under cover of the approaching darkness.

All hands set to work; sails were loosed, yards swung into place, and topsails set. The men were about to knock the pin from the shackle and slip the cable, when the steamer was heard returning, tearing fiercely through the water as if suspecting that the prizes already secured might yet slip away.

Into the harbour the gunboat came, ports lighted and guns run out. As she took a position between the two merchantmen, her captain, Maury by name, called out: "Move a hand on either vessel and I'll blow you out of the water!" As he was in a position and temper to carry out his threat, the men became as statues until a force of Confederates had been put on board, when the sails were furled again.

The twenty-one men of the Boston vessel were put on board the *City of Bath* to be taken to port, but the *Constitution* was burned.

The name of the fleet clipper which so gallantly defied the *Georgia* was never known to any of the Bath crew, but none could ever forget the magnificent spectacle she presented that day. With her clouds of white showing against the graceful tracery of slender spars and rigging which rose above the long black hull, she cut through the water so easily that scarcely a ripple showed upon her wake, as she flew from the toiling steamer, while the watchers exulted to behold her vanishing from sight of the towering crags of Trinidad.

E. C. Plummer.

IN THE PATH OF THE STORM.

AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

By L. B. Thorburn-Clarke.



"ANOTHER day, and not a sign of the break up of the drought," gloomily muttered Mr. Murray, looking out over the sun-baked plains to the far horizon, where the cloudless blue sky appeared to merge in the soft shimmering haze. "I wish those two boys would come back."

He sighed as he resumed his seat in the rough, home-made chair, and thought drearily that, unless the drought broke up at once with the welcome rain, he would be hopelessly ruined. He anxiously watched the brown trail that won across the plains below, waiting for the return of his son and nephew, who had been out since before daybreak seeking for waterholes and feed for the starving cattle.

As he watched, two riders came slowly into sight, and a minute later his nephew Tom rode up to the veranda.

"We can't find a trace of the hidden well," he observed, flinging himself down on the edge of the veranda. "The Juma Juma soak is dead out, and the hollow is full of dead and dying animals. It's simply awful, uncle. Listen to the cattle. They're mad with thirst."

"Poor brutes! They've been bellowing all the morning. I thought they would have broken the fence down and stampeded long before this."

"Charlie has gone to let down the slip bars. He thinks they might find water where we have failed. He still believes that old yarn of an unfailing water-hole."

"But the blacks declare that it does not exist," said Mr. Murray. "Even when there has been plenty of rain, they would never own up to its being anywhere near the Station."

"I know," replied Tom. "I don't think there's any truth in Old Geordie's yarn, but any straw is worth clinging to now. Why, we have only one water-bottle full between us and death."

"What's that!" asked Charlie, coming suddenly around the house. "Who wants to talk about death! Not I. We're going to find that water-hole or perish in the attempt. Buck, up, father, things might be worse. I've let the cattle go. Poor brutes! They're galloping madly over the plains. Look, you can see them!" He pointed to the cloud of reddish dust tossed up by the galloping hoofs of the maddened animals.

Nothing ever damped Charlie's spirits. Even now, in spite of the fact that they had searched for days, he still persisted that there was something in the story of the well that never dried. They had never sought it in the days of plenty, though all remembered that Old Geordie, who had settled down on the plains many years ago, had spoken of such a well. Unfortunately, no one had ever thought to inquire as to its location, and now the old stockman was dead.

Charlie still watched the cattle galloping across the plains.

"Why," he cried in surprise, "they're turning towards the hills."

"Perhaps they're making for the old water-holes," suggested Tom.

"They'll find them empty. Why, even the hoary old crocodiles must be baked to death in their mud holes! I wonder how they live through the hot weather?"

"They always turn up smiling after the rains," observed Tom, stroking the nose of his favourite horse, that still lingered beside the veranda.

"Well, I'm off to have another try for the well," observed Charlie cheerfully. "I'll follow up the line of water-holes. Perhaps old Bess might remember. Geordie used to own her, and probably she knows the way to the secret well.

"Don't be foolish, Charlie," said Mr. Murray. "Bess is half blind. You can't ride her."

"I'll walk beside her," replied Charlie, whistling gaily as he walked off the veranda. "Bess! Bess!" he called.

The old mare whinnied gently as she came up to him and pushed her nose into his hand. "Poor old girl, I've no water for you. I wish I had. Where did Geordie hide his well!"

Bess nosed around her young master, and then walked to the empty horse trough and whinnied for water.

"There's nothing for you, Bess. Come, you must show me how to find water."

Charlie brought out a bridle and put it on the mare, but in spite of all his coaxing Bess would not understand what was wanted. Charlie explained, ordered, and entreated, but Bess declined to show the least sagacity in the matter of water-finding.

"Geordie must have used her," observed Charlie, seating himself on a stump outside the stable door. "She was his only horse, and he always brought water from the well before father bought the run and made the dam. Now, how did he carry that water?"

Suddenly Charlie's brow cleared, and he dashed into the stable. Up in the loft he found what he sought—an old pack saddle and a pair of galvanised iron horse tanks. In a few minutes he had carried them down the ladder and had soon placed the outfit in position on Bess's back.

Evidently the old mare realised what was required, for she at once walked to the slip bars at the back of the house and whinnied.

"Tom," yelled Charlie, "are you coming! Bess and I are just off."

"Right you are," cried Tom, vaulting on his horse and trotting after Charlie, who was hurrying to overtake Bess.

The old mare made her way rapidly through the valley, past the dried up water-holes, until she entered a deep ravine that wound in and out of the hills. It was a barren, desolate region, the ironstone ridges on either side being crowned with tall gimlet gums, with their scanty foliage burnt brown by the drought. The rough ground under their feet echoed almost like metal as they hurried along.

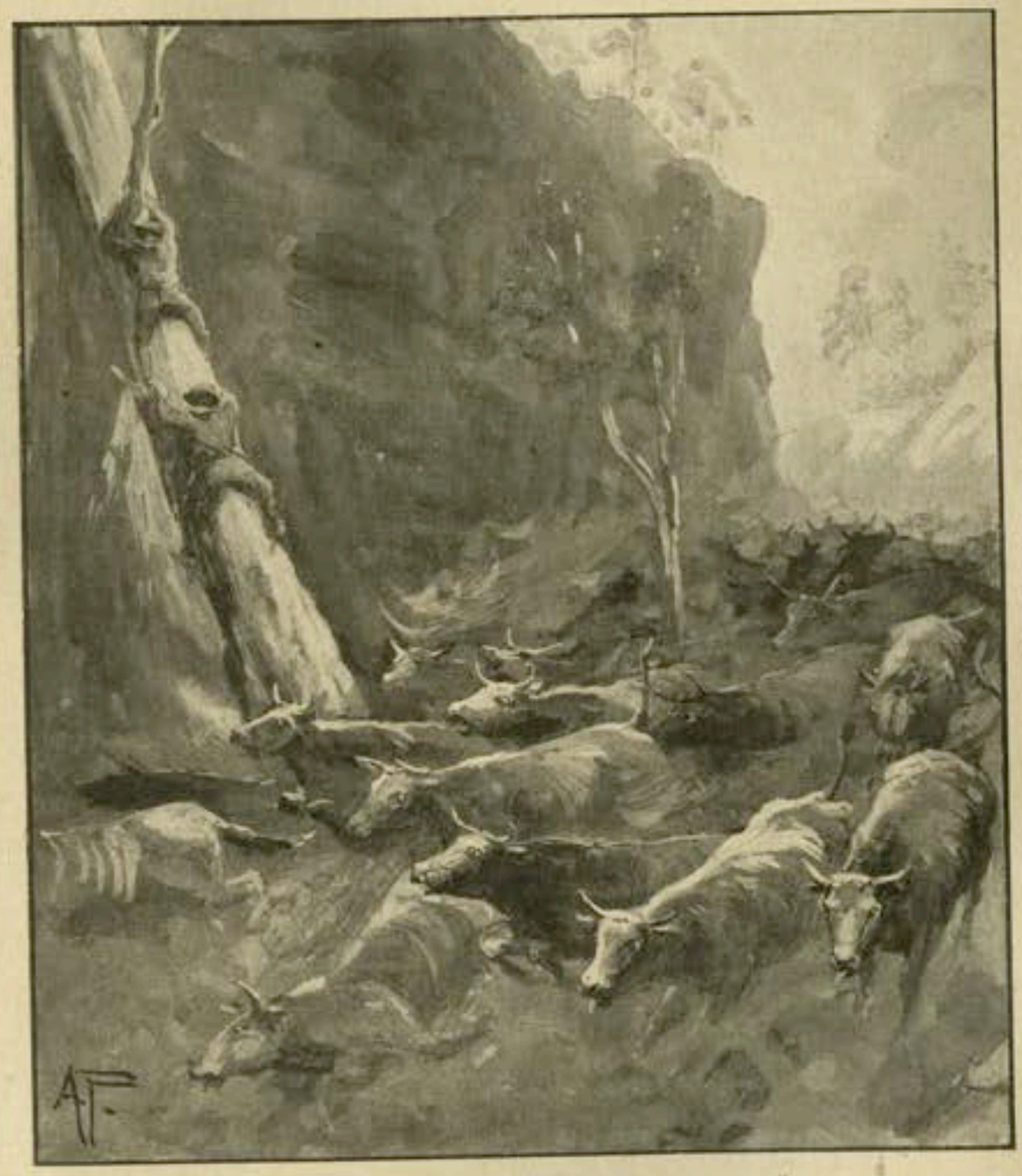
"Pleasant sort of place," observed Charlie.

"It's like walking through an oven. I wonder how far the mare will lead us?"

"This doesn't look much like a place to find water."

"The sides are water worn. At one time I expect it was the bed of a river. I say, there's Billy and his tribe making their way along the ridge.

"Billy!" yelled Charlie. "Where are you going!"



"THE BOYS CLUNG GRIMLY TO THE DEAD TREE TRUNK."

Drawn by Alfred Pearse.

"Plenty lain comin'. Bigum flood. You bet plenty lain."

"Tell that to my grandmother," cried Charlie. "You black fellow make big mistake. The sky's all blue."

The black fellow burst into a torrent of words.

"What does he say?" asked Tom, who could not understand the black's words.

"He says that some flowering gum has burst into bloom. It never flowers except before a big flood, and he and his tribe are leaving the plain and seeking refuge in the hills. He says the flood will cover the plains."

"I wish it would," observed Tom, as the black vanished after the rest of his family.

"No such luck," muttered Charlie. "Whoa, Bess, whoa! What's the matter, old girl? Did you hear anything, Tom?"

"I don't know." Tom paused and, leaning back in his saddle, listened. "Yes. . . . I can hear cattle bellowing. . ."

"They're stampeding this way," cried Charlie.

"Get up behind me," cried Tom, and, as Charlie sprang up, he urged his horse into a gallop. Not that the horses wanted urging, for already they had caught the ominous echo of the bellowing of the maddened cattle. For a few minutes they galloped, but the sound of their pursuers' hoofs grew louder.

"It can't be done," cried Charlie. "Bess is making a good pace of it, and your horse would stand a chance without a double burden. But if we are caught——"

"The sides of the ravine don't promise much chance of getting out."

"No, but here's a gum that has fallen. We might shin up the trunk."

Charlie sprang off the horse, his example being followed by Tom, and both of the boys made a dash for the tree, while the horses galloped off with a squeal of terror along the ravine. Already the beat of the cattle's hoofs could be heard mingling with their frenzied bellowing.

"This is a lively look out," said Charlie, as he clung to the tree trunk, trying to work his way up to the top of the ravine. "The wretched trunk is as smooth as glass. I hope we shan't be knocked off our perch by the cattle."

"Not much chance of that."

The cattle came thundering down the ravine, their eyes red and glaring, while with open mouths they panted with gasping breaths, as they surged in a frenzied mob beneath the tree. They were utterly unconscious of the two boys who clung grimly to the dead tree trunk above their heads, only that strange instinct that will draw thirst-maddened cattle for miles was forcing them onwards, seeking something to drink.

The boys waited till the last straggler had gone by. Then finished their climb to the top of the ravine, and made their way laboriously along the ridge that overlooked it. After about an hour's hard walking they reached a barrier of cliffs that effectually barred further progress.

"That ends it," observed Tom, gazing down at the cattle that were crowding around the foot of the cliff. The distressed animals were lowing miserably. "If there is any water, it is beyond the cliffs."

"Where's Bess?" asked Charlie. "There's your horse right enough, but Bess has disappeared."

"Killed by the cattle perhaps."

"Not she; you remember she had a good start. I'm going down to investigate."

"Don't be such an idiot, Charlie. It isn't safe."

Charlie only laughed as he scrambled down the face of the ravine. The cattle were apparently too worn out with their stampede to make any protest as he pushed his way through them.

"I say, Tom," yelled Charlie, "here's an old clay trough. I expect this is the site of the well, but there's no water. I'm going to investigate a sort of hole that leads somewhere."

"You'd better not," yelled Tom in reply. There was no answer for a few minutes; then he was startled by Charlie's voice from the top of the cliff.

"I've found the well. It's a regular robber's hole. A depression in the hills, with a small lake flowing out of the ground and down again. Lovely crop of wild oats and native grasses. I wish we could get the cattle through. Bess is in her glory. There is a picotta and a sort of pipe arrangement that leads out to the trough under the cliff. I'm going to see if it acts."

"I'll come."

"No, don't do that," replied Charlie. "I want you to see how the pipe works. You can watch."

Charlie disappeared, and Tom could hear his whistle as he evidently worked at the picotta beyond the cliff. The clanking of a chain was plainly audible, but in a moment this was drowned in the wild struggle of the thirsty cattle to obtain the water that came gushing through the pipe.

Fortunately the old clay trough was a long one, and so arranged that the water flowed down the whole length, or else in their wild endeavours to secure a drink the weaker cattle would have been seriously injured. As it was, they stood outside the line of drinking animals and lowed miserably. At last, however, all were satisfied and started to go home.

"Thank goodness, that's done," cried Charlie, coming out of the gap in the cliff. "My arms are nearly broken off. Come along, Tom, this old place is worth seeing."

Tom scrambled down to where Charlie was standing, and was led through a long, narrow rift in the rocks into the daylight on the other side.

"Pity we haven't a scythe to cut the oats," said Charlie, waving a hand over the standing crop. "It's good, isn't it? Come, help me fill Bess's tanks, and then we'll explore the caves. I wonder, by the way, who lived in them?"

"Bushrangers, perhaps. You know Geordie was always a mystery."

"I wonder why they didn't build huts on the flat. Come along, Bess."

The tanks were soon filled, and the two boys climbed up to the caves, and then to the top of the cliff, which overlooked the highest hills.

"There's a dust storm," cried Tom, pointing to an ominous black cloud in the distance. "A pretty bad one, too. We'd better make for home at our best pace."

(*Continued on page* 87.)



What Goes to Make a Prize Winner?

PROFESSOR HUXLEY'S ADVICE TO BOYS.

THE other day I came across some wise, clear, sensible words which Professor Huxley addressed to the boys of University College School, London.

The occasion seems to have been a prize distribution and the year 1880.

Some of my readers may say that is a long time ago, and the advice, therefore, out of date. But when you have read the great scientist's very wise and sensible words, you will, I think, agree that they are every bit as applicable to the boys who now fill the class-rooms and studies as they were to your predecessors.

This is what Professor Huxley said:

"What sort of fellows are those who win prizes? I am sorry to say I have not the pleasure of knowing any of the prize winners personally, but I take upon myself to affirm that the boys to whom I have had the pleasure of giving prizes to-day, take them altogether, are the sharpest, quickest, and most industrious and strongest boys in the school.

"By strongest, I do not exactly mean those who can lift the greatest weights or jump the furthest, but those who have the most endurance.

"You will observe, again, that I say, take them together; I do not doubt that outside the list of prize winners there may be boys of keener intellect than any who are in it, disqualified by lack of industry or lack of health, and there may be highly industrious boys who are unfortunately dull or sickly; and there may be athletes who are still more unfortunately either idle or stupid, or both. Quickness in learning, readiness and accuracy in reproducing what is learnt, industry, endurance—these are the qualities, mixed in various proportions, which are found in boys who win prizes.

"Now there is not the smallest doubt that every one of these qualities is of great value in practical life. Upon whatever career you may enter, intellectual quickness, industry, and the power of bearing fatigue are three great advantages.

"But I want to impress upon you, and, through you, upon those who will direct your future course, the conviction which I entertain, that, as a general rule, the relative importance of these three qualifications is not rightly estimated; and that there are other qualifications of no less value which are not directly detected by school competition.

"A somewhat varied experience of men has led me, the longer I live, to set the less value on mere cleverness—to attach more and more importance to industry and physical endurance. Indeed, I am much disposed to think that endurance is the most valuable quality of all, for industry and the desire to work hard do not come to much if a feeble frame is unable to respond to the desire.

"Everybody who has had to make his way in the world must know that, while the occasion for intellectual effort of a high order is rare, it often happens that a man's future turns upon his being able to stand a sudden and a heavy strain upon his powers of endurance.

"To a lawyer, a physician, or a merchant, it may be everything to be able to work sixteen hours a day for as long as is needful without knocking up. Moreover, the patience, tenacity, and good humour, which are among the most important qualifications for dealing with men, are incompatible with an irritable brain, a weak stomach, or a defective circulation.

"If any of you prize winners were a son of mine—as might have been the case, I am glad to think, on former occasions—and a good fairy were to offer to equip him according to my wishes for the battle of practical life, I should say, 'I do not care to trouble you for any more cleverness. Put in as much industry as you can instead; and oh!—if you please—a broad, deep chest, and a stomach of whose existence he shall never know anything.' I should be well content with the prospects of a fellow so endowed.

"The other point which I wish to impress upon you is, that competitive examination, useful and excellent as it is for some purposes, is only a very partial test of what the winners will be worth in practical life.

"There are people who are neither very clever, nor very industrious, nor very strong, and who would probably be nowhere in an examination, and who yet exert a great influence in virtue of what is called 'force of character.' They may not know much, but they take care that what they do know they know well. They may not be very quick, but the knowledge they acquire sticks. They may not even be particularly industrious or enduring, but they are strong of will and firm of purpose, undaunted by fear of responsibility, single-minded, and trustworthy.

"In practical life a man of this sort is worth any number of merely clever and learned people."

The Finesse of Forward Play.

By R. THOMSON (Chelsea's famous Centre Forward).

THERE is all the difference in the world between merely doing a thing so as to pass muster and doing it like a tip-top artist. There are hundreds of people who can draw or paint a bit, in more or less amateur fashion; there are few who ever excel after the style of the grand old artists of Italy, France, Spain and England in days gone by. There are scores on scores of lads who learn to play the piano or violin sufficiently to extract a melody of some sort from it; but how many of these youths ever contrive to give the finished performance that a Frederick Dawson displays on the one instrument or a Haydn Wood on the other!

Exactly the same remark applies in the realm of Sport. There is, apart from mere scoring ability, a finesse and finish about some exponents of almost every game which is totally lacking in others. And this polished exposition of play, or of some department of it, is not a negligible item, nor a thing to be overlooked as unnecessary. For not only does it mark the stylish player, the true soul of the game, but it pleases the spectators—even when its exponent does not always score—far more than the average person may imagine.

You have only to reflect what a treat everybody has always deemed it to watch a Spooner or a Hayward when batting; a Renshaw or a Doherty at lawn-tennis; a Lambert or a Poulton at Rugby football; a Woodward or a Buchan at Soccer; an Oxford or a Cambridge eight on the river. Quite apart from winning or losing, there is a real delight in observing players who are showing the utmost grace, the perfection of movement, the charm of artistic finish in their work, whatever may be the particular sport or labour undertaken.

And so, boys, I would impress on you right at the start that there is a finesse, a polish, an artistry possible to Soccer forwards which far too few of them deem possible, or ever strive to attain. My space to describe a few of the things I would like to mention here for you is limited, but I will try to put some of them before you so clearly that you may be led, I hope, to aim at accomplishing something similar yourselves, and thus raising the game as a spectacle, whilst also vastly improving your own play on the field.

That extremely delicate touch of the ball with the instep, as exemplified by some of our greatest Soccer forwards, past and present—can't you manage to get nearer to this than you have previously done? It isn't enough simply to kick the ball on somehow towards the opposite goal-posts; it isn't enough to get in a punt just when it may be wanted from you. There are other delights of forward play, little touches of the ball which show the real forward-expert, and often mean a goal into the bargain.

When your opponent tackles you, gets up with you, tries to wrench command of the ball from you, how pleasant it is to know that you possess just that deftness of touch with the instep, and with either foot, and with either side of the foot, that shall outwit him, or perplex him, or prove his undoing in the attack! How the success of it thrills yourself; how the observation of its triumph makes the spectators cheer! And you can do it, if only you have any real bent towards forward play in Soccer, and are content to learn, and to practise, practise, practise until it comes easy to you.

Get two or three of your comrades one at a time to endeavour to stop you from passing them with the ball at your toes, as if on the real match-field. Try again and again to manipulate the ball with the instep of each foot so as to nullify their efforts. Use your head as well as your feet in the business, by trying to grasp just which foot they are expecting you to employ this time, which way they are next expecting you to turn the ball. Then, of course, endeavour to outwit them by doing just the opposite!

You may have to spend some long time in practice ere you attain your object with any confidence, especially if your opponents are smart, thoughtful men, as they ought to be. But you will begin to succeed at last, and then your reward will come in important matches later on.

Another piece of finesse in forward play is the striking way some players have of shouldering an opponent off when he challenges them whilst taking-on the ball. Now it is easy for any strong fellow to give a big lunge with his shoulder in such a case, a kind of brute-force business which may succeed or not, according as the opponent is clever or clumsy. But a mere solid push, which has nothing else to recommend it, does not often prove the undoing of the smart and accomplished player. He is too wary for that; he has been expecting something of the sort, you see, and is not to be caught napping by sheer strength.

No, there is a finesse in shouldering-off, as you will know well if ever you have observed closely some of our leading League forwards or 'Varsity men in Soccer. These expert players just seem to give a bit of a gentle shove with the shoulder, and hey, presto!—the opposing performer has been as effectually kept off the ball as though he were half a mile away! How did they do it? How can *you* do it?

Well, there is a knack of using the shoulder-push, just as in most things, to the best advantage. And the knack disposes of mere brute strength as certainly as jiu-jitsu does in overthrowing a man during wrestling. You can only learn the knack by getting a good player who knows it to show you exactly how it is done, and then practising, practising, practising till you have got hold of the trick yourself.

Then there is a finesse in running, which is not always appreciated even by good players. Though speed is of course a paramount necessity for him who wishes to overtake a man well in front, yet it is surprising to spectators to notice how often a wing forward, or other player wishing to circumvent a runner with the ball, or expectant of receiving the ball, does not by any means take the greatest advantage of direction, position of his opponents, etc., whilst so doing. You may be able to cut off the man with the ball far more effectively if you make your sprint an instant sooner, or even later in some cases, than if you dash forward without thought under some sudden impulse.

It is, again, a matter of using the head as well as the feet, but it signifies a finesse of play which is not always apparent in the average first-class forward, let alone in the boys' teams at our good schools.

And there is the very important finesse of doing what is best with the ball when you have it, under certain varying conditions. The methods of dealing with the ball when the ground is quite dry, when it is very wet, when covered with sticky mud, when snow is falling, when the ball itself is sodden through and through, are as different as cheese and chalk, if you would seek to play successfully and to score goals.

My space here is too short to detail exactly what you ought to do in each of these cases, but I point them out now to prove to you that merely kicking-on the ball is not enough for a forward, however enthusiastic or strong or eager he may be. It is finesse which tells you the exact thing likely to deceive your opponent, to bring about a goal for your side, under the above-named variety of circumstances.

It is little use kicking hard on a dry, firm ground in order to outwit your rivals; they will know the game, and probably be as quick on the ball as yourself. On the contrary, you will hardly be able to control the ball with deft touches from the toe on a sticky ground, or on a very sodden one; you must rely more on harder, straightforward kicking, for your opponents will not be able to sprint fast on such a ground, nor so likely to get up to the ball every time you put in a long forward kick.

And that beautiful finesse of combination, that pretty exemplification of expert play which



R. THOMSON.

enables you and your comrade, or comrades, by a clever and quick grasp of what each of you intends or desires, to deceive and altogether outwit the other side, is one of the finest specimens I know of real and paying finesse in Soccer!

You are making a long run, with the ball just before you; there seems nobody to whom you can possibly pass it effectively; your rival feels sure he has got you this time! He finally comes to close grips with you for the ball, when (as if he had dropped out of the blue sky above!) your comrade appears and gathers the ball, which you have neatly touched to that side to which your opponent's back was turned at the moment! Before the latter has grasped what has occurred, or that he is trying to get a ball which has gone, your friend is in the goal-mouth with it!

How was the smart move done? By clever finesse! You and your comrade had a perfect understanding that he should only come close to you behind your man when he saw you had succeeded in keeping an opponent's eyes and thoughts directed entirely one way for a perceptible space. Thus knowing, your comrade did not risk interference by coming up to your help too soon; at the same time he had every muscle taut, every nerve strained, for the great and quiet sprint when the proper moment came. There are scores of such bits of finesse which indicate brainy play at Soccer, which prove the value of artistic, as against mere kicking and commonplace endeavour.

Then, again, I should like to mention the finesse (a trifle risky for boys, perhaps, to try too often, but naturally frequently successful owing to its very daring and unexpectedness)—the finesse of doing something in a desperate crisis utterly against all regular canons of the sport.

Let me take an example which may serve, though I only use this because it comes at once to my mind. You are a wing forward, let us say, and a far surer and longer kicker than most others in similar position. You are approaching the goal with the ball, well away from the centre, but of course gradually curving inwards as you run.

Now every opponent from sheer custom is looking for you to "centre" the ball, especially as your man there is a dangerous one. And ten times out of twelve you would do this. But why

should you not, if you notice they are all expecting this, drop a bombshell on them by trying a kick at goal on your own, when you think you are within shooting distance of it? Doubtless you would now and then catch them napping, and a score would result. Of course you and your comrades ought to have some clear signal, known only to yourselves, that you mean to do this—a motion with the hand might signify your intention to your side—and then they would be ready to back up when the ball landed somewhere close to the goal, at any rate.

These pieces of finesse in play which I have mentioned in this article will not always come off, of course. If they did you would be a marvel, a man verging on the super-human in Soccer football. But they will frequently turn up trumps; and they will always serve to mark and stamp you as a player who uses his brains on the field as well as his feet and body, which is more than can be said of every fellow who aspires to be designated a Soccer player. Indeed, I myself always say that once we can get a man, perhaps better still a whole team, to use brains on the football ground during a match, we have more than half won the game, although so far we may not have actually scored a goal.

Brains are the things that tell to-day, boys, whether in labour or sport. Brains are what mark the real artists, whether in professions, trades, or games. However powerful a nation or individual may be; however it or he may rely on sheer strength; however many battalions may be arrayed on the side of might alone; these will all be unable to cope at last with the nation or individual whose work and aims are directed by brains as against mere force. Intellect and training have always eventually won the day, and they always will. I may say here as a side note that I look upon V. J. Woodward and Charlie Buchan as the brainiest players I have met.

Finesse in any play, as in any material work, is the child of thought, of brains, of keen training. You can never become an artist in your business or sport, whatever it be, unless you bring into it every faculty of your mind and higher sense.

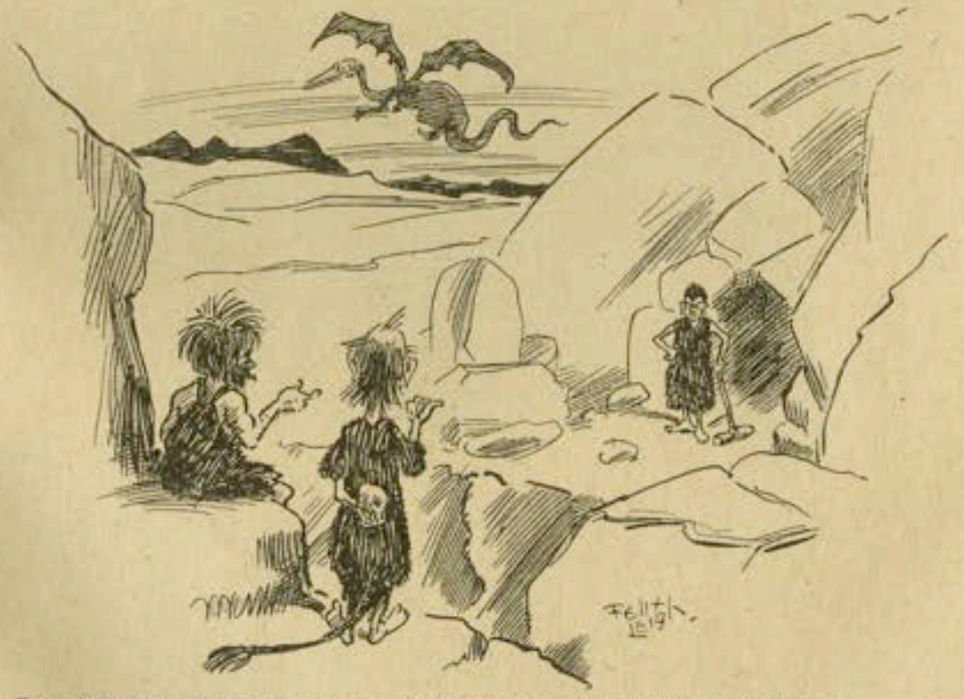
"Pray, Mr. Opie, what do you mix your paints with to get such lovely colours in your pictures?" a lady one day asked of the famous R.A.

"With brains, madam!" replied he.

And in that answer, boys, lies the great secret for you and me of success in Soccer, as in everything else.

R. Thomson
Chelsea F.C.

COURAGE IN THE STONE AGE.



FIRST ABORIGINE: "I WONDER IF THAT YOUNG FLINTMALLET IS AS PLUCKY AS HE LOOKS."
SECOND ABORIGINE: "EVERY BIT, I SHOULD SAY. WHY, SOME OF THE NEIGHBOURS TELL ME THAT HE'S BEEN KNOWN TO PULL THE TAIL OF A PTERODACTYL!"

THE STORY OF AN OWL.

BY ONE WHO OWNED HIM AND WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS MISDEMEANOURS.



HE was known to everyone as "His Reverence." His appearance was so ecclesiastical that the nickname seemed to fit him better than any other.

People often say "as stupid as an owl," but probably they have never kept one.

He passed into my hands in much the same casual way that all my pets did. Sauntering home in the dusk of a winter's afternoon, I came upon a lad dragging along by a rusty dog-chain a mass of dirty-looking, ruffled feathers, which on closer inspection proved to be a miserable, undersized owl. After some little argument, I plunged to the extent of eighteenpence, and so became its owner.

My appearance at home was not hailed with delight in consequence of my latest acquisition, which hardly created a favourable impression. This was due to his ejecting balls of fur (the remains of the last mouse he had eaten) directly anyone went near him. It was not very nice of him, and I was not surprised that my relatives retired in great disgust, with the common opinion that not much trouble had been spent on his manners.

Left alone with my new favourite, I began to wonder what I should do next. So far, owls had not been numbered amongst my pets, and I knew very little about them. I set to work and hunted up everything that I could find relating to owls, and I was sorely puzzled at the contradictory advice given. On one thing alone my authorities were agreed, and that was the absolute necessity for fur or feathers as an aid to digestion.

This was unfortunate; for the idea of taking life was always hateful to me, and I felt quite low-spirited about it. I disliked catching mice for His Reverence to kill, and to entrap small birds was still further out of the question.

So I compromised matters by chopping up some worsted and mixing it with finely shredded raw meat. Then I introduced him to the nearest mouse-run, and left him to his own devices.

At first he scornfully refused all my offerings of food with a seriously offended air. But as the days went by the food disappeared, and his sleek and prosperous condition gave ample proof that he did not spend all his time in idleness.

He was a French owl, of a much smaller size than our English ones, buff coloured, with pretty grey markings on his pinions, and a beautiful snowy breast. I found out later on that he had been brought over from France by an enterprising Frenchman as a unique offering for his lady-love. Perhaps he did not know that in England owls are held by the superstitious to be birds of ill-omen and forerunners of death, or, maybe, it was a new rendering of the old saw, "Love me, love my dog"; but certain it is that when the unfortunate suitor received his *congé*, Mr. Owl was also cast adrift to fend for himself as best he might.

There was something very uncanny about His Reverence, and I had always an uncomfortable feeling that, if he could speak, "he would a tale unfold." As I watched him sitting and blinking at me, I no longer wondered that the Athenians should have dedicated the owl to Pallas, the Goddess of Wisdom. The old-world legend of which we read in Ovid came back to me with startling distinctness, until, sitting in the dim twilight, I could fancy that I actually saw the transformation of Ascalaphus* into the bird take place before me. It was all horribly eerie.

My bird was at first most unsociable with people generally, and most persistently rejected all overtures from outsiders, though he became greatly attached to me. My mother was his favourite, however, and each evening, when she stood at the door to watch the stars, a gentle "twrr-twrr-hoo-oo-o" would sound from a neighbouring tree, and His Reverence would swoop silently down and perch on her shoulder, where he would nestle contentedly as long as she allowed him to.

He had a strange fancy for cheese, and it was her custom to give him a piece from the window after supper. He was always ready for it; but he was too wary to take it from the hand of anyone else, and would hover outside, uttering continuous hoots of dissatisfaction.

It may have been something French in his nature, but he never showed the same dislike to daylight that his English brethren have. He delighted to sit for hours in a high window where he could get a good view of the surrounding country. Like a small sentinel, he kept strict watch over everyone who came in and went out.

The little butcher-boy had a rough time of it when he appeared. He was deadly afraid of the owl, and His Reverence knew it, and turned his knowledge to some account. He much loved a juicy chop, and he was fully aware that such a luxury was often to be found in the butcher-boy's basket; so he acted accordingly.

Some little time before the meat was due, His Reverence would conceal himself in a tree, or a thick laurel-bush, and, just as the lad was passing, he would fly in his face, beating him with his wings. It was always the same; as soon as the bird attacked him, the boy put down his basket to defend himself, and the owl would seize on the chop that most took his fancy, and retreat

* Ascalaphus, the ancients said, was turned into an owl for mischief-making.

to his window, where it was next to impossible to reach him. The boy would go his way muttering imprecations on that imp of the Evil One.

As His Reverence grew more accustomed to his surroundings he became less of a recluse, and he paid very regular visits to the kitchen. He took the most lively interest in culinary matters, and watched the cook's movements unceasingly. He was no favourite of hers; for she declared that to see him sitting staring at her so solemnly made her quite "flustered like"; consequently, as she could not keep him out of her kitchen, she did her best to divert his attention by throwing him small pieces of meat. Being a bird of some discernment, he soon saw the drift of this, and gave her more and more of his company, until supply and demand got to such a pitch that the good woman declared that nothing short of a whole joint would satisfy him.

I did my best to restore peace by nailing some wire-netting over the kitchen windows, thus circumventing His Reverence, who, being a bird of great resource, turned his attention to fishing, and grew to be an ardent disciple of Izaak Walton.

There was a fair-sized trout stream running through our grounds, and in one spot an arch was formed by a little Chinese bridge. Under this bridge, on a little strip of sand, would the bird take up his position for hours at a time, watching patiently for the speckled trout. He became, in time, an expert fisherman, and devoured his victims with unmistakable relish, after which he would retire to his favourite perch and indulge in a snooze.

He soon established most friendly relations with all the dogs, but cats were his great aversion, and he lost no opportunity of a pitched battle with them. He had not the least objection to tackling two at one time, always defeating them "with great slaughter." After one of these skirmishes he would strut up and down in the proudest way possible, to the delight of his canine friends, who always watched the strange contest with the keenest interest.

He was a great pet in the stable, where his feats as a rat-catcher met with ungrudging admiration. The horses were not in the least afraid of him, and allowed him to perch on their necks without the slightest resistance. Here he waited motionless until a rat showed itself under the manger, when he covered it in an instant. There was no second appearance in public for the unfortunate rodent.

Like all geniuses, be they birds or persons, His Reverence had his cranks, and his especial one was the belief in a common fund; the cats' meat was his particular stumbling-block. It was not the least use driving him away from it; he always returned to it with fresh zeal, and would even try for it while the cats were actually eating it. Pussy, being much heavier than he was, sometimes pulled him right round the yard in their unequal tug-of-war, but His Reverence never once yielded one ounce of his ill-gotten gains, and generally managed to retire covered with gory glory and a sizable slab of liver.

Those who saw the performance for the first time were amazed at his style; but then, they did not know that, like the fashions, he came from Paris.

As months passed, there were unmistakable signs of a mouse-famine, consequently His Reverence betook himself to pastures new when he felt a longing for mouse-meat. Sometimes he would absent himself for a week at a time, returning in anything but a cheerful frame of mind, with his plumage ruffled and soiled, and a general air of depression. He made up to my mother on such occasions; for he was deep enough to know instinctively that she would be the first to see that he had a good meal.

I did not altogether approve of these expeditions, for the owl was not particular as to the hour of his return, and often chose the most unseasonable times. For example, there was that night when we were awakened by a succession of the most hair-lifting shrieks, which seemed to come from the servants' quarters. There I found the housemaid in violent hysterics, while her fellow servant was engaged in trying to pacify her, and at the same time get rid of the owl.

He had returned from one of his outings, and had got into the servants' room through a small window left open because of the heat. Here he decided to cast anchor, and worked his way on to the bed by means of his beak and claws. This had roused the maid, who, feeling something strange moving, started screaming.

By the time I reached the room she had hidden her head under the bed-clothes, while His Reverence sat on the bed-rail and hissed like a snake. Awakened by the noise, others from all parts of the house, clad in all sorts of scanty attire, straggled in one by one. It was a weird sight, and one over which I have laughed many a time since that never-to-be-forgotten night.

It was no laughing matter for me then, however; for nobody seemed able to see the funny side of it. The servant's explanation was that she thought it was a visit from the Evil One.

About this time His Reverence became a public character, and he paid many a visit to the village fish-dealer. He was seldom molested by anybody, and was soon a general favourite. He was, curiously enough, passionately fond of music, and whenever my mother sang or played the piano he became indifferent to everything else. The first few bars were enough to bring him; wherever he was he heard, and down he swooped silently and swiftly, perching on the window-sill, whence nobody could dislodge him until the last note had died away, when he would disappear as silently as he had come.

There was a certain inn not far off, where the men sat on the green with their mugs of beer, a lad playing the violin to them the while.

His Reverence often attended these musical evenings, where he had a pal, a retriever, on whose shaggy back he took refuge, and who, for the time, constituted himself the bird's protector. Woe to any thoughtless lad who in any way interfered with His Reverence; the dog quickly avenged him.

(*Concluded on page* 101.)

'TWIXT RIVAL SCHOOLS

By F. L. MORGAN,

Author of "The Lost Medal," "Against Heavy Odds," "The Big House in the Wood," etc.

CHAPTER VIII.—*A SUCCESSFUL RAID.*

"FOUR, five, no *seven* Redlands kids going down to bathe!" said Chalmers, looking through the hedge with caution.

Bates and Lynwood Secundus, lying flat on their backs in the field, continued to gaze up through a leafy maze into the clear blue beyond.

"They look jolly pleased with themselves, too," commented Chalmers, still gazing through the hedge.

"Are they big kids, Chalmers?" inquired Bates, without moving.

"Only about as big as us," replied Chalmers, coming to join the other two in the shade of the tree. "D'you know, Bates, I think I shall give up collecting birds' eggs," he continued, changing the subject with suddenness. "It's rather cruel, and, besides, there aren't any left hardly; they must be all hatched, I believe."

"What shall you collect, then?" asked Christopher, interestedly.

"Grasses, I think," replied Chalmers, turning over on his face and beginning on the instant. "Look what heaps of different sorts there are, even just on this spot. They'd look pretty decent arranged and stuck in a book. And it won't be a bally secret, like your wonderful collection, young Lyn Secundus. I s'pose you think that if we were to see yours we'd all want to copy it!"

Bates smacked the head of Chalmers with the familiarity of friendship and rose to his feet.

"Come on, you two," he said. "Those Redlands kids are out of sight by now—let's be getting on and see if there's anything doing."

"What are we going to do?" inquired Lynwood Secundus, as the three made for one of the many gaps in the hedge that led into the road.

"I couldn't say, young Lynwood," replied Bates, loftily. "I only know, same as you do, that seven Redlands kids are gone down to bathe. But you never can tell what may happen. We've got strategy on our side, because we know their movements and they don't know ours."

"You mean, Bates, that our superior knowledge gives us a chance to use strategy?" corrected Lynwood Secundus.

"P'raps I do, and I also mean that if I have too much of your lip I'll smack your head for you, young Lynwood Secundus!"

"I don't advise you to try. You'd be jolly sorry if you did," retorted Christopher.

"I say, shut up, you two!" interposed Chalmers. "We're just over the Reds' bathing-place now, and it'll spoil everything if they look up."

Cautiously the three juniors crept to the brow of the cliff. Below, the seven from Redlands, gathered together within such modest shelter as the rocks afforded, were rapidly changing their ordinary garments for swimming costumes. Even as the Storr Crossians looked over the edge the seven raced, shouting, down the sands and plunged into the shallow water.

A half-smothered chuckle rose in the throat of Chalmers.

"What!" inquired Bates briefly.

Chalmers pointed to the seven heaps of clothing directly below, and chuckled again.

"Yes, rather—a topping idea!" agreed Bates rapidly. "Now, look here, you kids, we must keep out of sight the whole time. It'll be dead easy!"

"What'll we do?" asked Lynwood Secundus as they began a rapid descent, keeping well behind bushes and rocks, and creeping close along the ground when any open space had to be crossed.

"Just grab their trousers," answered Bates. "You two chaps take two lots each, and I'll account for the other three. Bring 'em back this way as quick as lightning, and don't let the Reds see us!"

It was absurdly easy. From shrub to rock and from rock to tree-stump the raiders crept warily, their victims being some distance away, splashing and shouting and utterly unconscious of danger. To grab one garment from each pile of clothes and to return the way they had come was no trouble at all.

"What'll we do with 'em!" asked Chalmers when they were about halfway up the path and well out of sight.

"Let's take them right to the top and then see what those kids do," suggested Lynwood.

"No bally fear!" replied the practical Bates. "We'll hide 'em round about in these bushes and then cut back to school.

There would be no end of a dust-up if it were found out. The Old Man is just about sick of us having rows with Redlands. But if we're at the nets all the afternoon no one would think it was us. How's that for strategy, young Lynwood?"

"Pretty good," replied Christopher, stuffing a pair of obviously new grey flannel trousers into a bush that had prickles.

"Oh, my golly, if their matron's anything like the one in our house, won't they catch it when she sees these!" chuckled Chalmers. "Shall we just leave a bit of a brace sticking out to give those chaps an idea where to look? They're bound to come up this way."

"No—stuff it all out of sight. They're such a frightful set of kids," replied Bates mercilessly.

Some minutes later the raiding party, having gained the top of the cliff, and being unable to resist the temptation to look once more on their victims, crept on their hands and knees to the edge and cautiously stretched forth their necks. They saw seven unsuspecting figures doing vigorous exercise with seven towels. The dreadful and humiliating loss had evidently not yet been discovered.

"I never enjoyed anything more than this," whispered Chalmers.

"Nor have I. But I think we ought to get away now—they're seven to us three," said Bates.

"Pooh, what's seven chaps without any trousers!" exclaimed Lynwood Secundus, who had an intense desire to see the outcome of the adventure.

It is said that the cleverest criminals are generally undone by indulging a weakness or by making a miscalculation that a less clever man would probably have avoided. Had the Storr Cross juniors departed on the instant they would in all likelihood never have been found out. But their curiosity and the desire to gloat held them glued, on their stomachs, "on the grass of the cliff," as a certain well-known song has it.

Jim Lynwood, walking briskly along on the silent springy turf, came upon the recumbent figures, whose heads were close together, while their feet, spreading widely apart, waved in ecstasy.

"Hallo!" said the senior, pulling up short.

In one brief instant the three juniors had regained their feet and faced the senior, expressing on their three countenances a mixture of guilt, resentment and surprise.

Lynwood, ignoring the surprise and resentment, looked around for evidence of the guilt. There was no such evidence. A fair day and a stretch of sea and sky and country unspoiled was all that met the eye of the senior.

The juniors breathed more freely, and at that moment there floated from below in a loud treble an arresting sentence.

"I say, Brown, you little swine, what have you done with my bags?"

"I was just going to ask you the same question," came Brown's reply, borne on the breeze with quite a startling clearness.

A fearful joy that would not be denied spread o'er the warm countenances of the Storr Cross juniors.

Lynwood, with an expression that boded ill for the culprits, advanced to the edge and looked over. Several figures, clad only in shirts, were hurrying hither and thither and calling agitatedly to one another. It was only a brief glance that the Storr Cross senior bestowed on them, but he recognised on the instant the seven juniors who had cheekily barred his progress earlier in the afternoon. He drew back quickly lest the unfortunates below should see him and think that he, in revenge, had done this undignified thing. Turning to his own juniors, who looked rather crestfallen, he viewed them with all the sternness he could command.

"Upon my word," he said, "you kids are the limit! However often do you want telling to leave Redlands alone? You needn't say anything. I know jolly well that you three are in this, somehow."

Lynwood paused, and Bates opened his mouth to speak, but changed his mind and closed it again. He expected it would mean a thrashing, and very likely five hundred lines as well. He knew the feeling that existed with the Storr Cross authorities in regard to these affairs with Redlands. Chalmers was listening to the agitated sounds from below with a look of rapt delight. No thought of future punishment had power at the moment to take away his joy at having scored so completely over those unspeakable Red kids! Lynwood Secundus was regarding his brother with a peculiar cold scrutiny that was strangely detached from the situation. All three juniors were prepared to face the indignity of having to disclose the hiding-place of the purloined garments and of restoring them to their rightful owners.

Lynwood gave one more quick glance over the top, then withdrew from the edge. The glance had been peculiarly satisfying. The little brutes who had dared to defy him were obviously in a quandary—trouserless and subdued.

"Well," he said, and his voice sounded extraordinarily pleasant. "You three kids had better scoot back to the field and see if you can't do something more useful than baiting Redlands. I don't need to be told that you've been up to something or other, and so you'll all three bring me ten lines of your French author—from where you left off, mind—by to-morrow morning!"

He walked quickly away, and the astounded juniors followed at a sober pace. Ten lines! Was the prefect developing softening of the brain, or what?

"Lynwood's a sport—he's the most tremendous sport that ever was!" declared Chalmers, after a moment.

"He never asked us a thing about it, and he didn't do a thing to spoil it. He just pretended not to know," added Bates. "Lynwood's not usually like that. D'you think it was because he didn't want to punish young Lyn Secundus here?"

"No fear," said Christopher quickly and bitterly. "You can get that idea out of your head."

"Well, anyway," went on Bates, "it's the rippingest afternoon I've ever had!"

"D'you think those Redlands kids will ever find their bags?" asked Christopher, anxious to turn the conversation away from his brother, whose very presence aroused in him strange feelings of disturbance, reminiscent of the thrashing that was neither forgiven nor forgotten.

"Yes," replied Bates. "When the winter comes and the leaves drop off those bushes, they'll find 'em—worse luck!"

But Bates happened to be wrong about that. After nearly an hour spent in fruitless search and great bitterness of soul, those seven juniors from Redlands, with their shirts flapping merrily in the breeze, in strange contrast to their depressed feelings, started in a weird procession on their homeward way.

And halfway up the path they found their trousers, owing to the sun glinting on a protruding brace button, which Chalmers, ever soft-hearted, had neglected to push out of sight.

CHAPTER IX.—*MAINLY ABOUT CRICKET.*

NOBODY at Storr Cross appeared to be very enthusiastic over the match with Redlands. The truth was that Storr Cross, knowing the nondescript qualities of their team, apart from their captain and Lynwood, endeavoured to hide a certain amount of inward apprehension beneath an outward show of indifference.

It was a rather doubtful sort of day, with a fitful breeze and fast flying clouds. When the Redlands team turned up, accompanied by a fair number of supporters, most of them carried mackintoshes or coats over their arms.

"I think myself," said Olley, of the Storr Cross lower fifth, to Thwaites, of the same, "that Macmillan fixed this match too early. Our chaps haven't had proper time to get into shape yet."

"Well," replied Thwaites sensibly, "the same thing applies to Redlands, I s'pose."

"Um—m," was the doubtful response of Olley, who, in common with the rest of the school, had heard rumours of the extraordinary talent and prowess likely to be displayed by the Redlands team this season.

With the utmost casualness, and talking idly of many things besides cricket, Storr Cross gathered in the field to witness a most remarkable sequence of accidents, the result of which being that the match ended in a way that was unsatisfactory to both sides.

There is no use in hiding the fact, apparent to all, but voiced only when the match was over, that the Storr Cross eleven were not anything like as good as the Redlands team. Lynwood, usually a shining light, was to-day brilliant only in fitful starts. Macmillan was steadily dependable as usual, but the rest of the school team were undeniably feeble, and nervous into the bargain.

Redlands were good. They were quick and ready, and their fielding was superb. Jennison, the captain, was the best bat, but all were good, and they had several fair and one really first-class bowler, who knew not the meaning of fatigue.

The home team went in first, and, after a dismal performance, touches of relief being supplied by the captain and Lynwood, were all out for 97, of which Lynwood made 23 and Macmillan 19.

Then happened suddenly a sharp shower, which drove everyone to temporary shelter. On returning to the field Redlands went in to a wicket that was both sticky and treacherous, which happened to be exactly the state of things that the soul of Fisher, the Storr Cross star bowler, dearly loved. Therefore in an incredibly short time three of Redlands best men, with a total score of four runs, were bowled clean and well by the said Fisher.

This was a nasty blow, but this alone would not have prevented Redlands from winning. Jennison, happening to be nearly run out, flung himself so violently over the crease that the slippery earth played him false and let him down rather violently. He was up in a moment and made no complaint, but it was obvious to all that he had in some way hurt his left arm—not seriously evidently, but enough to mar his cricket and put a stop to his scoring.

Feeling rather heavily handicapped by their misfortunes, the visiting team continued to do their best gamely enough, and made 125 in their first innings.

When Storr Cross went in again the peculiar genius of Lynwood asserted itself. He became so full of confidence and good cheer that the men on his side felt victory almost within their grasp—with nothing within or without to warrant such feelings. Lynwood bucked along so well that almost before anyone realised it he had added another 40 to the school score. But he had seen four men out in doing so, and the position still appeared rather hopeless for Storr Cross. Then occurred another of those extraordinary accidents. The Redlands best bowler, in making a fine catch, got his right-hand little finger somehow misplaced, and it broke with a snap. After that Storr Cross, playing steadily against time, felt that fate, for some unknown reason, was on their side; and indeed it seemed like it, for, after another hour's play, with the wind rising and the weather threatening every moment to break up wholly, the match ended in a draw.

"It's been a most weird and uncanny afternoon altogether," commented Macmillan, when the visitors had departed in a state of puzzled depression. They had been too sporting to say anything, but they left with a distinct impression that they had been unfairly treated, not by Storr Cross, who had maintained throughout an attitude of unbroken politeness, but by an unkind fate, or some other interfering and outside influence.

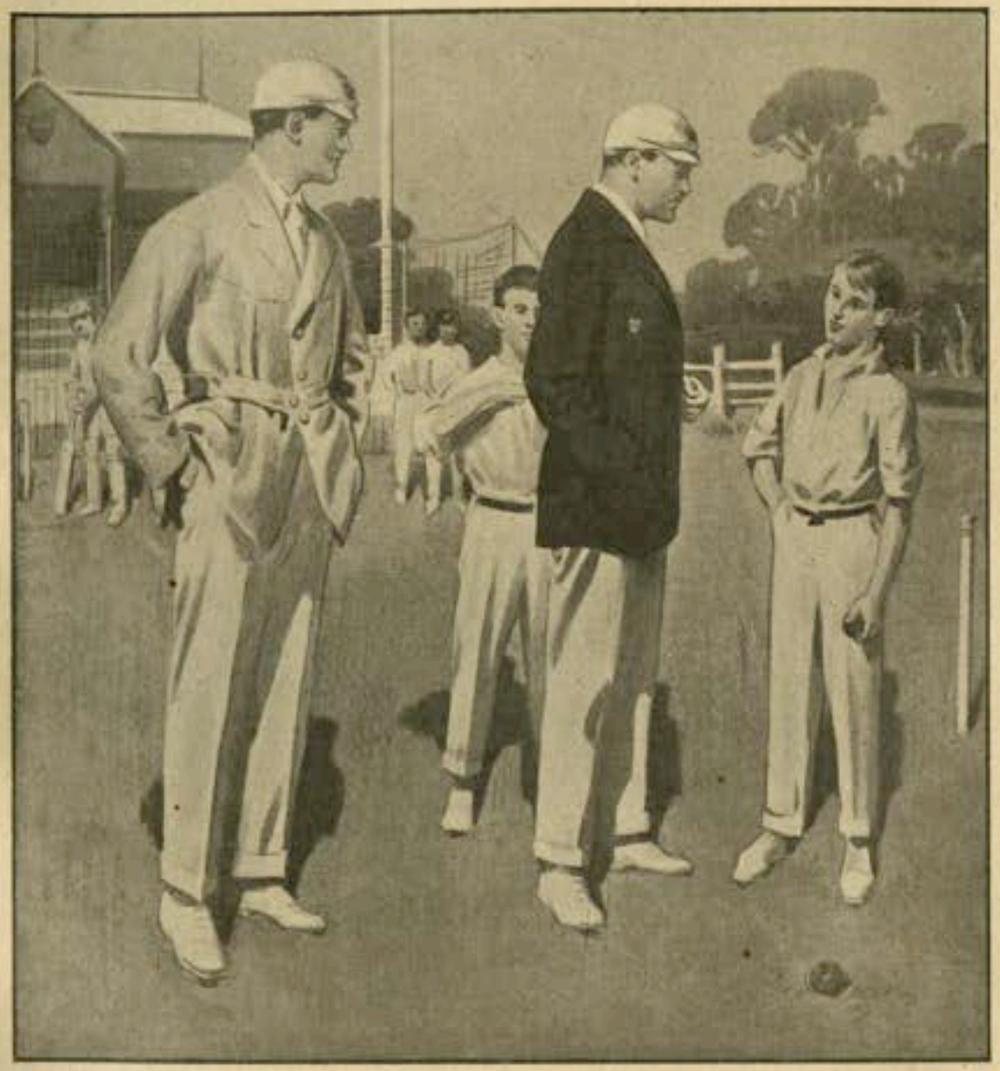
"It was a bit rummy the way things happened," agreed Lynwood. "But though our bacon is saved, it was not the sort of match I like."

They had wandered away from the pitch, through the hedge and into the junior field, where a number of third and fourth form enthusiasts were gathered together at the nets.

"Oh, no, it was simply putrid. Redlands never had a chance to get away properly with the scoring," said Macmillan. "Of course, it was wonderful luck for us that it ended as it did, but I feel more strongly than ever that we're a very poor crowd and to work up a decent average—you'll see! Of course, we *are* short of bowlers—there's only Fisher worth speaking of."

"Great Cæsar!" said Macmillan suddenly. "Do you remember when we were kids watching Reg Lynwood bowl out him in that, but kept all your vigour and vim for batting," went on Macmillan. "Hullo, by George, that was a lovely ball. Watch that kid bowling, Lyn!"

The two prefects drew nearer to the junior nets and stood to watch another slow but delightful



"HERE, YOUNG LYNWOOD SECUNDUS, WHICH ELEVEN DO YOU PLAY FOR?"

Drawn by REX OSBORNE.

likely to have the worst season we've had for years."

"Not us!" replied Lynwood, with cheerful disregard of grammar. "We only want practice. Every man in the team has the stuff in him, and will be able the Reds on that day when everything seemed hopeless? What a tip-top bowler he was!"

"Yes, I remember," replied Lynwood, quickening his pace a trifle.

"Funny you didn't take after long-hop ball sail treacherously down the pitch.

"It's your kid brother," said Macmillan, turning to his chum. "Who taught him to bowl?"

"Reg and I did," replied Lynwood, looking rather pleased.

"But the youngster's a bit of a natural hand at the game, really."

Macmillan approached and watched two more balls, the second of which broke to leg and scattered the bails of the defending Bates.

"Here, lend us a bat, someone," said the cricket captain, as the crowd drew back to a respectful distance. "Now then, Lynwood Secundus, send one of your best down, will you!"

Christopher's heart swelled with pride, and he was conscious of a very pleasant glow of warmth due neither to the exercise nor to the heat of the weather. He bowled three slow balls and then one fast one, then another slow, all left-handed. His brother, watching from behind, strolled forward.

"Pretty good, kid," he said. "But not up to your form. Let's have one of those twisters you're so fond of. Here, Mac, I'll take the bat, and you watch."

Macmillan was about to hand over the bat, but Lynwood Secundus, his face clouding over unpleasantly, dropped the ball with a gesture of finality and drew back. "No more, thanks," he said, with distinctness. "I've finished."

For an instant Lynwood stared haughtily and inquiringly at the junior, who looked up at him with an expression so exactly like his own that Lynwood, with raised eyebrows and a little amused smile, broke the momentary tension and walked off.

"Coming, Mac!" he said.

"Half a tick," replied the cricket captain. "Here, young Lynwood Secundus, which eleven do you play for?"

"Not for any, Macmillan," replied the junior. "I haven't got a place yet."

"Well, you ought to have. You're good enough for the first junior eleven. Tell Birchanger I said so!" declared Macmillan, hurrying after his chum.

"Of course, he's only a kid, Lyn," said he; "but if he keeps at it he'll be good old Reg over again. I never saw a kid shape so well—left-handed too, same as Reg."

"Did you notice how the uncivil little swine refused point-blank to bowl to me?" asked Lynwood, after a moment's silence.

"I did. And what's more, it's your own fault, old lad, and just what I warned you would happen. You did all you knew to make the kid hate you in the first place."

"What utter drivel you do talk, Macmillan," said Lynwood, irritably, at the same time experiencing a queer little stab of apprehension.

Meanwhile Lynwood Secundus, in the midst of a sudden popularity, refused persistently to bowl one of his twisters or any more of the remarkable balls that had gained attention (and actually won high praise) from two of Storr Cross's greatest men.

"I don't much want to play for the eleven," he confided to Bates afterwards. "At least, not until I've finished my collection."

"Lynwood Secundus, what is your collection?" demanded Bates, a trifle sharply. "Not one of the other kids makes a secret of his collections, and it's not a very nice thing to do anyway."

"Nice or nasty, it's my business and nobody else's," replied Christopher. "But I'll tell you this much, Bates. Of all the collections I've seen at Storr Cross there's nothing to touch my collection, and I honestly think I shall win the prize; and, if I do, I mean to have a microscope!"

Bates looked impressed. "That's all right," he said; "if you think so. But what I want to know is why you keep it so dark, and always go off by yourself."

"Oh, well," replied Christopher finally, "I get on better by myself. Besides, the place where I keep my collection sort of belongs to another person and is quite private."

At this Bates was still more puzzled, but Christopher had said his last word and nothing more could be got out of him. And as he had on several occasions proved himself well able to hold his own against Bates, there was nothing to be done but to change the subject, which Bates tactfully did.

CHAPTER X.—*CHRISTOPHER MISSES A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.*

"I TELL you what would be a good idea," said Lynwood to Macmillan some few weeks later, "Let's give up cricket and take to tiddley-winks or table golf. I think it would suit the team a lot better."

"Well, I'm willing," agreed Macmillan with a sigh. "I get a bit fed up myself when I think of our average and how it compares with Redlands."

"Oh, hang Redlands!" said Lynwood. "I was only joking just now, you funny ass! Besides, why do you want to follow the Reds' average with such keenness? I call it morbid. Can't you interest yourself in something nearer home? The junior collections competition, for instance. I bet you didn't see them before they were sent in, and now the kids are all expecting to hear the result any minute."

"No, I didn't see them. Did you, Lyn?"

"I did, old lad—some of 'em. And weird and wonderful they were, though some were jolly good for kids."

"Well, I did hear that your young brother's collection caused a regular sensation when it was produced," remarked Macmillan.

"Really?" said Lynwood, with an expression of satisfaction. "I've scarcely seen the kid for weeks. What did he collect, Mac?"

"Sea-shells. And young Chalmers told me that it was some collection, Lyn."

"Well, I'm—well, I never even knew the young bounder was going in for the comp. at all!" said Lynwood, still looking pleased. "By the way, Mac, is it absolutely dead cert. that you can't come into Talmouth this afternoon?"

"Oh, quite, Lyn. I'm heaps busy. And if you mean to bring that bat of yours back with you, and the other things from the

same shop, I was going to suggest you took a kid."

"Yes, I will," replied Lynwood, "if you're sure you can't come. Otherwise we might have managed a bit of a spree."

"Yes, I'd like to; but it's imposs, Lynwood."

Lynwood strolled outside, and captured the first junior that came into view, which happened to be Bolingbroke.

"Bolingbroke, cut along and tell Lynwood Secundus that I want him here at once," said the prefect.

Lynwood Secundus received the message with a frown, but he knew better than to delay.

"Hullo, youngster," said Jim Lynwood, as the junior came hurrying up and stood in front of him. "You're looking a bit hipped. Anything wrong, kid?"

"Nothing, thanks," replied the junior distantly.

Lynwood moved a trifle impatiently. He found his young brother's vacant stare and detached attitude distinctly irritating. However, he controlled his feelings and spoke pleasantly enough. "I'm going into Talmouth this afternoon on special business with a special *exeat*, and I shall need a kid to help bring back a cricket bat and one or two things. Want to come along?"

Christopher's eyelids blinked several times rather quickly. He realised to the full the tremendous treat that was being offered to him. But his pride proved stronger than his good sense. "I—I think I won't, thanks," he said, after a moment's hesitation.

"You *won't*, kid?" said Lynwood slowly, and flushing a bit.

"Well, of course I know I'll have to, if you say so," returned the junior quickly. "But since you *asked* me, I say I'd rather not go, if you can find anybody else."

Lynwood was silent for a moment, and his flush faded out. "What are you driving at, Chris?" he asked quietly.

In that moment, quite suddenly, the bitterness that Christopher had been nursing for so long melted away, and he realised that, more than anything, he wanted to be good friends with Jim. With the sudden change of feeling his heart began to beat quickly, and a lump rose in his throat. Lest his brother should see the moisture that came into his eyes he stared stolidly at the ground, unable to say a word.

Not often could Jim Lynwood be accused of dulness of perception, but, mistaking the junior's silence for obstinacy, he turned sharply on his heel, losing patience all at once.

"Get out, you sullen little beast," he said roughly. "Send Bolingbroke to me, and look sharp about it. I've done with you!"

Christopher, too proud to let his brother see his distress, ran off rather stumblingly.

Bolingbroke received Lynwood's message with astonishment. "But it was you he wanted, Lynwood Secundus."

"No, he's done with me," replied Christopher, unconsciously using his brother's own words. He had regained his normal self-possession. "He wants you to go with him to Talmouth, I think."

"Golly!" was Bolingbroke's only remark, as he raced off with much joy. To spend a whole afternoon in the company of the great Lynwood, to carry precious first-eleven bats, to have tea alone with the prefect in Talmouth, and come home late for lock-up with a special *exeat*—who wouldn't jump at the chance? So thought young Bolingbroke, little dreaming that Lynwood Secundus had just thrown away that very opportunity, and was now suffering considerable mental disturbance in consequence.

The afternoon passed off exactly as Bolingbroke had anticipated. Lynwood had been extraordinarily jolly and nice, and had treated the junior to a corking tea, besides ices and lemonade earlier in the afternoon. And it was even later than his wildest imaginings had deemed possible when they returned to Storr Cross, for the rest of the juniors had actually retired to their dormitories.

Tired, but well content, and feeling unusually important, Bolingbroke came in just as the others were getting into bed.

"Hullo, Bolingbroke! I say, you don't know what you've missed!" said Chalmers.

"And I don't care," replied Bolingbroke, taking off his boots. "I've had an absolutely *topping* time with Lynwood!"

"Ah, but we've had something else—the result of the Collections Competition!"

"What, to-night! Who's won it!" asked Bolingbroke, with keen interest, pausing a moment with a boot in each hand.

"Just after you left we had a call for a Big School to-night," went on Chalmers, "and old Saville came over. Who do you think is the winner!"

"Well, I'm glad it's one of us, and not one of those beastly Red kids," said Bolingbroke, who himself had not entered for the prize. He had commenced several collections, but had not got any one sufficiently near completion in time to enter it.

"A Red was second," said Bates. "But the winner is young——"

"Shut up, Bates!" interrupted several voices loudly. "Let him guess!"

Bolingbroke continued rapidly to disrobe, only stopping in order to scatter broadcast the neatly folded garments of Chalmers and to have the customary skirmish with their owner for doing so.

"Well," said Bolingbroke, when order was restored and he had again been requested to state the winner of the competition. "I should say it was young Lynwood Secundus, only he hasn't a bit got the look of a conquering hero!"

"Right!" said Bates, sitting up in bed. "And he's going to have a telescope, which makes your hand look as though you've got a hide like an elephant, if you look at it through it!"

"Microscope," corrected Christopher, in a flat voice. He looked solemn and rather downcast. The entrance of Bolingbroke had made him remember his interview with Jim.

Bolingbroke hopped into bed. "Did the Old Man and Uncle Saville let loose much of the chin-wag?" he asked.

"Pretty bad. But they didn't half praise some of the collections—specially young Lynwood's," replied Bates.

"Oh, well, bully for you Lyn Secundus," said Bolingbroke, settling himself comfortably and tucking the sheet up under his chin, which he always did before going off to sleep. "I wouldn't have missed this afternoon for something," he added. "Lynwood is simply corking to go out with—tell you about it to-morrow."

Christopher turned his back with a grunt, hiding his flushed face in his pillow. At that moment he would gladly have given up his triumph, and the fine prize that was coming, just to know that all was right between himself and old Jim once more.

(*Continued on page* 126.)

IN THE PATH OF THE STORM.

AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

By L. B. Thoburn Clarke.

(*Concluded from page* 74.)

"LOOK at Bess," cried Charlie, as the old mare, with a wild snort, rushed to the exit in the cliffs and vanished.

"What is the matter with her?"

"Smells the dust storm, perhaps," observed Tom, as he turned to descend the rough steps cut in the rocks.

"I say, the lake's boiling." Charlie paused at the top of the steps and looked down at the lake, the centre of which was boiling up in an extraordinary manner. There had always been a gentle movement in the centre, but this had not attracted the attention of the boys; now, however, the water foamed, and it had assumed a turgid yellow colour.

"It's an underground river, and—look, Charlie, it is rising over the banks. No wonder the old johnnies who lived here preferred these caves. Why, the place must have been the bed of a lake until the rift in the rocks drained it."

"Let's bolt," cried Charlie, dashing down the steps at top speed, followed by Tom, but as they ran, the lake, with a violent spouting of water, rushed madly over its banks and spread over the ground, making, in a broad, yellow river, for the rift in the cliffs.

The boys gained the opening just in time, but, before they had succeeded in reaching the ravine on the outside the water was flowing knee deep around them and every minute gaining in force.

Even as it was, Charlie stumbled and found himself caught in the torrent and hurled along for a few yards before he could regain his footing.

"Are you hurt!" inquired Tom, gripping hold of Charlie and dragging him to dry ground.

"No, but the blooming horses have stampeded. We'll have to walk."

"Well, there's plenty of water, anyway. This ravine reaches down to the chain of water-holes, and perhaps the stream will fill them."

"It's going strong, at any rate," replied Charlie, rubbing his arm ruefully.

The two boys, realising that the river would fill the ravine, climbed up on the ridge and walked hurriedly towards home. Below them the turgid, yellow-brown flood flowed swiftly, and there seemed abundant evidence that the black fellow's "bigum flood" would become a fact.

They had forgotten the dust storm that lurked away beyond the hills, and were watching the flood water filling the great empty pools when from behind them echoed a dreary moan. It was just sunset, and as they glanced around they saw the immense pillar of dust suddenly assume the angry glow of a fiery furnace. In a moment, with a wild, rushing roar, it had burst upon them. Exerting all their strength, they endeavoured to fight their way through the storm, but it was no use, they had to cower to the ground and wait for it to pass.

It seemed hours before the blinding dust storm passed, and the thunderstorm that followed close in their wake had burst in all its fury before the boys could stagger to their feet and run at top speed for their home. Although it was barely half a mile from the water-holes, the heavy rain was sending rivulets in all directions, while the river, now swollen to an immense torrent, thundered down towards the plains.

Mr. Murray was watching it anxiously as the boys burst into the house. He turned with a smile to greet them.

"You've brought the rain at any rate, lads. Bess turned up with her water tanks full, so I know you succeeded in finding your well, Charlie, and the cattle have returned, so they've had a drink."

"Well do I know that they have. I worked the picotta that drew up the water. My arms are aching still."

"Do you think the flood will reach the house?"

"No, but I am puzzled to understand how such a river should so suddenly develop in such a short time. The dam will be washed away, I am afraid, but I think we are safe, although I wish the house was built a little further away from the path of that torrent. If it rises much higher it may strike the corner of the veranda."

They sat talking for some time, then Mr. Murray retired to his bedroom, while the boys, following their usual custom, unslung their hammocks and turned

in. The thunder was still rolling across the sky, the crashing volleys echoing like the roar of artillery, while the lightning lit up the darkness of the night, and showed in every direction the glint of flowing water. Yet in spite of it all the boys slept soundly.

The flood rose higher and higher, until the yellow waters touched the edge of the veranda, and slowly wormed out its earthen floor. The path of the current was marked by the trunks of trees and other flotsam and jetsam of the hills, while every now and then a hapless crocodile, rudely washed out of his summer mud-hole, was whirled past, looking grotesquely helpless as he fought madly to resist the force of the current.

One huge reptile clung for a moment to the veranda post before he was dragged off by the force of the current. Then the rising water brought down another, and this one managed to gain a footing. He clambered up, panting for lack of breath, and exceedingly angry at having been disturbed.

He lay for a few moments, and then crawled under Charlie's hammock, and endeavoured to reach the sleeping boy. The sudden snap of his jaws woke Charlie.

"Tom," he yelled, "can you see anything on the veranda? I thought I heard a crocodile?"

"Nonsense," laughed Tom, peering through the darkness. "I say, though, I believe you are right. Wait until the lightning flashes again."

"The storm has passed. It isn't raining. Strike a match. I don't want to make a crocodile's morning meal."

"I haven't a match," replied Tom, who stepped cautiously out of his hammock, but the switch of a scaly tail made him take a flying leap through the door into the house. The reptile followed and Tom scrambled on to the table. He could see nothing, only hear the brute as it moved rapidly across the floor. The scratching of its claws sounded weirdly in the darkness.

"You're safe enough," cried Charlie. "The brute won't be able to climb on the table."

"He seems to think he can."

"Then climb on to the rafters. If they're not ant-eaten they'll hold you safe enough.

"What's the matter?" asked Mr. Murray, coming to his bedroom window.

"Only a hungry crocodile is hunting Tom," cried Charlie, with a laugh.

"It's all very well," grumbled Tom. "I wish I'd let him grab you before I turned out to get a match. Don't open your door, Uncle, the brute is really dangerous. If only I had a light. I suppose I'll have to wait until sun up."

"It's dawning now," observed Charlie, "and I think the flood is sinking."

Tom crouched with what patience he could on the top of the table, while the crocodile moved about the room, every now and then snapping his jaws in a way that made Tom's blood creep. The grey dawn came up very slowly, and it was some time before he could catch even a glimpse of the reptile, and when he did he was horrified to see that it was a giant of its kind.

"I say, Tom," yelled Charlie, who was peering through the window, "we shall never be able to kill that fellow without a gun."

"Well, who's got a gun?" growled the exasperated Tom.

"I'll manage," exclaimed Charlie, cheerfully. "You keep him occupied. I am going to creep around the house and go to the stable. The flood won't have got there yet. I expect a billhook will do the deed."

"All right," and Tom waved his hand in front of the crocodile with disastrous result. The infuriated reptile made a violent lunge at Tom's hand, and, crashing under the table, upset it and his prey. Fortunately, Tom was in good training, and as the table canted over he reached up, and, catching hold of the rafters, swung himself into a secure perch out of reach. Mr. Murray, alarmed at the noise, rushed out, only to have to retreat immediately from the furious charge of the angry brute.

Charlie returned, drenching wet, but with all the available weapons he could find, and two stout bowie knives which he had lashed firmly to a short stake.

"Now, father," he called, "you take the billhook while I try this knife dodge when the old brute goes for me with his mouth open."

The boy walked to the door, while his father covered his movements. The crocodile, catching sight of another meal, swirled suddenly round, knocking over a chair, and charged with open mouth at the figure in the doorway. Charlie held his arm rigid, the lashed knives gripped in his right hand, and as the reptile opened his mouth to bite, the boy plunged the knives between the parted jaws.

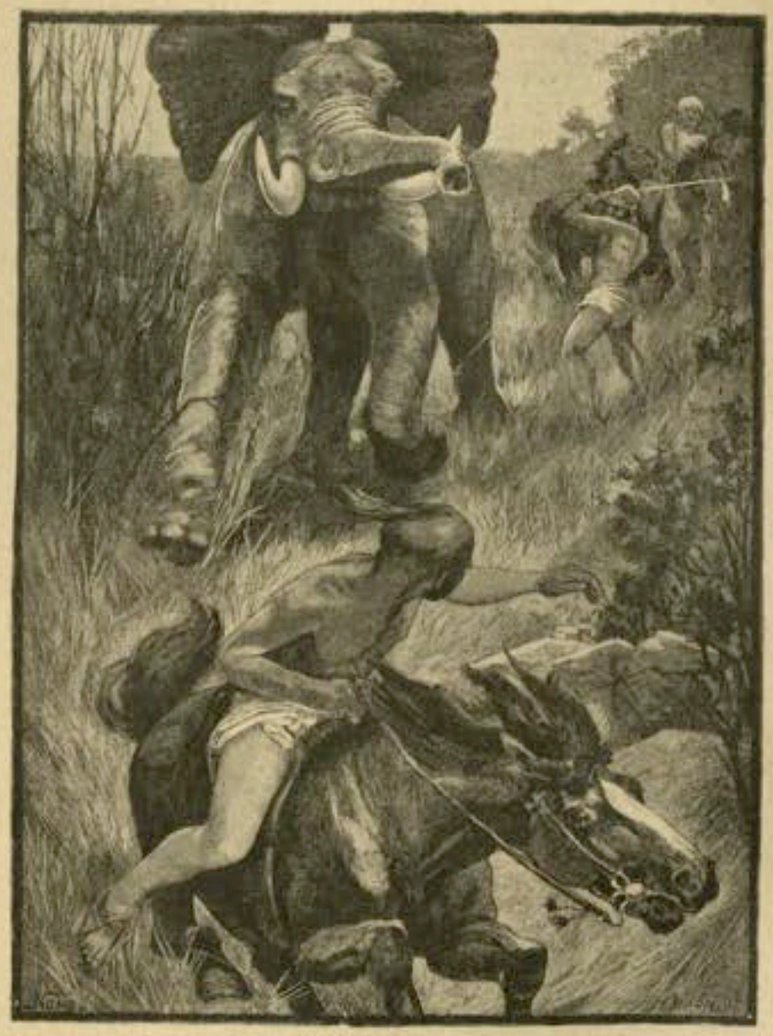
For a few seconds he thought that his plan had failed, as the immense crocodile thrashed about, endeavouring to rid himself of the knives which were slowly working their way into his jaws. But the reptile was powerless; he could only dash backwards and forwards seeking his tormentors. He worked himself into a frenzy of resentment, trying vainly to snap, and only driving the knives deeper and fixing his jaws more firmly. He was still too dangerous to attack, and Mr. Murray waited for a favourable opportunity to kill the brute, but none came. Charlie sprang through the window to attack the brute with the billhook, but the monster turned swiftly and charged the boy, sending him spinning off the veranda. In the mad rush the reptile lost his balance and fell into the flood.

"He's gone," Charlie cried joyously, as he scrambled out of the yellow water and pointing to the angry crocodile drifting down the current, still fighting furiously to rid himself of the knives fixed between his jaws. "What a glorious time we've had," he added, as he leant against the wall and watched the water dripping off his trousers.

"Speak for yourself," grunted Tom, jumping down from his perch. "I'd rather have a little less excitement with the breaking up of the drought."

Mr. Murray only smiled as he looked across the yellow flood, which stretched as far as the eye could reach, and noted that it was slowly sinking. The storm had saved them and he was content.

How the Hamran Arabs Hunt the Elephant.



WITH ONE STROKE OF THE SWORD.

THE Hamran Arabs are one of the numerous nomadic tribes dwelling in the Soudan. Unless anything has compelled them to shift their quarters, they wander, during the dry season, over the prairie country lying between the rivers Gash and Settit, the latter running into the Atbara, the great Nile tributary, the former spreading out and losing itself in the sandy soil a little to the west of Kassala.

In the rainy season they, like other tribes, migrate northward, with their flocks and herds, as the country is then flooded, and the *seroot* fly very destructive to the cattle.

North of the Gash live the Hadendowa and Hallonga Arabs, while, on the east, on the slope of the great Abyssinian mountains, the Hamrans have for their neighbours the negro tribe of the Base.

Most of these Arab tribes are very much alike in their ways and manners, but the Hamrans have one peculiarity which distinguishes them from the rest: they are famous as hunters, and particularly expert in killing elephants, either on foot or on horseback.

Whether there are now any elephants left for them to kill is another matter—the wars, British and Italian, of the last quarter of a century have very likely frightened them out of their old haunts. On the other hand, many places must have been desolated and left empty for the wild beasts to breed and multiply in.

However that may be, nearly forty years ago the late Sir Samuel Baker found in that country both abundance of elephants and first-rate hunters among the Hamrans.

The best description of these clever and plucky fellows is to be found in his book, "The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia."

Sir Samuel was a keen sportsman himself, and, as he says somewhere (others have made the same observation), there is a strong bond of sympathy between sportsmen all the world over, so that he not only sincerely admired these natives, but was soon on the most friendly terms with them.

The country of the Hamrans, though flooded in the rainy season, is, in the dry, a kind of open prairie, covered, for the most part, with long grass—in some places with jungle of scattered bushes and small trees—chiefly mimosa and other thorns. A great deal of this grass is of the kind found all over Africa, grow-

Cyril gruffly, winding the loose end of his bookstrap round his hand.

"What's the matter?" asked the other seriously. "Are you in a wax about something? You aren't seedy, I suppose?"

"I'm feeling a bit sick," returned Cyril shortly; and, without waiting to hear more, he turned out of the big schoolroom and started on his way home.

A few yards down the road he encountered Bowen. "I say," began the latter, "I heard that conceited idiot Ascott talking to Hill just now. Hill said it was a good thing the team was strong in backs, and Ascott answered that he thought the backs were our weak point. That's because he himself plays forward."

"Well, he can play back in my place this afternoon," retorted Cyril, with a flush of anger. "I'm not going near the beastly field; but, see here, don't you tell anyone, Bowen."

"Trust me," answered the other with a chuckle. "Im jolly glad you've made up your mind not to play. I'll go up and see the fun, and drop in and tell you about it afterwards."

"Are you going to play football this afternoon?" inquired Mrs. Haley, as her son rose from the table at the end of dinner.

"No, I don't think so," was the answer.

"But I thought you said you were playing a match against the boys from Onbury College?"

"Yes, there is a match," replied Cyril with assumed indifference, "but I don't feel like playing this afternoon, and they can easily get someone in my place."

Whistling a tune the boy strolled out into the hall, and then ran up to his own room. There was an exciting adventure story lying on the dressing-table which he wished to finish; seizing the book, he flung himself into a comfortable chair and commenced to read.

Before many minutes, however, his attention began to wander; he got up, and strolled over to the window. The day was damp and cold, and there seemed every likelihood that there would be rain; it would be much more comfortable indoors with a book than pounding about outside in the wet; so the boy tried to think, and yet the spirit within him rebelled against the course he was taking. He tugged impatiently at his watch, and looked at the time.

"I expect the fellows are all changed by this time, and Ascott's beginning to wonder why I don't turn up. Well, he'll be able to judge for once whether his blessed forwards are good enough to do without the backs. I hope Onbury have brought a strong team."

Cyril returned once more to his book, but, somehow, the story seemed to have lost its interest, and his thoughts, wandering from one subject to another, became suddenly centred on the recollection of something which had cropped up in the history lesson that very morning.

Mr. Chapman, the master, had taken pains to drive home the point of the anecdote; and the twenty-odd boys had ceased to shuffle and scribble on the desks as they listened to that tale of generous heroism, the story of Outram—the Bayard of India, who, though empowered to supersede Havelock at the commencement of the final march to Lucknow, had refused to assume command, that one who had already toiled and striven in the performance of a difficult and dangerous task should not be robbed of the credit of its final achievement. So, the man who might have won for himself immortal fame as leader of the expedition which first forced its way through to the beleaguered garrison chose to waive his rank, and was seen riding in the helter-skelter charges of a reckless handful of volunteer cavalry, belabouring the flying foe with a golden-headed cane. The man who might have been general!—*the man who might have been captain of the team!*

Cyril's lips twitched, the book dropped from his hand, and he rose suddenly to his feet. "I am a sneak," he muttered. "All I ought to think about is the game."

He glanced once more at his watch. "I believe I could do it now if I rode to the field on my machine," he cried, and straightway commenced tearing off his clothes. A few minutes sufficed for him to struggle into his war-paint. The school colours were blue and white, the first team being distinguished by a half-and-half shirt, while the second eleven wore one with alternate stripes. Cyril dragged this garment over his head, flung on his coat, buckled his belt, and laced his shoes, all in a state of feverish haste; then, rushing downstairs, he mounted his machine, and rode off as hard as he could pelt in the direction of the playing-field. No, the game had not begun, though the ground was "cleared for action."

"Where on earth have you been?" cried Ascott. "I thought you must have broken your leg or something. I'm glad you've turned up; they've brought an awfully strong team."

"I'm sorry I'm late," gasped Cyril, dragging off his coat. "But I—I made a mistake."

It was a losing game for the home team, but none the less glorious; for though from the first outmatched in weight and speed, they managed to score twice, and were only beaten by a single goal. To the back division, and to Cyril Haley in particular, was due the credit of maintaining such an even score. Breathless and mudstained, and constantly beset by hostile players bigger than himself, he met each successive attack with dogged determination, never losing his head and seldom missing his kick; though, especially towards the end of the game, when a drizzling rain began to fall, the ball seemed as slippery as a newly caught eel. Once he fell, with the heavy Onbury centre on top of him, and got up limping; but the shot had been smothered, and the ball rolled harmlessly into the hands of the goal-keeper, who cleared with a vigorous punt.

So, through the long seventy minutes, the battle raged; and when, at last, the whistle blew, the enemy were still one point ahead.

Ascott was not a good loser, and the chief comment he had to make on the play was a grumble that the backs had several times got too far up the field. Cyril, who could always find compensation for defeat in the memory of a well-fought game, turned away with a vexed expression, which deepened when he saw Bowen waiting for him just outside the gate.

"Well, you are a blooming humbug," exclaimed the latter, with a sneer. "You've got no spirit, and you don't know your own mind for two minutes together."

Cyril walked home half inclined to wish that he had stuck to his first intention, but some consolation came with the thought that he had acted as a true sportsman should; the game was the great thing, and not the mere glory of being captain of the team. Besides, Milman, muffled in a long coat, had been watching the match; and more than once, like a big hound, he had emitted a deep-throated bay of "Well played, Haley!"

* * * *

It was Friday, and Cyril was buckling his bookstrap, preparatory to starting off home, when a small boy hailed him down the passage with a shrill yell of—"I say, Haley! Milman wants to see you in his study."

"Bother!" muttered Cyril. "I expect he wants me to buy him something in town, and bring it up to-morrow morning."

The football captain was sprawling in a deck chair, reading a book; he was not given to wasting words, but came straight to business.

"There are two matches on to-morrow, first and second team against Chadworth. Mind you're in time; you were nearly late on Wednesday."

Cyril murmured that he would, and, thinking this was all, turned to leave the room.

"Wait a minute," shouted Milman. "Here's something for you—catch."

"For me?" questioned the other, pausing and holding the brown-paper parcel with an air of uncertainty. "What d'you mean?"

"I tell you it is something for you," answered Milman, with a queer sort of grin on his face. "Open it if you like; it won't bite. You'll have to pay for it, so I can't say it's exactly a present."

Unable to restrain his curiosity,



Coming into Action: South Africa, 1899-1900.



Coming into Action: Flanders, 1914-18.

Cyril tore away a few inches of paper; the look of perplexity gradually vanished from his face, and he gave utterance to an exclamation of astonishment and delight.

"Oh! I say, Milman, you don't mean I'm to—but there's Ascott——" he stammered.

"That's my business," answered the great man, laughing. "I watched you playing against Onbury. Barnes can't play any more; the doctor says his heart is weak, and you're the man I want. Now clear out, and shut the door, or I'll wring your neck."

Cyril returned home in what was probably record time; he ran all the way, dashed upstairs to his room, and surprised his mother almost out of her senses by coming down to tea in a half-and-half football shirt of blue and white.

"What on earth's the meaning of this?" cried the lady.

Cyril's face was radiant. "It means I'm in the first team now," he answered.

TWO BOYS AND A PONY.

A TERRIBLE JOURNEY THROUGH WIND AND SNOW.

THE winter of 1889-90 will ever be remembered by the early settlers of Eastern Washington for its intense cold and severity. Thousands of cattle perished. Loss and suffering were universal.

We had come from Brooklyn, and it was our first winter on the pre-emption. With many others, we were labouring under the delusion that the country had a very mild climate for its latitude. Therefore winter caught us unprepared, without food for ourselves or stock, and without roads to haul it upon.

Through the kindness of a neighbour we were permitted to leave our live stock and provisions in an abandoned hut at the foot of the mountain, which we called the "Half-way House." To this we daily made expeditions to care for them and to get food for ourselves and cow.

As we were able to feed the stock but once a day, they wandered a little in search of bunch grass, and, consequently, were scattered and overwhelmed by the first severe storm. We found them all dead, frozen where they stood in the shelter of a hill. Henry, my elder brother, having frozen his feet badly, all the "packing" for the family of six devolved upon Edward, my younger brother, and myself.

I was fourteen, and Edward twelve. But Yankee grit, self-confidence, and the fearlessness of ignorance enabled us to undertake what experience would not have warranted.

It was only three miles to the "Half-way House," over and around lofty hills covered with firm white crust, across little valleys, and through deep ravines, full of treacherous "drift" ten, twenty, and even thirty feet deep, a warm blanket for the young trees that slept beneath, with just their noses above, for health.

Part of the way was through the forest. Its gloom and murmuring we already loved. We felt safer there than in the open. For in the timber we always found landmarks and protection.

Beyond the forest, a great pine marked the only dangerous place on the trail.

Here the path rounded a point whose steep sides sloped nearly half a mile to a place covered with a thicket of brush and small trees. Beyond this point the trail crossed a small plat deeply covered with "drift." From this it was but a short walk to the cabin which contained our provisions.

We rather enjoyed our walk through the silvery woods and glistening meadows, ending with a rush down the hill at its end. But sometimes it was different; with a high wind blowing the fine "drift" in clouds that obliterated all landmarks, with the thermometer below zero, and falling, then it was all work.

It is about such a journey that I am writing.

A severe storm in January had prevented us from making our usual trips. We were out of bulky food for the cow, having fed her on even our old brooms and the straw from our bed-ticks. We were also in need of food ourselves. So as soon as the storm abated we determined to make a venture the next day.

We rose early, and dressed warmly. After eating a hot breakfast we strapped on our snowshoes, over nine feet in length, and, taking each a revolver, we started.

It was a beautiful morning, cold and crisp. The sun had not yet dawned. The dark heavens were full of sparkling gems. In their soft light all objects stood out distinct, clearly cut against their crystal background.

As daylight appeared on the mountain heights we had the majestic spectacle of sunrise among snow-laden crags and pines. The rising sun transformed the sombre valley into a glistening snow lake. The tamaracks began to snap and crack, indicating a warm day. Fearing a thaw, we hastened, and soon arrived at the hut.

We were delighted to find here an old Indian pony, that we supposed had perished during the fall. We made preparations for an unusual load.

Making a toboggan of our sled, we loaded it with groceries and a dozen sacks stuffed with hay. While we worked it rapidly became colder. A sharp east wind sprang up. Dull clouds darkened the sky. But we scarcely noticed these changes.

It was three before we started on a wood road that had recently been used. We made good headway until we turned up a steep hill toward the trail. We found that the morning thaw had caused a "breaking crust." It was not firm enough to bear our weight, breaking when we were almost upon it. To make matters worse, our little pony refused to travel without a path. We took turns in breaking the road for her, and in pushing the load.

Sweating in every pore, we reached the trail. The crust here was stronger and would support the pony. But in places it would suddenly give way, and we had the pleasure of digging her out only to have the process repeated. We crossed many of these spots by throwing down our coats for her to step upon.

Stopping to rest, we were surprised to find that we were not one-half mile from our starting-point. We pushed on, relieving each other in breaking the road.

The wind had now increased until it blew from the trees and ridges a thick cloud of snow and ice. We were somewhat protected by the trees until we reached the little plat, where the gale was furious.

But here the cloud of fine ice particles, edging and whirling in a confused mass, blistered our faces, blinded us, and filled our noses and mouths when we tried to speak. It penetrated the closest wraps, burning like fire. Masses of snow were hurled bodily against us with such violence that often we were brought to a standstill.

We were well across the plat when a sharp blast struck us, and the little mare, jerking the lead-strap from my benumbed hand, disappeared in the storm.

Telling Edward to stand where he was in the same position, I attempted to find the outfit. My effort was useless, so blinding was the storm. Realising the folly of further search, I fired my revolver. Far to the windward another faint shot sounded. While hastening toward it, I ran full upon the little mare, which had taken but a few steps with the wind, and was close to Edward when I called.

The storm had developed into a hurricane. We could not see our hands before our faces. We would have lost our bearings but for the wind. We attempted to proceed, but the snorting animal refused to face the blizzard, until Edward, unable to do more, clambered upon her, and then, from sheer indignation, the little animal made a final effort, and forged ahead.

This gave me an opportunity to rest, which I gladly took. With eyes half-closed by the storm and fatigue, I stumbled on behind. The crust became covered with fine drift, which increased until it was two feet deep. It told us that we were nearing the hill across the plat. Suddenly there was a lull, and we came upon a deep drift of fine snow under the lee of the hill. Here we again had to break the road.

Edward insisted upon taking the lead so as to get warm. We ploughed through, ascending rapidly, and as we emerged above the level of the hill we again met the full fury of the blast. Edward was not to be seen. I shouted and fired my revolver, but had no answer. I hastened toward a dark object, which proved to be the large pine. I thought he must be still in the drift, when I heard two shots, the signal of safety; he was safe, but where? They sounded faint and distant.

Three more shots followed, the signal of distress. They came from my right far down the mountain. It was only ten feet to where the hill sloped for two hundred yards at a very steep incline, then gently to the brink. It was evident that he had slid down the mountain, and could not return.

Having answered, I tied the pony to the tree, and deliberated what to do. I had no rope. As the signal again sounded, I hastened to aid him. I tried to go slowly on my hands and knees, but slipped on the icy crust. As I shot downward I wondered whether my trousers would hold out. It seemed but a moment when I was plunged into a deep drift.

Again the shots sounded very near. I floundered in their direction, and found Edward seated under a shrub pine rubbing his ankle, which had been sprained as he struck the tree in his descent. He was utterly exhausted, and begged me to camp beneath the little tree.

Realising the danger, I urged that we should get to the sled and our hay.

After tying ourselves together by our belts, we started, using a dead bough from the tree to break our way.

The tempest beat upon the bare mountain-side with terrific fury. The intense cold transformed the snowy crust to ice, over which scurried the drift in an endless whirl. With the dead bough I dug steps, into which we put our knees. It seemed an age before we reached the top, where the mare stood shivering and shrunken with cold.

Beyond this point a short distance was a hollow sheltered by hill and forest, where I preferred to camp. We therefore pushed on to its protection.

Camping in a storm was no new thing to us, and we had full confidence in our ability to take care of ourselves. Near by was a tree seamed by lightning. A long line of pitch ran from top to bottom on the windward side. To this I applied a match, and soon had a small flame, which I carefully guarded until it had taken good hold. Then I let the full blast strike it. Buffeted by the wind, it grew larger and larger, and, with a rush and roar, leaped heavenward. We stepped aside to avoid the fallen branches, and made a seat for ourselves of the hay.

We had no intention of going to sleep, but sat around toasting our benumbed feet and frozen shoes. They cracked and burned before we felt the heat. Edward's coat caught fire as he stood warming his back. Our wild pony, subdued by the storm, stood in the smoke with bowed head, a picture of dejection. Utter exhaustion had made us powerless. Our sense of security added to our danger. We made ourselves comfortable, and lay down. Edward was soon quiet. I was getting sleepy. It was past midnight, and though the blizzard raged violently, I began to doze. The roaring wind, the snapping branches, the furious storm, became a far away confused rumble, in the midst of which I heard a shout.

I awakened to find myself being shaken by Henry, my elder brother. We did not feel at all like moving, but the thought of a warm supper and bed aroused us, and soon we were at home. Henry had seen the blaze of our fire above the driving snow, and, with his frozen feet wrapped in sacking, made the effort which probably saved our lives.

A. F. Chittenden.

Against the Enemy, in East Africa.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTERS OF A MEMBER OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

THIRD LETTER.

"Central African Contingent,
"German East Africa,
"2nd February,
1917.

SOME time has elapsed since I last wrote to you, but I must be excused, as I have been on the trot again and have marched another sixty odd miles.

Wouldn't it be O.K. if we could advance in Flanders as rapidly as we, at times, do here! Unfortunately we are brought up with a bump, and have to hang on for a long or short period, but, in time, get going again.

The men are keeping pretty fit at present, but the rains have set in properly now, so I am afraid the sick lists will be very heavy soon. The mosquitoes nightly sing their "hymn of hate" again. The singers are not the dangerous ones; it is the silent ones that are the malaria mosquitoes—and then only the females.

I have a mosquito net and use it on every possible occasion. It gives me great glee to lie under the net and listen to the mosquitoes buzzing away outside the net, and "gnashing their teeth" in fury at their inability to get at the soldier-boy safely under cover. A few get in during the night, but then I have the satisfaction of "strafing" them in the morning when they are swollen like Zeppelins with my blue blood.

It is advisable to use a mosquito net whenever possible, as, not only does it keep out and infuriate the mosquitoes, but it also protects one from the huge hairy spiders, earwigs, scorpions, snakes, etc.—and I have even heard one of our men aver that it keeps off lions also. He states that a lion came right up to him one night, but did not touch him, as it evidently was afraid of the mosquito net.

I cannot vouch for the truth of this, and certainly do not advise anyone to depend upon a mosquito net to keep off lions, especially man-eaters. I would far rather depend upon my good old .303 short Service rifle.

The Taborah crowd of Huns who were chased by the Belgians came down our way in October, and we had many a tight little scrap before they broke through the dense bush and found their main body. When they eventually did manage to do this only about half their original number was left; we had accounted for the other half in killed, wounded and prisoners.

At a little place called Ngomine, a small garrison of ours, composed of some thirty or forty men, kept five hundred of the enemy at bay for six days before they were compelled to surrender. By that time they had killed and wounded a far larger number of the enemy. The German prisoners whom we have taken all say they would rather face five hundred Portuguese than fifty South Africans or British (same thing!).

During one of our rests I decided to go out elephant shooting, as some of these big beasts were reported to be within eight or ten miles of our camp. I asked for someone to accompany me, but all the chaps told me *they* had "lost no elephants."

I got a few days' leave, and hiring some native trackers, set off. The first day brought me to the neighbourhood of the elephants, but, as it was already late, I decided to wait until the next morning before commencing tracking—or "spooring."

After dining on chicken (obtained from the natives for a little salt) and scones (which I had made myself before leaving camp) I turned in, and listened to the buzzing of myriads of mosquitoes—I was safely under my net—and the roaring of a lion in the distance, while my thoughts wandered off to dear Sunny South Africa and the girl I had left behind me.

The natives with me were very concerned at my choosing to sleep outside instead of in one of their huts, saying I would wake up in the morning to find myself eaten by lions. I pitched them the yarn of "Lions afraid of mosquito nets," and also assured them that my rifle and revolver (Service Webley) would do for any interfering lions, and that I would welcome the chance of bagging one.

I certainly preferred the risk of lions to the certainty of vermin in the native huts, the more so as most of them are infested with the "khufu" tick, which gives whites tick fever. This is not a dangerous illness, but is most unpleasant, and leaves after-effects. Tick fever lasts for about ten weeks; the victim gets nine or ten attacks, each successive attack being milder than the previous one, until eventually he is immune.

Twenty-four men and an officer of the 1st S.A. Rifles went down with it at the same time, owing to sleeping in a disused native hut during a very stormy night. It affects the hearing and the sight of some people, and in all cases it leaves the victim in a very bloodless and debilitated state, making the constitution unfit to withstand malaria, and, still more, black-water fever. The natives become immune to tick-fever.

To proceed with my elephant-hunting narrative. At five o'clock next morning I rose and went off with my four natives. We soon struck the huge elephant spoor (tracks), some of them measuring twenty inches across. We followed this spoor all day, always imagining that we would come in sight of the huge brutes at any moment, as we picked up any number of freshly broken-off branches, and also noticed trees just recently pushed over by the elephants as they passed along.

Eventually, at about five o'clock, we turned back, and I created quite a good impression amongst my natives by killing three different species of buck with three consecutive shots—all over 200 yards' range. When I reached the native village where I was staying I was glad to get a good dinner of chicken and potatoes, as I had had nothing to eat all day.

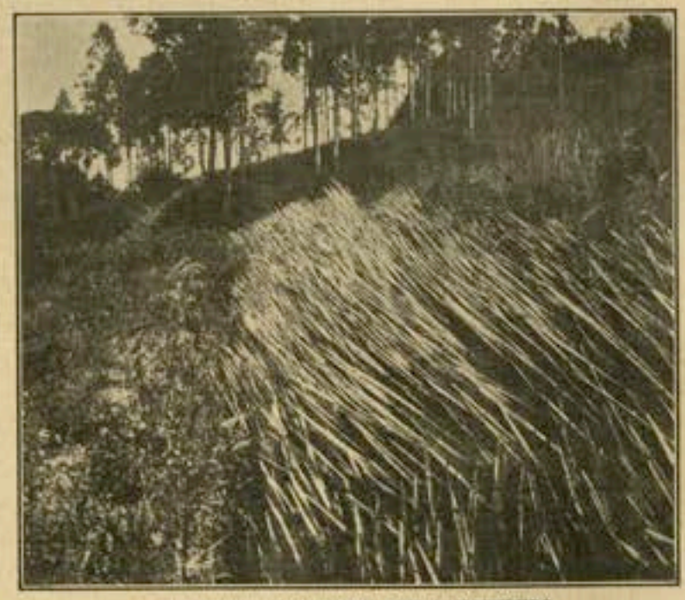
Next morning at cock-crow I was up and away on the spoor again. It was very fresh, as the elephants had come to a swamp about half a mile off. We again followed the spoor all day—I, with bated breath, expecting to bump into the brutes any minute. We worked round and round, and zigzagged all over the place, always missing the elephants by a few minutes. We came to a place where they had crossed a river and the water was still muddy, yet did not catch them up.

I turned back at last, at about 2 p.m., and had a bath in a river near the native huts. Whilst I was bathing a native came tearing up to tell me that the elephants were close at hand. It was the quickest dressing I ever did, and I was off with my gun as fast as I could go. I came upon three of them quite suddenly, standing about thirty yards away. They were at the foot of a hillock which I had climbed.

Going down on one knee I took good aim at a point behind the best tusker's ear. I had filed the noses off a couple of bullets. I expected to see the elephant drop, but instead he strolled behind a clump of bushes. When he made his appearance from behind the bushes I fired again, and then found to my amazement that it was a different one; so I had wounded two. The third one bolted.

The two wounded ones then raised their trunks in the air and spread their huge ears out like two enormous fans and shrieked with pain and rage. They had evidently not yet seen me, and could not smell me, as the wind was in my direction. When the brutes shrieked my boys got up and bolted, and then they spied us and bore down on us like locomotives. I then had perforce to bolt too, as it was hopeless trying to stop two elephants with only a .303 Service rifle.

My hair fairly rose on end, and I covered the ground at a rate that must have broken all world's records! Fortunately for me a dry watercourse, with sheer banks of some seven or eight feet, was



A STAKE PIT, NEAR FORT NEW LANGENBURG.

right in my way, and I scrambled through this. Once across I knew I was safe, so I pulled up to find my worthy pair of antagonists swaying from side to side on the other bank. I opened fire again, and they thought discretion the better part of valour—like our worthy German friends—and bolted, or rather attempted to, but one of them only got about fifty yards ere he collapsed—the other got right away.

I did not see the one falling dead, but recrossed the watercourse and took up the spoor, and had only followed a few yards when I came upon my monster—quite dead! A fine big bull with good tusks. I then continued following the blood spoor of the other, but it got too dark to see, and so I returned to the huts. Next morning we took up the spoor of the wounded beast again, followed for a long way, found where he had slept and moved on again, so came to the conclusion that he was only slightly wounded, and accordingly gave up the chase, as I was due back with my regiment that afternoon, my leave having expired.

I returned to the dead elephant, and there found all the natives—men, women and children from miles around—congregated round the carcase. They hailed me as a mighty hero, the women grovelling on the ground and patting my feet. Really, I felt quite embarrassed. My interpreter said they were so happy because I had provided them with meat, and because the elephants had damaged their crops.

I then sat down and watched the proceedings. The head was first hacked off, and a couple of men proceeded with the cutting out of the tusks, whilst the rest of them—a mixed company—hacked at the enormous body. They had brought their cooking

utensils with them, and soon fires were burning merrily all over the place, and bits of elephant were being roasted in the flames. I was told that this crowd would remain camped round the carcase until all was eaten.

Before the head was quite severed from the body the chief prepared some leaves from a tree growing near and handed them round to the men with him. As soon as the head fell away all the natives who had this preparation rubbed it quickly over their faces and chests — evidently some ancient custom, but they would not tell me why they did it.

Cutting out the tusks was a long job; it took about two and a half hours. The chief took the tusks as they were cut out and retired into the bush by himself. When he returned with them I found he had extracted the nerves, and had carefully wrapped them in leaves, so that no other eyes should see them—another superstition!

Eventually I was given the two tusks nicely cleaned and a couple of boys to carry them, and set off for the spot where my regiment was camped, reaching there the following morning, very proud of my trophies.

I was greeted with the usual soldier's welcome, and sarcastic shouts of "Where are all the elephants?" and so forth. They would not believe that I had shot one until the boys carrying the tusks arrived.

I have come to the conclusion that elephant hunting is not child's play. One must not be easily discouraged, but must stick to the tracks when once on them, and eventually will come up to the brutes, be it in a day or a week.

By the way, a .303 short Service rifle is not quite heavy enough for elephants, although I ought to have shot my brute stone dead with my first shot at such close quarters. I found out afterwards that it was my first shot that caused his death; had I not filed the nose off the bullet it would have penetrated the brain, but the filing had considerably lessened its penetrating power. . . . I shall know better next time.

Next day we moved off to take up our pastime of chasing the Huns.

Must go on duty now, so good-bye. H.

THROUGH THREE MILES OF WATER PIPE.

A WORKMAN'S ADVENTURE.

FOR very few persons can such an extraordinary adventure be in store as that which befell an Italian named Lazaroni, one of a gang of workmen who were engaged in laying a line of pipes in Somerville for the Metropolitan Water Supply. The incident is related by an American paper, the Boston *Transcript*.

On the day in question they were at work in Walnut Street, Somerville. From that point, back through Cambridge to the foot of Magazine Street, on the bank of the Charles River, the line was completed and the trench filled in.

When the men left off work at six o'clock Lazaroni missed his pipe, and, thinking he had left it in the main, went back to hunt for it. His action attracted no attention, and a few minutes later the entrance to the main was boarded up for the night.

One workman had noted Lazaroni's return into the main, however, and this man, when he was halfway into Boston, suddenly remembered that he had not seen Lazaroni come out again, and had not seen him among the other members of the party after quitting work.

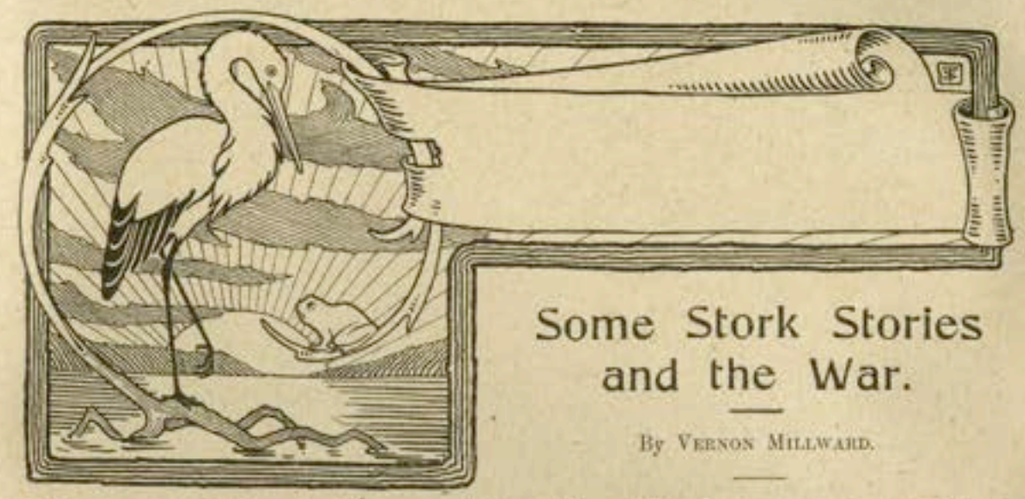
Becoming convinced that Lazaroni was imprisoned in the main, this friend got off the car and went back to Somerville, only to find that the entrance to the main was undisturbed, that Lazaroni was nowhere in sight, and that no one had heard any calls for assistance.

Bethinking himself of the other opening into the main at the foot of Magazine Street, Cambridge, the friend jumped upon a Cambridge car, and was soon at the opening on the river bank, where he sat down to wait.

Meanwhile, Lazaroni, in the big pipe, had been having a trying experience. When he found that the light was cut off from the end of the main in Walnut Street, he knew that he was a prisoner. He tried to attract attention by shouting, but the workmen were gone and he could not make anyone hear him. He knew that the only other opening was at the foot of Magazine Street, three miles away, so he turned about and started for that end.

The main is four feet in diameter, and Lazaroni is one foot and two inches taller than that; so he found the stooping position which he was compelled to assume very trying, and had to stop frequently to sit down and rest. More than that, the unbroken darkness hindered him; and he had to grope his way slowly in order to get round the turns without harm.

At length, after being three hours in the main, he emerged from the opening at the river, faint from his exertion, hungry, and temporarily blind from his long experience in the dark. He was glad to find his friend waiting to meet him, and as soon as he was assisted to his home, the friend spread the news of Lazaroni's imprisonment and happy escape.



Some Stork Stories and the War.

By Vernon Millward.

IF the great Napoleon had heeded the warning of the storks the terrible disaster of 1812 might have been averted.

How could that be? some of you ask. Well, it is said that on the eve of his grand expedition against Russia, or more probably when it was well advanced (for the four hundred thousand men that composed the invading force were within eighty miles of Moscow in September) he was warned that an early winter was probable, and that it was likely to be a severe one.

The prediction was based on a Natural History fact. That autumn the storks in Holland and Germany had flown southward long before their usual time. The wonderful bird instinct had noticed Nature's signs and had taken alarm early.

The Corsican laughed derisively at the supposed portent, and allowed it to make no difference in his plans. When Moscow—a seemingly empty city when he reached it—was burned over his head he had no choice but to return westward. But no sooner were his disappointed legions well on their way homeward than the bitter weather set in, and storm and sleet and snow dogged the straggling host every step of the way.

Did Napoleon call to mind that bird omen which he had slighted, as the full magnitude of the disaster dawned upon him, and he saw the gaunt pale faces pushing onward through the pitiless snows?

The stork, as we all know, is a migrant. In Denmark and Germany and Holland the arrival of the storks in spring and their departure in autumn are fondly noticed by the people, and especially by the children. The great white birds love to build their nests on roofs and gables and chimney stacks.

Many of you, my readers, learned all about the stork when you were very little fellows and listened to Hans Andersen's stories. Do you recollect the charming description he gives of the mother stork bidding her children take no notice of the jeers of the rude street boys, for soon the family would be speeding away high in air to a land far to the southward, and while the street boys in that northern town were shivering in bitter cold and snow she and her children would be frog-hunting on the steamy mud-banks of a sunny river where palm trees threw their shade and the skies were always blue.

But little Danish and Dutch and German children know the stork by sight as early as English town children get to know the house sparrow. He is the most popular of birds, and as warmly welcomed as the cuckoo is by us, because he "brings the summer." For when the stork is back on the housetop every child knows that the winter is over and gone.

Bearing in mind, therefore, the traditional affection for these birds among the Scandinavian and Teutonic peoples, I feel a good deal of doubt as to there being any truth in the stories which appeared in the newspapers two years ago that a public order in Germany allowing the killing of various wild birds included storks. Not only would it go grievously against popular sentiment, but, as a matter of fact, the flesh of the stork is very unpalatable eating.

It is a happy thing for the stork, in these days of food shortage, that he is not particular about his own diet. He is, in this war, distinctly a citizen of enemy countries — Germany, Austria and Turkey being among his chief places of residence—and in none of these lands are the people able to throw to him, out of their abundance, as in pre-war days, the scraps and fragments which he loves. He must now be contenting himself with any inferior fare, the refuse of the fishmongers' stalls and the butchers' counters.

In years gone by he was *par excellence* the town scavenger, and many of those picturesque old cities with their narrow streets and overhanging house fronts owed not a little to him and his relations for lessening the amount of decaying matter left lying on roadway and sidewalk.

In the autumn of 1915, a German newspaper, the *Kölnische Zeitung*, reported that a movement had been going on for some

months previously among the storks belonging to the river-intersected districts of northern France and Flanders. The reason assigned was the obvious one of the disturbance caused by the noise of gun-fire and the marchings of large bodies of troops.

But what the Cologne paper chiefly deplored was the small extent to which the storks had migrated into Germany. There was the friendly Rhine with its many windings, and its riverside towns and villages and old castles, all offering free accommodation to such welcome winged visitors. Yet only a very limited proportion of these disturbed westerners sought an asylum in Deutschland.

Another war-invaded region, that of the Masurian Lakes, where Russians and Germans fought so fiercely, has also seen the migration of thousands of storks. When in the springtime they came winging up from southern climes, seeking the old roofs and turrets, they found many a familiar building gone altogether, and others shattered and dismantled by shell-fire. If the battered masonry offered any sort of support for nest-building it is said that the house-hunting pairs often took possession of it or built as close to it as they could.

The storks of the Polish provinces, on the other hand, equally harried by war's "alarums and excursions," appear to have sought the lakes of East Prussia, and settled there. Other storks, some from France and some from Flanders, have been found there too. One at least was identified, by the metal ring which had been fastened round its leg, as having come from France.

One curious occurrence is noted as having attended this migration of storks into East Prussia. Large swarms of flies and midges have been making life uncomfortable for man and beast. But whether it was due to the storks gobbling up the frogs which live largely on these flies, or whether it was pure coincidence, does not seem clear.

The presence of the stork is favoured in most Moslem countries, as in those of Scandinavia. Says a sportsman, in his book published some half a dozen years before the War, "It is a most difficult thing to take storks' eggs. . . . In Spain, it is true, I do not think the people pay much regard to them, merely considering them useful in eating locusts, mice, and even rats and snakes. But in Holland and Denmark it would be unsafe to disturb them, and even more dangerous in Mahometan countries, where the people look upon them with peculiar reverence."

And another traveller, Colonel Irby, says that in Morocco "almost every Moorish hovel has its stork's nest on the top, a pile of sticks lined with grass and palmetto-fibre"; and he mentions that in Fez and other large towns there is a regular hospital for storks. "Should one be injured in any way, or fall from the nest, it is sent to this institution, or rather enclosure, which is kept up by subscriptions from wealthy Moors, who regard the stork as a sacred bird."

Will the British troops in Palestine see anything of the arrival of the stork armies this spring? I am writing this too early to chronicle it. Perhaps the thunder of guns and the tramp and clatter of so many soldiers, "horse and foot," will scare the returning myriads into choosing another and quieter destination. But in ordinary times the return of the storks is one of the sights of the Holy Land.



THE WHITE STORK. *Drawn by* E. C. Mansell.

One of the first modern writers to describe it was Canon Tristram, in 1864. He says, "The multitudes which arrive and the suddenness with which these great birds distribute themselves over the whole face of the land is, in Palestine, truly startling. In winter not one is seen. On the 24th of March vast flocks suddenly appeared, steadily travelling northward, and leaving large detachments on every plain and hill."

A more recent traveller, Prince Rudolph of Austria, writing in 1881-2, tells us that "Storks were standing on the hillsides [of Palestine] in perfectly incredible numbers. In no region have I seen such masses of these birds as were assembled throughout the whole valley of the Jordan, especially in the valley of El-Audje." And in another place he says "We rode along the edge of the vegetation at the base of the mountains through thick bushes and low trees, which were literally covered with storks just awakening from their slumbers."

In the new armies which Britain has sent forth there are educated naturalists by the score who will note all such phenomena as bird migrations with keen interest, and the Palestine Expeditionary Force must contain many such.

To some of them the striking and vivid phrase used in the Old Testament, "The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed time," will acquire new meaning. For, as Canon Tristram has pointed out, not only does the stork migrate "at her appointed time," but these birds travel at a great height in the air and *by day*, so that the sight is noticeable and impressive.

And how does the stork fly? Not like the heron, which in general shape it so much resembles. The stork flies with its neck straightened out; the heron with its head drawn back between its shoulders.

Here is the description jotted down by one observer: "The black wings suddenly expanded from the white body have a most striking effect, having a spread of nearly seven feet; and the bird on the wing, showing its long, bright-red bill, and steering itself by its long red legs, stretched out far beyond its tail, is a noble sight."

Our airmen with the Army at Salonika have or had a Macedonian stork which always goes to meet them when they come in from their flights, as if he felt some kind of kinship with these bold fliers.

The devotion of the stork as a parent is well known. There are some wonderfully pathetic anecdotes in illustration of this. Let me close this article by relating one which belongs to wartime.

It was an earlier war; that of the ambitious conqueror Napoleon Bonaparte, and the incident took place in 1807 while the battle of Friedland was being fought, an engagement in which the Prussians and their allies were handsomely beaten.

A farm near the city was set on fire by a bursting shell. Near by stood an old dry tree on which a pair of storks had built. "The mother bird was on the nest at the time. The noise of the guns scared her, but they could not scare her from her precious charge. But presently, fanned by the wind, a sheet of flame from the burning buildings swept round the tree. Then she sprang up and soared high in air.

But she could not bring herself to quit the nest. "Down she swooped through the smoke, wondering how she might save her brood. The heat again drove her away, and again she soared into the sky. But her mother-love was greater than her fear, and it drew her back. Once more she came down, and this time the smoke and flames overpowered her, and she fell on to the already crackling heap of sticks, blinded, scorched and dead."

THE STORY OF AN OWL.

(*Concluded from page* 80.)

The rough men always gave him a welcome, and they were very careful to see that he came to no harm. They took it in turn to see him safely inside our gates, otherwise he would have followed home the lad who beguiled the way with his fiddle.

This fiddle acted on the owl as did the Pied Piper's piping on the children in the legend of olden days; no matter what the music was, he felt irresistibly drawn by it.

As all good things come to an end, so did His Reverence. I left home to pay a long-promised visit to some relatives, and my mother being unable to get about by reason of the great heat, my bird was left pretty much to himself. We conclude that he must have felt a trifle lonely; at any rate, he made more excursions than usual, and was several times brought back by friendly neighbours.

At length, one day he was brought back for the last time, stiff, cold, and dead—a pathetic little heap of soaking feathers. He had evidently been overtaken by one of the heavy thunder storms just then so prevalent, and had not been strong enough to make headway, with his wet plumage, against the fiercely buffeting wind.

His stormy little life was over, and I was not the only one who regretted it. My mother missed him in the evenings, when she stood and watched the stars; the dogs sniffed diligently about in every corner, and seemed as if they could not make it out. The horses looked at me reproachfully, as if asking where their little comrade was.

As I strolled in the twilight under the lime-trees I listened in vain for his soft twrr-twrr-hoo-oo-o, and in my studio I sadly missed his bright little eyes watching me as I worked.

I have never replaced him, nor have I forgotten him; often, when I look up at his portrait hanging on the wall, my thoughts travel back to the old days, and to those who, like His Reverence, are no longer with me.

S.

How to Make a Dog Kennel.

By George P. Moon.

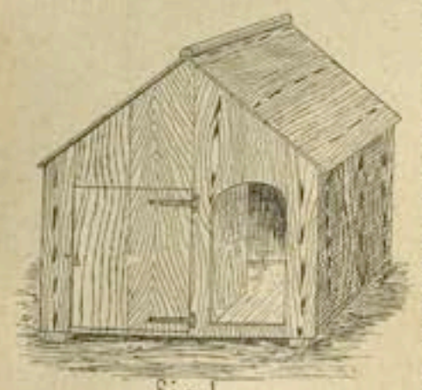


Fig. 1

OUR first illustration gives you a fair idea of the dog kennel I propose to show you how to build.

You will at once notice that it differs in more than one point from dog kennels in general—the entrance is not in the middle of the front, but at one side; also it has a door of good size, hinged, and with a staple for padlock, and there is a partition on the left of the entrance. The partition makes a kind of entrance-hall for your pet, and also enables it to escape wind and bad weather, which, in the common variety of kennel, it must patiently endure.

As a boy's pet dog is generally a terrier of some breed, I shall give dimensions proper for a small animal. If your dog be a collie, retriever, or some other

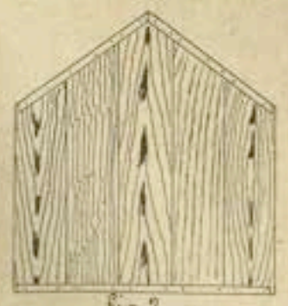


Fig. 2

large breed, you can make it correspondingly larger.

A length of 2½ ft., width of 2 ft., and height of 3 ft. will be suitable dimensions.

All parts are constructed of ¾-in. thick matchboarding, which is not only cheap, but waterproof, owing to the fact that the edge of one piece of board has a tongue which fits into a groove cut in the edge of another. Such boarding is 6 ins. wide, and is already planed.

The sides are built up before being united. Fig. 2 depicts the back, Fig. 3 the front, and Fig. 4 one of the sides.

Beginning with the back, we lay on some flat surface five 3-ft. or longer lengths of match-boarding, side by side, the

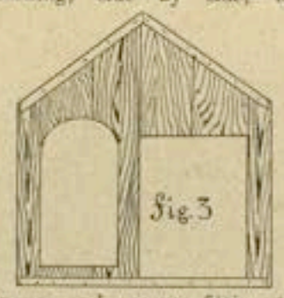


Fig. 3

tongues and grooves fitting together, and one extremity of each coinciding, as Fig. 5 illustrates, to form the bottom of the kennel back.

In the middle of the middle length of board make a mark at a distance of 32 ins. from the bottom end. Draw a line from this point to others on each side margin, 18 ins. from the bottom, to mark the roof inclination (Fig. 5).

Carefully saw through these lines. Then nail on the three rails which keep the boards together. Fig. 2 shows the position of these. That for the bottom measures 28 ins. in length, 2 ins. in width, and 1 in. in thickness. It is flush with the bottom extremities of the boards, and 1 in. from the side margins.

Those at the top are 22 ins. in length, and have a width and thickness similar to the bottom rail. They are united by a mitre joint in the upper middle, as



Fig. 4

illustrated, and their other ends are sawn parallel with, and 1 in. from, the side margins. They must be flush with the roof extremities. Shave off the tongue on one of the margin lengths of board.

The front is, of course, identical with the back as regards dimensions and shape, and top and bottom rails. But it does not consist of five boards, as in the case of the back, but of four boards and two halves, the latter occupying the outer position. This is to facilitate the cutting out of the doorway, which should be done before the rails are nailed on.

The doorway measures 14 ins. in height and 12 ins. in width. As you will notice in Fig. 3, it extends from the left hand halved board to the third whole board. Therefore the two boards through which it is cut need but to be sawn across at two points—2 ins. and 14 ins. distant

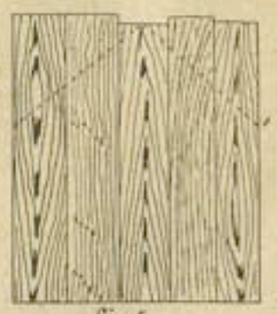


Fig. 5

from the bottom end—for us to produce, not only the doorway, but the door itself.

The entrance must be cut when the rails are nailed in place. It

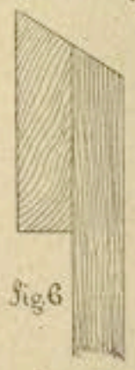


Fig. 6

should be made with a keyhole saw. Its dimensions are: Height 17 ins. and width 9 ins., the foot being 3 ins. from the bottom, and the right side 3 ins. from the margin.

The two sides of the kennel are formed of four lengths of match-

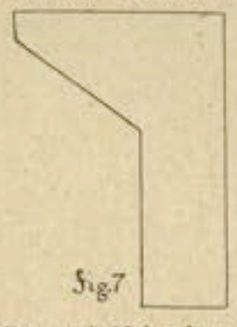


Fig. 7

boarding, each 18 ins. long, fastened together with a rail at top and bottom. Fig. 6, which gives an end view of the top of one of these sides, shows you that the tops of boards and rail are bevelled to make them correspond with the inclination of the front and back. Trace the angle on a piece of cardboard; cut out and use this (Fig. 7) as a guide to the amount of bevelling required. Plane or spokeshave should be used for this part of the business. We must take care to have the rails 1½ ins. shorter than the width of the side, because the latter is nailed on to the edge of the front and back, as the top view of a corner (Fig. 8) clearly shows, and this, of course, couldn't be done if the rails were longer.

We begin to build up the ken-



Fig. 9

nel by nailing or screwing a side to the front and back. The sectional view (Fig. 9) illustrates the relative positions of the various parts. Then we add the flooring boards, which run from back to front, and are 22½ ins. long. Five will be required. They rest upon the bottom rails of front and back, and are nailed in place. Fig. 10 gives some idea of the appearance of the work at this stage. Next nail on the four 3-in. blocks which raise the kennel above the ground, and add the remaining side.

The partition comes after. It measures about 20 ins. long and 12 ins. wide, and is cut from a piece of ¾-in. deal. Its upper

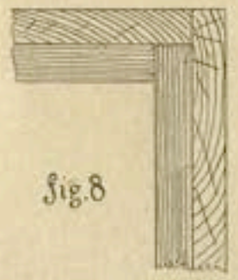


Fig. 8

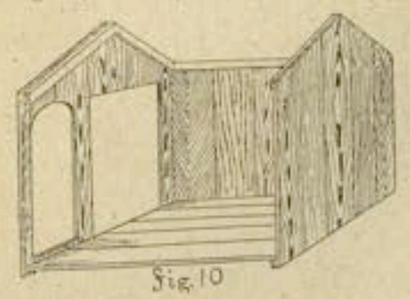


Fig. 10

end is nailed to a rail (Fig. 11), say 2 ins. by ¾ in., long enough to touch the front and back of the kennel where they are

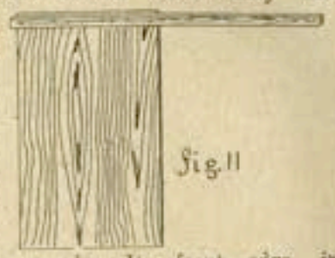


Fig. 11

secured. Its front edge is screwed to the front, and lower edge to the bottom of the kennel, close to the entrance.

The fact of the floor being ¾ in. above the foot of the doorway



Fig. 12

gives a stop at that point, to hinder the door opening further. But, as wet can enter at the top and sides of the door, stops are wanted at such points also. Three pieces of ½-in. wood, 1½ ins.

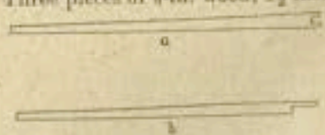


Fig. 13

wide, and 14 ins. long, will be required. They are nailed to the inside, to project ½ in. into the aperture, the joint uniting the vertical and horizontal pieces being a mitre, as Fig. 12 shows.

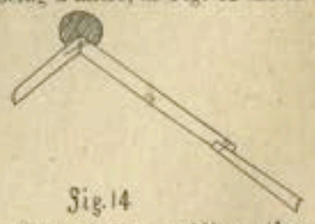


Fig. 14

But, before adding them, shave off the tongue on one side

of the doorway, if this has not been done before.

Matchboarding is employed also for the roof. But it needs some little preparation first. Four pieces and one half-piece will be needed for each slant, measuring 26 ins. long.

Take one of them, and taper it down with your plane till the edge having the tongue is reduced to ½ in. in thickness (*a*, Fig. 13). Then, with a chisel, remove one of the laps of the groove, and work on till the lap remaining is at least 1 in. long (*b*, Fig. 13).

These boards are nailed on the kennel, so that the thin margin of one lies underneath the lap of that above it. The two half-boards are secured first at the highest point. Fig. 14 explains better than words the way the parts lie.

The joining of the half-pieces is made waterproof by nailing over it a 26-in. length of rod, 2 ins. in diameter, along which we have chiselled a cavity, to make it sit neatly on the ridge of the roof.

The two boards forming the door are united by a couple of cross-rails 3 ins. by 11 ins. Hinge on, and add staple and hasp. Finally, putty the nail and screw holes, and paint all parts any colour you may desire.

The Pigeon as War Courier.

THE BRITISH N.P.S. AND WHAT IT HAS DONE.

By PATRICK VAUX.



THE British N. P. S. One wonders how many of us — even those interested in birds—can say off-hand what these initials stand for. Certainly they are seen seldom, very seldom, in the world of print.

Yet, although the N.P.S. is not heard of once in a blue moon, it has done priceless work in the great hostilities. By means of it not only human lives have been saved, but it has been an invaluable weapon, offensive and defensive, against the under-water craft of the Germans and their wily and treacherous ways.

The British Naval Pigeon Service is not new. It is as old as the times of galleys and bows and arrows, and was also the sole means of distant communication in the days of masts and yards and pig-tails. Thus the medium that served for giving naval information in far-off days, when only certain English ports provided the naval forces of England, still serves the same purpose to-day, when the British Navy is an Empire force girdling the world seas, and wireless telegraphy has harnessed the air.

Perhaps no living creature is more carefully preserved in Britain at the present day than the "carrier" and the "homer" pigeon. Thrilling stories creep out from time to time of the splendid work done by their wonderful pluck and determination. On shore they are trained and looked after by the N.P.S., the men of which had the handling and training of racing pigeons before entering this Service. Then the birds, when proficient, are sent out as required to the various naval bases and sub-bases for use along the coast by the watchers and the patrols and other craft.

There is a watcher on one of the loneliest parts of the coast of the British Isles who fully realised the worth of the N.P.S., for it brought about the capture of a crew of Huns and their submarine. For many nights he had kept a sharp look-out along his beat for the U-boats possibly making the land to get the petrol so cunningly stored away somewhere up his short stretch of coast. Day and night his vigilant eyes, jammed against the eyepiece of his binoculars, swept the lonely waters, where few sails appeared save of the very occasional fishing boats on the reach of waters laid down for them by the Admiralty. Again and again he searched all likely and unlikely places for the cache where the petrol was. But in vain.

One evening, however, just after sundown, he saw the tip of a periscope rise far out at sea, and then the conning-tower of a U-boat showed awash. The craft became stationary. On her conning-tower platform there appeared specks representing men, confident of safety, for the nearest British base was far distant and the patrols were few.

The watcher turned to the light basket he was carrying on his back, and the little note he wrote hurriedly he tied to a leg of the pigeon. Then he released the "homer." For less than a minute the bird cast about, as if finding its bearings, then winged quickly away toward the naval sub-base, its home.

Sooner than the sun rose next morning that U-boat was lying moored hard by British destroyers, and her crew were prisoners. She had run out of petrol, but not this time was the hidden cache tapped. The winged member of the N.P.S. had stopped that.

Another instance is that which ensued when one of our patrol boats, early one morning, was attacked by a German submarine.

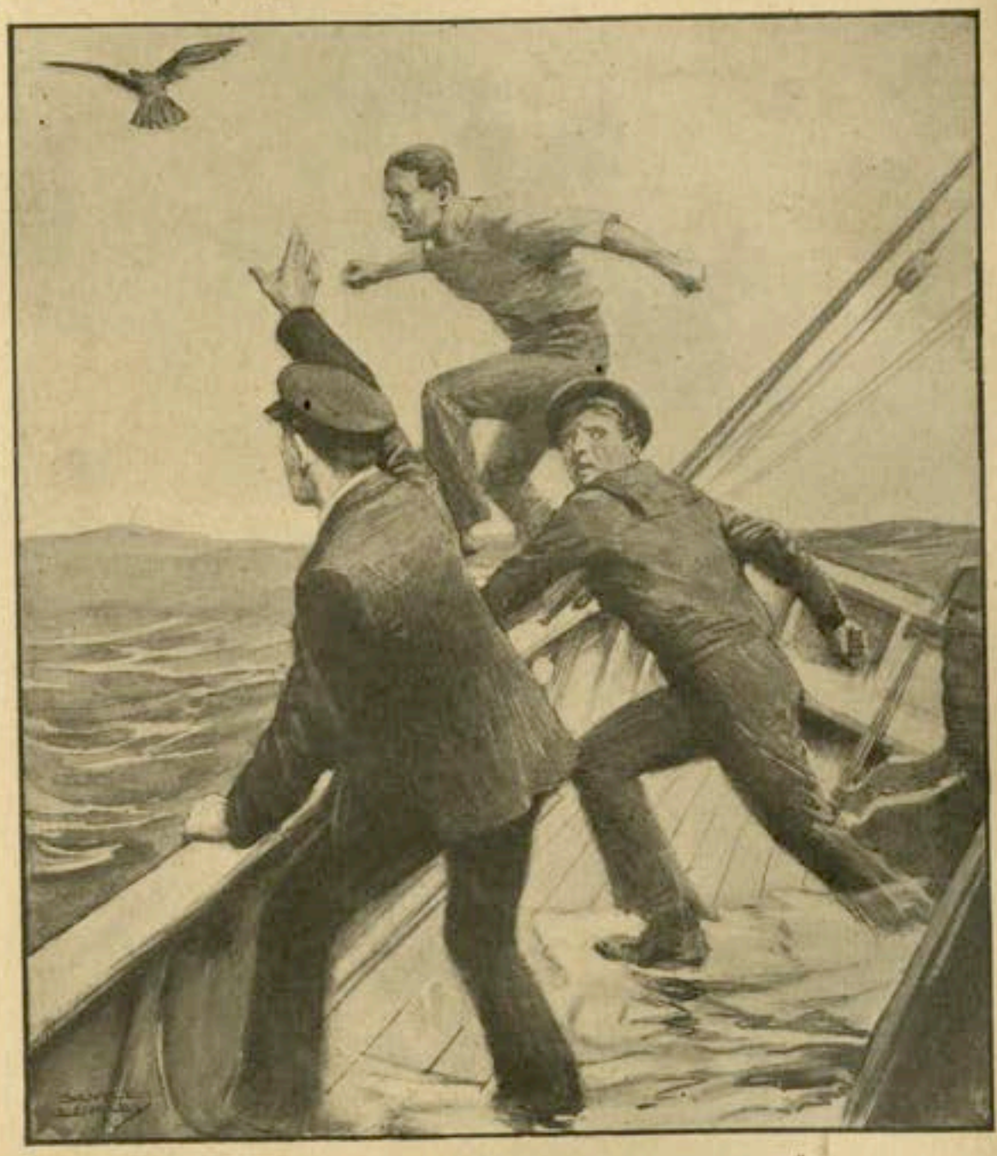
The vessel was torpedoed, and began to sink quickly. The skipper, however, had time to write a short message, roll up the scrap of paper, and secure it to a leg of the pigeon that he carried on board. Just in time, before the shattered vessel sank under his feet, he threw the carrier up into the air; the next moment he was struggling in the water, and soon was striking out for dear life toward a bit of wreckage.

By now the U-boat had risen to the surface, and her men were watching the patrolsmen battling in the water. The bird also they espied, and immediately they began to fire at it. The skipper saw the bird was badly hit, and all gave up hopes of rescue. They did not know how plucky the N.P.S. is, how staunch the spirit of a well-trained "carrier."

Twenty miles away it alighted on the deck of a patrolling destroyer, its silver-grey plumage specked with blood, one of its wings wounded, and some feathers of the tail completely shot away. Quickly it was brought to the commanding officer, who took the message off its leg. Three minutes later the destroyer was steaming at full speed to the succour, and her wireless telegraphist was ringing the sky with news of the enemy's whereabouts.

In less than three-quarters of an hour the patrolsmen were safe on board. The N.P.S. had saved their lives, and also brought the avenging trawlers and destroyers together for the hunting.

Many are the praiseworthy



"JUST IN TIME HE THREW THE 'CARRIER' UP INTO THE AIR."

Drawn by SAVILE LUMLEY.

deeds that have been done by the birds of the British Naval Pigeon Service, that if achieved by human individuals would be acknowledged by some medal or other decoration for distinguished conduct in face of the enemy.

What these exploits have been only the register of the Naval Pigeon Service could tell fully, but in its curt, brief sentences the record of each bird and the good work it has done against the Huns is faithfully preserved.

MY MAN, NOAH.

A TRUE STORY OF THE KARROO.

By M. Woodifield.

"BOTHER it! How the light fades! It's like going out of the sunshine into a tunnel. I'll be blessed if you can't see it fall like a shadow from overhead on the veldt."

I threw the book I had been reading on to the wicker table, which stood on the stoep of my house, or, to be more accurate, my dog kennel—it was hardly bigger.

As I did so, a terrific clap of thunder cracked the sky, and the blue-white flame of tropical lightning lit up in zigzag flashes the pitchy darkness which had so rapidly descended. Then down came the rain in a perfect torrent. By Jove! how it pelted, dashing upon the roof with the noise of a hail of bullets.

Whew! What a deluge! How I opened my arms to it as I watched the baked ground thirstily sucking up the water where the big heat cracks gave entrance to the dry earth; for did it not mean that in the cooled air I should get a good sleep that night—a luxury of which the recent intense heat had for some time robbed me!

For twenty minutes at least it poured with ever-increasing heaviness, while I revelled in the anticipation of the bathe I should have on the morrow. At last, as suddenly as it had commenced, the thunder and lightning ceased, the torrent passed into a mere drip, and slowly the skies cleared until it became so light I could distinguish the things in the room behind me.

I was just about to enter when I heard a yell from the open, and Noah, my black "boy," came rushing over the ground below the stoep, and bounding up the steps leading to it cried breathlessly: "Look out, massa! Water run very quick, sar. Oi! Eye! 'Ware, sar, 'ware!"

To my unbounded astonishment he caught me round the waist, staggered into the room, and literally threw me on top of a heavy chest; then, catching up a skin, and seizing one or two boxes and my desk, which he knew contained valuable papers, flung them on top of me.

I thought he had gone mad, and waited to see what he would do next. He seemed to be working against time, for with another "Oi! Eye!" he turned to the back door, which faced that leading on to the stoep. To my astonishment, it was creaking and bending inwards, as if resisting some great outside force, while a stream of water slowly poured from below it.

Hurling his big muscular frame, with its full strength, against the panel, he forced it backwards and clicked up the latch. With a blasting report the door flew open, and a volume of water rushed through, pinning him between the door and the wall.

I was alarmed, and was about to yell out and ask if he was safe, when a roar came from his prison:

"Nick of time, sar! Just so—all right, massa. Me all right. Sit tight, sar. Hold on for life, sar. Soon be ober."

And tight I sat, for though the chest was out of the vortex of the direct rush, the cement floor was now four feet deep in water, and the wicker tables and chairs which composed my furniture were floating in mad whirls from one end of the room to the other, dancing a bobbing polka in and out of each corner.

Still the torrent poured in at one door, out at the other, flooding the stoep and dashing over the hard earth below, until it finally fell into a dried-up waterbed beyond, where it could do no further mischief. It was getting lively in the room, with the water steadily rising, and no possible knowledge as to when it would subside. Something must be done. I had no great desire to be drowned like a rat.

"Noah!" I shouted, "how long is this going on? And where the dickens does the water come from?"

The big head craned round the door; the large eyes rolled, for I could see a gleaming white about where I knew they would be.

"Comed down the kloof at the back of the house, sar. Nearly done now, sar. Water run slower—better now, I tink."

He was right. Even as he spoke I noticed the volume was decreasing, and the noise of the rush was undoubtedly less. Feeling in my pocket for my match-box, I drew it forth and struck a vesta.

Then I saw the six-foot-three of my "boy," emboldened by the glimmer, emerge from his shelter behind the door. His black face grinned with merriment—probably at my very ludicrous position. The sight was so comical that I went one better, and burst into roars of laughter, in which he joined. I flatter myself I looked like Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday—not a bad resemblance, considering a large sheepskin rug nearly covered me, from which

emerged only my head, with its ruffled dark hair and beard.

The water was rapidly subsiding, and when it reached a couple and a half of feet in depth, I was off with my shoes and socks, tucked up my trousers, and together we went in for a paddle to rescue my drunken furniture, which now, worn out by its mad career, reposed against the walls. We bobbed about like a couple of corks after the chairs and tables, and when they were caught, sat down on the former and hugged the latter until the water had drained away, merely leaving the cement floor damp and cool.

Not much mischief was done, only the havoc made with the whitewashed walls caused Noah to ejaculate rather hotly in low Dutch, which, luckily for him, I was supposed not to understand. All the same, in his shoes I should have done the same, for a round of whitewashing in the heat of a Karroo summer is not a pleasant anticipation, and that bit of whitewashing would be his fate next day.

Whether this incident excited my "slave"—for such he would virtually have been had we lived before the abolition of slavery in our English Colonies—I cannot say; but, considering his undoubted affection for me, and his utter disregard for the safety of his own life where mine was concerned, I am inclined to believe it was so.

The terrifying affair which I am about to relate, and which took place that night, was probably brought about by this excitement, increased by my folly in giving him a drop of "smoke," as he called my raw Scotch, to which I had had recourse to stave off the chilliness induced by sitting on a recently submerged floor.

I spoke of Noah as a "slave," and such, when I first met him, he was. I had come across him in Zanzibar, where I caught his master, a brute of a Portuguese, thrashing the life out of him with a sjambok of rhinoceros hide. My English blood was up, and I could hardly restrain myself from wresting the whip out of the ruffian's hands and applying it to his own back. Luckily I restrained the impulse, and resorted to diplomacy in the shape of dollars, which, thanks to the cupidity of the man, were willingly taken in exchange for the "lazy dog of a nigger."

Noah's gratitude, that of a beaten hound, at first irritated me by its servility; but as I realised how utterly incapable he was of understanding his freedom, or the benefits it conferred, the annoyance changed to pity, and finally to a strong affection, as little by little his manliness asserted itself, and he gave me an honesty, faithfulness, and devotion so great and unswerving that I would have laid any odds on his absolute trustworthiness and love.

He had been in my service nine years when I, a member of the Colonial Civil Service in South Africa, was sent to a forsaken hole in the Karroo called Kokovlei, there to ferret out among the white and black inhabitants the perpetrators of a ghastly crime. I had been in the place some five weeks, and my task was well-nigh completed, for I had run to earth a half-caste Malay, had placed him under arrest, and the very night my house was swamped had completed my final arrangements to take him, along with the evidence bound to hang him, to Port Elizabeth.

My three rooms, all the same length and breadth, lay side by side. First came the sitting room, then my sleeping den, and finally the kitchen. They in no way communicated with each other, but each had two doors, one opening on to the stoep, the other on to the open ground at the back of the house.

Noah usually slept on the stoep, rolled in a kaross when the frosts were keen, or else as lightly clad as his respect for me would permit in the stifling heat.

After he had gone off with his toddy, I replenished my glass, locked up the bottle in the canister, and put it back on the shelf, midway between the back door as you enter it and the left-hand corner, and exactly behind the wicker table I used for my dinner.

By this time the storm had quite passed over, but it had now grown dark; so I lit my reading lamp, and placing it on the dinner table, drew up a chair in front of it, so that the light fell over my left shoulder, and I was soon lost in the depths of a work on electricity, a subject which was my one and only hobby. I had just come to the description of an especially fascinating experiment, which interested me so deeply that I was soon lost to all but the absorbing test.

It was then about eight o'clock, and as I did not have my supper until nine, I was sure of a quiet hour, and so gave myself up entirely to a thorough enjoyment of it.

I must have been reading some time when I was vaguely conscious of some disturbing element near. A spasmodic creak and jar—it sounded as if someone was endeavouring to push open the door behind me, which had stuck.

I knew that Noah was not likely to come in—in fact, I had been aware for some time of a savoury smell of roast buck, which was wafted from the kitchen; so I knew my dinner was in process of cooking, and as he was a most careful cook, it was not likely he would run the risk of burning the joint by leaving the fire to look after itself, even for a moment; so, without turning, I continued my reading.

But again came that curious creaking, pushing, sound, this time emphasised by sundry squeaks. Irritably, with an angry jerk, I swung myself round to the right, and looked towards the door. To my surprise, although I had latched it before settling myself down, it stood slightly open, and just inside, holding the door, were two black fingers with a space of wood between them. After all, it was Noah. The two fingers betrayed him—for when a child, as a punishment for laziness, the second and third fingers of his right hand had been chopped off by that brute Van Diekirke, leaving an unsightly gap between the first and little fingers.

Annoyed at being disturbed, I called out angrily: "What the dickens are you doing there? Come in, if you want to; but don't make that worrying noise."

As I turned to my book I heard: "All rite, massa—all rite"; and I was aware that he had come in and put something on the shelf to my right.

Once more the experiment claimed my attention. For awhile all was silent; then once more, louder, clearer, came the pushing, grinding sound. I banged my book down, and turned round—again to see the tell-tale fingers.

I lost all patience, and called out: "What on earth do you mean by it? Get what you require and be off, or I'll kick you down the stoep."

"Very sorry, massa—very sorry. Me no light—want matches." In he came, off the shelf went a box of matches, and I saw his disappearing form.

I got up, kicked the door to; but it still remained open some four inches.

"Don't you come back till supper time," I shouted angrily; "or I'll make your head creak as the door does."

Silence met my remark; so I settled myself down once again, pulled the lamp close, and went on reading.

Suddenly an extraordinary feeling seized me. I felt exactly as if a pail of iced water had been dashed down my back. For an instant I sat dumb—paralysed, then I leapt to my feet, and in doing so turned round and faced the door.

In front of me, with the chair between us, stood Noah—the open door behind him. He was drawn to his full height, close on six-foot three. His massive shoulders were thrown back, his broad, muscular chest forwards, and his arms were put behind him. He eyed me stolidly; yet the snarl of a springing tiger raised his upper lip, showing the strong white teeth. I had never before noticed the massive squareness of his jaw, or the brutal expansion of his nostrils. Neither had the dark eye ever looked concentrated with such intense determination.

There was only one thought in my mind. He meant death to me. Did he realise that I was aware of his intention? If so, and I believe he did, the knowledge touched him, for he swerved, and—the light fell on the keen, sharp edge of a knife held in his right hand behind his back, the broad point lying in the crook of the left elbow.

It *was* life or death. My revolvers were in my bedroom, and to fetch them I should have to go out on the stoep to enter it. But I had no intention to retreat one pace, for I knew that if I took even one backwards the knife would be sheathed in my breast.

I grasped the chair-back. All the cool pluck of an Englishman came to my aid. Physically I was weaker than he. I had no such brute strength as his, but morally, mentally, I was as a giant compared to him, and in that supreme moment I felt that in that power lay my salvation. I met his hard, glittering eyes quietly.

"What are you doing here, Noah?"

No answer. The upper lip drew a little higher.

"I am busy reading, and I told you not to disturb me. *Go!*" I said, sharply—authoritatively—and I pointed to the door.

No answer; but a gasp caught his throat. I saw the contraction.

"Do you hear what I say? Go—or it will be the worse for you. Get out at once, or——" I caught up the lamp. I knew the terror of the man was fire, and I was fully resolved to break the glass receptacle about his head.

Even that threat did not shake his nerve, though his steady eyes blinked. I could not but admire his pluck. Face into face we looked, and little by little I realised my impotence to move him. Hardly knowing what I did, I replaced the lamp, and stood before him defenceless—mentally and physically.

Then—I do not know what made me do it—I had lost the fear of death, and had but one desire, to save him from such an awful crime. At that moment I felt impelled by some strong inward force of pity, affection, even *trust*, to save him from himself, and I spoke as gently as a woman speaks.

"Noah—what is it you want? Have you come to tell me that you have grown tired of being my friend—that you wish to return to Zanzibar—to Van Diskirke?"

I hardly knew my own voice; it was so sad—almost pleading. But soft as the words were, they went home sharp and keen, like a knife thrust. A convulsive shudder passed over his face, and extended to his chest in a sob. Something clattered behind him, and with a heavy lurch he threw himself—not upon me, thank God!—but upon the ground, clasping my feet, and sobbing like a child.

"Massa, massa—I not forget! Noah not forgot. Will massa ever forgib?"

For a moment I looked down at him—this child of impulse. Strange as the statement may sound, at the instant I loved him; for I knew without one doubt that he loved me. Then I touched his shoulder.

"Get up, my man. Yes, I quite forgive you, Noah, and I have forgotten this——"

The facts here related are perfectly true, but I can give no explanation of the cause of his sudden homicidal intention.

I can only suggest that after the excitement of the flood, the "tot" of whiskey I had been so foolish as to give him had induced a longing for more, and that as twice the creaking door had baulked his getting the canister behind my seat without arousing me, in an access of drink lust he had resolved—if I detected his entrance again—to kill me, and so secure the whiskey.

Noah remained with me until he died—some twenty-two years after—and I emphatically state that though during that time he had every opportunity to get the drink, I never saw him affected by it. To the day he left me he was the most thoughtful, faithful servant and friend a man ever had, and I do not hesitate to say I have never felt anyone's loss more.

Mascots and Amulets in War Time,

PAST AND PRESENT.



ONE of the surprising features of the present great war, though one not mentioned in reports and despatches, is the use of mascots and charms as a supposed protection against injury and death.

To most of us the wearing of a charm or amulet is either a pretty fancy or a silly superstition. It has a savour of romance about it, and we are interested and amused rather than contemptuous when we find that someone of our acquaintance is wearing one.

The fact is, a belief in charms is widespread, though the belief is more deep and real in some places than in others. All over the world men, women and children may be found who wear charms as a defence against various forms of misfortune, real or imaginary. There are charms to protect the wearer from accident, illness, or disease, from enchantment—*e.g.*, the power of the evil eye, from fire, from poison, from mischievous fairies and evil spirits, and from death in battle.

In war time, when, of course, the risks are suddenly made terribly greater, it is not to be wondered at that those whose faith in God's protecting care has not previously been very robust should fly to these fanciful safeguards. "Other people believe in them and use them," they will say, "so why should not we? It can at least do no harm."

And so we find that quite a trade is done in these supposed protective knick-knacks, some of which are very pretty and artistic, while others are grotesque and hideous. It is a queer thing, however, that after all these centuries of education such articles should be genuinely believed in by the soldiers of Western Europe.

It is an ancient belief. References to it in Greek and Roman literature abound. Mediæval stories are full of it, and mediæval travellers found it preached among the more remote peoples they visited. Marco Polo, for instance, found certain cow-worshippers who carried the hair of a wild ox with them as a protection when they went to battle.

The deluded savages and barbarians who put their faith in a charm which will protect their lives in battle are quite as ready to believe that this charm is as effectual against bullets as against swords or spears. There are instances of charms being specially made and distributed to give this protection. We scarcely know how much these charms have cost the British Army, for instance, in money and treasure; for, as we can well imagine, the man with a "charmed" life fights with an unnatural courage and frenzy. A mere display of force will not frighten him, and it may even happen that the sight of disaster on all sides will not wean him from his fatal confidence. Perhaps it is this which so often makes it necessary to annihilate a host before a conquest can be made—as happened at Omdurman, when the fanatical Dervish horsemen charged Kitchener's army with the greatest confidence.

We have had many little wars in South Africa. The interference of the British authorities with some of the Kaffir witchcraft practices was in a great measure the cause of the eighth Kaffir war, which commenced at the close of 1850. Almost the first warning which the colonists received of the insurrection was a report that a native magician, named Umlanjeni, was issuing charms to the Kaffir warriors which would protect them from the Englishmen's bullets.

The natives visited him by hundreds to obtain these charms, which he asserted would turn the bullets shot against them into water.

Shortly afterwards attacks were confidently made upon our troops in different places, and the war which ensued was the longest and most serious which had occurred in South Africa up to that time.

An officer who was serving in New Zealand in 1865, during the time of a war with the Maoris, relates that these natives had a similar belief. Their priests told them that the words "Pai Mariré" would ward off all dangers, and even render harmless the rifle bullets of their English opponents.

In Egypt and Syria the belief in charms is found among all races and all classes, Druses, Bedouin, Moslems, Jews, and Christians. The most usual forms which the charms take are short sentences from the religious books of the particular people, written upon parchment or other suitable materials, and enclosed in little bags, which are often heart-shaped. These are hung upon the neck, or carried in some other way about the person.

The absurd lengths to which this superstition can go are described by a writer who followed the Egyptian army in Palestine in 1834, when Ibrahim Pasha, the adopted son of the Pasha of Egypt, was reducing Syria to subjection.

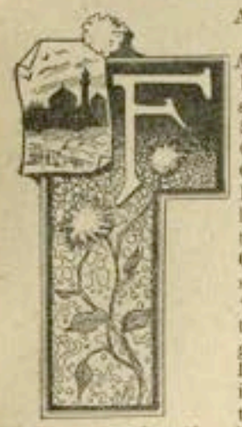
Ibrahim Pasha wore charms, and lived a "charmed" life. His credulous officers assured our author that, when he came into camp after a skirmish, he would loose his girdle, and shake out of it the bullets which had been shot at him in the fight. They were beaten quite flat, but, owing to the charms, not one of them had injured him.

Instances are even known where savages have deliberately offered themselves to be shot at, trusting for their safety to the potency of a charm which they were wearing.

Faith in a safeguard could no further go than that.

THE MYSTERY AT MYSALA.

A STORY OF INDIAN LIFE, FOUNDED ON FACT.



"FACT is, I'm baffled," said Naval Store Officer George Rawson to his friend the Police Commissioner. "There the stuff goes, and I'm hanged if I can trace how it goes, or who takes it. I confess I'm fairly done."

The police officer tapped his heel with his riding whip. "You've had the workmen searched, I suppose, and all that sort of thing," he said.

"My dear Delaun, do you think I'm an utter fool? I've had the men searched; I've had every corner of the yard turned inside out at one time or another; I've done everything you could possibly think of, but it is still as great a puzzle as ever. One day I thought I had got a bite. I came across a native slinking along by the wall, as the beggars do, with a sack over his shoulders. I cornered him like a shot.

"'Hallo!' I said, 'what have you got there?'

"'Meat, sahib.'

"'Put it down, and let me have a look at it.'

"The man made some excuse and looked so uneasy that really I thought I was on the point of a discovery at last; but, seeing I meant what I said, he turned the thing out on the ground."

"Well?" interjected Delaun, as the store officer paused.

"No, it was not well," said Rawson. "It was decidedly ill—or, at least, I nearly was. Faugh! the stench when the contents of that sack saw light! It was a chunk of putrid salt beef that I had myself condemned a few days previously.

"Yes, you can laugh, you beggar," he went on, as a broad grin spread over the delighted police officer's face. "Your nose was not there, or you'd probably be dead long ago."

Delaun ignored the innuendo directed at his most prominent feature. "I don't quite understand," he remarked, "why you are so keen on the business. These peculations must have gone on for a long time before your energetic self came upon the scene, yet your worthy predecessor (peace to his ashes!) did not upset himself about it. Moreover, they can't amount to much."

"It's not the amount that I care about," replied Rawson impatiently, "it's the idea of being done that riles me. Confound it, here are a pack of dirty natives carrying off my stores right under my very eyes, and I'm powerless to stop it. Of course, I could sack every mother's son of them to-morrow, but what would be the use? The new men would be the brothers, or fathers, or sons, or some other relatives of those who were kicked out. The whole lot of them are related to one another. They're one big cunning family, and the worst of it is I know they are laughing up their sleeve at me all the time."

"Well, old chap," said Delaun, rising, "don't take it too much to heart. I'll do what I can for you in the district, but don't expect any result. If you can't find out anything inside, I don't see how I can do much outside the yard. Besides, there's my own job to look after, which does not leave much time for anything else. Good-night."

When he had gone, Rawson lit another cheroot, and sat thinking for some time before turning in. He was a good man, and a strong man, as a naval store officer in charge of one of H.M. store depots abroad ought to be, for at some depots, when the admiral is away, the store officer becomes senior officer in charge of the dockyard, in which position his powers and responsibilities are not small. Mysala, where Rawson was serving, was such a depot, and as it was a small place, and not the central rendezvous of the station, he was not often superseded in his charge by the presence of a senior naval officer at the port.

But the more Rawson enjoyed his authority the more he resented the quiet but decided manner in which it was defied, in the matter of the mysterious disappearance of the dockyard stores. The quantities taken at a time were small, but hardly a day passed without some articles of food or other stores unaccountably being found missing.

As he had said to the District Police Commissioner, Delaun, he was convinced that the Mysalese workmen, who had managed practically to turn the native staff of the yard into a family concern, were at the bottom of the mischief, and it was not to be expected that they would betray any one of their kindred—probably they all had a share in the proceeds. Hence the store officer's appeal to Delaun to look out particularly for anything suspicious in the native quarter of the town that might afford a clue.

Next morning Rawson still had the problem on his mind. As he stood under the verandah of his house, waiting for his dog-cart to take him to the dockyard, two miles distant, he wondered grimly whether any new feature had developed since he left the depot the day before.

His syce, the smartest and cleverest groom in all Further India, as his master was wont to boast, brought the dog-cart round, and in a few moments Rawson was bowling down to the yard, as he had done every morning for the last six months, whatever the state of the weather.

Sure enough, in reply to Rawson's first question on entering his office, his chief assistant had a list of inexplicable deficiencies to report as usual.

"What are they?" he growled.

So much of this, so much of that, so much of the other, ticked off the assistant store officer.

Rawson muttered savagely under his breath. "How much longer is this sort of thing to go on?" he thundered. "It's a positive disgrace to the Service. Can't you do something to stop it?"

"I feel it as much as anybody, sir," replied the assistant, helplessly, "but everything has been done that I can suggest."

Rawson went on jabbing open his letters. The assistant watched him for a minute, and then continued:

"Old Mr. Moody, sir, used to say where there are natives you must always allow a margin for——"

"That will do," broke in Rawson. "Confound Mr. Moody and you, too. Get on with your work."

For the rest of the day "Old Rawty," as the subordinate staff called him, was just about as cantankerous as he could possibly be, and they were all unfeignedly glad when the time came for the yard to close.

Rawson had gone only a few hundred paces on his return journey when Delaun appeared at the side of the road and hailed him.

"Hi!" he yelled. "Pull up. I'm coming your way."

"Hurry up, then," replied Rawson, whose temper was still ruffled.

"What's the hurry?" said Delaun. "No, I'm not coming up there"—as Rawson moved to make more room. "Get down, 'Tod Sloan,'" to the grinning syce. "I want your place."

"What are you sitting behind there for?" grunted Rawson, as the trap started again with the syce gaily swinging along by its side.

"Want to watch the road astern—certain private reasons," answered Delaun.

Presently he spoke again. "I'm coming over there, now we're round the bend. Steady. That's right. Get up, ugly," to the syce.

"When you have done with your acrobatic performances, perhaps we shall get along in a decent manner," growled Rawson.

"Cheerful companion for a picnic you are," commented his friend. "Don't you understand, the exigencies of my profession put me to many personal inconveniences—such, for instance, as riding on the backs of dog-carts driven by bad-tempered storekeepers."

Rawson grinned. The cheerful influence of his volatile companion soon restored his equanimity. Ere long, perched conspicuously on the side of the hill, the little white house, with the big verandah, came in sight.

They pulled up at the door, and the two men got down. Just as they turned to go in, however, Delaun paused.

"Look here," he said, "I'm going round to the stables to have a look at Peggy." Peggy was a polo pony of Rawson's, then in dock with a crocked fetlock. "You go on and dress, I'll join you afterwards."

"All right," replied Rawson, and went in.

He had changed and left his room before the police officer returned. Just as he thought of strolling round to meet him, Delaun came in.

"Well," he said, "what do you think of her?"

"Oh, she'll do," answered his friend. "A bit more rest and she'll be as fit as ever."

Rawson nodded acquiescence. Presently Delaun spoke again:

"How is the yard going? Any more robberies?"

"I should think so," replied Rawson with a scowl; and he proceeded to tell the police officer what had taken place that day.

"H'm," remarked Delaun, when he had finished. "I think it was about time you came to me."

"Eh!" Rawson exclaimed, looking at him suspiciously. "I believe you know something, you beggar."

"Yes; I do."

"Come on. Out with it. What have you found?"

"Well," drawled Delaun, meditatively contemplating his finger tips, "if you really want to know, I've found the thief."

"What!" shouted the store officer. "Don't be an ass."

"Why I should be termed an ass because I have succeeded where my brilliant and talented friend and all his minions have failed is beyond my limited comprehension," remarked Delaun cheerfully.

Rawson looked at him dubiously. "You are pulling my leg," he said.

"Would you like to see the man who took your stores?" inquired Delaun. "Of course you would. Come along."

He took the wondering store officer by the arm and led him a few steps towards the verandah. Then he stopped suddenly and brought Rawson opposite an oval glass that hung against the wall. "There you are," he said, "that's the man. Observe his low brow, the criminal look in his eyes, his generally furtive appearance. I arrest you, George Rawson, naval store officer, for taking your own stores from your own dockyard." Then, catching sight of the bewildered store officer's face, he sank back on a deck chair, choking with laughter.

"Are you mad?" sadly said Rawson "Are you utterly and entirely insane, you unhappy lunatic?"

"Give me another cheroot," Delaun said, "and I will tell you all about it."

"After I left you last night, and had got well round the curve of the road down there"—he waved his hand toward the town—"I suddenly remembered that I had forgotten to ask you to redeem your promise to give me Charlie Madin's address—by the way, you might jot it down now, as I want to write to him particularly—and it occurred to me that I might very likely not see you again before the mail went out to-morrow. I turned at once to come back, and in order to cut off the bend struck into the short cut. You know the path—it comes out just by the side here."

Rawson nodded.

"Well, thinking of nothing in particular, I let Dory pick his way along, when, just after I came in view of the outline of your wall, I saw, to my astonishment, a large, unshapely mass appear on the top of it for a moment, and then topple over down to the ground outside.

"Such a sight, of course, was enough to make anybody suspicious—much more a policeman. Moreover, our last subject of conversation came back to my mind, and I reined up Dory promptly. Taking him aside and tethering him to a con-

venient tree, I stole forward on foot to reconnoitre.

"The object proved to be a large and evidently well-filled sack. I turned it over, and quickly satisfied myself as to its original owner. By the light of a match, the Government brand and 'Myaala Dockyard' were visible in letters four inches long.

"This, I thought, begins to get exciting. People do not dump down sackloads of goods in the middle of the night for nothing. Evidently someone was expected to take it away, so I retired to the background to watch for him.

"Now, I am going to surprise you," continued Delaun, leaning back comfortably in his chair. "I had not been in hiding two minutes before I decided that it was not worth while to wait for the expected someone. So I left the sack lying there, went back to my horse, and rode home."

"You left it!" cried Rawson; "whatever did you do that for? Why, you've let the thief slip through your fingers!"

"Wait a minute," said Delaun; "I thought you would say that. How do you know the man who fetched the sack was the thief? To my mind it was pretty clear he was not. The sack came over the wall from your house, consequently the thief was almost certainly a member of your household. If he had not been, why should he take the goods into your garden at all? But, even supposing that the man who fetched the sack was the actual thief, probably he would protest that he had merely found it, and that his only desire was to take it back to the dockyard. You know the native. We should never get anything satisfactory out of him. It would not clear up the mystery of how the stores got from the dockyard to the other side of your garden wall. On the contrary, it would serve as a warning to the thief to change his methods, and we might never discover the secret at all.

"No. I thought I had got enough to work upon as it was. The only thing that puzzled me was, assuming that the thief was one of your retainers, why he should, in the first place, take his booty into your premises, and, in the second place, choose that risky and troublesome way of disposing of it, when he might easily at any time of the day walk down to the town with the goods concealed in some receptacle or about his person.

"But, at the same time, did not these perplexing features in the problem afford a means of narrowing the field of investigation? Assuming the actual thief to be equally quick to appreciate an easier way of disposing of his ill-gotten gains, it was clear that he had not the opportunity of adopting those easier methods. Now," said Delaun, turning to the storekeper, "can you pick out anyone whose business takes him daily both to the dockyard and to your house, and who, at the same time, would have no opportunity of visiting the town during the day?"

Rawson thought for a minute. "No," he said; "I don't know of any one—that is, excepting myself."

"Well," said Delaun with a smile, "I should have thought I had given you sufficient indication. How about Kura Lal, the syce?"

Rawson started. "No," he said, "surely not—but, by Jove, though, he does fill the bill."

"Yes!" smiled Delaun, "and so do you! Do you know that in all probability you have yourself driven home every ounce of those stores whose disappearance has caused you so much trouble?"

"But how?" exclaimed Rawson. "I have it though; under the seat behind?"

"Yes," replied Delaun; "I cleared that point up this afternoon while Master Kura Lal was taking a little healthy exercise."

"I can see it all now," said Rawson lugubriously. "By Jove, what an ass I've been! Of course, he collected the things during the day, and I, of all men, drove them home at night." Then, as the humour of the situation overcame Rawson's chagrin at the way in which he had been duped, he caught his companion's infectious smile.

"But what an ingenious rascal," he said, with a hearty laugh. "He almost deserves to be let off. I suppose this explains your long absence in the stable. Where is he now?"

"Oh, he's safe in the coach-house under charge of your man, Tom, penitent enough, with the evidence of his guilt all round him. What are you going to do?"

"I'm sorry, but, of course, I shall have to prosecute him, said Rawson.

And prosecuted he was.

G. E.

SOME DIFFICULTIES OF TRANSLATION.

TRANSLATING the Bible into strange and little-known languages requires not merely learning but ingenuity on the part of the translator.

In the language with which he is dealing he may find that there is no word or phrase which exactly applies, and he has to select the one with the nearest approach to the meaning. But it may easily be that there is no native word which even approximately describes what is wanted.

How, for example, is one to translate the word "lamb" into a tongue which knows no quadruped except pigs and rats? Or how is one to render the word "snow" to a people who live where snow does not exist?

Recently the Gospel according to Mark has been translated for an Indian tribe in Paraguay. The word "eighteen" appears as *Sohoge-mek-wabethiamok-emimk-antonthlama*. Literally this means, "Finished my hands, pass to my other foot, three", for fingers and toes are used as units in counting.

Such unwieldy synonyms are worse than those twenty-letter German words which we used to laugh at and sometimes vainly try to master.

MY SURPRISING V.C.

SERGEANT MCNESS, V.C., OF THE SCOTS GUARDS, TELLS HOW ASTONISHED HE WAS TO GET THE CROSS, AND ABOUT THE DEED WHICH BROUGHT HIM THAT GOOD FORTUNE.

By GEORGE A. WADE.

WELL, if ever there was a chap surprised when told he was to be given the Victoria Cross I just about reckon that chap was me!" said the gallant, smiling Sergeant of whom the famous Scots Guards are so extremely proud to-day.

"You see, sir, all I did was what any other fellow would have done if he had got the chance! Of course I had some adventures; and of course I settled a few Germans on the way; and of course I rallied my men time after time; and of course I got a terrible mauling and mangling before I had done. I grant you that! But then, wouldn't any other fellow who found himself in just the same box have done just what I did, had he been in charge?"



Now that is where these gallant, unassuming, heroic men of ours always fail to see the point clearly. They never manage to understand—soldiers, sailors, airmen—that they have done anything beyond what their mates also would have done, or even anything out of the common, in most cases.

Such a man as the Sergeant is one of the last to comprehend this, for he is a veritable Alfred Lester, Mark Tapley, and Mr. Pickwick all rolled into one. His life's motto seems to be "Always merry and bright!" and his cheery, smiling face, like his good old mother's at Bramley, Leeds, is worth going miles to see.

For this is as striking a case of "Like mother, like son!" as you will find in a day's march. The same brave outlook on life, the same devotion to duty, the same pleasant, ever-smiling face, the same deep religious strain, the same thoughtful mind, the same eager sympathy with those in trouble or danger, and the same intense desire to help them. If once you heard the good folk round Town End, Bramley, praise the Sergeant's grand old mother, you would quite agree that, as Napoleon himself once said, in Campbell's poem:

"A noble mother must have bred
So brave a son."

"How did I do it?" went on McNess, after I had long tried, and so far vainly, to get the tale out of him, for, after all, the *London Gazette* records are but bare and stolid recitals of main facts. "Well, if you *will* make me tell you, let me do it in my own way.

"About 8 a.m. on Sunday, September 10th, 1916, I was informed that our Company Sergeant-Major wished to see me; so I made my way to his tent at once, and learned that in a few days we were going to make an attack in the region of Les Bœufs. The whole attacking force, British and French, covered, I believe, a distance of nearly fourteen miles front; but my own section, the Guards, was what I had to do with. My orders were to act as Platoon-Sergeant for No. 10 Platoon, C Company, Scots Guards, and I was told our Captain, Sir Ian Colquhoun, D.S.O., was giving me the opportunity of taking the said platoon into action. My reply was simply that I would do all to the best of my ability!"

"Good old McNess!" said I enthusiastically. For that was just what his dear old mother herself would have said. "Always, my lad, trust in God and do your best!" Ask the Bramley folk how often they have heard her say those very words!

"We were then in a place known as 'Happy Valley,' and there we saw for the first time the tanks at their little game! We

roared with laughter at them, but I often wonder what the Huns thought when they first saw them coming and found what those tanks could do!

"On Thursday night, about 8.30, we drew our special equipment—250 extra rounds of ammunition, a pick and shovel, three mill bombs, a rifle-grenade, smoke bombs, rockets and red flares, as well as rations, which had to last two days. At 10.30 we formed up, ready to march to our position for going over the top the following morning at 6 a.m. And, as one chap said, if only it had been Christmas, the Germans would never have fired on us at all, but have taken us for decorated Christmas trees!

"We stepped off to the fine old Scottish tune, 'Will ye no' come back again?' When we reached our destination, after going across deep shell holes, decaying corpses and all sorts of rubbish, we had to dig ourselves in by joining up the shell holes; and it wasn't easy to get the boys to do this.

"At 6 a.m. the signal to advance was given, and it was a very stirring sight to see the splendid swarms of khaki-clad Guards go forward. We were preceded by a barrage of shell-fire, under which we advanced, as near as possible to it for our safety.

"At exactly 6.20 I was struck by half a dozen large pieces of shrapnel in the back, and some time later a piece hit me in the left shoulder, whilst an hour afterwards another piece got me in the chest. But I wouldn't give in, for I had determined to have a good smack at old Fritz this time, even if only half of me landed in his trenches!

"Some of the platoons lost their leaders, and when I saw this, I went and encouraged the men, and asked them to join my lot, which they willingly did. At last we arrived in front of the Germans' barbed wire, and we knew about it too! Not seeing the fun of standing there waiting for them to kill us, since our own barrage-fire was still going on, I took a party of the brave lads, and we went straight through our own barrage, hot though it was, and then we engaged a strong party of German bombers.

"We drove them down the trench before us, and occasionally I stood on the firing-step (where there *was* one) to see how things were going. We went for one machine-gun of the enemy and put it out of action, which pleased me much, for it had been doing deadly work on our fellows.

"Then I had the luck to stop a bomb, whose coming threatened my men, and was not long before I came to the conclusion that something had happened! It had! My teeth were all blown out, my lower jaw badly smashed, and a good portion of my neck blown away, leaving the windpipe and some blood-vessels exposed. My left arm was rendered useless, and the left part of my chest put out of place! Still, though many of my men had fallen, and we were very short of bombs, the few of us surviving kept going strong with the German bombs we found left behind, which we used against the foe to good effect.

"I was now pretty weak from pain of my wounds and great loss of blood, so I came away, and met Sergeant Powell, who spoke most kindly and encouragingly to me, and tried to find some stretcher-bearers for me, but could not. He helped me over the top of the German trench, and I sat in a shell-hole for half an hour.

"Being then nearly fainting, I decided that if I meant to live I must get back soon to the dressing-station, so off I set. But on the way I met some of our fellows who were lost, and, though against all their wishes, I persisted in guiding them to a safer place, where others of our men were. Then I left them once more, to make my way back.

"I met the gallant Lieut. Carter, who tried to bandage me up, and much relieved my pain by cutting away my equipment, and wiping off the blood which then saturated me. Then he managed to get some German prisoners, obtained an ambulance, and they carried me off for proper medical treatment.

"Well, here I am! Of course, everybody gave me up many a time; but several severe operations, and magnificent attention by skilled doctors and nurses—how kind everybody has been, Mr. Wade!—at the base hospitals, at King George's Hospital in London, and at Percy House Hospital, Isleworth, have made me practically all right again. Yes, a bit of a miracle, sir, isn't it? I myself often think so!

"And those generous Bramleyites and Leeds folk, how can I thank them enough! Something near £500, I hear, they have got together, to start me in business when I get back! And there's to be a great public reception by the Lord Mayor and Council! Truly, sir, I'd nearly rather face the trenches again!

"Yes, it was whilst I lay half-dazed in hospital in London that a nurse came in with beaming face.

"'Mac!' says she, 'we're all just off our heads; we're so delighted! Every one of your men who survived has received some decoration from the King! And——'

"'That's good, nurse!' said I, only half-hearing and half-understanding what she said.

"'And you'—she fairly cried with joy—'are to have the Victoria Cross! Oh, we are *so* glad!'

"I was only half-conscious, it is true, but I managed to whisper, '*Me*, the Victoria Cross? Why, what did I do more than anyone else to get that?'

"And how kind the King was, and how nicely he spoke to me at the Palace when he pinned the Cross on my breast! Good gracious, I can see the dear old mother and sister Lizzie laughing and crying at the same time when they welcome me back again to Bramley, after more than two years away in France!"

I seized the brave Sergeant's hand and shook it warmly. For they are wonderful men, these heroes of Britain to-day—soldiers, sailors, and airmen alike. And as modest and true at heart as they are heroic. God bless them!

"I can never be sufficiently grateful for the marvellous things those doctors and nurses did," said the Sergeant after a pause. "When I got to the dressing-station, after a two miles' walk, during which I several times practically collapsed, and almost came to an end, the doctors would not believe I had walked so far at all! The shell had taken off all one side of my neck and shoulder, leaving the jugular vein torn out and twisted; all my teeth and part of my lower jaw were gone; and it seemed impossible to get my shoulder-bone and flesh ever again as it had been!

"The doctors said the jugular was nearly stopped up with clots of blood, that I must have an operation immediately if I wished to live another fifteen minutes, by the vein being cut open and cleared; that it was certain death if *not* at once done, and a million to one against my getting over it if it *was* done! So, half-unconscious then, I just said, 'Get on with it!'

"They did, and with magnificent skill cut open the jugular, cleared out all the congealed blood, carefully got the vital vein straightened, and replaced it in its proper position! And, strange though it seems, I not only recovered from this unique operation, but soon began to get better!

"In the course of several later operations the doctors 'made up my neck' by pieces of flesh taken from my shoulder, and they formed my bottom jaw from strips of bone. When these, too, began to get fairly right, they started to heal my shoulder by portions of flesh and skin taken from other places; and to-day I am, generally speaking, so well and right that you, if meeting me on a long walk, would never guess what I had once gone through under Army medical treatment. But I often say, 'God bless doctors and nurses,' for I owe them everything for being as I am to-day!"

His Mustang Mount.

A TALE OF THE PRAIRIES.



ONE day in the year 1874 a young man named Sprague, journeying in one of the old-fashioned paddle-steamers which at that time plied on the lower waters of the Missouri, fell in with a wrong and righted it, whence later came his great reward.

The wrong was the attempted fleecing, by expert card-sharpers, of an old wilderness hunter named Brant, familiarly known as "Teton" Brant because he was supposed to have been one of the first white men to hunt in the mysterious Teton range.

He was a tall, lank, grizzled old man, dressed in the strange costume of the time and region. On the plains he was known and respected, but at the moment of his rescue from the sharpers he was as bewildered and easily led as a child. The righting of the wrong accomplished, the two men separated.

Some years later it happened that a great "strike" of gold was made at Spanish Gulch in the Black Hills. Several hundreds of men immediately set out for the diggings, and among them was Sprague.

The latter speedily left his rivals far in the rear, but when he had gained some three days he suddenly realised that the deliberate gait he had despised in them was, after all, the wiser. The realisation came to him as he watched his pack-horse gasp and die, dropping its head wearily back among the prairie grasses.

So sudden and so unexpected was the catastrophe that for a moment he could not appreciate its extent. He was yet three hundred miles from his destination. Even should he push ahead with only the bare necessities of his prospector's work, he could not hope, on foot as he was, to arrive before the rush; and after the rush it was useless. He clenched his hands in disappointment, trying to accept the situation stoically.

"Well, son," cackled an unexpected voice at his elbow, "what'd ye give jest now fer a fresh hoss?"

Sprague started violently, his hand instinctively seeking his weapon. Before him stood a small, wiry horse, loosely bestridden by one of the picturesque rangers of the plains.

The man was old, grizzled, hairy, with the keen, kindly eye of the pioneer. Across his saddle rested one of the long, heavy, muzzle-loading rifles, carrying balls sixty to the pound, one of the most accurate weapons known.

Sprague looked his man in the face a moment, then said: "I should know you."

"The *Missouri Belle*," the other reminded him.

"I remember," said Sprague.

"You seem to be a leetle shy o' transportation."

"I am."

"Want another hoss?"

Sprague glanced at the old man's mount. "Want to go pardners?" he said. "I ain't got any money."

"No, sonny," replied the hunter, with an elemental simplicity that told plainer than words his contempt for such a thing. Sprague looked his inquiry.

"I knows whar I kin git you a hoss over yander," answered Teton Brant, waving his hand.

"Ranch, I s'pose," said Sprague. "I tell you I ain't got any money."

"Don't need any," assured the hunter.

Without a word he dismounted and assisted in the transference of Sprague's outfit to the back of his own animal. The two men then took their way afoot over the long, sweeping rises of the prairies.

It was late afternoon. Already the shadows were long,

and the outline of a castellated butte some miles distant was beginning to loom against the sun.

"Is it far?" queried Sprague at last.

"Not far," his companion assured him.

Soon the country began to break. In the descent of a little coulée Teton Brant dropped the leading strap to the ground, and the horse promptly halted. Laying his finger on his lips to command silence, the old man stole softly forward down the windings of the ravine. Sprague followed.

His guide stopped, peering cautiously through the grasses, motioning the young man to look.

At this point the coulée ran into a broad, flat valley, through which in the distance a scattered fringe of cottonwoods marked the course of a stream. Even from afar it could be seen that the course was nearly dry, but a faint thread of glimmering light and a tinge of green attested a remnant of moisture.

Far away in the flats, so remote that the eye could hardly distinguish them, a band of animals grazed slowly down the wind. Sprague looked steadily a moment, shading his eyes with his hand. Suddenly he made them out.

"Mustangs!" he exclaimed, with bitter disgust. "Did you toll me all this distance to play me a joke like that?"

"They're hosses, ain't they?" grinned the old man.

"Horses, yes," replied Sprague. "And them clouds is water, but they don't do a thirsty man much good!"

"Well, let's go make camp," rejoined the other.

Sprague turned back with bitter thoughts. The horses he had seen he knew to be the wildest of wild animals, alert to catch the slightest indication of an enemy, prompt to flee, wary with the highest equine intelligence. As well attempt to catch alive the little mule-deer of the cottonwoods, or to harness to his necessities the ghost-like antelope of the plains.

He knew that the Indians sometimes captured mustangs in the hills where blind cañons afforded natural traps; that tradition spoke of riflemen so expert as to stun the animals without killing, by a ball through a certain part of the neck; that a great body of fleet horsemen might occasionally surround and rope slow members of the band. But here, on the open plains, they two alone? The idea was folly!

All that evening he sulked, while the old man, chuckling grimly, eyed him askance. Once he spoke, but Sprague answered him roughly.

"Oh, go to thunder, Teton!" he cried in anger.

In the chill of early dawn the hunter touched him on the shoulder.

"Come on!" he whispered. "We're goin' to ketch you a hoss."

Sprague arose sleepily, for it was not yet light. Brant was already mounted bareback on Susy, the saddle-horse. He thrust food into the prospector's hand, impatiently motioning him to hurry. A moment later, at a rapid walk, the two emerged into the valley and headed downstream.

They pushed forward steadily for a half-hour. Then objects became dimly visible. The mustangs still grazed down-wind.

In a short time the men had approached to within a quarter of a mile of their quarry. Then the leader of the herd, a magnificent black stallion, threw up his head with a whinny of command, and gracefully, swift as a whirl of dust, the animals skimmed away.

Teton Brant did not increase his pace, as Sprague thought he would. The two men continued their unhurrying way in the direction taken by the mustangs.

"Kin you read a trail?" inquired the hunter.

"I should hope I could read that!" answered Sprague, glancing with contempt at the unmistakable path left by the ponies.

"We'll foller it," said Brant unmoved.

In less than a mile they overtook the band. The black stallion, evidently puzzled at their persistency, trotted a few paces toward them, snorted and pawed the ground. Then with a great air of decision he set off at a swift run, followed by the entire herd.

Brant bade Sprague cling to Susy's mane, so they could follow at a jog-trot.

"They'll go a plumb five mile this trip," said Brant.

The prospector trotted along by the side of his companion in considerable wonderment, for he was unable to divine the latter's intent. Being an American, he possessed a restless intelligence, and that intelligence soon told him that at the present rate of travel they would be able to cover but forty miles during the day.

A horse can go forty miles a day indefinitely; a man cannot.

The sun had now risen. Teton Brant glanced at it, then abandoned the trail of the mustangs to bear strongly to the west. So when next the pursuers caught sight of their quarry they approached it nearly at right angles to their former course. Sprague saw the old man meant to turn the direction of flight.

This time the mustangs were plainly uneasy. They could not understand the persistence of the men who clung so doggedly to their flanks. The mares huddled together in a compact bunch, while the stallions imitated their leader in pawing the ground with impatient snorts. Then, as if at a preconcerted signal, they wheeled and set off at a beautiful, high, swinging trot.

"Won't see them thar agin till th' sun is overhead," observed Teton Brant comfortably.

"What you tryin' to do?" ventured Sprague.

"Walk 'em down," replied the hunter.

"Your horse, with you on her, will give out before they do, with nothin' on them."

"I ain't goin' to use Susy, only to-day," replied Teton Brant comfortably. "We goes afoot. I takes th' night shift; that's why I rides to-day."

Sprague ruminated a few moments.

"Look here, Teton," he burst out at last, "you trying to run another joke on me? You're plumb-crazy! We can't make more'n sixty mile between us if we rustle, and ther ain't a cayuse in that herd that don't run more'n a hundred every day for the fun of it! You'll walk 'em down, but never them horses!"

"I got Susy that way."

"I reckon Susy was sick, then. You're plumb locoed."

"It's your only show, and you may as well walk yourself down a-follerin' of cayuses as to try to walk home."

At noon the men ate without pausing. When the trail freshened Teton Brant again left it, to come in sight of the mustangs at another angle.

"Now when we starts 'em we're on the way to camp," he explained with satisfaction.

For the first time Sprague detected anxiety in his companion's bearing. As for the third time they approached the feeding herd, the old man grew tense of attitude and eager of gaze.

The mustangs trotted a hundred paces only, then paused to snatch a mouthful of grass; then, as their pursuers gradually shortened the distance, trotted another twenty rods, to repeat the same performance.

Teton Brant uttered an exclamation of satisfaction.

All the afternoon the procession went on in the same wise. At no time were the mustangs out of sight; in fact, the little animals took good care to keep their pursuers under their wary eyes; at no time did the men approach nearer than a long quarter of a mile.

Teton Brant threw off his taciturnity and talked.

"Couldn't have hit it better," said he. "It's the full of the moon and the weather is settled. I'll foller 'em all night, and you be on hand in the morning."

He seemed so sure of the success of the undertaking that Sprague was partly convinced. Towards sunset the party again approached the long valley through which ran the dwindled stream and the stunted cottonwoods. Teton Brant dismounted.

"You take Susy and rest up a whole lot. I got grub for to-night. Cook yourself a good snack, and keep a fire goin' on the hill, so I has somethin' to go by. Rest all you kin. Be on deck in the mornin', afoot, with a good lunch. The coulée with our outfit is yander. So long!"

Sprague made camp, built a fire on the hill, and turned in. From time to time during the night, with the habit of the plainsman strong upon him, he arose under the splendid moon and replenished the signal fire.

About him the mystery of the prairies descended like a tent. Far off in the darkness he could imagine the solitary, unwearied old man trudging, trudging through the still hours, preceded always by the restless, shifting phantoms, appearing and disappearing through the dusk.

Morning came, and with it the sun. After a time, from the summit of the hill, Sprague distinguished a puff of dust. He made toward it, and so came upon the hunter.



"THE MUSTANGS WERE PLAINLY UNEASY."

"Keep a'ter them!" was the latter's only greeting. "Don't hurry 'em, but keep a-turnin' of them so's to make back yere come sundown."

So Sprague took up the march. After an hour he ran smartly toward the herd. The mustangs at once took to their graceful flight, apparently as fresh as ever. Sprague muttered something about eternal fools, and plodded on. If Teton could ride all day and then walk all night, he himself could certainly make a day of it.

But he could not see the good. The mustangs did not need to go faster than a slow walk, and whenever they required food all they had to do was to trot a few hundred paces to win ample leisure.

A little after sundown he turned his charge over to Teton Brant with a sarcastic remark about "six-day go-as-you-please" matches.

"Praise be she ain't cloudy!" was the old man's only reply.

That night Sprague dreamed

that he had almost caught the herd, and was trying desperately to gain another yard that he might put salt on their tails. He awoke laughing, to find that he had overslept, and that the sun was already an hour high.

"Come on, thar! Select your cayuse!" a voice called to him from the coulée.

An astonishing sight met his gaze. The entire herd of mustangs stood indolent and tame not fifty yards from his camp. Teton Brant was urging them gently forward.

"Bring your rope an' select your cayuse!" repeated Teton Brant.

Sprague could not understand what had happened. The evening before the little horses had been apparently as fresh as ever; now they moved somnolently forward, with half-closed eyes and drooping ears. So wonderful a change had come about in a night!

However, he did not pause to theorise, but swiftly uncoiled his own and Teton's ropes, and joined the hunter.

"Ain't time to break no fine hosses," said the latter briefly. "Cut out that thar old mare; she'll do well enough."

Sprague looked with longing eyes on the magnificent proportions of the black stallion, but nevertheless obeyed.

"Now ketch me that blaze-face," requested Teton Brant. "May as well git a pack-horse myself while I'm about it!"

The affair was ridiculously simple; a mere cast of the rope, as one would take his saddle-horse from a corral.

"Now git! Whoop-ee-e-e!" yelled Teton Brant at the rest of the herd. The little horses moved slowly away.

"Thar's your hoss!" observed the hunter. "She ain't broke, but she'll git your outfit to th' hills fer you. And now, sonny, you remember this: When you want to travel fast, you ride three hours and rest your hoss two, day an' night, an' you'll git thar! Let's chew! I'm dog-hungry!"

They cooked their tea and antelope steak.

"Fer forty year," said the old man to his companion as he ate, "I've been cruisin' around these yere plains. I never got left yet. No matter what you needs, you finds it on th' plains, *provided* you knows whar to look. Thar's teepees, clothes, fire, grub, medicine to be had. All you has to do is to take them. I gets my tea and my powder and ball from Three Rivers, but in a manner of speakin' they comes from th' prairie, too, because I trades fer them with buffaler pelts. With horses it's all sim'lar. They's *thar*. All you has to do is to git them."

"I don't quite savvy yet what happened to them mustangs," said Sprague. "They was fresh enough las' evenin,' an' they couldn't have travelled more'n thirty mile las' night."

"My son," replied Teton Brant impressively, "you freeze to this: It ain't th' distance they has to travel, none whatever. A naked hoss can make a hundred mile a day an' not feel it, while these didn't get pushed more'n fifty. *But a hoss has got to sleep!* He cyan't git along without it. He don't need to lie down and snore, but he has to tuck up his hind leg every onct in a while and sort of doze. Otherwise he gits plumb indifferent. If you kin keep him thirty hours without his little doze you've got him. That's all th' secret of ketchin' wild hosses, and you're welcome to it."

"Why ain't more of 'em ketched that way?" asked Sprague. "It sounds dead easy."

"It ain't," replied the hunter. "You jest had plumb luck. You got to have a clear night—two of 'em. You got to git your cayuse to rackin' along in front of you slow afore the first night, or else you loses them in th' dark. If they dusts out fer five miles at a clip, you loses them too easy. Then they works in their little *siesta*. *Sabe?*"

"I see," said Sprague.

"There *is* a good many ketched that way. I walked Susy down alone. Some fellers builds a corral and gathers in th' whole bunch."

"Well, I'm plumb tenderfoot!" cried Sprague. "I never heard of anything like it."

"The Lord put the sun in th' sky fer to see by," rejoined the old hunter, with unexpected reverence, "and water in the valleys fer a man to drink. Buffaler and antelope are his'n fer th' takin' of them. An' when he thinks he wants somethin' else, ten to one if he looks around him he'll find that it is thar, like these hosses, ready to his hand."

Stewart E. White.

A STARTLING VISITOR.

THE Kings-at-Arms and other officers of the Heralds' College have official robes of great splendour, reminding us of the pictures of knights and esquires which adorn the margins of old illuminated manuscripts, or of the representation of the kings and knaves upon our playing cards.

Their dress, like that of the well-known scarlet-clad Beefeaters (French, *beaufetiers*) at the Tower of London, who wear a uniform dating back to the days of Henry the Seventh, is a survival from an age when our nation dressed with much greater variety and picturesqueness.

It is said that an Irish King-at-Arms once went in his robes to summon the Bishop of Killaloe to Parliament.

The Bishop's footman, who answered the door, had never seen such an outlandishly dressed figure in his life before, and was so taken by surprise at the magnificent apparition that he could not collect his wits to take the message properly. But, greatly impressed, he knocked at the door of the Bishop's room, threw it open, and announced the visitor: "My Lord, here is the King of Trumps." W. A. A.



TIMBER FOR THE TRENCHES.

A PEEP AT A CANADIAN LUMBER CAMP IN ENGLAND.

By L. F. Stockwell.

EVERY boy enjoys reading stories of life in the lumber camps of Canada, or seeing pictures of the wild North-West at the cinema, but it would be a great surprise to many to come upon a real Canadian lumber camp in the heart of our English woods.

Yet to-day, if we happen to stroll through a forest, "somewhere in England," we may do so, for in one district alone there are five such camps, four entirely worked by men who have learned their trade in the famous timber camps of Canada, the fifth worked by our oldest allies, the Portuguese, who are said to be the best lumber-men in the world.

At first sight of the Canadian camp we rub our eyes, and can scarcely believe we are in old England, so strange and foreign-looking is this picturesque town of brown wooden huts that has sprung up within a few months, and is being constantly added to. On either side of the white winding road are irregular rows of huts with sharply-pointed roofs and fronts tastefully ornamented with unbarked pine wood in diamond devices. These are the men's living quarters, the officers' being distinguished by an overhanging roof that forms a verandah, with three fir trees in pots before the door. When, in summer, the poles are twined with bright nasturtiums the effect is very pretty.

There are, besides, a large lofty stable for the powerful horses that draw the timber waggons, a big shed where the saw-mill is ever at work, turning the rough tree trunks into neatly sawn planks, sheds for stores and the various motor vehicles, a tiny church, a Y.M.C.A. hut, or a hospital.

The workers, who have come from the utmost parts of the Empire to help, are under military discipline, though they are not actual soldiers, but correspond to the labour battalions. They wear a loose comfortable uniform suited to the heavy work of handling logs, consisting of khaki shirts, blue slacks, slouch hats, or bright yellow oilskin sou'-westers, which make a cheerful patch of colour among the brown of the woods.

Many of the lumber-men are fine strong young Colonials of pure British blood, others are French Canadians who can speak little or no English, and there are, besides, Indians and half-breeds who have left their far homes to do their bit in the world war.

But a short time ago these forest solitudes were given up to the foxes, the badgers and the birds. Now the sun shines down upon a busy scene, while over all the red flag of Canada floats proudly in the breeze. With a sudden hoot a little engine appears from behind the trees, bringing rough timber to feed the saw-mill, while, on a second light railway running down to another clearing the trucks are drawn by a horse harnessed to the first. The wood is sawn into planks of equal size, then neatly piled cross-wise in tall stacks till ready to be taken to the railway on huge motor lorries. These great piles of timber remind us of the teak yards of Rangoon, where the wood is piled by the clever elephant "lumbermen."

All day long the work goes steadily forward without hustle or the noise and shouting we generally associate with timber work. An officer in khaki goes round supervising, accompanied by a lame retriever and a bull terrier—two faithful friends who bear him company in exile.

The planks are chiefly used for building the huts needed to shelter our millions of soldiers, the round tree tops serve for trench props and similar purposes. Thus, as in days of old the yew trees of this forest provided bows for the archers of Crécy, and the oaks supplied timber for our wooden ships, so to-day the pine woods are making their war-offering, and the Overseas men who have come to cut the timber are linking up the chain of our great Empire.

A TERRIBLE BEDFELLOW:

A YOUNG CADET'S NIGHT IN A TRAVELLER'S BUNGALOW.

By L. Hardy.

SWIFT steamships, the telegraph, and improved postal communication have made our Eastern dependencies seem incalculably nearer to us than they were to our grandfathers in the 'fifties. It was a depressingly lonely life which many a youthful cadet (youths still in their teens) led upon arriving in India in the days of the old "John Company."

Vincent Murrell, now halting for the night at that dreariest of all caravanserais, the "traveller's bungalow" of those days, felt as depressed and home-sick as when, some six years previously, he had, at twelve years old, made his first plunge into the "little world" of a great public school.

Vincent was eighteen now, and a cadet in the Hon. East India Company's Service, and had even, youth as he was, "smelt powder" on more than one occasion since his arrival in the East. At the time of our story he had obtained a few days' leave of absence from his regiment, to accompany an older friend upon a shooting expedition; but the latter had been unexpectedly recalled to his post, and Vincent had finished his little expedition alone.

He had had excellent sport, and enjoyed himself on the whole; but now he was domiciled for the night in the dreary traveller's bungalow, with no other European within twenty miles.

His thoughts kept flying back to the dear old English home, so many thousand miles away, where the cheerful family circle would now be gathered together. How many years would it be before he could hope to see those dear faces again?

Telling himself that it was no use giving way to low spirits, and mindful of his projected early start next morning, Murrell flung himself on the low bedstead, and was speedily asleep. He had by this time become accustomed to the presence of all the various objectionable insects and other creatures which generally abounded in all travellers' bungalows in the days of yore, where the rats always seemed bolder, and the mosquitoes more vicious, and the centipedes and similar unpleasant creatures more numerous, than in any other Indian abode.

Suddenly, out of a crack in the wall, glided a more alarming visitor than the largest rat or the most bloodthirsty mosquito.

Sliding noiselessly across the mud flooring, with graceful undulating motion, came a large snake—a deadly cobra—and made direct for the couch of the sleeper, who lay breathing peacefully, all unconscious of the peril approaching him.

Silently, stealthily, the reptile glided up the bedstead, and coiled itself comfortably upon the blanket which covered the slumberer; for in many parts of India the nights are cold, though the days are hot, and a warm coverlet is appreciated when the heavy evening dews are falling.

A snake is essentially a "frileuse," and loves to bask in warmth. The creature nestled itself closer and closer amid the folds of the blanket, coiling itself at length against the sleeper's right arm, with its hooded head only a few inches away from his pillow. And here, in tranquil comfort, it remained, pulsating with that quiet movement (somewhat like a cat's purring) which in a snake apparently denotes satisfaction, as persons who have made pets of the harmless English grass snakes and nursed them in their warm hands (which the snake loves) know well.

But a cobra is "another guess affair" from the pretty English snake which adventurous schoolboys so often carry (or used to carry when I was a boy) in their jacket pockets. Murrell slept on, unconscious of his strange bedfellow, until his dream took a disagreeable turn. He was out boating with his sister and brothers, as he had been often enough in the bygone days; and they were all as merry as usual, when, by some awkwardness on the part of one of the boys, the boat gave a lurch, and sent Caroline's parasol overboard. Murrell leant over to catch it, his own hand and arm plunged into the cold water—and the sudden chill awoke him.

It was all a dream, of course, except the chill upon his hand and arm; they were still in contact with something cold, smooth, slimy. By the glimmer of the night-light (which no Indian traveller sleeps without), Murrell suddenly realised the situation, and woke to a full consciousness of his deadly peril.

Great danger often has a paralysing effect; it was well for Vincent Murrell that such was now the case with himself. For to stir or to move would have roused the beautiful, venomous creature now lying in complete repose, nestled closely by his side. Murrell was no coward; young as he was he had faced death more than once before, but never in such a shape as this.

With beating heart and strained nerves he lay motionless and still, dreading lest, by even a deeper breath than usual, he might disturb the sleeping serpent. And indeed, at this moment, something seemed to warn the reptile that it was observed, for it uncoiled itself slightly, and raised its head for a second.

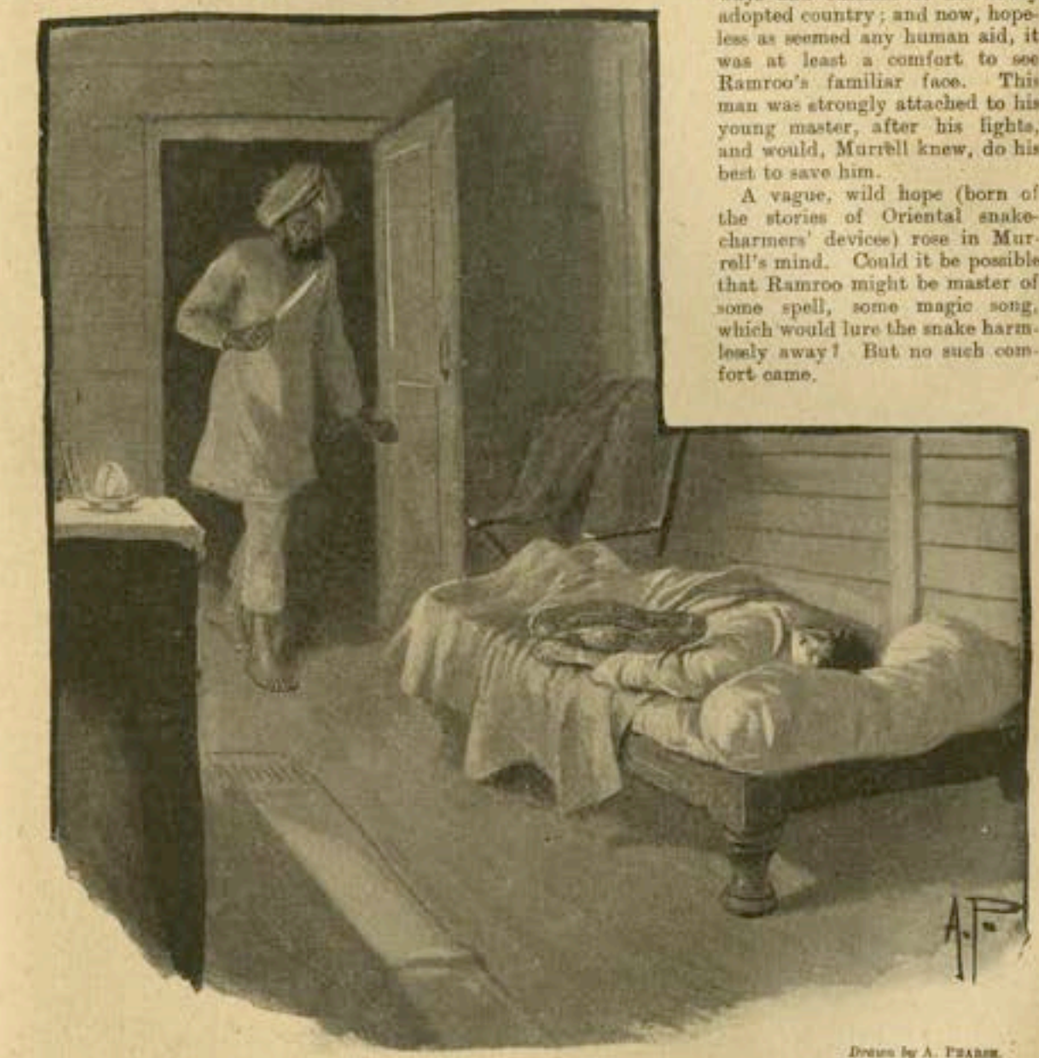
Murrell's heart stood still, but the next moment the snake, apparently reassured, only nestled itself closer against the youth's warm side, and all was tranquil again.

Big drops of sweat now stood upon Murrell's brow, and he fancied that the beating of his heart must surely be audible. In dumb, motionless agony he lay, controlling himself by a strong effort, knowing that his only chance of life lay in remaining absolutely immovable; and all the while the snake rested in calm repose, the image of careless grace, its head almost upon his hand, its coils next his heart.

Minutes, which seemed like hours, passed away thus; then Murrell suddenly felt that his nerve and will power were deserting him. If he remained there much longer he would assuredly go mad.

Just at this moment a dusky head peered in at the open doorway, and Murrell recognised the familiar features of his own personal attendant, a native servant whom an elder brother had assigned to his service. Ramroo had watched faithfully over his young master in these days of his early "griffhood," and allowed no one to rob him but himself. Murrell had been accustomed to rely upon this useful servitor for much information regarding the ways and customs of his newly adopted country; and now, hopeless as seemed any human aid, it was at least a comfort to see Ramroo's familiar face. This man was strongly attached to his young master, after his fights, and would, Murrell knew, do his best to save him.

A vague, wild hope (born of the stories of Oriental snake-charmers' devices) rose in Murrell's mind. Could it be possible that Ramroo might be master of some spell, some magic song, which would lure the snake harmlessly away? But no such comfort came.



Drawn by A. Pearse.

"IN A MOMENT THE FAITHFUL FELLOW REAPPEARED WITH A THIN KEEN KNIFE."

The keen quick eyes of the native took in the situation at a glance, and a look of unmistakable terror overspread his dark face. Then he looked across at his master, answered the dumb agony of appeal in Murrell's eyes with a glance

which conveyed that at least he would *attempt* to aid him; and then noiselessly withdrew.

In a moment the faithful fellow reappeared with a thin keen knife in his hand. Murrell guessed the man's intention; it was to strike off the head of the snake as it lay, if he could only succeed in approaching without arousing it. Murrell had once seen a snake similarly despatched as it lay slumbering in the sun. To shoot it in its present position would have been impossible. Man and serpent were lying so closely together that a shot would have been as dangerous to Murrell as to the cobra.

As silently and stealthily as the reptile itself, Ramroo now crept across the room, his naked feet falling noiselessly upon the floor. Murrell had often declared that he disliked the stealthy cat-like movements of his Oriental domestics, but now he secretly blessed Ramroo's noiseless tread.

Nearer and nearer crept the native, and the serpent lay unsuspicious of its danger. Murrell held his breath, and seemed even to check the beating of his heart. The keen knife was already gleaming in Ramroo's hand, when suddenly the snake stirred its coils, and, with an unexpected movement, raised its head and confronted the intruder.

For the first time it flashed upon Murrell that Ramroo was, in truth, risking his own life in the attempt to save his master's; and a passing regret at the apparently useless sacrifice crossed the Englishman's mind as the deadly reptile raised itself angrily from his side and swayed its body with a low ominous hiss.

Quick as thought, Ramroo had shrunk aside from the spring which it seemed the creature was about to make; but the snake did not, after all, remove its body from the bed. It remained for a second or two, its head poised in the air, its slender form swaying to and fro, as if doubtful upon which of its destined victims it should first spring, while the two men remained as if spellbound. Suddenly, changing its mind, the cobra dropped again on the bed, drew its cold scaly folds rapidly across Murrell's arm, and glided away across the floor, vanishing like a streak of lightning down the crevice in the wall whence it had issued.

And then, for the first and only time in his life, Vincent Murrell fainted!

* * *

The doctor, who was summoned from the next station to attend Vincent through a severe attack of fever, asserted that never before had he nursed a patient whose delirious ravings ran so persistently upon "snakes!" For days Vincent Murrell had declared that he beheld these reptiles everywhere, crawling about the walls and floor, smothering him in their slimy embraces.

It was, indeed, many months after his recovery before he could altogether shake off the remembrance of that awful night with so strange a bedfellow.

THE VILLAGE CARRIER.



H, a happy man is the Carrier-man,
Who plies between village and town,
As he jogs along with his old brown mare,
Whistling or singing with never a care,
Not so concerned if he's late getting there,
For a village can wait on the town!

Oh, a jolly man is the Carrier-man,
Who goes thrice a week to the town!
He hears the lark from the meadows rise,
And sees the blue of the speedwell's eyes,
And the hawthorn bloom 'neath the fleecy skies,
As he rumbles along to the town.

Oh, a cheery man is the Carrier-man,
Whose luck is to ride to the town
When the poppies nod in the rustling corn
And the bright dew glints in the sunlit morn,
And the thrush's song to the ear is borne
On the winding lane to the town!

Oh, a thankful man is the Carrier-man
As his mare pulls her load to the town,
For he passes the fields of ripened grain
And joins in the reapers' glad refrain
While his wheels crush nuts in the brambled lane
As he rolls his way to the town!

Oh, a merry man is the Carrier-man
As at Christmas he goes to town
With ducks and geese for the folk to buy,
And holly and mistletoe heaped up high,
On a ringing road where the snow lies dry
As he carols his way to the town!

R. A. H. Goodyear.



THE NEW TUTOR.

A STORY OF AUSTRALIAN STATION LIFE.

CANOOLA (the sheep run, and not the township) was celebrated all over New South Wales for the roan horses that were bred there. That was before the big drought, and when old man Black was alive.

He was almost as well known as his famous roans, and the stories of the practical jokes devised and carried out by him are still going the rounds of the shearers' huts and drovers' camps, from the Bight to the Gulf of Carpentaria. He was a tall, black-bearded man, who carried himself with the sad manner that used to be considered the thing for a successful squatter.

The boys, Archie and Fred Black, had never been to school, for Canoola was 300 miles from Sydney, and nearly seventy from the nearest railway station. Their early education had been entrusted to a timid English governess, who was the only person at Canoola who had not at some time suffered from the mischievous propensities of Black, senior. She had become quite an institution there long before it was recognised that the boys had got entirely beyond her, and were learning nothing, and running wild into the bargain. Then Miss Minns was pensioned, to her own intense relief, and a procession of tutors followed.

Some frankly admitted after a few weeks that they could do nothing with their charges, others were humiliated by some ingenious pleasantry contrived by the elder Black and resigned. Not one stayed for any length of time, and at each fresh defection their employer cheerfully paid the fare to Sydney and engaged a new candidate.

Considering the breaks in their education caused by these constant departures and by the encroachment of such busy times in station life as shearing and mustering (when all other occupations are abandoned), it is remarkable that the young Blacks turned out as well as they did. They may have been rougher than the average home-reared station boys, and had certainly seen too much of the life in the men's huts. But they were a pair of shrewd and good-hearted youngsters, on whom the example of the gentle Miss Minns had not been entirely thrown away.

George Todd came to Canoola when Archie was 19 and Fred 17 years of age.

"Boys," said the squatter one morning at breakfast, "I have arranged to confide your education to a Mr. Todd, who will arrive here to-day. Mr. Todd," he went on, with a grave face, but a twinkling eye, "is, I believe, a new arrival from home, and a graduate of Oxford. I hope you will remember this, and refrain from your silly horseplay and practical jokes. It's about time you learned something."

With these words Mr. Black proceeded to pull on his riding boots, and the boys, after a solemn exchange of winks, followed his example.

Meanwhile the boundary-rider (who was affectionately called Billy the Liar) was summing up the situation in the men's hut for the benefit of an admiring audience, consisting of the cook, a brace of jackaroos, and three assorted sundowners, who were drawing rations preparatory to another day on the wallaby track.

"It's gettin' monotonous," declared Billy. "'William,' says the boss, 'go down to meet the coach. There's another gentleman coming to teach the boys. Take the buggy, and lead the Fencer colt, the gentleman may like to ride.'"

"The Fencer colt!" gasped the cook.

"Yes. He's a nice man, the boss is. 'I rather like new tutors, William,' he says; 'they make a pleasant change, and brighten up the home a bit.'"

"If he tries to ride that colt, he won't brighten up no home," declared Andy the jackaroo.

The cook said nothing, but lifted up eyes and hands in fervent supplication.

"Well, I'm off," said Billy. "Mustn't miss the coach, y' know. So long."

When the coach arrived Billy ran an experienced eye over its occupants as they stiffly alighted and stretched themselves, for this was no new errand for him. He had met tutors before. His doubts were quickly resolved by a tall young man, who stepped briskly up to him with the short question:

"You the man from Canoola?"

"Yes, sir," said Billy. "Mr. Todd, I suppose?"

"Right you are; and what do they call you?"

"George Washington Williams, sir."

"A very good name, too. What's that you've got there?"

"Nice young saddle horse for you to ride, sir."

"He looks it. No temper, I suppose?"

"As quiet as a lamb, sir."

"Ah! Very well, my man; get my trape on the buggy, and we'll make a start. I'll let you ride."

"Beg pardon, sir, but Mr. Black's instructions must be carried out. I'm to lead the saddle horse if you don't care to ride."

"Very well, George Washington; let's be moving."

When describing that drive afterwards to his friend the cook, Billy declared that he felt just as if he was in a witness-box.

"First he wanted to know where the boundary huts were, then how much wire fencing there was on the run, and all about everything. Then it was how far the creek was, and where could he find a good deep hole for bathing. Mark my words, Cookie, he ain't no new chum, ain't Mr. Todd."

Meanwhile, the newcomer was undergoing a covert but critical inspection by his employer and his pupils. On comparing notes afterwards, the latter admitted that he looked fit and well set up, but drew the most unfavourable inferences from the fact that he had declined a ride.

Next morning both boys left the breakfast-table in a matter-of-course manner, and strolled down to the stockyard, where some young horses were being broken. The new tutor lit his pipe, and followed them. After watching the operations for a few minutes, he went over to Archie and said:

"I think it's about time we began work. You and your brother will wash your hands and come into the study."

Archie stared at him for a second, and then said, with an insolent laugh: "It's not worth while washing my hands. I'm just going to dirty them."

"How?" inquired the tutor quietly.

"On you, if you like."

Mr. Todd knocked the ashes out of his pipe and stowed it carefully away in its case.

"Very well," he said slowly. "Take off your coat."

There was a moment's pause, and then: "I say take off your coat and put up your hands," shouted the new tutor.

Then the station hands formed a ring, and, as Billy said, Archie began his course of instruction. It was all over in five minutes, or less than that. After shaking hands with Archie, the tutor turned on Fred and asked whether he too required any persuasion to start work.

"I'm not taking any, thank you," said Fred, and the three turned and went off to the study.

From that day, to the intense astonishment of their father, the life of the two boys was reduced to some sort of regularity and order. Once or twice he inquired of the boys if they were quite well, but to the tutor himself he made no remark of any kind.

But one morning he asked somewhat abruptly: "Are you fond of driving, Mr. Todd?"

"Very fond indeed, sir."

"Then perhaps you would like a dash around the run with me. I usually drive round the boundaries once a month."

"I have the boys——"

"The boys may have a holiday to-day. They need it after such an unusual display of diligence. Archie, tell William that I'll drive the roans to-day."

Fred and Archie exchanged significant glances, but the tutor lit his pipe unconcernedly, and picked up a copy of the last week's *Australasian*.

Presently Billy announced that the buggy was ready, and all hands made a move to the verandah to see the team depart. The buggy was built on the principle of an American buckboard, light, but strong, and was known on the run as the "stump jumper." Four ramping, raging five-year-olds composed the team, and Andy and another station hand had to stand at the head of the leaders to control their impatience.

Billy held the long reins, his face lighted with an anticipatory grin; the usual miscellaneous throng of rouseabouts and swagmen stood idly about, while Cookie peered anxiously from the door of the men's quarters.

"Ready, Mr. Todd?" asked the squatter.

"All ready, sir. How would it do if we took Truthful James there along with us? He could open the gates."

Billy's grin faded away like magic, while the bystanders chuckled audibly at this perversion of his nickname.

"Good idea. Get up behind, William."

"Please, sir, there's that——"

"That'll do. Get up behind. Up you jump, Mr. Todd. All right there? Then let 'em go, Andy."

And away went the roans squealing and pig-jumping, while the master of Canoola flicked them with his long whip as he deftly steered them through the narrow gate of the homestead paddock.

It was a wild and whirling drive. Occasionally the wheels dipped into a rut of the rugged track, and the vehicle oscillated fearfully, causing Billy to grasp the rail before him with both hands. At other times the buggy threatened to overturn on a huge boulder or a decaying log; the Canoola roans took such objects in their stride, and wherever they went the buggy had to follow. But the tutor sat and smoked with placid, unmoved face, apparently lost in admiration of the masterly quality of the squatter's driving.

Now and then a fence came in sight, and the team would be with difficulty reined up to the driver's insistent yell of "Gate." Oh! it was then that Billy the Liar had to climb down from his lofty perch and open the gate leading from one paddock to another. And here the diabolical ingenuity of the squatter displayed itself in the accurate timing of his start, just allowing Billy to close the gate and make a wild dash to regain his seat as the horses settled once more into their stride.

After they had forded the creek at a shallow crossing-place the character of the country changed. The timber became thicker and heavier, and the wire fences gave place to substantial ramparts made of logs piled one on top of another in pyramidal heaps.

As they approached one of these log fences, and the tutor was looking for the customary gateway, the squatter sent his team straight at the obstacle with a yell of "Hold tight, all."

Over scrambled the horses, somehow and anyhow; the buggy tilted backwards, leapt into the air with a sickening lurch, and then bumped forward with a horrible jerk. They were over.

"That is what we call Scotch navigation, Mr. Todd," remarked Black of Canoola.

"Yes, sir," said the tutor simply. "Have a cigar?"

"Thank you; my hands are occupied at present."

"Cigar, George Washington?"

"Thank you, sir, but I'm busy, too, holding on."

By the time they had reached the outer boundary of Canoola run, the young horses were glad enough to be reined up for a spell. Some lunch of a rough kind was obtained from the hut, and after it had been consumed the squatter asked: "Do you think you could drive them back to the homestead, Mr. Todd?"

"I'd like to try, sir."

"Very well, then. I'll trouble you for that cigar you mentioned. Did you say anything, William?"

"No, sir."

"Perhaps you'd like to get down and walk?"

"No, sir. I'll stay where I am. I'm a single man, and got nobody dependent on me. Cook knows where to find my will."

"All ready?" inquired the tutor, and, without waiting for an answer, swung the team round in a bee-line for the homestead.

This occasioned no small disappointment to his companion, who had hoped to find him completely "bushed," but he remembered with glee that there was a creek to be crossed. At the point where Todd would encounter it, he knew there was neither bridge nor crossing place, so that he waited in silent contentment.

The buggy certainly swayed and plunged less on the return journey, as the quaking Billy noticed with some satisfaction. Besides, the new driver took some trouble to avoid rut holes and fallen logs, and the team by this time had settled down and required less management.

So, for the first time during the progress of that drive, Billy found time to look about him a little, and even to concoct a marvellous story concerning valuable advice on the subject of driving, tendered by him and gladly accepted by Mr. Todd. Later on he proposed to retail this yarn for the benefit of Cookie and the jackaroos.

Presently the tutor called aloud: "George Washington, can you swim?"

"No, sir."

"Then hang on tight," and the unhappy prevaricator suddenly realised that they were near the creek, and heading straight for the big hole where he knew there was twelve feet of water. Urged by the flicking whip, the horses took the water like deer, the buggy smacked into the hole with the splash of a water chute, and in half a minute they were scrambling up the bank on the other side.

"Never even touched bottom," remarked the new tutor cheerfully. But his sodden companions had no word of congratulation.

When they pulled up at the homestead Mr. Black alighted and waited for the tutor. The pair walked along the verandah; the water in their boots went "Squelch, squelch."

"And where did you learn to drive, Mr. Todd?" he asked, inspecting the butt of his extinguished cigar.

"At my father's place on Conchingella," answered the supposed new chum.

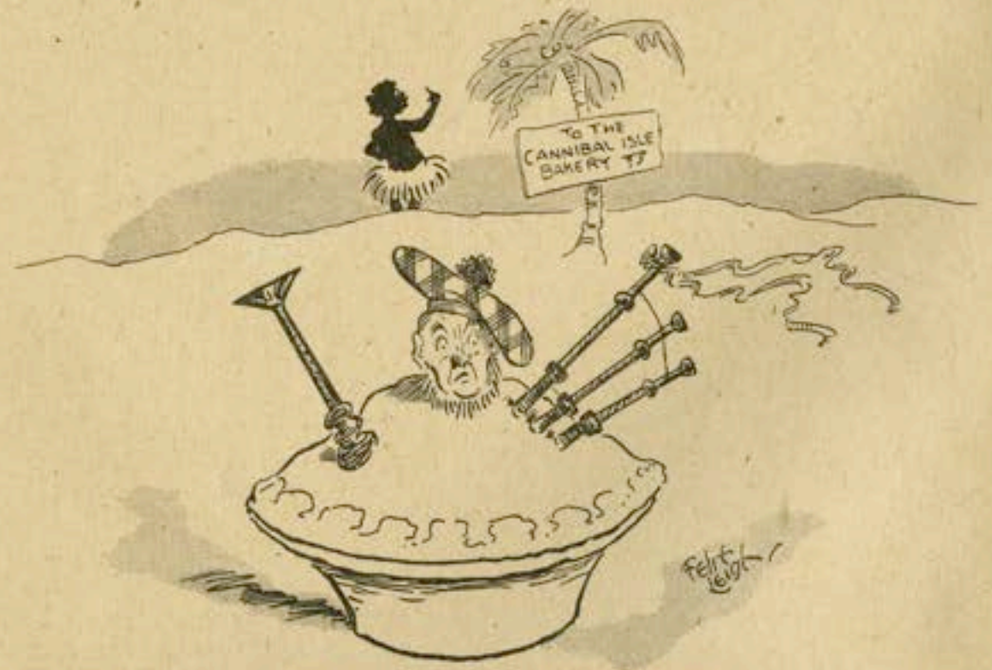
"What! Are you a son of old Sandy Todd of Conchingella? Give me your hand, my boy. I know your father well. But what are you doing masquerading as an Oxford don?"

"I believe I am not the only Australian who has been to Oxford, Mr. Black," said the tutor, gripping his extended hand.

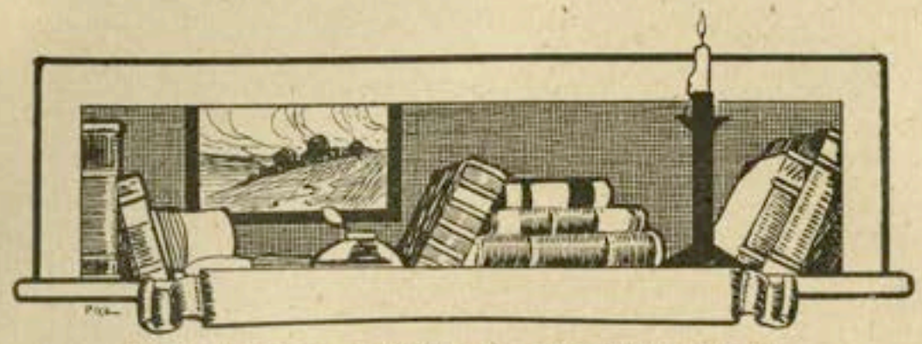
* * * *

George Todd stayed at Canoola until the education of the boys was pronounced complete, and when he left he took with him, as a present, the roan Firefly, seventeen hands high, and winner of the high jumping competition at Maitland Show.

E. C. B.



THE PIE'D PIPER. [Drawn by FELIX LEIGH.



'TWIXT RIVAL SCHOOLS.

By F. L. MORGAN,

Author of "The Lost Medal," "Against Heavy Odds," "The Big House in the Wood," etc.

CHAPTER XI.—*A STARTLING DISCOVERY.*

MR. SAVILLE was possessed of a kind heart, and his intentions were invariably of the best; but he had also an apprehension—or a belief, shall we say?—that he was pursued by ill-luck, especially when he desired to do good in any specific way.

Instead of understanding that goodness and honour and a desire for the better things of life constitute power, he was always fearing that an evil chance might bring these finer things to confusion. Consequently, though unswervingly good himself, so far as he knew, he had a great belief in the power of evil—which false belief baulked and handicapped him at every turn and made him feel and seem weak instead of strong, as it is every man's God-given right to be.

Mr. Saville had been feeling that he really had achieved something in the matter of the competition. He felt certain that those boys who had taken part in it must have acquired a great deal of useful knowledge, besides having been given a decided stimulus towards the true spirit of collecting.

Also, and this was his pet hope, he thought that in all probability Storr Cross and Redlands, helped by the sporting sense of friendly competition, would henceforth be more kindly disposed towards each other. Mr. Saville was one of those well-intentioned people who rush in where it would be far better to leave it to the angels.

It was with a light heart, however, and his mind full of the subject, that Mr. Saville sent over to the school the fine microscope he had procured for Lynwood Secundus, and then went down to the station to meet an old friend who was to spend the week-end at the bungalow.

The friend listened with sympathy and interest to an enthusiastic and detailed account of the competition, and remarked that he should much have liked to see the winning collection, as he himself had always been rather keen on shells.

"Then you shall see them!" replied Mr. Saville, with delight. "The collections are still at the bungalow—in fact, they are displayed on the billiard table. Come right away, my dear fellow, and tell me what you think of them."

The winning collection was far and away the best submitted, and certainly merited high praise. The shells, not very large, but exquisite in colour and shape, and beautifully polished, numbered nearly three dozen, and were arranged with taste in a large shallow box, which had been neatly lined with black material. A card attached declared that every shell had been found on the local shores by Lynwood Secundus, of Storr Cross School.

"Well, Martin, old friend, what do you think of that for a young boy of twelve?" asked Mr. Saville.

Mr. Martin bent closer to look at the collection. "Who was the judge?" he asked, after a moment, in a queer voice.

"The two head masters—a brilliant idea, I thought, Martin, likely to promote good feeling between the schools, eh? Their decision was quite unanimous. The next best was this collection of rock plants, made by a Redlands College boy of fourteen."

"Ha—hum!" replied Mr. Martin, without shifting his gaze from the winning collection, which seemed to fascinate him. "Do you know anything about shells yourself, Saville?"

"Nothing, my dear fellow, nothing at all, though I have a case full in what I call my museum. But it was left to me by a departed friend whom I used to know in India, otherwise it's a subject I'm not particularly interested in."

"Hum!" said Mr. Martin again, still in a queer voice. "And how old do you say this young—er—collector is?"

"About twelve, I believe—quite a youngster. But why do you look so strange, Martin?"

Mr. Martin stood upright and faced his friend. "Only because those shells were never found on the coast of Devon, Saville, that I'll swear. They're foreigners, every one!"

"Martin—no!" gasped Mr. Saville faintly, putting out a hand as though to ward off a blow.

"Yes—India, I think, but I won't be sure they're all Indian. Anyway, there's not an English one amongst them!"

Mr. Saville sat down looking very distressed. Like Job, the thing he feared had come upon him—as it pretty often does to most of us, unless we have a faith that is stronger than fear. All he could think at the moment was that out of his earnest desire to do much good had arisen a terrible evil.

"Are you sure, Martin?"

"Quite. Your two head masters must be a couple of old ignoramuses not to have been able to *see* that. Good heavens, Saville, nobody ever found shells like these on English shores. You say you have a case of Indian ones in your museum. Let's have a look at them. I believe these are Indian, or some of them, anyhow."

Wearily and unhappily Mr. Saville led the way to his museum, which contained many wonderful and interesting things gathered together by him during his travels, which had extended to nearly all parts of the globe.

"The shells are over there, in that cabinet behind the fish skeleton," he said, sitting down on the first chair. "Get them, there's a good fellow. I really feel too much upset to do anything."

Mr. Martin went briskly across to the place indicated, and uttered a sharp exclamation, followed by a long whistle of astonishment.

"Come here, Saville," he said, after a moment. "Our young friend is a most artistic rogue, though reckless in his methods!"

Mr. Saville crossed the room, and beheld his case of shells with the glass lid broken and the contents scattered in wild confusion. A deft arrangement of the shells in their places showed that many of the smaller ones were missing. Mr. Saville uttered a groan.

"By George! Saville," said his friend, "this is where the young blackguard found his collection. I thought they were Indian. Let's get his lot and see if they fit in here."

It was only too true. Quite obviously the shells of Lynwood Secundus had been shamefully plucked from their rightful home to form a spurious collection.

Mr. Saville was deeply moved by the discovery. "Martin, my dear friend, I blame myself for this—I do indeed. The prize I offered was too much, and this poor boy was tempted beyond his strength."

"Don't mince matters, Saville," said Mr. Martin, with a shade of contempt. "This was no sudden temptation. The boy who did this is a young thief, with the criminal instinct very well developed, I should say."

"No, no, Martin!" Mr. Saville's voice was determined. "This is a great blow to me, but I must beg of you not to say anything about it. Forget it. I must have time to think before anything is done in the matter; also I would like the boy's conscience to be given a chance to reflect. My hope is that he will come of his own free will and confess. Anyhow, it is a terrible discovery, and I must have time to give it careful thought. Can I rely upon you, Martin?"

"Oh, it's nothing to do with me," replied Mr. Martin, with a short laugh. "Though I should like to see the young scoundrel brought to book and severely punished. But don't you take it too much to heart, old fellow, for not a shadow of blame falls on yourself. Anyhow, let's drop the subject. Merciful heavens, what's this?"

A small, thin and hairy hand had suddenly thrust itself coldly into the visitor's grasp, giving him a momentary shock. Then he laughed.

"By George! man, I'd forgotten you had a monkey. I say, isn't he a friendly little beggar? What's his name, Saville?"

"I call him Tino—though with no disrespect to any past monarch. Yes, he's very tame, and runs loose all over the house, except at night," replied Mr. Saville, doing his best to speak brightly and to forget, anyhow for the remainder of his guest's short stay, the awful discovery that had just been made.

And so well did he succeed in dismissing the subject that Mr. Martin actually never thought of it again until the first night of his return home, when, suddenly remembering, he said to his wife, "My dear, down at Saville's, the most extraordinary criminal daring on the part of a boy of twelve years—well, you just listen to this!" And he forthwith told his wife the story of the shells, omitting names, as he had forgotten them.

And (such are the inscrutable ways of Providence) Mrs. Martin, being deeply impressed, and knowing nothing of Mr. Saville's request for secrecy, repeated the story, plain and unvarnished, to a friend of hers, who had a son whose best friend was away at school in Devonshire, the school in question being Redlands College and no other.

CHAPTER XII.—*A STORM.*

THE summer, which up to now had pursued its way in almost uninterrupted fairness, all at once broke up with a thoroughness that was, to say the least of it, disconcerting.

As though suddenly remembering that the corn and the fruit needed rain to fill out and enrich their produce, the heavens opened and gushed forth so copiously that farmers and land folk in general hastily changed the form of their petitions, which now went forth in earnest plea for dry weather. It rained, not one or two days and now and then, but all day, every day, and for over a week.

On the Wednesday afternoon Macmillan groaned a deep groan as he stood at his study window and surveyed the general dampness without.

"I say, this is simply deplorable!" he said. "I s'pose it means we'd better put in an afternoon's swot."

Lynwood, who was raking about in the bottom of a cupboard, produced therefrom a large and hefty pair of boots. "You can swot if you like," he replied. "Happily, I've still got command of my mental

faculties, and I'm going for a walk."

"A walk, Lynwood? Into the village? Shall you stay out to tea?" asked Macmillan, turning round in surprise at such a proposition on such an afternoon.

"The answer to the first question is in the affirmative, and to the other two in the negative," replied Lynwood, sitting down and getting into the boots. "Aren't you coming, old sonkins?"

"Well, I s'pose so," said Macmillan, with another glance at the weeping skies, "though it's not very inviting. Where shall we go?"

"Why, across the hills 'over the lovely squishy-squashy turf and into the rainbow, if we can find it—there is generally one to be found in the valleys between the Tors. Then we'll pause and drink in the beauty of Nature's——"

"Oh, all right," cut in Macmillan. "Though I guess we shan't get much to drink except rain!"

"We'll come back about five, have a cold shower and change, and then feed largely and repletefully in here," went on Lynwood. "After that, if you like, we'll lay aside our better judgment and do some work."

"Well, all right," agreed Macmillan, but with yet another glance of cold dislike at the weather. During the cricket season he regarded wet half-holidays with a particular and personal animosity.

Although so damp, the afternoon was very warm and close, and the two fellows soon unfastened their rain-coats as they walked briskly over the soaked grass. And when suddenly the rain left off, the clouds parted and a vivid ray of sunshine set the earth steaming and the drops on the trees and bushes glittering like jewels, the Storr Crosslans thankfully shed their coats altogether.

"Great Cæsar, it is hot!" exclaimed Lynwood. "We were fools to bring these things, you know, Mac!"

"Let's leave 'em in the shepherd's hut to pick up on our way back," suggested Macmillan. "Though it still looks pretty black, and I've heard it thunder several times. Haven't you?"

Lynwood nodded. The shepherd's hut was a little rough shelter made of stone with a wooden door. A piece of corrugated iron, held down by great stones, formed the roof. There was a rusty padlock, but it was unfastened. The two fellows entered and hung their wet coats on a rusty nail on the wall.

"By Jove, how dark it has got!" said Lynwood, turning suddenly. Even as he spoke the great cloud that had hidden the ray of sunlight declared its presence by a loud clap of thunder and a regular deluge of rain.

"Thanks very much!" said Lynwood, gazing through the open door up at the disturbed heavens. "Just as we'd decided to leave our macs behind, too—very kind and thoughtful of you, I'm sure!"

"We're lucky to be in this shelter, anyway," said Macmillan. "Come and sit down, Lyn, till the worst of it passes over."

Lynwood turned round and joined his chum, who was sitting on a pile of stones in one corner of the hut. The storm, which increased in intensity, was just overhead, and the noise of the thunder was deafening, clap following hard upon clap before the echoes of the last had finished rolling and rumbling round the hills.

Macmillan remained sitting on the stones, but Lynwood continually walked to the half-open door and looked through a grey mist of falling rain and up at the streaks of fire that flashed and rent the dark clouds like quivering live wires.

"I say, it is heavy!" he said, going back and sitting down for the fifth time.

"Yes — soon be over now, I expect," replied Macmillan, comfortably. Unlike his chum, he was not possessed of a temperament likely to be affected by the elements. Except in so far as they interfered with his sport or his pleasure, all weathers were one to Macmillan.

Hearing nothing from without but the noise of the thunder and the rain on the roof, both fellows were startled by the sudden opening of the door to its fullest extent as a form, with head bent to the storm and water running from his cap to his shoulders and down to the ground in rivulets, hurled himself within, breathing heavily. The newcomer took off his cap and shook it, and then looked round. He had red hair and freckles and honest blue eyes. He wore no overcoat, and was pretty well drenched to the skin.

Without speaking, Lynwood got up and pushed the door to, for the wet was coming in too much. The situation was distinctly awkward, the shelter very small, and one at least of the three occupants was in a vile temper.

Jennison, having regained his breath, looked unpleasantly at Lynwood. "Sorry to intrude," said he, curtly.

"Don't mention it," replied Lynwood, easily. "This is not our hut."

Jennison, dripping in extreme discomfort from head to foot, snorted in a war-like fashion. "Oh," he said, "I thought perhaps you owned this as well as the tea-shop!"

The air was heavy and close, and Lynwood got up. "Are you trying to be offensive, Jennison?" he inquired.

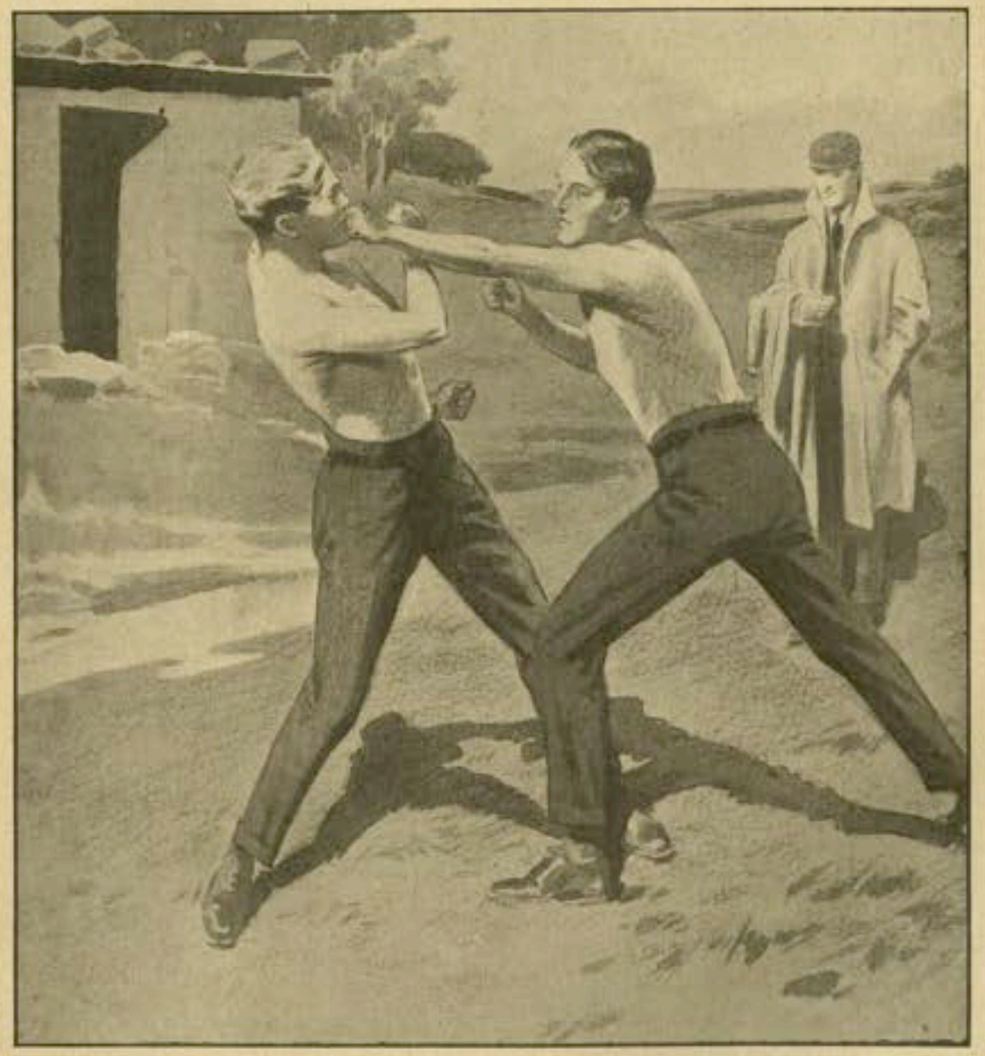
"Not at all," replied the Redlands fellow, though his face looked anything but ingratiating. He was feeling so extremely annoyed that words came to him more easily than usual. "I was only remembering your kind hint about manners, and trying to benefit by it!"

"I say, shut up," said Macmillan suddenly, to nobody in particular. "The storm is nearly over."

Jennison was staring at Lynwood with a very peculiar expression, as though undetermined whether to say something that was in his mind or not.

Lynwood put his hands in his pockets and commenced to whistle, with great effect, an operatic air. In spite of the wet he looked smart and well-groomed, as he always did, and his black hair had remained smoothly in its correct parting. While he whistled—and it must be admitted he did it well—his eyes, coolly critical, travelled slowly over the bedraggled form in front of him.

Under that unbearable scrutiny Jennison flushed crimson to the roots of his fiery hair, which, rendered rampant by the wet, stood up all over his head in twists and curls that were his particular abomination and which all his life resisted his determined efforts to reduce to submission and smoothness.



"THE TWO FOUGHT FURIOUSLY FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE ROUND."
Drawn by REX OSBORNE.

Though the storm was nearly over outside, the atmosphere of the little hut became more heavily charged than ever.

"You have got a nerve, Lynwood," said Jennison, in a calm voice, though his face was still red. "If I were in your place I shouldn't care to look a straight chap in the face, much less——"

"What are you talking about?" interrupted Macmillan suddenly, catching something of the prevalent electricity.

"Lynwood knows," said Jennison, through his shut teeth. He lied, but he was too angry just then to care.

Macmillan looked fiercely puzzled. "I don't think I should let pass what he said, Lynwood," he said, slowly.

Lynwood stopped whistling.

"I didn't get any sense out of what he said, Mac. Was there any?"

"You may be a very clever chap," went on Jennison, rather violently, "and as far as your tongue goes, no doubt you think you are. But I wouldn't have

ten times your cleverness coupled with—well, what you've got in your family, for a million pounds!"

Lynwood walked over and pushed open the door. The storm had passed, only a light rain was falling, and a tiny edging of pale, blue-green sky showed above the horizon.

"I shall suffocate if we stop in here any longer," he said. "So let's get outside. Now, Jennison, just say what you mean, will you? and then I'll make you swallow it back!"

The three had come outside and stood looking darkly at each other. At this stage Lynwood seemed the least disturbed.

"I suppose you know that your brother won the Collections Competition?" commenced Jennison. There was a peculiar expression on his face, as though his words were coming out against his better judgment, as indeed they were.

"Yes, of course," replied Lynwood, impatiently. "What's that got to do with you?"

"But I suppose you're quite ignorant of the way he made this collection that won the prize!" went on Jennison, sneeringly, ignoring the other's question.

Lynwood turned to Macmillan. "I believe the poor chap's got shell-shock or something!" he said.

Jennison moved a step nearer and his words came with a rush. He knew that if he allowed himself to think he would never speak them. But his greatest desire at the moment was to score off Lynwood, who had so often scored heavily off him. "Your wretched little thief of a brother pilfered the shells to form his collection—and from Saville himself, who has since found it out, but he's keeping it dark for the present—for the sake of the wonderful Storr Cross School, I suppose!"

Lynwood, more amazed than angry, stood staring steadily at the man from Redlands as if he could scarcely believe his ears.

"You're quite right, Lyn," cut in Macmillan, quickly. "He's mad. It's the storm, I expect. Let's make a move."

"I don't think we'll go yet," replied Lynwood, advancing towards Jennison. "Now, you clumsy liar, what the blazes do you mean? Are you mad, or only a fool? In either case you'll have to take back what you've just said."

Jennison laughed shortly and turned on his heel as if to go, but before he had taken more than two steps his arm was gripped from behind and he was swung violently round to meet Lynwood, whose face had gone white.

The latter sign Macmillan noted with mixed feelings, for it meant that Jim was thoroughly roused.

"Will you explain what you said just now, please?" said the Storr Crossian, with dangerous politeness.

"I did explain. Your young brother stole the shells from Saville's museum——"

Jennison stopped speaking abruptly, for the simple reason that Lynwood, whose eyes were blazing, had smacked him across the mouth.

CHAPTER XIII.—*THE FIGHT.*

THE fight that followed was worthy of a bigger audience; at least, so thought Macmillan, as he stood, watch in hand, calling the rounds, and, incidentally, thoroughly enjoying himself.

"I'm sorry there's no one on your side, Jennison," said Lynwood, stiffly, while he stripped to his trousers and vest.

"That's all right," replied Jennison, with heartiness. "Macmillan's time-keeping will do fine for me."

Curiously enough, both Lynwood and Jennison felt more amicably disposed towards each other now that a fight was inevitable. Jennison especially was conscious that the tension of months was likely to be considerably relieved by this afternoon's contest—whatever the result. Both were now agreed that the undercurrents of bitterness and unavenged insults must be settled somehow to-day, and by means which, though unlawful and supposed to be beneath their dignity, yet afforded immense satisfaction in crises of this kind.

Lynwood was the finest fighter at Storr Cross. He fought as he did most things, with brilliancy, dash and courage. He also had a sound knowledge of the art and unbounded confidence to back it up. Both he and Macmillan fully expected that three or four rounds at most would be more than enough for Jennison, and in this they were not belittling, in their minds, the courage of the Redlands man.

Meanwhile Jennison was feeling absolutely serene. Though not quite so tall as Lynwood, he was fully as heavy and had a tremendous reach. Also Jennison was a natural born fighter, and had all a natural fighter's quickness of eye and instinct. He knew when a blow was coming and where it was intended to fall. Another thing, Jennison liked fighting, while Lynwood did not. In his heart of hearts the Storr Crossian believed that such methods of settling disputes belong by rights to the dark ages and should therefore be relegated to the ignorant past.

At first the two fought easily, yet warily, almost as they might have sparred in the gym. Before the end of the first round both Macmillan and Lynwood had made a rapid revision of their ideas regarding Jennison's powers of pugilism. Lynwood and Jennison quickly appreciated the knowledge and skill displayed by the other, and each felt that he was standing up to a man whose pluck would bear any amount of strain that might be put upon it. Except for some sweet sparring, nothing much happened until the fourth round. Then Jennison slipped on the wet grass, and Lynwood waited while he regained his balance.

"Time!" said Macmillan, three seconds later. "Here—come off the grass on to this gravelly bit; it's not so treacherous."

Jennison spent his rests lying flat on the ground, but Lynwood walked tirelessly to and fro. Nobody spoke.

The fifth round commenced more fiercely, both fellows taking more chances. Jennison had a slight cut on the lip and, in guarding it, he exposed his body to several slogging blows from Lynwood, but he managed to get in a stinger on the ear of the Storr Crossian. At the end of the round both were breathing heavily. In the next three rounds Jennison was rather punished but not marked again, and he showed no signs of being done. In the ninth round Lynwood received one in the eye and went down. He was up again instantly, and the two fought furiously for the remainder of the round, which finished in a considerable effusion from Jennison's cut lip. Lynwood, for the first time, lay down to rest.

"I say," said Macmillan, "isn't this about enough?"

"I don't know," replied Lynwood, his hands under his head. "What has Jennison got to say about my young brother?"

"Nothing," replied Jennison, promptly. "It is a fact that what I told you is talked about at Redlands, but I didn't believe it myself."

"Well, why the blazes couldn't you say so before?" demanded Lynwood, irritably, sitting up. His eye was beginning to swell.

"Because I wanted to fight you, Lynwood," said Jennison, simply. "Isn't it time yet, Macmillan?"

"You're not going on?" said Macmillan.

"If Lynwood is ready," replied Jennison.

"Oh, certainly—is it time, Mac?"

"Yes—but you are a couple of fools!"

Three more rounds were doggedly contested; then Jennison was also bleeding from the nose and Lynwood had a broken bruise on his shoulder as big as a five-shilling piece. Both were covered with mud and sweat. Breathing heavily, they dropped down to rest, and Jennison tried vainly to stem the ruby flood. Lynwood pulled out his own handkerchief and chucked it over.

"Look here," said Macmillan, decidedly, "I call this off. Honour is absolutely satisfied on both sides—don't you think so yourself, Lynwood?"

"I'm willing to stop," replied Lynwood, "if Jennison quite understands that there is to be no repetition either to us or anybody of that tomfool yarn he told us."

"I shouldn't repeat it in any case," said Jennison from within the enveloping folds of Lynwood's handkerchief. "But I think it would be more satisfactory to fight to the finish," he added.

"Oh, rot!" interposed Macmillan. "There's absolutely nothing left to fight for. You're satisfied, aren't you, Lyn?"

"Oh, yes—I would have stopped three rounds ago."

Jennison was reluctant, but his nose, refusing to be comforted, decided the matter for him. He got into his clothes in silence, and was going off when Lynwood, with one of those rare smiles of his, held out his hand, "Give us your paw, man," he said. "And I vote next time we have the gloves on!"

Jennison gripped at once, and also shook hands with Macmillan, and when he had gone, still holding Lynwood's handkerchief to a refractory nose, Lynwood, also fully clothed now, settled his tie and smoothed his hair.

"Coming, Mac? I'm just about ready for tea, aren't you?"

"Yes," replied Macmillan. "I say, Lyn, Jennison is a lovely fighter."

Lynwood laughed. "D'you expect me to endorse that? What does my poor little peeper look like? And how much of a wreck am I in general appearance?"

"Your eye is going black already, but otherwise you don't look so bad—considering."

"Rotten luck getting one in the optic," said Lynwood, sorrowfully. "Means explanations about accidents and so forth to the powers that be."

"Oh, being you, I don't suppose they'll ask," returned Macmillan, comfortingly. "But say, old lad, what a very insane sort of rumour that was about your young——"

"Yes, very mad," cut in Lynwood, shortly. "Come Mac, let's get a move on. I don't want to linger about in this disreputable-looking condition to give the kids a treat."

"Well, I hope nobody will think I did it," grinned Macmillan, with a side glance at his chum's injured eye, and putting the pace on as requested.

"No fear of that," replied Lynwood, amiably. "They know you couldn't, old son!"

(*Continued on page* 155.)

The Beginnings of the Japanese Navy.

ALL the world knows how marvellously Japan emerged as a first-class military Power, strong enough to inflict defeat on Russia. Her rise as a naval Power is hardly less remarkable.

In his book, "A Tragedy in Stone, and Other Papers," the late Lord Redesdale has told us of the beginnings of her Navy. "Nearly fifty years ago [nearer seventy now] I was in Japan, and the Japanese then bought from an American firm of the name of Walsh, Hall and Co. their first man-of-war. They had owned a small ironclad which had been presented to them by the United States, but this was their first purchase of a man-of-war. It was an old monitor that had done service in the American Civil War.

"When the Japanese came to pay over the dollars and take possession of the ship, Messrs. Walsh, Hall and Co. offered to send their engineer on board to show them how to work the engines. They were grateful for the offer, but they declined it. They said that they knew all about engines, and that they did not need any help whatever. They took over the ship, got up steam, and sailed away gaily into the Bay of Yedo; but, having got up steam, they did not know how to shut it off again. They had to go round and round in a circle until the fires went out and the boilers cooled!

"In less than forty years from that time that nation became one of the first naval Powers of the world. Is not that an astonishing instance of what can be achieved by people who set before themselves an ideal, and, striving seriously to reach it, are never contented until they have attained it?"

HOW TO MAKE A TELEPHONE.

IN giving you boys directions how to make any such mechanical appliance as a telephone, in these days of shortage and rising prices, one is constantly up against the question of expense. Very few materials have *not* gone up in price. As,

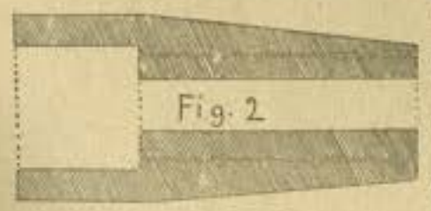


however, the cost is ever changing, and varies also, in many cases, according to local facilities of supply, my best plan will be to leave the question to be settled between you and the dealer.

Let me, then, begin by saying that such an instrument as I am going to describe would have cost its maker, a few years ago, very little over five shillings, not counting the amount paid for the insulated wire connecting the two stations.

We will adopt a form of instrument which was invented some years ago, as it has several points to recommend it in view of the fact that it has to be home-made.

The instrument consists of a couple of wood cone-shaped cases (transmitters and receivers in one); both are identical. Let us examine one closely. Fig. 1 will



give you an idea of its construction.

First of all, we notice that the base has an opening in it—a mouthpiece—which is closed by a disc of thin metal. These two being removed, we see one end of a bar-magnet on which is a reel of cotton or silk-covered wire. The magnet passes through a hole bored through the whole length of the receiver; and its front extremity is in close proximity with the metal disc before-mentioned—not in contact, but as near as it can possibly be without touching. The ends of the wire from the reel pass through the cone to the small end and are connected, one with the cable running between the stations, and the other with a piece of iron buried in the earth or such-like, to make a good "earth connection."

This is the whole apparatus, and you must confess its simplicity. No battery is needed at all; for the instrument works by what is termed "induced currents"—that is to say, when the receiver is spoken into, the vibration of the metal disc in front of the bar-magnet in some way affects the magnetism of the latter, which in turn influences the wire on the reel. This influence passes to the other reel, and interrupts, so to speak, the attractive force of the magnet connected with it, so that its disc is thrown into vibrations identical with those of the first disc; hence the words spoken into the one instrument are given out by the other.

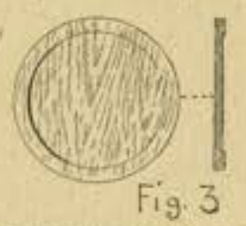
Well, now, having got an idea of how the thing works, let us set about making it.

The first point, of course, is the receiver-transmitter case. This is formed out of a single piece of wood, say yellow pine, for this material is easy to cut. It should measure 3½in. by 2in.

With your compasses describe a circle on one end 2in. in diameter, and another on the other end 1in. in diameter.

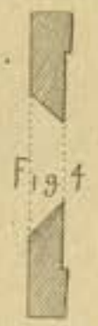
Beginning at the extremity with the larger circle, shave off the wood till you have a cylinder 2in. in diameter; the first inch should be very nicely cut and rubbed with fine glass-paper to remove inequalities. Then begin to slant off the stuff towards the other end, which should be 1in. in diameter. Fig. 1 will be a guide to you during this portion of the work.

Now we come to the hollowing out of the base to make room for the reel. If you possess a brace and a 1½in. centre-bit, the busi-



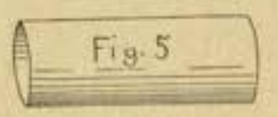
ness will be very simple, for you have merely to secure the cone in the vice or get a friend to hold it firmly, with its base upwards, and drill a hole ⅝in. deep.

"That's all very well," you may exclaim. "But suppose we



don't own a brace and bit—what then?"

Well, in that case you must do what I did in my younger days before I was in possession of any but the simplest tools—you must have recourse to a red-hot poker.



Begin in the centre, and work outwards. Do not go quite to the outward limits, but stop somewhat short of this, and finish with a sharp penknife, scraping off the charred wood from sides and bottom of the hole as well as you can. Though very primitive, this method will be, judging by the result, quite as effective as

the more workman-like fashion before mentioned.

The bar-magnet occupies the centre of the cone, as we have already seen; therefore, you must make a hole in it.

Here the brace with a twist or gimlet bit will be of great service, the diameter of the latter being ⅝in., for that is the diameter of the magnet we are going to use. In the absence of a brace, the hole should first be bored with a gimlet, then finished with a red-hot wire of proper thickness. But in any case it will be wise to purchase the pair of magnets, ⅝in. in diameter and about 4½in. long, before making this hole, for it must be only wide enough to hold the magnet—that is to say, the magnet must fit rather tightly.

Two fine holes are wanted for the wires running from the reel. A gimlet will be the most suitable tool for producing these; and it would be better to start from the small end than from the other, for it won't be easy to so direct the tool that it may emerge at a particular point; and the wider extremity, of course, gives a bigger space

At this point Fig. 2 illustrates the work in section.

The mouth-piece is the next part of the apparatus for you to tackle.

Get a piece of wood ½in. thick; place upon it the base of the cone, and pencil its outline; then cut out with a fret saw, keyhole saw, or, if you haven't either of these very useful tools, with a sharp knife.

Supposing you are possessed of a brace and 1½in. centre-bit, you next place the point of the latter in the very centre of the wooden disc, and work sufficiently to remove the material to the depth of 1-16in. (Fig. 3). The object of this operation is to prevent the mouthpiece touching the metal disc except at its circumference, else it would be unable to vibrate. Look at Figs. 1 and 8 to understand this clearly.

The opening through which one speaks is ⅝in. in diameter. If you haven't a brace you can make use of the hot poker to pierce the hole and conclude with a knife. Let the outside of the opening be bevelled, as you will notice in Fig. 4.

Should your tools not include a brace, you may employ a chisel, or, better still, a gouge, to reduce the thickness of the disc. Remember that the circumference of this hollowed part and the cir-



cumference of the chamber of the receiver must coincide as near as possible, because the metal disc is clipped tightly between the two parts, as you will notice on referring to Figs. 1 and 8.

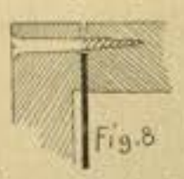
Now I think you may construct the reel for the insulated wire.

The simplest method of doing this is to build it up of paper and wood—wood for the sides, and paper for the body, or connecting



tube which fits on the end of the bar-magnet.

The latter may be first made. Cut a strip of stout writing-paper ⅝in. wide and roll it regularly and tightly round one end of the magnet ½in. from the extremity, gumming the layers together. Half a dozen layers will be quite sufficient. Fig. 5 represents this



tube when removed from the magnet.

Then with your fret saw or penknife cut out of a piece of thin cigar-box wood a couple of discs measuring 1½in., and in the middle of each bore a hole just large enough to allow the tube to enter (Fig. 6). The two are glued in place at each end of the tube, and the reel is completed (Fig. 7).

Then about 1oz. of silk or cotton-covered wire (No. 36) is wound very regularly on to the reel, leaving six inches or so of ends, which are threaded through the holes provided for such a purpose in the cone. Then the magnet is inserted, and pushed in till the reel upon it is nearly in contact with the back of the recess.

The metal disc, or vibrator, must be next attended to. This is cut with a pair of scissors out of a piece of ferrotype, which you will be able to purchase at the photographic dealers. It must measure 1⅝in. in diameter, and you will naturally choose a piece without any defects, knowing what an important part this disc plays in the wonderful instrument.

The position of the disc is illustrated clearly in Fig. 1; and an enlarged view of a portion of the same, showing the method of securing it, is given in Fig. 8.

Four holes are bored in the front of the mouthpiece at equal intervals apart, as close as possible to the outer margin, to take thin ½in. brass screws. And these screw holes should have their tops enlarged so that the screw heads may sink in to bring them on a level with the surface of the wood.

Well, this done, you place the ferrotype plate in its position and screw on the mouthpiece.

The bar-magnet projects a little at the back of the cone; this you seize between your fingers and push it forward till the front extremity all but touches the disc.

You may suggest that this is a rather difficult piece of adjustment, because you cannot see what you are doing, and, therefore, don't know when the magnet has been advanced enough. But it is really not at all difficult. When the magnet is in the proper position you will hear a "click," when you press the centre of the disc inward, caused by the coming in contact of the two metals.

One of the receiver transmitters is now completed, with the exception of a couple of coats of

varnish stain, which will be almost necessary, for the white wood soils very quickly with handling. Ebony is recommended.

The second receiver-transmitter is exactly similar to the one just described.

I have already mentioned the way these two parts of the instrument are connected: a single line only is needed, which is joined to one of the wires proceeding from the reel of each. The other ends are connected with a short length of wire, which runs to earth—to a piece of buried iron or to some iron pipe or other in connection with the soil. The joining ends must be stripped of the insulating silk or cotton, and the two are then twisted together to make a perfect contact, without which the instrument will not work.

And now good luck to your efforts.

A Blind Man's Russian Travels.

THE MARVELLOUS ACHIEVEMENTS OF A BRITISH NAVAL OFFICER.

By Percy Longhurst.

THE feats accomplished by men who have lost their eyesight fill us with wonder. How is it possible, we ask in amazement, that a blind man should go tramping, fishing, skating, riding to hounds, and a score of other things?

Yet we know that all these activities have been shown to be possible, as well as the quieter and more sedentary occupations in which fineness of touch goes far to make up for the absence of sight.

But of the achievements of blind travellers those of our countryman, James Holman, R.N., must be reckoned among the most marvellous.

Many of you boys have probably never even heard of him, for his story belongs to the early days of last century, and many pages of travel history have been written since then.

I think, therefore, you will be interested in learning something about him.

An officer of the British Navy, he had been forced by loss of sight to retire from the service. But he was not one to settle down in a state of depression and dependence on other people. He had an unappeasable appetite for travel, and, despite his blindness, he devoted the rest of his life to wanderings in foreign countries.

He had already travelled over the greater part of France, Italy, and Switzerland, and had published a most interesting book of his journey, when, in 1822, he started off for his long contemplated tour round the world.

That he was a remarkably handy man in spite of his blindness the following anecdote will prove. The schooner in which he sailed, before leaving the Thames, was run into by a heavily laden collier, and the steersman, losing his nerve, abandoned his post. Holman, who had been awakened by the collison, immediately rushed from his cabin in his nightshirt, and, taking charge of the helm, promptly complied with the rapidly succeeding orders of the captain, who was totally unaware that it was a blind man who was steering.

Like all the intelligent blind, Holman had acquired most extraordinary delicacy of touch and hearing, and could describe objects and persons with whom he came into contact with a minuteness and correctness that was nothing less than marvellous.

Travelling to St. Petersburg in the schooner, he spent the winter in the city, which he describes with wonderful accuracy, even giving an account of the structure and action of the machinery in use in the manufactories.

From St. Petersburg he went on to Moscow by posts, and from there made his preparations for the formidable journey which lay before him. While on the steamer he had studied maps of the country, and arranged the route by which he intended to travel across Russia and Siberia towards the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

It is hardly possible to imagine what this journey meant, or to realise the courage of the man who, blind and ignorant of the languages of the country through which he was to pass, thus committed himself to a solitary journey of several thousands of miles across one of the wildest and most desolate regions of the earth, and inhabited by people barely within the pale of civilisation.

Of the hardships and adventures which Holman met in his long journey we can have but a faint idea, but at the end of 1824, two and a half years since he left the London docks, he arrived safe and well at Irkutsk, the chief town of Siberia, and nearly four thousand miles from St. Petersburg.

His journey had not been hurried, for, as was his custom, Holman had made halts of varying length *en route* to study the condition of the country and the people, and make minute inquiries of everything and everybody he passed.

All this was not done, unfortunately, without exciting the suspicion and distrust of the Government officials in the places he had passed through.

He was now within a few miles of the Chinese frontier, and his ardent wish to make a land journey through China seemed about to be gratified.

But one evening, when he was dining with the Governor-General of Irkutsk, that gentleman suddenly informed him that the Czar had heard of his wonderful journey and further intentions, and, surprised that a blind man should have voluntarily submitted himself to such terrible hardships, and unwilling that he should encounter further, had despatched a military officer from St. Petersburg to protect him and to accompany him back to Europe.

His Imperial Majesty could not consent to the courageous traveller running any further risks, such as the journey through China or Kamtchatka would entail, and it was his wish that Mr. Holman would return immediately the officer arrived. The officer had arrived, the Governor stated, and Mr. Holman must go back with him at once.

Holman was thunderstruck when this news was given him. In vain he explained that he wanted neither protection nor assistance; he had come thus far alone, and could continue without any harm. All he wished was to cross the frontier into China, travelling by sleigh over Lake Baikal, for it was now winter and the lake was frozen.

The Governor listened politely to all his expostulations and protests, but assured him they were useless; these were the Czar's wishes, and they must be obeyed.

Holman quickly saw that mere solicitude for his personal safety was not the cause of this interference, but he was perfectly helpless and forced to submit.

Holman's narrative of this return across the frozen country, with the thermometer frequently fifteen degrees below zero, is intensely interesting. The journey was made in a sledge, with a sort of covered hood and curtains in front, the traveller and his protector sitting side by side. The officer had evidently been told to make the utmost despatch, and four horses were harnessed to the sledge. The first day one of the animals dropped dead owing to the furious rate at which they were driven. Another time only some fallen timber saved them from rushing headlong over a precipice, and collisions and upsets were frequent.

The cold was terrible, the mercury frequently being frozen in the thermometer, and in spite of the thickness and quantity of the clothes he wore, Holman began to suffer from the effects of the rigorous winter. He was wearing two pairs of woollen stockings, two pairs of fur and leather boots, a thick fur cloak over his legs, a thickly wadded greatcoat in addition to his ordinary clothing, and a gigantic "overall" of wolfskin, notwithstanding which the cold and fatigue had so affected him that when Ekaterinburg was reached he was so ill that a Government doctor forbade his further progress until he was somewhat recovered.

The delay was brief, however, for the officer was anxious to get his charge safely over the Polish frontier, which they reached after an almost continuous road journey of eight days from Moscow, the officer—moved no doubt by fear of royal displeasure—being unwilling to halt even to allow Holman to obtain a few hours' sleep.

At the Polish frontier the officer left Holman, who journeyed from Cracow to Vienna, and thence through Germany, finally returning to England by ship from Bremen, having been absent on his travels for over three years.

A marvellous record of daring, enterprise, and endurance!



A RUSSIAN VILLAGE.

A V.C. Officer's "Magnificent Example."

THAT phrase is used even in the bare official report issued in April last, notifying that Brigadier-General F. W. Lumsden had won the D.S.O. for the fourth time.

This is how the report runs:

"During a large raid on the enemy's lines, in which a portion of his brigade formed the left of the attack, he first superintended the assembly in our advanced line, and then advanced to each successive objective, encouraging the men.

"At the final objective, where, owing to heavy machine-gun and rifle fire and the exhaustion of the troops, there was some slight hesitation, he led the assault on a group of seven 'pill-boxes,' and after their capture made a valuable reconnaissance of the enemy's position. He then supervised the withdrawal, forming a covering party, with which he himself withdrew, being the last to leave the enemy's position.

"Such coolness, determination to succeed, and absolute disregard of danger not only ensured the success of the operation, but afforded a magnificent example to all ranks, the value of which can hardly be exaggerated."

Brigadier-General Lumsden's original D.S.O. was gazetted in January last year, and the first and second bars in May. In the following month he was awarded the Victoria Cross for personally leading artillery teams and infantry through a barrage to save six captured enemy field-guns. He has been wounded.

Happy the men whose officers display this splendid indifference to personal risk.

CACTUS GROWING.

A PLEASANT HOBBY AND HOW TO TAKE IT UP.

By George Day, F.R.M.S.



CACTUS.

GARDENING is one thing, cactus-growing is another, and at first sight the latter may seem to you not even to approach the former in point of interest.

And yet these hard, quaint, prickly plants have a charm that is all their own, and I may tell you at the outset that the cultivation of the cactus family is becoming increasingly popular as a home amusement.

There are many things to recommend it. To begin with, the growing of these interesting little plants does not take up much room. Nor do they require any elaborate care: should a greenhouse not be available, they can be reared in an ordinary room with surprising success. It is true that their growth is slow, but much pleasure will be derived from watching their wonderful development.

Many of the varieties can be purchased for a few pence—or could be, before the war. The rare kinds will involve considerable expenditure, but for the present these need not be thought of, even if we can afford them.

One collector in England, some years ago, had under his care no fewer than six hundred varieties; so it will be seen that the culture of cacti opens up a wide field for the enthusiastic collector.

As an instance showing how little is known about these curious plants, many books advise that they should be grown in *poor* soil, such as sand or gravel, with a portion of lime rubbish to make it porous. Shirley Hibberd, one of our authorities upon gardening, suggests that cacti should be grown in equal parts of turfy loam and leaf mould, or fibry peat and a fourth part of silver sand. The best soil, however, is the ordinary kind generally used in greenhouses—obtainable everywhere.

A large grower in France, known to the writer, has a collection of 12,000 of these plants. He uses meadow-earth, well powdered with leaf mould, and a little old manure, well mixed, then sifted, and mixed with fine sand, watering them about once a month, taking care that no water touches the crown of the plant, and, above all, giving plenty of air.

It has been the common belief that cacti only bloom once in a number of years, but, as a fact, if properly cared for, they will bloom freely, and hold their own against any other plant in our botanical catalogue.

It must always be remembered that cacti are natives of tropical countries, the larger number growing wild in Central and South America—the West Indies, Mexico, California, Brazil, and similar places—so that they require some little consideration as to treatment and conditions.

Doubtless only a few of our readers possess the luxury of a greenhouse, but every one surely has a window over which he has control. This, strictly speaking, is all that is needful.



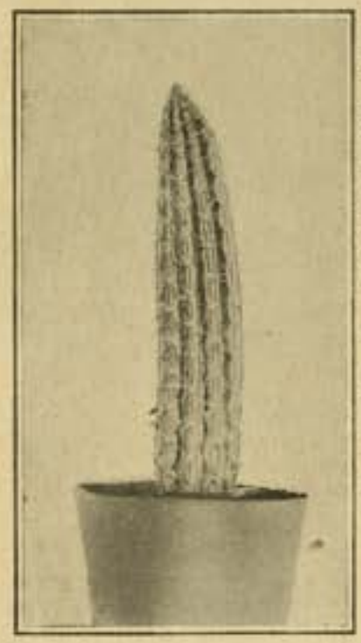
OPUNTIA.

Start with the common kinds, such as may be purchased for sixpence, or even less. Remembering the conditions under which they grow in nature, our aim must be to get as near the original natural state as possible. They grow mostly on desert plains, where dry weather is the rule throughout the year, under the strong heat of the sun, which at times is fierce and pitiless. Parched as is the soil, and dry the atmosphere, yet by their succulent nature they flourish where no other vegetation can thrive.

Of course, however, the rainy season is the time of growth for cacti, and by their wonderful structure they are able to store up, as it were, a large amount of liquid for future needs, thus really living upon themselves when the heat increases and all else is parched and dry.

Bearing these facts in mind, we must try to get near to these conditions for our foreign friends.

So withhold water during a large portion of the twelve months, giving the plants a season of rest. I should advise



CEREUS.

that no water be given them from September to the end of January. By so doing, at the proper time you are more likely to get fine blooms.

Don't be concerned should the plants appear shrivelled and apparently dead. Having obtained the plants, procure some small pots, such as will just hold the roots and no more. Place in the bottom a number of small pieces of brick rubbish and a little charcoal, so that the soil may be perfectly porous. Too much attention cannot be paid to the subject of drainage and to the use of charcoal, as this latter keeps the soil sweet, besides acting as manure. Stagnant water must never be allowed, for this causes rapid decay.

For mould take equal parts of peat, loam, and sand, with the small quantity of charcoal referred to above. Mix well together, and place the plant therein. If these preliminaries are seen to, success is pretty well certain to follow.

When once a start has been made, increases in the number of plants can soon be effected by offshoots, cuttings, and even by grafting and seeds. Take off the young growths in spring and summer, do not pot immediately, but allow the off-shoot to lie exposed to the sun for a day or two in order that the broken or cut surface may heal. After this has been done, place them in pots containing sandy soil until they have begun to grow; giving very little moisture, keeping the soil almost entirely dry.

Rain-water is the best for cacti, as the chalk usually found in spring water gets deposited on the plants, thereby causing unsightly spots. Do not water them for several days after final potting. Indeed, the better plan would be to place the pots in some damp material, thus avoiding necessity of watering them at all.

A great deal depends upon the moisture required for cacti; nothing is so injurious to their growth as constant humidity. The state of the earth in which they are planted should be examined, especially during the growing time. What that time is depends upon the species. Some favour spring and autumn, others confine themselves to summer.

This, however, can be taken as a general direction: When your plants are in blossom water them freely.

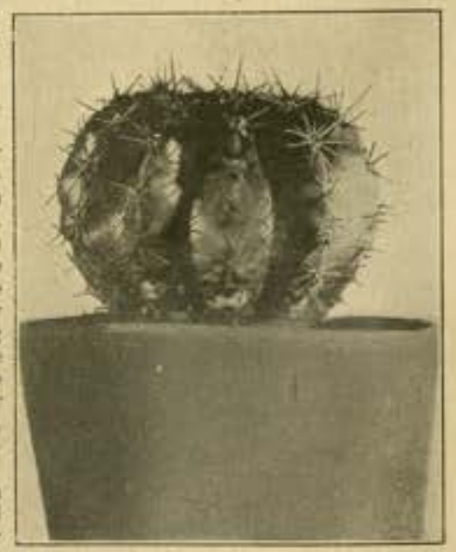


ECHINOCACTUS.

Don't let the plant be wet on dull days in the winter months if it can be avoided, and allow the soil to dry between each watering.

Plants may derive great benefit from being spattered with soft water. This opens and purifies the pores, enabling the plant to breathe and take in air. Of course, this must only be done during the summer. The best time to do this is early morning, so that the plants may dry before night. Use a small ordinary squirt, such as may be purchased for a few pence.

The cactus family, I may say,



ECHINOPSIS.

numbers over eight hundred varieties, but as some cannot be grown in this country, we had better confine our attention to those which may be reared under ordinary conditions.

The best kinds to purchase are as follows:—

Cereus Flagelliformis—
Rat's Tail Cactus (Bright rosy flowers).
Cereus Speciosissimus—
Torch Thistle Cactus (Crimson flowers).
Echinopsis Eyriesii
(Pure white flowers).
Phyllocactus Ackermanni
(Scarlet flowers).
Phyllocactus Albus Superbus.
" *Hitchensi.*
" *Jenkinsoni.*

All these (and many others) will succeed well in any ordinary sunny room.

The *Cereus* variety number over three hundred. They are most interesting, both from their curious stems, as well as their handsome flowers. Under favourable conditions they sometimes measure more than twelve inches across. The best of these, however, are night bloomers. The finest of this variety is the *C. Speciosissimus*. The Rat's Tail has growing stems of a rose colour, and if the plant is properly treated it will blossom freely.

For window-growing, however, there is none better than the *Echinopsis*, it being of a very hardy nature. The flowers are handsome, and are produced at the sides of their stems, which are globular.

The best-known is the *Eyriesii*, having white flowers and exquisite scent.

Plants of the *Phyllocactus* genus bear the finest flowers of the whole cacti family. They bloom freely, and can easily be propagated by cuttings.

The *Opuntia* are famous for their peculiar stems and spines. The flowers are not specially attractive, but from their curious growth are well worth cultivating. They will grow freely in almost any condition, so that this variety is one of the very best for the amateur. They will thrive in any kind of soil, and do not need special attention.

One of the most enthusiastic and successful cactus-growers says: "Cacti have very much to recommend them to all lovers of the curious and beautiful, especially considering how easily they are grown. The cottager who can only devote a small space to them in his window may, and often does, grow them to greater perfection than his richer neighbours, who have greenhouses, stoves, and every convenience. This is because he loves and cares for them, seeking to find out their likes and dislikes, whereas his wealthy neighbour leaves them to gardeners who, as likely as not, care little or nothing for these quaint plants."

In the dry and heated atmosphere of a room, which is so trying to ordinary plants, cacti are perfectly at home, and their demands upon the time and attention of their owner are so slight that they may be left for weeks, or even months, without a drop of water. It is therefore not surprising that these plants are becoming favourites with dwellers in towns, and many a humble artisan has his heart gladdened by a sight of the lovely flowers produced by his beloved window cactus.

"Unlike ordinary plants, they are always attractive, whether in or out of bloom, their stems being most interesting."

I have quoted this last passage from a small handbook, written by Mr. W. C. C. Ludford, the well-known amateur cactus specialist; the book referred to is unfortunately now out of print.

There is something romantic, too, about these fantastic plants. They bring into English rooms a suggestion of the wild waste lands far away where their kindred live and flourish.

"Not ours the sweet, soft leaves and tendrils light
Of hedgerow glories and frail garden flowers;
The desert bore us, and the llanos bright,
Where thirst the parchèd lands for cooling showers,
And sun-scorched rocks burn through the noontide hours."

The more these wonderful plants are understood the greater will be the interest taken by individual growers. They have been sadly neglected hitherto, except by the few, a fact which one can only explain by concluding that they have been too little known.

I hope that, as the result of what I have put before them, many of the readers of this Annual will take up a hobby which has so much to recommend it, and which will make such little inroads on the time of even the busiest of them.

No doubt there will be more than usual difficulty at such times as these in getting just the particular plants we desire, but this War is not going to last for ever.

So by all means make a start and do the best you can.



THE TRUE HOME OF THE CACTUS.
THE ARID, SUN-PARCHED LLANOS OF SOUTH AMERICA.



HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE.

A TALE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

By Travace Reay.

'TIS a street brawl, grandsire. Nay, a baiting, for one stands against the wall holding scores at bay with his sword. It's cruel unfair," and the Anglo-French lad, Emil Raynor, turned appealingly to his kinsman, the Count de Champellier.

They had been looking through the handsome iron gates of the chateau down the straggling street of the village.

"A brawl, say you, in Champellier?" repeated the aged noble incredulously. "Truly our France has come to a sore pass!"

That was a mild term for the terrible state of the excited country. It was late autumn in 1792. Murder and rapine were rife in the land. It was a crime merely to be gentle born, and those declared guilty were being guillotined every day. The King was in gaol with the same fate drawing nearer. That very day from Champellier could be seen the curling smoke of the burned Chateau Romanie, the funeral pyre of a ducal family and all their agents. These dread happenings were not always undeserved, but as yet the turmoil had left Champellier untouched, for there was no honest complaint where the Count ruled.

The nobleman viewed the unseemly disorder with marked disfavour. "Baston! The gates!" he demanded.

The old valet trembled. He feared the trouble was come to them at last. But he dreaded the Count more than the peasants. So he opened the gates and followed his master bravely. Young Emil went also, with hand on sword-hilt.

The Count, however, walked with fine careless grace, a notable figure, richly and handsomely clad in the most faultless fashion of his day. He marched with dignity into the thick of the shouting, shifting throng. From inborn habit the peasants stood aside and disclosed who held them at defiance. It was a mere lad of sixteen, a fair-haired, red-cheeked Britisher.

"Tom Threlford!" young Emil greeted him, amazed.

The lad turned and smiled shyly. That diversion proved his undoing. A stone came smash at his averted head. He went down without a groan.

Yelling exultant, the crowd dashed forward. Somehow the Count got first to the boy and bestrode his body. The assailants halted, except one, a huge hairy fellow, who flaunted the red Republican cap. He made boldly up to the dignified noble.

"What means this?" the Count asked sternly.

"Treason, Citizen Champellier. An enemy of the Constitution resisted arrest. That young dog coming on the scene aided him. He is in league with the traitors, for the first gave his treasonable papers into his keeping. See, he still has some parts and so have I also." The giant flourished some scraps of paper snatched from the packet still clutched in the senseless lad's hand. "Stand aside, citizen. I would deal with this enemy of the State."

"Pierre Daton, when I would teach you how to work in your smithy at Romanie 'twill be time to teach me the ordering of affairs in my own Champellier."

The smith scowled blackly. He was the ringleader of the local revolutionaries, with a tongue as wild as his passions, yet none of his tales of black cruelties by aristocrats which fired murder in the hearts of his hearers could be used now against the just Champelliers. So he tried bullying argument.

"There is now no 'yours' or 'mine,' citizen. 'Tis 'Ours,' the People's. He who is not for the People is against them. Help or hinder—choose. In the name of the Committee, I bid you stand aside!"

The Count merely stared.

There were ugly murmurings in the crowd. Most were not Champellier men, and mainly they were in dangerous mood. Some had suffered wrongs, others had done them, and many had taken part in the devilries of yester-night in Romanie.

"You are against us?" challenged Pierre. "So, thus do we serve our enemies!"

He made a menacing step, swinging a heavy Indian sword he had looted. Emil stepped between with his rapier bared. The Count looked on with smiling approval. Then he motioned him aside, while with excessive slowness he drew out and opened a jewelled snuffbox.

Such dignified indifference made the smith furious. The frail old gallant did not consider the giant worth the drawing of a weapon. Pierre snarled like a beast, threw back his sword, and balanced for the blow.

The crowd held ominously still. The Champellier peasants turned their heads, ashamed to see their master die. Emil darted in again—needlessly. The Count had already made his guard—just a flick of the wrist, and the contents of the snuffbox had shot squarely into Pierre's face.

The brawny smith became a great quivering jelly, and his horrible blade dropped harmlessly as he burst into a storm of coughing sneezes.

Like the trigger of a gun, the crowd had been hanging tense for mischief. The besting of their leader with such absurd ease by a frail old man slackened the tension. Humour allayed their passions, and Pierre's angry bellows were lost in peals of laughter.

The Count remained grave. "Know you this person?" he asked of Emil.

"'Tis my chum, Tom Threl-

ford, who came with me from England on the venture."

"Ah, the matter of my own rescue. Well, it becomes me to rescue my rescuers," was the dry retort. "Jules! Henri! to the chateau!"

And such was the magnetic power of the old man that two of the rebellious peasants stepped meekly forward and obediently bore away Tom in their arms.

II.

"You are quite the biggest dunderhead man ever had for friend," was Emil's reproachful greeting when at evening Tom made his way from the bed-chamber to the salon of the chateau. Except for some shakiness, he was none the worse for the fell blow.

Tom smiled sheepishly. Emil's scoldings were always stingless. They were alone except for the old valet bringing refreshment for Tom. So Emil continued: "Did you not promise to stand by in the yawl? Might I not any moment have arrived at the shore with my grandfather, sore pressed and needing aid?"

"You would have got it. Baker and Young, the fishermen, are still aboard. She hovers off, awaiting the agreed signal. I could do nothing more afloat, while ashore I could see glares of burnings. You were long in coming. I thought——"

Emil hushed him with a real Gallic embrace. "Ah, my Tom! True blue! So eager to share your friend's dangers—ay, and the dangers of others also. Even must you stay to share a stranger's quarrel."

"What else could a gentleman do when he finds a score of cowards butchering a single man?"

"Ah, my Tom of the ready aid. Surely I asked enough in your coming with me in the yawl from England. I needed no more than you should hold her off awaiting my return with grandsire. Yet here you are, sword and all. Yet, 'tis not weapons but wit I need. Pardon, my Tom, but truly you do not bring that."

"Granted, Emil, for assuredly I was always a dull dog at scheming. I shall be of small service in smuggling away the Count, if the watch is strict."

"Ah, Tom, surely my wit is equal to the hoodwinking of a few peasants. I wager thee a guinea I get him away straight as soon as he consents to come. That is what stays us. He will not leave. True, this Committee, the self-styled Government of the province, have forbidden the Count to pass the borders of his park. Nevertheless, he gave no parole."

"Your father said he would not come."

"And he is like to be right," agreed Emil despondently. "Either grandsire will not face about from danger or he will not be my father's guest. The latter, I fear, for he seemed reluctant to own me his daughter's son."

Baston, who had been respectfully silent, now broke in: "Nay, Monsieur Emil, you mistake my master. 'Tis true the Colonel Raynor angered him by taking off the Mademoiselle Camille to wife, but that is long forgiven. He first wished to know your mettle before he favoured you. This day he has said to me, 'No matter of what breed is the father, the lad is French and Champellier.'"

"He will not go," continued the man earnestly, "yet warning follows warning. Even now every servant is fled. Yet, threaten what will, here he bides till the message comes. Permit me to explain:

"In the old glorious days at Versailles the Count was a counsellor at the side of His Majesty, as he had been at that of his grandsire. The Count saw the storm clouds gathering and gave outspoken warning. The young King liked sweet words better than stern truths. There was one played on his weakness, the turncoat Duc de Valines. He spoke lies of the Count; he told untruths to the King, and phrased them all in honeyed sayings. Thus, by an enemy's doing, the King turned his face from my master. 'Champellier, your old wives' warnings weary me,' he said, fretfully. 'Go hence to your chateau, and there await my summons.'

"Thus did His Majesty turn away a true man. And what sort, think you, was he who usurped my master's place? Bah! a black-hearted traitor, one who put place and power before honour and loyalty. When the troubles came Valines was not long in joining the winning side. His oily, false-speaking tongue soon got him favour with the rebels also. He was made President of Committee in this very province, while the King he deserted lies languishing in gaol. Sorely does His Majesty need the services of true men, and in this house the truest of the true awaits his sending. Strange that the summons has not come. Yet, for fear it should arrive and find him absent, the Count will never go to the English home of his daughter."

"And this Duc de Valines, where is he now?" Tom asked interestedly.

"Met his merited reward," replied Baston, exulting. "Three days ago a patriot slew him in the market-place for a betrayer of his King and his class."

Baston stopped short, holding up a warning finger. The door opened. The Count entered with courtly grace. "Greetings, Monsieur Threlford. I regret your visit should find us so unsettled."

"I'm afraid I'm but an intruder," apologised Tom.

"So my people thought. Their welcome was scarce friendly."

"I interfered in what they counted their own business. They had a horseman beset at the crossroads outside the village. I was too late to save the man's life, but in time to rescue his letters, which he thrust upon me. I had nearly lost them also when you came to my aid. Some part, indeed, is gone, but there is sense in the fragment which remains. They appear important. You may judge, Count, if you care."

Tom hurried away to his bed-chamber, and shortly returned with the tattered fragment of a letter.

The Count took it indulgently. Next instant the easy manner left him. The old courtier drew erect, gravely saluting the writing. "It is in the hand of his Gracious Majesty," he whispered reverently. "The words! They are a message. My boy, I am your everlasting debtor for this precious document. The messenger was to me. Long years have I waited his coming. Accident has robbed me of some words, but those here ring like gold. Listen: 'Our hope is in those who have fled our realms. Could they be gathered together they might strike in unison when times were ripe and aid us once more to our own. For this we rely on you, who were and are our loyal servant and trusted friend. We knew not your worth till you were from us. Be assured we believed not what rumour brought concerning you. We know the word will bring you to our side.'"

The Count rolled the words on his tongue like a tasty morsel. He bowed his head, but his voice rang triumphantly. "My liege, now as always, your commands receive my instant obedience." Then, turning eagerly to the lads, he asked, "Your England is full of our refugees? Yes, well, now I am ready to come also. I must gather them as His Majesty desires."

A door slammed in the empty hall below. Footsteps scurried up the deserted staircase. Instinctively the young men laid hands to their swords. The dark had now come. Were there blacker deeds to follow? The Count, however, stood calm as a graven image.

The door was flung open. A breathless man staggered in.

"Gaspard!" snapped the Count in reproof.

The fellow fell on his knees. "Pardon, my master. I had to approach thus. They are coming—those that destroyed Romanie. Pierre Daton leads them. They swear to have the English spies. They threaten to lay hands on you. They bring torches to fire the chateau. Fly, master, while time remains!"

"I thank you for your coming, Gaspard," said the Count, quite unconcerned, "though always remember over-zeal leads to impoliteness. However, I think I shall be denied the pleasure of receiving Monsieur Pierre. More important matters than himself have already called me abroad. Come, Baston, let us be about the old glad duties of the King's errands," and he passed out.

III.

Fortunately the horses were still in the stables, though the lads had to act as grooms. They raced to the mews. Ominous sounds from the village speeded them; far away shoutings, chatterings and clanking thuds as the gates were attacked.

"Do you, Tom, put this pair of hacks into the grand coach," begged Emil, as he flung saddles on a couple of others.

"The coach!" cried Tom. "Surely not that cumbersome scow? We should be a-saddle, riding light."

"We shall ride light enough—on angel's wings—if you don't carry through my idea! For methinks by the sounds the murderous rascals have already surrounded the chateau. Come now, Tom, this is where my wit wins. To tell even a little might spoil the lot. Bring her to the terrace steps," begged Emil as he hurried away, leaving the horses he had saddled.

Tom finished yoking, then swung to the postilion's saddle and brought the gilded vehicle round to the chateau front. His heart sank before he reached the terrace. They were too late. Already the mob swarmed across the lawns.

The Count awaited him alone on the terrace steps, his travelling coat buttoned to his throat, his head bent forward. To him the moment was intensely bitter. Whatever fate the future might hold for him, that of the old home of his ancient race was already settled. The dawn would find it a smoking ruin.

The peasants recognised him. "The Count!" went through the throng like a rallying cry and brought them swirling round. He made no sign of their presence, and the simple grandeur of his courage kept them at bay.

Tom drew up. The Count entered with deliberation, then waved the signal to depart. The old man's manner compelled everybody's respectful obedience. Tom went, but uneasily, for he could see no trace of Emil or Baston. Was he deserting them?

The same spell held the mob. They let the coach move. The horses were at the trot when there was a cry of "Halt!" The big smith came bounding forward, though none but himself would lift hand against that dignified figure sitting splendid and lone. Pierre sprang for the horses' heads, crying: "In the name of the Committee."

"Accept this," retorted Tom, bringing the whipstock full on his poll. The burly brute dropped and lay still.

It was forward now, but the coach was mighty heavy. Rightly it should have been horsed by six. So Tom nursed his team against the long run to the coast.

Not a soul was to be seen, road and village were devoid of life. The destruction of the chateau and the prospect of plunder had drawn all away. Still, escape was not yet, for the way went circling round the Montpellier woods to a bridge that was only half a mile direct from the chateau.

Unfortunately, Tom's fears were realised, for as he neared the river he spied torchlights flickering in the woods. The rioters, goaded at last by Pierre, were racing him for the bridge. Tom used whip and spur with merciless vigour. He forced the pace till the coach swayed like a drunken thing.

The overtaxed team responded gallantly, yet in vain. When they swerved at the last bend the torches had already reached the bridge end. Tom flogged the horses to greater effort. He would ride down resistance. Next moment he hauled the horses to their haunches. The bridge was barricaded by logs!

Smartly Tom pulled the team round to retrace the road. In that moment out sprang the aged noble with surprising lightness. In a trice his rapier cut the traces. Tom had a glimpse of the Count's figure leaping boyishly to the back of the off-wheeler, but it was Emil's voice rang out gleefully: "Come on, my Tom! Hi, sir, over!"

Staggered though he was, Tom followed his chum to the charge. The barricaders met them with yells, but scrambled aside from the cold steel while the two coach horses took the low timber barricade as nimbly as hunters.

"How now, Tom!" cried Emil

triumphantly when they were safely on the road which led them to the coast, the yawl, and the voyage to England and safety. "Was I not the grandsire to the life?"

"That you were, for even I was fooled. But what of the Count and Baston?"

"Safe, ahead of us. They left on saddle horses by the bridle-path at the back while we kept the callers engaged at the front. My wit wins your guinea, eh? Still, my dull-headed Tom, 'twould have fared ill without you, for grandsire would have stayed till the death had you not blundered hither and rescued the King's letter. I shudder to think how nearly he missed that for which he had waited all these long, wearing years. I could strangle that brute Pierre for the damage he did the precious document."

"Nay, bear not too hard on Pierre," begged Tom with a queer laugh. "He did you good service. True he slew the messenger and tore the message, but 'twas I completed the damage. The crossroads lead to more places than Montpellier. Baston said the man was dead. For once I had your wit, and in the bedchamber tore the letter in half. 'Twas addressed the Duc de Valines!"

A NIGHT WITH RATTLESNAKES.

AN OLD SETTLER'S STORY.



FINDING that I intended to "stop over" at Denver, a Western American whose acquaintance I made on the train gave me some interesting information about the historic mining city. Before I parted from him in the cars he begged me to call upon a certain friend of his, one Peter Davis, a storekeeper on Champa Street.

"You're a newspaper feller," he said, "an' you want to know ol' Pete. 'Rattler Pete' folks mostly call him. Get him to talk, an' you'll hear somethin' worth list'nin' to. He's an ol' plainsman an' Injun fighter; knew Denver 'fore '58, an' come over Pike's Peak by hisself in a waggon with his wife an' two kids. Start him on the Redskins an' Gray Wolf's rising in '70, an' how he wuz half scalped when the Apaches caught him down in Elk Cañon. An', sa-ay, don't forgit to ask him why he's called 'Rattler Pete'!"

My curiosity was aroused by these piquant details, and accordingly, on the second day of my arrival in Denver, I sought out Mr. Davis's residence. I found the old pioneer in his Champa Street store pulling placidly at a corncob pipe. He was a white-haired old man with straggling whiskers and a grizzled beard, but still erect and vigorous, in spite of his seventy odd years. It was easy to tell at a glance that he had at one time been a man of exceptionally fine physique.

On my expressing a wish to hear some of his early exploits, he showed no unwillingness to talk, but led the way into a cosy little parlour in the rear of his store, where we established ourselves comfortably.

My Western acquaintance had not deceived me in saying that I should find "Ol' Pete" good company. For a couple of hours or more he held me spellbound while he recounted his experiences of the exciting days when the settlers pushed out West; telling of Indian raids and massacres, of the fiendish cruelties of the Apaches and other tribes, of long, arduous hunting expeditions, and terrible hand-to-hand fights with grizzlies, the marks of which he still bore on his face and arms.

Space does not permit to tell of the many hair-breadth escapes and "moving accidents by flood and field" of which he had been the hero. For the present I will content myself with retailing here the story of how he came to acquire his popular nickname, the incident being not the least striking one in his career. I will give it, as far as possible, in the old man's picturesque language.

"Way back in '56," he began, "I was hunting in New Mexico. It was Injun country all around El Paso and the Guadalupe Mountains, but the Reds were lying low after the outbreak of the year before when they burnt Burden's Store an' scalped nigh on thirty people, countin' the children. Quiet as things were, howsomdever, I didn't 'low that the Navajos or the Apaches were off the war trail, an' I kept my eyes skinned while I was out in the saddle.

"One mornin' I quit Fort Henry, whar I wuz campin', an' rid off to cross over into Texas. I wuz all alone an' ridin' a big, raw-boned hoss I had got in a 'trade' some weeks back. He wuz a mighty pow'rful animal, an' I guessed he 'ud carry me thru the trip all right.

"But the evenin' of the second day out he fell sick all of a sudden, an' as we wuz roundin' Big Horn Mountain he let himself go an' rolled right over. He wuz done for, an' it weren't many minutes afore he wuz dead ez a skinned mule. An' thar I wuz, forty mile from home an' nary a livin' soul near me!

"Wal, I started right away to walk back to Fort Henry, keepin' to the cañon, but every now an' then climbin' to the top to see if the country wuz clear. I hadn't gone a couple of miles when I caught sight of a number of black specks moving about at the south end of the plain. I couldn't well see whether they wuz ranchers or Redskins, fur thar wuz a bit of a haze around 'em, so I calkilated to lay low.

"I hid down in the grass, an' presently I could make out as they wuz Injuns, an' Apaches at that. I had my Winchester with me, a couple of revolvers, an' a long hunting-knife; but ten to one wuz long odds, an' I reckoned I wouldn't interduce myself onless they crowded me. There didn't seem to be nowheres to hide, but searchin' down the side of the cañon I found a big slit in the rocks just wide enough to let me squeeze thru.

"In I went, an' found I wuz in a kind o' cave, 'bout twice ez high ez it was broad, and with a hole near the top that let the light thru. It wuz just the place I wanted, an' I guessed it 'ud take a pretty 'cute Injun to track me thar, sposin' they had seen my dead hoss and were on my trail.

"While I lay thar list'nin' for every sound I heard the party cum ridin' up an' dismount on the top of the cañon right above my head. Then they come down in single file; an', peepin' out thru the bushes I had pulled in front of the opening to my cave, I see ez the front Injun wuz carryin' a dead buck they had shot.

"When they wuz down the slope they set to to build a fire, an' seein' 'em tie up their hosses Apache fashion, I guessed they wuz goin' to camp there all night. That made me feel pretty sick, for I hadn't overmuch room to move in my quarters, an' it wuz gettin' so dark inside that I couldn't make shift to find a comfortable restin'-place.

"Just ez I wuz wonderin' whether I mightn't hev a chance of gettin' clear after the Injuns had eaten their buck and rolled theirselves up in their blankets, I heard somethin' movin' by my side, an' puttin' out my hand I felt the smooth skin of a snake. You bet I just let go ez if it wuz a red-hot brick! I lay ez still ez death, fur I calkilated it was most likely a rattler, they bein' common ez dirt about thar, an' I didn't much like fightin' one in the dark.

"While I wuz tellin' myself that my only chance wuz to keep still an' quiet, I felt the brute crawlin' up my arm, an' presently he made his way across my face an' on to my chest, whar he coiled himself up to sleep.

"That was alarmin' enough, an' I hardly dared to breathe fur fear ez I should wake him. Once, when one of the Injuns' hosses outside give a loud neigh, I heard the rattler's tail whiz, an' the sound sent a cold chill down my back.

"But if I thought he wuz the only snake I had to reckon with I wuz mistaken. *If thar wuz one rattler in that cave thar wuz a score!* My luck wuz fair agin me; I had struck one of their favourite meetin'-places. They wuz crawlin' an' hissin' all around me. Ev'ry now an' then they squirmed right over my legs or arms, disturbin' my friend who wuz sleepin' on my breast an' settin' those wicked rattles of his goin' like a clockwork toy; an' one ugly reptile amused himself in hanging downwards by his tail an' swingin' right across my head, lettin' his tongue run out ev'ry time he hit my face. Ef I'd ez much ez winked I reckon I'd a got his fangs in me afore you c'd hev said 'Jack Robinson'!

"It wuzn't pleasant, I can tell you, layin' thar, with several yards of snake twistin' over an' aroun' one; but I know that ef I lit out an' by luck escaped a bite I should only land in the midst of a worse enemy. The Apaches knew me too well to let me slip out of their hands, an' I had seen them torture enough whites to know what I might expect.

"So I reasoned it out that I must set my teeth hard an' stop whar I wuz till the mornin', when mebbe both Injuns an' rattlesnakes 'ud make off an' give me a clear field. My one fear wuz that I might go to sleep—fur I wuz dead tired—an', p'raps, make some movement that 'ud irritate one of the reptiles into strikin' me, an' the mere thought made me break out into a cold sweat.

"Outside in the cañon I could hear the Apaches at their feast, an' I fancied I could even smell the deer meat roastin' over the fire. I remember hearin' tell of a chap ez once had delusions about eatin' an' feastin', imaginin' he wuz sittin' down to a gorgeous banquet, when all the time he wuz lyin' on the bare floor of his attic in the tenement whar he lived; an' the smell o' that roast buck sorter give me the same kind o' dreams.

"It wuz a funny feelin', for all the time I fancied I wuz enjoyin' myself at a squar' meal I kept sayin' to myself, 'Pete, ol' boy, you're on your back in a nest o' rattlers, an' thar's Injuns waitin' fur you outside ez hates you wuss than pizen, an' 'ud ask fur nothin' better than to stake you out an' load you up with arrers. This dreamin' of eatin' is all plumb foolishness, an' you'd better quit right away!' I did quit thinkin' of it soon, an' then somethin' else created a diversion. Two of the rattlers set to fightin' together, an' in a minute it seemed ez if the whole cave wuz mixed up in the scrap.

"Whenever one or the other humped agin me an' rustled across my legs I guessed my last moment wuz come, but by good luck I never got a fang in me. I couldn't raise my head to see what wuz goin' on, though my eyes wuz gettin' used to the darkness, fur a big rattler wuz doubled up across my throat an' I wuz sorter pinned to the ground.

"After the battle wuz thru, the hissin' an' rattlin' give over, an' all wuz peaceful fur hours, ez it 'peared. Thar wuz no sound from the Injuns outside, an' I jest had to lay still ez ever an' wait fur the day to break. It wuz a cruel time, an' I wonder I didn't go mad thru it! I felt that the strain on my nerves wuz becomin' more an' more intense, an' that sooner or later I should hev to give in. I set my teeth harder than ever, an' stared right up at the black roof of the cave, an' whar I judged the hole to be.

"At last mornin' came, an' the light began to trickle thru. Then I saw more plainly what kind of place I wuz in. It wuz a well-shaped cavern, some six feet wide, an' smooth rock all round the sides. An' you may believe me or not, sir, but it wuz jest *alive with rattlesnakes!* I couldn't count how many they wuz, fur numbers of 'em wuz all coiled up in heaps, an' others were continually movin' round an' round. From the noise outside at the bottom of the cañon I

knew the Injuns wuz saddlin' up, an' by-an'-by I heard 'em ridin' off. I guessed it wuz high time fur me to be makin' a move too, but I jest couldn't find the courage to shake off the heavy brutes that still lay coiled up on my neck and chest.

"Fortunately for me, afore I had time to act on the thought, they quietly slid off of me an' made tracks for the opening. Ez the light got stronger the others followed suit, some goin' out of the main entrance among the bushes, an' others climbin' up the walls an' thru the hole in the top. In about half an hour I wuz alone in the cave, with jest four or five dead rattlers lyin' round me whar they had dropped in the fight.

"I cut their rattles off with my knife—fur I didn't expect the boys to believe my story onless I had somethin' to show fur it—an' dropped 'em in my pocket. Then I crawled out thru the bushes, an' you bet I wuz glad to see the sunshine agin!

"Down at the bottom of the cañon wuz the dead fire the Injuns had left, with some burnt pieces of deer-meat among the ashes. I wolfed these like a starved coyote, an' had a good drink from the river. Then, when I felt better, I got my Winchester an' things, an' lit out fur home.

"'Bout three miles on I fell in with a waggon an' some fellers goin' my way, an' I gave 'em a yell that made 'em think the Apaches were on 'em. When I reached the waggon I jest climbed up in it, an'—so they told me afterwards—began cryin' an' shiverin' like a man that's got the malary. They must hev thought I wuz crazy; but when I jerked out what I'd gone thru, an' showed 'em the rattles, they gave me a stiff peg of whiskey, an' I fell asleep like a child. An' that sleep, a doctor told me when I got home, jest saved my brain from goin' clean off its balance, an' I b'lieve he spoke true!

"Wal, the boys all rid out the nex' day to the place whar I'd taken shelter, and see with their own eyes the dead snakes an' a host of live ones swarmin' round the hole. An' so they come to call me 'Rattler Pete.' An' I don't mind tellin' you, sir, that I kaint see a rattlesnake to this day 'ithout feelin' sick, an' ez ef the hair on my head wuz all standin' up!"

Self-forgetfulness on the Battlefield.

SOMEONE writing during the War has tried to analyse courage. What is it, he asks, that most helps a man, whether soldier or civilian, to be brave, daringly brave? And he goes on to say that one of the things most potent to make a man indifferent to danger is *self-forgetfulness*.

When a man's mind is *filled* with the thought of saving, or going to the help of, others, he will run risks and face terrors which would daunt him if he stopped to consider his own safety.

This has been illustrated again and again on all the battle-fronts of the present great war. Sometimes it is an officer's solicitude for the safety of his men. Sometimes it is a private's devotion to his officer. Sometimes it is the brotherly, comradely concern of one private for another whom he sees in peril.

Where instances are so numerous it is almost invidious to single out any for special praise. But the one which our artist, Mr. W. M. Bowles, has specially drawn for us certainly deserves to be told in this volume.

It concerns Corporal Alfred Drake. He had gone out with his officer on patrol duty. The two had proceeded some distance, and were reckoning that with ordinary luck they would accomplish their purpose and get back in safety, when suddenly the Huns detected them. Immediately shots rang out, and to his dismay the Corporal found that Lieut. Tryon had been hit. The latter stumbled and fell, and lay still.

What should he do? To remain was certain death. But if he was to have any chance of regaining the British lines he must take to his heels there and then.

Corporal Drake did not hesitate a moment. He dropped on his knees, and whipping out his first aid materials he set to work to bandage his wounded officer. He was last seen busy at his task of mercy, quite regardless of the bullets that hailed around him.

Later on, a rescue party came upon the two, lying side by side. The officer was alive, but unconscious; the corporal lay dead, his body riddled with bullets.

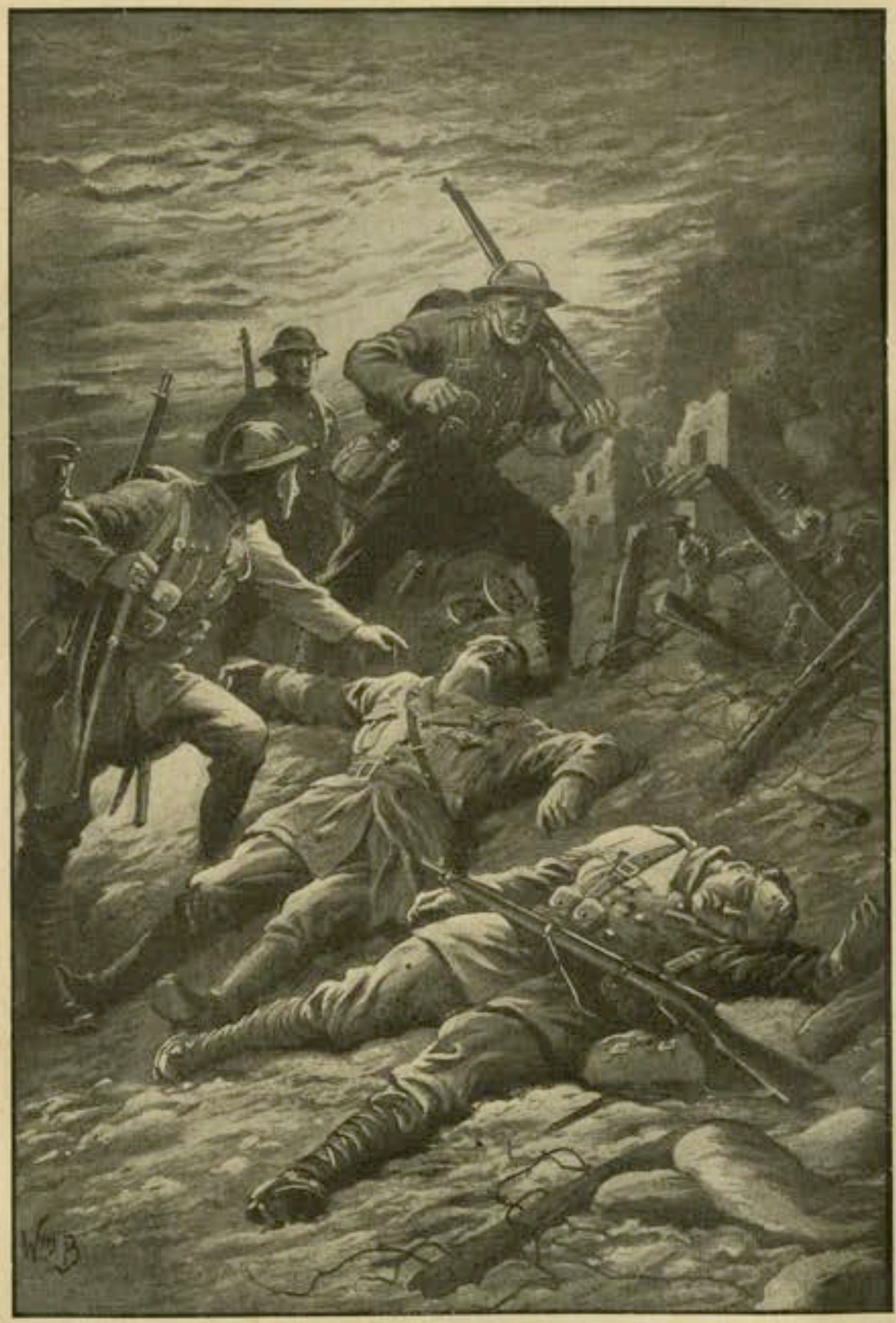
There is just space here for two more stories. One relates to Private Michael J. O'Rourke, of the Canadian Infantry, and was reported officially in November last.

For three days and nights O'Rourke, who is a stretcher-bearer, worked unceasingly in bringing the wounded into safety, dressing them, and getting them food and water. During this period the area in which he worked was subjected to very severe shelling, machine-gun and rifle fire. On several occasions he was knocked down and partially buried by shells.

Seeing a comrade who had been blinded stumbling around ahead of our trench, in full view of the enemy who were sniping him, O'Rourke jumped out of his trench and brought the man back, being himself heavily sniped at while doing so. Again he went forward about fifty yards in front of our barrage under very heavy and accurate fire and brought in a comrade.

On a subsequent occasion he went forward under very heavy fire and brought back a wounded man who had been left behind. His magnificent courage and devotion inspired all ranks and saved many lives.

The other story concerns a V.C. hero killed in the hour of victory, Captain (Acting Lieut.-Col.) John Stanhope Collings-Wells, D.S.O., late of the Bedfordshires. "When the rearguard was almost surrounded and in great danger of being captured," says the official report, "he, realising the situation, called for volunteers to remain behind and hold up the enemy whilst the remainder of the rearguard withdrew, and with his small body of volunteers held them up for one and a half hours until they had expended every round of ammunition. During this time he moved freely amongst his men, guiding and encouraging them, and by his great courage undoubtedly saved the situation."



"A RESCUE PARTY CAME UPON THE TWO LYING SIDE BY SIDE."
Drawn by W. M. Bowles.

THE BURIED RUBIES.

THE ADVENTURES OF TWO YOUNG ENGLISHMEN IN BURMAH.

CHAPTER I.—*THE EASTERN TRADER'S STORY.*



THE story which I am about to write was told me by Frank Ayres some time after his return from Upper Burmah, whither he and a friend journeyed during the reign of the last king—Theebaw, the henpecked and insolent. That journey was the result of a traveller's tale told literally "by the wayside," which it is necessary to relate.

Ayres and his chum, Charlie Temple, both young fellows with a sufficiency of money and nothing particular to do, were on a walking tour, tramping, knapsack on back and stout stick in hand, from Bristol to Worcester. When about a dozen miles from the "Faithful City" they overtook an old fellow who asked them to direct him on his way thither. This they did, and the three walked on together, chatting.

"It's odd, my having to ask the way on this road," said the stranger, presently, "for I was born at Worcester. But it's more than forty years since I was there, so it's no wonder I've forgotten the landmarks."

"You are going home after forty years!" questioned Ayres.

"Yes, tramping home for want of the money to ride," was the reply. "Rather a come down for a man who was once a millionaire, or thereabouts, eh?"

Ayres and Temple were interested at once. An ex-millionaire on the tramp is not often met with. They looked at the stranger closely. That he had spent many years in the tropics could be seen at a glance, for his face was the colour of a copper kettle. His clothes were old and shabby, and afforded no clue to his calling. He looked honest, however, and apparently years had not greatly diminished his energy.

"You must have seen some ups and downs, in that case," said Temple.

The stranger laughed pleasantly, almost cheerily.

"I have so," he said. "Thirty years I've spent in the Far East, trading between Hong Kong, Manilla, Palawan, Mindanao, and other islands in the Philippines, most of the time. But I fell on evil days. I needn't have told you that. You can see it."

"Yes," said Ayres; "how did it happen?"

"Just a run of ill luck. One schooner went down with crew and cargo in a monsoon in the China Sea; a Spanish gunboat sank another in the belief that she had contraband of war on board. It was untrue, but I could do nothing. My last venture was snapped up by Sulu pirates, and here I am—stone broke."

"But," said Ayres, "the loss of three ships and their cargoes would not break a millionaire?"

"You're right. I lost my last ship rather more than a year ago. I was only a millionaire for about ten days, and that was quite ten years since. What a pity it is we can't foresee the future, eh, boys? Now, if I'd been gifted with second sight and could have foretold this beggarly home-coming, I think I should have stuck to my pot of rubies as long as the breath was in me, and the rascally Burmans might have buried me where I hid them. It might have been a lot better so."

"Pot of rubies!" exclaimed Ayres and Temple together.

"Just so," rejoined the stranger, with another pleasant laugh. "It's hard to believe, perhaps, that a battered old tramp like me ever owned a pot of rubies, but it's true nevertheless. Hundreds of them there were, many as big as sparrows' eggs, and a few monsters, and almost every one was of the true pigeon's blood colour. I'd a few topazes and emeralds as well. I don't know what they were worth. A million is mere guesswork. But I tell you I felt jolly rich while I had them."

"And you hid them!" cried Ayres.

"Aye; to save my life. I buried them in a tumble-down monastery in Upper Burmah."

"Where are they now!" cried Temple.

"Most likely just where I put them. My partners were both killed, and no Burman would go digging about in a holy place. But you shall hear the yarn."

They sat down by the roadside, and the old Far East trader filled his pipe.

"Philip Ridgeway is my name," he resumed, "and rather more than ten years ago I was at Rangoon with my own tight little steamer and a cargo of Manchester goods. I had discharged some cargo, and was about starting up the Irrawaddy for Mandalay when two Chinamen came on board and asked for a passage. They turned out to be old friends, and after a bit of talk they told me what they were going to do and offered me a share. An acquaintance had gone home to China with a heap of rubies, and they had persuaded him to tell them where he found them. The place was sixty miles north-east of Mandalay, and only three men knew of the deposit.

"I was aware that the produce of the King's mines was a royal monopoly, and that for a stranger to be caught near them meant death, but the spot the Chinamen were bound for was thirty or forty miles from the Royal mines, and I didn't know that the King, old Mindohn—it was before Theebaw's time — claimed a monopoly over all the rubies found in his dominions. The Chinamen did, I'm pretty sure, but they took care not to mention it, and so I agreed to go.

"We steamed up to Mandalay, and when I'd got rid of the rest of my cargo we three slipped off. The Chinamen had full particulars and couldn't well mistake the route. We thought we had got away nicely, but we soon found out that we were being followed. However, we threw the rascals behind off the scent and struck further into the jungle, cutting a path half the time. On the tenth day we discovered the Chinaman's workings. He had dug a pit of no great size in a gully, and there we stayed, enlarging that pit, for the best part of a month.

"It was just amazing. The stones were in pockets in the gravel. Often, for two days on end we didn't find one; the next we'd each get a heap. When we'd filled our waterpots we divided the plunder and set out back to Mandalay.

"One morning I was tramping along, half a mile in advance of my Chinese partners, when I suddenly caught sight of a Burman's ugly phiz in the jungle on my left. He hadn't seen me, so I dropped at once, crawled into a thicket and lay low. Very soon I became aware that the beggar was not alone. There were not far short of fifty Burman soldiers in ambush on the very path we had cut a month before. All round me they were, and if I had moved I should have been caught.

"The Chinamen came along quite innocent and unsuspecting. To have warned them would have been certain death for me, with those rubies slung on my back, and would have done them no good. Escape was impossible, and they walked right into the trap. The Burmans seized them, found their share of the rubies upon them, and executed them on the spot.

"Then the rascals had a conference concerning my whereabouts. So near were they to my hiding-place that I could hear nearly every word that was spoken. The majority seemed to think that, as I was not with the Chinamen, I must have been murdered by them. But there was a minority who insisted on going to look for me. The party divided, the greater number returning to Mandalay with the rubies and the heads of the Chinamen, the others proceeding on our path.

"As soon as the coast was clear I crept out and followed the larger party—at a safe distance, you may be sure. But I had never reckoned on the others hitting my trail and coming back hot-foot after me. However, that's what happened, and I ought to have expected it. Mandalay and my steamer were a good eight miles distant when I heard the beggars dashing through the bushes behind. Not five minutes before I had heard the rascals who were ahead of me, so, as you may guess, there was only one thing to do—bolt into the jungle. That I did. I suppose you have never tried to run in a tropical jungle?"

Ayres and Temple shook their heads. Mr. Ridgeway resumed.

"I reckon you haven't. Well, it can't be done—not by a white man, anyhow. I struggled along at the speed of about a mile an hour, but I hadn't gone far when I heard a tremendous hullaballoo in the rear. The Burmans, both parties, were on my trail again. I can tell you, boys, I pushed on more recklessly than ever, but it was no use. I knew I couldn't get away, and I was just about to give up when I caught sight of the golden 'umbrellas' on the top of a pagoda shining through the trees. Some sort of old-time notion of a place of refuge entered my head, and I made an effort to reach it.

"The pagoda stood on a grassy cone-shaped hill, bare of timber, and close by was a square building, a monastery in ruins. This seemed the most likely hiding-place, and I ran for it. I don't think the Burmans saw me enter, but I watched them forming a cordon round the hill at the foot, near the jungle, and I knew they would have me, sooner or later. When the circuit was complete they commenced ascending, closing up as they drew nearer."

Mr. Ridgeway paused.

"And then you decided to bury the rubies!" said Ayres.

"Exactly. I was thankful for the notion at the time, but, as I have said, I couldn't read the future. Close at hand lay a lot of flat stones. I turned over the biggest, dug a hole with my knife, dropped the pot of rubies into it, and replaced the stone. Then I strolled out of the building, and stood, pretending to be struck all of a heap at finding the place surrounded.

"I was seized and searched, of course, and my arms and money were taken from me. Then they asked me no end of questions, at all of which I shook my head, pretending not to understand. Eventually the stones taken from the Chinamen were produced, and the rascals demanded to know what I had done with mine. But I only stared and looked as stupid as possible. In the end the puzzled fellows marched me off to Mandalay and took me before the King and the Woon-gyees, his Ministers. They fined me three-fourths the value of the cargo I had sold there, and told me to go and never come back. I was glad to escape with my life, and I have never ventured near Mandalay since."

"And you say the rubies are most likely in the old monastery still?" asked Temple.

"I should think that's certain."

"But why didn't you try to get them? You have had ten years to devise a plan," said Ayres.

"Just so, and I have thought of a good many ways. But I could never made up my mind to run the risk until it was too late, and I lacked the means. When at Singapore I tried to get assistance, but I wasn't believed."

Ayres rose to his feet.

"Look here, Mr. Ridgeway," he said, "you're a stranger, but I believe you implicitly. To whom do these rubies really belong?"

"I hold they belong to me by all reasonable laws," replied the broken trader; "but the rubies in Burmah are a royal monopoly, and might's right. Theebaw is King of Upper Burmah at present, though there's some of us think his days are numbered.

He'll hold, no doubt, that they're his property."

"I understand," Ayres rejoined. "Now, suppose you were to go to King Theebaw and tell him that you know where those rubies are, and that you will undertake to find them, providing that he will divide them and give you one-half. Do you think he'd agree to that?"

"I'm sure he would," cried the trader, springing up from the ground in great excitement. "I never thought of that plan. It's the very thing, and more, it's honest. Why, I could bargain for all the rubies buried in the monastery on condition that I pointed out the situation of the mine, and I could guide his officers to the gully with never a fault. What an ass I've been!" His sunburnt face clouded suddenly. "I ought to have said what an ass I am," he went on mournfully. "I'm a ruined man, going home to live on charity. I haven't any means of getting to Mandalay." His head dropped. He looked the picture of despair.

"Don't worry about that," said Ayres. "My chum and I could find the money. It wouldn't take much more temptation to induce us to see you through, eh, Charlie?"

"I should like it immensely," said Temple.

The trader grasped Ayres by the hand.

"I never was a man of many words," he said, "but I thank you from the bottom of my heart. If you like to go, both of ye, and we get the rubies, it shall be share and share alike."

"Then I think that settles the matter," said Ayres. "Of course we must talk it over, and you won't take it amiss if we make a few inquiries for form's sake? I'm quite satisfied myself, however, and I think you can count upon our active assistance."

"I am sure he can," added Temple.

On the outskirts of Worcester City they separated. The old trader did not go quite penniless to his friends.

CHAPTER II.—*UP THE IRRAWADDY TO MANDALAY.*

FROM various merchants Ayres and Temple ascertained that the old trader bore a high character for honesty and trustworthiness. Except himself, no man had suffered through his misfortunes. He had given up all to pay his debts.

Perfectly satisfied, therefore, as indeed they were before, the young fellows took passages for Mr. Ridgeway and themselves on the *Æolus*, and in due course sailed for Rangoon.

A fortnight after their arrival at that wonderful city, so recently a stockaded town of huts and ruins, now rivalling Calcutta, they were ascending the Irrawaddy on board a steamer belonging to the "Lord of the White Elephant," King Theebaw himself.

Ayres had suggested that a letter explaining their object should be addressed to the King from British territory. This had been done, and the steamer was the result. At that time Theebaw was either seeking, or pretending to seek, an alliance with the British. But Ridgeway knew his treacherous character, and full particulars of their mission had been deposited with the Governor of British Burmah for use in the not unlikely circumstance of the "King of the Umbrella-bearing Chiefs, Arbiter of Existence, and Great Lord of Righteousness" seizing them and throwing them into prison.

The risk was great, but with the prospect of independence before him, the old trader grew young again. There was scarcely a village on the Irrawaddy that he was not acquainted with, and every object of interest he pointed out. Past Minhla, the frontier post of Upper Burmah, they steamed; past Magway, with its great gilt pagoda and numerous smaller ones, and so on to the most picturesque part of the river.

There is nothing like the Irrawaddy anywhere else on earth. For miles nearly every prominent hill has its pagoda, some thickly covered with gold-leaf, glittering in the brilliant sunlight, others dazzling white, of marble pure as alabaster; others again half-hidden with bushes, moss, and grass, crumbling into decay. Exclamations of surprise and delight broke from the trader's companions at almost every reach of the stream.

But at Pagán they were amazed, almost to silence. Once the capital of Burmah, Pagán was at that time, as now, I believe, a City of the Dead, deserted, except for a few hundreds of pagoda-slaves, whose mission it was to attend to the myriad shrines. It may seem incredible that, for eight miles along the river bank and two miles inland, an area of sixteen square miles, the whole surface of the ground is studded with more or less desolate pagodas and crumbling monuments. Nine thousand, nine hundred, and ninety-nine they number, according to the Burman chroniclers, who declare that the traveller cannot move "foot or hand without touching a holy thing."

Some had been newly restored, and glistened with gold. Some resembled a Christian cathedral, with chapels and ante-chapels. The Mahomedan minaret, the Hindoo dome, the bamboo pagoda of China, all were there, in shape at least; but most numerous were the bell-like structures peculiar to Burmah itself.

"After this," said Ayres, as he gazed upon the amazing spectacle—that beautiful Silent City, about which moved no thing of life—from the deck of the steamer, then nearly in the middle of the river, which is there two miles broad—"after this I don't care if we never get the rubies. I am repaid."

"And so am I," added Temple.

The old trader smiled. "You are young," he said. "All the world is before you. I am nearly at the end of life's journey. As we can't carry away and sell yonder city, give me the

rubies. I admit Pagán is beautiful, but for forty years I've been looking upon the most lovely things in nature, the islands of the eastern seas. Besides, you have not seen all. Wait until we get to the Sa-gaing Hills."

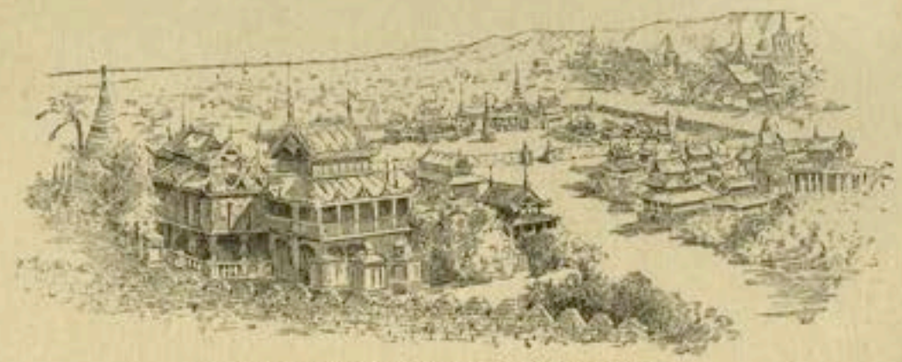
"Where are they?" Ayres asked.

"Near Mandalay, eighty miles or more from here."

In due course they beheld those hills in all their bare magnificence. The great river, a mile in width, narrowed to seven or eight hundred yards, and made a grand sweep to the west. On the left they saw Sa-gaing; on the right, Ava and Amarapura, all three ancient capitals. The famous hills of Sa-gaing were almost treeless and rocky, but terious. Rangoon, Moulmein, and Pagán were eclipsed. Small wonder that Ayres and his chum could only gaze in silence.

The western hills rolled back, a bare, burnt sandbank replaced them. On the right hand, the left bank of the river, among a number of crazy ramshackle huts, bamboos and ragged trees, stood a crowd of loafers. Such was the ghaut of Mandalay. For some time the steam whistle of the royal boat had been screaming to announce her arrival. Hence the crowd, almost every man, woman, and child of whom was smoking a huge cheroot.

As the steamer swung round to the landing-place there was a sudden commotion among the people.



THE INNER TOWN AND PALACE OF MANDALAY.

A man on horseback appeared on the bank, helmeted, and magnificently attired in embroidered silks and satins. Beneath his left stirrup hung a huge shield; his saddle was of velvet and gold, while tasselled streamers fluttered from the horse's trappings. Behind this splendidly arrayed personage marched his attendants, the bearers of his umbrella, gun, spittoon, etc., short, but tremendously muscular fellows, all of them.

"Why," exclaimed Ayres, "the King himself has come to meet us!"

"That isn't Theebaw," rejoined the trader. "No animal less dignified than a white elephant would do for his High Mightiness. I expect that gentleman is one of his Woongyees, or some other sort of Woon."

So it proved. When they had landed, the awe-inspiring personage on the white horse rode up to them, reined in his steed, and made a speech. The trader translated it afterwards—all of it that he could remember. It was to the following effect:

"The Emperor of Emperors, Theebaw, Lord of the White Elephant and King of the Golden Throne, Lord of Great Charity and Help of Nations, the Lord esteemed for Happiness, the Lord of Riches, of Elephants, and Horses, and all Blessings, the Lord of Golden Palaces and Umbrellas, the most powerful Emperor, the soles of whose golden feet are set upon the heads of all the Peoples, commands that the strangers who have written to him shall enter the Golden City in peace."

The trader replied. A bullock-cart rattled up, like a gaily painted dog-kennel on solid wheels which had never been, and never would be, round. Our adventurers entered by the hole in front and took their seats on the bare boards. The driver, sitting on the shaft, prodded the bullocks with a goad, and they set off up the dusty road to Mandalay at a shambling trot, preceded by the King's magnificently clad Minister.

(*To be continued.*)

A First and Last Attempt at Diving.

A SEASIDE ADVENTURE.



THE three boys stood at the end of the little pier, watching the strange, grotesque figure slowly emerge from the water. First came the huge metal helmet, the circular glass panel in front looking like an enormous eye, then the heavy breast-plate, which hung from the man's shoulders, and finally the loose, baggy indiarubber suit which encased the diver's body. When half out of the water he paused, and one of the boatmen hastened to unscrew the ponderous helmet. Relieved of this, the diver, in his red woollen cap, stepped awkwardly over the boat's side, for his heavy boots, each with a thick leaden sole, made his movements slow and ungainly.

The trio on the pier close by—Harold Dickenson, Edgar Powles, and Charlie Weston—watched these proceedings with the closest interest.

"Jolly life a diver's must be," Harold said, presently. "Rare fun to go prowling about the bottom of the sea and picking up all sorts of queer things."

"Shouldn't care for it myself," remarked Edgar, who was by no means of an adventurous disposition—quite different from both his companions in this respect. "I'd always be afraid of a shark or something getting hold of me by the leg."

"Shark?—fiddlesticks!" retorted the other, contemptuously. "Who ever heard of sharks on the English coast, I'd like to know?"

"Oh, but there are, though," persisted Powles. "Not always, of course; but they turn up occasionally in the hot weather. I read about it in the papers."

"Don't believe a word of it!"

"Here comes the diver," put in Charlie, as a boat, with four men in it, left the side of the barge, and pulled in towards the pier. The diver, who had discarded his indiarubber suit, was seated in the stern.

"What a plucky chap he must be," muttered Edgar, admiringly.

"Plucky?—nonsense!" returned Harold. "Anyone with a grain of pluck wouldn't mind taking his place. I bet I'd do it myself if I had the chance."

"No, you wouldn't, Dickey-bird," dissented Charlie. "Dickey-bird," by the way, was Harold's nickname among his schoolfellows.

"Wouldn't I! We'll see."

As soon as the men had landed and disappeared from sight he sprang from his perch, looked around him as if to make sure that the coast was clear, and hurried off towards the spot where the boat was secured.

"Now, then, you fellows, come along!" he called back over his shoulder to the two others.

He cast off the boat's painter, and ran nimbly down the steps with the rope in his hand.

"Look sharp!" he cried, glancing up at his companions, who hesitated whether to follow or not. "Don't stand gaping there, but jump in at once. That's right! Off we go!"

Before the others had time to consider what his intentions were, he had shoved the boat off and seized an oar. Charlie, who appeared as much bent upon the adventure as Harold himself, took the other, and they pulled off towards the barge.

"We'll be seen!" cried Edgar.

"Stuff and nonsense!" returned Harold, with a reckless laugh. "It's dinner-hour, and there's nobody about."

The boat was soon alongside the barge, and Harold sprang on board. He stamped about the deck in the wildest glee, and called out to the others to hurry up.

Going down into the cabin of the barge, he presently reappeared with the diving-dress in his arms. The great helmet was lying on deck, with the air-tube attached.

"Come, you fellows," he cried, "help me to get into these things. Look slippy, will you? We haven't too much time to spare, you know."

They arrayed him in the indiarubber suit, which was about a dozen sizes too large for him, and hung around him like a sack. Then Charlie helped him on with the huge leaden-soled boots. He stood up, and shambled awkwardly about the deck.

"Great Scot!" he cried, "it's like trying to walk when you are up to your ankles in glue."

Powles ventured upon a last remonstrance. He went up to Harold, and took him by the arm.

"Don't, pray don't!" he pleaded. "You'll never come up alive!"

"Oh, get out!" was the impatient reply. "You and Charlie must work the air-pump. Turn the handles slowly and regularly or you'll give me too powerful a dose, which would be almost as bad as giving me too little. Charlie, you hold the signal-cord. When you feel a tug, haul me up."

"Right you are!"

"Now for the helmet. Screw it on tight, mind."

The great metal covering was placed over his head, while Powles began to turn one of the handles of the air-pump very laboriously. The amateur diver waddled to the side of the barge, and with some difficulty managed to get over on to the ladder.

Down he went until his head and shoulders alone were visible. Then he paused, and his companions saw the helmet turn slowly from side to side, as if their schoolfellow was taking a last look at the shining surface of the sea. The next moment he stepped boldly downwards, and the waters closed over his head. The bubbles alone marked the spot where he had disappeared.

Despite his daring, which amounted to positive foolhardiness, Harold paused when he had reached the last rung of the ladder, and hesitated before letting himself go. Though there was no lack of air, he found it difficult to breathe with his head cooped up in the helmet. He felt oppressed—suffocated. He gasped once or twice, and with difficulty refrained from scrambling hastily up the ladder.

Overcoming this sudden impulse to get into the open air again as quickly as possible, he stepped off, and sank down, down through the murky waters. Upon touching the bottom he stood perfectly still, almost afraid to move. It was a strange, an unearthly feeling to find oneself alone down there in those dismal depths. The silence, the darkness, the pressure of the water all around might have dismayed a stouter heart. Harold felt a thrill of awe go through him; there was a singing sound in his ears, a horrible oppressiveness weighed upon him, and he seemed as utterly helpless as if some terrible nightmare had laid its hold upon him.

At last he tried to raise his foot, but it appeared to be glued to the soft, oozy bottom. His imagination filled the black void around him with countless horrors. He thought he saw dark, shapeless things dart past him through the water, and involuntarily his mind turned to what Powles had said about sharks. What if these ravenous monsters really visited the coast? What if one should suddenly come swirling towards him?

Meanwhile, in the barge overhead, the two lads continued to work away at the air-pump. At first it was easy enough, but a short spell of it was enough to make their arms ache. They plodded on, however, intent upon keeping up the regular supply of air.

They toiled on until the perspiration rolled down their faces, for it was a warm summer's day. How long they were at it neither could tell, but it seemed a considerable time to both. At last Weston felt a faint tug at the signal-cord.

"He wants to be drawn up," he said. "You must try and work the pump yourself, Powles."

"I can't!" was the reply. "It's as much as I can do to keep on as it is."

"Well, I'll help you with one hand, while I draw in the lines with the other."

But that was by no means an easy feat to accomplish; and after vainly endeavouring to perform both duties, Charlie let go the handle. As he did so there was a hard pull at the signal-cord, which startled and alarmed him.

"Keep on, keep on!" he shouted to his companion. "If you stop for an instant he'll be suffocated."

"Oh, I can't do it alone!" cried Powles, struggling and straining with might and main. "My arms are like lumps of lead already. Oh! oh!——"

But strive as he might he could scarcely get the handle round. Every moment the supply of air grew less. Weston could lend no assistance; to haul in the air-tube and signal-cord was as much as he could manage. It was a terrible predicament, and one which they little anticipated when they embarked upon this escapade.

"What are we to do!" moaned Charlie. "He'll be stifled! Oh, what are we to do?"

"My arms are nearly dropping off," sobbed his companion. "I must—I must give up."

"Help! Help! Help!" from both boys.

There was a shout, the splash of oars, and the next moment a boat bumped against the side of the barge. A man sprang on board, thrust Powles aside, and seized the handle of the air-pump. A second man pounced upon the one at the opposite side, while a third snatched the air-tube and signal-cord out of Weston's hands. There was a fourth, who was none other than the diver himself. He hastened to where the ladder was fixed, and peered down over the side.

"Look sharp!" he cried. "Haul him up as quickly as you can. It'll be lucky if he's alive when he gets to the surface."

In a minute or two there was a great spouting of bubbles, and then the helmet suddenly bobbed up out of the water, a few feet away from the ladder. It spun around as if the lad had lost consciousness. The diver bent down, seized him by the shoulder, and dragged him bodily into the boat.

In a few seconds the helmet was whipped off. Weston and Powles both uttered a cry of dismay when they beheld the pale face, blue lips, and closed eyes of their schoolfellow.

The men carried Harold below, rubbed him vigorously, and then wrapped him up in blankets. When they had brewed him some hot coffee and poured it down his throat, he sighed, opened his eyes, and gazed around him in a dazed sort of way. He closed them again, and lay still.

"What's that he's got in his hand?" said one of the men.

The diver opened the clenched fingers, and gave a cry of surprise and delight.

"Why, bless me!" he exclaimed, "if it isn't the very thing I've been looking for all the morning!"

He held it up—a magnificent diamond bracelet!

"Yes," he went on, to the two wondering boys, "a lady dropped this out of a boat here a day or two ago. She employed me to go down and search for it, and I've been prowling about after it for hours."

Harold was now sufficiently recovered to explain how he made this lucky find. He told them that while moving about down below his foot struck against something. He bent down and found that it was a large stone. While groping around it his fingers came into contact with the bracelet. Of course he could not tell what it was, but kept it in his hand until he was hauled up to the surface.

"Well," said the diver, "as you've done me a good turn, young gentleman, I forgive you for running away with my boat, and making use of my dress. But take my advice, and don't try a thing of that kind again in a hurry."

"No," said Harold, with a feeble smile. "I've had quite enough of diving, I can tell you."

A GREAT BLACK SEA PORT.

FALL of Odessa! Those words stared at us out of our morning newspapers on the fourteenth day of March. They startled us, they were so sinister.

For one of the weapons with which we had for so long been trying to bring Germany to her senses was by blockade, and the consequences of that blockade in cutting down her food supplies were making themselves felt.

But with Odessa in German hands it certainly seemed as if a new backdoor for supplies was opened to the arch-enemy. For Odessa has been for many a long year one of the greatest grain-exporting cities of Europe. The vast cornfields of Southern Russia pour their harvests by cart and railway into Odessa, and before the war hundreds of ships lay ready along her quays to convey the precious grain to hungry populations near and far.

Yet we need not have been surprised at the news of its capture by the Germans. They had long had their eyes on the Ukraine and its great seaport, and when the suicidal misuse of power by the Russian Revolutionaries left the nation, like a modern Samson, as helpless as a child, there was nothing to prevent the robber-Power laying forcible hands on any place so accessible as Odessa.

The city population made no attempt to resist the capture. Of the 600,000 inhabitants, half are Jews, and Russia's treatment of her Jewish subjects in the past was not likely to endear them to strike a blow in her defence. Moreover, here in the Southern provinces they have been largely Germanised, and they speak a kind of German *patois*.

Most of the foreign residents made haste to depart as soon as the approach of the Huns became known. French influence used to be strong in Odessa, but it is a very cosmopolitan sort of place.

Anyone visiting the city would see little but what was modern, but it has a pretty long history. In far-back ages Greek navigators, coasting along the Black Sea shores, founded, here and there, a colony or trading-post.

"*Axenos*" ("Inhospitable") the sea was called at first; for the savages dwelling along the shores did not welcome the visitors, and many fierce fights took place, and much blood was shed, until the Greeks became better known, and, possibly, better feared. Then, instead of *Axenos* Pontus, the sea became *Euxinus* Pontus (the Hospitable Sea) to the ancient world.

On the shore of one of its northern bays, some time before the third century, the Greeks founded the first Odessa, a little colony which flourished for a time, then dwindled, and disappeared.

Centuries passed: Turks took the place of Greeks; and the name of the sea was changed once more. The gloomy, rugged coastline, and the dense fogs which often shrouded its waters, made it known as "The Black Sea" to the followers of Mahomet, who erected a fort—Fort Hajibey—on the site of the old Greek village. This was taken in 1789 by the Russians, who were then attempting to force the Turks to give up their authority over the Tartars in the south of the new Empire.

Three years later, Catherine II., whose reign is one of the most remarkable in history, determined to establish a port on the Black Sea; some of the regiments which the Peace of Jassy had thrown out of work were sent down to build it, and on the site of the old Greek colony modern Odessa sprang up.

That was only a little over a century ago; yet to-day Odessa has over 600,000 inhabitants, and before the war it sent away more exports than any other city in the dominions of "The Great White Tsar," and over twelve hundred steamers, in addition to great sailing vessels and coasting boats, entered its harbour every year.

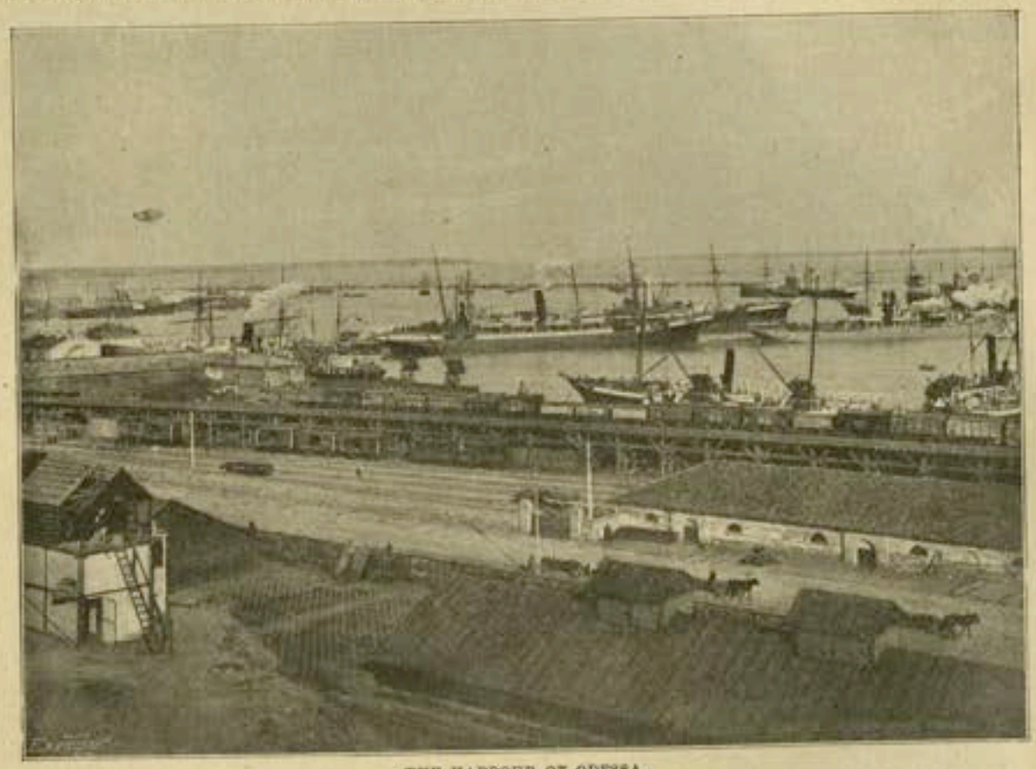
If the Black Sea be still "Inhospitable" to mariners—subject to fogs and treacherous storms, affording bad anchorage for vessels, shut in by masses of floating ice in winter, and edged, all the year round, by ugly cliffs and rocks—Odessa itself well deserves the name "*Euxinus*." A fine breakwater protects the harbour from the rude easterly gales; there are four good masonry moles, well-paved, and fitted with grain elevators and shoots, for the use of steamers trading to the port; a large new harbour has been built within recent years for the trade in naphtha; and sailing vessels find excellent anchorage in the inner roads.

The ice only interrupts navigation for sixteen days, on an average, every year. This is an important point for Russia, for even before the loss of her Baltic provinces by German decree this year she had none too much seaboard for the requirements of her vast territory, and Cronstadt, the port of St. Petersburg, is blocked with ice for five months out of the twelve.

Catherine and her soldier-builders must have had eyes for the picturesque when they chose the site for the new town. Odessa is a city "set on a hill"—or, to speak more correctly, on steep cliffs from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet above the sea. The white, oblong cluster of houses, churches, museums and warehouses looks something like an old Roman amphitheatre, perched on the top of its precipitous crags. A flight of two hundred steps leads from the beach to the centre of the town, and it is worth while to ascend these, if only for the sake of the view of the harbour below and the strong sea breezes.

Have you ever read descriptions of the Palace of the Shah Nasr-ed-Din of Persia, at Teheran—of the magnificent rooms in which jewels worth a king's ransom, and cheap steel and glass trinkets from Birmingham, magnificent works of art and prints cut from French and English papers, were huddled indiscriminately together?

Well, the city of Odessa calls these to mind. Its streets are broad, straight, and carefully arranged at right angles to each other; but they are so badly paved that in winter they are always dirty; in summer, always filled with choking, chalky dust. It boasts some really handsome buildings; but not very far from them are the squalid dwellings of people who, in a city which used to supply the nations of the world with bread, scarcely know where to turn for their next crust.



THE HARBOUR OF ODESSA.

"Don't poverty and wealth rub shoulders in London as well?" I can fancy some of you asking. True, "the poor we have always with us"; but in Odessa the contrast is so marked that writers have noticed it as one of the striking features of the town.

Numbers of Jews live here. Some are wealthy, but many of them are abjectly poor. Peter the Great once refused to allow members of their race to enter his realm, remarking jocularly that he did it for their own good—his Russians were so sharp that they would be sure to outwit the new-comers. There may have been a grain of truth in this jest; at all events, the lot of the poor Jew in Russia is not one to be envied.

It is said that Russia includes over a hundred different races, each having a distinct language of its own; and some very queer people from remote corners of the Empire are usually to be found in the streets and squares of this city.

Coal, iron, machinery, tobacco, tea, coffee, and manufactured goods of different kinds are, or were, the chief imports of Odessa; its exports are linseed, wool, cattle, tallow, and, of course, grain.

Its palmiest days were those when Alexander I., the monarch who was on the throne at the time of Napoleon's invasion, was Tsar of All the Russias; in 1804 he granted it many privileges, and, thirteen years later, made it a free port. Even in recent years, settlers in the country round Odessa have been granted a house, a yoke of oxen, a plough, a little money, and exemption from all taxes and military service during twenty-five years.

Like North Hindostan, Central and Southern Russia is wonderfully fertile. In a district as large as France and Austria put together, the soil is composed entirely of decayed vegetable matter, to the depth of from three to six feet. This is known as the "Black Earth Zone." It is a region that Germany may well desire to exploit. What a magnificent cornfield it would make, if all were under cultivation! As it is, Odessa was in the habit, until the war, of sending away about seven million pounds' worth of grain annually; and of this Great Britain took the lion's share.

In selecting a site for Odessa, the Empress Catherine tried to "kill two birds with one stone,"

by building the new port between two rivers, the Dnieper and the Dniester, the estuaries of both of which present many obstacles to navigation. Much of the corn is grown along their banks, and, after the harvest, it is sent down the river as far as possible, and then carried across the steppes in carts, or packed into railway trucks at Bendery, on the Lower Dniester, and so despatched to the port.

But how do the people manage who live in out-of-the-way parts, many weary versts from rivers and railways?

Well, the Russian peasant is a merry, light-hearted fellow, looking on life through the eyes of a big child; and as soon as the sickle has done its ugly work, and left the fields bare save for the stubble, he begins to think of his annual trip to the sea.

At last the day arrives when the grain is ready; good-byes are said to wife and children; a final prayer muttered before the "ikon," or painted image of Virgin or saint, in the corner of his hut, and our villager joins the party of friends with whom he proposes to travel.

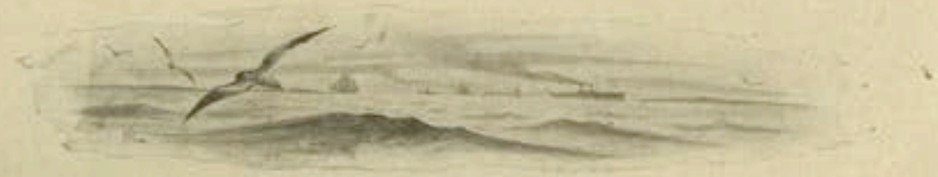
The corn is carried in little carts or waggons, each of which holds five "chetwerts," or three and a half bushels, and is drawn by shambling oxen: and, if the weather be favourable, our friend has an excellent time.

During the daylight hours they travel slowly southwards, now through field after field of brown stubble; now across patches of forest land; now over verst after verst of desolate steppe. Sometimes they pass through little villages, where they are joined by new friends; occasionally they may exchange greetings with herdsmen watching their cattle on the steppes, grey-coated soldiers tramping townwards, or uniformed officials rattling past in clumsy wooden tarantasses; but often, for mile after mile, they see no signs of human beings.

When night falls, a halt is made, and, while the oxen are grazing on the coarse grass, the men build up a barricade of waggons, and, sheltered from the wind, make tea in their "samovars," eat their evening meal, and, before they "turn in," spend an hour or so over the camp fire, either singing or telling each other weird legends of steppe, tundra, and forest.

At last, Odessa is reached, and the sacks of grain are flung into vessels waiting in the harbour

How far the expectations of the Germans of getting hold of this vast supply of Russian grain will be realised, or whether after nearly four years of war the supposed vast supply has dwindled greatly, as some experts aver, time alone can show. These words are written in the spring of 1918. But that so rich a region should pass under German control and so great a seaport as Odessa remain in her hands, is a disaster which we must all hope will be ere long retrieved.



A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA DEPTHS.

A SUBMARINE COMMANDER'S SELF-SACRIFICE.

A THRILLING story was narrated in the *London Gazette* for April 23 last. It told of the rescue of the crew of a submarine from the bottom of the sea, and announced the award of the Albert Medal in gold to the dead hero who figured in the episode—Commander Francis H. Goodhart, D.S.O., R.N.

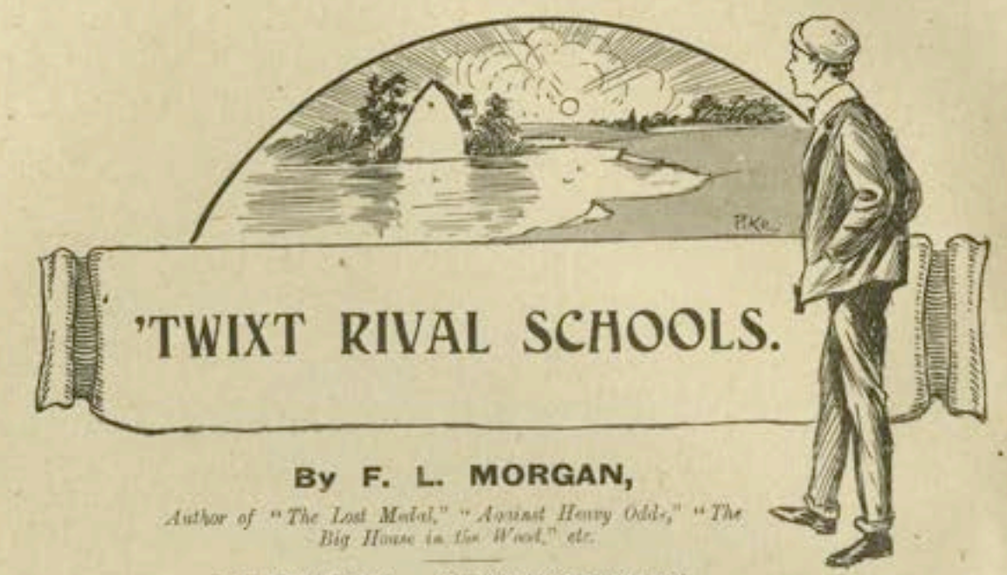
The story ran as follows:—"Owing to an accident, the submarine became fast on the bottom in 38 feet of water, parts of the vessel becoming flooded. After several hours the only prospect of saving those remaining on board appeared to be for someone to escape from the submarine in order to concert measures with the rescuers, who were by this time present on the surface.

"Commander Goodhart, after consultation with the commanding officer, volunteered to make the attempt. After placing in his belt a tin cylinder with instructions for the rescuers, he went into the conning tower with the commanding officer. The conning tower was flooded up to their waists, and the high-pressure air was turned on; the clips of the conning tower were knocked off and the conning tower lid was soon wide open.

"Commander Goodhart then stood up in the dome, took a deep breath, and made his escape, but, unfortunately, was blown by the pressure of air against part of the superstructure, and was killed by the force of the blow.

"The commanding officer, whose intention it had been to return inside the submarine after Commander Goodhart's escape, was involuntarily forced to the surface by the air pressure, and it was thus rendered possible for the plans for rescuing those still inside the submarine to be carried out.

"Commander Goodhart displayed extreme and heroic daring in attempting to escape from the submarine in order to save the lives of those remaining on board, and thoroughly realised the forlorn nature of his act. His last remark to the commanding officer was: 'If I don't get up, the tin cylinder will.'"



'TWIXT RIVAL SCHOOLS.

By F. L. MORGAN,

Author of "The Lost Medal," "Against Heavy Odds," "The Big House in the West," etc.

CHAPTER XIV.—*AN UGLY SUSPICION.*

"EAVES, tell us exactly what he said!" At least half a dozen voices joined in the entreaty.

"Well, I've told you about fifty times what he said," replied Eaves, a large and rather unprepossessing youth belonging to the fourth form.

The junior day-room was well filled, for the afternoon had been wet, and the tea bell was expected every moment.

"I should have thought you'd got something better to do, Eaves, than stop listening to that sort of rot," said Chalmers, indignantly. "Or, anyhow, you ought to have pushed the face in of the Red kid that said it!"

"Suppose you mind your own business, young Chalmers, unless you want your own face pushed in! Besides, how am I to know that the Redlands chap wasn't speaking the truth!"

Expressions of amazement mingled with indignation spread over the faces of the juniors, and Chalmers laughed scornfully. "What rot!" he said.

Eaves grew angrily red beneath his rather unfortunate complexion. "Well," he said, defiantly, "did anybody here ever *see* young Lynwood when he was hunting for shells!"

There was an arresting sort of silence, for the simple reason that nobody present had ever seen anything of the kind.

Eaves, noting his advantage, stuck his hands in his pockets and sauntered towards the middle of the room. "Or, did any of you kids know anything about his precious collection until he suddenly produced it quite complete!"

There was another silence, everybody remembering the extraordinary secrecy which had surrounded the collection of Lynwood Secundus. Then Chalmers, with a courage unusual in him, for Eaves was large and powerful, again protested.

"Shut up Eaves, for goodness sake!" he exclaimed. "If what you say were true, wouldn't Uncle Saville have had something to say in the matter!"

Eaves hoisted himself on to a corner of the table before replying. "I don't know so much about that. He may have reasons for keeping quiet about it—for a time, anyhow."

"Eaves, do you believe it's really true, then!" A small junior, interrupting, breathlessly voiced the question that was reflected on almost every face. Even Chalmers waited, with unconcealed anxiety, for the answer.

Eaves laughed affectedly. He saw and was thoroughly enjoying the sensation he had caused. He was a blundering, backward youth, not popular nor of very good repute, but with a certain influence amongst the younger boys on account of his size and physical strength. He had certainly not believed the rumour from Redlands concerning Lynwood Secundus, but he was willing to sacrifice truth in order to keep public interest centred in himself. Christopher's reputation or the right or wrong of the case mattered nothing at all to Eaves. He rarely had the pleasure, as now, of seeing an assembly of his fellow creatures hanging interestedly and almost breathlessly on his every word.

"You may be sure," said he, with an air of considerable self-importance, "that a queer yarn like that has something queer behind it. That Redlands kid declared absolutely on his solemn oath that it was true, and that old Saville discovered it himself when he found his own shells missing from his museum. Of course it's a disgusting thing really, and when it all comes out Lynwood Secundus will most likely be expelled!"

It was at this moment that the door opened to admit Bates, followed by Lynwood Secundus.

"Hallo," said Bates, the acknowledged cock o' the walk

in the junior school, noting something unusual in the general attitude of the room, "what's the matter with you kids? You look like a lot of paralysed lunatics!"

"Thanks," replied Eaves, anxious to keep himself in the foreground. "Perhaps it was the sudden appearance of a kid like your friend there that upset us!"

Lynwood Secundus, who had taken little notice of what passed, except to throw a glance of distaste at the ungainly Eaves, went up to the table and put thereon a book that he had just fetched from the school library. Eaves unfortunately caught the look, which was the replica of one he had but recently received from Lynwood Primus—thrown at him gratuitously from the head of the stairs that very morning. He could not revenge himself on the great Lynwood, but Christopher was a different matter. He slid off the table and grasped the junior by the arm—hard.

"Beastly little sneak-thief!" he said with a twist of the arm he held.

"Shut up, Eaves!" protested Lynwood Secundus, shrilly. "You're hurting!"

With a final twist, Eaves loosened his hold and turned to the rest of the room. "Shall we make the little cad tell where he got the shells from, you kids?"

The juniors fidgeted uncomfortably, and Christopher, rubbing his arm, faced Eaves with an expression of extreme dislike. Bates looked from one to the other and round at the faces of the rest, which showed eagerness, embarrassment, a little shame, and considerable curiosity.

"Whatever is up?" asked Bates, who, more than Christopher, seemed to realise that something unusual was afoot. "Can't you speak plainly, some of you?"

"I'll tell you," said Eaves, silkily. "It's about time it came out, seeing it's all over Redlands. But first we'll put Lynwood Secundus where he can be seen!"

Christopher was forced to sit up on the table by Eaves. The junior had said nothing up to now, realising his powerlessness in the hands of a bully. But he noted with considerable mystification the atmosphere of aloofness towards himself that seemed to pervade the day-room. He was soon to be enlightened.

Eaves, striking an attitude in order to focus attention on himself, repeated in flowery language and with many personal comments, the story that had been told to him the previous afternoon by a junior from Redlands.

Lynwood Secundus, after one short exclamation of startled protest, listened to the end in absolute silence, his straight brows settling down into a heavy frown and a queer little twist in his lip.

Directly the fourth-form boy stopped speaking, Christopher turned on him a look of contempt. "Finished, Eaves? Well, then I've only got one thing to say to you—you're a liar!"

Eaves promptly knocked him off the table, and the tea-bell clanged imperiously at the same moment. The juniors surged forward, Bates hustling Christopher to the fore, well out of the way of Eaves, who was still uttering threats against him. The general attitude of the juniors appeared to be one of reserved judgment, which Christopher, in spite of his dazed feelings, very clearly realised.

"It'll be all right, Lynwood Secundus," whispered Bates, towards the end of tea-time. "All you need do is to tell them a bit more how you found your collection and where you kept it—and p'raps go and find one or two more shells like your others!"

Lynwood Secundus stiffened perceptibly. "There is absolutely nothing to tell about it," he said with dignity. "I found the shells on the sands, as you all know—and as for getting some more, I've been to look several times and there don't seem to be any more like them!"

Bates answered nothing, but the look he turned upon Christopher was a long one, full of a strange, unwilling sort of doubt.

CHAPTER XV.—*CHRISTOPHER GETS SEVERAL SHOCKS.*

MR. SAVILLE had just finished his evening meal, which was a compromise between dinner and tea and occurred at six o'clock. He dined late only when he had guests.

Although he lived alone, save for the middle-aged couple that attended to his material comfort, he was not by any means a lonely man. He was as happy, in his solitary state, as his nature would have permitted him to be in any circumstances. But for some little time Mr. Saville had been suffering from severe depression, which dated from the day that his friend Martin had made the terrible discovery about the collection of shells.

Ringing for his housekeeper to come and clear the table, he chose a cigar from a cabinet and, with a long and heavy sigh, took it into the garden to smoke. As he walked down the path he saw a Storr Cross boy coming at a quick pace up the hill. The boy turned towards the gate of the Bungalow and, with a quick throb of relief and gratitude, Mr. Saville recognised Lynwood Secundus.

His relief and gratitude were accounted for by the fact that he had not the slightest doubt about the nature of Christopher's errand. He was certain the boy had come to make the confession for which Mr. Saville had so earnestly and patiently waited. He hurried to the gate and met Christopher there.

"Come in, my boy, come in," he said, with a grave gentleness befitting the occasion.

Christopher raised his cap and came in. He looked troubled and was distinctly warm, having hurried very much.

"I wanted to speak to you, sir," he commenced, quickly,

lest his courage should cool before he had got well into his subject.

"I know," said Mr. Saville, taking him by the arm and leading him into the house to a cool, dim room called the lounge. "I know all about it, my dear lad, and I honour you for coming to me, I do indeed."

Christopher looked slightly puzzled. "Have you heard, sir? It's about the—my collection."

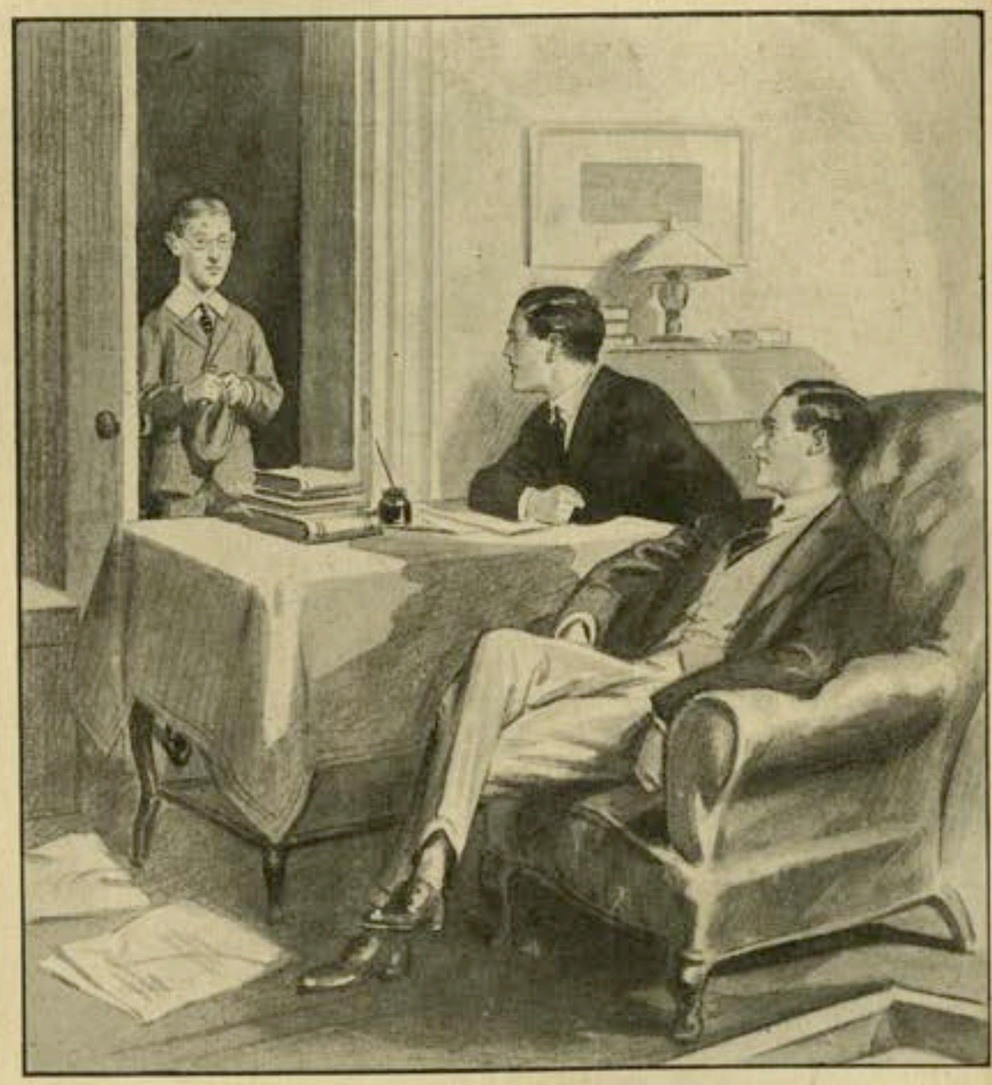
"Yes, yes, I discovered it some time back, Lynwood. But I hoped—I knew you would come to me of your own free will!"

Christopher's breath came rather short. "Discovered what, Mr. Saville?"

Mr. Saville replied slowly and gravely, but with one hand outstretched to reassure his listener. "That your collection was not genuine, my poor boy, and that the shells had actually been removed from a case belonging to myself—oh, Lynwood, what a grievous thing!"

Every scrap of colour had drained out of the junior's face and he got up out of his chair. "I never knew you had any shells, sir," he said swiftly, "I found all mine down on the sands——"

"Hush, Lynwood, think!"



"GREAT CÆSAR!" SAID MACMILLAN. "WHAT NEXT, I WONDER?"

said Mr. Saville, in a quiet, pleading voice. "What, then, did you come to me for this evening?"

"Only to ask you," replied the junior, still swiftly. "I—I heard a yarn to-day, and I

wanted to know for certain that everything was all right. I didn't really suppose—but anyhow, sir, you don't think I *stole* your or anybody's shells!"

Mr. Saville rose also, and at the solemn, grieved look on his face Christopher seemed to feel something freeze inside him.

"Come with me," he said, leading the way to the museum.

In the ordinary way Christopher would have revelled in the many wonderful and interesting things to be seen in this fascinating room, but now his eye and mind perceived only the broken glass case with rifled contents and the gaps in which his own shells most certainly belonged. He felt almost as dazed by the sight as by the fact that Mr. Saville believed him to be a thief.

"You see," said Mr. Saville, after explaining that such shells were not to be found in their natural state in England at all, and speaking more sternly than he had yet done, "What is the use of further denial?"

"I've never been in this house before," said Christopher, doggedly. "I found my shells down on the sands, two or three at a time, and once I found four——" he stopped abruptly, a sudden thought turning him cold from head to foot. A suspicion, a horrible, unthinkable suspicion was knocking at the door of his mind. And being muddled and disturbed by the extraordinary turn events had taken, Christopher opened the door of his mind and let in that suspicion.

Mr. Saville led the way into the other room again, talking all the time. "I shall do nothing in the matter at present. It is just between you and me and your conscience, Lynwood"—how fervently Christopher wished it could have been! "I feel that you will think things over and then come to me again. May your young heart be softened, my poor lad!"

The junior scarcely heard. He left the Bungalow in a state of utter mental confusion. He had had several severe shocks that afternoon, not the least of which had been the readiness with which people seemed to believe him capable of both meanness and dishonesty.

And then had come that awful thought. That the shells belonged to Mr. Saville he no longer doubted, but how had they got down to the sands of the Secret Cave Coombe? Someone must have put them there for him to find—*for him to find*.

A vision of a slim little figure clothed in a cotton frock and mackintosh paddlers rose vividly before his mind's eye, and a thousand little forgotten incidents connected with the finding of the shells suddenly became significant and invaded his memory with little stabs of fear.

Christopher was nearly thirteen years old, and the tears that he dashed away from his eyes as he turned blindly down the hill would not have come there on his own account. Deciding that, in any case, the Pewk must be shielded—she was such a little kid—he squared his shoulders, resolved, if possible, to stop all further investigation with regard to the shells, and to bear himself the burden of anything that might come along.

He little dreamed, as he turned into Storr Cross just in time for junior lock-up, of the immense and complicated difficulties that lay in his path.

CHAPTER XVI.—*CONSIDERABLE UNPLEASANTNESS.*

EARLY the following afternoon a thin, solemn-faced youth, wearing glasses and a Redlands cap, apparently unconscious of the frightful risks he ran, walked sedately up to a group of juniors just within the Storr Cross gates and asked civilly and expectantly for the Captain.

"What!" said Thornton of the Storr Cross lower fourth, eyeing the stranger with distinct suspicion and his cap with positive truculence.

"Can I see the Captain of the school, please, on important business!"

The juniors looked at one another in silence. The polite insistence of the strange visitant was not to be denied. What seemed to them most surprising was that this odd-looking visitor appeared not to know that he was in a hostile country fraught with dangers unspeakable to anyone wearing that cap.

"We haven't got a school captain," replied Thornton, at length. "Macmillan is captain of the first eleven—would he do?"

The visitor, on reflection, thought that he would.

"Go right on up, then," said Thornton, impressed, as were all those present, by the remarkable coolness as well as the simple earnestness of the inquirer. "See that biggest building—he's in there. Ask for Macmillan. And if you really want to get right in, I should advise you to put that cap out of sight—we don't consider it pretty in these parts!"

The thin and bespectacled one, who was about fourteen years of age, thanked Thornton politely and immediately acted on the advice just given. He then took the direction indicated and inquired of another junior outside the house for Macmillan.

"Macmillan!" replied Bolingbroke, gazing comprehensively at the capless stranger, and deeming him some new boy who had been shot into Storr Cross in the middle of the term—which not infrequently happened. "Well, his study is No. 1 on the first floor—go up and knock."

It was characteristic of the visitor that as soon as he was indoors he took his cap from his pocket and placed it on his head. And when, in answer to his knock, Macmillan roared "Come in!" and he went in, great indeed was the amazement of Lynwood and Macmillan to behold a youth from Redlands modestly standing in their doorway.

"Great Cæsar!" said Macmillan. "What next, I wonder!"

"Are you Macmillan, the Captain?" asked the visitor, in his simple way, gazing from one to the other of the two seniors.

"Well, I'm Macmillan all right, and I'm captain of some things, and this man here taking his afternoon nap in the armchair is captain of others. What do you want? And how did you get in here?"

"I am Wade, of Redlands, and I want to speak to you privately," said the newcomer.

"Indeed! Well, you can spit it out quite safely in front of this friend of mine," replied Macmillan, stooping to lace up his white cricket boots.

Lynwood, who had turned his head languidly to look at the newcomer, now closed his eyes with every appearance of extreme fatigue.

"I am sorry," went on the visitor, showing signs of nervousness for the first time, "to trouble you. But my name is Wade——"

"I know that much," interrupted Macmillan, "of Redlands. How did you get in here?"

Wade moistened his lips, fingered his glasses, and finally, taking his cap from his head, gripped it in both hands. He seemed to experience considerable difficulty in stating his case.

"Nobody knows I am here," he said, "I came entirely of my own accord. I am Wade ——"

"My hat, kid, we *know* you're Wade!" said Macmillan, suddenly losing patience. "What, in the name of the Great Salt Lake, do you want?"

Wade palpitated nervously at the cricket captain's tones. But he recovered himself and made a mighty and successful effort to explain further. In one simple sentence he secured unto himself all (and more) than he desired—the sudden arrested attention of Macmillan.

"I've come because I was second in the Collections Competition, with rock plants," he said.

Lynwood never moved, but his eyes opened wide and fixed themselves steadily on the visitor, who began visibly to perspire.

"Well, what about it?" asked Macmillan, quietly, after an almost imperceptible pause.

Wade breathed more easily, and, with a courage worthy of note, came direct to his point. "I—all of us think that the winning collection made by a chap here named Lynwood Secundus is—was not fairly come by."

"Well, why don't you go to Saville?" inquired Lynwood, crisply, opening his mouth for the first time.

Wade started and turned his mild gaze towards the senior who had just spoken and who, in spite of his lazy attitude, seemed to him to have an expression of extraordinary fierceness.

"I have been," he replied, simply. "But Mr. Saville, though he can't deny that his shells were stolen and that there's a mystery, says he cannot do or say anything in the matter at present."

At this point Lynwood sat up straight, and looked so dangerous that Macmillan interposed quickly. "Look here; I understand, Wade, that you've come—though why to us I cannot imagine—to lodge a foul against the winner of the competition, and if he's disqualified you wish to claim the prize. Is that it?"

"That's it," replied Wade, of Redlands. "It's not only the prize, which, being a microscope, wouldn't interest me much, as I wanted a set of tools, but it's the honour and that for Redlands——"

"Exactly," said Macmillan, dryly. "We quite understand! Well, are you willing to leave this matter with us for the present?"

"Oh, quite," returned Wade, earnestly. "There's no hurry, and thank you very much!"

"Not at all," replied Macmillan. "Good afternoon—and may you get out as easily and safely as you got in!"

Wade thanked him again and departed.

"Rather a quaint specimen that kid from Redlands," said Macmillan, with a grin, wishing to discuss the subject pleasantly and ignoring the inward promptings that advised him to leave it alone. He and Lynwood were walking towards the field five minutes after Wade's departure.

Lynwood, who, up till now, had silently refused to be drawn into conversation, turned unsmilingly to his chum. "I think you ought to have sent him about his business, Mac, and not listened to him!"

Macmillan was silent for a moment. Then he said decidedly: "It's no use you getting rattled about it, Lynwood. There's evidently something needs clearing up, and if you've no objection I'm going to speak to your young brother at the first opportunity."

Lynwood stopped abruptly, an expression of extreme irritation on his face. He opened his mouth to speak, but, changing his mind, closed it again and walked on in silence. Macmillan glanced once or twice at his chum, but said nothing. Just by the gate which led into the senior field Lynwood stopped again.

"Where there's dirty work afoot," he said, with a peculiar inflection in his voice, "there's no time like the present. I can see Lynwood Secundus on ahead. Hi, Christopher!"

Macmillan seemed annoyed. "Lynwood," he said, "I know you're in a bate over this, but I've no wish to have any trouble with the kid; I only——"

"That's all right," interrupted Lynwood. "You shall have it all to yourself—I'll not speak a word!"

Christopher, hearing Jim's call, came running at full speed. He found Macmillan looking a trifle disturbed, and on the face of his brother was the nearest thing to a heavy scowl that can be accomplished by the Lynwood cast of features. Taking it to be directed against himself, the junior's heart sank, and he stood, almost sullenly, waiting for one of the seniors to speak.

Macmillan, feeling distinctly resentful at having the situation, by no means a pleasant one, forced upon him, came direct to his point, speaking in as agreeable a voice as he could command. "I want to know more about those shells, kid. Where did you get them from?"

At the mention of the word shells Lynwood Secundus changed colour, and a look of distinct apprehension came into his eyes. However, he answered

steadily enough. "I found them on the sands in the—in Rocky Bay, Macmillan." He had been going to say the Secret Cave Coombe, but remembered in time that that name was known only to himself and the Pewk, whose name and very existence he had the strongest reasons for wishing to keep silent about.

Macmillan, seeing the change of colour, and noting the junior's hesitation, frowned, as he asked: "How was it that none of the other kids saw your collection while you were getting it together?"

"Because I kept it in a—a place away from the school, Macmillan."

"What place, kid?"

Christopher hesitated again. He looked over towards Jim, but got no help from the set face that stared across the fields. He didn't know that Jim was simply hard put to it to keep the promise he had made to say nothing during this interview. The junior suffered an agony of mind at that moment. Besides feeling that every word he uttered was implicating him still further, he had a sudden awful conviction that his brother believed him guilty of the peculiar low-down charges that were being made against him, and that thought was the worst of all, and the hardest to bear.

"Speak up!" said Macmillan, sharply.

"I can't tell you where, Macmillan—it's a secret I've promised not to give away," replied the junior, with a note of despair.

Macmillan paused. He was both puzzled and astonished at the unsatisfactory nature of Christopher's replies, and he was feeling very uncomfortable. In spite of himself doubts were already flooding his mind, and he would have given almost anything he possessed had Jim not been present.

However, having gone thus far, he made an effort to speak quite frankly and pleasantly, and said: "Now, look here, kid, there appears to be some kind of a mystery about those shells—and I only want to clear it up. Can you take me to the place where you found them and show me some more?"

"No, Macmillan," replied the junior, very low. "I—I've been to look heaps of times, but there aren't any more. But I found all those in my collection on the sands myself, Macmillan."

The cricket captain, sorely puzzled as to what to do or say next, glanced at Jim, who still had not moved his gaze from the fields. Getting no help, he decided not to investigate further in such extremely difficult circumstances, and turned to Christopher with an air of finality.

"Well," he said, coldly, "anyhow, kid, from what you've said, I gather that there's no one in this business but yourself!"

"Nobody at all, Macmillan," replied Lynwood Secundus with extraordinary earnestness.

Macmillan sighed sharply when the junior had gone on his way. "Hanged if I know what to make of it," he said, pushing his cap far back on the crown of his head. "What do you make of it, Lynwood?"

"Nothing," replied Lynwood, calmly, but with his hand tightly clenched on the top bar of the gate. "Except that I'm heartily sorry the kid isn't big enough to knock you down, Macmillan."

Macmillan shut his teeth, but said nothing. He understood better than anyone else the temper of his chum, and when silence was not only golden but absolutely necessary if peace was to be maintained. Lightly vaulting the gate, he went slowly across the field towards the nets, and a few moments later Lynwood followed, and the incident blew over, though a coolness remained.

CHAPTER XVII.—*JENNISON'S CLUE AND WHAT CAME OF IT.*

JENNISON, captain of Redlands cricket, was perfectly well aware that he was not only expected up in the field for practice, but also that Duty indicated quite clearly that he ought most certainly to be there, and in no other place, on this brilliantly fair day.

But Jennison had a great longing for the sea, and for the boat belonging to the aged man of his acquaintance. Therefore he made off exceedingly warily by himself, unceremoniously choking off the voice of Duty, and bent only on pleasing his fancy. Let it be said on his behalf that he did not do it often.

As he rowed leisurely round the bend making for the little bay where the rocks extended on either side, famous now as being understood to be the place where Lynwood Secundus had found his shells, Jennison was thinking fairly solidly about the peculiar rumours that were abroad in connection with those same shells. He knew the details pretty well. He was not only captain of Redlands cricket, but of the college as well, and he generally made it his business to know things. But he did wonder what Lynwood now thought about all this unpleasantness that circulated round about the head of his young brother.

Of course, Jennison realised that if Lynwood Secundus were disqualified, the honour and glory and the attendant prize would go to Redlands, but somehow he did not fancy it at such a cost to Storr Cross, and to Lynwood Primus. Since he and Lynwood had fought, Jennison had felt curiously drawn towards the Storr Cross prefect. Possibly he had been impressed by Lynwood's personality, which was both agreeable and compelling, and which, though he was at this time unconscious of it, stood him in good stead all his life through. Certain it was that Jennison was thinking a great deal about Lynwood during this time, and wishing he could discover a possible clue to the mystery of the shells, for Jennison did not doubt the integrity of Lynwood Secundus.

It was just as he was pulling in towards his favourite little bay that the illumination came to him. Perhaps it was the sight of the Pewk, playing on the sand with her back to the sea, that gave him the clue he had wished for; but as the Redlands captain jumped on to the shore and dragged his boat up, the explanation that he had been



WITH DESPATCHES. *Drawn by* SCOTT RANKIN.

seeking flashed into his mind so suddenly and so completely that he was almost dazzled by its clearness.

Resolved to make sure of his ground, he walked up to the small girl, and stood looking down at her as she patted into shape a wonderful castle made of sand and ornamented with pebbles and seaweed.

"Hallo," said Jennison.

The small girl gave him one glance, which indicated distinctly that she was not entirely inclined towards the pleasure of his acquaintance.

"That's a jolly sand-castle," said Jennison, beguilingly.

The Pewk rose to her feet and surveyed her handiwork with satisfaction, but said nothing, only glanced at him again, rather shyly.

Jennison shifted his ground. "Perhaps you don't remember me," he said pleasantly. "You spoke to me that day when you were hiding something you didn't want me to see. Shall I guess what it was you were hiding?"

The small girl faced him now, with her hands behind her back, and her eyes on his face.

"You must excuse me," she said politely, "if I don't 'ticularly want to talk to you, but, you see, I belong to Storr Cross!"

Jennison forbore to laugh. "I see," he replied, leading up to his point with a simple directness that completely disarmed the Pewk. "Then that was why you helped young Lynwood with his collection, was it?"

His voice was so ordinary and matter-of-fact that the Pewk showed no signs of being startled, but accepted his peculiar knowledge of what she had hitherto believed to be an absolute secret without surprise. She even smiled as she walked into the trap that had been so openly set.

"Ah," she said, gazing up at Jennison and shaking her flaxen head, "but he didn't know I helped him!"

"No," replied Jennison rather gravely, seeing more and more daylight. "But he's got rather into trouble over it. You see, it has been discovered that his shells could not have been found here, because they are not the right kind, and so people are wondering where young Lynwood got them from, and making it jolly unpleasant for him." The Redlands captain stopped, finding himself unable to mention the fact that the theft of the shells from Mr. Saville's museum had also been discovered.

The Pewk listened intently to this long speech, and her lip quivered pitifully. But she controlled it, and faced the Redlands captain bravely, and Jennison found himself wondering if it were possible for anybody with such a clear and candid pair of eyes, and such an absolutely innocent expression, to have sneaked old Saville's shells.

The Pewk never dropped her eyes from his face. "I knew it was wrong," she said, with a catch in her clear little voice. "What—what must I do, please?"

"Well, I think if you were to tell young Lynwood how you—" Jennison hesitated a moment over the same difficulty as before—"how you helped him with his collection, it would be the best thing." The Redlands captain had forgotten the Pewk's tender years, and was speaking as to one of his own age.

And the Pewk, rising to the confidence reposed in her, as quite young children often will, replied gravely, "All right, then, I'll tell him."

When Jennison had gone the small girl hid her face for a few moments and cried. Christopher had not been near the sands or to the Secret Cave for some time, not, indeed, since he had called at the Bungalow, and had learnt the unpleasant truth, or part of it anyhow, concerning the mystery surrounding his shells. So the Pewk had no hopes of his coming down to her. And she felt that her courage might not be equal to the strain of waiting. What she had promised to do must be done at once. Not even an hour must be lost, for she knew that early to-morrow she was going away from Storr Cross with her mother on a visit lasting over several days.

With a little sigh she wriggled out of her paddlers, shook out her short skirts, and put on her shoes.

Every now and again her eyes filled with tears as she plodded up the little red path which seemed extra steep and of an unusual length, but she blinked them bravely away, resolved to do her best towards righting the wrong she had done to Christopher.

(*Continued on page* 182.)

AN EEL AS A PET.

STRANGE creatures have been chosen as pets, we all know. Some have been so small, or so shy, or so intractable that it has been a wonder to everybody else why such a pet should be selected.

Of all creatures, fishes as pets have always seemed to me the least attractive, but some people, I know, think otherwise.

Until lately I must confess that I never heard of anyone making a pet of an eel. Yet in the *Spectator*, last March, I read a most interesting reminiscence, signed by E. O. Bray, which I think the boys of this Annual would like to read.

"At my old home, Bury Hill, Dorking," says the writer, "there is an artificial lake of about eighteen acres. I and my sisters had an old nurse who had been in the Barclay family for over forty years, and who had a wonderful power with all animals. We were allowed to keep in our nursery almost any animal *ad lib.* — hedgehogs, dormice, squirrels. We daily fed the ducks, swans, and geese on the lake at a shallow place, and they came at our call and ate out of our hands.

"One morning, to our intense surprise, a black eel put its head out and began to eat the bread we had thrown in the water. Old Rich, the nurse, immediately began to feed it, and it ate out of her hand without any fear, and used to come daily to be fed with the ducks.

"One day an uncle (whom I fear we never forgave) caught our eel, and doubtless ate it, as was often done with the eels in this particular lake."

"AN ORPHAN LADDIE."

A HIGHLAND STORY.

By Lieutenant-Colonel JOHN MACGREGOR,
Author of "Through the Buffer State," "The Girdle of the Globe," etc.

"MITHER," said little Archie, a lad of twelve, "shall I nae be ganging to Kreggan to-day?"

"What for, *mo leanibh* [my child], will ye be ganging to Kreggan?" replied the mother. "It is wild that the weather is to be ganging sae far awa' frae hame."

"For the letter frae Dûnnacha, mither. It is to-day that Angus Breck [Freckled Angus] will be coming wi' his bag frae Inverewe."

"Mony is the day, *mo leanibh*, will Angus Breck be coming wi' his bag afore he will be bringing a letter from Dûnnacha, for it is afeared that I am that we shall not be getting a letter frae Dûnnacha any more," and the tears came into her eyes at the memory of her sailor son.

She had every reason to feel anxious about him. His ship had been long overdue from Calcutta, and his poor widowed mother, whose only support he was, had gradually abandoned all hope of his safety.

It was in the olden days, though not so very long ago either, when letters from the south reached Kreggan at rare intervals, and no news reached Glenmore at all, except when called for at the Kreggan post-office, thirteen long miles away across the barren moor.

Many, therefore, were the weary waitings for Angus Breck and his waterproof canvas bag, and many the sad homeward journeys throughout the shortening days of winter. And now it was after Christmas, with never a word concerning the fate of the missing *Dunara*. She had long ago been posted at Lloyd's; though of that significant sign poor Widow Marion Murchy had no knowledge, nor would she have understood, in any case.

"But I shall be going, mither, wi' yer leave; for it is sure that I am there will be a letter from Dûnnacha in Angus Breck's bag when he comes from Inverewe."

"It is too sure you are sae often, Archie, without Dûnnacha's letter comin', to be sae sure you will be goin' to get one just now."

"Last nicht, mither, it was dreamin' of Dûnnacha I was, and he was comin' to thae door, and it was weepin' you was when he met you."

"Weepin' it is that I am for long now, *mo leanibh*; but gin Dûnnacha would be comin' back, I would be for weepin' no more."

And so Archie, with his mother's blessing, and a bannock of barley in his pocket, left the humble cottage in search of the letter from Dûnnacha that was so long of coming. Fleet of foot and hardy for his age, with his shoes slung over his arm to expedite his journey, he betook himself to the bridle path across the moor with an eager step and hopeful heart.

Stormy indeed it was, as his mother had said, with the cold, dreary wind blowing from the north, over the uplands of Naver. It was not the first stormy day, though, on which Archie had been going on the same willing, though fruitless errand. Seldom had Angus Breck reached Kreggan of late, with his bag slung over his shoulders, without young Archie being there to meet him, in hopes of getting any news of the *Dunara*. Moreover, the wind, biting and cold though it was, blew in the direction he was going, and only helped Archie to get on the faster.

There was a spate in Kearna, the mountain stream, which, however, did not much impede the progress of the messenger. Was he not familiar with every boulder in the ford, and had he not often and often crossed it before, leaping from stone to stone, on occasions of greater spate than this one? Yet he had a long journey in front of him before he could turn back, and the daylight was short at that season, so he loitered not on the way.

"Is Angus Breck after coming?" was his first inquiry of Mr. Morrison, the postmaster, on reaching the office, which served the double purpose of a small grocer's shop and the safe custody of Her Majesty's mails.

"Angus Breck came early this morning. Come ben, callant," the postmaster replied kindly. "You're verra weet. Come, ben, and dry yoursel' afore the fire. Ma conscience, you hae nae come frae Glenmore on sic a day as this, sure?"

Archie took off his bonnet, and shook it briskly. It was quite soaked with the rain, and a spray proceeded from it with each swish that would have done credit to the watering-pot of the laird's flower-garden. Then, after twisting it between his hands till the water dripped in a stream on the clay floor of the shop, he again cocked it sideways on the top of his head. Fingal, his faithful collie, that was sure to be at his master's heels wherever he went, meantime shook himself after his own fashion.

"I canna bide, thank ye, Mishtir Morrison," the boy said, "the nicht will soon fa', and it's gay deeficult to haud the way back to Glenmore in the dark, ye ken."

With his face flushed by his walking exercise, wet though he was, he was as bonnie a bairn as the eye could rest upon, with his frank, open features that betokened the true mountaineer.

The postmaster, behind the counter, who was then busy balancing on the scales an ounce or two of tea and a pound of sugar to Morag Bhân, looked up, or, rather, down, at Archie (for h

was only a young callant), and then towards the four-paned shop window.

"It looks dour eneuch," he said. "It will be ganging to snaw, a'm thinkin', afore the nicht fa's."

"Mair reason for me to be up and awa', then, Mishtir Morrison," quoth the boy, in order to remind him that his errand was an urgent one.

"I'm nae so certain sure," Mr. Morrison replied, handing the groceries and the copper change over to Morag Bhân, "that there's ony letter for Glenmore this time at all. Angus Breck came early to-day, as his bag was sae licht; but I hae nae opened ony o' them yet, as naebody has called for them."

"Mishtir Morrison, then, gin ye'd look and see if there's ony for Glenmore. I would be muckle obleeged to ye."

"On ay, on ay," returned the man of letters (in the literal sense), "that's just what I'll do the nou, for thae maun be stampit afore thae leave the premises."

And, with the word, Mr. Morrison cut open the string that bound up the small parcel of letters for Kreggan, and began to deface them in due form, reading each of the addresses as he went along.

Tap goes the stamper on the grocery counter.

"Mistress Ewan Martin—a'm thinkin' it will be frae Murdoch, in the big bank at Oban. He's a gran' scholar, and will be up in Lunnon itself some day."

Tap. "Frae Canada"—looking at the post-mark—"to Maistair Roy. His brother is not yet deed, then."

Tap. "To myself, frae—a'm thinkin' it will be a bill for my last box o' sweeties frae Glasgee."

"I'm afeard, Archie, lad," he continued, as he was finishing the package in this odd fashion—"I'm afeard there's nae letter at a' for Glenmore this post—but stay—why, man, gosh me! the very last ane, tae, to think o' it, and to Widow Marion Murchy! It's nae frae furrin pairts, forbye."

Archie snapped at the letter as if his life depended on his agility. He was no scholar, poor lad. That was the fault of Providence, though, and not his, for he was quick-witted to a degree beyond his years.

"It's frae Dûnnacha! from Dûnnacha," he ejaculated, in his excitement, and tearing the letter open. "Look, see Mishtir Morrison, is that not the seegnature of Dûnnacha at the end?"

"Deed, that it is," replied Mr. Morrison, "and richt glad am I to say sae. He was aye a braw laddie, and vera mindfu' of his peur auld mither, forbye."

Archie tried to decipher the letter, but could only make out a word here and there. Mr. Morrison could have easily done so, but had no desire to pry into other people's concerns; nor did Archie himself make any proffers in that direction.

"Eneuch, eneuch!" he cried at last, "it's frae Dûnnacha, and peur auld mither will be longing to get the news, so I maun be ganging the nou, Mishtir Morrison, and mony thanks tae ye."

Mr. Morrison looked out again. It was beginning to snow hard, with thick white flakes driving past the window.

"It's too wild for you, callant, to mak way 'gainst the snawdrift ower the meur. Better stay the nicht wi' us, and ye'll sleep with Donald Gorm till the morrow's morn."

"I canna, I canna," replied the boy. "My peur auld mither will be waitin' for me, forbye I maun hurry home wi' the good news. Thank ye, Mishtir Morrison for a' that, and good-day to ye, sir."

He put the letter sacredly in his inside coat pocket; then, drawing his bonnet more tightly over his forehead, Archie and his dog, Fingal, took to the moors again on their way homeward.

It was not long before the blinding sleet and hail began to tell upon them, for now they were facing the wind, which was in their favour on their way to Kreegan. The ground became rapidly covered with snow, so that Archie found it harder and harder to find his way along the narrow bye-way, till he fell at last into a huge snowdrift exhausted and benumbed with cold.

Early next morning there was a great stir among the simple people of Glenmore, for Archie had never reached his destination, while his dog, Fingal, had come home, and was pulling at everybody's dress and yelping as if it had gone mad. But when he observed the searchers move in the right direction he wriggled his back and wagged his tail hopefully, saying, as plain as ever a tail could say:

"This is the way, friends; no time to be lost, or you will be too late."

Every trace of the bridle path, and even the steps of Fingal, had by this time been covered by the snowfall; while great, big heaps were to be found in every hollow and on the shaded side of every knoll.

"Guid save 's," said Callum Caird, the shepherd, as he stumbled on a dark object in the midst of the universal fall of snow. "Guid save 's, it's the corp of Archie!"

There he lay, with his hand still clasping the beloved letter to his heart, as if trying to keep it warm against the coldness of death, that was already freezing his own vitals.

"He hasna been vera lang deed, either," he added, "or the snaw would hae covered him a' ower. We'll carry the chiel to my *bohan* [shanty], and rub him till the doctor comes."

"Here's the doctor himsel', bless him!" cried Marion, in her agony. "He's aye at the ca' of the puir."

Dr. Lachlan, indeed, as soon as he heard of the news, had immediately proceeded after the others, for he knew only too well what was likely to have happened. But even his skill and perseverance could not avail; he could not revive the dead.

Within a week afterwards there was a knock at the door of Widow Marion's cottage. It was the knock of Dûnnacha. And as his mother, with open arms, welcomed him back again, it was weeping, indeed, she was, as Archie had dreamt the night before his fatal errand, for Archie himself, the brave, gallant lad, had, by this time, been buried in the solitary graveyard of Gearran-Cro.

THE BURIED RUBIES.

THE ADVENTURES OF TWO YOUNG ENGLISHMEN IN BURMAH.

CHAPTER III.—*IN DESPERATE PERIL.*

THE misery of that ride along the road to Mandalay our three friends never forgot.

The jolting was awful. Great stones lay scattered over the road, and when the more or less square wheels went over a bigger one than usual the shock almost dislocated their bones. Some time afterwards, when our Government sent Theebaw from his palace to the river in one of his own bullock carts, Ayres expressed the greatest satisfaction. The sufferings of that terrible ride were avenged.

The road was bordered by houses and monasteries, pagodas, gardens and orchards, the greater part of the way to the City proper, which latter comprised a square, protected by high walls, with a watch tower of wood at intervals.

Alighting from the horrible cart and crossing the moat, covered with beautiful lotus flowers, they entered the inner city, and approached the palace, guarded by a log stockade with turreted gateways, and beyond that by a wall of brick. Passing through the last barrier, the seven-roofed spire—proudly called the centre of Burmah—rose before them, with the Supreme Court and Hall of Audience, surrounded by gardens and pleasure houses.

Notwithstanding their painful progress, Ayres and Temple had been greatly interested, in their passage through the straggling outer town, chiefly by the people in the streets.

The groups of children amused them. Never before, not even in Rangoon, had they seen naked babies making mud-pies while sucking at cigars an inch thick and about eight inches long, big enough, as a writer has remarked, to be used by them as walking-sticks. Then the diversity of races was remarkable. The old trader pointed out tattooed Shans in baggy trousers of blue; a Kachyen chief, slight in figure and fierce-looking; nearly naked Chins, with their hair tied up in a knot over the forehead; Karenns in long embroidered garments; fat and waddling Chinamen; Moguls with beards dyed red and cunning eyes; and many other peoples, interspersed with shaven-headed monks in their yellow robes, squat but burly Burmans, and hordes of pigs and dogs.

On arriving at the Hall of Audience, the supposed Woongyee, who afterwards turned out to be the Myinthoo-gyee Woon, or "Master of the Horse," conducted them to a sort of vestibule, where he ordered them to take off their boots, an essential preliminary to an interview with the King.

Both Ayres and Temple objected to this, but the old trader laughed at them.

"What does it matter?" he said. "We shouldn't catch cold if we approached the Lord of the Golden Throne and all the rest of it barefoot. We want that pot of rubies, and if I am asked to sit on the floor I shall do it. It will be better than sitting in mud, which I have done to please myself many a time."

After that philosophical speech the rebels put their British pride in their pockets and did exactly as they were bidden.

When they had removed their boots, the resplendent officer led them to a long room, where the King sat on a throne of gold, or gilt, surrounded by his Woons, every one with a cigar in his mouth. At the distance of ten feet from His Golden Majesty the trader sat down on the floor, and Ayres and Temple promptly followed his example. Their conductor then presented the gifts they had brought, without which an audience could not be obtained.

Ayres has often declared that but for his clothes and jewels he would never have recognised the Golden Monarch in Theebaw. His features were mean and weak; in fact he looked precisely what he was—a miserable, henpecked, mother-in-law-ridden man.

Lying back in his gilded chair, he received the presents listlessly and muttered a few words; an officer stepped forward and agreed to the conditions mentioned in the trader's letter—viz., that, on the situation of the new mine having been pointed out, the Englishmen should be allowed to depart with the precious stones hidden in the monastery, and the audience was over. The Master of the Horse, who appeared to be Master of the Ceremonies also, then conducted them to a sort of summer-house in the Palace grounds, and told them they must remain there until the King's pleasure could be learned. Food was brought, and they made themselves at home.

"Hurrah," exclaimed Ayres, as soon as they were alone. "The rubies are ours!"

"Don't be too sure of that," said the old trader, gravely, and he led his companions to the square aperture which served as a window. Sentries, armed with muskets and dahs, had been posted. The building was surrounded by them.

"I don't know that we need be alarmed," the old trader went on. "Perhaps they are only making it impossible for us to get the rubies and clear off without guiding them to the mine."

"What course do you propose to take?" asked Ayres.

"Sit tight, just here, until we

have a document under the King's seal, which I shall hand over to the British Resident. Then we shall go for the rubies, and, if we get them, we must ask the Resident to take charge of those also. When we have made everything safe, I'll guide the King's officers to the mine."

"Do you think Theebaw will agree to that?" asked Temple.

"Not if he can help it," replied the old man. "But we shall see."

The sun went down. Attendants brought cushions and lamps, and our adventurers prepared to make themselves comfortable for the night.

Observing the trader reloading his revolver, Ayres and Temple did the same. They had arrived apparently unarmed, but each had a pistol in his hip pocket. The night, however, passed without incident.

Early next morning came the Master of the Horse, with two of the Woon-gyees, or Secretaries of State. The first-named made another speech, interpreted by the trader.

"The most glorious and famous Lord of the Celestial Elephant, and Lord of many White Elephants, Lord of the Heavenly Weapon, and Sovereign of the Whole World, commands his slaves to go forth and lead his officers to the Mine of Rubies."

Courteously—that is, with much Oriental hyperbole—the trader declined until he had a document under the King's seal.

The officers tried persuasion. Finding soft words of no avail, they began to threaten, and spoke of an appeal to the stocks, in which victims were hoisted to the roof of the torture chamber and left hanging by their ankles.

"If you do that," replied the trader firmly, "the Governor of British Burmah, who knows where we are and why we have come, will send his soldiers and bombard Mandalay. We demand to be taken to the British Resident."

But that did not suit the wily Burmans. Drawing aside, they talked in whispers for a little while, then went away. Shortly afterwards the trader, chancing to look out of the window, noticed with some concern that the sentries had been doubled.

"We shall have to be wary," he said, "and fight for it if they try to separate us. In case of a row, make for yonder flag." He pointed to the Union Jack, fluttering from a two-roofed house scarcely half a mile away. "That's the British Resident's," he went on. "I heard talk of withdrawing him at Rangoon. I hope they won't do it till we are safely out of this."

In about an hour the officials returned, bringing a document bearing the Royal seal and written in Pali. But Mr. Ridgeway had not traded with Burmah for nothing. He understood the characters.

"This is all right," he said. "And for that reason I reckon it's a very serious warning. If they thought we intended to hand it over to the British Resident, we never should have got it, you mark my words." Turning to the dignitaries, he signified that they were ready to set out for the ruined monastery.

All left the pleasure-house. Outside, a guard of twenty soldiers was drawn up. These fell in behind the Woons, who led the way towards the first gate. The white men walked side by side.

"Our route lies pretty near the Residency," said the trader, in a low tone, "and I'm going there at all risks. Keep together and follow me when I give the signal."

They marched on, crossed the moat, and so reached the outer town. When within a couple of hundred yards of the British flag Ridgeway suddenly halted, addressed a few words to the Burman officials, and before they had time to reply, set out at a brisk pace for the Residency, followed closely by Ayres and Temple. For a moment the Burmans stood as if undecided what to do, then they also followed, remonstrating volubly. Evidently the trader's prudent move was not in their programme.

Ridgeway entered the house alone. At the expiration of a few minutes he came back, smiling.

"Now we're moderately safe," he said. "Her Majesty's representative has taken charge of the document and promised to lock the rubies up in his safe—if ever we get them. He thinks that is a bit more than doubtful. But so far all is well."

Addressing the Woons, he then told them what he had done, and the reason. Judging by their angry looks, Ayres and Temple felt quite sure that it had disorganised their plans in some manner.

Leaving the town at length, they entered a dense forest of teak, cutch, ironwood, and other valuable timbers, interspersed with patches of bamboo jungle and elephant grass. The so-called path was so narrow and choked that it was necessary to march in single file, which they did for a time in the same order as when they started. After some six miles had been covered, the trader took the lead, with Ayres and Temple. So they reached the Pagoda, a prominent object in the landscape, indeed, and the ruined monastery, one of many in the neighbourhood.

"If the rubies are still there," said the trader, as they climbed the cone-shaped hill, "we shall have to be doubly on our guard from the moment they are in my possession. Have your pistols at hand, and be wary."

They entered by the shattered doorway. The stones strewn about the ground seemed to be part of a broken altar, or shrine. Ridgeway walked straight to the biggest, and with an effort turned it over.

"Close up!" he muttered, warningly.

The water-pot lay in the hole intact. Round it a network of split rattans had been interlaced, and to these was attached a shoulder-strap of the same material. Slipping the strap over his head, Ridgeway pulled the pot in front of him.

"Now we are ready to go back," he said.

The principal Woon-gyee stepped forward and asked him, civilly enough, to remove the cover.

"Not until we get to the British Resident's," was the reply. "Lead the way thither."

In an instant there was a hubbub. The officers vociferated in passion, declaring that the terms of the agreement should not be violated. The Englishmen had undertaken to guide them to the mine, and they

insisted upon being taken there without delay. But the trader stood firm, declining to do so until the precious stones had been duly deposited in a place of safety.

Then the Master of the Horse uttered an order, and the soldiers crowded round, handling their muskets threateningly.

"Back to back!" exclaimed the old trader, "and each cover a Woon."

The manœuvre was smartly executed. In an instant three shining barrels were pointing in three different directions.

"If you fire a shot," cried the trader above the uproar, "we shall drop a dozen of you, may be, and that won't leave many to deal with!"

The demeanour of the Woons changed. In obedience to a low order the soldiers lowered their muskets and left the building. The Master of the Horse pointed to the doorway.

"You may go," he said in English, which he had not before spoken.

"After you," replied the old trader, resolutely.

The imminent peril was over. Reluctantly the King's officers preceded them, and, descending the hill, entered the jungle path in rear of the soldiers, whom they presently overtook.

"Do you think they really mean to attack us?" asked Temple, as the Englishmen followed in single file.

"Aye," replied the old trader with great gravity. "They've shown their hands and their orders clearly—clearly. We're in desperate danger this minute, and shall be for the next three hours, if we live so long. But I fancy we'll circumvent 'em."

"What do you think their orders were?" said Ayres.

"To murder us as soon as we had guided them to the mine, and take the rubies."

"But if they kill us now they will have to find the mine themselves."

"It's likely they're as well acquainted with the mine as I am," replied the old man. "Ten years ago they knew the direction. I remember some of the ugly mugs of the rascals who took me before, and I tell you they're on ahead of us now. Besides, if they've never found the mine, they won't kill me till they've tried what torture will do."

An hour passed. More than half the distance to Mandalay had been covered, and they were approaching a narrow ravine which the path threaded. The Woons had fallen back some time before, and were walking leisurely twenty yards in front of our adventurers. The soldiers had gone on ahead, and were now out of sight, but their boisterous laughter could be heard distinctly. Suddenly it ceased. Except the rustling of the crowded bushes, there was no sound.

"As I feared; as I feared," muttered the trader, over his shoulder, to Temple. "The scoundrels have formed an ambush. They mean to shoot us down in that ravine. It's close ahead. Don't you recollect the rocks and bushes on both sides? They're most convenient."

"I remember," the young fellow whispered back. "What shall we do?"

"There's a chance, and only one. We're close there. Follow the Woons, quick! Grab your man, there's one apiece, and put your pistol to his head! Hold him as a hostage. Don't shoot, for the love of heaven, if you can help it; but, if you must—well, we can only die once, and we'll make a fight for it. Now!"

They dashed forward. The Burman officers were walking in single file. Springing past two of them, Temple seized the foremost, the Master of the Horse.

"If you struggle, you're a dead man!" he yelled hoarsely, thrusting the barrel of his revolver hard against the Burman's cheek.

In the meantime Ayres and the trader had each seized a Woon-gyee. All were too much surprised to resist. Besides, they must have understood the meaning of this rough usage.

So they passed through the dangerous ravine. As the Englishmen looked neither to right nor left, but each kept his gaze fixed on his prisoner, they saw no sign of an ambush. But it was not until they had left the ravine half a mile in the rear that their grips relaxed. Then the trader glanced back over his shoulder.

"The scoundrels are coming on behind," he said. "That's proof enough."

It was conclusive.

Presently the gilded spires and domes and "umbrellas" of Mandalay came in sight. Then, and not until then, were the crestfallen Woons released, though the shining barrels still covered them. Near the outer town the trader stopped and addressed the Master of the Horse in English.

"You and your fellow rascals can go on first, or follow behind, as you please," he said, "we are going to the British Residency. Don't come asking me to guide you to the mine to-morrow, that's all."

Pushing on, our adventurers presently reached the Residency, to the great satisfaction of the gentleman in charge. There the pot was uncovered and the contents spread out upon a table. I forget how many rubies Ayres said there were, but they realised £125,000! Not a million sterling, by a long way, but certainly a sum worth running a little risk to obtain, especially in the case of Philip Ridgeway, who otherwise might have been dependent on charity for the remainder of his life. The delight of that honest trader, when he had leisure to reflect upon what he had gained and escaped, was unbounded; and the pleasure of his companions was nearly as great.

"It is a splendid haul," said the representative of Her Gracious Majesty, running his fingers through the heap of stones, "but I confess I never expected to see you again, living or dead. All day a report has been running through my brain. 'Three Englishmen missing in the interior.' Thank goodness I haven't got to write it."

Mr. Ridgeway presented him with one of the largest rubies and several smaller ones, after which the remainder were replaced in the water-pot and locked up in the Resident's safe.

Not the least curious part of the story is the fact that the Master of the Horse and his companions, the Woon-gyees, did present themselves at the Residency, begging to be guided to the mine. For a long time the trader refused, but eventually

yielded to their importunities, stipulating, however, that only their personal attendants, spittoon and umbrella bearers, etc., should accompany them. To this the Burmans agreed, and the party set out, found the mine without any difficulty, and convinced themselves that it was still very rich.

Ayres and Temple enjoyed their second trip into the jungle very well. The Burmans, having nothing to gain by murdering their white companions, unbent, and proved themselves jolly good fellows. It may seem incredible, but that is exactly the Burman character.

Nevertheless, the trader and his lucky comrades were very careful to return to British territory in a steamer belonging to the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company.

WHO WAS THE THIEF?

THE STORY OF A SCHOOL MYSTERY.

"IT'S as plain as a pikestaff," said Kellett, decisively; "that box has been burst open and the money cribbed!"

"How much was in it?" asked Jessop.

"Oh, half a crown and some coppers. Not a big lot, but it was all I had left; and I don't see why some thief should come and burgle my desk like this; do you?"

Jessop shook his head.

"There *is* some thief about," he answered; "and I believe it's that little wretch Talbot, or else it's the 'Camel.' I've seen both of them loafing around, looking jolly suspicious. I went down town the day before yesterday to buy a packet of envelopes, and left the change in the pocket of my overcoat. When I remembered, and went to get it, there wasn't a cent left. Someone had prigged it."

The two boys were standing in one of the classrooms at Westvale College; Kellett's desk was open, and he held in his hand a small wooden box, the lock of which had certainly been forced, as the hasp had come away from the lid.

"I wonder if it was the 'Camel'?"

"I don't know, but he's just one of those fellows who might turn out a thief."

"Well, all I know is that my money-box has been burgled," growled Kellett, "and I wish I knew who'd done it."

"What shall you do?"

"Do! What can you do? I'm not going to tell old Morgan, as that little ass Tremlett did during his first term and got well snubbed; . . . 'tisn't good enough. I'd sooner lose the money twice over."

"Something ought to be done," remarked Jessop, as his companion returned the rifled box to its former resting-place. "Steel told me the day before yesterday that someone had bagged his silk scarf. When a chap can't call his things his own it's getting a bit too thick, that's my opinion."

Jessop was certainly justified in his complaint, and within the next few days matters went from bad to worse. A new umbrella, a box of mathematical instruments, and some gold links were all missed by their several owners. Webster, the head of the school, was spoken to, and advised the complainants to keep their eyes open, and not leave things about.

"It's all very well to talk about keeping your eye open," said Kellett. "You can't always sit watching your desk."

So the daily question, "Who could have taken the things?" remained unanswered.

Whether, as our forefathers believed, a comet may be taken as foretelling coming calamity I do not pretend to say; one thing, however, is certain, that the events narrated in this story were heralded by the appearance of one of these heavenly bodies; and no one can deny that it undoubtedly had something to do with what subsequently happened.

The fact that this phenomenon did not appear till long after midnight, and had to be viewed from one particular window at the end of a corridor on the top landing, which was forbidden ground, only caused adventure-loving juveniles to take greater interest in it than they otherwise would have done. The boys of more than one room had already gone in a body to view it, and began to assume airs of superiority over those who had not undertaken a similar unlawful expedition.

Jessop, Kellett, a classmate named Atkins, and two other boys, all slept in No. 11. Atkins, who wore spectacles, was a bit of a scientist; he was one of the "snail-catchers," as the members of a small Natural History Society were irreverently termed, and he had in his desk the nucleus of a collection of geological specimens which at present consisted of three fossils, and the fragment of a ginger-beer bottle which he declared was New Zealand green-stone.

"Look here, you fellows, we ought to go up and squint at that comet," he remarked one evening, as he and his room-mates were undressing. "We might as well see it while we've got the chance, for it won't be on view again for another seventy years."

Neither Kellett nor Jessop cared very much about the comet; but the prospect of careering about the building in the dead of night rather tickled their fancy; besides, other rooms had done it, and No. 11 ought not to show itself lacking in a spirit of enterprise.

"Right you are!" they answered. "Let's go to-night. You can be showman and give the explanation."

"Very well," answered Atkins, complacently. "About half-past one would be the best time. We must take it in turns to keep awake till then. I'll pass round my watch; we can each do a half-hour spell, and then wake someone else."

The master on duty appeared as usual and turned out the gas; but, with the thought of the coming adventure in their minds, none of the boys felt much inclined for sleep, so for some time they lay awake talking.

"You know what a lot of things have been cribbed lately," said Jessop. "Well, I believe I've spotted the thief. It's young Talbot. I came upon him in the classroom this afternoon with one of the desk-lids open, looking at what was inside. I shouted out 'Hullo! what are you up to!' and the young beggar turned, as bold as brass, and said he'd found one of Slater's books lying about and wanted to know which was his desk so that he might put it back. It was a jolly plain excuse."

"I don't believe it's young Talbot," answered Kellett. "My belief is that it's the 'Camel,' and I've thought so all along."

"No fear!" answered Atkins. "He's a rum sort, I know; call him a block head, if you like; but I shouldn't go so far as to say that he was a thief."

The discussion was continued for some little time; then, as the occupants of the room gradually began to grow sleepy, the conversation flagged, and the boy who had the watch was the only one awake.



"WHO COULD HAVE TAKEN THE THINGS?"

II.

There was a good deal of yawning and stretching when Atkins at length roused his companions and intimated that the time had arrived for making a move. The other four boys seemed inclined to stay where they were, and growled out something about "too much fag," and "comets be hanged!" But the scientiest was not going to let them off.

"Get out, you lazy dogs!" he cried, pulling at Kellett's bedclothes. "You may never have a chance of seeing the thing again."

The boys scrambled into their coats and trousers, Kellett arraying himself in a marvellous red dressing-gown, with pockets and a waist-cord, which was the envy of the whole room. It was a risky business, promenading the premises in the small hours; but the chances of capture gave just sufficient spice of danger to the adventure to make it all the more appreciated; and, once wide awake, the No. 11's were ready to follow Atkins wherever he chose to lead.

"Now keep quiet," said he. "We shall have to pass Mr. Blake's room, and he always sleeps with his door open."

In single file they ascended the stairs leading to the upper landing. Half way up a loose board, which creaked loudly when stepped on, gave each boy in turn a shock which made his blood run cold. The second master's door was passed in safety, and at length they found themselves at the end of the corridor.

Atkins rubbed down the window-pane with his coat-sleeve and peered out.

"Yes," he said, "there she is."

"Crummy! let's have a look," exclaimed Kellett eagerly, elbowing his comrade to one side. "Why, is that streaky thing it?" he asked a moment later, in a tone of disappointment. "That isn't moving."

"Yes it is, only it doesn't appear to be."

"Pooh! if I'd known that was all I'd have stayed in bed!"

Atkins' reply was a grunt of disgust. Jessop came next, evidently determined to second his companion in taking a rise out of the leader of the party.

"Oh, what a sell!" he exclaimed, after gazing at the heavens. "Call that thing a comet! I thought it would fly along like a rocket and throw out coloured stars."

"Then you're an ass," retorted Atkins, severely.

"Is that streaky thing its tail?"

"Yes," snapped the scientist.

"Does it wag it when it's pleased?"

There was a subdued titter, and Atkins was about to make some crushing reply, when something happened which for a moment turned each member of the little group into stone.

Away in the darkness the loose

board on the stairs gave an ominous creak! For five seconds every tongue was tied; then a hurried conversation broke out in a whisper.

"What's that!" . . . "Someone's coming to see the comet!" . . . "Blake hasn't gone to bed!" . . . "No, it's only the board giving of its own accord."

The last sentence had hardly been uttered when Kellett suddenly pushed his companions away from the window.

"Down!" he cried.

In breathless expectation the boys crouched in dark corners. Away along the passage, and growing every instant more distinct, was the dusky outline of an approaching figure. For a few seconds the whole party remained in an agony of suspense; then there was a sigh of relief as they became aware of the reassuring fact that the unknown was, at all events, not a master, but apparently some boy with an overcoat or dressing-gown thrown over his night-shirt.

"Someone walking in his sleep," whispered Atkins.

"Not it!" answered Kellett. "I'm blest! It's the 'Camel.'"

The "Camel" certainly it was. He came leisurely forward until he was within four yards of the window; then, turning to the right, was about to enter the nearest dormitory when Kellett sprang from his hiding-place and caught him round the waist.

Startled nearly out of his wits, Smith gave vent to a cry of dismay, and at the same moment the other occupants of No. 11 appeared from out of the gloom.

"Hullo, 'Camel,' where do you come from?" asked Jessop. "What do you want wandering about this time in the morning?"

"I've been downstairs," was the answer. "What a start you chaps gave me!"

"Come, that's not good enough," answered Kellett, whose suspicions had been aroused the moment he recognised the figure in the darkness. "What brings you poking about downstairs? Have you been in the classroom?"

"Yes; I've got face-ache and can't sleep. I went down to fetch some medicine."

"Then where is it?"

"It's—it's here," answered the "Camel," rather vaguely. "At least I had the bottle in my hand a minute ago."

"Then you must have dropped it," answered Kellett sharply.

"I—I suppose I have."

Atkins had a box of matches in his pocket. Several were now struck, and by their light the bystanders searched every corner, but with no result.

"Look here, my boy," said Kellett, "that's all make-up about the medicine. You're a liar; and it's my firm belief you're a thief."

"I'm not," answered Smith, with a burst of indignation. "You've no more ground for saying that than I have for saying that you fellows are prowling about stealing things. You can think what you like—I don't care!"

With this parting shot the speaker disappeared inside the neighbouring bedroom, and the party from No. 11 prepared to retire likewise.

"That's the thief," muttered Kellett. "We've caught him right enough!"

"Looks jolly fishy," replied Jessop. "I wish we'd thought to search his pockets; he may have cribbed something to-night."

III.

Before dinner-time on the following day the story of No. 11's adventure was known all over the school, and not one boy in ten doubted for a moment that "Camel" Smith was a thief. What else should be his object in prowling about at that time of night? The face-ache was a palpable excuse, and to make matters worse a silver pencil-case was missing, which the owner declared had been in his desk when he went up to bed the evening before.

In vain did the suspected youth vow and declare that he was innocent. A clamour of angry voices drowned his protestations, and he went about shunned and avoided as though he were a leper.

The five occupants of No. 11 found themselves raised in a moment almost to the rank of popular favourites. Everyone was anxious to hear an account of their adventure, and the general opinion seemed to be that they had done rather a smart thing in discovering the thief.

"You ought to go straight away and tell old Morgan," was the verdict. There, however, came the rub; for, in order to inform against Smith, the No. 11's would have to give the head master an account of their own nocturnal wanderings; and this, for their own sakes, they firmly refused to do.

* * *

It was the second evening after their expedition to view the comet. The master on duty was a little behind his time, and Kellett, standing on the end of his bed, was pretending to act the part of a villain for the amusement of his comrades.

"Ha! ha! the deed is done!" he exclaimed, striking an attitude and throwing his dressing-gown over his shoulder in imitation of a cloak. As he did so something flew across the room, and dropped on the floor close to Jessop's bed. The latter leant out and picked it up.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed. "What's this? Toothache tincture!"

Kellett, Atkins, and the other two boys all stared at each other in astonishment. Then the scientist broke the silence.

"It's the 'Camel's,'" he exclaimed. "It must have dropped by accident into the pocket of your dressing-gown when you collared hold of him."

Kellett scrambled into bed, and sat thinking, with his chin resting on his knees.

"Hang it!" he exclaimed; "then what the chap said was truth after all."

"Seems so," growled Atkins; "and what's more, he may not be the thief, and we've made everyone believe he is."

Mr. Blake made his appearance and turned out the light; but the occupants of No. 11 were not inclined for slumber. They found themselves in an awkward predicament, and how to act they hardly knew.

The story, which by this time the whole school knew by heart, was proved to be partly untrue, and it was a humiliating thing to have to own as much to sixty odd companions.

"I don't see there's any need to say anything," remarked Jessop. "Because he went down to fetch medicine it doesn't follow that he didn't fetch something else besides. I'm positive the chap's a thief."

But Kellett took a better view of the matter.

"It's not fair," he said, with a sigh. "We must give the chap the benefit of the doubt, and tell the other fellows we were mistaken."

"Yes," added Atkins. "You know the proverb *Ruat cælum;* though the ceiling fall let justice be done."

The Latin quotation may have finally decided the matter; and next day Kellett owned up to having found the medicine, and so proved that there was some truth in Smith's excuse, which had hitherto been set down as a pure fabrication.

"Well, you chaps are a set of humbugs," said one and another. "First you swear a chap's a thief, and then you come and try to make out he isn't. Another time tell your yarns to the Marines."

Kellett's pride smarted, but the "Camel" got the benefit of the doubt; and it was well he did so, for, being no longer able to tolerate his life at Westvale, he was making up his mind to end the matter by running away.

A week later Webster caught Joe Green, the school errand-boy, foraging among the overcoat pockets in the cloak-room. A full confession followed, and most of the lost articles were recovered.

"I'm glad I owned up at once about the 'Camel's' toothache stuff," said Kellett.

"Yes," answered Jessop, who had come to change his opinions. "I suppose it's best always to do the square thing, and to do it, as Atkins says, 'though the ceiling fall.'"

H. A.

The Sweetmeat Tree.

By Nigel Tourneur.

As can be easily imagined there is no tree more popular than the Sweetmeat Tree, yet it is safe to say that not one youngster in ten thousand knows its proper name. As for their elders, they are just as ignorant about it.

Though both young and old so much enjoy the product of this tree that, in the United States alone, if all the delicious packages containing its sweetmeat were placed on end, it has been calculated that every year they would reach nearly two and a half times round the world, or extend to a distance of 71,025 miles.

Now the word "chicle" to most folk might be Greek, but it is not. It is an Aztec word, and is the name of the sap of the Sapota tree—the sap out of which nearly all the chewing gum is made. But the Sweetmeat tree, the real name of which then is the Sapota, has other names, too, such as the Sapodilla, the Nasseberry, the Bully tree.

The Aztecs of Mexico are said to have been the first gum-chewers. It was reported by the soldiers of Cortez that the Indians chewed a gum to quench their thirst and keep themselves strong. They got it from the Sapota tree by tapping, very much as their descendants do to-day in the chiclero camps; for gathering the sap of this tree is just as much a business as logging or timber work, or obtaining indiarubber, or balsam, from the growth producing them.

In the northern parts of South America and in Central America and Mexico this tree, out of the sap of which the sweetmeat is made up in time, grows wild in great groups, and seldom reaches the height of sixty feet. Very straight it grows, with a long, clean stem, which makes it of great value for timber, for the wood of it is almost as good as the best mahogany. Reddish in colour, quite hard, heavy and of a fine growth or grain, it remains sound and strong for many hundreds of years.

During the rainy season when the sap runs up the tapping is done by the "chicleros," whose only tools are a machete and a bit of rope. The rope is tied round the man's waist and slipped around a tree, leaving the chiclero's hands free to make a series of groovings all around the trunk as he climbs upward. The sap runs along and down these groovings or incisions, and is collected in cups and canvas bags at the foot of the tree every day, until the supply obtainable from that tree is exhausted.

A tree in good condition overflows with the milky juice; when the native chicle gatherer drives his broad-bladed machete into the bark the milk spurts out as if it were pressing a way forth. A large tree will often yield quarts of juice before the flow stops.

Very soon the sap loses its milky condition and turns to a yellow colour, thickening till it is just like treacle. The juice is then taken to the chiclero camp, and there it is boiled in a great pot or open kettle, then kneaded to press the moisture out, and afterwards moulded into large loaves, and shipped to the chewing-gum factories in the United States.

Here it is mixed and boiled in copper pots, as required, and flavoured with vanilla, peppermint, or wintergreen, together with the desirable amount of sugar. It is then whipped into a dough, removed to tables, kneaded into powdered sugar, rolled into sheets, cut into the requisite sizes, wrapped in attractive paper and packed into boxes.

There, then, is the chewing gum one buys—one of the most popular and delicious of the world's sweetmeats.

A PUNCH AT THE ENEMY.

By PATRICK VAUX



IGHT bells of the forenoon watch went on board the *Polly Ann*; and yet His Britannic Majesty's patrol boat remained stationary. Wondering to himself as to the cause of her delay, young William Liddiard swung up his "devil"— that formidable implement for cleaning furnace fires—on to the steel cleat holding it in place against the bulkhead separating engine-room and stokehold. He marked, through the low, narrow opening into the engine-room, that no one was there; then cast an uneasy eye on the pointer of the nearest steam-gauge, that was rapidly mounting to blowing-off pressure; and, scaling the iron ladder of the fire-room, he reached the deck.

"What's the matter? What's holding up the old craft?" he asked, meeting the fireman who was relieving him.

"Aw, the shore's a-speakin' with our 'Old Man,'" Grimley replied, wiping some bits of seapie off his stubbly moustache, and nodding forward to the busy bridge. "Been more of them dirty Garmans' low-down work around here. Jist throw y'r eye to sta'b'd. An' wot do ye see there? an' wot have happened to 'er hands? Gone—gone under to Davy Jones—an' two boats shot to bits at their davits! If I ketch a U-boat——" But, too savagely angry to finish the sentence, the fireman disappeared down into the softly rumbling boiler-room.

In half a dozen steps Will'm cleared the after-end of its superstructure casing and stared to starboard. His round face, streaked with coal-dust and oily grime where he had swabbed the sweat off with a piece of dirty waste, grew hard and stern; his brown eyes darkened with indignation and wrath; the whole body of the seventeen-year-old lad stiffened in enmity to the work of the ruthless enemy.

Where the Atlantic swell meets the waters of the Bristol Channel there sluggishly heaved, some 2,000 yards away, the hull of a large schooner.

Her mainsail-gaff had been clean shot away, and sail and gear lay half over the side; her fore-topsail and fore-topmast had been wrecked, and, hanging down by their running tackle, dangled against the fleecy June sky, as the vessel wallowed to the lift of the waters. She lay awash to her bulwarks, her deck-house aft shattered by gun-fire into matchwood. But, main-topmast high, the flag of her country still flickered in the breeze.

As the flood-tide took her slowly toward the land it was for all the world as if the maimed thing was seeking succour and protection within that arm of Britain's which has driven the so-called "High Seas Fleet" of Germany behind the minefields and embankments protecting her.

With fists clenched in useless anger, Will'm turned and looked landward. There, high and beetling cliffs and the thin thread of foam at their feet stretched for miles up into the north-east. Far over the oily swells to starboard he made out the coastguard and signal station perched on the top of the ironstone heights there, its whitewashed walls and squat blue-slated houses reduced by the distance to toy size. It looked so near to the brink of the precipice that it seemed to be sliding over into the depths below.

Keen though his eyesight was, it was with great difficulty he could pick out the tall semaphore's wooden arms as they jerked and wagged themselves up and down and horizontally, spelling out orders to the *Polly Ann*. And slowly, too, were these distant signals being worked, for the coastguards knew the ex-tug had yet to acquire the smartness of the naval eye.

Suddenly the tiny, whirling arms ceased flailing out words, and, closing, dropped into silence.

Liddiard, looking to the bridge, saw his father slide his telescope together with evident relief, and the stout mate throw down the code-book, out of which he had laboriously been spelling the message, and jump to hoist the answering pennant that a deck-hand had already bent on to the halliards of the stumpy mast's yardarm.

"Us getting something like a real Navy ship," quoth young Liddiard to himself in grim pride. "Mayhap, 'tis orders we have now for a proper kind o' punch at the Garmans, 'stead of for ever doddering up an' down, hunting mines an' picking up torpedoes, an' all that kind o' kedgijeeree! 'Twill hearten me——"

"Hey, Will'm, there," came his father's roar from the bridge, "bear a hand to get the skiff into the water, do 'e. Us have got to sink the schooner over there, so the poor thing don't come in the way o' us Navy craft an' t'others, an' do hurt. Ye'll pull across to her wi' the mate, an' loose off some bu'stin' charges for'a'd an' aft. Move perky, do 'e, Will'm. 'Tis them Navy chaps ashore are watchin' the *Polly Ann* at work."

Quickly, then, the skiff, that lay snugged down aft, was got over the side, and quickly, too, four charges of powerful explosive, with fuses attached, were cautiously deposited in the stern-sheets. Oars were soon in their crutches, and, with the mate pulling stroke, Will'm and he set out for the derelict victim of the U-boat.

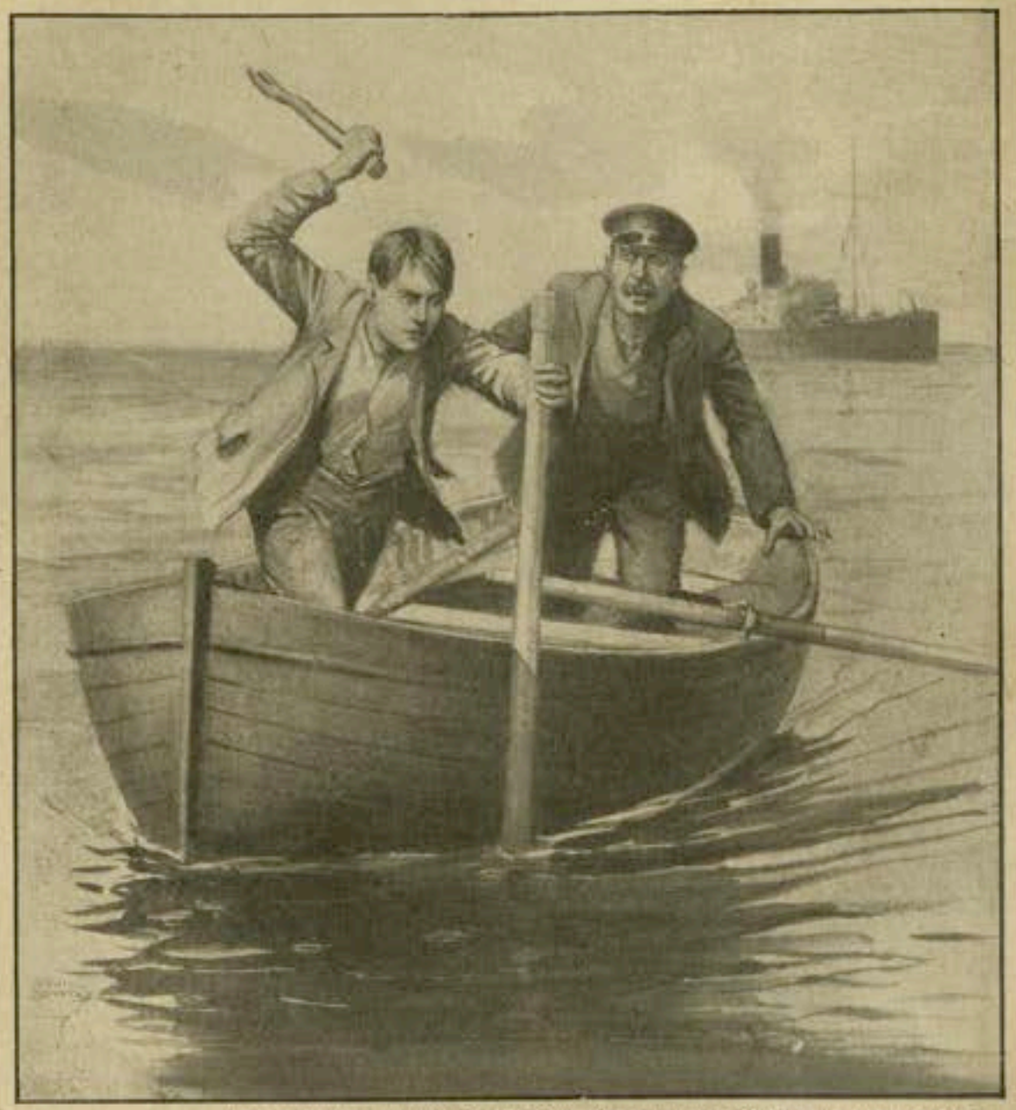
"Us'll soon have this job over," young Liddiard exclaimed confidently, as under their lusty steady pulling the light skiff shot forward, an occasional handful of spray tumbling inboard when her stem dipped into a lounging, broad-backed swell.

"Ah-a, there ain't no knowin' the sea," grunted the mate; "no, there ain't! She pawls your capstan w'en ye least 'xpects it. She can put a stop to un!"

sourness of his heart because of his now much-delayed dinner of salt pork and pea doo and new potatoes, had forecasted correctly.

The waters were calm save for the swells, and little trails of loose cloud drifted leisurely across the blue summer sky. Two fishing boats that had stood out from the little Cornish port farther up the coast were makin' along inshore to the southward, and the smoke of a steamer bound for Ireland lingered in little wisps and shreds above the western horizon.

As Liddiard, pulling strongly, slewed his eyes on to the stern-sheets again he got a glimpse ahead, off the starboard bow of the skiff, of a white seagull sitting motionless on the water,



"HE RAINED A HURRICANE OF BLOWS ON THE PRISM-BOX." *Drawn by* SAVILE LUMLEY.

"I reckon she's not trying to put a stop to this job, nohow!" rejoined the sturdy lad, casting an alert and weatherwise eye around.

But the mate, though his answer had been given out of the and five or six others eddying and dipping low around it.

"We're coming up on a bit of wreckage, Joe," remarked Will'm; "pull her round a bit to port, an' she'll clear un."

"Right-o," growled the mate,

without removing his moody gaze off the sternsheets.

For a minute or two Will'm plied his oars in silence, watching the blades of them as, with the regularity of a machine, they dipped and thrust, and rose and dripped to dip and thrust again. Then he turned his gaze ahead to starboard.

"Say, mate," he broke out hurriedly, "that 'ere bit of wreckage is coming down on us, queer and quick! Take 'e a squint at that li'le old gull travelling along. Her's standing on one leg; t'othar's tucked up, blow-me-tight!"

Old Joe lifted his gimlet eyes and stared at the singular sight.

"Doggon't!" he rasped, lying on his oars, "there's a——"

"Ripple astarn o' she," young Will'm pumped out stridently. "I see it."

For a second or two the patrol's men stared as if fascinated at the thin, light ripple caused by the tip of the periscope and prism-box of the nearing under-water boat.

Suddenly, having apparently discovered that something obscured her view, she sank deeper, for the sinister ripple from her periscope ceased, and the gull floated away, and nothing was left behind but a short attenuated track-mark, as if a snail had passed over the water there.

On board the *Polly Ann*, where sharp eyes had picked up these indications, her whistle signalled the recall, but it fell on unhearing ears. Already these two in the skiff saw the loom of the great submarine as she approached in the water beneath.

"Garman!" the mate snapped, breaking the tension. "Our chaps ain't hereabout, 'cause of the drag-nets comin' down the coast i' the forenoon."

It was just then the U-boat thrust her periscope some two feet out of the water close abeam.

The huge elongated blob of the hull just underneath surged onward, and the sight of it took young Will'm like a blow on the jaw. Snatching up the tiller handle, he gripped the periscope as it bore against the skiff, carrying her onward with it, and raised a hurricane of blows on the prism-box. But the strong metal and thick lenses remained undented, and the heavy wooden tiller split up.

The enemy, taken aback and full of wonder at the strange faint thud-thudding coming down her periscope, rose slowly to the top. Foot by foot the sighting-tube soared above the skiff, sliding upward through Will'm's hands.

"Keep us clear o' the conning tower as the Garman rises," he ordered, suddenly shifting his position to aft in the boat. "Us 'll give 'em summat!" he added, bending swiftly down.

"Do un in, Will'm," the mate barked savagely, leaning over to fend off the boat from the rising conning-tower. "Us don't mind nawthin' now!"

It came, then, that to the eyes of the German look-out, who was staring through one of the thick glass scuttles set in the conning-tower, and looking forward, there appeared the extraordinary sight of a skiff, with one man in her, sliding off the narrow deck of the U-boat, on which it had come to rest, just as the latter rose awash with the waters. He also saw a sturdy lad standing there, who, when the under-water craft soared up again clear of the sea, was on his knees at the base of the conning-tower.

Herr Kapitän Lieutenant and another officer joined the look-out, and stared—stared for exactly one second too long.

"Ach! You mad Englisch," cried the officer commanding an instant later, on having gained the top of the conning-tower with its little bridge-platform. "You say your prayers to the Germans? Soon you all will be praying to us!"

"Do you surrender?" Will'm pumped out, crushing his body against the steel conning-tower, and looking upward at the officer, who had been joined by three others.

"Mein Vaterland! Listen to what the mad Englisch dog says!" clucked the German officer commanding. "It is, the patrol scheep is for that—yours, over da," and he pointed to the *Polly Ann*, that was surging along on a course to ram the enemy. "I will zink her, and you all. . . . Pszt!" And he spat over the rail in contempt.

William Liddiard, with his heart hammering, and his breath coming in little gasps, was counting the moments in an agony of suspense—not that he might jump too late, but too soon. Then all would be disclosed. Of his own life he took no account. It had struck home to him that, if he failed in his venture against the U-boat, the *Polly Ann*, his father, and all her crew were doomed.

"Ja, ja! Hit the white-faced idiot on the head, Brandelbaar!" he heard in the deep harsh voice of the officer commanding. "Feur fangen!"

It was just as this order was given to open fire on the *Polly Ann* with the disappearing gun that Will'm made a desperate leap to port.

As the waters closed over him he heard a revolver crackle out upon him; then heard, too, a tremendous roar of an explosion. He was conscious of the sea rushing past him in one vast spout, felt himself driven to the surface, and then dropped back again, squeezed and buffeted.

. . . . .

When he came to himself Will'm found he was lying in his father's bunk in the little chart-house under the *Polly Ann's* bridge.

"Law, Will'm, 'e have had a turn at them Garmans," quoth the Captain in a proud and satisfied voice, that was edged with concern also. "The mate tell me ye smartly shortened them fuses wi' your knife, dropped the bu'stin' charges against the Garmans' conning-tower foot, an' fired 'em, standin' by to hide 'em. Joey, that picked 'e up, says 'twas a tidy li'le job, an' so say I, for all I am the father o' you. That U-boat don't sink no more vessels an' their crews—she don't. You ain't left as much as a patch o' oil from her!"

Captain Liddiard paused for a moment or two, gravely patting Will'm's shoulder in approval.

"I say, Billy," he continued, a slow smile spreading over his weather-beaten face, "I am real glad you be the stock o' mother and me. Yours was summat of a real punch at the enemy, old son!"

PRISONERS OF WAR.

THEIR TREATMENT, PAST AND PRESENT.

FOUR years of uninterrupted fighting have filled the countries of the combatant nations with thousands of prisoners.

The number of Germans held in England is very large indeed; France has many others; while the Revolution in Russia and the mad action of the Bolsheviks revived hopes of release in the hearts of an immense number of German and Austrian captives who had been dispersed to various centres in the enormous Russian Empire.

In addition to these, neutral countries, especially Holland, detain thousands more who found themselves compelled to seek refuge across the forbidden line of a neutral frontier.

On the other hand, Germany holds large numbers of British, French, and Russian prisoners, and her treatment of a considerable proportion of these has given rise to the greatest anxiety on the part of their friends, so ruthless have been her methods and so inhuman the harshness and severity which have prevailed in many of her prison camps. We have only to recall the names of two of these—Wittenberg and Ruhleben—where the brutality and gross stupidity of the treatment meted out to the helpless prisoners filled us with horror and indignation.

The problem of dealing with prisoners of war has always been a difficult one. To-day it is solved by the special provision of internment camps, where, in what we may call temporary villages, strongly fenced and carefully patrolled, the prisoners pass the time in what is a blend of barrack life and camp life.

But in the far-off days, when our chronic wars with our present gallant Ally kept both France and England well supplied with prisoners, these unfortunates were relegated to actual prisons or to buildings temporarily fitted up as such. The oldest part of Dartmoor Convict Prison was built for the reception of French prisoners in 1809, and Princetown, which received its name from the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV., grew up as an adjunct to the prison, which it still is to a large extent. In the five years following that date 12,679 French and American prisoners were confined at Princetown. At the conclusion of the war the buildings fell into disuse. For a short time they were used by a naphtha company, and at last, in 1850, they were converted into a convict prison.

The military prisoners who were sent to Princetown during the old wars were mostly men of the rougher and more dangerous sort, who were ever ready to rebel against the authority of their captors. In April, 1815, there was a serious disturbance among the American prisoners, who, armed with knives, attacked the guard, and attempted to make their escape. The guard fired upon them, and seven were killed and thirty-five wounded.

Other prisoners were disposed of in the towns skirting Dartmoor, among them Tavistock, Ashburton, Moreton Hampstead, and Okehampton, these places being selected partly because of their proximity to Plymouth, the most important naval port in those times, and also because of the wild character of the district, which made escape for the prisoners exceedingly difficult. In the ruined chapel of Okehampton Castle there is an inscription in Latin which is said to have been executed by a French prisoner of war on parole in 1809.

The old Woolhouse in Southampton, a building situated at the corner of Town Quay and Bugle Street, has at various times been used as a temporary prison for captives of war. It was built in the fourteenth century, and was long used as the warehouse for the weighing and assessment of wool in the days when the export of that commodity was carefully controlled and restricted to a few ports.

When the building ceased to be used for this purpose, it was employed as a casual prison for the Frenchmen or Spaniards who were taken in sea-fights, and thus it came to be known as "the old French prison." In 1781 there were three ships of French and Spanish prisoners in the port, and these men were all placed under guard in the Woolhouse. The wooden beams are scored in many places with the names of prisoners, and some years ago an old French prayer-book was found hidden in a recess in the wall. In 1904 the Woolhouse was bought by the Carron Iron Company to be used as a depôt for their goods.

Great numbers of prisoners were also lodged in Porchester Castle, at the head of Portsmouth Harbour. After the battle of Camperdown in 1797 nearly two thousand Dutch sailors and soldiers were accommodated in the inner ward of the castle, many of them sleeping in hammocks. At various times as many as from 3,000 to 5,000 prisoners were confined here at once. A good deal of liberty seems to have been allowed to some of the officers, who found easy means of getting in and out of confinement. One of the French officers was a man of colour, who, along with his four wives, had been taken in the West Indies. The commander of the local militia made a good deal of him, and showed him off to the local gentry as if he had been a visitor from an unknown world.

Edinburgh Castle was another of the places where French prisoners were confined. They occupied much of their time in making little ornamental objects, such as workboxes, brooches, and toys, which they carved out of pieces of bone and wood, and adorned with tasteful patterns, making of some of them excellent works of art. These labours were carried on in small temporary sheds in the castle, which were

erected behind strong, close-barred palisades. The public were allowed to approach the palisades, and the prisoners sold the little things which they had made to anyone who would buy, the transaction being completed by passing the money and the goods between the bars of the barricade. A visit to the French prisoners, most of them dark-haired and rather ferocious in appearance, was one of the sights of Edinburgh.

These prisoners, like those at Porchester and other places, were released when the preliminaries of peace were arranged at Paris in 1814. They were marched to Leith by torchlight, and placed on transports which carried them back to their own country. Many of them no doubt joined Napoleon again in the following year, when he returned from Elba.

Many prisoners were confined at Norman Cross, in Huntingdonshire, and in the museum at Peterborough may be seen an interesting collection of little articles, such as models of ships, which they, like their fellow-countrymen in Edinburgh, made from their beef bones and other odds and ends to while away the tedium of their confinement. French prisoners were also sent to Chesterfield and other places in Derbyshire, and it is said that they introduced the art of netted glove making into Chesterfield. About 3,000 prisoners were also confined at Wincanton in the south-eastern part of Somerset. As communications between towns were very difficult in those days, and many ports which are now insignificant were important when wooden ships were in vogue, provision had often to be made for the housing of prisoners of war in the places where they were landed.

Many little ports, as, for instance, Whitby, have memories of French prisoners who were confined in ordinary houses, and in such places relics like those in the museum at Peterborough are often to be seen. Such easy methods of dealing with prisoners of war afforded many opportunities for escape. W. A. A.

The Tragedy of the American Buffalo.*

By AXEL TEGNIER.



THREE generations ago more than sixty million buffaloes roamed on the North American Continent. To-day, the wild buffalo in the U.S.A. has ceased to exist, except for the few in the Yellowstone National Park, and the still smaller remnant in Montana, which once belonged to the great herd there. On this herd being sold to the Canadian Government these few escaped in the general rounding-up, and were ultimately given the protection of the Montana State Game Laws.

The herd now belonging to the Canadian Government is maintained at Wainwright, Alberta, where there are more than 800 buffaloes in a healthy and thriving condition, and from this herd as it increases numbers are sent to form the beginning of herds in other parts of Canada. There are, however, a number of these noble beasts roaming wild in the Cassiar district of British Columbia, and it has been reckoned that some 500 others haunt the wilds of Athabasca and the Peace River. These, to-day, are the only real wild buffaloes known to exist in the North American Continent—the sole survivors of many millions.

The end of the American buffalo really began with the first inland trek of the settler. As far back as 1800 the picturesque animals had disappeared east of the Mississippi. Long before that date they had ceased to exist in North Carolina and in Virginia, where they were numerous in the first half of the previous century.

As the 'seventies of last century passed, so the buffaloes vanished from the southern plains, and in the 'eighties from the more northern parts. Yet in 1868 a train on the Kansas Pacific Railway, between Ellsworth and Sheridan, travelled for 120 miles through a more or less continuous herd of buffaloes, and often was forced to stop on account of their closely packed masses! Seton writes that in the 'seventies hundreds of thousands of them crossed the Missouri River, going northward. They never returned.

The stories concerning the gigantic herds once to be seen on the plains would appear fabulous were they not set down by separate and independent witnesses. At times the entire prairie seemed one moving mass of buffaloes. On one occasion, in the 'sixties, as some British travellers were going down the Missouri River, they encountered a herd of the animals fording the stream at a point on what is now the divisional line between North Dakota and Montana. They were compelled to wait for three days and four nights until the buffaloes had passed. Colonel Dodge describes an enormous herd which required five days and nights to pass the butt where he and his party were camping in safety.

Before the coming of the White man with his firearms any abnormal increase in the herds was kept down by Indian hunters and by wolves and other beasts of prey, as well as by the loss of tens of thousands every year through blizzards, severe winters, prairie fires, and drowning when the animals forded rivers. The numbers killed by the Indians were insignificant compared with the numbers destroyed by the forces of Nature. Each great blizzard left a trail of buffalo hulks in its wake. Each spring, when the ice on the rivers began to grow thin, and the herds migrated, many thousands of the animals were drowned, many trampled to death by the oncoming gigantic masses of them, till at last the ice was broken over the entire width of the water, and the main body of the herd swam or floundered across.

When, however, the White man pressed West, and the Red began to use firearms, the doom of the noble beast was sealed. The animals were shot more rapidly than their numbers could be replenished by natural in-

* "Bison" is, of course, the more strictly correct name. But the word "Buffalo" is so much better known and understood that it has been used in this article throughout.



Drawn by GEO. RANKIN

THE NORTH AMERICAN BISON (BUFFALO).

crease. It has been stated that during 1850-60 the Indians alone were killing 3,500,000 buffaloes every year. Millions of them were slaughtered by the hide-hunters, who left trails of carcases and bleaching bones throughout the regions.

After the railways were carried across the plains travellers amused themselves by shooting the animals from the cars from the mere lust of killing. Frequent appeals were made about 1870 to Congress to stop the wanton waste of the buffalo herds. If they had been listened to, not only would the Sioux risings of 1875 and 1876, culminating in the Custer Massacre, have been averted—for to the Red man the buffalo was meat, clothing, and a dozen other things—but a great number of these great game animals would have been saved.

The absolute wantonness of the slaughtering of the huge beasts shocks us as we think of it. Miles away from the railroad there were localities where one could walk all day over ground strewn thickly with the skeletons of buffaloes. Not that hide-hunters were responsible for all of these vast cemeteries. Another enemy, already mentioned, accounted for many.

Close records kept by the early observers of the movements of the buffalo herds noted the fact that after each blizzard complete herds were found to have disappeared from the storm-swept area. Seton describes how in 1880 a settler in the Big Sioux River country found the hollows and dips of the prairie in his neighbourhood to be littered with the carcases of buffalo. These were the remains of a gigantic herd which was known to have gone north in 1870-71, but never returned.

During the extermination of the great animals their bones were strewn over the plains in incredible quantities, and were gathered for utilisation in carbon works. They were piled up in vast heaps along the railway line, and shipped east whenever empty cars came along.

There is a melancholy interest in the records of the last three years of the hide-hunters. In 1882 they shipped 200,000 hides to the East; in 1883 40,000; in 1884 only 300 hides were reported. After that—none.

In 1886 the last survivors of the wild buffaloes were killed on the Big Porcupine, and were mounted for the National Museum. With them the wild buffalo died.

It was the farm and the ranch that, at root, brought about the end of those great wild cattle. Civilisation killed them.

Some Gems of Translation Blunders.

TO the schoolboy wrestling with the difficulties of his examination paper in all probability it seldom if ever occurs to think how tedious must be the process of going over the written papers sent in, and estimating their merit and assigning marks to this answer and that.

But he also fails to realise the joy with which the examiner, if he has any sense of humour, lights on such delightful errors as are presented below. They are selected from a number of letters sent in to the *Spectator* some months ago. They are all vouched for by the correspondents who supplied them.

One of the best was secured by a friend of the writer, who, while travelling in New Zealand, was invited to inspect a school. Finding a class reading an ode of Horace, he listened to the youthful translator, who arrived at "Post equitem sedet atra Cura" (Black care rides behind the horseman). The rendering was certainly ingenious: "After horse-exercise, the black lady sits down with care."

The same writer tells how a perplexing item once appeared on the menu of a regimental mess. It ran thus: "Imbécile rôti." The worthy Mess-Sergeant, no French scholar himself, relied upon a dictionary for his culinary titles, and made an unfortunate selection. The dish (which had caused much speculation amongst the diners) proved to be roast goose!

At a large school in the South-West of England a master, who was rather curious to test the ability of one of the pupils, asked: "What is the English translation of the Royal motto *Honi soit qui mal y pense?*" The unhesitating reply was: "Honey is sweet which you think bitter."

An Army coach came upon the following gems in an otherwise dreary terminal examination. These were the results of the efforts at translation:—*Vacuus viator*—"The absent-minded roadmender." *Il fit l'appel aux amateurs de bâbas*—"He called in a baby specialist."

Of *Septimus mihi Originum liber est in manibus* the following five renderings were given in one examination, according to Prebendary Moss, formerly Head Master of Shrewsbury School:—

(1) "Septimus, child of the Origines, is in my hands."
(2) "Septimus Originum is a child in my hands."
(3) "I have the care of the Septimus Originum family."
(4) "This is my seventh book on the spirits of ancestors."
(5) "Septimus free of origins is with me in the shades."

Here is another from the French:—"*Mes souliers me blessent*" (My shoes are hurting me) was translated "My soldiers bless me"!

Some of the best recent translation "howlers," however, were published in the *Civil Service Gazette* for February last, quoted from the *University Correspondent*. Here are some of them:—

"*Le marquis recommenda son âme à Dieu.*—The marquis wished his donkey good-bye."

"They gave this old rake to our gardener on Thursday.—*Ils donnèrent cet âgé libertin à notre jardinier le jeudi.*"

"*L'école était près du presbytère.*—The school was nearly a presbyterian one."

"*Il fait des éclairs.*—He is making cream-buns."

ARNULF MALER AND HIS BOAT.

A LEGEND OF THE BALTIC.

OLD Jacob Maler, the boatman, had lived for many years in the island of Rugen. His had been a life of adventure, and it was rumoured amongst his neighbours that he had wealth hoarded and hidden, though he lived in great simplicity, almost, it might be said, in poverty.

And now the old man lay dying, and he called his three sons to him to tell them how he wished to divide his possessions amongst them.

Arnulf, the youngest, had always been his father's favourite — his "Joseph," as the brothers used to say.

"My sons," said old Jacob, "I am not the poor man you think. I have wealth, great wealth, which I have always kept carefully hidden. Much of it I earned by my own industry, the rest has been given me from time to time by noble lords to whom I have rendered important services. In spite of this, I have brought you up as a poor man's sons; for I knew that only too often wealth brings along with it idleness, envy and many other evils. Therefore, I taught you to work hard and be contented with little. Now the time has come when I must divide my wealth amongst you."

Then he directed them to remove some bricks in the wall, where, in a secret cupboard, lay two chests. These he told them to bring to him. The chests were so heavy that it needed all the strength of the two elder lads to carry them. But, when they were opened, the glitter, the splendour, of the contents took away their breath. They were dazzled by the gleam of precious gems, of golden cups and beakers, and of cloth of gold all sown with gems.

"These are yours, my sons," said Jacob, speaking to the two elder brothers.

They were overwhelmed with wonder, surprise and gratitude.

Now all this time Arnulf had been standing in the background looking on, waiting his turn, expecting that his share would be something even better than his brothers', for was not he the favoured one, the "Joseph" of his father Jacob?

"To you, Arnulf, I bequeath the little fishing-smack which you will find at anchor in the harbour," said the old man.

Arnulf could scarcely believe his ears. Was *this* all his father was giving him—a leaky old boat, not worth a suit of Sunday clothes. He hid his face in his hands and shed bitter tears; not so much because he craved riches and treasure as that he was wounded by his father's strange capriciousness and injustice.

But Jacob, dismissing the others, called Arnulf to his side.

"You have no need to grieve," said he. "You will find your boat a treasure-house, worth more to you than gold and gems. It will bring you not only riches, but content and happiness. Listen!

"In the old boat dwells a good and kindly spirit—'Ehrengeist!' He has been with our family for generations. He will now belong to you. In the hold is a cavity, most carefully concealed, where you will find a leaden coffer. This is his abode. Guard it well. Tell no one of it. One grave warning I must give you—if you would have him help, protect, enrich you, you must do nothing base or wrong."

After a pause he continued: "It may be, I cannot tell, but it may happen that he should wish to leave the old boat for another. If so, he will give you some clear sign, but *what*, I do not know."

Arnulf listened as though in a dream—so marvellous a thing his father told him.

Then the old man said, smiling:

"Lest you should think that my mind is wandering, give me your hand and you shall know that what I have told you is true; that 'Ehrengeist,' though unseen, is here, and is bequeathed to you."

Arnulf took his father's hand in his and immediately felt a slim, cold little palm giving his own a gentle pressure.

Soon after this Jacob died. After his burial the two brothers hastened to put their costly chests into places of safety. Arnulf betook himself sorrowfully to the harbour.

There lay the little boat at anchor, a wretched-looking little craft. The sails were torn and old, the decks worm-eaten and battered, the sides had the paint worn away. It looked, thought Arnulf, ashamed and unhappy amongst the gay craft around it.

The sailors standing about made many jests at Arnulf's expense.

"Fine voyages you will make in your handsome boat," they cried. "Doubtless she will ride the storm waves like a mighty war-horse. The best thing you could do would be to scuttle her in deep water."

Arnulf, taking no notice of their jeers, went on board his little vessel.

Oh, marvel! It was as though the boat had sense and feeling. A thrill went through it like the beating of a human heart; a sound like a joyful whisper was heard. Arnulf had taken with him some of his crew, amongst them a ship's carpenter to put things in order; but, strange to say, so soon as they set foot on deck, the sails unfurled themselves, new masts, beams, and cordage rattled merrily. Indeed, the boat looked like a young bird just flying from the nest, said the carpenter, so fresh and new it seemed.

Arnulf was delighted, and now only longed to make his first voyage in his wonder-boat.

The opportunity soon came. A band of fierce sea-robbers, who called themselves the "Wolf-

brothers," at this time infested the seas and were the terror of all the coast.

At last the seamen of the coast villages formed a league, and resolved to combat them and to pursue them even to their secret stronghold. All they now wanted was a bold and fearless man to be their leader. They came to Arnulf and asked him whether he would undertake the hazardous enterprise.

Right gladly he consented. But the adventure was one of even more danger than they had expected, for a sudden and violent storm arising drove the boats far asunder. However, led by Arnulf in his magic bark, thanks to his courage and skill and the protecting care of his good boat-spirit, they came off victorious in the end and seized from the discomfited "Wolf-brothers" a vast store of rich booty.

None of the boatmen now ridiculed the poor old craft to which they owed so much. Arnulf soon proved his father's words to be true. The old boat was indeed worth more than coffers of gold, and brought its owner wealth, fame and happiness. Soon he was able to buy another boat, which he lent to the villagers, but he himself remained on the old one.

One day a messenger sought Arnulf with ill tidings.

"Your boat," said he, "is in a terrible state. The windows of the cabin are shattered; the mainsail torn from top to bottom, the cordage broken, the helm split in twain. The poor boat is a perfect wreck."

"What in the world can it mean?" exclaimed Arnulf.

"That someone wants to do you an ill-turn, I take it," replied the man.

"To-night we will set a watch, then," rejoined Arnulf.

This was accordingly done; but in the morning, though no one had come near the boat, it was in even a worse condition than before.

Then suddenly Arnulf remembered what his father had said about "Ehrengeist" giving some sign should he wish to leave the old boat for another. So he made up his mind, not without feeling some regret, to leave the old boat that had served him so faithfully and take possession of his new one.

The boat's crew, before leaving it, made it a little speech, thanking it for all the good service it had rendered. They had grown to love it so well that they felt they could not stand by to hear the sound of saw and hammer doing their work of destruction.

And now the carpenter was sent on board. But—once again a wonder! Sharp axe and saw slipped from the planks like children's toys. Again and again with all his might he wielded axe and hammer. It was all in vain. The ship simply *would* not be destroyed.

"Something must have been left on board," said the men. But after careful search there was found nothing—nothing whatever.

At last Arnulf went on board, and after a time he stumbled upon a little door into a cupboard most carefully hidden, and looking in he saw a small leaden coffer lying there.

Instantly his father's words came into his mind, and he carefully hid the little chest until he could bestow it in his new boat. So soon as he left the old smack it trembled, it creaked and groaned; the masts crashed down, the sides burst asunder; the boat heeled over and sank beneath the waves. It was never seen or heard of more.

Things still prospered with Arnulf, but a change gradually came over him; the love of gold grew ever stronger within him until it became his master passion. He was no longer satisfied with being the richest, the most respected boatman of the island; his ambition craved something greater.

The "Wolf-brothers" found this out and thought they could turn it to their own uses. They begged him to join them in their wild, lawless, adventurous life. At first he refused; but again and again they made him tempting offers, promising to let him be their leader and their captain. They won over Arnulf's steersman, Treulos, to their side, for he was greatly in the confidence of his master. Unhappily for himself, Arnulf listened to this false friend and adviser, and, yielding at last to his greed for gold, consented to join them.

His name now became the terror of the seas. He was cursed and outlawed by those whom he had before led to victory. Everyone fled before him, for it seemed as if nothing could withstand or daunt him in his magic boat. It was proof against fire and waves, and seemed, truly, to bear a charmed life.

But its owner was not happy. Ever there sounded in his ears the sad and warning voice of "Ehrengeist."

The booty won by robbery and violence did Arnulf little good, for, strange to say, it would not remain with him. As he and his companions sat carousing in the cabin, overhead they would hear heavy footsteps moving to and fro, and bales of goods were rolled over the vessel's sides into the waves around. At other times they would find the ill-gotten gains torn or destroyed, lying all around.

No harm came to the boat or to the crew, but all Arnulf's first companions, those who were good and honest men, declared that they could stay no longer, and they left the service of their captain in a body.

One night as Arnulf and his boon companion, Treulos the steersman, sat drinking together, a tumult suddenly arose such as they had never heard before. Blows like thunder claps sounded on all sides of the vessel, which reeled and staggered. Voices, loud and terrible, were heard around. Blue and yellow flames like streamers rose higher and higher above the masts in fiery tongues. The terrified crew knew not what to do. Treulos, Arnulf's bad genius, came to him, urging him to throw overboard the little chest in which the boat-spirit, "Ehrengeist," was hidden (for Arnulf had told him the secret). All the trouble, he was sure, was caused by the spirit.

"Get rid of him, therefore, once for all," insisted he.

For some time Arnulf hesitated. At last yielding to the temptation of his ill-adviser, he went to the little cupboard and drew thence the leaden chest. As he did so a soft and mournful voice sighed:

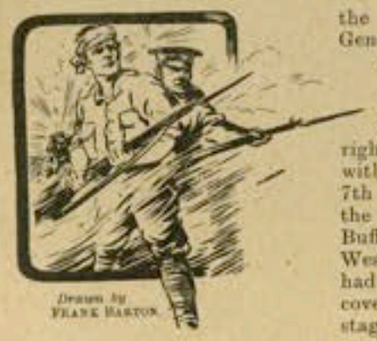
"Arnulf, I leave thee for ever."

He laid the coffer on the deck, turned away, and with one powerful kick Treulos spurned it into the sea. At the same moment a deep, long-drawn cry of pain sounded over the now silent, peaceful waters.

The sailors congratulated themselves on the sudden calm that had followed the storm and tumult. But soon their joy was turned into surprise and fear as they found that the boat was shattered, leaking, torn, a mere wreck! The helm was torn away, and the boat, without help or guidance, drifted out to sea. At last, after twelve long weary days, they espied a sail in the distance. Hope sprang up in their breasts, and they signalled with all their might, but in vain. A tremendous wave struck the disabled and water-logged boat, and it was buried with all on board beneath the waves.

"Ehrengeist," the boat-spirit, no longer a kindly guide and protector, had become a stern and merciless avenger.

HEROES OF THE SOMME BATTLE.



Drawn by FRANK BARTON.

EVERY boy should beg, borrow or buy a copy of Dr. Conan Doyle's history of "The British Campaign in France and Flanders, 1916." For it gives in graphic detail what most of us have only known in general—the wonderful story of British valour in the Battle of the Somme.

In one sense it is too big for us to grasp, too magnificent to realise. For it was not like Waterloo, a compact combat on a limited scale, begun and ended in a single day, but a series of fights continuing day after day—"a battle which opened," as one reviewer has said, "with an attack by 230,000 British troops on a twenty-mile front, a battle in which, from first to last, nearly three million men were engaged, and in which the total casualties were at least three-quarters of a million."

As a sample of Dr. Conan Doyle's clear, direct style, we should like to quote his account of how Montauban was taken by the Thirteenth Corps under General Congreve on the first day of the battle:—

"The hardest fighting of any fell to the lot of the 55th Brigade upon the right. The advance was made with the 8th East Surrey and 7th Queen's Surrey in front, the latter to the left. The 7th Buffs were in support and the 7th West Kents in reserve. No sooner had the troops come out from cover than they were met by a staggering fire which held them up in the Breslau Trench. The supports had soon to be pushed up to thicken the ranks of the East Surrey—a battalion which, with the ineradicable sporting instinct and light-heartedness of the Londoner, had dribbled footballs, one for each platoon, across No Man's Land and shot their goal in the front-line trench.

"A crater had been formed by a mine explosion, forming a gap in the German front, and round this crater a fierce fight raged for some time, the Germans rushing down a side sap which brought them up to the fray. Into this side sap sprang an officer and a sergeant of the Buffs, and killed twelve of the Germans, cutting off their flow of reinforcements, while half a company of the same battalion cleared up the crater and captured a machine-gun which had fought to the last cartridge.

"It is worth recording that in the case of one of these machine-guns the gunner was actually found with a four-foot chain attaching him to the tripod. Being badly wounded and unable to disengage himself, the wretched man had dragged himself, his wound, and his tripod for some distance before being captured by the British. The fact was duly established by a sworn inquiry.

"The brigade was winning its way forward, but the hard resistance of the Germans had delayed it to such a point that there was a danger that it would not be in its place so as to cover the left flank of the 90th Brigade, who were due to attack Montauban at 10 a.m. Such a failure might make the difference between victory and defeat. At this critical moment the officer commanding the East Surreys dashed to the front, re-formed his own men with all whom he could collect and led them onwards. Captain Neville was killed in gallantly leading the rush, but the wave went forward.

"There was check after check, but the point had to be won, and the Suffolks of the 53rd Brigade were brought round to strengthen the attack, while the West Kents were pushed forward to the fighting line. By midday two platoons of West Kents were into Montauban Alley, and had seized two houses at the western end of Montauban, which were rapidly fortified by a section of the 92nd Field Company. The flank of the 90th was assured. A South African officer led the first group of Surrey men who seized Montauban. He is said during the action to have slain seventeen of the enemy."

'TWIXT RIVAL SCHOOLS.

By F. L. MORGAN,

Author of "The Lost Medal," "Against Heavy Odds," "The Big House in the Wood," etc.

CHAPTER XVIII.—*LYNWOOD IS AWAKENED.*

THAT morning, sad to relate, the third form of Storr Cross had had a serious difference of opinion with Mr. Pickthall, their form-master, over the strange disappearance of an unknown quantity called *x*, which, in spite of the perspiring efforts of the third form, utterly refused to come forward and declare itself, evidently preferring to remain, so far as they were concerned, for ever unknown.

The result of this was that, after a short and sharp encounter with Mr. Pickthall, whose patience was ever short-lived, about half the third form found itself spending the greater part of a gloriously fine and warm half-holiday in their class-room looking for the elusive *x*.

As each one, after further explanations on the blackboard by Mr. Pickthall, found it he was allowed to go free. When Chalmers and Bolingbroke had successively triumphed, Mr. Pickthall sent them out, told the remaining sufferer to finish his work properly before leaving, and to place it on his (Mr. Pickthall's) desk. The master then hurried off, for half-holidays were as precious to him as to the third form.

"Golly," said Bolingbroke, when they were just outside, "what a rotten muck-up of a free half! It's nearly four o'clock. What shall we do!"

They stood just beneath the open window of their classroom, and the solitary inmate within, hearing their voices, rose from his desk, intending to ask for a tip with regard to finding the unknown quantity, for somehow his brain, usually quick enough, seemed muddled and slow. He did not speak, however, for he saw something from the window that made him draw back quickly with a sudden feeling of apprehension.

Bolingbroke and Chalmers saw the same thing, or, rather, the same small person, at the same moment.

"Hal—lo," remarked Bolingbroke in an under-tone, genuinely amazed, "look what the wind has blown in!"

"It's that little kid who lives in the cottage on the cliff," said Chalmers, staring round-eyed at the Pewk, who was bearing rapidly down upon them.

Daintily dressed in a clean frock of palest pink, with a big bow of voluminous black ribbon on her flaxen curls, the Pewk was a pleasing sight, but she did not impress the Storr Cross juniors that way—at least, they were not conscious of it.

"I say, you know," said Chalmers, addressing himself to the visitor with politeness, "you musn't come in here—this is the school."

"I know," replied the Pewk in her clear little voice, and with her sweetest smile. "But I want to find Christopher!"

The occupant of the classroom, who was at the window just above, frowned fiercely. How dared that kid come here after him—and what might she not say next! If she gave herself away to Chalmers and Bolingbroke, all his (Lynwood's) trouble to shield her from discovery would come to nothing! Getting closer to the window, but keeping out of sight, Christopher, with a beating heart, listened eagerly.

As the Pewk finished speaking Bolingbroke gave Chalmers a severe pinch, which was borne in silence, that young hero merely giving it as his opinion that Lynwood Secundus would not be forthcoming that afternoon. Both juniors were oblivious of the proximity of the classroom and the open window.

"Why!" asked the Pewk rather anxiously. "I very 'ticularly want to speak to him to-day, because I'm going away till Friday with my mummy!"

At this Bolingbroke, showing every evidence of internal explosiveness, relieved his feelings by kicking Chalmers violently on the calf.

"Shut up, you silly ass!" said Chalmers. Then, addressing himself once more to the Pewk, he added, "Lynwood Secundus is rather busy to-day, and I'm sorry, but I think you'd better go now, if you don't mind, because any minute some of the other kids or one of the masters might come along!"

The small girl did not seem much impressed, but after a moment's thought she said sweetly, "Then will you please give him a message for me!"

Before Chalmers could reply in the affirmative, a large and rather loutish form, whose approach had not been noticed, pushed into the little group.

"What's all this!" said Eaves, harshly. "Who is this precious kid, and what's she doing in here!"

Chalmers and Bolingbroke answered nothing, but both looked uncomfortable and annoyed. Eaves was no favourite of theirs.

The Pewk, ignoring the newcomer after one little glance of protest at his rough manners and grating voice, turned again to Chalmers. "Please say that I've got something very important to tell him, and that I'll be down in the Secret Cave Coombe next Friday!"

"This is rich!" said Eaves, with a loud laugh, and putting out a hand to stay the small girl's departure. "And who, at Storr Cross, is to have this interesting message!"

Lynwood Secundus, hearing every word from above, felt the blood go to his head with indignation at the fourth-form boy's tones.

"Go on—leave the kid alone, Eaves, it's not your business!" said Bolingbroke.

"Oh, isn't it, my fine kid! We'll see about that!" said Eaves, with no intention of doing anything but making himself generally unpleasant, his victims all being smaller and weaker than himself. "Now, young lady, perhaps you'll tell me who it is you want to see so particularly on Friday!"

"It is Christopher Lynwood," replied the Pewk with dignity, giving Eaves one look of childish distaste as she turned to go.

But Eaves had no intention of letting her go yet. Noting the extreme discomfort and annoyance on the faces of the two juniors, he foresaw more sport of the kind that his miserable soul revelled in.

"Lynwood Secundus!" he said loudly. "That underhanded little sneak-thief!"

As he spoke Eaves took hold of the small girl's arm to detain her, quite gently, but his harsh voice and forbidding manner frightened her, and she suddenly began to cry.

Lynwood Secundus, his face scarlet with rage, was about to shout furiously at Eaves, when once more the sight of yet another addition to the little group made him draw back quickly.

"What are you doing, Eaves, to that little kid!" asked Jim Lynwood coolly, coming suddenly upon the scene.

Eaves released the Pewk instantly, and his face grew uncomfortably warm. "Nothing, Lynwood," he said nervously. "I—I didn't hurt her."

"But you've upset the kid and made her cry," went on the senior, with his stern eyes still on the fourth-form boy. "You miserable little cad!" he added disgustedly.

The Pewk, after one glance at Jim's face, and seeing it so like Christopher's, in spite of its stern expression, ran over to him and grasped his hand with confidence. She had stopped crying, and wanted only to get home to her mother.

"He didn't hurt me," she said eagerly. "Only I—I want to go home. Can I go home now!"

"Yes, of course, kiddie; but, you know, you mustn't come into the school, or you might get into difficulties again," said Lynwood kindly. "Off you go!"

The small girl ran down the drive, turning at the gates to wave to Lynwood, who waved back to her. Then his manner changed.

"Now, Eaves," he said briskly, "we can get to business. Will you repeat what you said just as I came round the corner!"

Eaves turned a sickly yellow. "I—I don't remember. I didn't say anything particular, Lynwood."

"Yes—about Lynwood Secundus," said the prefect very distinctly.

Eaves' breath came short. He saw the anger underlying Lynwood's calmness, and he was, like most bullies, an unmitigated coward. "I didn't mean anything, really, Lynwood," he said humbly. "I'm very sorry."

Lynwood thrust his hands in his pockets savagely. "Then I suppose I can't give you what you deserve," he said. "But let me hear of you saying a word of that kind about Lynwood Secundus again, and I'll give you the best thrashing you ever had in your life, or are likely to have. See, you miserable little reptile!"

Eaves, looking very crestfallen, shuffled off, and Lynwood turned and looked searchingly at Chalmers and Bolingbroke. Apparently satisfied with what he saw in their faces, he asked abruptly, "Is that idiotic lie *believed* in the Junior School!"

Both juniors hesitated, then Chalmers began, awkwardly, "Well—not by us, Lynwood——"

"All right," cut in Lynwood, "you needn't say any more!" He walked off, looking very fierce.

Meanwhile Christopher, who had overheard everything, went slowly back to his desk. He knew now that Jim believed in him, had believed in him all along, and he was ashamed that he had ever doubted Jim's faith. He felt extraordinarily happy though, and it seemed to him that with Jim on his side he could bear *anything*, until somehow things were straightened out. Tears of real joy came into Christopher's eyes, and when he had cleared them away such a lot of sadness had disappeared from his mind that in less than three minutes he had found the unknown quantity that equalled *x*, and was free to go.

It was then that he remembered the Pewk's message. Since he had thought that the small girl (in ignorance of the wrong, he always felt sure) had taken some of Mr. Saville's shells in order (in her mistaken childish way) to help him, Christopher, to win the prize the junior had carefully avoided his little playmate. He felt he could not meet her with that dreadful secret on his mind. However, rather than she should come again to the school, he decided to go down to the Secret Cave Coombe next Friday after school, and to listen to the "something very important" that the small girl had said she wished to tell him.

The junior didn't know how truly important the Pewk's information was likely to be, and how it contained the key to the mystery of the shells, explaining it in a way he had never dreamed of.

CHAPTER XIX.—*LYNWOOD'S DECISION.*

MEANWHILE Jim Lynwood strode on up to the field with his thoughts in rather a whirl. For the first time he realised that the rumour about his young brother had taken fast hold of the school, until now it was very generally believed. The question was, how to stop it?

Lynwood, angry and puzzled, wondered why the authorities had not taken the matter in hand and cleared it up. Young Christopher would not want to keep the prize if it was not his by rights—but to have his honesty and good faith questioned was another matter!

As he thought about it Lynwood shut his teeth hard. There had been rather a coolness between old Mac and himself. Was it possible that Macmillan also believed?

Lynwood walked more quickly, but his face was as calm as usual as he entered the field and went over to the nets.

There was a fair-sized crowd round the captain's pitch, larger even than usual, for the return match with Redlands was coming off the following week, and Storr Cross was conscious of an almost passionate desire to rise above the weakness that had seemed to pervade their cricket this season and to win that match.

Therefore quite a large gathering hung about the captain's pitch, to listen and watch the great men of the school as they talked and practised and discussed chances. Even juniors crept in, to hang worshipfully on the words of wisdom that fell from the lips of Macmillan, as he chatted with other members of the first eleven.

The cricket captain quickly espied Lynwood coming up, and with a sudden desire to bridge over the inexplicable little coolness that had somehow risen between them, he called out:

"What ho, Lyn! Put the pads on and come on, will you?"

There was no answering smile on Lynwood's face, and Macmillan's heart sank rather. He hated being out of it with Jim. Lynwood advanced slowly, saying for all to hear:

"No, thanks—I'll leave it for those who need it, till after next week!"

"What do you mean by that?" asked Macmillan, with a queer feeling of apprehension.

"I only mean, Macmillan," replied Lynwood easily, "that as I shall not be playing against Redlands next week, I won't take up time at the nets."

There was absolute silence. It is no exaggeration to say that many of the fellows present held their breath. The colour mounted to Macmillan's forehead, and his voice was hard when he spoke.

"Not play, Lynwood? What the dickens do you mean?"

"Just that, Macmillan. I don't intend to play against Redlands."

"What rot!" replied the cricket captain, obviously losing patience. "You are our best bat—I don't see that you can refuse to play."

"Don't you?" said Lynwood steadily. "Well, I can, and do, absolutely!"

Macmillan advanced until he stood within a foot of Lynwood. He was cricket captain, and he knew that every ounce of skill that Storr Cross possessed would be needed in the forthcoming match. He forgot entirely that he and Jim were not alone in the field.

"What are your reasons?" he asked peremptorily.

Lynwood's mouth tightened, and he regarded his chum steadily. He had not forgotten the audience who had drawn silently nearer. "I don't feel it necessary to give them," he said with distinctness. "But if you want to know, it is because I won't play for the school until the matter concerning Lynwood Secundus is explained!"

The fellows round stirred, glancing at each other uneasily. Especially affected was Bates, who looked as he felt, ashamed of himself.

Macmillan's flush grew deeper. If Lynwood persisted in his mad idea, the match with Redlands was as good as lost already.

"What utter rot!" he said fiercely. "What's the kid got to do with your playing for the school? Besides, I thought you settled that when you fought Jennison."

A thrill of excitement went round the crowd, which was increasing in dimensions every minute. At last Lynwood's black eye, the appearance of which had electrified the school some weeks ago, was explained.

"I did—so far as he was concerned. But I'm not disposed to fight all the cads at Storr Cross who are feeble-minded enough to believe in it," replied Lynwood icily.

Macmillan, with a hand that shook rather, picked up his bat. "Is this final, Lynwood? Because I warn you plainly that if you persist you are in danger of losing your colours."

Lynwood's eyes flashed dangerously, but he replied coolly enough, "That's for your ruling, of course, Macmillan. Anyway, it's quite final that I don't play for or with anybody who thinks Lynwood Secundus is not absolutely on the square!"

Without waiting for an answer Lynwood, his head in the air, walked off alone. Macmillan snappishly ordered a resumption of practice, and the tongues of the spellbound audience were loosened.

CHAPTER XX.—*NEARING A CRISIS.*

LYNWOOD had made a deep impression in Christopher's favour, but his own popularity had received a blow. His high-handed action in defying the cricket captain and refusing to play when he was so urgently needed was criticised very adversely.

As for Christopher, such is the rapidity with which thought sometimes changes its channels, within a few days Storr Crossians were, for the most part, assuring one another that they,

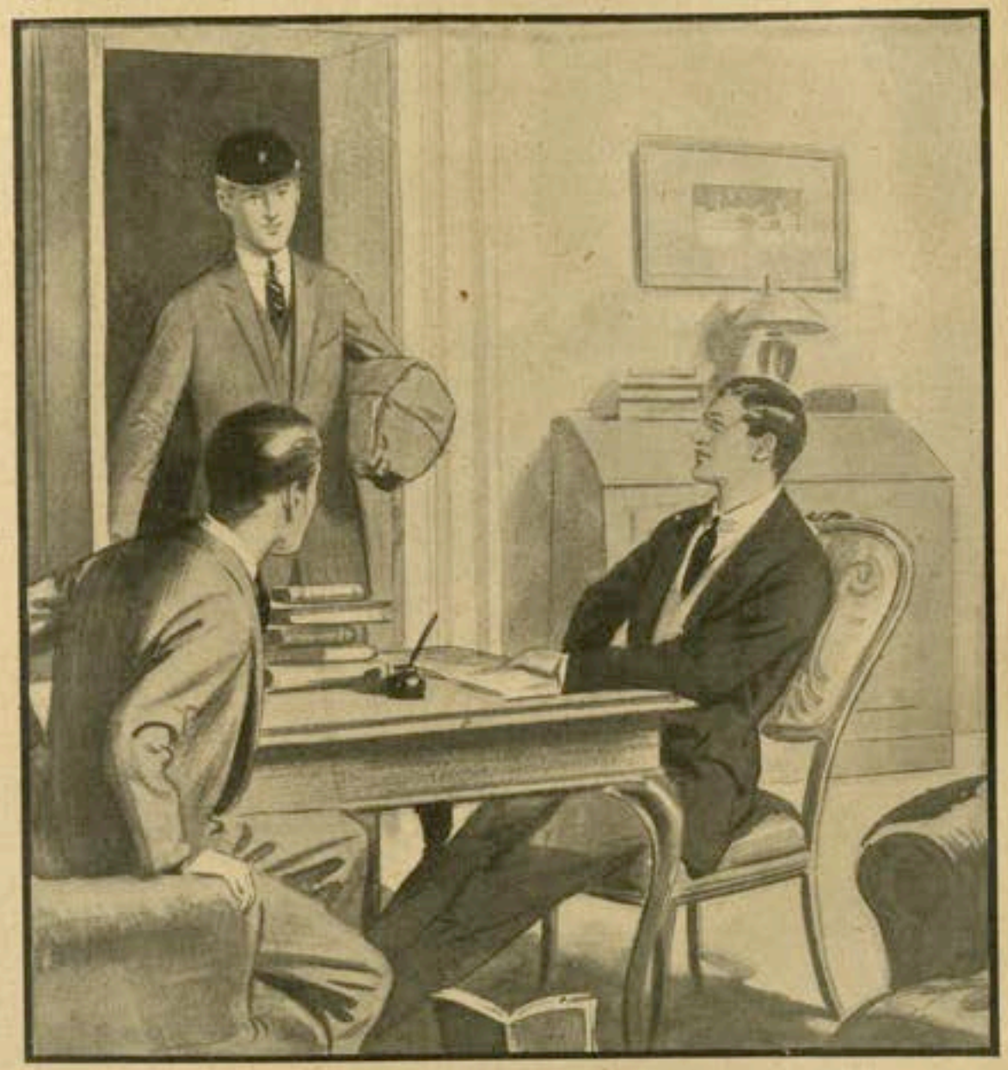
personally, had *never* believed that the kid had done anything really wrong, only it was such a dashed funny rumour that it ought to be cleared up! What the dickens was at the bottom of it, anyhow?

Lynwood Secundus heard of the scene at the nets, felt the change in the atmosphere, and was grateful for it. But fear lest the Pewk's share in the mystery should be discovered made him reserved and difficult, and also prevented him from going to his brother to tell him the whole story, and to establish friendly relations between them—which he most ardently longed to do.

It troubled the junior very much that Jim, on his account, would not be playing against Redlands, and he grasped at an idea which came to him that seemed to offer relief to the general situation. If he were to withdraw from the competition altogether, and give up the prize, he reasoned to himself, the whole matter would most likely be allowed to drop.

* * * * *

Absolute silence reigned in the most comfortable den at Storr Cross. Since the scene up at the nets nearly a week ago Lynwood and Macmillan had not exchanged one word other than necessity demanded. Lynwood had remained proudly obstinate in his decision, while Macmillan, though longing to be on good terms again, yet felt that he had



"THERE STOOD JENNISON, CAPTAIN OF REDLANDS COLLEGE."

Drawn by REX OSBORNE.

right on his side, and ought not to give in. Both, as they sat at work, were thinking regretfully of the time when prep. had been agreeably and profitably shared in a manner that meant half labour and full benefit to each.

As though in sympathy with the disturbances at Storr Cross, the weather for some days had been gradually working itself up to a state of turbulence rare in July. And to-day, which was Friday, a storm of wind had swept over the country all day, squalling and screeching round corners, and setting the windows and doors of the school rattling and shaking. The sound of the waves could be heard booming on the shore like distant gun-fire.

Five times Macmillan had looked up, meaning to say that it was very rough, or some such remark, just to break the awful silence, but each time the sight of Lynwood's smooth, irreproachable parting, bent low over his work, had seemed to discourage and restrain him.

The sound of a measured tread in the corridor, followed by a loud knock on the door, made both fellows look up.

"Come in!" said Lynwood.

Of all people the visitor was the very last to be expected. With an apologetic expression in his honest eyes, rampantly curly hair beneath his cap, and a large brown-paper parcel under his arm, stood Jennison, captain of Redlands College.

"I wanted particularly to see you, Lynwood, and, as I didn't meet anybody, I found the number of your study in the downstairs corridor and came right up. I hope you don't mind."

"Not a bit," replied Lynwood. "There's no need for you to go, Macmillan," he added, stiffly, as Macmillan rose.

The Storr Cross cricket captain sat down again, apparently to work, and Jennison, at Lynwood's courteous invitation, came further into the room. He laid the brown-paper parcel on the table.

"Just have a look at that, Lynwood, will you? I thought I'd better come over and tell you what I know about it."

Lynwood stripped off the paper and disclosed a fine microscope.

"There's a note—read it," said Jennison, taking no notice of the peculiar expression on the face of the Storr Crossian.

Lynwood read it. It was quite short, and said simply that Lynwood Secundus wished the prize given over to the rightful winner at Redlands, and would Jennison please drop a note to Lynwood Primus, telling him this had been done, and that as the matter was now ended there was no reason why he should not take his place in the field at the Redlands match to-morrow.

"You can guess it puzzled me a bit," said Jennison.

Lynwood screwed the note into a tight ball. "Well?" he said.

"Well," replied Jennison, bluntly. "I don't know anything about you playing to-morrow or not, but I do think this kid ought to be righted. The fact is that he found the shells straightforwardly enough."

"We know that!" cut in Macmillan, looking up from his books. Lynwood flashed a glance at him, but said nothing.

"Great Scott, yes," replied Jennison, "but you didn't any of you take trouble enough to get to the root of the affair—because, sure enough, those shells *were* stolen from Saville, and naturally suspicion fell on young Lynwood. But, though I'm no detective, I can tell you who the real culprit is, because, of course, if Lynwood Secundus didn't take them somebody else did, and hid them in the sand where he found them."

"Go on, Jennison," said Lynwood, as the other paused. Both he and Macmillan were listening with the deepest attention.

"It was a girl—a little kid that Lynwood Secundus knows, and she admitted to me that she had 'helped' him with his collection, but that he didn't know it. Whether he has guessed the truth and is keeping quiet for her sake——"

The Redlands captain stopped speaking as Lynwood strode towards the door.

"I say, sit down, Jennison," he said, over his shoulder. Opening the door, he called down the passage "Hi! you kid there—go and find Lynwood Secundus. I want him at once—*at once*, do you hear!"

Lynwood came back into the room. "You're right, Jennison, this ought to have been looked into before. But I didn't know it had gone so far, and, anyway, I've been no end of a fool with regard to my young brother. It is awfully decent of you to come over—we'll soon put it straight now. I had no idea that Saville's shells had really been nicked. Why on earth hasn't he taken the matter up!"

Jennison shook his head. As he had said, he was no detective. He was gazing with much appreciation round the little study, and as his eyes fell upon the photograph in the centre of the mantelshelf he got up to have a closer view of Reggie Lynwood.

"This a brother of yours? Exactly like you, Lynwood," he said pleasantly, glancing round.

Lynwood made no immediate reply, and Macmillan raised his head quickly, intending to change the subject. But something in Lynwood's face had gone home to Jennison, who added, simply, "My dad was killed at Bullecourt."

Lynwood looked up with an understanding smile, and at that moment the door opened to admit Chalmers, whose jaw dropped with surprise at the sight of the man from Redlands.

"I thought I sent you to find Lynwood Secundus," said Lynwood.

"I know—I can't find him. He hasn't come back yet, please Lynwood!"

"Not come back!" echoed Lynwood, with a quick glance at his watch. It was already time for junior lock-up. "Where has he gone!"

"He went down to Rocky Bay," replied Chalmers, "directly after school. He wasn't in for tea." The junior looked uneasy as he spoke.

"Rocky Bay will be full up with water—no one could go down there on a day like this," said Jennison, decidedly.

"I know he went there," persisted Chalmers, looking still more uneasy. "He—he went to meet somebody."

There was a brief, doubtful sort of silence. Lynwood was the first to move.

"What time is high tide!" he asked, calmly reaching up for his cap, which hung on a corner of a picture. Macmillan, who was making no further pretence at work, looked fixedly at his chum.

"At six, I believe," replied Jennison. "But it comes in very quickly, and in a storm like this the sea would be dashing against the cliffs, ten or twelve feet deep, before that. It would be quite impos. for the kid to be down there, Lynwood."

"Unless he went down earlier to that cave of his and got caught," suggested Chalmers, turning pale.

"Shut up!" said Lynwood, angrily. "Don't croak. What cave!"

"I know the cave the kid means," interrupted Jennison. "I've seen him go there often—and the little Pewkastor child as well."

"Oh, well, come on then, and show me the place," said Lynwood. "That is, if you've got time, Jennison. And you, Chalmers, just cut back to your own day-room and keep your mouth shut—see? Not a word, remember!"

"But, Lynwood," protested Jennison, as the other, whistling a little tune under his breath, began, quickly and deftly, to take several things from the cupboard and distribute them about his person, notably a coil of rope of the kind sometimes used to string up nets, "it's no use trying to reach the cave—it will be full of water. Besides, I doubt if we could stand on the cliffs even, in this wind."

"Well, anyhow, I'm going out there," replied Lynwood, with decision.

"All right, I'm with you, but you are a fool—we shall never get down there. Is Macmillan coming?" The Redlands man had failed to notice anything unusual between the two Storr Crossians, though it had struck him that Macmillian was unusually silent.

Lynwood didn't confirm the suggested invitation, but he looked once at his chum, as Macmillan, with a sick feeling of despair, pulled a Latin dictionary towards him and blindly opened it.

Lynwood and Jennison went out into the corridor, and at the head of the stairs Lynwood paused and half turned his head.

"Aren't you coming, Mac?" he shouted.

There was a sound of a chair falling as Macmillan started up, and the next instant he, too, was at the head of the stairs. Jennison had gone on in front, and was already outside.

"If young Chris is all right I shall play to-morrow—if you still want me to, Mac," said Lynwood, staring straight in front of him, as the two descended the stairs side by side.

"Oh, hang to-morrow!" returned Macmillan with fervour, suddenly thrusting his arm through that of his chum. "And you can bet your life the kid's all right—he's got plenty of sense, Lyn!"

(*Continued on page* 220.)

FEARING DEATH, BUT FACING IT.

THERE have been many writers, especially during the last few years, who have tried their hand at describing the feelings of the soldier under fire—the feeling of fear, its presence or absence, the rapid rush of thoughts through the brain, the influence of habit in urging or restraining, and so on.

That he should feel fear is natural, with the prospect of sudden death or lingering suffering thus before him. Some men, it is true, are too dense and unimaginative to feel it, and some realise the risks perfectly, and yet feel no fear. They are a minority, and not a large one.

Mr. Stephen Bonsal, writing some years ago in *McClure's Magazine*, supplied some instances from the Spanish-American War of men who felt the full force of fear and went forward in an agony, but held themselves to it by sheer force of will.

He refers to the gallant advance of the Americans through the jungle and up the heights of San Juan under a withering fire of bullets.

A young officer whom Bonsal knew was so changed in the expression of his face that the correspondent hardly recognised him.

"His company had been halted for a minute by the little hillock behind which I lay in almost perfect security, and where there was security for others, too. But he had to go on, leading the hundred men who would obey him implicitly, who would follow him either right up to the enemy's lines, or in a cowardly flight off the field, just as he said, just as he led. Seeing my anxiety at the suffering I had surprised in his face, he said:

"'I'm sweating with fear; but I will go ahead all right, and keep my men in line, too, never fear.'

"He went on, and by force of character and unwavering devotion to duty, carried his weak and protesting body into the zone of fire.

"That evening I listened to those who told how gallantly he had died at the head of his company in the charge up the heights, and I thought then, and have thought many times since, that although many died there, none showed such heroism or was deserving of such praise as this man, who was born a coward, and who died at the head of the charge with the bravest of the brave."

The brave officer forced his reluctant body to go where it was his duty to go.

It reminds us of the words uttered by Marshal Turenne, long ago, when, as he mounted his horse to ride to the front, he said to his trembling knees: "If you knew where I am going to take you to-day you would quake more than you do."

Surely that is the very acme of courage—nobler than that which defies danger and laughs at fear because it cannot feel it.

THE OLDEST SEAPORT OF ALL.

By Nigel Tourneur.



THE PORT OF ADEN.

FEW of us connect Aden, our possession on the south-west coast of Arabia, with what is probably the oldest existing seaport in the world. But here is a centre of shipping which was busy when all but the south-east corner of Europe was unknown—and when Britain was hidden in the darkness of barbarism—and it is busy still.

Aden, also known as the "Indian Gibraltar," ought to prove even a harder nut for an enemy to crack than the famous Rock guarding the entrance to the inland sea. No stronger fortified base exists.

Bombarded and seized in January, 1839, in satisfaction for injuries to British subjects, Aden was the first accession of territory recorded in the reign of Queen Victoria; and never in its palmiest days before the Christian era was that great headland such an important seat of trade as it has become since the opening of the Suez Canal.

The "key" of the Red Sea route to India, and of the Persian Gulf as well, this grim, gaunt-looking base was menaced by the Turks in the present great war, but only from a distance in the Yemen behind it. No British possession, save Gibraltar, and, perhaps, Malta, is so strongly defended by a system of land fortifications, and the general defences of the narrow isthmus connecting Aden with the mainland of Arabia, together with the forts to seaward.

Aden can hardly be termed popular even with the visitors off the passenger steamers that coal here, and in certain cases tranship cargo and passengers for Bombay and other ports. Yet, notwithstanding it is the hottest spot in the British Empire, and the driest and dustiest, too, there are many interesting features in addition to the oldest seaport in the world.

Maala, the Arab village, not far from the town, Steamer Point, that is facing the inner harbour, with its square mud-built houses arranged irregularly along the sides of the bay, was of seafaring note, and built dhows, as it does now, in the years of Tyre and Sidon. To-day, as then, it forms the maritime outlet for much commerce from the Yemen. It also claims to be the burial-place of Abel—the tomb being far up the wall of the cliff. Many Biblical scholars and others aver that Aden was the "Garden of Eden," and the "flaming sword" which drove forth Adam was the eruption of the vast crater formed of the high hills composing the headland itself.

Inside the crater lies the town of Aden, between four and five miles by rock-hewn road and passage from Steamer Point, and connected by a tunnel with the isthmus and the mainland beyond. Here two regiments of British and Indian troops always occupy the military cantonments; the garrison artillery and the sappers being stationed on several of the rugged spurs that slope to seaward, radiating from the crater, with a series of narrow barren valleys between them and the crater, as if from a common centre.

Opposite the town of Aden are the tanks, which both as regards construction and arrangement are so remarkable. It has been stated there are about fifty—dating back at their latest to the Persian occupation of the Yemen in 600 A.D.—which, if entirely cleared out, would hold nearly 30,000,000 gallons. At this day some thirteen are in use, holding about 8,000,000 gallons of rain-water. The rain, when it does fall, usually once in seven years, is drained into them by a most cleverly contrived network of stone channels and aqueducts, the overflow of one tank being conducted into the succeeding one, and thus a complete chain formed, reaching the town.

At the present time condensers also supply fresh water, which is brought round daily in a camel cart, and measured out for domestic purposes. With a large and increasing population, in a hot, dry climate, the ancient reservoirs are again becoming of vital importance.

At Steamer Point all the shops and business houses are situated, with broad shady verandahs, beneath which one of the most mixed populations of the East passes up and down, and camels and motor cars crowd the "street." Arabs and Turks, Parsees, Hindus and Indian Mohammedans, Somalis and other Africans, British civilians and sailors and soldiers mix in the traffic.

Despite the everlasting lava and dust, the hot, stifling atmosphere, and the total absence of greenery, it is an interesting scene. On each spur or headland around stand the open bungalows of the Europeans and Government officials. In the little sandy coves, and between the headland and Little Aden or Jebel Hasan, a group of volcanic rocks, some two miles to the westward, the native fishermen in their quaint craft are catching skate and other fish in the blue sea. The octopus, shark, dugong and others also frequent the waters.

Vegetables and other supplies for everyday life are brought in by steamer and dhow from Somaliland, and by camel from the oases in the near desert. The largest of these is that of the Sheikh Othman, about eight miles inland. Here the Adenese and Europeans, when tired of their monotonous brown rock and broiling heat, find the refreshing green of gardens, and palms, and mimosa, and other trees.

Some six miles out in the parched, roasting desert is situated the headquarters of the landward defence—the Aden Troop, at Khor Maksar. Composed of a camel detachment and of cavalry from the Punjab, its duty is to hold the isthmus, and maintain law and order among the Arabs in British territory. Despite the heat and the drought, the officers of the Troop have a capital golf course and polo ground, and extract a considerable amount of enjoyment out of their surroundings.

With only one spot can Aden be compared, and that is Perim, to westward of the "cinder heap," as Aden has been called. To adopt similar phraseology, Perim is a "hot ash heap." Long low ranges of volcanic hills and salt, sandy plains, covered with boulders and masses of black lava, are its distinguishing features. There is not a drop of water, not a scrap of greenery. Every ounce of stores for the British garrison in its casemated batteries and fort, and for the Eastern Telegraph Company's officials, has to be conveyed hither, as was the water also till condensers were set up.

A truly "impossible" place, and yet it serves its purpose, and supplies a link in the far-strung territories of the British Empire.

MONSTER CANNON OF THE ANCIENTS.

By W. A. Atkinson.

THE early history of the use of gunpowder is lost in the mists of the past, but cannon are known to have been in use in Europe for about six hundred years. Edward the Third employed them against the Scots in the year 1327.

The records of monster guns go almost as far back.

We were all startled when the news came that Paris was being shelled by the Germans at a distance of sixty miles, and many were the theories advanced as to how their "Long Bertha" threw its missiles so far. But the ancients had their big cannon too.

Philip Van Artevelde made use of an enormous bombard when he laid siege to Oudenarde in 1382. This bombard was fifty feet in length, and threw immense stone balls. The report of the weapon could be heard at a distance of five leagues in the daytime and twice as far in the stillness of the night.

About the same time the Venetians were using similar bombards in their war with the Genoese. These weapons fired stone shot weighing a hundred and fifty or two hundred pounds each. There was, of course, little precision in the firing, but when one of these stones did fall in a vulnerable spot it effected much damage. Peter Doria, the Genoese admiral, and a score of others with him, were killed by the fall of a wall knocked down by one such lucky shot.

It was deemed unsafe or unwise to fire more than one shot a day from these guns, and so they were loaded overnight and fired in the morning!

But the wonder of ancient times was a monster gun made for the siege of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453.

It was designed by a Christian Pole or Hungarian, who had accepted a large bribe and entered the service of Mahomet II. The gun was cast at Adrianople in a factory specially constructed for the purpose. It measured 36 in. across the muzzle, and the weight of the shot is variously stated at five and ten hundredweight, and even much higher. One account says that the cannon threw a two-ton shot a distance of a mile and a half. The concussion of the trial shots shook the houses for thirteen miles round Adrianople.

A team of sixty oxen and hundreds of labourers were required to convey the huge weapon from Adrianople to the fighting line at Constantinople, and the journey occupied two months. The cannon was a brass one, and it took so long to cool that it did not fire more than seven shots a day. The weapon burst while the siege was in progress.

The Turks had other guns of a much smaller size, which were probably far more useful than this huge "Jack Johnson." They carried the siege, and wrested Constantinople from the Christians, and they have held it ever since.

HOW THEY SAVED THE SHACK.

A STORY OF A CANADIAN FOREST FIRE.

By L. B. THOBURN-CLARKE.

THE shack stood on a mountain spur that appeared to rise among the pines and stretch like the back of a great brown whale down to the river that swirled and eddied in a bend below.

The ridge was quite bare of trees, and the small brush that covered its surface was dried up by the summer heat. But the pine forest came close up to the log hut, and the great trees sheltered it from the sudden mountain storms that swept fiercely down to where a long chain of reed-fringed lakes lay bathed in the glowing sunlight.

Dick and Dave Travers cleaned their guns, and longingly gazed out over the wide forest that lay between them and the lakes. They had begged their father to allow them to go with him and help fight the forest fires that were raging through the woods of Ontario, but he had been firm in his refusal.

"No, no," he had said, as he mounted his broncho, and, driving the loaded pack horse in front of him, had vanished down the trail that led towards the burning district.

Much disappointed, the boys lounged about, doing their usual "chores" and finding time hang heavily.

Dave had climbed to the top of an immense boulder and gazed out over the landscape. "I say, Dick," he yelled, "I believe the fire's coming this way."

"No such luck," growled Dick, pausing in his playing with a tame bear cub. "Father said the lakes and swamps would stop it. There's too much water in them."

Dave still sat perched on the boulder, his eyes fixed on the sullen, dark-grey cloud that hung on the eastern horizon. He was sure it was growing darker and spreading further up towards the zenith.

"Stop fooling, Dick," he yelled, "and come here. The fire's really coming nearer. You look how thick the smoke's getting."

Dick tucked the cub under his arm and scrambled up to his brother's side, and in his turn gazed out over the forest.

"You're right, lad," he said. "It's coming. But that doesn't mean it will reach here. Even if it gets as far as the swamps, they will check the flames."

"They're at summer level, and the fire might creep past at the end where the outlet flows into the river. The trees are pretty close together there."

The two boys sat and watched the smoke as it rose higher and higher until all the distant horizon was obscured by a dense grey cloud.

"I say," ejaculated Dave, "if the fire crosses the swamps it will burn our canoe. I guess we'd better go and anchor it out in the lake. And while we are about it we might as well shoot a few ducks."

It did not take them long to catch their ponies. Leaving the bear cub whining discontentedly in the shack, they galloped off to where the lakes lay shimmering in the vivid sunlight.

When they reached the edge of the reeds that fringed the water they sprang from their ponies, and, picketing them, strode to where the canoe lay in a tiny cleared space among the rushes.

They paddled in and out of the tiny islets that studded the lakes, and explored all the reaches in a vain endeavour to find game. There was not a duck to be seen.

"I guess they're all flown off to the upper lakes," observed Dick, as he laid down his paddle and reaching over the side pulled up a great water lily leaf and proceeded to fan himself lazily. "We'll go to 'Look-Out Island' and rest till the sun gets lower. The ducks are bound to come back at sundown."

"Right you are," was the rejoinder, and forthwith the canoe was headed to a rocky island, the favourite resort of the boys during many a long summer's day. They had built a rough shelter of boughs under the solitary pine that crowned its summit.

After beaching their canoe, they climbed the rocks, and, laying down their guns, lounged on the piles of leaves heaped under the shelter.

Overhead a few white clouds floated across a perfectly blue sky, while the lazy drone of insects filled the air.

The boys lay and yarned until both dropped to sleep.

The sudden splash of some large animal rushing through the water awoke them. Instantly, with every nerve on the alert, they peered out through the leafy screen that formed the shelter.

A long shallow stretched from shore to shore of the lake and along this two moose raced at a rapid rate. But even as the boys stared several smaller deer came hurrying after them, flying as if from some foe.

"Wolves!" said Dave inquiringly.

"I don't know," replied Dick doubtfully, as he watched the panting animals race past. "It ain't wolves, Dave. At least the wolves ain't troubling about hunting. See, there's a great timber wolf and a coyote side by side. They seem to be too frightened to trouble about each other. They're scared at something behind them."

The two boys watched the strange procession for a few minutes, until it disappeared with a crash into the forest on the other side. Then Dick sprang up, and, darting from the shelter, gazed around. "Our bronchos are stampeding!"

Dave rushed out. It was only too true. Their ponies had broken the picket ropes, and were

galloping madly along the trail that led to the shacks.

"What's up?"

"I guess it's the fire coming up," replied Dick gravely. "Look!"

Together the boys looked at the forest that stretched to the east of the lake and swamp. The tall tree tops appeared to be crowned by a dense cloud of grey smoke that grew perceptibly darker as they looked. Already the lower part was reddened by the furious flames that burned out of sight, hidden by the forest.

Even as they gazed the red flames shot upwards, cleaving the dense smoke like fiery knives. The smoke cloud spread overhead. All around them tiny birds dropped as with spent wings they flew in exhausted

bronchos have stampeded. We're safe enough here."

"I know. But I'm going by the river," said Dave, with a grave, stern look that sat oddly on his round, boyish face. "We can do it in less than half an hour."

"Whew!" ejaculated Dick. "You're taking chances, Dave. Why, Red Tassel says it's full of 'bad spirits,' and the 'riffles' are awfully bad just below the spot where the stream flows into the river from the lake."

"I know, but if we want to save the shack, we've got to get back in the shortest possible time, and by the quickest way."

Dick shrugged his shoulders, and gazed doubtfully about him, but Dave's word was always law.

Nothing was to be heard above the roar of the fire fiend which was now flinging great tongues of flame from branch to branch of the pines, while the heavy smoke drifted across the sky in dense masses, blotting out the sunlight.

"We'd best have stayed at the island," muttered Dick. "We'd have been all right there."

"We've got to save the shack and the animals," said Dave. "Steady, lad," he urged, as Dick, intent on watching the great wall of fire, nearly dropped his paddle. "If you lose that we'll be in a hole, even though we're close up to the reeds."

The reeds and a grove of alder trees encroached so closely that the branches of the latter almost met overhead. In spite of the haste with which the boys had



"A LONG SHALLOW STRETCHED FROM SHORE TO SHORE OF THE LAKE."

"It won't cross the lake?" asked Dick anxiously.

"I don't know," replied Dave, viewing with alarm the furious wall of flame that was fast blotting out the forest. The roar of its coming was almost deafening. "We'd best get back to the shack. We've got to save that as well as the ponies. They're sure to crowd into the stable and be burnt. Then there's the bear cub—poor little beggar, he can't get out. I believe the fire is going to cross the swamp—just look at it!"

"I don't," replied Dick. "The shack is safe enough. Besides, if the fire did cross, we couldn't get home. It would soon outpace us. You forget the Besides, what would father say if the shack were burnt?

They scrambled down to the water's edge and into the canoe. Almost before he had thought out the chances of their success the light vessel was spinning through the shimmering water, making rapidly for the far end of the lake.

"If the fire crosses it will be just at the point where the outlet flows into the river," observed Dick, looking at the flames now advancing like a vast red wall behind the nearer pines. The trees appeared outlined in black against its radiance. "We'll have all we can do to race it. My word, but it is coming up at a pace!"

come, it appeared doubtful whether they or the flames would reach the outlet first.

With frantic energy they used their paddles, and won by a hair's-breadth. As they ran into the gloom under the trees it seemed as if the fiery monster must inevitably destroy them. One hungry flame flashed out, and a burning branch fell hissing into the stream just behind their canoe, but luckily the fire did not cross the narrow barrier of the stream.

Then began a grim race for life. There could be no turning back now. The flames swept madly along one bank, and the boys gazed upon the glowing wall of fire, with their breaths coming in

deep gasps as they strove to increase the pace. Not far ahead of them the trees grew close together, many of them growing out of the water, their roots forming great archways over the surface of the stream.

Dick and Dave realised that if the fire reached this part before them, their passage into the river might be effectually blocked.

The burning branches dropped from the trees, and fell hissing around them, as the boys swept rapidly underneath. They never paused for an instant, but, with heads bent low, paddled swiftly through the shower of sparks.

For some moments their fate was in suspense. The trees above flared wildly, and burning fragments dropped in every direction. If one of the huge trunks gave way, or a larger branch dropped in a blazing mass upon them, the end would be certain. With an energy born of despair they drove the canoe through the water. The foam almost broke over the bows, and long lines of white ripples marked their way.

They hardly realised the pace at which the canoe was travelling until it shot out of the burning archway into the clearer air above the river, and for the time being they were safe.

But now their frail cockle-shell was dancing and tossing in the heart of what Red Tassel called "bad spirits." The whirlpools caught and swirled them around, and then tossed them aside. Sometimes deep "cones" raced beside them, threatening to engulf them in their winding depths and dash them to pieces on the rocks below.

Neither of the boys spoke a word, but watched grimly as the swift current dashed them madly down to where the worst riffle (*i.e.*, rapid) rushed foaming between the jagged edges of a series of black rocks. For a few minutes it seemed that the canoe could not possibly live in that cauldron of raving water. Then suddenly she shot forward and slid down a long, glassy, green plane, answering a dexterous twist of Dick's paddle, which sent her into a tiny backwater protected by a great rock that jutted out from the river's bank.

They were too breathless to speak, but drawing the canoe to a shelving bank, they sprang ashore. In a few more minutes they had gained the summit of the spur, and were looking down upon the swamps below. The fire had crossed the stream, and was making for the spot on which they stood. It travelled more slowly than it had advanced to the swamps, for the wind had died down, and the long, wide sweep of the lake held back its fury for many a mile, but a long wedge-shaped tongue of red showed in the forest below them.

"Hurry, Dick," panted Dave, as they rushed towards the shack. "I guess we haven't a moment to spare."

They tore into the shack. The first thing they did was to let loose the bear cub. Then each seized a heavy sack, dipped it in the water-butt, and ran to where the dry pine needles lay thickest on the ground behind the log hut, brushing them into a loose heap. Dave lighted a match, and putting it to the pile, left Dick watching the small fire, and lit another a few yards further on. As soon as the flames grew too high to be safe, they were beaten out with the wet sacks, and, in this way, a band was "blazed" around the shack.

It was not very wide. The time was too short to do much, and they eyed their endeavours anxiously as the roaring of the fire, now well into the depth of the forest, sounded ever menacingly nearer.

They worked madly, lighting fire after fire, and beating them out, until Dick felt assured that enough had been done. Even then they dashed around the "blaze" lighting fresh fires, in the hope that the new ones, in rushing to meet the opposing force, would further widen the space of the protecting belt of "blazed" ground.

They had done all they possibly could, and now they retreated to the great boulder. Under its shelter they awaited the coming of the fire that was now roaring just below the foot of the spur.

Their bronchos rushed whinnying to them. It was with difficulty they could restrain the animals from dashing wildly off to certain death in the pine forest. The bear cub crept whimperingly into Dick's arms, and thus, crouching all together, they waited to see what would be their fate. The fiery flames came roaring fiercely towards them, sweeping up the mountain side where the pines grew thickest. Their opposing fires crept slowly downwards, ever increasing the safety zone of burnt ground that lay around the shack.

The boys' eyes ached with the glare as the oncoming flames sprang upwards into the tree-tops, devouring the branches their puny fires had not reached. All around them the tree trunks were swaying and crashing down, threatening to ruin the log hut. The fire swept roaring past, but fortunately the stillness of the day prevented the flames from reaching them as they crouched under the boulder.

It was really only a few minutes, but to the waiting boys it appeared like an hour. At last the raging flames passed on, leaving behind them a desolate region of charred and blackened tree trunks. But the shack was safe. The boys sprang up, tired and trembling with the ordeal through which they had passed, but rejoicing in the fact that the shack and the animals were saved, thanks to what they, of their own accord, had dared and done.

INSPIRING LIVES.

THESE words by General Sir William Robertson, until lately Chief of our General Staff, and one of the soundest heads in the British Army, were spoken some months ago at the unveiling of a memorial window in a church near Ongar, Essex. This was in commemoration of Major Arthur Travers Saulez (son of the vicar of the church), who was killed in action at Arras.

Said Sir William: "I think we are justified in saying that the world is better and richer for the lives of such men. We believe and we know that a man cannot live to himself alone. We know that a great act does not perish with the life of the man who performed it, but that it lives and grows up into the lives and acts of those who survive him and cherish his memory."

How Boys can get into Better-class Cricket.

A CHAT WITH LORD HAWKE, PRESIDENT M.C.C.

By George A. Wade.

"DON'T you think, sir, that boys are often too content with just going on in ordinary school or club games year after year, playing amongst a number of cricketers of their own class and ability, or even below their own standard, instead of trying to obtain better games, to get better coaching, to take part in higher class cricket?" I asked Lord Hawke, as we sat chatting upon the chances there would be after the war for our younger players of good ability to show what they could do in the higher ranks.

"Oh, that is certainly the case in many places," replied his lordship, "and I fear, more especially amongst lads who belong to minor clubs in big towns or country villages. I would not go so far as to say that there exists a large number of promising boy-cricketers in the land who never become county or first-class players from this cause, for the various county secretaries are too keen on finding out latent talent for their county teams to allow much that is really valuable in youthful cricket to escape their eagle eyes in that way. But there is a great deal in your remark, nevertheless; for how can even a county secretary hear or learn of a boy's great natural ability or promise at the game if such a lad never tries to obtain entrance into a club which is likely to come more or less under his notice?"

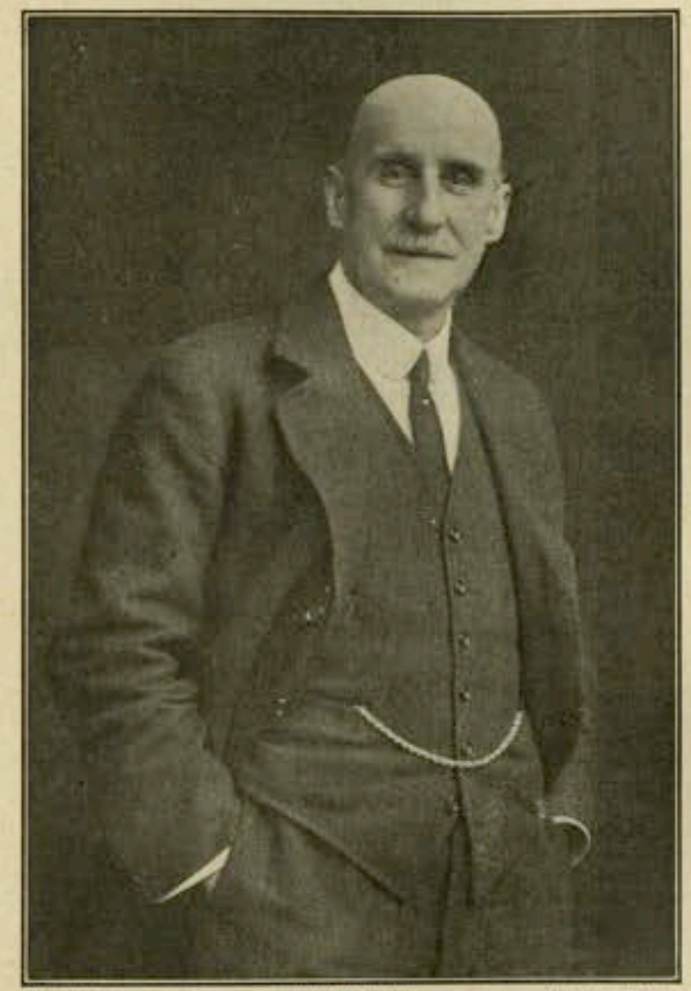


Photo by LORD HAWKE. [Elliott & Fry.

"There are many openings available for boys to-day who want to better their play and get good coaching, don't you think, my lord?" was my next question.

"Yes," answered Lord Hawke. "I should say no boy who really wishes to improve his play, and to bring himself under the notice of authorities who can help him to do that, or who can give him the opportunities to enjoy first-class games, need fail in his endeavour if he will but go the right way to secure those ends."

"And would you suggest what are the right ways, sir?" said I.

"Well, they differ according to the home and ability of the boy," went on his lordship. "Let us arrange lads into some sort of category for this purpose. There is first of all, we will say, the public school boy.

"Now there is a big chance for him to get excellent cricket, and to push on, if he will exert himself a bit. He may have to wait years ere he gets into the first eleven—if ever—should he take no special steps to make those in command of cricket at his school recognise his value. How is he to do that? Well, by continual

practice under a good coach—and almost every decent school has such a man—this lad must improve quickly.

"Can he get such help and practice if he isn't in the first team? I think so. For although I know many of the coaches at our chief schools, I don't know one who would not be both willing and eager to assist in that way the boy, however young, who asked him, and who showed by his enthusiasm, continuous practice, and natural bent that he would repay the time and effort spent on him.

"Then, having once gained the coach's attention and approval, that boy can hardly be quite overlooked in future by the cricket captain. But if he is, there are to-day many holiday matches arranged between public school elevens, or between them and other good teams, by such men as Mr. C. F. Tufnell, Mr. O. R. Borradaile, Mr. Howard Lacy, Mr. W. Lotinga, etc., so that many chances for a junior boy getting excellent cricket are provided. And he can always be sure such gentlemen would be eager and willing to take note of promising youthful material in batting, bowling, and other departments of cricket. There is no reason why this boy should not write to some of the promoters of such games, giving a full list of his best performances in his own special line, to act as a guide for them when making up their various teams for matches during the long summer holidays."

"I take it those remarks will apply with almost greater force to boys who have been fortunate enough to get into their school elevens, Lord Hawke?" said I.

"Oh, any boy who has reason to believe that he is good enough for the games now arranged far and wide for older lads every summer ought certainly to put himself into communication with some of the promoters of those games," returned his lordship. "But he must have at hand figures to prove that he is worth a trial, or his application is likely to fail, simply because those who don't know him personally, and his cricket intimately, will have nothing to judge by as to what he is really capable of doing."

"Now what about boys who do not go to the big schools, or to any school—boys who are at work, whose only time for cricket is in the evening, or on Saturday afternoons? Have *they* any chance of getting better games, or of becoming better cricketers from good coaching or playing with first-class exponents of the sport?" I inquired.

"Again I should say, speaking generally, yes," was the answer. "What is the great fault of boys of the kind you have mentioned? They are, if naturally good players, often too much inclined to remain in a minor club, or in some local organisation, because there they are superior to their fellows; they can usually shine above the rest; they are more likely to come out near the top in batting and bowling at the end of the season.

"That is by no means an uncommon mistake of youthful cricketers in the ranks of which we are speaking. But that can never be the way for a boy to make real progress and advancement in his work or sport.

"What should such a boy do? He ought to try as soon as possible to get into some more important and better-standing club, to get practice with men who are superior players, to have the benefit of their advice and coaching in his batting, bowling, and fielding. Even though for some time he may not be selected as one of their first eleven, or second eleven, in the Saturday and holiday matches, he will learn a great deal worth knowing about the game which he did not know before.

"However, if and when he *does* get into the best class of cricket he wishes to seek still higher honours, it is always open to him to write the county secretary and ask for a trial with the colts of the year. And he will undoubtedly get this sooner or later if he has at all proved his worth and shown himself to be a player above the average. The counties, in this age of keen competition, simply cannot afford to miss any really promising recruit."

"Then is there any other class of boy to whom you think good advice might be given, so as to get him to improve his play in the fine old summer game, sir?" I asked.

"Yes, there is. He may perhaps not so much need the advice, but it is only fitting to include it in such an account as you are writing.

"They are the boys whose parents happen to be members of the various county clubs where they reside. Although it is fairly well known to such members that the coaches and professional players on the grounds are available for their own use when they would like a game or practice, it is perhaps not quite so widely known or recognised that these same professionals are in most cases equally available for helping members' sons to become better and more skilful performers in the different departments of the game.

"At Lord's, indeed, we make a very special point of coaching promising youthful talent in that way during the Easter holidays, so as to make the boys better players during the following summer.

"Of course, I cannot say for certain whether similar work is done on all the county grounds, or whether they are equally open to helping forward boy-cricketers during school holidays. But I should imagine most of them are only too pleased to do everything they can to assist lads desirous of becoming players of a higher class. And I certainly think that no boy, willing, eager, keen, and with the least natural ability for cricket can fairly complain that the opportunities for improving his play, and for obtaining admission into a better class of games, are to-day closed to him."

"I suppose there will be, after the war, greater chances for our younger men, and our most promising lads, coming to the front in cricket than there have been for a very long time. Is that your opinion, Lord Hawke, may I ask?" was my next query.

"I think so, undoubtedly," replied his lordship. "So many really splendid fellows whom we knew in past days have fallen in the great fight. We feel proud indeed of what these grand players, comrades of former days, have done for our country in her time of stress. Others have either been so wounded, or so taken from the game by various causes, that they will never play in first-class games again—that is certain.

"Then we have also to take into serious account the fact that many of our greatest exponents of the game, who were growing somewhat old for it even when war broke out, but who might have gone on for a year or two more, are now altogether *hors de combat* with respect to it. Men who were on the verge of forty, or even just over it, in August, 1914, will hardly be able to return to the highest class of cricket in 1919 or later, when, so far as we can see to-day, the earliest opportunity for first-class and county matches could possibly occur once more."

"Your last piece of useful counsel, then, to our boys, Lord Hawke, would be——?" I said.

"To practise constantly in their leisure hours. To get the best coaching and advice possible, whether at school or in some country town or larger centre. To get into better class club or team cricket as soon as they can; to seek to play in games where more skilled and expert cricketers are engaged, so as to profit by their counsel, example and methods. To prefer to be the poorest, or one of the poorest, players in a really fine eleven rather than to be content with prominence in an inferior team. To seek constantly the opportunity of attaining the highest standard in the game, so as to become as proficient in it as natural skill, unceasing practice, and expert coaching can make them.

"If our boys of all ranks do that I am sure there will be a fine future for cricket, after the war. Don't let us forget that cricket is, after all, the king of summer sports, and that more men and boys play at this game during the summer months than at any other. It is not a case of amusing spectators; it is a matter of enjoying a glorious summer game—one of the very best. And the best way to do that with any sport is to make yourself as excellent a performer in it as you possibly can by contending with the leading exponents of it."

HOW I GOT LOST ON THE RIGI.

A HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE IN SWITZERLAND.



"WHAT, lost on the Rigi?" I can imagine some reader who has gone comfortably up the mountain in a railway carriage exclaim in surprise. "Why, one might just as well talk about getting lost at the Crystal Palace."

The Rigi is such familiar ground that I run some risk of being put in the same category with Jensen, the famous Danish walker, who started once to walk from London to Brighton with a huge revolver sticking out of his hip pocket. When asked his reasons for carrying it, it turned out that he thought the country he was going through was very wild and dangerous, and he had brought the revolver with him to keep off any packs of wolves who might attack him on the way!

The beaten track up the Rigi is almost as well known to travellers as the Brighton Road; yet, for all that, it was on the Rigi I succeeded in getting lost, and passed some hours which, though they now form an entertaining reminiscence, were by no means so pleasant at the time.

Early one summer's morning I took the boat from Lucerne to Kussnacht, a little town at the extremity of one arm of Lake Lucerne. The sun was shining brightly, bringing out all the colours of the beautiful wooded islands, the snow-clad peaks, the little villages dotting the shores of the lake, and the picturesque old walled town of Lucerne, with its two-spired church, its weather-beaten water tower, and the quaint old wooden bridges which the curious mediæval paintings with which they are decorated have made so famous.

I had already spent a night in Kussnacht, and had been one of the audience at a very queer and interesting entertainment there.

The proprietor of a puppet-show had set up his little stage in the principal square, and had summoned all the villagers to attend by the beating of a gigantic drum. Rows of wooden benches were arranged near a battered fountain that kept up a rippling undertone of sound, and the audience took their seats on these, long lines of children occupying the front benches. By flaring torch-light, with the old nodding houses looking on, the puppets went through their antics, and very creditably they managed to play their parts.

On this morning, however, Kussnacht lay in blazing sunshine. It was in Kussnacht, according to history (or legend), that Gessler, the Austrian tyrant, once lived. My way took me past an ancient chapel, which is said to mark the spot where he was killed by William Tell.

According to the legend, when Tell had hit the apple on his son's head, and the second arrow, meant for Gessler's heart, had been discovered, the patriot was clapped in irons and put on board a boat, in order to be brought to Gessler's castle at Kussnacht. A storm arose, and Tell's captors, unable to manage the boat by themselves, loosed his chains, and, giving him the helm, made him promise to bring the boat ashore.

Steering it towards a rock jutting from the shore, he sprang suddenly on to the rock, and pushed the boat with his captors back into the raging waters. Shortly after this daring escape, Tell waylaid Gessler at Kussnacht, and shot him through the heart on the spot where this

chapel stands, and an old fresco on the wall depicts the incident of the tyrant's death.

A short walk from the chapel brought me to the lake of Zug. In its clear waters, as I walked along the almost deserted shore, I could see shoal after shoal of fish darting hither and thither. Behind an orchard near the lake-side a rather steep path led up the side of the Rigi, winding here and there through dark patches of pinewood. I came, by and by, to a level stretch of sunny meadow, where I asked the way of some haymakers, and another longer climb brought me at last to the first bank of snow.

I had no idea of the distance from Lake Zug to the summit, but hoped to reach it by lunch time. Hour after hour passed, however, and I was still trudging up past endless stretches of snow. It was five o'clock before I reached an hotel not far from the highest point of the mountain. After a welcome meal, I climbed on again to the Rigi Kulm, nearly 6,000 feet in height, and saw the magnificent Alpine panorama, embracing, on a clear day like this, a circumference of over 300 miles of country!

It was nearly seven o'clock, I suppose, before I began the descent. I had gone some little distance when I came to a small hut, with a wooden table in front of it, and a notice stating that milk was to be obtained. I stopped to drink a glass, and to chat for a few minutes with the owner of the hut, an old man who, in his youth, had been a well-known guide.

Stretched out before us was the Bernese Oberland, its peaks now rosy with the setting sun, and I rested there, enjoying the view, and listening to the old guide's stories of famous climbs and hair-breadth 'scapes he had experienced, until the last glimmer of light had almost faded from snow and sky. Then, and not till then, I remembered that there was no moon to light me on my way.

"No matter," thought I, "the path is clearly marked, and going down on this side of the mountain will be a much easier business than the weary trudge up from Kussnacht."

I said good-bye, and started off at a brisk pace. For a while I could see my way clearly. Then, gradually, the path grew less and less distinct, darkness closed round, and I had to slacken speed and go forward more cautiously. By and by I found myself close to a kind of gateway, formed by two gigantic rocks. I imagined that the path must lead between them, and passed on, splashing through thick mud. By this time it was almost impossible to see the ground beneath one's feet. I wandered on for some distance, then something blacker even than the darkness rose before me, and, to my relief, I discovered a small hut or barn. This looked as if I had not missed the path.

In front of the hut some planks had been put down, which ran for some little distance, and then ended abruptly in a kind of slough. Trudging on through deep mud was out of the question, and I retraced my steps to the hut, and succeeded in bringing an old woman to the door.

It was a more difficult matter to make her understand what I wanted. When I asked the direction of the Lake of the Four Cantons—Lake Lucerne—she pointed towards the slough, but directly I started, called me back, and waved vigorously in the opposite direction. I tramped back again, and came to the natural archway which I had already passed through. After floundering about for some time in mud and darkness, I discovered that I had described a circle, and had arrived a second time at the hut.

A man came out this time, with the woman. Both jabbered in an uncouth *patois*, and again waved me back. A third time, after a longer interval, I arrived at the hut. My shouts now brought out the man, the woman, and a boy, who stood in a row in the doorway, like three curious birds, eyeing each other and me in a half-frightened way, as if they fancied I was some wandering spirit of the Rigi—as, for the time, I certainly was.

By this time I was beginning to despair of ever finding the way, and urged either the man or the boy to guide me to the foot of the mountain. This, when I succeeded in making them understand, they flatly declined to do. I offered money in vain, and then begged for a lantern, but this request was also refused in the same half-timid, half-churlish way. All I could discover was that the lake lay beyond the planks, far down below the hut, but that it was impossible to descend in that direction.

Thoroughly exhausted, I started away from the hut again, and this time lost it altogether. After aimless wanderings in pitch darkness, I should have been glad to find it, if only to beg shelter of its roof—though the look of the people, and their evident poverty, did not make that an inviting prospect. The utter silence of the mountain, the thick wall of darkness that now hemmed me in on every side, the memory of the eerie legends that cluster round the Rigi, and the uncanny thought of gloomy stalactite caverns into which I might wander, unguarded precipices over which I might fall, swamps, landslips, and bristling forests of pine or fir, did not add to the enjoyment of my position.

At last I struck a match, just in time as it proved, for only a few feet away the ground ended abruptly in a black chasm of unknown depth! I had missed the path altogether, and had short, slippery grass under my feet. Again and again I struck matches, trying to discover a track, but fearing by this time that I should have to spend the night on the mountain. At last, to my delight, I caught sight of a rough wooden railing, evidently protecting travellers from some pitfall. Holding on to it, I followed it for some little distance up the gentle slope, then suddenly a light gleamed out before me.

A few minutes later I was standing in front of a French window opening on to a well-lit room. I tapped, and a tall man in shooting costume and top-boots came to the window, and opened it.

Two ladies were sitting at a table in the room, and looked up in surprise as I appeared out of the darkness. In a few words I told my story.

"Why, it's six miles down to the lake," said the man, "and you'll never be able to find your way to-night in pitch darkness. Come inside."

Good fortune had led me to one of the hotels on the mountain, and I found that all my wanderings had not brought me further than 1,200 feet or so below the summit. It was very late, but a meal was hastily procured by a pretty waiting-maid, and after it I was not at all sorry to get to my bedroom.

Outside the room there was a small covered balcony, and early in the morning I got up, wrapped in blankets like a Red Indian—for the morning air, coming straight from the ice-fields, was bitterly cold—and sat for an hour or so, watching the sun rise over Lake Lucerne and the Bernese Oberland. The little puff-balls of cloud hanging over the waters of the lake, as it gradually grew out of darkness into intense blue, and the rose and gold tints that spread gradually from peak to peak, until the long line of snow mountains looked on fire, made a sight never to be forgotten.

After breakfast I started off down the mountain, which I had to myself, save for a goat-herd or two, and a pair of squirrels I surprised at a bend in the path. The sunrise and my early morning walk amply repaid me for my wanderings, though it will be a long time before I make another attempt to descend an unknown mountain in pitch darkness.

LUCIAN SORREL.

A LONG-DISTANCE SWIM.

A HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE.



We had just got our new baths at Dundleford School and a great crowd of us had entered for the Humane Society's medal. The conversation ran so much upon the subject of life-saving that an outsider might have been excused for believing half the school had been in deadly peril at the swimming-baths, and only rescued by the heroic exertions of the other half.

Even those of us who were not often at the seaside could, consequently, appreciate Marsden's swimming powers. He was about fourteen, and there was hardly anything in the way of diving and fancy strokes that he couldn't do. Out of the water he was clumsy, but in it he was like a seal.

We were all keen on swimming that term; and when several prizes (to be competed for on July 18th) were offered by one of the Governors of the school, there were a good many entries.

But when the subject of the competitions came before a committee of prefects, we were all startled by Trevett's sending in a protest against Marsden's entry.

"He'll walk off with every prize for boys under fifteen," he said.

Now Trevett was a very fair swimmer, but couldn't keep under water long, or dive from the spring-board. If he had been the probable winner after Marsden scratched, it would have looked like playing a very low-down game indeed. The perplexed committee appealed to the master who presided.

"It ought to be fair enough," I said, "if Marsden is handicapped by three lengths. You can't help his being such a good diver."

"Three lengths isn't enough," Trevett told me. "He goes driving through the water at a frightful rate."

"Marsden isn't quite a Webb," I retorted. "He's awfully good, but what utter rot to say he would win with any handicap! If he enters for six competitions it isn't likely he can win them all."

Trevett looked sulky, but gave in. After the "House" swimming matches had come off (the winners were to compete on July 18th), there was only one opinion. Marsden had swum uncommonly well, but there was no earthly reason to disqualify him for the prizes. Jones, of Mr. Dale's house, had beaten him twice, with a two lengths' handicap, and there was a shout of disapproval when Trevett hinted that Marsden had not shown his true form.

"You're behaving like a perfect ass, Trevett," I said to him one evening. "You'll get hissed on the prize-day if you don't look out."

"Mind your own business," said Trevett, as sulky as a bear.

The prize-day was full of surprises. Nothing remarkable occurred till Marsden won the diving competition so easily that the committee looked thoughtful. In the other races he seemed too heavily handicapped, and Unwin, a steady but slow swimmer, won two of the best prizes.

It got a little tedious and stuffy watching them after a bit. The general interest wasn't as keen as over the winter sports, and there were very few spectators left by the time the hundred yards (under fifteen) came on.

There were five entries for the final heat, and Marsden and Trevett were Nos. 4 and 5 respectively. By the third time they turned Marsden was swimming quite easily and in better form than I had ever seen him show. I thought the winner was a foregone conclusion, and was strolling out, when a sudden splash at the further end echoed across the baths, and I halted in the doorway.

There was a confused sound of a furious argument, lost in the fall of spray; and when the water subsided, Trevett had struck out swiftly, and was halfway down the final length.

"What's happened? Whose fault was it?" everyone was asking.

Marsden was far behind. He made a desperate effort, but his strokes were laboured; and Trevett had scrambled out, and stood, dripping and victorious, at the shallow end, before one of

the other five was half-way down the final length.

There was an uproar instantly.

"What happened in that splash? Which was it who fouled the other?" shouted Mr. Dale above the tumult.

Jones, Unwin, and Marriott spoke in a breath. I never saw anything funnier than that dripping, spluttering five, trying to tell a coherent tale.

"I couldn't see, gasped Jones. "I was just turning at the shallow end, when I saw the splash at the deep end."

"S-s-same here," said Unwin, with chattering teeth.

"Well, go and dress," said Mr. Dale hastily, "and I'll find out what the spectators thought"; and he hastily kicked in a bladder and started the water-polo teams.

The five "Hundred Yarders" were dressed, and wrangling fiercely in undertones, long before the last event was over. Mr. Dale had dragged up myself and half-a-dozen boys as witnesses, but the splash had been so sudden and blinding that no one felt certain.

Marsden stood with his coat still off, and a face like a thundercloud.

"Look here," he said, rolling up his shirt-sleeve, and, sure enough, there was a rapidly darkening bruise near his elbow, quite enough to numb a man's arm for several seconds.

"I turned too suddenly," Trevett protested. "I kicked out without the least idea he was so close. I was leading, and he had gained quite two yards more than I fancied. I never meant to spoil his chance of winning."

Marsden rolled down his shirt-sleeve, and flung on his coat without another word, and Mr. Dale got no further light on the subject from anyone else, so we all went in to tea.

Directly it was over, I got hold of Marsden to ask if the matron had seen to his arm. I thought she might be a rather useful witness as to what a nasty knock it was. But Marsden said, "Oh, it's nothing to what one often gets at footer; it's the sneaking way it was done."

"I suppose he meant to hurt you a good deal worse!" I hazarded sympathetically.

"Of course he did, the little toad!" raged Marsden. "It wouldn't have been my *arm* if I hadn't flung it out in time."

I said things looked very black against Trevett, but so long as there was no proof we couldn't say we were certain.

I hope Trevett enjoyed the ensuing fortnight. I know that if I had been he, I would have run away to sea, or done something equally useful, to get away from Dundleford. The other chaps gave him a truly awful time of it. They used to rush out of the dormitories when he went up to bed, to ask him if kicks felt any nicer on land than on water, and made him test it practically. I don't know that I was any better than the rest; it seemed to me that such a dirty trick really deserved kicking.

My pater had taken a great fancy to Marsden at Founder's Day, and when we went to Pebble Bay, a little seaside place in the country, he asked Marsden to come with us. Everyone in the place had noticed his swimming before we had been there three days. It was cracked up so much that he began to get awfully cocky, and I wondered why we had all thought such a lot of him.

On the fourth day after our arrival, my young brother Cyril came back to tea in great excitement.

"Do you know," he said, "another Dundleford boy is staying here! I saw his green and light-blue cap, and sung out to him, but he was bicycling past me, and didn't hear."

"It wasn't a prefect!" Marsden and I inquired in alarm. Cyril was not yet at Dundleford, and having cheek enough for anything, might not yet realise that prefects are great men, and dislike being spoken to before they choose to speak.

"I don't know," said Cyril, rather abashed. "I think he only looked about fourteen. He was a red-haired chap, with very large freckles."

"What an awful nuisance!" said Marsden, getting quite crimson. "It sounds like Trevett."

And Trevett it was. His people had rented a house at the other end of the bay, and we pretty soon noticed the Trevetts swimming at the same hour as we did.

It was a glorious hot summer, and we were in the sea nearly every day, rough or smooth. There was a particular ledge of rocks, covered with "mermaid's hair," and with rather a nasty swirl of tide round it, which we made it a point of honour to reach every day.

The Trevetts were all good swimmers, and if we found ourselves perched like seagulls round the rocks, it was impossible not to exchange a few remarks. Thus it occurred one morning that Trevett inquired if we had ever swum round the Buffalo rock.

This was a rock well beyond the headlands of the bay, covered at high tide, but at low water showing a bison-like hump, hung with seaweed. I instantly declined to go.

"It means nearly a mile's swim," I said, "and we've been in the water ten minutes already. You chaps had better wait till I've fetched a boat to keep alongside."

I don't know what train of thought made me glance at Marsden's elbow, where the cold water had brought out the last faint traces of his bruise. It was a most unlucky glance, for it fired both boys' memories at once.

"I'll race you round the Buffalo," said Marsden; and they were off the rocks directly. Trevett plunged in with a great splash, as usual, and Marsden dived motionless, with his hands together, till an upward curve brought him to the surface like a seal, many yards away.

I sat and watched them till I got chilly, and swam slowly ashore to dress. Then I climbed to the top of a bathing-machine, and saw that they were hanging on to the Buffalo for a few minutes' rest; but the water had darkened Trevett's hair, and I couldn't see much difference between the red head and the black.

They did not wait long before starting for the shore, and I remembered with an uneasy qualm that, so far as I knew, Trevett had never swum over half-a-mile in his life.

By this time I could tell the heads apart. Marsden had fallen to a rather languid side-stroke; Trevett was frankly pausing to float every few yards. I shouted to my young brother, who sat munching biscuits and drying his towel in the sun.

"I say, Cyril," I said "you might run for a pair of sculls."

"They won't thank you," said Cyril, obeying nevertheless.

Hardly had I launched the dinghy, when a yell from Marsden made me look out to sea. He had thrown up his arms and gone right under. It wasn't cramp, it was sheer exhaustion, and there was no one near him but a fellow apparently more "done" than himself. I simply rowed for all I was worth.

If you have ever done any life-saving, even in play, you will know the sort of scene that followed. If you have ever done it in real earnest, you will know that the sea suddenly seems to have grown fathoms deeper, the shore many miles further off, and the dead weight in your arms heavier than any fellow you ever wrestled with.

Trevett says the life-saving rules went completely out of his head. He got his legs under Marsden, put one arm round his waist, and struck out desperately with the other. He also kicked him enough to have disqualified himself for ten races. But Trevett's pulls, kicks, and encouraging remarks at last got Marsden alongside the dinghy.

"Get the painter round him if you can," I said, tossing it over the side, and nearly upsetting the boat in my frenzied endeavours to haul in Marsden.

"I don't believe—I can—hold out much longer," said Trevett, who could barely cling to the gunwale; and round and round we spun till a perfect flotilla of boats came out to our rescue.

We laid Trevett and Marsden flat on the beach, and an irate coastguard worked to bring them round, in the intervals of letting us know his opinion of our folly. They soon sat up, and by tea-time both were out on the beach again, while I searched for the coastguard to reward his ministrations. When I returned, Trevett and Marsden were still looking at each other in shamefaced silence.

"You'd better thank him for saving your life," I suggested to Marsden, to help him out.

"I'm awfully obliged to you," said Marsden, miserably. "At least, I'm told I am, for I don't remember much about it."

"Oh, if the dinghy hadn't come out, I don't suppose either of us would have been here," said Trevett, rather solemnly, for neither felt exactly jocular.

"Trevett!" said Marsden in a rush. "I know that kick at the baths was an accident. *I* tried to disqualify you, not the other way about. It suddenly came into my head that you had been dead against me all the term, and any collision would be set down to you as a matter-of-course. And I was dead-set on winning. Of course, I had to carry it off, once it was done, and it was absolutely sickening of me——"

"Well, of all the——!" said I. Words failed me, and I sat down abruptly on a rock, gaping.

"Oh, but I'd been behaving like a several kinds of idiot over the prizes," said Trevett hastily. "It wasn't wonderful all the school backed you up. They'll have forgotten all about it next term."

"Here are skits of people coming up to ask how we are," said Marsden hurriedly. "Let's get indoors before you've been told you're a hero."

Of course it leaked out at school, as Trevett found when the old swimming-pro. asked him if he had remembered all the life-saving rules, and he had to own he hadn't. It was some years before Marsden could be amiable to anyone who innocently inquired how he learned to be such a good long-distance swimmer.

"I know a few tricks," he would say, "but they're very little use. Nothing to be compared to a man with staying power, you know."

Which was hardly fair to himself, as he and Trevett have swum round the Buffalo rock many a time since that memorable day; but to fail once in the point where you imagine yourself strongest is to believe it the weak link in the chain for ever after.

B. M. A.

THE STORY OF A CAPTIVE LYNX.



UNTAMEABLE pet he proved from first to last—from the day when a Mexican cowboy, after making sure that the mother cat was nowhere near, dragged him out of his den in the rocks, a little yellow ball of fur, spitting, growling and resisting, to the day when —— But there, let the woman who tried to do the taming and wrote an account of it for a very popular American paper tell the story in her own words.

We were delighted with Chico, she says; and would have taken him to our hearts at once but for his perversity. He looked attractive and amiable in his baby grace until we were within half a foot of his box, and then came a leap toward the bars and a hissing spit, and we had to be very careful to jump back in time.

Yet I do not know that I blame him. They fed him on fried bacon, and fried bacon is enough to make any three-weeks infant ill-tempered. Besides, a small box nailed to the wall, and open to the broiling New Mexico sun all day, is not a very good substitute for a cool, shady den and a mother.

I took charge of him and demanded his release. So with much ado and excitement on part of both man and kitten, a leather collar was placed round his neck, and a small chain

fastened thereto. Then the chain was run on a wire between two trees eight feet apart, and Chico had a qualified freedom.

It was my intention to win the little fellow's heart, and I hoped he would be as docile as any house cat by the autumn. I fed him on milk and cooked meat, and hoped this would do much to soften his disposition. When he saw his dinner, he would run toward me with little high-keyed mews; but with the food once in his possession, he was a spitting fury.

He grew rapidly, and his coat became beautifully tawny, with markings like those of a tiger house cat, the under side a light grey, with black spots.

Chico developed the long, sinuous body, the thick, short paws and ruff of the lynx family, and the little bobtail quivered with suppressed excitement.

His hostile temper grew even worse. When anyone came near him he would fly up one of the trees, and from that point of advantage came forcible cat language.

"Hike!" he would hiss. "Get out!"

To climb one of the trees, wind in and out among the branches until his chain was badly tangled, was one of his daily diversions. Then he looked so sorrowful and pleading that we would go to his rescue, only to be hissed and spat at. At such times a rake was brought, and with it Chico was pressed against the tree, and then, as he chewed and clawed the rake, while gurglings of rage and bubbles of foam issued from his mouth, the chain was unsnapped from the wire and untangled from the branches.

"You never can tame him, don't you know that?" said Ben Thaker, "cow-puncher," as he stood eyeing the cat that was returning the stare.

"Did you ever try?" I asked.

"No," he replied, "but I know a lot who have, and they all had to give it up. A bobcat is a fool cat. He don't know enough to be tame."

The summer wore on and I made no progress. Every effort failed, until one day I sat perfectly still in a chair near his wire, the plate of food in my lap. Chico was hungry. He smelled the food and located it, but how to get it?

He came toward me cautiously, lifting each forefoot in an expectant manner. When within a few inches of me he would stop, lose confidence, and go back. Then he would decide to try again, and finally—oh, the thrill of it!—one big paw was placed on my knee, his head raised to the plate, up came the other paw, and slowly, but surely this time, a piece of meat was taken, and he trotted away with it. He came back again and again, until each piece was taken.

One day they had to enlarge his collar, and that meant trouble. It was only accomplished by throwing him down on the ground and placing a sheepskin over his claws, and holding him firmly on his back, while the collar was buckled in another hole. Then the cat was wild for a week afterward.

The next day after this interesting and exciting performance, I came out at dinner-time with his plate of food. At my approach he flew up a tree. I held the plate up to him. He seemed to imagine it to be his worst enemy, for he sprang in terror and landed on a stump.

"It is only your dinner, Chico," I said. "Here," and I moved the plate toward him. Then he lost his self-control entirely, sprang in the air, and landed on my head.

They said I was brave, but my bravery was merely a condition of being too terrified to move. Had the cat been angry, I should have fared ill, but he was simply frightened. As I did not move, he finally unfastened his claws from my scalp, dropped down to my shoulders, and then to the ground, and crawled away.

It was growing cold now, and the prairie wind was keen. I did not try to win him back to take the food from my lap, but I still fed him.

It was early winter when the children awakened us one morning with the cry, "The lynx cat's gone!" The wire was empty, and we found the chain entangled in the garden fence.

"Gone to the foot-hills," said Ben Thaker, when he heard of our loss. "I'm going up that way, and if I find him I'll bring him back."

Two days afterward, while travelling over the rocky foothills on his pony, Ben came across Chico, still wearing his collar.

"Guess you're wanted up the L ranch way," he said, as he undid his lasso.

Chico stared at him and growled defiance. He gave a leap as he saw the rope come flying through the air, but too late. It caught him about the middle, and he was a prisoner. It was of no use pulling back; he was forced to come, albeit with a very bad grace.

As the cowboy guided his pony down a steep ravine, the cat dragging behind, Chico saw a chance for revenge. He was above, the hated man and pony below. He gave a spring, and landed on the horse, just back of the saddle, and teeth and claws went to work.

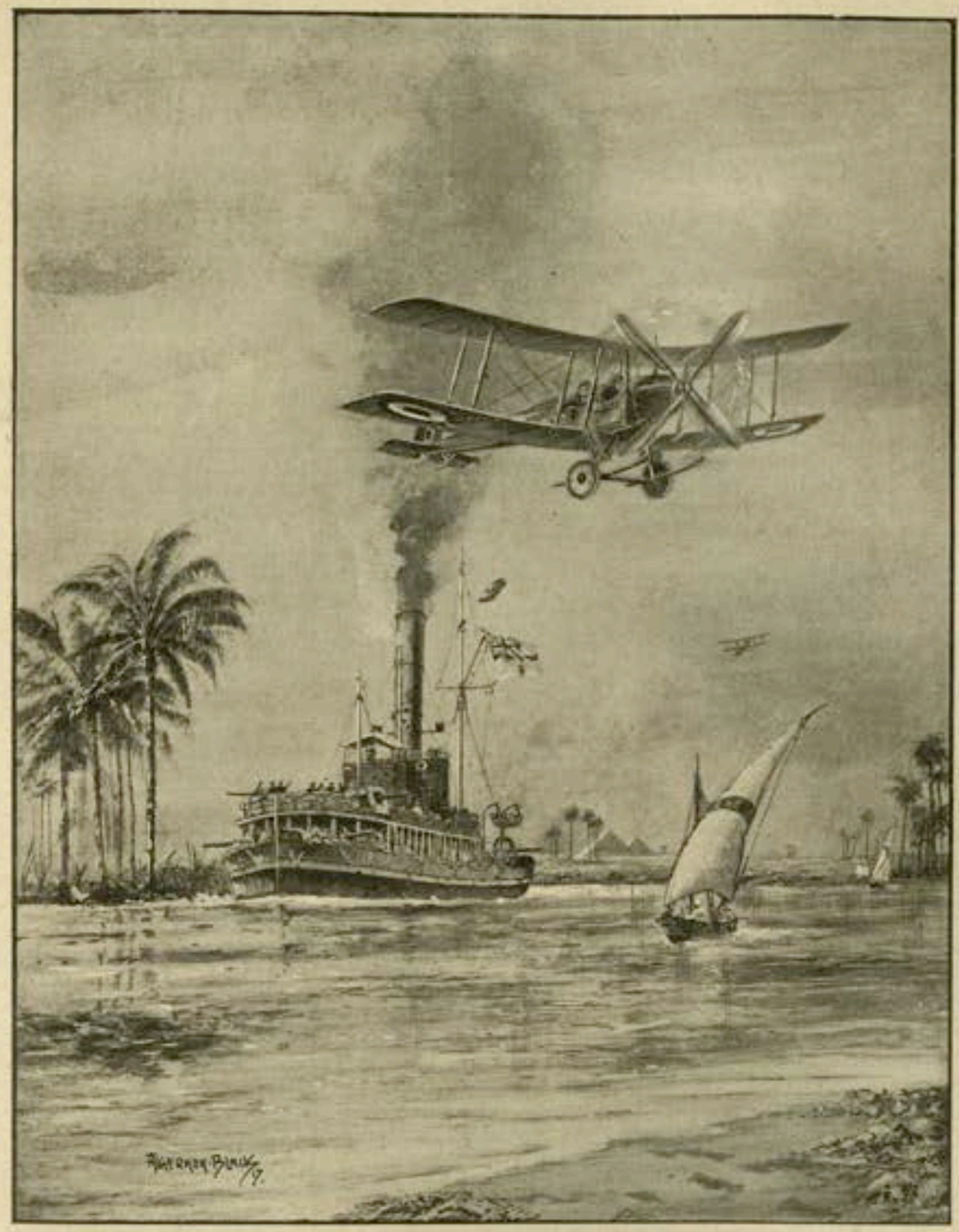
The frightened pony rushed up the bank and began to buck. Once, twice, three times went the "cow-puncher" in the air, with a fear lest the cat should crawl into the saddle and make a troublesome reception for him when he returned. Finally, with a desperate plunge and buck, the horse managed to unseat the rider and shake off the cat.

Ben Thaker landed on a pile of rocks. With an exclamation of pain and rage, he sprang up, seized the pony's bridle, drew his shooter, and faced the cat, that was pulling back on the rope, snarling and spitting.

Later they had the bad taste to show me a photograph of Ben Thaker skinning my late acquaintance, and still later I stole sorrowfully into the storeroom to stroke the tanned fur, as it hung from some antlers on the wall.

L. E. Towner.

OUR graphic illustration on the opposite page shows one of the strange scenes of contrast that the present War has brought into the most ancient lands of the world. What would even the wisest and most far-seeing of the Pharaohs have thought of a modern gunboat patrolling his sacred river and an airman rushing like a bird through the blue rainless sky of Egypt?

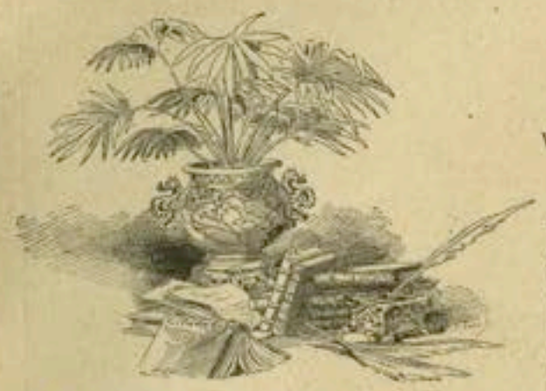


IN THE LAND OF THE PHARAOHS.

The Ancient River and the War of To-day.

Dropping a Despatch from an Aeroplane to a Gunboat, on the Nile.

Drawn for this Annual by Algernon Black.



A TALK ABOUT BOOKS.

WHAT PROFESSOR HENRY DRUMMOND SAID TO THE UNDERGRADUATES.

RARELY have the young men of the British race had such a winning speaker to address them from the platform as the friend they lost in Professor Henry Drummond —"the Prince," as his college associates affectionately and not ineptly called him.

He was not only a man of great personal charm, but with all his modesty a man of wide culture.

Words of his are to be prized, and we think the elder fellows among our readers will like to hear what he said once to the undergraduates of Melbourne University. The report of the speech is contained in the "Life" of Drummond, written by Cuthbert Lennox.

This is what he said:

"I wish to talk to the duffers, because while I was at College I was a duffer myself, and I therefore sympathise with the duffers.

"In a certain library I know of in Scotland, the books are divided into two great classes, which are in cases on opposite sides of the room. Surmounting the shelves in which one class is ranged there is a stuffed owl, while upon the other there is a bird known in Scotland as the 'dipper.' These birds are symbolical of the two kinds of books. It is about the second class, the 'dipper' books, the books that may be dipped into, that I am going to speak.

"The 'owl' class is uninviting in appearance, and requires the reader to burn the 'midnight oil.' The main value of these books is not what one gets out of them, but the mental discipline which is got from them; and no man will ever come to much unless he occasionally goes laboriously and conscientiously through the 'owl' books.

"In general literature, an example of the 'owl' books would be Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall'; in poetry, 'The Ring and the Book.' Each of these leaves behind a sense of power and grasp possessed by the writer. And so with all these great books. . . . They leave upon the reader an impression of the size and power of the human mind. I do not think it is necessary to know many of these, but every duffer ought to read one or two of them during his College course. A man is partly made by his friends, partly by his College books; and many a man is entirely shut up to the first, many a man to the second. . . .

"I think every student should form a library of his own. It does not matter how small. During my College course I gathered such a library. It occupied the mantel-shelf, yet I owe more to these books than to all the professors.

"I would especially urge this upon medical students. Medical men know all about bones, but not one in a hundred knows about the literature of his time.

"I remember the very first book which I ever bought, which I shall call No. 1. It was a volume of Ruskin—only a book of selections which cost four shillings and sixpence. When I look back upon it now, I can name with perfect clearness what I got out of that book. Ruskin *taught me to see*. Men are born blind, as blind as bats or kittens, and many men go through their whole career without ever opening their eyes. I should have done so, too, if I had not encountered Ruskin. It only requires the idea to be put into a man's mind. . . .

"Ruskin will help a man to the use of his eyes. Anybody can be put up to this in a few minutes. Go out into the country on Saturday, and stop at the first ploughed field. At first you will see nothing but an ugly ploughed mass. When you look again it is a rich amber colour, with probably two feet of coloured air moving over it. The ploughed field is really a glowing mass of beautiful colour. When I was a little boy I wondered why God made the world so dingy. I saw in Ruskin that the colours, as they are in Nature, are most perfectly beautiful, and that by no possibility can they be changed to advantage.

"Then look at the boulders, with their miniature forests of lichen and mosses.

"Just try to think what naked rock is like. There are a few places on the earth's surface where the earth's bones stick out, and there is nothing more appalling in the world. Ruskin calls mosses and lichens 'God's first mercy to the world.' Do not look at the general effect, but look at the individual. Look how exquisitely coloured they are; look at the imitation of crystallisation; look at the finish upon their most minute parts; and look at the stability of these things. They are delicate as a little cigar ash; the sun shines and scorches them, the wind blows and moves them, the frost bites and chills them, the rain falls on them, but never washes them away.

"I should have gone through the world and never seen them at all had Ruskin never taught me to look. He taught me to look at the trees when the leaves were off, and to see as much in them as when the leaves were on. One of the advantages this gives a man is the possession of a great

many adjectives, and it is a man's adjectives, to a large extent, that bear witness to his intellectual power. A lot of men go to hear a sermon or a lecture. Some say, 'It was very nice,' but the thoughtful man will say, 'It was a discerning sermon,' or 'a well-thought-out sermon,' or 'a weak sermon.'

"Now there is nothing that will supply a man with adjectives so much as Nature. What should we know of the word 'awful,' if it were not for thunder? Ruskin says, 'No one knows what tenderness is until he has seen a sunrise.' The best idea that one can get of tenderness is the delicate light of an autumn sunrise. Let me simply say that if anyone has not discovered the world in which he lives, he ought to get some book that will help him to do this.

"The second book I bought was Emerson, and I used always to take credit to myself that I had discovered Emerson. My fellow-students would not read him. They always read Carlyle. I could not read Carlyle then. If I did read Carlyle, I felt I had been whipped; while, after I read Emerson, I felt that I had been stroked down.

"I think a man should read the books that help him. It does not matter what reputation they have got. I think a man should discard the books that bore him. I think what Emerson does for you is to *teach you to see with the mind*. Emerson never proves anything; he never works out logic. He just looks at truth, and sees what he sees, and you see that what he sees is right.

"Emerson was one of the purest and most unworldly men that ever lived. He lived the ripe scholar all the time. He never came down and mingled with the crowd, and took off his gown. There is a scholarly purity and unworldliness about his work.

"He teaches, for instance, the great truth that a man ought to rely upon himself; that God has given him a certain number of talents, and that is his equipment to go through life on. He has to stand on his own instincts, and to be perfectly content to be what God has made him to be, and not anxious to be anybody else; and this makes a man perfectly satisfied to be even a 'duffer.'

"The next books on my library shelf were one or two novels of George Eliot's, which were much in vogue during my College course. I owe a great deal to George Eliot. She *opened my eyes to the meaning of life*. There is no better reading in the world than a good novel. In reading a good novel you are living with good and interesting people who do you good. I was kept going a whole winter because I fell in love with one of George Eliot's young ladies.

"Well, I should say to a student that second or third on his list of books should be a few really first-rate novels. George Eliot had a great message to the world, and she deliberately chose the novel form as the form in which she could best teach the world.

"I used to like Besant and Rice in those days; since then, of course, I have tried to read more carefully.

"I suppose the greatest novelist at the present time is George Meredith. I suppose George Meredith belongs to the same class of novelist as Victor Hugo, where you get George Meredith and more besides. 'Les Misérables' is, perhaps, the greatest of novels.

"Next to my novels, I had one or two books of humour. My favourite, then and now, is Mark Twain. I do not know a book in our language which can touch the American humour in its dash and piquancy. . . . I think the very best book of humour that has ever been given to the world is Mark Twain's 'Selections of American Humour.' That book contains the 'Blue Jay.' I wish I had it here to read to you. . . .

"I must conclude by referring to one or two books which satisfied another part of my nature. I suppose I am not out of court in referring to these books which satisfied the higher part of my being. I think a man should be developed in his whole manhood.

"Well, I picked up a book from a bookstall, and after reading a page of it, carried it home —a volume of Dr. Channing's. Channing taught me to *believe in a God*. I had always been brought up to know that there was a God. But I did not like the idea. I had much rather there had been no God. But when I read Channing's book, I saw the character of the Deity put in such a way that I was glad there was a God.

"To the next book on my list I owed the impression that God was a man. Of course He was more than a man, but He was a man. I got that from one of F. W. Robertson's books of sermons. It was a new revelation to me when I knew that Christ had been a man. I went to the 'Life' of Robertson of Brighton, and I knew what freedom meant.

"Robertson was one of the noblest and truest spirits that ever lived. He did not care what he said so long as he spoke the truth; and my first glimpse of liberty in the intellectual life I got from reading Robertson of Brighton."

A GALLANT HELPER.

THE "Britains beyond the Seas" have had a big share in winning the coveted Victoria Cross. In some cases the deeds of valour have been magnificent in the spirit of self-devotion which they manifested.

Such was shown by Private Patrick Bugden, an Australian, who must have been a comrade worth having.

Of this soldier it is recorded that "in the face of devastating fire from machine guns he gallantly led small parties to attack many strong points, and, successfully silencing the guns with bombs, captured the garrison at the point of the bayonet. On another occasion, when a corporal had been captured and was being taken to the rear by the enemy, Bugden rushed to the rescue of his comrade, shot one enemy and bayoneted the remaining two, thus releasing the corporal. On five occasions he rescued wounded men under intense fire. Always foremost in volunteering for any dangerous mission, it was during the execution of one of these missions that this gallant soldier was killed."

THROWING THE BOOMERANG.

EVERY boy has heard of the boomerang — that uncanny wooden weapon used by the Australian natives. It is a kind of bent stick, which, when properly thrown, will go forward, then turn in the air and come back towards the thrower, and fall to the ground near his feet.

A boomerang is a very ordinary thing in appearance. One which I have often handled was a flat, thin piece of wood, a little more than two feet long, and about three inches broad at the widest part. It was slightly curved, as if it had been cut out of a large ring of wood. Both ends were nicely rounded, and the edges were very thin. The wood was dark in colour, hard and wavy, and it looked stringy, like horn or whalebone, though it was not really so.

All boomerangs are not quite like this, however. Many of them are bent in the middle, rather than curved all the way, and some of them are slightly bent in two different directions, like the letter **S**. It seems very strange that weapons of so many different shapes should all have this peculiarity of turning as they fly through the air.

The Australians make their boomerangs of the wood of the gum tree, and they bend them by means of fire while they are green from the tree.

It requires great skill to throw the boomerang properly. I have repeatedly tried, but always in vain. I never succeeded in making the weapon do anything more than an ordinary piece of wood would have done if thrown in the same way. My brother, who had brought the boomerang from Australia, was more successful. He got it to sail in the air a little, and to turn back in its course. It was a strange sight to see the weapon which he had thrown away from him slowly spinning in the air and coming towards us as though someone else had thrown it at us. We had to watch it carefully, and get out of its way, or we should sometimes have received a rather dangerous blow.

The late Rev. J. G. Wood, who wrote so many interesting books on natural history, had learned how to throw the boomerang, and he knew other people who could do it too.

He says that every man does it in his own way, and it is possible to tell by the flight of the boomerang through the air who has thrown it. When he himself threw it, the weapon went forward for about fifty yards until it nearly reached the ground, then gave a turn and sailed upwards to a great height. There it seemed to hesitate for a moment, and then wheeled slowly round until it fell about ten feet behind him.

Once, when he was throwing



the boomerang, a lad, who was wearing riding boots and spurs, stood watching him. He had told the lad to stand in a place which he knew would be safe, but when the boy saw the boomerang come whirling towards them he took fright and ran away. Unfortunately, he ran into the path of the weapon, and narrowly escaped being seriously injured. The boomerang struck one of his brass spurs and broke it clean off.

From this you may judge what force the weapon will have when thrown by a skilful thrower. This broken spur was the effect of a blow when the boomerang was returning, and nearly spent in its flight. But the Australian native throws it at an object, and then its force is greater. He is so skilful in the use of the weapon that he rarely misses his mark, and he will bring down animals, and also birds upon the wing, two hundred paces distant.

If the boomerang hits its mark it is spent, and falls at once to the ground; but if it misses, it returns to within a few yards of the thrower. Owing to this the weapon can be thrown time after time if it fails to hit the object, and is not lost as an arrow or spear would be.

A skilful thrower can throw it in almost any direction, even against the wind, and he appears to make very little effort. Sometimes he throws it so that it will touch the ground with its flat surface, and then rise up in the air, and it is said that by doing this he increases the force of the blow.

When used in warfare it is a dangerous weapon, for no one but the thrower is quite sure which way it will turn in its flight. Different shapes of boomerangs are used for warfare, for hunting, and for play. They are most used in the eastern part of Australia, and not at all in the extreme north. It is said that some of the tribes of India also use the boomerang.

In warfare the Australian defends himself from the boomerang by means of a shield. This is a long, narrow piece of wood, just wide enough to protect the hand in the middle, and having a sharp ridge up the front. It is held straight up, like other long shields, and the Australian, as the boomerang spins towards him, tries to turn it harmlessly aside by a twist of his hand and shield.

He is careful not to stop the boomerang altogether, for it might break, and the two ends would come round the shield and strike him on each side, or the whole weapon might spin round his shield and still inflict a very dangerous blow. But with a skilful movement he will often succeed in turning it aside, and it then falls harmlessly to the ground.

W. A. Atkinson.

SOME AUSTRALIAN FIGHTERS

AND THEIR DEEDS OF VALOUR.



frequent mention of Australian gallantry during these last twelve months of war has given us some notion of the contribution which the Commonwealth is making in the tremendous struggle. Our readers will like to have some of these deeds put on record.

The difficulty is in making a selection from the many instances which "cry out" for notice.

Here is one story told, last April, by Mr. F. M. Cutlack, correspondent with the Australian Force. It concerns the daring initiative shown by a Queensland sergeant during the heavy fighting in the valley of the Ancre, south-west of Albert:

The enemy suddenly advanced in heavy waves through the mist upon an outpost line without warning, and came streaming across the railway in columns, then spreading out and skirmishing in lines up the gullies on our side.

This sergeant, without waiting for his comrades to accompany him, although these shortly followed, dashed at the centre of the oncoming line with his bayonet. He killed seven Germans immediately and captured a machine gun, which he turned on to the second wave of the enemy following.

The gun jamming, he seized the rifle again and fired at the figures in the second line. Then he picked up a Lewis gun dropped by the first wave of the enemy, and turned and fired this from his hip into the remains of the first wave until his hands were badly burnt and he was unable to continue. This reckless bravery absolutely disorganised the head of the German attack. Once he was surrounded by Germans at twenty yards distance. Australians coming up on the flanks completed the slaughter of the enemy, and the remainder, to the number of thirty, were taken prisoners.

Another stirring story is told of a West Australian private in the heavier battle a few days later. The Australian flank at the right of a British division was obliged to retire a short distance after six hours' resistance, and tried to signal to the British across the valley, but was unable to attract an answer.

The private volunteered to carry a message, and ran out carrying a signal flag. Fierce enemy machine-gun fire swept the valley and cut him down. He struggled up again and ran on. Again he fell, but staggered on for the third time, and finally fell, badly wounded, 100 yards from the British post, and feebly waved his flag in the air.

Two British soldiers ran out and brought in the Australian to their lines. The message was undoubtedly delivered, for immediately afterwards the British signalled and communication was established.

Our next story has to do with an Australian officer—2nd Lieut. Frederick Birks. He did not live to receive the Victoria Cross which was awarded in recognition of his splendid courage. The official account of his deed is as follows:

Accompanied by a corporal, he rushed a strong point which was holding up the advance. The corporal was wounded by a bomb, but Birks went on by himself, killed the remainder of the enemy occupying the position, and captured a machine gun. Shortly afterwards he organised a small party and attacked another strong point which was occupied by about twenty-five of the enemy, of whom many were killed, and an officer and fifteen men captured. By his wonderful coolness and personal bravery Birks kept his men in splendid spirits throughout. He was killed at his post by a shell whilst endeavouring to extricate some of his men who had been buried by a shell.

Of an Australian machine-gun sergeant, John W. Dwyer, to whom the Victoria Cross has been given, we are told that "in an attack, Dwyer, in charge of a Vickers machine gun, went forward with the first wave of the brigade. On reaching the final objective he rushed his gun forward in advance of the captured position in order to obtain a commanding spot. Whilst advancing he noticed an enemy machine gun firing on the troops on our right flank. Unhesitatingly he rushed his gun to within thirty yards of the enemy gun and fired point blank at it, putting it out of action and killing the gun crew. He then seized the gun and, ignoring the snipers from the rear of the enemy position, carried it back across the shell-swept ground to our front line and established both it and his Vickers gun on the right flank of our brigade.

"Dwyer commanded these guns with great coolness, and when the enemy counter-attacked our positions he rendered great assistance in repulsing them. On the following day, when the position was heavily shelled, he took up successive positions. On one occasion his Vickers gun was blown up by shell fire, but he conducted his gun team back to headquarters through the enemy barrage, secured one of the reserve guns, and rushed it back to our position in the shortest possible time."

Another Victoria Cross man who unhappily did not live to receive the decoration was Sergeant Lewis McGee.

His platoon had been suffering severely during the engagement, and the advance of the company was stopped by machine-gun fire from a "pill-box" post. Single-handed, McGee rushed the post armed only with a revolver. He shot some of the crew and captured the rest, and thus enabled the advance to proceed. He reorganised the remnants of his platoon and was foremost in the remainder of the advance, and during consolidation of the position he did splendid work. He was subsequently killed in action.



By W. VICTOR COOK.

Author of "Anton of the Alps," "A Wilderness Wooing," etc.

CHAPTER I.—*NEWS FOR PRIOR NICHOLAS.*

THROUGH the dark woods in panting haste ran Arnulf, the Thane's young son. Now he stumbled in gloomiest shadow, now like a hunted deer he sped over clearer spaces where the parting boughs let the May moonlight filter through upon the ground.

When he blundered through the darker recesses there was a scurrying and twittering of woodland creatures which hastened from his path. When he crossed the clearings the shredded moonlight revealed him, a fateful figure rushing through the quiet night.

Now and then as he ran, between the clustering trunks on his left Arnulf could see the shimmer of the light on the sea creek, in the waters of which the forest dipped its feet. Bursting from the woods at last, the youth came out on a stretch of meadow land lying along the beach, and a little settlement of wooden houses gathered about a church tower. Here lay Bosham at the head of its creek, where Thane Elfric, Arnulf's father ruled, and where his father's fathers had ruled for generations, since the conquering Saxons had wrested this land from the Roman-British, centuries before.

For a moment the lad stood to get his breath.

Over the marshes and the flat woodlands the night breeze blew steadily from the sea to the southward—a vigorous, briny air, which the tired runner drew deep into his lungs. He heard the low booming of a bittern, and a flock of wild geese, flying inland down the wind, passed overhead with a hoarse cry. From the village there was no sound. It lay dreaming under the moon, whose pale gleam picked out the low gray tower of the church.

All along the winding, reed-fringed channels the tide was flowing swiftly—the tide that was big with fate to-night for Bosham. Arnulf broke again into a run.

As he panted through the village, here and there in the homesteads a roused watch-dog gave tongue. Arnulf took no heed, but ran on towards the ghostly church tower.

In his cell in the little monastery beside the church Nicholas the Prior knelt on the bare ground. Before him a crucifix, hanging in a niche upon the wall, was faintly illumined by a candle which burned at its foot. The midnight silence was broken by the sound of his troubled prayers. The candle which lit the holy symbol shone also upon his spare, bearded face, ghastly in the feeble rav, and upon the coarse brown habit he wore and the golden cross that hung resting upon his breast.

The Prior seemed to protest against some dreadful thing. He flung wide his arms as in entreaty; he cried out brokenly; he groaned as if in bitterness of spirit. At last he rose to his feet, and in his sunken eyes there was a stare of horror. His monkish habit hung loosely upon his tall, gaunt frame as he began to walk about the cell. He opened the door and strode out into the courtyard, placid under the moonbeams. Now he caught the barking of the dogs, and stood wondering at the sound.

Suddenly there came a frantic knocking at the monastery gate. Nicholas the Prior, startled, went to the gate, and peered through a little barred wicket.

"Open—for the love of God!" cried an urgent voice. "The Danes sail up the creek to Bosham!"

For a moment the Prior stood as though turned to stone.

"Open!" cried the voice again. "It is I—Arnulf, the Thane's son."

The Prior undid the heavy gate of timber crossed with iron.

"The Danes!" gasped Arnulf, seizing the shoulder of the monk's robe. "Father, in half an hour they will be upon us!"

"The Danes!" repeated Nicholas slowly. He stared at the lad's dripping figure, soaked from his long fair hair to his thong-bound young legs, which were covered thickly with mud. The water trickled from him, and his tunic clung close to his lithe young body. "Young man, it cannot be! None sails the creeks at night." Yet while speaking thus incredulously the Prior stepped outside the walls, and with shaded eyes gazed down the water. "There is nothing, my son," said he.

"By the Rood, but there is!" cried Arnulf urgently. "There is Wulff the son of Sweyn with five great galleys. Even by the moon I saw his sails, blue and white, and the red raven in the midst of them, and the long rows of his pirates' shields along the gunwales."

Prior Nicholas smote his forehead. "Then it is my dream come true!" he cried. "Wulff the son of Sweyn! Pity us, O Lord!"

"Alas!" said the youth. "They come to pay us for Saint Brice's Day, and all the Danish blood our King so foully shed."

"Ay," said the monk. "But they know too well of the precious things our church contains—our great golden crucifix, our chalice of jewelled silver, and the holy vessels, all of silver, which pious men have given to God. Alas, it is my dream come true!"

"What dream?" panted Arnulf, wondering, despite his urgency, at the monk's strange manner.

The Prior's eyes looked wild. He gripped the lad's wet shoulder, and his bony hand shook as if with ague.

"I walked in my sleep up a stony path, and stood at the gates of Paradise," said he, "before Saint Peter with his golden key. God knows I have not spared myself in His service, yet that holy Apostle looked sternly upon me, and said, 'Where is that precious treasure which God gave into thy charge?' 'Sir,' I said, 'it is in the church at Bosham,' and I told him of the golden crucifix and the jewelled chalice and all our vessels. But he shook his head sadly, and said again, 'Where is that precious treasure which God gave into thy charge?' 'Sir,' I said, 'it is in the church—as I am a Christian man and God's priest.' And again he shook his white head, asking me yet a third time his question. And I, fool that I was, cried out yet again, 'Sir, may Paradise be lost to me, if it be not in the church of Bosham as I have said!' Then the holy Apostle frowned, and without more words he slowly closed in my face that gate of shining pearl. Alas, alas, wretched man that I am!"

"Prior Nicholas," broke out Arnulf impatiently, "it is no time for dreams. Open the church, ring the great bell, and save the people lest they all be slain in their beds."

Nicholas started back. "Open the church?" he cried. "That will I, young man, when I have hidden God's treasure where these pagans shall never find it. And then I will ring the bell, and Prince Wulff and his pirates shall have their will of me. But not before! Go you and rouse the village, and send messengers to your father at Chichester to hasten hither with his men and save God's holy house."

"A messenger has gone," said Arnulf. "May Heaven bring her safely to the city!" The youth's face grew anxious.

"A woman! Are you mad—to send a woman!" cried the Prior.

"Alas! there was no other," answered the lad. "Her dear life is on my head, Father—Eadith, daughter of the lord of Itchenor. My father forbade me to see her, but we held secret tryst to-night by Vespasian's ruined palace, and there we saw the ships of Wulff sailing in from the sea. I sent my love by the forest path to Chichester, while I, swimming the channel, ran hither to warn you. Ring the bell, Father!"

Already, roused by the blows at the gate, the brethren of the little monastery had come forth into the courtyard. Like frightened sheep they gathered about their superior. The pale, gaunt face of the Prior took on a stern, fanatic look.

But all the time Arnulf's keen young eyes were staring seawards. Suddenly he cried out, and stretched forth his arm.

The churchmen turned, and lo, on the moonlit water far down the channel half a dozen black shapes came into view.

"The Danes!" exclaimed the young Saxon. "Open the church, my fathers!"

But the Prior turned to his quaking monks, and pointed to the gate, and spoke with sudden, stony calm.

"Go, brothers," he ordered. "Rouse the people, that they and all of you may reach the woods in time."

Hesitating, the monks looked at him. "And you, Father?" faltered one.

"Go!" commanded Nicholas in a terrible voice. And, shrinking before the look in his hollow eyes, the monks went forth to warn the village.

But the Thane's young son stood still and grimly faced the Prior.

"Go you also, boy," said Nicholas.

"I will not," said Arnulf. "till the great bell rings, for only the great bell can save them all. The time is now too short."

The monk changed his ground quickly. "The Mainwood where your Eadith walks is deep and dangerous," he said. "She may never come to the city. Go to her while there is yet time, my son."

"By Heaven's aid I will find her when the bell rings," replied the youth. But there was agony in his face, for he knew well the perils that his sweetheart must run in the crossing of the great Mainwood.

"Wretched boy!" cried Nicholas, impatiently. "Shall I be lost to eternity because of your obstinacy? Go, and leave me to hide God's treasure where none but God and I shall know."

"I will not go," cried Arnulf, "till the bell is rung!"

"Then die here," answered Nicholas sternly. And on the word he fastened the heavy door again. "The pirates will burn the monastery," said he, looking wildly on the lad. "The stone walls of God's house will stand, but you and I, Arnulf, will never see to-morrow's sun."

"Give me the key of the tower,

mad priest!" cried Arnulf desperately.

For answer the Prior struck a sudden, furious blow at the young man's head. But the quick, blue eyes of the Thane's son had been watchful. He parried deftly with his strong, young arm; the Prior's blow fell on a golden armlet, and with the blood running from his bruised fingers he recoiled. With a wild cry he turned and fled swiftly across the courtyard towards the inner door of the church.

The young man followed, but as he ran he stumbled over an unevenness in the flagged courtyard near the well which was in the midst of the enclosure. The Prior had entered the church and had nearly succeeded in closing the door against him when Arnulf flung himself against the oaken frame.

The monk's strength, despite his stature, was no match for that of the younger man, trained to all exercises of war and the chase. He gave back, measuring his length upon the floor, as Arnulf burst into the sanctuary.

Springing to his feet, the Prior ran to the altar, and with feverish haste began to pile the precious vessels into a great iron-clamped chest. "Rash youth," he cried, "in the name of the Blessed Trinity, I command you: help me to save God's treasure, which He hath committed to my charge. Thus, like the dying thief, thou mayest win Paradise in this thy last hour."

"Fool!" cried the impetuous boy. "Is not the treasure of God the children of God? Will a man save his silver candlesticks before his sons and his daughters?"

At that word the Prior stood still in the midst of his haste and stared upon his companion.

"The keys—the keys of the tower!" insisted Arnulf. But without reply Nicholas the Prior turned suddenly away and fell on his knees before the altar. A new light glowed upon his haggard face.

"Blessed Apostle!" he almost shouted. "Is this indeed thy warning? Dost thou teach me out of the mouth of a boy?" He bowed his shaven head to the very ground before the altar, then rose as suddenly as he had knelt.

"Arnulf," he said, in a voice humble and calm, "Go now to your Eadith. I will ring the bell." He ran to the door of the tower and set it open. And while Arnulf still stood wondering at the swift change, he heard the creak of the great bell's gear.

Then with a sudden shock of sound the iron tongue clanged out its warning to the night. Stroke upon stroke, quicker and louder, the great bell crashed and boomed, and the stone walls shook and quivered to the deep full tones. Over sleeping village and tranquil creek that urgent tocsin rang, startling from their couch freedman and slave, tired housewife and little child. The Danish rovers heard it in their long dragon-ships as they thrust them to the land, and cursed that iron throat by Odin and Thor: the sea wind carried it over forest and marsh, and on the distant uplands the lonely shepherd trembled at the sound.

CHAPTER II.—*THE DANES!*

SHUTTING his ears to the deafening clangour, Arnulf, the Thane's son, ran for the monastery gate. His duty was done: the villagers were saved. Quick, now, by the old Roman road to Chichester, to rouse the city and learn how his love had fared! He pictured his Eadith lost in the deep mazes of the Mainwood, torn by tangled thornbrakes, attacked by savage beasts, as with trembling hands he began to unfasten the gate.

Alas! To persuade the Prior had taken longer than he knew, and the pirates' keels had been even swifter than his fears. As he worked with frantic haste at the fastening of the gate, he heard from without a savage shouting which rose against the clamour of the bell.

Peering through the wicket ere he flung wide the gate, Arnulf saw the narrow street that ran down to the creek filled with a press of shouting warriors. Already on either hand in the village red tongues of flame were shooting up.

Straight for the gate ran the Danish rovers, yelling with savage fury. Some bore blazing torches, whose light danced on polished helms and the bare blades of weapons, and illumined the red cloaks of the warriors flyng open above their shirts of mail. At their head ran a young viking in shining armour of bronze that glowed like gold, and over his gleaming silver helm two great black ram's horns curved together. In his hand he carried a two-bladed axe.

All these things young Arnulf saw in the winking of an eye as he peeped through the wicket, and at the same time he understood that there was nothing to be done. He could but sell his life at its best price, and for that last fight he had no armour, no weapon but his short sword.

The hail of blows assailed the gate again. Bitterly Arnulf cursed, as his elders had done before, King Ethelred's savage folly, who, since he could not stay the raiding bands of the Danes, massacred bloodily all who had settled in his land, and among them on that fatal Saint Brice's Day made Gunhild, King Sweyn's own sister, look on at the slaughter of husband and children before she, too, was butchered. Well might the pirates cry, "Remember!"

And now the tumult at the gate drowned even the booming of the bell. Arnulf ran swiftly across the empty courtyard and re-entered the church.

Save for a small slit in the stone, through which a thin shaft of moonlight fell, the tower was utterly dark. Arnulf made out a black shape which swayed this way and that as the bell clanged, and he put out his hand and caught the Prior's habit.

"The Danes hammer at the gate!" he shouted. "In a few minutes they will burst it in. Father, where shall I hide the altar vessels?"

The black shape ceased to

sway, and the deep voice of the great bell died away in its iron throat.

"The people are fled, are they not?" said the Prior. "They heard the bell in time?"

"Every man in a three-mile circuit must have heard it," answered the lad.

"Quick, then!" cried Nicholas. "To the well—it is the only way!"



"BORNE SHOULDER-HIGH BY SIX WARRIORS CAME THE GREAT BELL OF BOSHAM."

Drawn by SAVILE LUMLEY.

Running into the church, he pointed to the oaken chest containing the sacred vessels. Together they lifted it, and carried it to the well in the courtyard. The priest snatched the young man's keen, short sword from its sheath, and with it cut a length of rope from the well top. To one end the wooden bucket was attached; the other Nicholas made fast round the chest.

Outside the tumult of shouting continued, but so far the stout gate had held, and for the moment the hail of blows had ceased. Suddenly there came a united shout from the Danes: a heavy thud shook the gate, and there was a noise of rending wood.

"They have made a ram," said Arnulf. "The next stroke will end all, father."

"As God wills," answered the Prior, calmly. "Now!"

Together the two Saxons hove the chest into the well's dark depths. The Prior thrust back the covering of the well into its place, and turned a calm face to the lad

"Make now a good confession, Arnulf, for the hour has come."

Even as he spoke, the gate gave way before another crashing blow, and the exultant Danes poured through the breach. Foremost came the chieftain in his gleaming mail suit.

Seeing no one in the moonlit courtyard but an old man and a youth, they stood for a moment in astonishment. Then the

leader ran towards Nicholas, and raised his axe to strike.

But, swift as a leaping hound, young Arnulf sprang between; his short sword flashed, and with all his force he brought it down upon the Dane's broad chest. The steel snapped harmlessly upon the shining scale-armour, but the raider, momentarily checked by the fury of the blow, stood and regarded the young Saxon, who, defenceless now, still held himself in front of the Prior.

The big Dane laughed, and put up a hand to stay his shouting warriors.

"Who are you, wild-cat?" he cried.

"I am Arnulf, son of Elfric the Thane of Bosham."

"And I am Wulff, son of Sweyn, the King of Denmark. By the light of my beacon-fires even a Saxon may learn wisdom," cried the other roughly. "Where are the dogs from yonder kennels?" He pointed behind him to the blazing village.

Arnulf threw back his young head defiantly.

"Bosham bell has saved all Bosham folk," he cried. "Robber and pirate, do your worst! Ere the dawn breaks my father will avenge his son."

"Was it you who rang the bell, O terrible one?" asked Wulff, with grim humour.

"It was I," said the Prior.

"You have robbed us of a goodly slaughter, priest, and your church's treasure shall pay us. Where is it?"

"In God's keeping," answered the monk calmly.

The Dane spoke to a couple of his men, and each seized an arm of the Prior. Wulff pressed the keen points of his axe-blades lightly against the throat of Nicholas. "It were better in ours," he said. "Show us the place quickly, and, by Odin, thou shalt live to amass more, for such is the only use of you priests in the world."

"Strike," said the Prior calmly, with closed eyes.

But with a harsh laugh the Dane withdrew the steel.

"We will talk of this again," said he, "when we have made search. Pray to thy pale gods that we find the treasure soon, for so thy death will be easier. As for you, my cockerel—" Wulff turned to the Saxon youth—"it may be that the Thane your father will pay good gold for you. Red gold is better than a strangled chicken. Take them out, shipmates, and hold them fast, whilst we smoke out this foxes' nest. Come on!"

With a fierce shout the pirates rushed like a wave of destruction into the monastery. From doorway and window space the ruddy light of their torches flared and faded; cell and corridor and shrine rang to the clank of arms, and re-echoed in hollow mockery the jeers of the despoilers. Sacred images and pictures and embroidered vestments, and the furniture of the altar itself, were smashed and spoiled and strewn broadcast. The cellars of the monastery were raided and the ale-casks broached, and drunkenness was added to the terror of the scene.

Soon yellow tongues of flame began to shoot up here and there. Quickly reddening, they spread in all directions, crackling and roaring, while showers of sparks mingled with a great cloud of smoke which rose from the burning monastery. Savage figures, wild with the fury of destruction, began to run out across the courtyard from the ever-increasing heat of the conflagration.

Suddenly, in the midst of the orgy, the deep voice of the bell was heard once more. For a few moments it rang out clear and loud above the tumult; then its strong vibrating notes ceased with a harsh crash and clatter of metal.

"They have flung down the bell in the tower," muttered Arnulf to his fellow-prisoner.

Tears were running slowly down the thin cheeks of the Prior as he watched the ruin of the place he loved.

They were still watching, through the opening of the shattered gate, the come and go of figures in the lurid quadrangle, when a strange procession appeared emerging from the monastery.

Raised above a sea of frenzied faces, borne shoulder-high through the smoke and flame by six warriors upon the wrenched-off door of the church, came the great bell of Bosham. Brandished swords and axes ringed it with a hedge of flashing steel, while a hundred rude warrior voices shouted exultingly a hymn to Thor the thunder-god. In the bell's smooth side, polished to the brightness of silver by the labour of generations of monks, the red reflection of the conflagration lurked with a dull glow.

The guards about the captives shouted with their comrades as the latter emerged from the gateway with their unwieldy burden.

"Swords for Odin's warriors!" cried the Danes. "Arrow-heads for Ethelred and all his Saxon herd!"

"Better than gold and silver!" cried Wulff, the son of Sweyn. Snatching a pike from one of his followers, he hurled it at the bell with such force that the steel tip broke short on the smooth surface. "O bell, that called the Christian slaves to kneel, many and bright mail-shirts thou shalt make; often shalt thou hear the bird of Odin scream over the fields of the slain!"

With furious face the Prince turned to his prisoners. "Yet think not the treasure shall escape us!" he cried. "We will return, and the Thane shall buy his son at our price."

For the first time Nicholas the Prior made answer: "The treasure which my God committed to me is not for you, Sir Prince. O blessed Apostle, who sent me word in time!"

"What is it the Saxon says?" cried Wulff. "Comrades bring them to the ships."

Down through the narrow street poured the savage crews between blazing homesteads to the beach, shouting and singing, mad with the liquor they had broached and with the lust of havoc.

At the little landing stage the pirate ships lay moored, side by side, swung ready for the ebb tide. At each prow the painted dragon's head in green and red and gold looked towards the blazing village; at each sternpost the long curve of the ship's sides bent upwards in a dragon's tail.

The ebb had commenced, and with the sea-breeze still blowing stiffly, the conflict of wind and tide set up a pother and splash of waves about the ships as their long, lean shapes rose and fell to the water.

CHAPTER III.—*OUT TO SEA!*

CAREFULLY in the nearest ship the raiders placed the captured bell, laying the church door supporting it across two of the stout thwarts. They began to clamber into their vessels, while stragglers from the burning village came running to the beach, and from all around went up the deep, full roaring of the flames.

Suddenly another sound broke upon the night—angry voices of men, the shouts of an approaching host.

"Hearken!" cried Wulff. "What noise is that?"

The Saxon youth turned proudly to his captor. "The noise of vengeance, Prince," said he. "The Thane, my father, with a thousand men, holds Chichester for the King."

Louder and louder came the shouting voices. "Cast off! Cast off!" cried the Danish leader. "Out sweeps and pull all!"

The ships thrust clear of the landing stage, the long oars dipped and rose, and they began to pull out into the creek, just as with a wild clatter of hoofs a band of horsemen galloped down to the beach.

"To me! To me!" shouted Arnulf, standing up in the ship and calling to his countrymen, for foremost among the horsemen he saw his father's bearded face. But a Dane struck him fiercely on the mouth and knocked him down. The Saxons, seeing themselves too late, reined up, and some, who carried bows, sent a scattered flight of arrows on board the viking ships.

Wulff, the son of Sweyn, laughed aloud. "Shipmates," he cried, "the creek is narrow; these Saxon darts may do some hurt. Set me the Thane's son on the bell-top for all of them to see. Get up, young lion cub, and come no more among us till we reach open water, or, by all the gods in Valhalla, you die in that same moment."

A roar of applause welcomed the proposal, and Arnulf, with a rope about his middle held by one of his captors, was pushed up to the top of the bell, where he was forced to cling for support to the broken fastening, while the Danes below yelled defiance at their discomfited foes.

"Now let us put the priest under the bell, lest he jump overboard!" cried Wulff, and again the pirates shouted with approval. Using their weapons as levers, they raised one edge of the bell high enough to thrust Nicholas the Prior underneath, which they did with many blows, though he offered no resistance.

Impelled by many stalwart arms, and helped by the tide, the dragon-ships moved swiftly down the channel in the teeth of the breeze. Their sharp prows cut through the plashing white-caps; their long decks heaved gently to the rising swell.

At the end of the Bosham reach, at a point where the channel deepens quickly, the creek enters the wider waters of the great estuary. The pirate ships rounded the point, and fresh and strong came the wind from the sea. Noisily the white-caps broke over the broad waters in the moonlight; bravely the long decks lifted and swung to the roll of the waves. Now on the port side, now on the starboard, the Prince's ship raised her long array of shields. She dipped her nose to a trough of green waters, and took stoutly the buffet of the oncoming billow.

Arnulf clung fast on his unsteady perch, but at the shock of the wave the great bell moved upon the flat church door. Forward it slid, the smooth metal making no resistance, forward till its rim projected far beyond the door's edge.

With a loud cry the Danes sprang up to thrust it back. Too late! Again the long ship heaved and swung to the sea. With a last loud clang the massive bell lurched forward, bearing all before it. Crashing through decking and side-planks and shattered gunwale, it plunged to the watery depths, while for a moment the dragon-ship shivered down all her length, and lay on the waves like a wounded sea-bird. A welter of green water poured through her riven side, the painted monster on her prow leaned over, and her stern-post lifted for a moment above the sea. From the doomed raiders came a loud cry of despair. Then down sank ship and men like a stone into the sea.

Arnulf had sprung clear when the great bell crashed down. Dashing the salt water from his eyes as he came to the surface, he looked about him. Of ship or crew scarcely a sign remained. Here and there a mail-clad form clutched at a floating oar; here and there broken timbers rose and fell. In vain he looked for Nicholas the Prior. The Prior had travelled, even as he had dreamed, by a rough path to the gate of Paradise.

Far down the channel the other ships, warned by that piercing cry of terror, were turning back.

The young Saxon struck out for the shore. Lightly clad as he was, and a swimmer from boyhood, he reached it easily, and for the second time that night fled through the dark woods to Bosham.

The rim of night was lifting on the pale landward hills as he came to the smoking village. The bodies of a few Danes, stragglers after spoil slain by the angry Saxons, lay upon the beach. In the courtyard of the monastery, where the fire had been extinguished, Arnulf found Elfric the Thane, his father, with many horse and foot from the city. They stared at him as at one returned from the dead. But Arnulf ran to his father where he sat his great horse, and caught him by the hand.

"Sir, where is Eadith?"

The old soldier smiled grimly.

"Where she should have stayed, son Arnulf—in her father's house."

"She saved the people, father," said the lad, with shining eyes.

"She—and you, it seems."

"Nay, father, not I, but Prior Nicholas, who stayed to ring the bell."

"Where is he?" asked the Thane.

"In Paradise," said Arnulf, and he told the story of the great bell.

And the story has come down, changing as such stories do, through many generations, till it began to be related that the frightened folk of Bosham turned to the blessed saints in their extremity, and were saved by the intervention of Saint Nicholas, patron of sailors, and that the raiding Danes were destroyed miraculously by the great bell.

The place where the pirate ship went down is called the Bell Hole to this day, and they say in Sussex that if you stand by the water's edge when the bells of Bosham chime you will still hear, faint and low over the waves, the voice of the lost big bell, answering the peal, from the bottomless depths of the Hole.



On a South African Farm.

CRAMBLING up a steep bank of crumbling red clay, in the full glare of a real South African sun, I come suddenly out upon a wide sweep of grassy upland, and see at last the meaning of the mysterious bellowing that has been puzzling me for the last ten minutes or so.

About a hundred yards in front of me lies a small palisaded enclosure with a single opening, not unlike a Mexican "corral" or an Australian stock-pen. In one corner of it a number of half-grown bullocks are huddling together, while one of the largest is dashing wildly round and round the corral, as if trying to make his escape from it.

But the three men who are guarding him are not to be so easily baulked.

One of the two small, gaunt, wiry Kaffir stockmen stands in the entrance to oppose his flight, offering his own bare brown chest to the short, sharp horns as fearlessly as if cased in steel; and the second Kaffir, springing nimbly aside from the brute's headlong rush, flings a short, strong noose of hide over its horns, and in another moment it lies sprawling on the ground, kicking and bellowing in impotent rage.

Meanwhile the third man—a tall, sinewy figure, with the fair complexion and reddish-brown beard of an Englishman—steps forward in his turn, and, while the two natives hold the beast down, dexterously clips the hair from its tail, which he then pricks deeply with a strong sail-maker's needle.

This rough-and-ready vaccination has, as I suddenly discover, three more spectators, in the form of the three small boys (evidently the operator's children) who sit perched on a rude deal table in one corner of the corral, while the furious beasts rush backward and forward within a few inches of them, without seeming to discompose them in the least.

"I'm doctoring them for lung-disease," says the farmer, in reply to my question. "I've done fifty of 'em this way since breakfast, and I'll have to do a whole lot more yet, but I shall think myself precious lucky, I can tell you, if I don't lose any more than the nine that are dead already. That's the worst of raising stock in this country; just when you think you've got everything shipshape at last, half your beasts get stolen, or washed away in a flood, or knocked over by sickness—and there you are!"

He pauses for an instant to wipe his heated face, and then, with a meaning glance around him, goes on:

"I once lost a thousand sheep in three days, and I should hope that was enough to lose at one time. The land's good enough if one could only get water for it; but isn't *that* nice stuff to feed cattle on!"

And he points significantly to the short, dry stems of dusty grass, which seem to have in them about as much nourishment as a meal of hairpins.

In truth, I have only to cast one glance around me in order to see for myself all the terrific effects of a genuine South African drought.

The parched earth, cracked and split in every direction, seems gaping through a hundred thirsty mouths for the life-giving rain that is still denied it. The very leaves of the trees are curled up like burning paper, and thickly coated with hot, prickly dust. The short, yellow, stubbly grass below is scorched as dry as tinder. The watercourses that seam the ground on all sides are mere dusty ditches; and only half an hour ago I strolled leisurely, with my hands in my pockets, across a river (or rather across the place where it ought to have been) which makes a great figure on all local maps.

In fact, I can see from where I stand all that is left of a stream that, only last year, swept away, like straws, a waggon and four horses—viz., a wide waste of smooth white pebbles, amid which lingers one tiny pool, so small and shallow that the sturdy Kaffir washerwoman, who is using it as an outdoor laundry, looks very much as if she were trying to bathe in a teacup.

And terrible it is to think that even when the long-wished-for rain *does* come it will do little or no good. By that time the parched, baked earth will be as hard as a flint, and the life-bringing water will sweep over it as if pouring down a slated roof, and, instead of sinking in, will rush away down to the sea, leaving everything behind it as bare as ever.

"Come in and have a drink of fresh milk," says my new acquaintance, with true colonial hospitality, "and then I'll show you over the place."

The tiny parlour of my host's neat little cottage looks delightfully cool and shady after the blistering glare outside; and what with its well-kept piano, its three or four simple pictures, and the trim row of books on a small shelf along the farther wall, the whole interior has quite a home-like aspect. The milk, too, is first-rate of its kind, and far from requiring the apology that my kind host hastens to make.

"Sorry I can't give you a better welcome; but, you see, we've got sickness in the house, and that has put us all about. Lucy, yonder" (nodding towards a charming little flaxen-haired head that has just peeped out of the inner room), "is just getting over the measles, and the baby was mighty bad with croup last night; once or twice I really wondered if she would pull through. Here she is, you see."

There, sure enough—half hidden by the encircling arms of its black nurse—is the poor wee pale face, which brightens into a wan smile as the father's strong brown hand smoothes its soft hair tenderly before passing on to exhibit his little stock of "curios."

The collection is a simple one—a small basket of dried sea-weeds, a Zulu knobkerry and assegai (club and spear), and the banded skin of the deadly "puff-adder" (with its picturesque mixture of sombre gray and dull parchment white) killed close to the house only a few days before by one of the small boys whom I had seen, with no weapon but a stick!

But while the sturdy colonist is showing me his little store of curiosities I inwardly decide that not one of them is so well worth seeing as himself. There he stands, the veteran of a thirty years' war with every kind of ill-fortune, with a weary look in his bold, gray eyes, and many a line of trouble cut deep in his honest, sunburned face, but still as fearless and as ready for another grapple with adverse fate as ever.

This done, we go forth again, passing three or four native farm-hands near the door.

"What sort of labourers do these Kaffirs make?" ask I.

"Well, they're not good for much, except in the way of minding cattle, and, of course, they do *that* first-rate, because it's what they've been at all their lives in their own country. You may put a hundred oxen in a Kaffir's charge, and he'll know every one of them after that, even though he's only seen 'em once; but for most other work they're no use at all—not a bit. The only thing is that they're very cheap."

Amid the universal desolation of this thirsty land, the only vegetation that seems to thrive is the army of thick, dark mimosa-clumps around the clearing, the little ball-like yellow flowers of which contrast very prettily with those huge, spiky thorns—quite as long as a good-sized knife—to which the Dutch Boers give the significant name of "wait-a-bit." But when I brush against these vegetable bayonets, not a few of them crumple up like paper; and I see that they are hollow and dead, the entire inside having been eaten by insects.

Striding across the clearing, my host marches me up to a fence, if such it can be called (for it is really nothing more than a line of thorn bushes piled one upon the other), and, halting in front of it, shouts with the full power of his deep voice, "Bob!"

Instantly a rustling and a crackling in the thicket behind answers the call, and forth steps a splendid black ostrich, far beyond the average size, with a tufted tail of magnificent white feathers, every one of which would be worth any money in London or New York.

Behind him, at a slower and less swaggering pace, follows his mate in her dress of sober brown, heading the procession of her children—four promising little ostrichlings about the size of geese, whose grayish-brown plumage is curiously streaked and mottled with pale yellow.

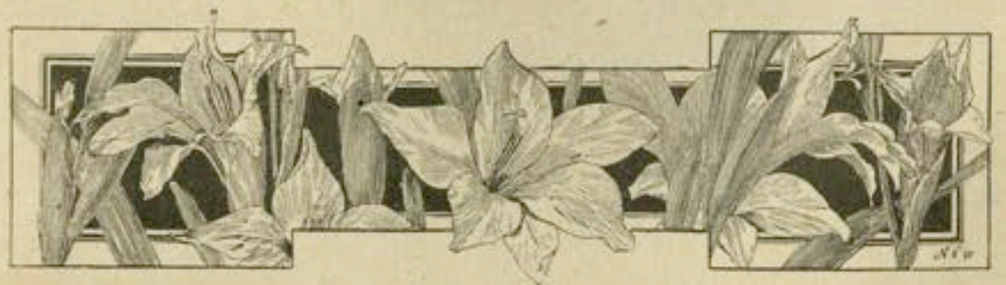
"Fine fellow, isn't he?" says the farmer, nodding approvingly toward the stately bird, which comes right up to him in the most familiar way. "He knows his name, as you see, but he doesn't always know his master. Only the other day I happened to go up to him in a long coat and dark wideawake, quite different from my usual dress, and he, taking me for a stranger, suddenly fetched me a kick that sent me head-over-heels, and fairly knocked me silly!"

"Very ungrateful of him I must say," rejoined I, laughing; "but I believe the older birds *are* rather dangerous in that way."

"They are indeed; but fancy a big, strong creature like that being kept in sometimes by a fence only three inches high! It's true, though—they never dream of stepping over it; and, for that matter, if you only *chalk* a line round them upon the grass, that's quite enough—they won't try to cross it."

A few more friendly words, and then we parted, never to meet again; and I can only hope—having heard no more of him since that day—that this brave farmer *did*, in the long run, succeed in holding his own, and met with better fortune than many of his fellows.

D. K.



DRAGON FLIES AND THEIR WAYS.

FIERCE pirates though they be, one cannot watch the movements of the dragon flies that skim our pools and streams without admiring their glittering beauty and the marvellous swiftness with which they pass and repass, flashing to and fro in the sunlight.

Much can be learned about them by any boy who cares to spare an hour out of a summer's day to sit by the waterside and study them. But such boys may be glad to add to their own knowledge the information collected and most attractively presented



DRAGON FLIES ON THE WING.

by a writer in the *Spectator* some years ago. The subject has seldom had better treatment. This is what he says:

The most beautiful and numerous of the dragon flies are of the most brilliant blue conceivable, one being small and slender, another a great blue-and-black fly called the *Anax Imperator*, and another, a brilliant black-and-blue insect, rather less in size, the *Æschna mixta*, with huge sapphire-blue eyes. No flowers on earth have such a blue, heightened as the pure colour is by the metallic shine of the insect's cuirass.

We had the curiosity to count the number and species in one small area, the size of a drawing-room table, and floored with wet, green moss studded with round penny-wort leaves, and dotted here and there with tufts of thin rushes. There were fourteen of the slender blue variety, five of the red, a big ferocious yellow-green dragon fly, and a few pale ones of a slender green species.

From over the water one of the magnificent large blue *Anax Imperator*, the pride of the lake, came dashing up, poised himself for an instant, and then, marking a large bee-like fly passing slowly by, twisted, mounted a foot or so, dashed at it, seized it in its feet or jaws—it was impossible to see which—and sailed away with its prize across the pool like a hawk carrying a partridge. The speed of the flight is like a swallow's, and in addition the dragon flies, unlike most insects, can fly *backwards*.

In the moss at the bottom of the rushes lay something shining and gently moving. It was a medium-sized dragon fly, just emerged from the larva-case, and as yet too weak to fly.

Every one who has watched butterflies or moths after they have emerged from the chrysalis knows the extraordinary natural miracle which accompanies the growth of the wings. When the butterfly, or moth, struggles out from the chrysalis-case it appears to have only dwarf wings, and any one would think that it was not properly developed. A privet hawk-moth, for instance, will emerge with all its body and legs properly formed, but with wings only half an inch long. In an hour they will have grown to their full shape and dimensions.

What happens is that the folded and apparently rudimentary wing is really like a parachute with hollow ribs, which have to be inflated first with juices and then with air. This sets up the ribs, and expands the wing, and as the whole structure hardens, fills, and dries, so the miraculous growth goes on.

This, too, happens in the case of the dragon fly, which has what look only like the stumps of wings when it emerges from the pupa. These the creature moves and shakes, while it forces air in and causes them to expand. This dragon fly had apparently satisfied itself in regard to the size of its wings. But the material had not hardened. Instead of the dry, rustling talc-like wings, with veins like fine steel-wire, of the perfect dragon fly, these were like the thinnest gelatine or wet "cracker" paper or goldbeater's skin, shining with iridescent lustre in very pale opal hues. The case from which it had emerged must have been close by, but was not discovered.

The larvæ, when in the water, are quite as ferocious as are the dragon flies when in the air. They can both swim and run, and are deadly enemies of fish spawn, and, indeed, of any living creatures which they can catch.

When they feel that they are going to become something else, their first impulse is to climb out of the water up a stick or reed. One of the large green-and-black kind taken as a larva was kept in a basin, with a flower-pot partly broken to form a den for it to hide in. Here it fed and flourished for some weeks, until it showed a disposition to climb up the flower-pot. To make things to its liking, a stick was stuck into the flower-pot hole for the larva to walk up and get through its metamorphosis comfortably. Next day it was seen on the stick.

A nearer approach showed that it was only the shell, out of which the full-formed insect had crept by a split in the back of the thorax.

In the evening the dragon fly, which had probably been sitting on a tree to "harden," appeared vigorously hawking about in the garden where it had lived as a larva under the flower-pot. One wonders whether it could see its old shape, which remained quite perfect as a shell on the stick, and whether it realised what it had been.

Some of the dragon flies are very pale and colourless when they emerge, and only assume their brilliant hues gradually. Possibly high feeding has something to do with their splendour of colour.

It is said that on almost the last appearance of the vanished great copper butterfly in the Fens the swarm only survived for two days. On the third nothing but wings were found lying about, just as pigeons' or grouse's wings are found where a falcon has been feeding. The dragon flies had attacked and eaten every butterfly.

This was told to the writer many years ago by a gentleman who had seen them, and who had a very considerable number of the great coppers, which he had secured, in his collection.

The wing-power of the dragon flies is probably greater than that of any other insect. They can travel great distances if they please, and have been seen from ships very far out at sea.

Not all dragon flies haunt water or the neighbourhood of aquatic plants after they have emerged and can fly. The large common green-and-black species often leaves the waterside altogether, and takes up a beat on the drive leading to a country house. This suits it exactly, for the lines of trees on either side prevent the insects haunting the drive from escaping readily from this lightning raider.

Some species do not remain ever on the wing, but sit on boughs of trees, whence they dash off, like a flycatcher or a kingfisher watching from a bough, at passing insects, which they bring back to their perch to devour.

THE FIRST TRIP OF A U-BOAT

AND HOW RETRIBUTION OVERTOOK HER.

HER number was UC39, and she was out on her first pirate voyage. She was a new mine-laying submarine, commanded by Otto Ehrentraut, a personal friend of Prince Henry of Prussia.

The story of her crimes and how they were avenged got into the newspapers last May. It should have a place in our pages if only as a typical example of the way the Huns have swept aside all the old chivalrous rules of sea warfare.

On the first day after leaving the base, the UC39, carrying several torpedoes and a quantity of ammunition for her gun but no mines, for it was her first trip and a "shakedown" cruise for her officers and men, sank the Norwegian s.s. *Hans Kinck* and the British steamer *Hanna Larsen*.

On the second morning she sighted the Norwegian s.s. *Ida* and opened fire.

The *Ida* stopped immediately, probably after the first round, but nevertheless the submarine continued firing under the personal orders of Otto Ehrentraut. When the gunlayer saw that the ship had stopped and that he had obtained several hits he asked if he should cease firing. He was told by the captain to carry on and had to obey.

Some twenty-five rounds in all were fired, the last few being at a range of a little under two miles. When the German finally ceased fire, one of the *Ida's* boats went alongside the submarine and said that two wounded had been left on the steamer. The sub-lieutenant and three men were sent on board, and found the mate and a steward lying dead on the deck, having been killed whilst in the act of lowering the boats. The *Ida* was then sunk by bombs. The two dead bodies had been left lying on the deck, with less regard than is usually paid to the corpse of a dog.

Two hours later UC39 opened fire on a steamer and a trawler, but, on diving, lost them in the mist. About 1 p.m. she came to the surface and opened fire on another steamer, but her fire was almost immediately answered from a British destroyer.

She dived; but not soon enough, for a depth charge shook her vitally, so that water poured into her conning tower and control room, causing a panic amongst the crew.

UC39 rose sharply to the surface, and the destroyer raked her fore and aft. Ehrentraut climbed out of the conning tower hatch, and was preparing to surrender when he was killed by a shell. The engineer and sub-lieutenant were the next on deck, and the former was wounded.

The UC-boat was still making speed on the surface, and the destroyer therefore continued to fire. Three of the crew jumped overboard and were immediately drowned, while three others on the deck were killed by gunfire, and several were wounded.

Finally the destroyer hailed the UC-boat through a megaphone to stop, and, this being done, fire ceased, and seventeen German survivors were taken off by the destroyer. Two British prisoners were also rescued.

"Quits."

A PENINSULAR MEMORY.

By D. H. PARRY.

CHAPTER I.—*THE KING'S SHILLING.*

DUB — dub — drub-a-dub-dub!"

It was certainly drums, a long way off, but coming nearer. And Jimmy Langford, half way up the big apple tree, looked away across the wide stretch of the forty-acre cornfield.

His cheeks were browner than the mellowing grain that rolled in billowy waves up to the skyline, where the heat haze shimmered against the blue glare as though the field were on fire.

His lips were parched and dry as the white limekiln yonder on the saltings, and no wonder, for since five o'clock that morning the lonely little lad had patrolled the edge of "Forty Acre" in patched smock and leggings, springing his rattle to scare the birds and shouting his shrill discordant song, which had about as much music in it as the rattle itself.

The horizon of his short life had been practically bounded by the "Forty Acre" from the day Farmer Argent took him out of the workhouse, and whipped him and worked him far harder than any horse on the farm.

His wooden keg had been empty for hours; water there was none nearer than the farm, where he must not go until supper-time on pain of that cruel waggon whip. And there they hung, apples galore, with not a soul in sight to say him nay!

The orchard lay between "Forty Acre" and the road, a door in the red wall opening into the field and another on to the highway, and unslinging his keg, he laid it down beside the rattle and took a bold step.

"Dub—dub—drub-a-dub-dub!" And mingling with the drums came the soft, sweet wail of fifes quite close now.

"Sojers!" whispered Jimmy delightedly. "I shall see they from here an' no one can see I." So he plucked an apple and munched, lying among the gnarled boughs in the shelter of the leaves.

A cloud of dust floated round the angle of the orchard wall, and out of the cloud stalked a red-coated sergeant with a halberd on his shoulder. Behind him came a group of lads in bearskin caps with white tape lace plastered over their tight jackets, fifing and drumming at the head of twenty recruits with ribbons in their caps, half a dozen soldiers bringing up the tail of the little procession.

With mouth wide open Jimmy devoured the spectacle, wondering in a vague sort of way how one of the drummers, who was so very small, managed to make so much noise on his drum, which was so very large, when from somewhere out of sight behind him came an angry shout of "Jimmy Langford, where be 'e?"

Farmer Argent had come along the field, the birds rising at every yard and his temper with them, and the crack of his whip struck terror into the culprit.

It was almost death by the law to set foot within that orchard, and the unhappy foundling dropped from the tree as his master thrust the field door open in time to see him fall on all fours.

"What! Thowt you was asleep, but it's stealing, is it?" roared the brute. "Thee shall smart for this!"

Jimmy did not pause to reflect; something seemed to tell him that beyond the other wall there was the high road, and the drums, and freedom of sorts, and in a moment he had crossed the orchard and drawn the wooden bolt.

The recruiting party grinned as they saw a terror-stricken little figure suddenly emerge, slam the wall door behind him, and cling desperately to the iron handle, and the farmer's bellow told them what was happening.

The tallest of the drummers laughed as he stepped aside, and picking up a piece of broken bough, thrust it through the staple.

"It's a strong man that'll open that from the inside," he grinned. "Now run home to your mammy—that'll give you a good start."

It was quite five minutes before the door yielded to Farmer Argent's strong hands, and by that time the drums were dying away and the dust was settling down on to the empty road.

"All right, Jimmy, my lad! Thou shalt have a hot supper to-night, the hottest you've ever had in your life!" snarled the farmer.

* * * *

The recruiting party had had their supper in the town five miles off and the sergeant, mug at elbow and long clay pipe in hand, was discoursing on war and wounds and glory to the yokels in the tap room when a wan little figure with big wide eyes appeared so suddenly round the high settle that the good man jumped. Behind him was the tall drummer, who had pushed him almost into the sergeant's arms.

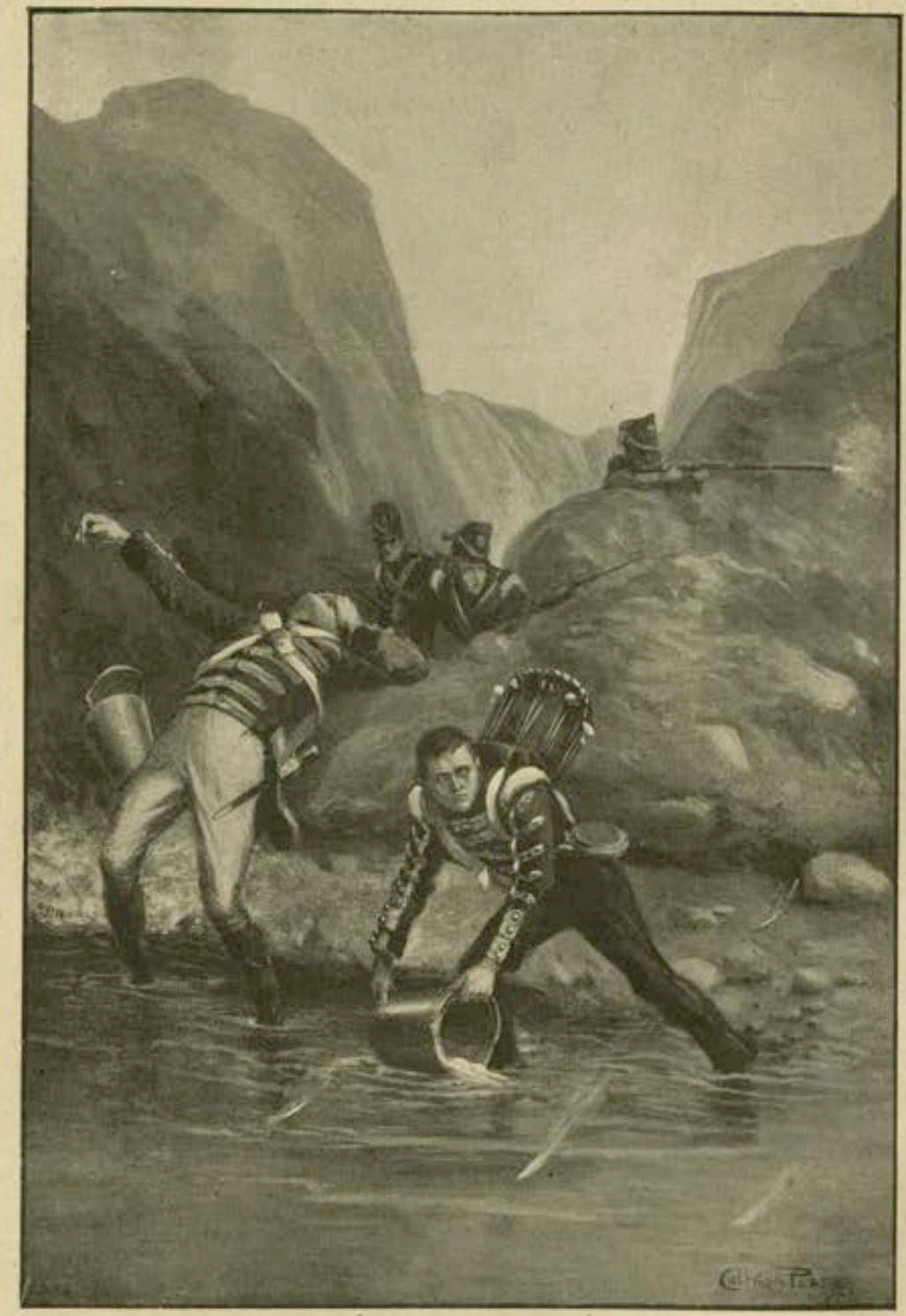
"What's this?" he cried.

"New recruit, Sergeant," grinned the drummer lad.

"Eh? Bless my soul! Run away to bed, child! And don't you come playing any of your jokes on me, Larkins!"

"It's no joke, Sergeant. The little 'un's got no bed. He says farmer'll kill him if he goes back, and that's the worst the French can do if he goes with us. Speak up for yourself, young 'un." And Jimmy spoke up.

"Please, sir," he piped, "will you take I for a sojer?"



"HIS ONLY CHUM REELED BACKWARDS."
Drawn by COLBRON PEARCE.

'TWIXT RIVAL SCHOOLS.

By F. L. MORGAN,

Author of "The Lost Medal," "Against Heavy Odds," "The Big House in the Wood," etc.

CHAPTER XXI.—*WHO STOLE THE SHELLS?*



LYNWOOD SECUNDUS, as Macmillan had said, was possessed of plenty of sense. He had gone but a short distance down the little red path when, on turning a corner, he was pulled up by a perfect hurricane of wind, while from below came the regular boom of the waves as they dashed heavily on the shore.

Realising that it was quite out of the question for the Pewk to be down there on such a rough day, the junior turned back, walking very slowly, and trying to make up his mind what he should do.

Suddenly concluding that it would be better to see the small girl anyhow, if only to prevent her from coming again to the school, Christopher quickened his steps, and, taking a short cut through the woods, soon arrived at the cottage.

Mrs. Pewkastor and her daughter were both in the garden, and as the Storr Cross boy hesitated a moment at the gate, he distinctly heard the lady say, "Why, Joan darling, here is Christopher! Now, isn't that just right? You tell him all about it, the same as you've told mother, darling, and then both of you come in to tea." Then, turning to Lynwood Secundus, Mrs. Pewkastor raised her voice. "Come along, Christopher! My little girl wants to tell you something while I just go in to get tea ready."

Christopher, rather embarrassed by what he had heard, went in, and the Pewk led the way to a seat at the bottom of the garden. The small girl's face was not so serene as usual, and, seeing her lip tremble, the junior felt a great desire to spare her the confession. He sat down on the seat, and the Pewk stood silently in front of him, swinging first one leg and then the other off the ground, while the tears slowly welled up in her eyes until they were brimming over.

"Oh, I say, Pewk, don't cry," said Christopher, distressed. "There's not the slightest need for you to tell me anything, because I happen to know all about it already. Let's talk of something else."

"I—I haven't got a ha-hanky-chief," sobbed the Pewk, throwing herself on the seat beside the junior and hiding her face in her hands.

Christopher was not so embarrassed as many boys would have been, nor was he contemptuous of the small girl's tears. Being a very gallant little gentleman, he produced the article required from his own pocket and himself helped to apply it to the Pewk's tear-drenched countenance.

"Cheer up, kid," he said comfortingly. "There's nothing the matter. Of course, it was a pity about the shells, but I know jolly well you didn't do it on purpose!"

"You see," explained the Pewk, when she had recovered marvellously quickly, as very young people can, from her outburst of grief, which even failed to leave any trace in her clear eyes, "I thought that as long as you found them every one your own self it wouldn't matter about me finding them first and putting them there. But I know now it wasn't 'xactly right."

Struck by her way of putting it, Christopher regarded her steadily, a dawning conviction making his breath uneven for the moment and forcing the colour into his face.

"Pewk," he said, suddenly, "I think I've been as bad to you as old Saville and some of the kids have been to me. I've been believing—I say, Pewk, *where* did you get those shells?"

The small girl regarded his agitation with obvious surprise. "I found them," she replied with directness. "Why, Chris, what did you think?"

"Nothing," said the junior, firmly resolved never to let her know what he had thought. "D'you mind telling me where you found them?"

"In a rubbish heap," replied the small girl, promptly, "in the wood on the other side of Mr. Saville's garden. I'll show you the place after tea, if you like."

Christopher assented eagerly, and as the sound of the tea-bell came tinkling from the cottage, he took the Pewk by the hand and ran with her, laughing and shouting, and so fast that her little flying feet scarcely touched the ground, into the small parlour. Another great weight was lifted off the junior's mind in the discovery that, whatever the solution of the mystery, it was anyhow not the Pewk who had removed the shells from Mr. Saville's museum.

Mrs. Pewkastor, after one glance at the two bright faces, decided not to mention the shells. She was a wise woman, with an understanding heart, and she had the great and rare gift of knowing when to speak and when to keep silent.

After tea the two younger ones set out to find the peculiar rubbish heap mentioned by the Pewk. Christopher, whose heart was getting lighter every moment, had completely forgotten the time, and the thought of being late for lock-up never entered his head. At least, it didn't until he saw two Storr Cross seniors, accompanied by another big fellow in a Redlands cap, coming slowly, and with a rather dejected air, along the path.

With an internal quiver Christopher recognised his brother, and at the same time noted the unusual appearance of the immaculate Jim. Besides having a rent in the knee of his trousers, he was otherwise greatly dishevelled, and, yes, he was wet—dripping from head to foot.

With a shout, Macmillan was the first to see the junior and his small companion, and when the seniors came up Lynwood simply put out a hand and grasped Christopher by the arm.

"Where have you been, kid?" he asked in a queer sort of voice.

Christopher didn't answer—he was too engrossed in taking in further details of the strange party, including the coil of rope carried by Macmillan, who every now and again fingered the places that had been worn almost to a thread, evidently by contact with some sharp edge. The junior, conscious of a warm thrill in his arm, looked up at his brother, who said, with an effort at lightness:

"A nice old dance you've led us, my fine kid. And is this the little Pewkastor girl who plays such a prominent part in the mystery of the shells?"

"My name is Joan," replied the Pewk with dignity, but breaking into a smile the next moment. "And I was just going to show Christopher the place where I found the shells."

The three seniors stared in astonishment, and Christopher, rather red in the face, looked doubtfully from one to the other.

"She's only seven!" he said quickly.

"*Found* the shells!" murmured Jennison slowly, looking down at the Pewk, who nodded vigorously.

"Yes—on a rubbish heap. There's a lot of things throwed away there, only you have to creep in, because it's a very old hollow tree!"

"I guess we'd better see this through, now," said Macmillan, suddenly. "Or are you too wet, Lyn?"

"No, I'm all right," replied Lynwood, passing his arm round Christopher's shoulders. Christopher turned his face, and for one instant pressed it against Jim's damp coat, and in that instant everything that had been wrong between the brothers melted away.

"Lead on then, Lady Macbeth!" said Macmillan.

The Pewk smiled graciously up at him and did as requested. She thought the seniors all very pleasant, and, with the exception of Christopher, of course, she considered them much nicer than smaller boys she had known. She knew nothing of the fears and stress of the preceding two hours that had gradually grown until they swamped all other feelings, now to be swamped in their turn by relief at finding Christopher safe and sound.

"It's through those bushes," announced the small girl, suddenly stopping, and pointing to a large tree-stump thirty or forty yards from where they stood.

Finding it hard to believe that Christopher's beautiful shells could have been found here, they pushed their way through the undergrowth, and the Pewk, running ahead, disappeared as she made for the hollow side of the old tree.

The next moment she came flying back, uttering little shrieks, and clutched wildly at Jennison, who was nearest.

"What's the matter, you silly kid?" said the Redlands senior, gently.

"Oh, oh, there's somebody in the hole!" gasped the small girl, fearfully.

Not knowing what to think, but feeling curiously excited and expectant, the three seniors and Christopher hurried round to the far side of the tree, there to come face to face with the owner of the rubbish heap, who, fiercely chattering and making strange noises, barred the entrance.

It was Tino, the monkey, angrily guarding his secret store of treasures, to which he added from time to time any article that took his fancy, and that he could make away with, unnoticed by his indulgent master.

CHAPTER XXII.—*THE MATCH. CONCLUSION.*

WHEN the next day dawned, yesterday seemed almost like a disturbed dream. The wind, suddenly disappearing in the night, gave place to a calm, with scarcely a stir in the air. The sun shone brilliantly, the clouds that were yesterday chasing across the sky having apparently chased each other out of sight altogether. And the biggest cloud of all, so far as Storr Cross was concerned, which had for so long hung over the head of Lynwood Secundus, had gone with the rest.

Lynwood and Macmillan had seen to it the night before that explanations were not delayed. When all the truth was known, it was of course evident that the winner of the competition was Wade, of Redlands, and Mr. Saville promptly ordered another prize for him, declaring that the microscope was to be retained by Lynwood Secundus. Perhaps he felt that he owed an apology to the Storr Cross junior, and this generosity was his way of offering it.

But all these things faded from thought as the time for the match drew near. Only Macmillan, as he and Lynwood approached Jennison on the Redlands field, turned to his chum with sudden remembrance.

"It doesn't seem possible that it was only yesterday you were risking your life on the end of a bit of string, exploring that beastly little place in the rocks until you were half drowned, while Jennison and I, with our hearts in our mouths, hung on to the said bit of string, praying that it would hold out until we got you up again!"

CHAPTER II.—*ONE OF THE LIGHT COMPANY.*

THREE years work wonders, and I doubt if even Farmer Argent would have recognised the runaway in the well-grown, sturdy boy who wound down the slope chatting with his bosom chum.

High up above them the Spanish peaks still glowed golden in the sunset; in the valley below the mist was rising.

"Yon cotton wool reminds me of the way the fog used to roll in over the saltings," said Jimmy Langford with a retrospective smile. "I've never paid off my debt to you, Sam. I owe you something for the chance of getting away, and am like to owe it."

"Stuff!" rejoined Sam Larkins. "What have you got in the drumhead for supper, Jimmy?"

"Pair of ducks and twenty hens' eggs the French overlooked at the last farm, and as they'd murdered the farmer I had nothing to pay. But, Sam, I hope the officers know what they're doing to-night. Masséna's rearguard must have heard us for the last ten miles, and there's only half a company for escort."

"You forget we're from the Light Company," said his friend, who, to Jimmy's only regret, had grown so much on service that they had taken him out of the drums, given him a musket, and made a private of him.

The excruciating screech of the ox-carts filled the gorge with fearsome sound, like the perpetual killing of pigs, as the detachment of the 4th "King's Own" escorted the long convoy, and only when they reached the valley bottom did peace fall over everything.

There was a cork wood clothing one side of the gorge, and soon the fires twinkled and the camp kettles began to boil. Pickets were posted, and the great stars came out in the blue velvet vault overhead.

Jimmy had curled himself up in his blanket and was sinking into a dreamless sleep, when a shot went echoing across the little valley, followed by a shout of "Fall in!"

The moon peeped out, wondering at the uproar, as Jimmy seized his sticks and punished his drumhead, and in a few minutes there was a very pretty interchange of whistling bullets, and the civilian waggon drivers thought it high time to depart with their beloved bullocks up the rocky road, leaving the carts parked in a long line.

"You're a prophet, Jimmy," said Sam Larkins. "The Froggies are starving, and it'll take us all our time to guard the battalion's breakfast. Aaron Smith's shot yonder; leave your drum and take his Brown Bess."

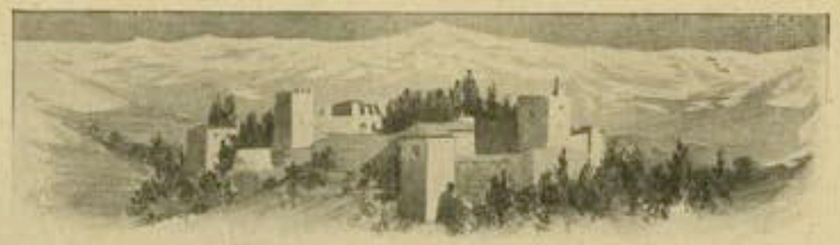
The moon went out behind one of the peaks, and when she had the curiosity to peep into the valley again the little escort was still holding its own, lying down among the rocks and boulders and keeping the Mounseers at bay.

When morning dawned they were still there, but as the sun rose a cry went up: "Last cartridge!" repeated right and left, and Jimmy laid his piece down. He remembered something, and running like a hare, he sprang on to the last cart, slashed the covering with his knife, and staggered back with a box on each shoulder.

"Bravo, little man!" said the lieutenant in charge of the escort, and they knocked the lids of the boxes off, and the black pouches were filled again.

In the forenoon they were still loading and firing that dear old imperfect Tower musket, which the soldiers had lovingly christened "Brown Bess," which, with all its faults, won the great Peninsular War for us, in spite of the fact that good shooting was only possible at a hundred yards, and you had to fix three flints for every sixty rounds you fired.

The scorching sun of Spain gleamed overhead like a circle of molten brass. Half a dozen redcoats lay very still among the withered herbage, but for everyone of them three or four of the enemy had floated away on the current of the little river which the French were trying to cross.



AMONG THE MOUNTAINS OF SPAIN.

The sergeant was shot through the lungs; a corporal went down with heat stroke and babbled incoherently. The lieutenant in charge, the lower half of his face quite blue with biting cartridges, sank exhausted as Jimmy crept up to him, and muttered feebly: "Water, Langford! We can hold on if we can get some water."

It was not thirty yards in front of them, but the vicious plop of bullets made it a hazardous task.

"Come on, Jimmy—it's got to be done!" gasped Sam Larkins. "A couple of camp kettles full will do the business."

"Your names shall go in to the Colonel if you bring it back," said the lieutenant in a whisper like a death rattle, and the two chums crept forward to an opening in the gorge.

Jimmy's eyes were bloodshot as he jumped in ankle-jack deep and scooped the life-giving fluid up into the metal bucket. He heard a sharp cry as he did so, the clatter of a camp kettle on the shingle, and the fall of a body as his only chum reeled backwards.

The bullets plopped and starred on the rocks as he turned and ran, and sprinting back again he filled Sam Larkins' kettle and got a ball through his wooden drum in the doing of it.

That water was like nectar to the little handful of redcoats among the rocks, and so busy were they slaking their frightful thirst that they did not see the drummer crouch down and steal out again, empty-handed this time.

Not a word said he until he had reached the only friend he had ever known in his life, and then he dared not look at the upturned face, but seized him by the shoulders and dragged and hauled the limp form under cover.

It was all he could do, and when he had drunk and drunk he picked up his musket again, and every time the hammer fell he muttered something between his clenched teeth.

Only the lieutenant had seen Sam Larkins sit up after a while and press his hand to the gash that seamed his brow, and he watched him stagger across to the officer's pony tied to one of the waggons.

He crawled up on his chest beside the drummer just as the sun began to dip, and there was an odd quiver in Jimmy's throat as he spoke.

"We're done now, sir," he said. "Our boys on the left yonder haven't fired a shot for a long while, and this time it's my last cartridge without a doubt!"

"Hold on, lad," said his officer. "What do you make of that!" And he pointed across the plain on the other side of the river.

Like magic the French rearguard scurried back from the bank, but our Hussar Brigade were on them before they could form up, and Jimmy Langford was still watching the flash of the curved sabres when a redcoated figure with a bandaged head rode through the water and dropped out of the saddle beside him.

"Jimmy, lad, you can't say you haven't paid your debt now," laughed Sam Larkins, as the boy gasped. "If it hadn't been for you we'd have been wiped up, that's a fact."

"But you were dead when I brought you in, Sam!" said Jimmy slowly, as the truth began to dawn upon him. "It's you that saved the convoy."

"Oh, that's nothing," smiled Sam loftily. "You see, I'm one of the Light Company now, and that accounts for it—but we're quits, anyhow!"

MORE ABOUT THE PIGEON POST.

IN a previous article we explained the meaning of the puzzling title "B.N.P.S."* — the British Naval Pigeon Service—and put before our readers some of the fine things it had done.

These trained pigeons are formally rated as part of our fighting forces. Their work is a matter of life and death to our fighting men, and many a man alive to-day owes his life to the speed of the homing pigeon.

So it has been several times pointed out to the public that the careless gunner, be he farmer or gamekeeper or anybody, does the greatest disservice if he recklessly or wantonly lets fly at these swift messengers, on the chance that it is "only a wood pigeon." It is good to know that magistrates are now imposing heavy penalties for all such offences.

The pluck and persistence of these carrier pigeons has been dwelt upon in our previous article. Of the messages carried it is reckoned that 95 per cent. have been delivered.

Two or three more examples may be given here, but every month sees the splendid record grow longer.

On one occasion a flying boat and a hydroplane both got into difficulties in stormy weather, and it seemed that all lives must be lost. A message for help was sent out by pigeon. In the teeth of a fierce wind the gallant bird fought its way home, only to die from exhaustion on arrival. But its message had been delivered, assistance was sent with all speed, and the lives of both crews were saved.

Here is an instance of the way in which pigeons bring back news as to the progress of an engagement.

An air patrol fell in with some German seaplanes, and these messages were received at a seaplane station in Flanders:—

(1) Short shot down ten miles N.N.E. Nieuport. One Hun down. My tanks shot. French T.B.D. on its way. Send fighters quick.

Then followed another pigeon with

Message (3): Am shot down. Hit in tank radiator. Observer dead. Am unhurt. Please send small craft.

Message (4): Machine turning over to port. Have jettisoned everything. Am on wing tip. Sea calm. Machine has seemingly steadied. Nothing in sight. I think machine will float a long time. Send small craft at once. Land bus has just made one circuit, but I don't think he saw me. My love to my mother. Tell her I am not worrying. If machine sinks I will swim to a buoy close by.

A French naval officer in a seaplane was driven down by a hostile aircraft, and had to seek the sea within range of enemy coastal batteries. Shells were soon pitching all round him, and he realised that the end was near. He carried a pigeon, and sent back his last message: "They have got the range. All is over. Vive la France!"

Our minesweepers and patrols have had cause to bless these swift-winged messengers. It may be remembered that Skipper Thomas Crisp, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for his pluck and indomitable spirit in the face of U-boat perils, and who died at the wheel under fire from the pitiless Huns, lived long enough to dispatch a message by pigeon. The bird sped away with the dying hero's last request for help for his crew, and they were saved—but only through the timely arrival of the faithful bird.

* For the first article see page 105.

Lynwood smiled in response, and impulsively stretched out his hand as the Redlands captain came up.

"None the worse for yesterday's adventures, Lynwood?" said Jennison, grasping the hand with great heartiness.

"No fear," replied Lynwood. "Which of you two is going to toss?"

A new and pleasant sensation went round the vast audience at the sight of that handshake, and, though interest in the match swamped everything else for the next few hours, Storr Cross and Redlands had unconsciously entered upon a new phase, and were fostering feelings of mutual respect, from which bitterness, rancour and contempt were fast disappearing.

Storr Cross were calm, but not very hopeful, and their first innings, though it did not disturb their calmness, amply justified their lack of hope, for they scored very badly indeed.

"Who is that chap—the taller one?" asked a Redlands fifth-former of a friend.

"Lynwood—brother to the kid that there's been all this fuss about. He wouldn't have played to-day if it hadn't been cleared up just in time," replied the friend, who was well informed on the subject.

"Why wouldn't he have played?" asked the first speaker, whose appropriate name was Dulling.

"Because of what was said about his brother," explained the well-informed one. "They're a very proud lot, the Lynwoods—the eldest was a great man at Storr Cross, too, but he was killed in the war."

Dulling regarded Lynwood with a deep interest. "He's not much of a cricketer," he remarked, after a moment.

"That's where you're a silly fathead, and don't know," replied the other, who was well informed also on this. "He's the best man they've got—when he really gets going!"

It would take too much space to describe the match in detail, but when Storr Cross went in for the second time they wanted such an incredible number of runs to win that Redlands had already claimed victory in their hearts, which occasioned them to have a certain air, justified perhaps by their own sound score, of pluming themselves. Storr Cross found this intensely irritating, but they were good sportsmen, and, hiding their chagrin, they determined to do their best to the bitter end.

It was at this stage that Macmillan, the captain, noticed with subdued joy and just a wee flutter of hope that the peculiar genius of Lynwood was beginning to assert itself.

"I'm afraid we're going to get it where the chicken got the axe—that is to say, in the neck," Macmillan had remarked rather ruefully, as they walked out for their second innings.

"Not this time, old son—not so as you'd notice it!" had been Lynwood's reply.

The two leading Storr Crossians started off right away in their finest form, Lynwood especially knocking up runs for the school as though he had, up to now, been asleep, and had only just realised what was expected of him. After a brilliant innings, which was all too short for the need of the school, Macmillan was unfortunately caught out.

While the next man was coming along Lynwood walked round and round the wicket, occasionally patting the ground with his bat. It seemed as though he could not keep still for an instant. He never looked at the distant scenery or at the crowds watching, but kept his eyes focussed on the little piece of turf surrounding the wicket. Fellows often wondered what he was thinking of at those times, but had to be content with the knowledge that it was a sure sign that the popular prefect was in his best form. He glanced up with one of his rare smiles as Parker, the next man, passed him.

Parker was not in long, but he did well for the time. The same applies to the next three or four Storr Cross men, all of whom did better than in the previous innings, but not nearly well enough to disturb the comfortable assurance of victory possessed by Redlands in the calm recesses of their minds.

Meanwhile, Lynwood was certainly playing a magnificent game. He hardly seemed aware of the changes as the men came and went. Cricket had just gripped him. All bowlers were alike to him, and he seemed unable to make a mistake. To get him out became the object of the combined, concentrated mental and physical forces of the Redlands team.

Macmillan, watching from the steps of the pavilion, felt a glow of pride and warmth. The pity of it was that it was too late!

"If only we had done this in the first innings," he said, sorrowfully. Then, perceiving Lynwood Secundus sitting on the step below him, he remarked, "Hullo, kid, I thought you were helping to score."

"I was," replied Christopher, without removing his rapt gaze from the field. "But I left off to watch."

"By gum, that's a good 'un. Bravo, Lyn!" said the captain, as Lynwood met an astounding first-class yorker with perfect skill and lifted a fourer. "If we'd weighed in like this earlier we should have won, kid."

"We are going to win," said Lynwood Secundus confidently. "Jim'll stop in ages yet!"

Macmillan said nothing, but a sudden wild hope surged up within him. For a long time the hundreds of fellows in the field had realised that something very special in the way of brilliant batting was afoot. Even the non-enthusiasts had left their refreshments and broken up their little social groups and were crowding round. Little rippling waves of clapping punctuated the scoring. When Lynwood hit two more boundaries running, bringing his score up to 99, a great burst of applause marked the appreciation of both supporters and opponents. And at that moment the first doubts as to the result of the match fluttered in the heart of Redlands.

Eight men had come and gone, and Redlands had long since parted with their feelings of security, when Lynwood, with a personal score of 155, was bowled. The cheers that greeted him were terrific. With a quick glance round, as though for the first time aware of the onlookers, he strode to the pavilion and stood beside Macmillan, who almost choked with joy and pride as he greeted him. Whatever the

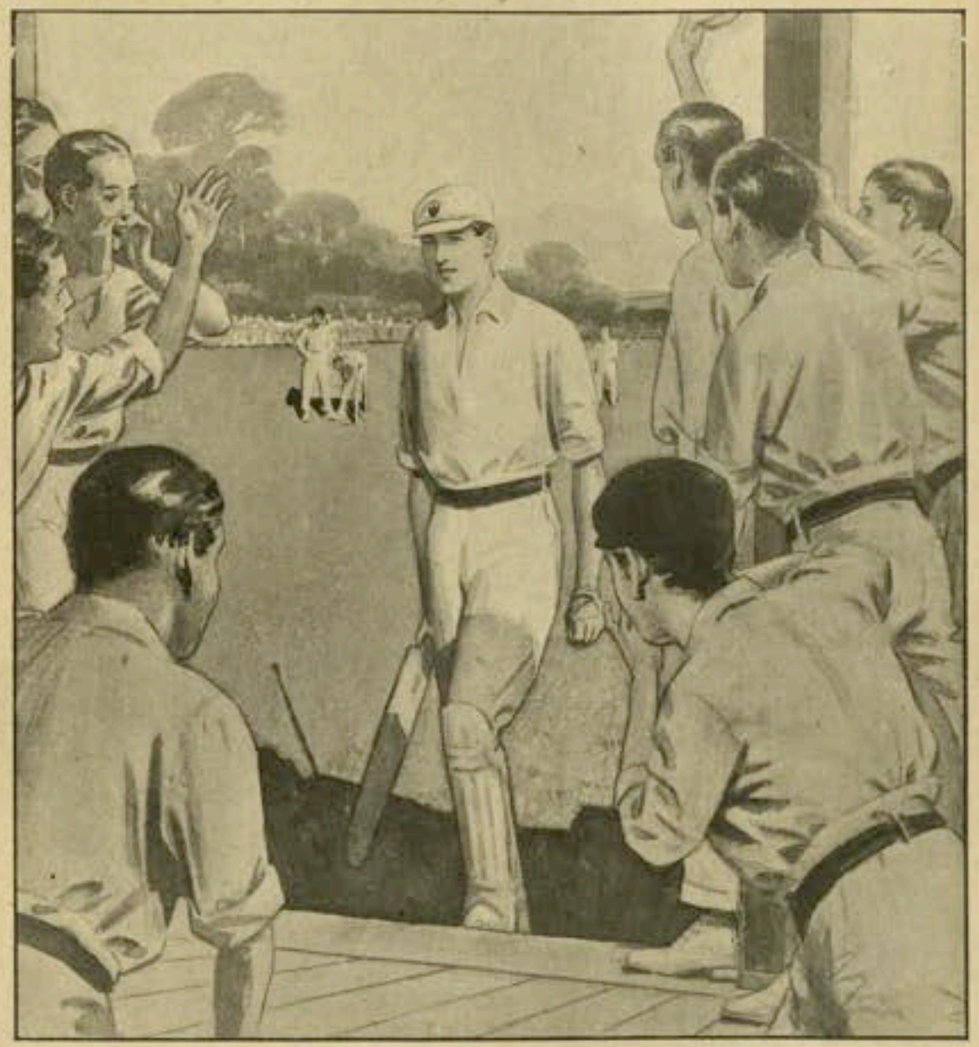
result of the match, the reputation of Storr Cross cricket, thanks to Lynwood, would remain.

Storr Cross wanted 27 runs to win as their last two men, Scrase and Morrison, faced each other with a grim determination. They knew they were not up to much as a rule—but 27 wasn't much either!

Lynwood was quickly surrounded. Even the tense excitement was suspended for a moment while fellows crowded about the prefect. Whether they won or lost, Storr Cross was conscious of leaving behind at Redlands an impression of a class of cricket that could be ranked with the best, and which Redlands itself had never yet produced.

Jennison, his red hair rampantly upright and a bright spot of colour on either cheek, managed to keep the outward calmness necessary to his position, but blue darts seemed to shoot forth from his eyes, so great was his excitement. He changed the bowling rapidly several times in the hope of confusing either Scrase or Morrison, but the two stuck fast and took no risks. They made runs cautiously, generally one at a time, and cheerfully blocked any ball that presented difficulties.

As the school score crept up, leaving first 25 then 19, now 17, and again but 10 runs to win, the silence of intense waiting settled down on the field. Audible gasps were heard to come from Storr Crossians when Scrase was almost run out, and Redlands groaned aloud when one of their men buttered a catch.



"THE CHEERS THAT GREETED HIM WERE TERRIFIC."
Drawn by REX OSBORNE.

Macmillan neither moved nor spoke. His every sense was concentrated on the field.

"Three more runs, Mac!" said Lynwood, suddenly breaking the tension.

"Great Cæsar, Lyn—this is the greatest—steady, Scrase—see him slip that one? Will they hold out, Lyn?"

"Oh, yes," replied Lynwood, easily. He seemed the least excited of anybody.

The next ball nearly proved fatal, and Macmillan drew in his breath with a hiss. Then Scrase, with a mighty effort, hit a really fine ball and scored two. Had it not been for a specially good bit of fielding by the long-stop, which called forth hysterical cheers from Redlands, the match would have been ended then and there in favour of Storr Cross. Hearing Redlands cheer, Storr Cross counter-cheered, wildly. But the noise died quickly down again.

One run needed—*one*. Well, Scrase and Morrison, realising what depended upon them, and being scarcely up to the mental strain involved, began to show obvious signs of nervousness. As, in answer to a signal from Jennison, the fielders began to close in a bit, Morrison felt an entirely new and unpleasantly chilly perspiration break out all over him, and, to add to his misery at this critical moment, the best of Redlands' bowlers fell to his lot.

The first was a fast, rising ball with a treacherous break. Morrison, with clenched teeth and no very clear idea of what he was going to do, met it somehow. The next was a seductive slow, which trimmed in from leg and hopped dangerously near the stumps. Morrison gasped. His nerve was really gone, seeing which, Jennison called the fielders in yet a bit nearer, and, strange to say, this had the effect of terrifying the Storr Crossian still more.

The Redlands star bowler, heartened by the stricken look on Morrison's face, took an extra run, and sent down a ball of terrific swiftness, but absolutely straightforward. Morrison, grasping his bat with clammy hands, and feeling that this was the end, actually closed his eyes while giving one mighty swipe, into which he put all his strength and all his despair.

When he opened his eyes again he heard the roar of mighty cheering, and he saw, to his own amazement, the ball soaring merrily over the heads of the fieldsmen, past the long-stop, and actually over the pavilion. It was the hit of Morrison's life, and it won the match for Storr Cross.

* * * * *

It was the same evening. After an hour or two of joyous riot, Storr Cross had perforce to make some attempt towards settling down to the evening's prep. Macmillan, with an imposing array of books, unopened, on the table before him, sat contentedly smiling into space. He looked up quickly as Lynwood entered. Jim was gently rubbing his right arm, which was distinctly feeling the after-effects of much congratulatory hand-shaking. He subsided into a chair opposite his chum, and glanced with distaste at the piles of books on the table.

"It's been a great day, Lyn," said Macmillan, with a sigh.

Lynwood nodded. "Is all this mass of learning necessary?" he asked, indicating the books. "It's a kind of depressing finish."

Macmillan made no reply to that, save to smile vacantly. He was still thinking of the match. "There's no doubt you are a great man, Lyn, and a genius at cricket. I've never seen anything like——"

Lynwood opened his mouth and laughed aloud. "Pull yourself together, old son," he said. "It was mostly luck. Wait till young Christopher grows a bit, and then see some cricket! By the way, I'm going to coach the kid a bit before brekker now and again, as he's so keen."

"Good!" responded Macmillan. "I'll come along and help. Also, by the way, that chap Jennison wants us to go over to Redlands one day and have tea with him in his den."

"We'll go, then," said Lynwood promptly. "He's a decent man altogether."

Macmillan agreed, and Lynwood laid hold of a couple of books. "Well, come on," he said, "let's get on with it! Life can't be all cricket I s'pose—which is just as well, as I honestly prefer footer; but I've got a very benign, happy-ever-after sort of feeling to-night, as though all's right with the world!"

"Well, so it is, really, I expect," rejoined Macmillan. "What shall we tackle first—History or Science?"

"History, mostly a record of experiments in error—Science, the key to all truth," said Lynwood. "We'll have History first, it's got to be done, and then we'll rest our poor intellects in Science afterwards. Chuck over my notebook, old lad, will you?"

THE END.

GETTING BACK THE GUN.

A FRONTIER STORY.

EXCEPT for the time we were away at school, my cousin, Rufe Welles, and I grew up on the extreme frontier of the upper Missouri country. We were great chums, of about the same age. Two years before we reached majority, we found ourselves working at the hay and wood ranch of an uncle, Capt. Ira Welles. Our employer had contracts to furnish hay at two cavalry posts, and wood for steamers engaged in the river traffic.

The captain had made friends with the Sioux, spoke their tongue, had been adopted into the Yankton tribe, and was generally considered a friend and brother. For years he and his men had been immune from attack, and his horse-herd had suffered little from theft. We therefore felt ourselves practically safe at the ranch.

In late September we had finished with the hay-baling. Most of the haymakers had returned down the river; the captain, two men and I were out on the prairies rounding up scattered brood-mares and their foals, and Rufe was left alone.

It was about noon that he discovered the smoke of a steamer across a wide loop of the Missouri and far up the river. There were some bales of raw skins marked for shipment, and Rufe trundled these down to the ranch-landing, and went into the house to write a letter home.

The day was warm, and to get the benefit of a slight breeze he threw open every door and window of the three ranch rooms, and arranged his writing materials on the cook-room table.

Suddenly he was interrupted by the "How! how!" of an Indian. He looked up and was annoyed to find the soft-footed red man already inside the door. It was a blanket Indian—not tributary to an agency—greasy of leggings, paint-bedaubed, and grinning in expectation of a gift of coffee, sugar or other delicacy.

Rufe answered his greeting shortly and asked what he wanted. For answer the Indian's eyes suddenly became riveted upon the wall behind the boy. And as suddenly he strode forward, and before Rufe could remonstrate or interfere, he had taken down a double-barrelled rifle from its rack of deer horns.

This performance was startling, but immediately it became apparent that curiosity and admiration, not hostility, had prompted the act.

"How — how — how!" exclaimed the visitor, with deep emphasis, as he turned the gun over in his hands, his eyes glued upon a stock fitted with inset patch and cap-boxes and inlaid with ornaments all of sterling silver. "Much—big—gun," he declared, "heap—plenty—good gun!"

In truth, the rifle was a fine weapon. It was my father's, and I had been allowed to bring it up the Missouri. It was a heavy-weight gun of big calibre, a muzzle-loader of English make.

Probably no Indian of the upper Missouri had ever seen such a weapon, and its size and ornaments roused in the visitor a state of emotion hardly to be described. His whole body seemed to radiate astonishment and delight.

Rufe watched him with amusement, as he turned the gun over for the hundredth time. The desire of possession seized upon him.

"You swap him?" he inquired eagerly. "Injun got heap good pony." Then seeing a lack of interest in the white man's face, "Got two pony—heap, plenty, good pony," he declared, "him, you swap?"

He seemed much depressed when Rufe positively refused. He presently hung up the rifle and, much to Rufe's surprise, stalked soberly out, asking neither for sugar nor tobacco.

Rufe returned to his writing, and in the course of another half-hour had finished his letter. He was about to go out to look for the steamer when his eye happened to fall upon the rack where my gun had hung. The rifle was gone!

The Indian had stolen in through an open back door and noiselessly made off with the gun. Rufe ran out to find the rascal's two ponies tied to the rails of a near-by corral, one of them bearing a small, flat saddle of Indian make.

The Indian himself was to be seen a quarter of a mile away, going up the river at a rapid trot. Beyond him, at the distance of a mile or more, and on a rise of ground against which the shifting current had worn, were some dozen teepees, newly set up, and others in process of erection. Numerous ponies and the figures of many Indians moving about told of a big village.

In a flash his late visitor's scheme was apparent to Rufe. He was hurrying to his tribesmen with the gun, where he would declare that he had traded his ponies for it. There had been no witness, and should the white man follow to claim the gun he must pit his word against the Indian's, and the Indian, backed by overwhelming odds, would maintain that he had traded in a fair bargain, and so refuse to give up the rifle.

There was no ranch horse within reach, and Rufe, knowing that he must on no account touch the Indian's pony, raced away in chase of the thief.

Although the rascal gave no other sign of acknowledging pursuit, he very soon quickened his pace. Hampered though he was with the fourteen-pound rifle, his long, swinging trot carried him

to his village a hundred yards in advance of the panting and exasperated Rufe.

A crowd of Indians, big and little, had gathered, excitedly watching the race, and Rufe, walking now toward them, heard their exclamations of astonishment as their tribesman exhibited his ill-gotten prize. And hearing more distinctly their foreign dialect as he neared them, Rufe suddenly realised that these Indians were not Sioux, but some wandering men of the plains, of unknown tribe.

He felt a distinct thrill of alarm and a sudden falling off of any hope of recovering his friend's rifle. However, he had walked, or rather run, into the lions' den, and putting on a bold front, he demanded to see the head man.

He had difficulty in making himself understood, but he was finally conducted to the teepee of a large, fat individual, who seemed possessed of too much dignity to mingle with the crowd.

To Rufe's immense relief this man spoke the "trade" English fairly well, and immediately invited him to a seat on a robe. Rufe accepted, and without awaiting further preliminaries, briefly stated his case. The Indian he had chased had stolen a gun and run off, leaving two ponies tied to a corral; and he demanded the return of the weapon at once. Without stopping to quarrel with the man, he said, he had come directly to his chief as one having authority to command the return of the property.

The big man listened attentively, blowing thin wreaths of smoke from his nostrils as he pulled on a long-stemmed pipe. In the end he spoke some words in his own tongue to a bystander, who hastened away among the teepees.

Presently this messenger returned with the thief, a crowd following. The culprit had put the rifle in his teepee or placed it in charge of a friend, for the weapon was nowhere in evidence.

The chief apparently questioned him shrewdly, although Rufe could understand nothing of what was said. The man answered with a brazen face and great volubility, his manner and gestures expressing evident contempt for a white man who was trying to back out of a trade.

At the close of this taking of evidence there was silence, while the chief smoked and meditated for some minutes. Finally he spoke.

"Cheyenne he lie sometimes,' he said. "White man he lie a heap. Me tink more better you fight." He got to his feet, motioning Rufe to rise. "Come," he said. "You put Injun in river, you take gun; Injun put you in river, he keep."

He repeated this judgment in Cheyenne, and his braves whooped their approval. Apparently the disputants could have no choice in the matter. Rufe found himself hustled forward to a steep bank, high above the river, down which a small landslide had made its way. A half-circle was quickly formed, several braves acting as police to keep the crowd off a space of five or six square rods allotted to the contestants.

Rufe tried to thrust his way out of the mob, but was firmly pushed back and made to take his stand in a space marked out for him. His opponent, weaponless, stripped to the waist, oily of skin and eager for the fray, stood facing him at the distance of six paces.

Seeing it was neck or nothing with him, Rufe took off his flannel shirt and tightened his belt. Taking account of the muscular and now fierce-visaged warrior, he saw that the man was taller than himself. Very possibly the Cheyenne was an expert wrestler, which Rufe was not. He had learned boxing at school, and he determined to trust to that exercise. He put himself in position and signalled that he was ready. A gun cracked, and the Cheyenne, confident of superior strength, bolted at him, hands outstretched, having in mind no other tactics than those of a clinch and an instant trial of strength. Rufe, who was really quick and clever, side-stepped the impending grapple, and with a swift blow dealt in the neck, knocked the Indian clear off his feet.

Much to Rufe's surprise, his success was greeted with yells of delight; men and women doubled themselves in laughter as the Cheyenne lay for a moment in a dazed condition, his head wobbling to and fro. But he "came to" quickly, and lifted a gaze so full of venom that Rufe was glad no weapons were within his reach. That look settled the Indian's fate. He lay within two or three yards of the edge of the bank, and Rufe might have toppled him over before, but had hesitated to take such advantage.

Now as the Cheyenne gathered himself to leap to his feet, Rufe shot at him like a football-player about to make a tackle. He caught the savage with a low shoulder-hit just as the latter was straightening on his legs. In vain the Indian clutched wildly at his antagonist's bare body; he was bowled over the brink of the bank.

Rufe himself fell upon his breast, his face and shoulders thrust out over the hard clay edge of the bank. He saw, to his horror, the Indian's body go hurtling like a dust-raising missile, down the almost perpendicular surface of the recent landslip, fifty feet or more in height—saw it strike with a splash and sink in the muddy current.

He had had no idea of the peril of that plunge, and he saw that the chief's judgment had meant nothing less than probable death to himself or the Cheyenne. He leaped to his feet and ran at the mob, which quickly and silently made way for him, as for a mighty man of valour. He ran at the top of his speed down the bank to where he could leap into the current without danger.

Pausing to look for the defeated Cheyenne, he saw him come to the surface, feebly struggling, some twenty yards above. Then he jumped into the river, and holding his head high, swam with all his might up-stream.

The Indian, strangling and unconscious, sank a few yards in front of him, going under for the second and perhaps the third time. Rufe ceased his stroke, and, treading water, drifted with the current, his eyes alert on all sides.

It was half a minute before the Indian's motionless body came to the surface near at hand. Rufe towed its dead weight swiftly down the stream to a lower bank, where Indians, men and women, were at hand to assist in hoisting it to land.

"Him dead," said the big chief, turning away with callous indifference; but several women seized upon the body. Two of them held it in a drooping position, face downward, while others worked the arms and pounded the back.

In the course of twenty minutes, the man was brought back to the practical certainty of restoration. When it was known that the Cheyenne was all right, save for some severe bruises, the chief again appeared on the scene.

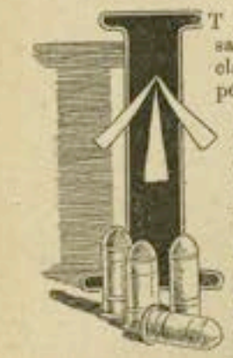
He bore the big rifle, which he placed in Rufe's hands with a wide grin of approval.

"Injun no good," he said, with a shrug of contempt for the defeated one. "You heap good man—make big warrior—you keep gun."

F. W. Calkins.

BRAVEST IN THE BRITISH NAVY.

By PATRICK VAUX.



IT goes without saying that all classes of the personnel of the British Navy are brave—from the second class boy-sweeper to the Commander-in-Chief; from the redoutable baker who carried on with his work in the exposed bakehouse of his battleship during the battle of Jutland to the so-called "idlers" or "baymen" who act as ambulance and do other duties under the direction of the surgeons.

Interest is usually most stirred by the bravery of the officers on deck or on the bridge or in the conning-tower, and of the men who fight the guns. But below the thick armoured deck, that shuts off the vital parts of the warship, bravery is also shown; and bravery of a more insistent kind, because it cannot find relief in striking at the enemy, nor can it take comfort in seeing that the fight goes well.

Among those of the personnel who show this high strain of courage are they who are too often forgotten in the tributes to the bravery of the men of the British Fleet. The stokers and the engineers, the surgeons and the stretcher-bearers, the men at the telephones and in the wireless cabin, and the midshipmen and other officers in the transmitting stations below, have been touched upon in print. But never a word about those men without whose work the guns would be silent—they who keep up the supply of ammunition from the magazines during an engagement.

When the enemy's projectiles tear open a fissure in the side of the vessel, and the engine-room is wrecked, a few of the men there may escape; or, when one of the stokeholds is devastated and instantly filled with parboiling, superheated steam and water, some there may save their lives by escaping through the manhole. But where the ammunition passages and hoists and magazines are, when the projectile smashes home, *there* death comes to all in the ten-thousandth part of a second. For, down here, where a white-belted Marine keeps sentry at the door of each of the big shell-rooms, is the store of many hundreds of 12-inch or greater projectiles and explosives for the great guns overhead, together with thousands for the other and lighter cannon.

A very common error with most people is to assume that a gunner necessarily works a gun. His duties, and those of others of his class, lie in the magazines and shell-rooms, from which most cleverly contrived hoists and trays carry up the projectiles and other munitions to the gun positions far above. It is the gun-layer who is responsible, under his officer, for the work of the guns.

In all these underwater stores of explosives every precaution is taken for safety, and the magazines can be flooded with sea water in a very short time. Not one but several instances are on record during these last four years of war when, on the vessel being set on fire by the enemy's shells, a magazine has been filled with water, its working crew still inside it. On two occasions they remained *chin-deep for over an hour, and in total darkness*, and hurled about almost to the point of drowning as the great battle-cruiser lurched and rolled in her engagement.

When the ship goes into action her men in the shell-rooms and other munition stores know that it is all or nothing for them. They reach their posts only from the upper deck, as all the water-tight doors are closed leading from one compartment of the hull to another; and, above them, the heavy armoured door in the protection deck is shut down. Hardly a sound can they hear as the ship steams onward to the attack. Already the hydraulic lifts have gently hoisted the great firing-charges and huge projectiles (each of which five men can hardly move by themselves) directly to the breech of the turret-guns.

Suddenly, bang goes the right gun or guns of the particular turret overhead, and everything, including the deck on which the men stand, quivers violently, and the concussion, coming down the armoured casing of the hoist, sends a blast of air through the magazine, stinking with the sharp, acrid fumes of cordite. Bang goes the left gun or guns almost simultaneously. Then ensues a continuous crashing of the great pieces, and through the clamour and clatter comes the sucking hiss of the hydraulic

pressure and the hollow-sounding voices shouting orders from the working chamber of the thundering monsters.

In spite of the fact that the men in the magazines are stripped to their trousers, blobs of sweat run down their faces and arms, for the rapidity of the firing of the guns is great; and the charge of cordite has to be swiftly got away, contained in bags of cream-coloured silk with the red ends indicating the igniters; and from the shell-room the deadly projectile has to be rapidly but gently rocked off its rack, and by a travelling "gripper" conveyed to the hoist, up which it travels to the gun-breech.

From time to time the men in the gunhouse shout down scraps of news. "First ship on fire and sinking fast." "Last shot fetched away for'a'rd funnel of second ship." "Flagship sunk a big cruiser." But, apart from such items of information, the men in the magazines know as much of how things are going in the fight and in their own vessel as anyone 3,000 miles away. There comes a mighty and dull rumble of explosion, followed by a quivering of the great hull. Yet they below cannot tell whether she has been hit, or if it all was caused by a salvo of her guns. They can only know that still she floats on an even keel.

Dashing the sweat out of their eyes, and gulping down mouthfuls of oatmeal water to quench their thirst, they work on, thankful that as yet the hand-hoisting gear is not in use and the hydraulic heart of the ship keeps up its pressure.

Yet they know well that upon them, sealed up deep within the shaking warship, death may come in a whirlwind of flame that no man has seen and survived.

Such was the doom of the *Queen Mary*, *Indefatigable*, and *Invincible* bn May 31st, 1915; and among the survivors were none of the men in the magazines.

A huge shell hit the top of a turret and wrenched it off, and the explosion bellowed down the open hoist, up which go the charges to the guns. The gush of flame shooting down the lift-shaft reached the shell-room. There was a terrific explosion, a gigantic upheaval of water, a tremendous plume of smoke and steam. Down went each of the mighty warships, split in two by the volcanic explosion.

Bravest of the brave! Is not that title won—if all things be taken into consideration—by the men who work in the warships' magazines?

SQUIRRELS AND THEIR WAYS.

Of all the varied and wonderful forms of animal life that abound in the world, Great Britain has comparatively few. We are rich in our bird-life and our insect-life, and in all the marvellous variety of living creatures that fill the deep oceans which surround our shores. But of animals there are only a few that are native to the British Isles.

Some that used to live here have disappeared. The Irish elks that roamed in the ancient forests of Ireland, the famous white cattle of the North of England, the wild boar, whose strong tusks are sometimes dug up in the fenlands of the eastern counties, the wild cat of the woods, beside many smaller species, are some of those lost tribes.

Among those that survive none are more charming than the graceful and sportive squirrels. These abound in our woods. In the copses where hazel and beech nuts grow, in the groups of fine trees that ornament old parks, in the cedars that spread their branches close to the house, squirrels gambol and play.

Very often, however, it is only the close observer of wild life who is aware of their presence, for the little brown creatures hide cunningly behind the big brown branches, very often only betraying their presence by the scraping noise their hard white teeth make as they sharpen them against a bough.

The habits of squirrels, indeed, are such as to screen them from view. They have no song to draw attention to themselves like the birds, no wings to carry them on wild, intrepid flights across the open, no brilliant colours to betray them suddenly when the first beam of sunlight falls on their retreat.

Silently climbing and leaping among the trees where they make their home, dressed in ruddy chestnut and soft grey that matches well with wood and lichen, they play safely in the seclusion they love.

Once, however, our attention is drawn to them, it is not difficult to observe their ways, and often where the strong limbs and deep shade of an old tree give them a sense of security they will lose their shyness so far as to sport freely while we look on. Then we may watch this interesting little animal.

During the great heat of the summer's day the squirrel sleeps. During the long cold of mid-winter also it retires from view and hibernates. But at other times and seasons all its lively pranks are feats of agility and grace. It bounds from branch to branch, high up, and if it should miss its foothold, only spreads its "feathered" feet and its bushy tail, and floats lightly to the ground—almost as easily as its near relative, the flying squirrel; climbing the trunk, it gallops upwards in a series of bounds, and, having arrived at its high perch, sits and cracks nuts, and peers downwards with its round brown eyes.

These galloping, leaping excursions are for the most part in search of food, though it often seems as if a squirrel were disporting itself for sheer joyfulness of heart. The food it seeks is mostly vegetable; nuts and acorns, fruits and seeds, including corn; but it also eats large insects occasionally, and it has to be confessed that sometimes it even robs birds' nests, sucking the eggs or eating the young.

In the autumn it lays up store for hard time coming. First, it stuffs itself, getting so fat as the days shorten that it is scarcely as agile as usual. Secondly, it collects and buries in the ground a secret store of nuts and acorns and anything else that will keep until such time as it wakes up during its long winter sleep. A busy time this, spent in rampaging through the woods and visits to orchards in search of provender.

It is in the autumn also that the squirrel is in its full beauty. New fur clothes its back and the top of its bushy tail with a bright rufous tint, its light underparts gleam whiter, its tail is fringed anew with long hairs, and the feathery tufts grow long and bushy on its ears. Doubtless these tufts, with the new fur and the tail fringes, are all for extra warmth to meet the cold of winter. In very cold climates the ruddy-backed squirrel turns to a bluish-grey, which harmonises with its surroundings, and renders it almost invisible.

The squirrel's home is in the trees, like the birds; like them also it builds a nest for its young. Concealed in the fork of a tree, it weaves a rough ball of grasses and moss, leaves and twigs, and inside—like little wrens—the young squirrels are born and bred.

I once found a nest in a small fir plantation. There were four young squirrels inside. Such funny little creatures—naked and skinny, and with large, long-shaped heads, like a hippopotamus, and closed goggle eyes like a young thrush! The nest was so closely woven and so firmly lodged that it would have been difficult to displace it.

Squirrels economise their time by using the same nest year after year, so it may well be strongly built. The young, three or four in number, are generally born in the middle of the summer, and remain with their parents until the following spring.

There are a large number of different kinds of squirrels, such as the long-eared squirrel of Borneo, the black squirrel, with its very bushy tail, five inches wide, who drinks like a horse by thrusting its muzzle below the water and taking a steady draught, afterwards sitting up and washing its face by dipping its paws into the water; the ground squirrel, whose home is on the ground; the flying squirrel, who lives high up in the top branches; all these and many more, but none more interesting than the little brown squirrel of our English woods. F. A. L.

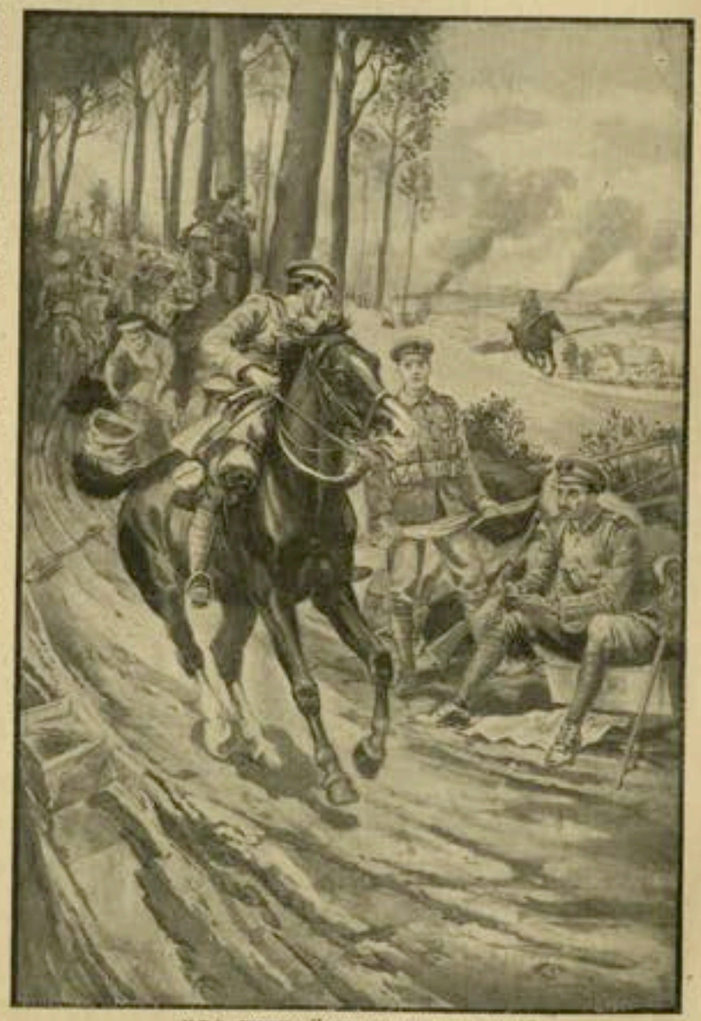
HOW A BOY SCOUT DIED FOR FRANCE.

IN a letter found on the body of a dead German on the Western Front was the following account—an enemy account, of course—of a captured Boy Scout.

"A traitor has just been shot—a little French lad belonging to one of those gymnastic societies which wear tricolour ribbons (the Eclaireurs, or Boy Scouts), a poor young fellow who in his infatuation wanted to be a hero. The German column was passing along a wooded defile, and he was caught and asked whether the French were about. He refused to give information.

"Fifty yards further on there was fire from the cover of a wood. The prisoner was asked in French if he had known that the enemy was in the forest, and he did not deny it. He went with a firm step to a telegraph post and stood up against it with the green vineyard at his back, and received the volley of the firing party with a proud smile on his face. Infatuated wretch! It was a pity to see such wasted courage."

"*Is* such courage wasted when it acts as an inspiration to the great brotherhood of boys?" was the comment of General Sir Robert Baden-Powell, who read the letter at a meeting at the Guildhall in May last.



V.T.C. WORK: "NEWS OF THE ENEMY."

PLAYING THE GAME.

A CRICKET STORY.

By the Author of "The School's Honour, and Other Stories," etc.



"Oh, what a beastly shame!"

It was the last day of the summer term, and Cyril Finch was standing in the carpenter's shop at Winscott College with an oblong panel of oak in his hand.

Although not much work was usually done in the shop at this time of the year, Cyril had been employing some wet afternoons in the construction of a corner cupboard, of which the piece of carefully squared and planed wood he was now examining was intended to form the door. The work of packing-up was now in progress, and the boy was collecting the various parts of the cupboard, with the intention of finishing it some time during the holidays.

"What a caddish trick!" he muttered. "I believe someone's done that on purpose."

The smooth surface of the board was covered with little round dents, in the centre of each of which was a hole, such as might have been made with a fine wire nail. The panel, which, in addition to the fact of its being a choice bit of wood, had taken some time to finish off, was completely spoilt by the disfigurements.

"I know what it is!" exclaimed the owner, examining the marks more closely. "Someone's been using it as a target, and firing darts at it with an air pistol. Then it must have been Archer. What a cad! He might have seen that it wasn't a piece of waste board."

At Winscott pistols of all kinds were, of course, strictly contraband; but his more intimate friends knew that Archer had recently purchased an air pistol, with which he intended to do great things in the holidays. This was kept stowed away at the bottom of the owner's play-box, and only taken out occasionally for a surreptitious practice. No other boy in the school had a weapon of the kind; of that Cyril felt certain.

With an angry growl, the boy flung the piece of oak into a corner of the shed and hurried out, vowing vengeance on the perpetrator of this outrage. As luck would have it, the first person he saw in the yard outside was the offender himself.

"Oh, all right, Archer!" began Cyril. "I've found out what you've been doing; and now you'll just have to buy me a fresh piece of wood."

"Hullo, 'Squib,' what's up with you?" returned the other, using a nickname which had originated from certain fiery outbursts to which the first speaker was rather addicted.

"It's no use pretending you don't know," returned Cyril hotly. "I mean firing those beastly darts into my oak panel."

"I don't know anything about your oak panel," was the reply.

"Yes, you do. It took me no end of time to plane that wood; and I call it downright caddish to spoil a fellow's work. Well, you'll have to get me another piece of board."

"Now, look out, Squibby," cried Archer in feigned alarm. "You'd better throw yourself away; you're just coming to the bang!"

"Shut up!" cried the victim, boiling with rage. "Just fork out the money. I paid Brookes eighteen-pence for that wood."

"Eighteen-pence!" was the reply. "Why, the whole blessed cupboard you're making won't be worth fourpence."

"Look here, Archer," began Cyril, with terrible solemnity, "you may think it funny, but I call it beastly mean. You've spoilt my panel, and I think the least you can do is to get me another."

"I'm bothered if I do!" answered the other. "If you leave your bits of plank lying all about the shop——"

Cyril was too angry to listen any more; with a parting ejaculation of "Well, then, you're a cad," he turned on his heel and walked away.

An instant later he thought he heard Archer shouting after him to come back, but he marched straight on without deigning to turn his head. He and Archer had always been chums; and, in addition to the natural vexation at finding his wood spoilt, he felt disgusted and indignant at his former friend's conduct. It was bad enough callously to damage another person's property; and doubly mean to pretend afterwards to be entirely ignorant of the whole matter.

As for Archer, he soon forgot all about the incident; he was, indeed, hardly likely to remember anything just then beyond the one all-important topic which filled his mind—who was to come out top of the second eleven batting average, himself or Coggins!

All the term it had been a neck and neck race between the two players for this distinction; each had his little band of friends and supporters, who totalled up the scores after every match, and declared with no little warmth and excitement that their man was the one who would eventually carry off the prize bat.

Archer and Coggins pretended to take little interest in the result, and to be altogether above any feeling of jealousy. The two studiously congratulated each other after a good innings, and were profuse in expressions of regret when a score was cut short by a catch or a shooter. Archer said that Coggins would undoubtedly have the highest average; while Coggins uttered the same prophecy with regard to Archer.

In his secret heart, however, as was perfectly natural, each champion hoped that, at the final reckoning, his name would top the list; and at present, owing to a remarkably good score on the previous Saturday, Coggins seemed to have been selected by Fortune as the winner.

The contest was, however, not yet finally decided. A second eleven match against Beechgrove, which had been postponed owing to rain, was to be played that same afternoon, when, if Coggins made a poor score, and Archer a specially good one, the order of things might be reversed, and the present leader in the race come in second.

If, however, all recollection of the encounter in the playground soon faded from Archer's mind, it was not so easily forgotten by Cyril Finch. Though possessed of a somewhat fiery temper, he was naturally generous, and more apt to be incensed at a mean trick than at a knockdown blow. The thought of the petty injury he had received, and the off-hand manner in which it had been repudiated, somehow rankled in his heart. Being some six inches shorter than Archer, he could hardly box the latter's ears; but he determined, in some way or other, to pay out the offender, and, as it were, balance the account.

Cyril was a keen cricketer, as, indeed, had been his father and grandfather before him. He had won his place in the second eleven as a bowler, a proneness to slog rendering him less effective at the wicket, his average innings representing the maximum amount of excitement crammed into the minimum length of time.

The match against Beechgrove was not watched by the school with any particular interest. For one thing, it was a second eleven game; and, taking place on the last day of the term, the minds of most boys were filled with thoughts of the holidays. The visiting team, going in first, made but a very poor show at the wicket, securing the meagre total of 42; while Dawson, the captain of the home team, put together 28 runs off his own bat. The time fixed for drawing stumps was not likely to admit of a second innings, and an easy win was practically certain; thus there was nothing about the match itself to rouse the onlookers to any particular display of feeling.

Nevertheless, for reasons which have already been stated, the game was destined to prove intensely interesting to a certain portion of the spectators. Two rival parties, friends and supporters of Archer and Coggins, had assembled in full force to see the question finally decided as to which of the two players should win the prize bat for the second eleven average. Pugh, the mathematical genius of the Upper Fourth, armed with some scraps of wastepaper covered with figures, was prepared to announce the result as soon as the two wickets had fallen; and when Coggins was clean bowled for a paltry nine, the excitement increased to something like fever heat. If only Archer could make a decent stand, he still stood a good chance of winning.

Cyril Finch had withdrawn a little way from the mass of the spectators, and was sitting by himself under the shade of a tall hedge. He had taken his full share of the enemy's wickets, and was not paying much more than a drowsy kind of attention to the rest of the game. He knew that his name was down last but one on the batting list; no one ever expected him to make a score; his share in the contest was practically over. In an absent-minded way he watched Archer go to the wicket, and heard a lot of shouting whenever the latter made a good hit, but he did not join in the applause.

"Cad!" he muttered. "I wish I was bowling: I'd put him in a few hot 'uns!"

The time slipped by; three more players performed the journey between the pitch and pavilion without achieving much distinction by their performances, and Cyril began to buckle the straps of his own pads. He was thus engaged when a boy named Kenny came trotting across the grass.

"Hullo, Finch! I've been looking for you," began the newcomer breathlessly. "I say, you're in next; and, look here, for goodness' sake keep your end up, and don't slog. If Archer can make fifty he'll win the average: he's got twenty-six, and he's playing a ripping good game. It'll be a beastly shame if he doesn't get a chance of finishing his innings. I say, 'Squib,'" concluded the speaker with great earnestness, "you will try and keep your end up, won't you, old chap?"

Cyril replied with a grunt; and as he did so a faint cry of "How's that!" came from the centre of the field.

"There, that ass Todd has spooned up a catch!" cried Kenny. "You're in, 'Squib'; I say, do keep your end up till Archer's made fifty!"

Cyril made no reply; he carelessly threw off his blazer, picked up his bat, and walked off slowly in the direction of the distant wicket. He didn't care tuppence how long his own innings lasted, and very much less whether Archer won the bat. There was that little account to be balanced; the thing would be to give the fellow a glance and a nod, and then purposely miss the first straight ball. The "Squib" could not help chuckling at the thought of how neatly Fate had delivered his enemy into his hands.

He reached the pitch, and there was a momentary delay while the bowler repaired a broken shoe-lace. Archer stood leaning on his bat, his face flushed and anxious; he evidently knew exactly how matters stood with regard to his chances of the average, and he greeted his new partner with a look which plainly repeated the words spoken by Kenny: "Keep your end up, old chap!"

The smooth green turf, the shining, brass-topped stumps, the white creases, the ruts worn by the bowlers' feet: what curious influence could they all have upon a boy's mind; and why should they cause him suddenly to remember two pictures, one of a rather stout, clean-shaven gentleman, wearing a preposterous top hat, and balancing a ball on the tips of his fingers, as if he were about to perform a conjuring trick; the other a dim and spotted photograph of a younger man, leaning on a bat, with one leg crossed accurately in front of the other, wearing a flannel cap and highly ornamented shirt, and with side whiskers adorning his face!

Father and grandfather—they had neither of them lived to witness the performances of the pre-

sent bearer of their name; the cricket which they played and delighted in would now be voted out of date, and even absurd; but, oh! that the true spirit and chivalry of the game they handed on might ever remain the same!

Perhaps some such thought flashed through the batsman's mind as he grasped his weapon and watched the bowler's arm. It was a most tempting ball, just the sort to invite a mighty swipe, but Cyril merely returned it carefully.

"I say," exclaimed Kenny, ten minutes later, "it's a jolly sporting game the 'Squib's' playing! He's only made two himself, and I haven't seen him slog once. He's doing all he knows to keep his end up for Archer. Give him a cheer, you fellows!"

With dogged care Cyril continued to defend his stumps till the mathematical Pugh tossed his calculations into the air, and a shout went up of "Bravo, Archer! you've made 'em, sir! Hurray! Archer's won the bat!"

* * * *

The last game of the season was over, and the big bell was clanging for tea, but two boys lingered talking by the pavilion door.

"It was jolly sporting of you, 'Squib,'" said Archer. "If you hadn't given me the chance, I should never have made 'em."

"I'd a jolly good mind to get out first ball," answered the other curtly. "I quite intended to—only—only I didn't."

"What ever for?"

"Why, because you spoilt my board with your beastly darts."

"Look here," cried Archer, laughing, "I meant to have told you this morning, but you wouldn't listen when I called you to come back. I sold my air pistol to Peters, and it must have been his doing. He went home yesterday, but you wait till next term, and I'll make him pay for the damage, or punch the beggar's head."

"Then it wasn't your doing, after all!" muttered Cyril, looking rather astonished.

"No," answered the other laughing. "I'm jolly glad you didn't slog. What made you change your mind!"

"Oh, I don't know," answered the "Squib," flushing, and possibly wondering in some dim manner what answer the stout old gentleman in the top hat, and the original of the spotted photograph, would have returned to such a question. "I don't know; it wouldn't have been sporting; and of course—well, only cads play mean tricks at cricket."

U-BOAT VICTIMS.

IS it any wonder that the British mercantile marine has vowed a solemn vow to have no dealings with German seamen for a period of years after the present war ends, in the face of such outrages as these two stories disclose? Only the plain facts (as reported in May of the present year) are here given, and they are officially proved.

A British passenger steamer, carrying seventy-seven passengers and a crew of 217, had been torpedoed without warning, and had at once taken a list to starboard. She was 140 miles from land, the time being 11 o'clock at night.

Boats were lowered as quickly as possible, passengers and crew abandoning ship, while the Germans launched a second torpedo at the vessel. The submarine then came to the surface, wished the boats' companies good-night, and disappeared in the darkness.

One of the lifeboats had been considerably damaged before getting clear, and every wave washed over the boat's company.

Their sufferings were deplorable. About two hours after leaving the ship a passenger succumbed to exposure. Then a lady died, but her daughter continued to support the dead body, thinking her mother was still alive. An hour later the daughter herself passed away. A coloured sailor now succumbed; then a fireman, sitting on a thwart, allowed his head to sink into the water and was drowned.

A male passenger was now seen to be dead, and a lady who was his friend became hysterical, so they pretended he had fainted, and kept his body in the boat. Fifteen minutes afterwards a fireman lurched overboard and was drowned.

But by this time help was at hand, and the boat was picked up at 9 o'clock next morning.

The survivors from another British steamer, torpedoed without warning 320 miles from land, went through even more terrible experiences. They were adrift in a boat containing thirty-one people, including two women and a baby four months old.

The steamer was sunk on a Monday, and during that night the boat lost touch with the others. They lay-to, keeping head on to the enormous seas that were running. By Wednesday the chief officer had gone mad, and he died during the day. That night the storekeeper went mad and had to be lashed down; he died at noon on Thursday.

On Friday the weather moderated. Agonies of thirst were being endured, and during that day a seaman expired. On Saturday a fireman was found dead in the bottom of the boat.

They drifted with sail down through the night of Saturday, there being no stars to steer by. On Sunday a cattleman jumped overboard, his companions being too weak to rescue him. The last tot of water was served out, a mouthful apiece, after which they tried to collect a little moisture from occasional showers.

They sighted land at 3 p.m. on Monday, but the weather prevented them from attempting to put in until Tuesday morning, when they were too weak to make the shore. However, a couple of fishing boats came to their assistance and towed them in.

The linen-keeper died as he was being lifted ashore; two seamen, who had gone mad, had to be dragged from the boat, which they refused to leave. A trimmer died of gangrene a fortnight later in hospital, where the baby also succumbed, after surviving all the horrors of that terrible journey.

KINGFISHERS AND THEIR WAYS.

By Eustace Masingfield.

ENGLAND has many wild birds that can be called handsome, but few, if any, that come any way near the Kingfisher in brilliance of colouring. He is a bit of the tropics, judged by beauty, but happily he is "all English" by "residence and long descent."

If you read the poets as far back as the days of Good Queen Bess you will find references to him. Kit Marlowe, whose genius shone out a little earlier than that of Will Shakespeare, makes one of the characters in his play, "The Jew of Malta," ask—

> "But how now stands the wind?
> Into what corner peers my Halcyon's bill?"

Halcyon was a Greek name often used then for the Kingfisher, and the meaning of the second line lies in the fact that a dead Halcyon, hung up under the roof or ceiling, was supposed to turn its breast in the direction from which the wind was blowing.

This queer fancy had not died out, in some country districts, even when Queen Victoria came to the throne; perhaps it lingers still in some out-of-the-way parts.

Many of my readers know the Kingfisher dead and stuffed, but under a glass shade, not hung up as a "weather-glass." But, even so, how poor an idea that little rigid stuffed figure conveys of the "living jewel" that others of us have so often seen flashing to and fro on some quiet reach of stream or river.

For no one knows the true beauty of this bird who has not seen it on the wing. Swift as an arrow, it shoots out from somewhere in the shadows of the bank, and speeds like a winged sapphire thirty, fifty, a hundred yards up or down the stream—a low, even flight, seldom if ever more than a few feet above the surface of the water.

Some observers have seen Kingfishers, in the pairing season, flying high in air, but this is not characteristic.

They are low-flying river haunters, and when they make



YOUNG KINGFISHERS.
(Brought to the mouth of their burrow.)

journeys it is, as a rule, to the river-mouth or estuary when winter warns them that Jack Frost may be going to harden the pools and reaches into crystal ice. Lower down, where the sea tides, moving up against the down-coming stream, keep its waters in a turmoil, the ice cannot form, and the brackish shallows teem with tiny crabs, sand hoppers, shrimps and such like dainties.

Although their summer fare is varied by an occasional dragonfly or water-beetle, it is fish that forms their staple food. The daily catch is considerable if a family is being reared. These busy parents must be continually saying to themselves: "What appetites those children of ours have, to be sure!"

Richard Jefferies, who knew wild life in England as few men know it who have the faculty of expressing themselves, tells how he came upon a group of these hungry little creatures: "One summer I found four young Kingfishers perched in a row on a dead branch crossing a brook which ran for some distance behind a double-mound hedge. . . . Every now and then the parents came with small fish, which they caught further down the brook."

And he describes the trick the Kingfisher has of choosing for his post of watch the lower boughs of some hawthorn bush overhanging the stream, "thick and impenetrable above, but more open below, just above the water. . . . When passing such a bush, how many times have I seen a brilliant streak of azure shoot out from the lower branches, and watched a Kingfisher skim across the meadow, rising with a piping whistle over the distant hedge."

Those four little Kingfishers he speaks about would be charming little beings, but another twelve months would have to elapse before they could vie with their mother and father in brilliance of colour.

The Kingfisher nursery is not a tidy place. It cannot be compared to the round, cup-shaped moss and feather-lined nest of

finch or lark. All it consists of is a tunnel-like hole in the river-bank, running in perhaps for two or three feet, and opening out into a round inner chamber, strewn with fish bones and scales, and other débris—a queer place for such gorgeous birds to sleep and rear their nestlings.

Our illustration, from a photograph taken by Mr. W. H. Nettlefield, shows a family of Kingfisher chicks which have been taken out of their dark and dismal dwelling and put down at the entrance to the burrow, for the purpose of having their portraits taken. No doubt they were glad to get back to their nursery, on the principle of "Home is home, be it ever so homely."

Besides, all his life long, the Kingfisher is a rather unsociable fellow. One never thinks of flocks, or even small groups, of Kingfishers. And he and his mate like best to be left alone to do their fishing, and their toilet, and their journeyings, and their family-rearing without prying eyes watching all their movements.

Occasionally he seems to show a rather less unsociable spirit, but it is rare. One nature-lover, Mr. J. E. Whiting, writing in a magazine, tells us how one lovely summer's day he was sitting by the side of a brook, making an impromptu attempt at fishing, when suddenly a very fine Kingfisher came flying up stream towards where he was sitting.

"I fully expected," he says, "that on seeing me it would dart on one side, and so return to the stream higher up. But it came straight on, and, to my surprise and pleasure, actually alighted on the rod which I was holding over the stream.

"I scarcely dared to breathe for fear the slightest motion on my part should frighten it away. It looked at me in a friendly sort of way, as much as to say, 'I am not at all frightened: we understand each other,' and at once began to clean and plume its beautiful feathers deliberately with its long bill."

When it had quite finished, but not until then, the brilliant-hued visitor changed its perch for another a little way off. Then it dived, caught a fish, killed and ate it, and flew off at last round a bend in the stream.

Such incidents make one wonder whether the gulf which separates us from the wild creatures of wood and stream and field is, after all, so very wide and impassable, and whether sympathy and patience might not help us to understand these beautiful creatures whose speech no one has yet learned.

The First Airmen to Win the V.C.

THE first award of the Victoria Cross to members of the Royal Air Force was splendidly deserved. That it will prove to be the beginning of a long and brilliant list we doubt not. We think the details should be put on record in such an annual as ours for British boys. Here they are, as given in the official account in May last.

Lt. Alan Jerrard, Royal Air Force, formerly of the South Staffordshire Regiment:

When on an offensive patrol with two other officers he attacked five enemy aeroplanes and shot one down in flames, following it down to within 100 feet of the ground.

He then attacked an enemy aerodrome from a height of only 50 feet from the ground, and, engaging single-handed some 19 machines, which were either landing or attempting to take off, succeeded in destroying one of them, which crashed on the aerodrome. A large number of machines then attacked him, and whilst thus fully occupied he observed that one of the pilots of his patrol was in difficulties. He went immediately to his assistance, regardless of his own personal safety, and destroyed a third enemy machine.

Fresh enemy aeroplanes continued to rise from the aerodrome, which he attacked one after another, and only retreated—still engaged with five enemy machines—when ordered to do so by his patrol leader. Although apparently wounded, this very gallant officer turned repeatedly, and attacked single-handed the pursuing machines, until he was eventually overwhelmed by numbers and driven to the ground.

Lt. Jerrard had greatly distinguished himself on four previous occasions, within a period of 23 days, in destroying enemy machines, displaying bravery and ability of the very highest order.

The second winner of the Cross was 2nd Lt. Alan Arnett McLeod, Royal Air Force. His story, too, is thrilling.

Whilst flying with his observer (Lt. A. W. Hammond, M.C.), attacking hostile formations by bombs and machine-gun fire, he was assailed at a height of 5,000 feet by eight enemy triplanes, which dived at him from all directions, firing from their front guns. By skilful manœuvring he enabled his observer to fire bursts at each machine in turn, shooting three of them down out of control. By this time Lt. McLeod had received five wounds, and whilst continuing the engagement a bullet penetrated his petrol tank and set the machine on fire.

He then climbed out on to the left bottom plane, controlling his machine from the side of the fuselage, and by side-slipping steeply kept the flames to one side, thus enabling the observer to continue firing until the ground was reached.

The observer had been wounded six times when the machine crashed in "No Man's Land," and 2nd Lt. McLeod, notwithstanding his own wounds, dragged him away from the burning wreckage at great personal risk from heavy machine-gun fire from the enemy's lines. This very gallant pilot was again wounded by a bomb whilst engaged in this act of rescue, but he persevered until he had placed Lt. Hammond in comparative safety, before falling himself from exhaustion and loss of blood.



A STORY OF OLDEN DAYS.

By Sheila E. Braine.

KUNO, Duke of Brabant, was only twelve years old, and he had been a Duke exactly nine weeks. No doubt it sounds fine to be the head of a great province, but, unfortunately, a number of Kuno's subjects were inclined to be dissatisfied with their young ruler. He was too young, and they did not care about a regent.

"What we Brabantiners need is a man who can fight for us, and keep the Burgundians at bay," growled the malcontents.

"It will be years before he arrives at a fit age to govern for himself," whispered spies who were paid to foster this growing discontent: "why not choose a knight and a warrior!" "There is Count Wolf von Wolfstein; what a Duke of Brabant he would make!" insinuated one of the Count's allies.

So the end of it was that when Wolf, who was the little Duke's cousin, raised his standard of revolt, numbers flocked to it. He was selfish, treacherous, and cruel, but not every one knew his true character. What the people saw was that Count Wolf was six feet two in his great riding-boots, and as strong and hardy as a mountain bull. Clad in full armour, with plumes waving on his helmet, he looked such a knightly figure that it was not altogether surprising that the heads of a good many Brabantiners were turned.

"Wolf, Duke of Brabant!" they shouted as he rode along on his great black horse, Olaf, and at such cries the Count smiled, well pleased. Only let him sweep that puny boy, Kuno, out of the way, and his success was assured. He would make a much better Duke than his cousin, he was convinced.

But it was not quite so easy to carry out his project as he had anticipated. When the news arrived in the capital of the sudden death of Kuno's father, a few of the nobles hurriedly sent for the boy, and, fearing that his title might be disputed, had him crowned with all possible speed in the cathedral. The ceremony was shorn of its customary pomp and magnificence, but that did not matter. The ducal coronet had been placed upon Kuno's pretty dark head, and the ducal mantle upon his childish shoulders, while those who were present kissed his hand and vowed allegiance to him. He was the lawful Duke of Brabant, and his subjects would not all of them forget this.

Nevertheless the "Wolf," as he was familiarly called, made himself so popular that his followers increased in numbers daily. The little Duke's friends and adherents began to look very grave, for the situation was becoming a serious one. They knew that if Kuno once fell into his cousin's hands, the latter would find some means of ridding himself of the poor boy. There were deep dungeons enough in the castles of Brabant for a person to pass his whole life there, and no one be any the wiser.

At length Count Wolf's army grew so large that he determined to advance upon the capital of the duchy, and, with a bold stroke, try to win the dukedom.

A council of war was hastily called by Kuno's guardian, Count Arnold von Gerolstein, and it was decided that he should lead out all the troops yet faithful to their rightful sovereign, and risk a battle. "Either that, or we must turn tail and fly for our lives, and I like not that," cried Arnold grimly; "let us fight first and run afterwards, if needs be."

"So be it!" assented the other councillors; "we will drive back the Wolf if we can, and if not——"

"If not, those of us that be left must care for the safety of the Duke," said Count Arnold.

So it was arranged, and, after giving orders to his officers to be in readiness to march, the Count went to see his young charge.

"I would I were a man," sighed Kuno, who was well aware that his duchy was in danger of being taken from him. "I hate to be shut up in a palace, where I cannot even see the fighting. Take me with you, will you not, Count Arnold!" and he laid his hand beseechingly upon his guardian's sleeve.

The old warrior, who had seen so many frays, looked down at the manly little figure before him, and thought, with a sigh of remembrance, that he was worthy to be his father's son. For a minute or two he said nothing, for Kuno's request had put an idea into his head. Might it not be a bold and advisable stroke of policy to let the soldiers have their Duke with them?

"They would fight like lions for him then," thought the Count; "but, on the other hand, should he be captured, the game would be up. The 'Wolf' would never let the 'lamb' out of his clutches."

Kuno marked his guardian's hesitation, and urged his request again.

"I will do whatever you bid me, only let me ride with you," he pleaded.

"Wait a moment: your Highness must give me time to reflect," answered Count Arnold. "It is a serious matter."

Then he said to himself, "Shall I take him, or shall I not?

"Yes—no, yes—no—*Yes!*"

The Count had made up his mind, and wasted no more time. "Your Highness shall ride with the army, since it is your wish," he said briefly.

Kuno tossed his velvet cap in the air for joy.

"I hope we shall start very soon," he cried eagerly. "And I may wear the sword my father gave me, may I not?"

"Certainly," replied the Count, and smiled gravely.

The Duke of Brabant, therefore, rode with his army, surrounded by his faithful soldiers, who were proud indeed to have him in their midst. The tidings the scouts brought in were not reassuring; they declared that the "Wolf's" forces far outnumbered their own, and that they were marching so rapidly that another day would bring them in sight.

"Very good, then they will find us ready for them," said Count Arnold unmoved.

He gave directions that Kuno and his attendants should, as soon as the battle began, retire to a piece of rising ground in the rear; if the day went against their side, they were to ride back with all speed to the city, and prepare for a siege.

Before the engagement, the little Duke made a speech to his troops, and they cheered, and vowed to fight to death for him, a vow which most of those brave men fulfilled that day.

At the first onslaught, the Wolf's men had the worst of it, for the loyal Brabantiners, as Count Arnold predicted, fought like lions. The bowmen stood shoulder to shoulder, and discharged their arrows with such rapidity and precision that the front ranks of the enemy gave way. Then the pikemen, perceiving their advantage, rushed in, the cavalry came thundering after, and for a short space it seemed as if the victory were going to be with the Duke's men.

"Your Highness, all is well at present," cried a breathless messenger, riding up to the little group posted at the rear; "the foe is being beaten back with great slaughter."

The Duke clapped his hands with delight.

"I thought we should beat the Wolf," he exclaimed gaily. "Bear my greetings to Count Arnold and all my gallant officers and soldiers."

But even as he spoke, with a smile upon his face, the tide of battle turned. The Wolf himself, on his mighty charger, Olaf, flung himself into the breach made by the cavalry; his great sword dealt destruction wherever it swung; his furious shouts put new courage into the hearts of his wavering followers. They rallied round him, and the Duke's men were borne back in their turn. Fighting bravely, they yet lost ground inch by inch, and their leaders incited them in vain to fresh efforts. They had done what they could, but the enemy's numbers far exceeded their own.

Count Arnold, who had been in the thickest of the fray from the beginning, had his horse shot under him twice, but was dragged out of the press by his devoted attendants. The second time this happened the Count called to a young officer and gave him some hasty directions. The latter, who was ghastly pale, saluted, and rode off the field to the place where the Boy-Duke was awaiting the result of the fight

"The day is lost," muttered the rider, swaying in his saddle. "Count Arnold von Gerolstein commands you instantly to take his Highness——"

He dropped from his steed on to the ground, wounded to death. But there was no time to help the poor fellow; the Captain of the troop told off to guard the Duke seized Kuno's bridle, and away they rode, in the direction of the capital. Soon, however, they found that there was no getting back to the city, for a division of the enemy's cavalry had ridden round in a circuit, on purpose to intercept them. The Wolf was only too anxious to get possession of the little Duke.

What was to be done? The Captain took a minute to consider, then he called out:

"Right about face! We must make for the castle of Gerolstein. Max, take his Highness before you on your saddle, for we must ride for our lives now. Close up, men! Is there anyone here who knows the country well?"

"I do," answered a tall soldier with a bronzed face, "every inch of it."

"Then go first and lead the way," cried the Captain. "Forward, men!"

It was a long, tedious ride up hill and down dale, with scarcely a halt, so anxious was the little company to get their precious charge safely within the shelter of the castle. They had to ford more than one river, and lost one of their number, whose tired steed was swept down by the current. Long before the towers of Gerolstein came in sight the little Duke had fallen asleep, resting against the big trooper into whose charge he had been given. He was wearied out, and hardly woke when they rode over the drawbridge into the castle-yard and the governor helped him to dismount.

"Is Count Arnold slain?" inquired the latter hurriedly of Kuno's present guardian. "Ah, Captain, this is a sad day for all of us!"

"I do not know whether the Count is among the living or the dead," was the answer, "but if he is still alive he will be certain to follow his Highness here."

"That is true; I will post watchers on the Falcon Tower, to look out for him; so that we may sally forth and aid him, should any of the Wolf's men be about."

"It will not be long before we have the Wolf at our heels, Sir Governor," said the Captain with a short laugh, "he will soon find out where the Duke has taken shelter; of that be assured. I hope that the castle is well provisioned; I can see with my own eyes that it is well defended."

"Trust Arnold of Gerolstein for that," replied the governor; "our cellars are well plenished, I assure you."

Three days later the lord of the castle and some of his troops rode into Gerolstein. They had been utterly routed by Count Wolf, who was now engaged in overrunning the country. The capital still held out; it was strongly fortified, and Kuno's mother was doing her best to hold it for her son.

"All hope is not lost as long as the rightful Duke of Brabant is still living," said Count Arnold, "and *that* his traitor cousin knows right well. Mark my words; we shall hear from the Wolf to-morrow or the day after at the latest."

True enough, before that time had expired, a knight bearing a white flag of truce rode up to the castle gates and demanded an audience with Count Arnold von Gerolstein. The old warrior received him with a grim smile.

"He is come to treat with us for the delivery of the Duke into their hands," he said to his followers; and so it proved. The ambassador had brought an offer of peace and forgiveness and a general amnesty all round, from Count Wolf von Wolfstein, and the only condition attached to it was that the Count should be constituted the Duke's guardian.

"No, a thousand times, no!" thundered Arnold. "We will fight for our lawful sovereign until not one of us remains to man the castle walls, but we will not give him up to be butchered by your master. Take him back that answer, and tell him also that when he comes in person, we shall be ready for him."

The rebel knight laughed scornfully as he cried:

"The Wolf will soon burn this old crow's nest about your ears. The whole country is in his possession."

"I do not believe it," answered Arnold calmly; "you cannot shake my resolution that way. And if it were, I would still hold my castle of Gerolstein for his Highness Kuno, Duke of Brabant."

The messenger went off, not at all surprised that the conditions were refused, for Count Arnold's loyalty was well known. Two days later the usurper appeared with part of his army, and the siege of the castle began. The Wolf settled himself down regularly before it, knowing that its defenders would only yield with their last breath. It would take time to starve them out.

This was true, but it took much longer than he or anyone else fancied. In vain the besiegers bombarded the castle, and harassed its defenders night and day; in vain they tried to carry it by well-planned assaults, and then, when other means failed, endeavoured to cut off the water supply. Count Arnold and his men simply jeered at their efforts. The castle was built upon a lofty eminence, high up among barren rocks; a well-nigh impregnable fortress, guarded by determined men.

The Wolf grew weary of this continued resistance: besides, his presence was badly wanted elsewhere. The whole duchy was in a ferment, and he knew that the little Duke had still many adherents in different parts of it. Oh, if he could but batter the grim old walls of Gerolstein down and seize his coveted prey! The Wolf ground his teeth with rage.

A gleam of hope, however, sprang up in his breast when, one morning, a peasant was brought before him, who offered, if paid well, to show the besiegers an obscure and narrow path by which they might get close to the walls of the castle. It was a difficult and dangerous way; so much so that the inmates would never dream of the enemy appearing from that direction.

The Wolf's eyes glittered, as he gave orders for the peasant to be taken away and guarded carefully.

"You shall name your own reward, if we get into the castle," he said to the man: "if we fail, and it is through any fault of yours, you shall be hanged."

"To-morrow night will see us masters of Gerolstein," continued the Count, rubbing his hands; "under cover of darkness we can get our men up to the very walls, and then hey for the scaling ladders! I myself will command the attacking party."

"Is that wise, my lord?" hazarded his favourite lieutenant. "Should you fall, there is no one to take your place."

"It is not a time to think about that," cried the Wolf recklessly; "besides, I would fain have a brush with that tough old swordsman, Arnold von Gerolstein, who has baulked me for so long. We will take only picked men; Oscar and the rest of the camp shall hold a merry-making, to put the Gerolsteiners off their guard. Yes, to-morrow that puny Duke of theirs, whom they set such store by, will be in my power."

It was midnight, and the sentinels on the castle walls were drowsy with continual watching; their numbers were not sufficient to allow of frequent changes, and the men had to fight all day too, sometimes. To-night they felt secure, for down below in the enemy's camp high revelry was going forward, huge bonfires thrust up their fiery peaks to the sky, and the sound of shouting and singing floated up to the summit of the fortress.

Not one of the sentinels, thus lulled into a false security, noticed the dark figures creeping up the steep side of the rocks on the north of the castle, or the ladders that were being dragged up after them, and placed against the walls. One after the other they came, until a goodly troop was assembled, ready for the attack; and so noiselessly was everything accomplished that not one of the besieged had an idea of what was going forward.

The Wolf was there in person, as he had said; and, with his foot on one of the ladders, gave the signal to mount.

The castle of Gerolstein, so bravely defended, was all but lost. But suddenly the silence of the night was broken by an unromantic sound—namely, a loud, prolonged, and most melancholy "Moo." A cow tied up in a sheltered nook of the castle yard

was bemoaning the loss of her calf, taken from her that evening. Again she lifted up her voice in protest.

"Moo—oo—oo! Moo—oo—oo!"

The noise woke one of the sentinels, who sprang to his feet ashamed of the way in which he had kept his vigil. Approaching the edge of the battlements, the man instantly became aware of the danger that threatened the castle. The besiegers were even then swarming up the scaling ladders.

"Brabant, Brabant! To the walls! The Wolf is upon us!" yelled the sentinel, flinging down one of the ladders himself.

His comrades took up the cry, and the garrison came rushing up, half armed and half clad, to find their enemies were leaping over the parapet, with drawn swords. The Wolf was there, half mad with rage at the failure of his scheme, and presently Count Arnold, catching sight in the half-darkness of his gigantic figure, made for him at once.

"Traitor!" he shouted, "never shall you lay hands on the Duke!"

The Wolf, badly wounded in two places, turned upon Arnold fiercely, but his foot slipped, and he went down, lunging wildly at his opponent as he fell. The next moment the Count's sword was at his throat, while the old warrior cried hoarsely:

"Die, then, traitor to your Duke!"

With a sudden movement, the Wolf flung himself backwards, and, with a yell, rolled over the battlements into the abyss beneath, preferring to perish thus rather than to die by his enemy's sword.

His soldiers fought no longer when they saw their leader's awful end. Many were already killed, the rest threw down their weapons and begged for quarter.

Consternation fell upon the camp, and their merrymaking was turned into something quite different, when the troops learned that their master was dead. It was true, as the young lieutenant had told him, that no one could take his place. Hundreds of men stole away that very night, and returned to their homes, hoping that the Duke would be merciful, and not call them to account for their defection.

The next day what remained of the Wolf's army beat a hasty retreat, while the Duke of Brabant, surrounded by his suite, rode back in triumph to his capital.

He was a very boyish Duke, after all, for before he left the castle Kuno insisted upon going to see the cow that had saved the castle, much as the geese saved Rome. Later on, by command of its owner, the sculptured figure of a cow, apparently in the act of lowing, was placed in the courtyard of the castle of Gerolstein, as a memento of that night when the Wolf so nearly caught the Lamb.

Count Arnold did not have much trouble with his young master's enemies after this, and Kuno lived to take the reins of government into his own hands, and to make a wise and good Duke of Brabant.

A FAMOUS RUSSIAN FAIR.

By Guy Waterford.



WILL the war have prevented the holding of the great annual summer fair at Nijni-Novgorod? Russia being such an immense country, all manner of things go on undisturbed by the strenuous conflict and the disastrous peace. Besides, the place named is not anywhere near Petrograd, the storm-centre, but in the east-central part of Russia, which is far less accessible to the noise of the hurly-burly that has raged on the western borders.

Look out the place on the map of Russia. Don't fix on Novgorod just south of St. Petersburg, but Nijni-Novgorod due east of Moscow. It is here that the huge fair is held every year from mid-July to mid-September, and is truly one of the sights of the world.

Notice how convenient a meeting-place it is for Europe and Asia to foregather at; and foregather they do, till the medley of languages spoken in the "mushroom" town is suggestive of ancient Babel.

Let us take the train from Moscow, and having reached our right station, which is inconveniently "short" of our destination, we will either charter a cab or get into one of the electric trams which ply to and from the station. On alighting we find ourselves looking out on the great broad bosom of the Volga, with its bridge of boats a thousand metres wide.

In front of us, along the rising ground, lies posted the older city of Nijni—a picturesque, irregular group of low houses, and church spires, and mosque-like domes, with the Kremlin towering free of them all. If you are not too tired, come up to the top of this loftiest of the public buildings, and get a view of the surrounding country and the two months' city through which we are shortly going to wander.

Remember, this fair is not a collection of places of amusement with a *soupçon* of business, as the name might suggest to us western folk. It is first and foremost a great business centre. Indeed, while it lasts it is one of the most important places in the great Russian empire.

The agents of the producers and the agents of the consumers—500,000 traders—meet here every summer to exchange merchandise for money and money for merchandise, and their transactions amount annually to more than £25,000,000. Hundreds of thousands of merchants, of all classes and grades, in Eastern Russia, Siberia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, get their whole annual supply of goods, directly or indirectly, through the Nijni-Novgorod fair: and by its sales and purchases are regulated the prices of all the staple articles of trade throughout the empire.

No one knows who founded this great annual fair. If you try to trace back its history, the earliest references are scanty enough, and the clue gets lost in the "night of Time." But this we know—that it was Czar Alexander I. to whom the fair owes its present location; and the date of the first great gathering on this riverside site was 1817.

But take a good look round before we descend from our "watch tower." The fair ground lies spread out below us. It is a low, flat, but extensive tract of land lying between the rivers Oka and Volga, just above their junction, very much as New York City lies between East River and the Hudson. On this peninsula between the rivers lies Nijni New Town (Novgorod), a great horseshoe city of shops, sheds, and warehouses, regularly laid out in streets and squares, and covering, perhaps, two thousand acres.

Around the city, in a long, curving fringe, runs a perfect forest of masts, which, with the ceaseless whistling of steamers and tugs, testifies to the importance of the Nijni-Novgorod fair and the vast extent of Russia's inland commerce. And along the flat, sandy shores of the river lies the merchandise which these vessels and steamers have brought.

Now let us go down and inspect that merchandise. We shall be surprised both at the quantity and the variety of it.

We find the fair-town is built all of wood, in some sixty great blocks, which contain, perhaps, three thousand shops. It is laid out in broad, straight streets, that run parallel and rectangularly, with side-walks under covered colonnades. A canal circumscribes the horseshoe, but the fair has prospered beyond such limits, and has spread itself out on the far side of the old boundary.

Without the horseshoe, though, as within, each block of buildings is duly confined to one class of goods. Here all is cotton. The next block deals in pelts. This is a liquor block; that a jewellers'. You sample nothing but tea—the famous "thés de cuir" of Hankow—on this side of a street, while the other side may be all leather and prunella.

Says one writer: "There are silk blocks, and drug-blocks, and woodwork blocks; tool-shops and crockery shops; Russian iron in pigs, and Russian-made agricultural implements; piles of samovars, and cutlery, and the most eccentric padlocks that you shall find.

"Here a street is all Chinese pagodas. Turn this corner and you are in Persia. You have half a million icons, and a library of religious works, or, if you prefer it, of almanacks—your Russ is much given to the illuminated almanack—to choose from here; and bales of tobacco yonder. You can stroll through a thoroughfare of clocks, or of dried fruit—the *tchapdalla* so appreciated by the Muscovite palate—as the fancy takes you. You have a choice of foreign vehicles, of fur coats, of carpets, of articles of personal adornment, and of patent medicines."

Another writer, Mr. George Kennan, speaks of the "huge mounds of pig-iron from the mountains of the Ural (Oo-ral); immense green heaps of watermelons from the lower Volga; acres and acres of barrels containing dye-stuffs — principally madder—from Central Asia and the Caucasus; long walls of cotton bales from the oases of the Central Asiatic deserts; great piles of walrus teeth and mammoth ivory from North-Eastern Siberia, and tens of thousands of boxes of tea, sewed up in raw hides, which have come overland from Peking across the plains of Mongolia."

These latter, however, are rather merchants' stores, and lie along the river-side near the ships. If we want to go shopping we must repair to the bazaar, which is located near the point of the peninsula and is crowded by almost all the different types of folk in south-eastern Russia, as well as many from the remoter parts of western Asia. "There are Circassians selling silver-mounted daggers, belts and pistols from the Caucasus; Persians with soft, richly coloured rugs and carpets from Bokhara; Chinese merchants with 'flower tea' from Peking, and handsome Armenians, with soft, dark, dreamy-looking eyes, offering silks and shawls from the looms of the East."

The fish market is quite a feature of the fair. The fish is all of the dry order. It is stacked in piles, like so much logwood.

This article of merchandise comes from Siberia. It comes salted, dried, pickled, smoked; in boxes, in barrels, or in pyramids bound in bark, towering some six feet high.

Another feature of the fair, not less strong at times, is the miscellaneous character of the crowd. "You see every type of face, except the Anglo-Saxon; you behold every sort of dress, and hear all manner of languages and dialects. Announce yourself as a purchaser, however, and you find no difficulty in making your wants understood, even if you express them in your own vernacular."

The poor at the Fair are simply legion. Says Mr. Kennan: "You would suppose that all the lame, halt, and blind in the empire were there to solicit charity. I saw one day an old, haggard woman, apparently without legs, and a hump-backed man, both dressed in rags, riding about in a rickety cart drawn by a lame, spavined horse, the woman singing in a cracked voice something that sounded like a dirge, while the man rang a bell to call public attention to their misfortunes."

(*Concluded on page* 252.)

Some of Canada's Heroic Fighters

AND THEIR INTREPID DEEDS.

CANADA, as all the world knows, has done splendidly in the War. There are places of deathless memory which will always be associated with her name—Ypres and Vimy Ridge, and many another. Of the valiant deeds which her sons have wrought, many will never be known: the doers and the eye-witnesses having alike gone down in the dreadful storm of shot and shell. But the record of others has been preserved, and due recognition has followed.

Of the awards made within the last year or so we should like to record here some of the most notable.

The Victoria Cross was surely never more gallantly won by a cavalry officer than by Lieut. Gordon M. Flowerdew, to whom it was awarded for "most conspicuous bravery and dash when in command of a squadron detailed for special service of a very important nature.

"On reaching the first objective, Lieut. Flowerdew saw two lines of the enemy, each about sixty strong, with machine-guns in the centre and flanks, one line being about 200 yards behind the other. Realising the critical nature of the operation and how much depended upon it, Lieut. Flowerdew ordered a troop under Lieut. Harvey, V.C., to dismount and carry out a special movement while he led the remaining three troops to the charge. The squadron (less one troop) passed over both lines, killing many of the enemy with the sword; and wheeling about galloped at them again.

"Although the squadron had then lost about 70 per cent. of its numbers, killed and wounded, from rifle and machine-gun fire directed on it from the front and both flanks, the enemy broke and retired. The survivors of the squadron then established themselves in a position where they were joined, after much hand-to-hand fighting, by Lieut. Harvey's party. Lieut. Flowerdew was dangerously wounded, but continued to cheer on his men."

Another Canadian recipient of the Cross was Corporal Filip Konowal, on whom devolved the very ugly and perilous work of clearing out lurking Huns from their hiding-places among the ruins of shattered houses. If ever a soldier can be said to carry his life in his hands it is in an operation of this kind.

His section, says the *Gazette*, had the difficult task of mopping up cellars, craters and machine-gun emplacements. Under his able direction all resistance was overcome, and heavy casualties inflicted on the enemy. In one cellar he himself bayoneted three enemy and attacked single-handed seven others in a crater, killing them all.

"On reaching the objective, a machine-gun was holding up the right flank, causing many casualties. Konowal rushed forward and entered the emplacement, killed the crew, and brought the gun back to our lines. The next day he again attacked single-handed another machine-gun emplacement, killed three of the crew, and destroyed the gun and emplacement with explosives.

"This non-commissioned officer alone killed at least sixteen of the enemy, and during the two days' actual fighting carried on continuously his good work until severely wounded."

Our readers have probably heard of the next V.C. winner—Captain (acting Major) Okill Massey Learmouth, M.C.

"During a determined counter-attack on our new positions, this officer, when his company was momentarily surprised, instantly charged and personally disposed of the attackers. Later, he carried on a tremendous fight with the advancing enemy. Although under intense barrage fire and mortally wounded he stood on the parapet of the trench, bombed the enemy continuously and directed the defence in such a manner as to infuse a spirit of utmost resistance into his men. On several occasions this very brave officer actually caught bombs thrown at him by the enemy and threw them back.

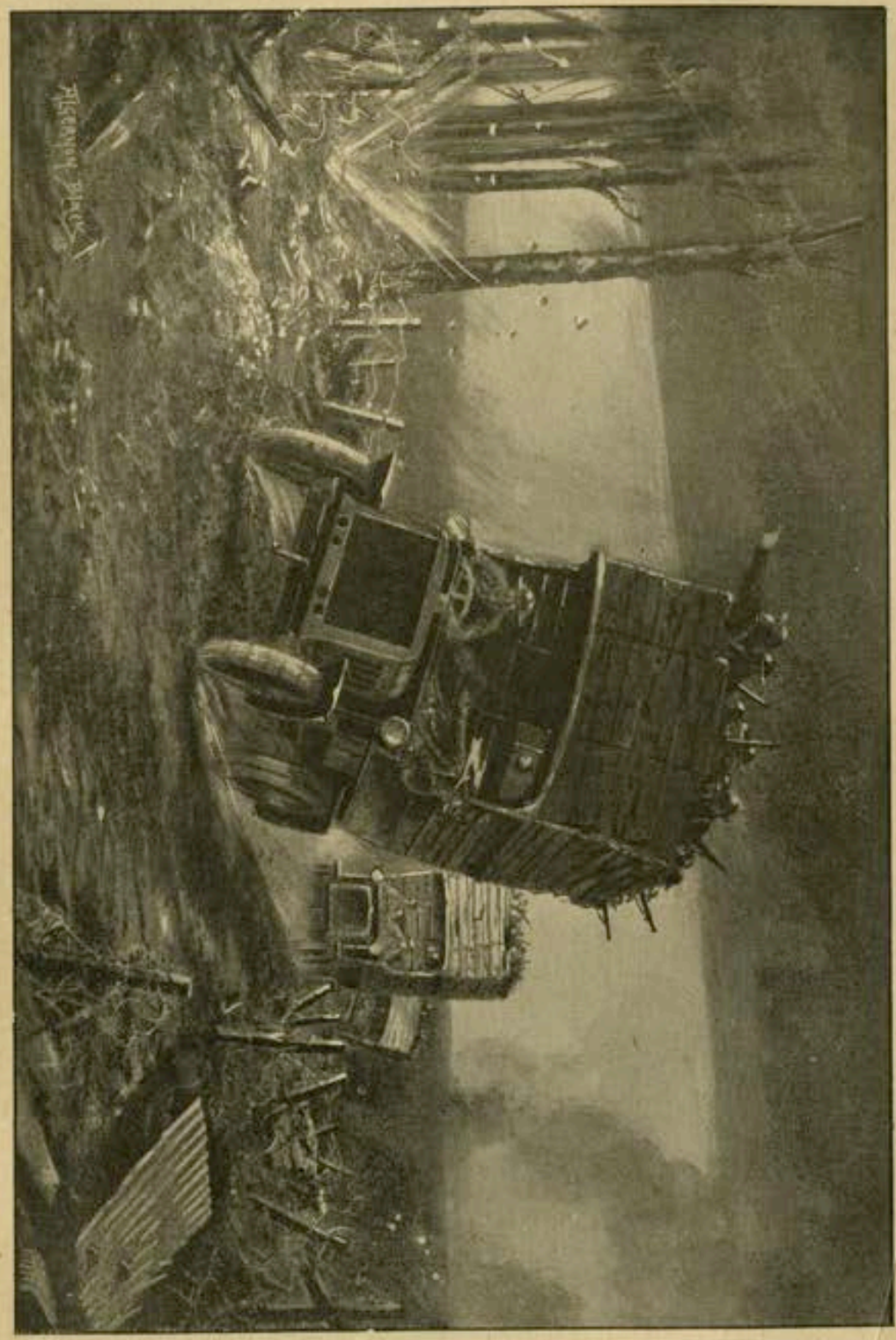
"When he was unable by reason of his wounds to carry on the fight he still refused to be carried out of the line, and continued to give instructions and invaluable advice to his junior officers, finally handing over all his duties before he was evacuated from the front line to the hospital where he died."

Another intrepid infantryman V.C. winner, Robert Hanna, Canadian warrant officer, "under heavy machine-gun and rifle fire, coolly collected a party of men, and leading them against a strong point, rushed through the wire and personally bayoneted three of the enemy and brained the fourth, capturing the position and silencing the machine gun.

"This most courageous action, displaying courage and personal bravery of the highest order at the most critical moment of the attack, resulted in the capture of a most important tactical point, and but for his daring action and determined handling of a desperate situation, the attack would not have succeeded."

Similar splendid courage and presence of mind was shown by another winner of the Cross—Lieut. Hugh Mackenzie, D.C.M., a machine-gun officer who, alas! did not survive the fight.

Of this gallant soldier it is said that, "seeing all the officers and most of the N.C.O.'s of an infantry company had become casualties, and that the men were hesitating before a nest of machine guns, he handed over command of his guns to a N.C.O., rallied the infantry, organised an attack, and captured the strong point. Finding that the position was swept by machine-gun fire from a 'pill-box,' Lieut. Mackenzie made a reconnaissance and detailed flanking and frontal attacking parties which captured the 'pill-box.' He was killed while leading the frontal attack."



ROUGH WORK FOR LONDON 'BUSES.

On the Way to the Trenches, in the Glare of the Enemy's Searchlights.

Drawn by Alexander Black.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

A STORY OF THE OLD FRENCH WARS, A CENTURY AGO.

By Walter Foster.

CHAPTER I.—*THE ACCIDENT ON THE QUAY.*



WAR had brought so many prisoners of one sort and another to the town that the passage through the streets of seven or eight downcast English merchant seamen presented no unusual features.

The small file of soldiers who had them in charge allowed them the free use of their limbs, for they rightly assumed that the loaded musket each carried over his shoulder was sufficient to discourage any thoughts of escape.

Their destination was the old grey stone tower situated a quarter of a mile or so to the west of the little port. Their line of route took them along the inner-quay side, where a chattering and laughing group of men and women had congregated, greatly interested, apparently, in the proceedings taking place aboard a smack just below, called the *Courlis*.

She was owned and commanded by one Jacques Arnaud, who was then getting ready for sea. His wife, holding in her arms an infant of twelve or thirteen months of age, sat on the heavy balk of timber skirting the edge of the stonework, occasionally speaking a word or two to her husband.

Just as the English prisoners drew near this group, a fisherman ran along the quay wall, dragging a rope from a smack lying lower down the harbour. He went blindly ahead, neither trying to avoid anyone nor even warning them to get out of his way, intent merely upon passing the rope round a wood post a few yards farther on.

Madame Arnaud, occupying a position fair in the path of the cable, and suddenly seeing the danger of her situation, sprang to her feet to try to dodge the swirling rope, but she was not quick enough, and ere she altogether realised what had happened her infant was whisked out of her arms and with a gasp fell into the harbour.

Simultaneously a general chorus from the loungers arose, each loudly instructing the other what he ought to do, but doing nothing himself. Meanwhile, Madame Arnaud was nigh distracted with the sense of her own helplessness. Her husband, being on the other side of a slight projection of the quay, was quite ignorant of the meaning of the hubbub and commotion on the wall-top, and begged in vain for enlightenment.

The wretched infant was doing its little best to drown itself in the quickest possible time, and in all probability would have succeeded, but at this moment the English prisoners drew up to the babbling and gesticulating spectators, and Humphrey Shadforth, the young ex-skipper, took in the facts at one glance. Unceremoniously pushing one of the soldiers to one side, he sprang into the water, having only paused to slip off his coat and shoes.

He struck the surface of the water close to the sinking child, whom he grabbed in the very nick of time. A rope was thrown to him, and he was drawn up on to the quay-wall with the little mite safe in his grasp. The whole affair had not occupied three minutes.

Shadforth, who bore himself with becoming modesty, received quite an ovation from the excited bystanders, and Madame Arnaud hugged him round the neck, all dripping as he was. The sergeant, however, soon cut this sort of thing short, and curtly set his prisoners in motion again.

In those days the regular jails of France were, for the most part, taxed to their utmost capacities, and prisoners-of-war were often incarcerated in places never intended for such purposes. Thus it happened that Shadforth and his companions in misfortune (the master and crew of a small trader captured in the Channel by a privateer brig) were destined to be locked up in the old tower near the harbour.

This tower stood on a massive rock rising directly from the water's edge, its walls, in rough weather, being wetted by the spray nearly to the roof, which, however, was not so very high, seeing the building was only of two storeys. The lower apartment formed the warder's quarters, while the upper chamber, of course, constituted the prisoners' cell.

On the side facing the sea, and just high enough for a tall man to see out of when standing upright, a two-barred window admitted whatever light and air entered the chamber. The room would not be more than forty feet above the sea level at low tide, and at high water probably less than thirty.

After a cursory examination of their surroundings, the Englishmen were forced to admit that the chances of escape were nil, and accordingly made up their minds for a rather prolonged stay there—in other words, until the war was over.

For men in their particular circumstances, they were not, on the whole, treated badly. What they complained of most was the daily search to which they were subjected—annoying and vexatious because obviously unnecessary, inasmuch as it was quite impossible that they could have procured or fabricated even the rudest instruments by which they could hope to break prison.

CHAPTER II.—*THE SEQUEL.*

ABOUT a fortnight after their incarceration, it being then early spring, Madame Arnaud came to the head warder, carrying a small flower-pot containing a tiny shoot of green—a little present, she explained, for Humphrey Shadforth.

That was, to be sure, if Monsieur the Commandant was agreeable. It was merely as a token of gratitude to the man whom she owed that which she held dearer than life—to show she had not forgotten his courageous conduct. Certainly it was little enough, but it was circumstances, and not her will, that prevented her from doing more. She had brought it in the hope that the tending of it might in some sort lighten the dreary monotony of his captivity; for it is wonderful how people in his unhappy situation derived solace and amusement from the most insignificant object on which they could bestow their attention.

Therefore, would Monsieur the Commandant have the good nature to give it to the brave Englishman? Surely he would not be so cruel as to refuse her poor petition? She could not think so vilely of him as that, etc.

Well, no; Monsieur the Commandant had no great objection to the Englishman having a small plant to nurse, providing, of course, it was nothing more than a plant. He seemed to entertain some doubts on this point, and examined it narrowly, loosening the soil and emptying shoot and all into his left hand, but, finding neither ropes nor files within, he promised to let Shadforth have it.

Madame Arnaud thanked him with a thousand thanks. And would he say to Monsieur Humphrey that she trusted that by the time the plant had attained its full growth he would obtain his liberty? Just to keep his spirits from sinking.

Monsieur promised this much also, and Madame Arnaud, apparently much gratified, tripped away townwards.

Humphrey was grateful to the smackowner's wife for her little present; for already the irksomeness of confinement was beginning to tell. But as for quitting prison by the time the plant arrived at maturity—well, it was merely a kindly wish of madame.

He placed the little pot on the sill outside the bars of the window, where it would get air and sunshine, and every two or three days he gave it water out of his own allowance of drink. He fondly watched it grow. In a week or two a few little tendrils appeared, which soon increased to a round dozen, and rapidly began to push out beyond the edge of the pot. Once over the side, they lengthened with almost daily perceptibility.

Months went by, and September put in. The plant had gone ahead famously. The green tendrils, clustered round with their small elliptical leaves, were hanging down the tower walls every inch of a yard, and it looked as if they might grow a little more even yet.

One grey, lowering afternoon, a smack entering port from the westward edged closer in towards the tower than was usual—all craft, big and small, were expected to give the prison a pretty wide berth, and any coble discovered pottering about within thirty or forty fathoms of the building was promptly ordered away by the sentry under pain of being fired on.

The smack in question hugged the shore so closely that Humphrey, who was watching her through the barred window, could see distinctly aboard her. A great black-bearded fellow in a red woollen cap, blue tunic, and drawn-up sea-boots was at the tiller. He looked keenly at the tower-window and at the cluster of green-leaved tendrils drooping from the sill.

Presently he began to whistle, and so lustily, that Humphrey heard it quite plainly. He recognised the melody at once, for it happened to be a favourite of his, French though it was! It was a simple ballad, called "My Normandy." And whistling this tune, the helmsman ran the smack into port.

That night closed in thick and starless. About eight o'clock a few pattering drops of rain began to fall, presaging what was to come shortly. The prisoners had had their meagre supper, and were now permitted to go to bed or tell stories in the dark, for no light of any kind was allowed them. They were sitting on their beds listening to a yarn spun by Jack Toulden, Shadforth's mate, an elderly man, when a faint whistle fell on their ears.

"Hush, Jack," said Humphrey quickly. "Who's whistling?" All denied doing so.

"Then it's outside," he pursued; "though the hiss of the downpour makes it hard to determine. Perhaps it's the sentinel in front of the tower."

That it was not an ordinary "call" was evident from its unbroken flow, and by following the cadence with close attention, Humphrey succeeded in picking up the melody. It was "My Normandy." After going once over the air, the whistler ceased.

A great light broke upon Shadforth. He was as one who has long been enveloped in a dense fog, which, lifting suddenly, at last reveals a perfectly clear prospect of all around. He saw now, that by her innocent little gift, Madame Arnaud had had a more serious object in view than that of affording him amusement. Until then it had failed to strike him that there was anything odd in the nature of the plant. Even when the original small shoots multiplied and increased into long, tough tendrils he had seen nothing suggestive in their appearance.

Madame's words, too, when she hoped they might regain their liberty by the time the plant ceased growing, now came back to his memory with their real significance. She had, apparently, early resolved on their escape, but, quick to recognise the practical impossibility of ever being able to communicate with them in the first instance from the outside, she had hit upon this method of achieving her purpose as the only one feasible. It was a waiting game, certainly, but its probability of success was the greater for that very reason.

Bidding his men keep quiet, he stepped across to the window

and drew in the plant-pot. Feeling for the tendrils, he nipped off each shoot close to the soil, and stripped them of their leaves (which he carefully placed in his jacket pocket).

"Now, Rodham," to one of his men, "tear a piece of your shirt into a dozen strips as fine as you can, there's a good lad. I'd use my own, only there isn't time."

Rodham quickly complied, though not a little mystified.

Necessity had accustomed these poor prisoners to the use of their fingers in the dark, and Humphrey spliced the vegetable filaments together with the bindings supplied him by Rodham in wonderfully quick time; and when he had completed his task, he had a cord nearly forty feet long, and of considerable resisting power.

Going now to the window, he forced out the line, whistling a few bars of "My Normandy." When he had paid it all out, he waited patiently but in anxious expectancy.

Scarce half a minute passed before he felt a gentle tug at the line like the nibble of a fish, and he commenced to haul in—slowly and regularly, for now there was an additional weight bearing on the cord. From the "dead" manner of its ascent, Humphrey fancied there must be another line attached to his own. And such was indeed the case. Hauling in this second string, he drew up one end of a rope-ladder with strong iron hooks affixed and something swathed in a bit of rag. Making fast the ladder, he removed the wrapping of this latter article, and felt the rough edges of a file.

"Now men," he exclaimed in a low voice, "we have good friends outside when we least expected it, and they have placed in our hands the means of escape. A couple of bars stand between us and liberty. With a little perseverance and a little luck, we shall bid good-bye to this wretched den for ever and a day. We must go to work at once, though, and each take a turn. We must commence on the tops of the bars before starting on the bases, therefore two men will have to lean against the wall and allow the operator to get on their backs. Who volunteers for supporters?"

Immediately a couple of seamen stepped forward. Humphrey, taking first spell with the file, clambered into position, and his elbows were soon shooting backwards and forwards.

The extreme caution necessary in using the file rendered the progress of cutting through the iron terribly slow, but the task was accomplished at last.

The hooks of the old rope ladder were then made fast, and Humphrey, singling out the youngest seaman by name, bade him go first. Getting his feet on the ratlines, he began cautiously to descend, and, after a little, found himself standing on the thwart of a large boat.

Simultaneously, he received a hearty thump on the back from a great, black-bearded fellow answering to the name of Jacques Arnaud, though, what with the impervious darkness, and what with the blinding rain, it was quite impossible to distinguish anything, however indistinctly.

Jacques, it may be mentioned in passing, was popularly supposed to receive his sailing orders, in all matters save those connected with his own calling, from his wife—and he was now carrying out her precise injunctions—the plan of escape, in good sooth, being of her conception from start to finish.

"It is well, my friend," said Jacques, in a hearty whisper; "go forward," a behest the Englishman intuitively inferred rather than understood literally.

One by one the whole party descended, the last to leave the tower being Humphrey himself, who took the precaution to bring away the flower-pot and vegetable-cord, to preclude the possibility of their being used as evidence against Madame Arnaud, should suspicion arise.

Oars were shipped, and the boat forced slowly out to sea. The *Courlis* which was lying-to in the offing was soon discovered by means of preconcerted lantern signal, and in less than twenty minutes all were standing on the smack's deck.

Jacques made sail without loss of a moment, and shaped a course for England. All next day he tacked up and down Channel, keeping just within sight of the coast, looking for a retired spot to land the prisoners; and having descried a quiet cove, he succeeded in putting them ashore a little after dark.

THE BRAVEST DEED OF THE YEAR.

IT was a proud honour that was conferred on Commander Francis H. L. Lewin, of the Royal Navy, to whom the Royal Humane Society has awarded the Stanhope Gold Medal for 1918. Out of a thousand persons whose gallant conduct came under the Society's notice in 1917, Commander Lewin's deed was adjudged to be the bravest.

The story of the deed is officially given as follows:—

About 8 p.m. on February 8, 1917, one of H.M. ships struck a mine in English waters and sank in a few minutes. With the intention of picking up survivors, a trawler steamed over the spot, but in putting out her boat it was damaged and broke adrift, thereby losing the only means of rescuing those in the water.

Shortly afterwards, Commander Lewin drifted alongside, with two men clinging to him, and although he knew that he might drift away again any moment, as others had already done, he called out to those on the trawler to take the men first, and supported the second man until the first was dragged on board.

Eventually all three were rescued in a state of complete exhaustion, having been thirty minutes in the water. There was a heavy sea running, the weather being cold, and the deck of the trawler covered with ice.



CRICKET HINTS.

BY A COUNTY MAN.



FRANKLY let me say, to begin with, good cricket is only possible if you have a good wicket; and, let me add, a wicket is spoilt, in nine cases out of ten, because it is not looked at the beginning of the season.

Early in March the boy who is really keen on his game will begin to think about the pitch, and should carefully examine the ground. All weeds should first be removed, and the holes filled up, the whole ground made as level as possible, the levelling to extend as far into the long field as the circumstances of the ground permit.

In April begin to do some rolling, but see that your roller is not too heavy; a little later commence cutting the grass, but set the machine so that it does not shave it too finely. Grass that is cut too closely in the beginning of the season is apt to disappear later on.

Very few school grounds are so kept that any fielding has to be done in the long grass, although some that I have seen leave a good deal to be desired in the way of levelness, especially in the long field. A careful captain or member of the ground committee should remember that if the fielding is done on bad ground it generally means lost catches and missed balls, and every effort should therefore be made to keep the grass well cut and the ground level.

When the weather gets warmer, and you begin to water your pitch, remember that it should always be done in the evening, after the sun has gone down, and whether you use a can or hose-pipe, see that your rose is fitted with very fine holes and the water sprayed on in such a way as to resemble as near as possible the falling of rain.

Use the best grass seed obtainable for renewing and strengthening the grass of your wicket. When the worms begin to show activity, the ground should be lightly harrowed and then afterwards well rolled.

So much for ground, and now, before the actual season commences, let your mind go back to last season, and let each boy ask himself, "How can I improve my play?" "What old faults have I to correct?" Perhaps, if you have not the advantage of a professional, some of your older friends will give you a few hints, so that you may detect your mistakes, and take care right away from the beginning to correct these mistakes as far as possible, so that they do not become bad habits.

I do not think that I need say much on the question of **outfit**, but one thing I do strongly advise every boy to go in for, and that is a good pair of cricketing boots. I am not in favour of the very heavy ones, but at the same time they should be workmanlike, and not too flimsy. Again, from the very first, learn to play easily in pads and gloves, and always wear them. Confidence is essential in every batsman, and very often a nasty knock will take away a young player's nerve and ruin his chances of scoring.

I would strongly advise every youngster to make an effort and buy a thoroughly good bat, or, anyway, arrange to have the use of the same one through the season. If the hands are at all inclined to perspire, a rubber or leather band round the handle will be found a great advantage, and by constantly using the same bat a player obtains confidence. I have seen many instances where the use of a fresh bat, perhaps a little different (let us say, in the balance) from the old one, has entirely put a man off his game.

Perhaps I may introduce a word here on what may be called the **etiquette** of the cricket field.

In the first place, absolute obedience is necessary. One may not always think the captain right, but whatever orders he gives should be cheerfully obeyed. A sulky man is the ruin of any team, and the man who plays entirely for his own hand and his own score, forgetting the general interest of the side, can be nothing but a source of danger and unpleasantness and ruination to a successful season.

Never question the umpire's decision; it is bad form and only causes irritation.

Lastly, the virtue of patience is one of the great essentials of a successful cricketer. In practice, either with bowling or batting, directly you feel your patience going, and when you commence slogging or bowling wildly, take a rest. Ten minutes of unrestrained play will do more harm to your style than almost anything else.

The best help a youngster can ever have in forming his ideas of play is to **watch good players.** Good cricket is within the reach of everybody who lives near a large town nowadays, and every minute that can be spared to watch fine batting or bowling patiently and intelligently will do more good than any amount of theory.

Many young players are apt to imagine that if they can bat or bowl fairly well **fielding** is not a thing they should bother much about, but it is the good all-round man who is the backbone of every team, and smart fielding and sure catching are things that should be quite as carefully and diligently practised as batting and bowling.

A very good plan I have seen carried out in some schools has been for the captain, or one of the seniors, to get three or four of the men together, stand in the middle of the pitch with a bat and some half-dozen balls, and

hit various drives and catches in turn to the men grouped around him.

He can then move his men nearer or further off, as he may think desirable, so as to give them the advantage of practice in different positions of the field; in this way, if he knows the weaknesses of his men, he can so arrange his strokes that each man may have practice in just that side of fielding in which he is weakest.

Two of the best schoolboy fielders I have ever known were two brothers who were always about together, and during the cricket season they were never without a cricket ball in their pockets. I have seen them on a station, in a railway train, during the five minutes in between classes, passing the ball backwards and forwards in every conceivable way, until they became so absolutely safe that, provided the ground was anything like level, they never missed.

This is the only way for the man who means to become a good cricketer. Many of our first-class players to-day have given years of patient practice to each style of play before they have obtained anything near proficiency.

Now a word about **the bat.**

In the first place, learn to stand properly. The weight should be thrown on the right leg, and the left leg planted fifteen or sixteen inches in advance, but placed so lightly on the ground that it may, so to speak, skim the surface at a moment's notice.

I think as a general rule the best position for the bat is "middle and leg," and although it seems futile to say so, the batsman should give his whole energies to learn to play with a straight bat.

Of course, the rules for back and forward play depend to a certain extent on the man's height; a big man may reach out in a free and easy way which would be rank slogging in a small player. During the first few overs, do not let the bowler tempt you. Carefully keep your eye on the ball and play cautiously, and do not begin hitting out until you feel fully confident of your ability to keep the balls down, that is, whether cutting or driving, to keep the strokes hard and low, so as to minimise any possibility of the fielder bringing off a catch.

Many other suggestions one could give, but, as said before, to obtain real benefit, couple a little judicious coaching from some steady older player with watching good players: theory will do little for you unless you make up your mind to watch good cricket, and to see carried out by an abler and older hand the theories which you have been turning over in your brain during your practice hours.

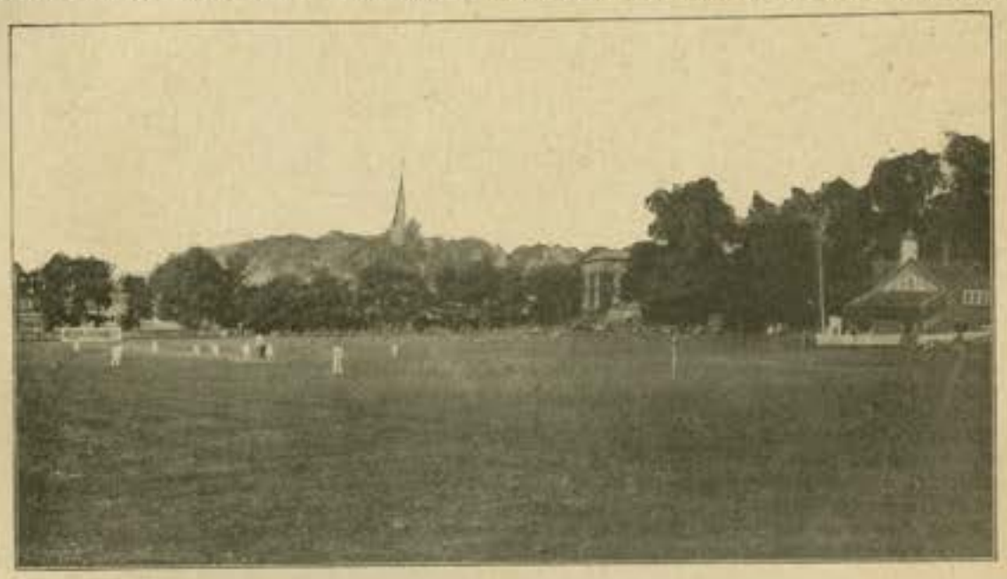
Now with regard to **bowling.** Most boys make the mistake of wanting to bowl too fast, and many a bowler is absolutely ruined and never even becomes a medium one simply because from the very start of the season he begins wildly hurling the ball at the wicket without regard to length, pitch, or anything else. Start the season by bowling slowly and carefully; be certain of your length, and then make sure of being able to pitch the ball on any spot where you determine to make it land. When you become somewhat proficient in this, getting a little spin on the ball may be practised, and should you be lucky enough to ensure getting some break on the ball you may permit yourself to increase the pace a little.

To my mind, a boy should begin as early as possible to bowl with his head as well as his hands. Never continue the same sort of bowling over after over. Vary it with the object of tempting the batsman, or finding out his weak points. Always keep a little in hand; it is the greatest mistake for a man to bowl himself clean out.

The man who would be a true friend to his side, directly he feels himself getting a little stale or believes that he has lost command over his bowling, should at once ask to be taken off.

My space is finished, and for a parting word I would say punctuality in cricket, as well as in ordinary life, has its very valuable side.

The man who arrives on the ground a quarter of an hour too early, with leisure to change and get his eye in a little bit before he goes on to the field, will have a huge advantage over the fellow who arrives just as the first ball is being delivered, with an apoplectic face, and hands that are too nervous to hold the ball, however delivered.



HARROW CRICKET GROUND—THE SCHOOL ELEVEN BATTING.

A BIG CATTLE "DRIFT."

AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE ON A TEXAN RANCHE.

"WAKE up, fellows, and get out of here quick, if you want to save your hides. There's a big drift coming down on us, and we've got to move!"

These words woke me, rather roughly, one bitter cold night of the first winter I spent on the plains. More asleep than awake, I crawled out of my comfortable bunk and began to dress. Evidently a big "norther," as the Texans say, had come up since I had retired. I could feel our little one-room box shanty tremble in the fierce gusts of wind, and the snow was sifting in through the cracks.

It was Tobe Wilson, the second relief guard for the night, that waked me, and I knew by the tone of his voice that there was real danger in the case.

In a very few moments I had donned my usual clothes, and had buttoned a heavy buffalo-skin overcoat over them.

My horse had been brought to the shanty door, and now stood shivering in the biting wind. The poor brute's whinnies showed that he felt the sudden cold almost as much as I did. How, with my fingers numb as they were, I ever managed to saddle him, I am unable to say.

When I had finally mounted, I turned my attention to what was going on around me. Just a quarter of a mile north of the shanty there was a tall, six-wire fence, constructed of heavy *bois-d'arc* posts and the strongest of barbed wire. It divided our own land from the government land we had leased.

After some minutes of hard galloping against the wind, I reached this fence. About a quarter of a mile farther north, I could now make out a black, confused-looking mass, that seemed gradually making its way forward. A continuous, low, rumbling sound that had something of the plaintive mingled with its awfulness. It was neither loud nor deep, but it was what you might call significant.

Inexperienced though I was in ranch matters, I knew what had happened. When the norther had come up, our big herd of twenty thousand grazing steers had done as they always do on such occasions. They had huddled together in a densely compact mass to keep warm. This living mill was now grinding round and round, slowly moving away from the windward. This is a common habit among the vast herds on our Western prairies, but for which many more cattle would freeze to death.

Passing through a gate in the fence, I soon came within a few yards of the cattle. In the darkness and the light flurry of flying snow, I could barely make out the figures of the cowboys as they sat shivering on their ponies. They had long before done all they could do, and were now silently watching the almost imperceptible advance of the great drift of cattle.

Just as I reached the place, big Dan Kirby, the foreman of the outfit, dashed up from the ranch headquarters. He had ridden nine miles against that awful wind, having been summoned as soon as the drift began.

"Great guns!" he shouted. "Why don't you do something? Goin' to let them drift all over creation an' you a-doin' nothin' to stop 'em? Why didn't you shoot?"

Quick as lightning he drew his heavy six-shooter and aimed at the herd. Three successive flashes lit the air, but the reports, owing to the fury of the opposing wind, sounded more like the noise of a boy's pop-gun than anything else. Big Dan was considered a dead shot, and I am confident that near fifty dollars' worth of steers went down at his three shots, though we had no means of determining.

The herd continued to advance as if nothing had happened. Perhaps they had not even heard the shots.

"Yell, then!" shouted the foreman again. "Shoot! Howl! Anything!"

"What's the use of yelling, on such a night as this?" shouted Tobe Wilson, near by.

Nevertheless, instinctively, all eight of us yelled, shouted, fired our six-shooters in the air and made what, but for the wind, would have been a pandemonium. Under ordinary circumstances, it would have scared the cattle out of what wits they had, as well it might. As it was, they feared nothing but the storm. If they even heard our noises, they never once showed it.

Our only policy now was to wait for a lull in the storm. If that should occur, we might frighten the herd, and thus break the drift. As we waited, we were compelled, step by step, to give way.

Soon we had to retreat beyond the wire fence mentioned. I was anxious to see what would happen when the herd reached this. I waited, but nothing happened at all.

Without even so much as a perceptible creak, half a mile of wire fence went down, and the herd moved on as if there had been no fence in the way.

When we reached our shanty,

we took out what articles we could carry on horseback, and let the scanty remainder stay. Soon the black line neared this also. The shanty went down, and I never saw a stick of it afterward. It offered no more resistance to the drift than a ship would to the course of an iceberg.

The wind still continued. For a while our men feared the cattle would cross the intervening ten miles, break another fence, and mix with another big herd south of it.

We soon saw, however, that at the slow rate of the drift such would not be the case. Near morning we gave the matter over and galloped off to headquarters, leaving the drift to take care of itself. We were nearly frozen as it was.

The next day I visited the scene of our night's labour. Over a path of half a mile's width every particle of grass had been removed. A fire could not have taken it off cleaner. Even the frozen ground had been cut down an inch or two below the level of the surrounding earth.

The trail was marked, at intervals, by the carcases of steers that had fallen and been trampled to death by their companions. The survivors were scattered over several counties. We spent the next week collecting them.

Many drifts are more easily broken than was this one, which was the worst, I can honestly vouch for, that I ever remember to have seen.

In summer-time cattle often collect and drift away, as if seeking escape from the intense heat of the sun. Such drifts, however, are comparatively easy to break. Then, again, cattle often drift in a given direction, when no particular reason can be assigned for their movement.

The first year I was in Texas they all drifted north-west. There was no huddling together, such as I have described, but whenever a herd was left to itself it would invariably move off in that direction. What the reason was nobody knew.

P. W. Horn.

CROSSING THE DESERT.



THERE are deserts and deserts. Some are easy to cross—others are neither easy nor safe. There are deserts in North Africa and others in Asia which are traversed by recognised trade routes, some of them of ancient date. Along these to-day, as five thousand years or more ago, come the caravans—camels, or horses, or mules—in a long procession, carrying merchandise—just as on the day when Joseph, in the old Bible story, was purchased by the Midianite traders to be sold as a slave, with spices and other wares, in an Egyptian market-place.

Such desert travelling is by no means a hardship.

But there are other deserts, where travelling calls not only for great bodily endurance, but for a really intrepid spirit. Not only are they practically waterless, and filled with heat as from a furnace, but they abound with venomous snakes which lie among the stones and sand, often undistinguishable from their surroundings.

One such desert was described some years ago by Capt. A. H. McMahon, who crossed it. It lies on the southern border-land of Afghanistan:

The feature which most impressed the travellers was the awful stillness and solitude of the desert. Not a sound was to be heard, except now and then the rustling of the wind over the sand. Not a living creature was seen day after day. Here and there, after miles of trackless sand, they came upon the footmarks of a herd of deer or wild asses, but seldom saw the animals themselves.

Snakes and lizards, it is true, were seen everywhere, for a more snaky country than this is in the hot weather it would be hard to imagine. There was one sound that did sometimes break the stillness of a night march, and that was the deep hiss of the horned viper. During the day he lies with only his head showing above the sand, from which it is almost impossible to distinguish him. At night he sits up and hisses at anyone who approaches.

If the travellers had a lantern handy, or could set fire to a bush, so as to be able to find the reptile, they would dismount and kill it, but if not, they must make a wide detour, and leave it hissing a proud defiance at them as they passed.

Some of the party had narrow escapes from being bitten. Captain McMahon says:

"I saw a venomous snake actually strike one of my men on the hand, but luckily the fangs did not pierce the skin. On another occasion, one early morning, a very fine specimen of the same viper came out of a small hole in the ground over which I had just been sleeping. A few moments before he might have caught me napping, but as it was he got up too late, and went to join a zoological collection. We generally looked for a clear spot to sleep in, but sometimes we were too tired and sleepy on our night marches to bother much about it.

"One night, as Doctor Maynard threw himself down to sleep on the sand not very far from me, he made some remarks about the ground sounding curiously hollow, and, in fact, kept me awake, as I thought, unnecessarily long, propounding theories to account for the phenomenon. It turned out that his theories were wrong, and he didn't solve the question till after he had gone to sleep.

"When I woke next morning he was gone. It appears that he had in the meantime been almost eaten alive, having gone to sleep on a huge ant-hill."

Downing the U-Boats.



By the Author of "How Anson brought in the 'Forfarshire.'"

THE naval warfare of the Allies since the first few weeks of the war, and even previous to the sinking of H.M. cruisers *Aboukir*, *Cressy* and *Hogue* in September, 1914, has been largely directed against the submarine.

No type of war-vessel has effected so much destruction as the U-boat. Yet it is safe to say no other craft has been destroyed in such great numbers as the U-boat, which was to sweep the "Red Duster" of the British Mercantile Marine off the seas.

It is difficult to over-praise the splendid courage and endurance of the merchant seamen, by whose aid the European Allies are fed and provided with munitions of war. On the sea the sailor may wear himself out in an agony of waiting—though he usually does not, to the chagrin of the underwater Hun—and the attack comes as often as not invisibly, for those who assassinate him crawl and prowl in the depths beneath. Even the vigilant gun crews, that were placed so tardily on merchant ships navigating the war zones, may not have picked up the furtive tip of the enemy's periscope before the danger is upon them, and their first intimation is a torpedo just shaving the vessel's stern.

The gun-fire is opened energetically. The merchantman begins to twist about like a mad thing. The vessel is steered so as to present herself end-on to the under-water craft, which is manœuvring to place herself in a position to discharge her torpedo.

Shut off from sight of sea and sky, even of disaster till it engulfs them in an instant, the men who feed the high blistering-hot boilers need a stout heart; and they, also, who move in the engine-room, amid the columnar masses of machinery—where gleams from electric or flickering lamp streak the polished cross-heads swiftly jogging up and down, and flashes illumine the bright brasses and steel of the massive cranks speeding round in a halo, so rapid their circling motion. On them, as on the captain and men on deck, depends the ability of the merchantman to circumvent the attack.

But before the U-boat can do any damage, maybe a watchful motor-launch puts in an appearance and opens a hot fire with her gun. The enemy, taken by surprise, is compelled to withdraw his attention from the steamer or other vessel and defend himself against the motor-craft. So the merchantman escapes without any damage, while the German is forced to submerge to escape the shower of shells.

Over the sea, just behind the horizon, destroyers have picked up the sound of the firing, and three of them, to a signal from the senior officer's flag-boat, turn at right angles to their course and fling themselves forward at full speed. Lean, low, long and lithe-looking, with rocky high bows, or, again, low turtle-back noses that slice the waters instead of rising to their lift, with volumes of grey smoke trailing from their stumpy funnels, they rush upon the scene with the speed of an express train. Keen, year-long trained eyes on board pick up the slight wave formation on the surface caused by the submarine below, and, perhaps, the faint, very faint, line of bubbles sent up by her exhaust of foul air.

All of a sudden one of the three destroyers makes a spurt forward, opening a rapid fire, and the others zigzag about, also firing hotly. In a maze of intricate criss-cross movements they twist about, their guns spouting shell. In a short time their firing ceases as suddenly as it was begun. A great expanding smear of oil is gathering on the face of the sea. That "unterseе" boat has been "downed."

Of all the anti-submarine offensive the destroyer is the spearhead.

Her high speed, ease of manœuvring, 4-inch and other guns, together with her splendid sea-going qualities, make her the U-boat's most dangerous foe. Of recent months her capacity for destruction has been made all the more effective by the depth bomb and the gun firing the non-ricochet shell.

By means of dropping a depth charge that carries from two to three hundred pounds of T.N.T. the destroyer, as it follows in the wake of a submerged submarine, has an 80 per cent. chance of either completely destroying the Boche, or so damaging her that she has to come to the surface and surrender or sink to her destruction.

The shock of the bursting bomb under water is felt in all directions, capsizing, throwing about irretrievably, and blowing in the U-boat. When a depth bomb explodes beneath the submarine anywhere inside the effective radius, the force of the gases will hoist up the submarine,

tail or stem first, like a feather-weight.

The non-ricochet shell is a variation of the depth charge; it does not require a directly vertical drop to penetrate the water like the latter, and also like it can be adjusted to burst by pressure of the water at any given depth. Unlike the ordinary shell, it does not ricochet on the surface, and thus, if it completely misses the hull or periscope of the submarine it still explodes in its neighbourhood, and gives a result like that of the depth bomb.

The seaplane and other aircraft do good work in suppressing the under-water boat. Hundreds of ships have been convoyed by aircraft, and in but few cases has a U-boat dared to attack. When the aerial defence sights a submarine the German usually seeks refuge as best he can under the water, trying, if possible, to hide himself in the loom of some shoal. The aircraft comes along to the attack at anything from eighty to a hundred miles an hour, and begins dropping depth bombs before the enemy sometimes has even time to submerge. From the altitude at which he flies the airman can detect the U-boat below the surface, and drop his bursting charges where the Boche was last seen.

In one instance a U-boat, relying on the heavy seas for concealment, had with great daring dived beneath the armed escort and torpedoed her victim under their noses. A half-gale was blowing, but from overhead the airship shot down like a hawk, and along the track of the torpedo at ninety miles an hour. She sighted the outline of the submarine submerging, and released her depth bombs. Then she hovered against the wind and watched the sinister green cigar-shaped shadow beneath. In a minute or so a geyser of spray shot up, followed by a great column of water, and the seas ran smooth there with the outflow of oil from the despatched Hun.

The use of light steel nets of wide mesh, weighted along one edge and buoyed at the opposite end, have proved most embarrassing to the enemy's submarines in certain zones. When the whereabouts of the U-boat have been detected the net is dropped over the stern of the patrol craft, where she thinks the track of the U-boat is. On the submarine driving her nose into the mesh the tell-tale buoys on the surface go along with the net and her, and the patrols or chasers do the rest.

The use of nets is widespread, and effectively applied for the defence of ports and naval bases and relatively narrow waterways, and certain other stretches of waters frequented by these under-water vermin. Every such barrage net is closely watched by a line of patrol boats, and as soon as any of the surface buoys or floats show signs of disturbance depth charges are promptly dropped around in the neighbourhood. It was while British drifters were busy on this work in the Southern Adriatic, May, 1917, that Austrian cruisers sallied out of Pola and sank fourteen of them.

Perhaps no force has become of such deadly use against the pest as the Royal Naval Trawler Reserve. Its men are the sworn foes of the U-boat, and it is the sworn foe of this fine British naval force. Early in the war Mike-under-the-water was taught to dread their small one-funnelled, two-masted craft, painted the usual steel-grey of the British Navy, wearing the White Ensign, and each with her number set forth in large white letters on her bows.

The craft work in pairs under the direction of their flag-boat, in which is the senior officer in charge of the six vessels. According to the nature of their "catch" is their method of clearing the waters. Snaring submarines and mines involves the use of specially devised nets, and trapping of the U's is, as has been indicated, the main business of the drifters.

They have some queer yarns in the R.N.T.R. A trawler went a-fishing and got a U-boat on the end of her line. The skipper put his engines full speed astern, but the fish was strong, and ran away with the trawler instead of coming to the surface to fight it out as the real rules of the game lay down.

The trawler held on to her end of the line, which was a stout wire hawser, and, making use of her wits, towed a tarpaulin lashed by its four corners, and three buckets, and other odds and ends, off her stern to keep speed down, so that the U-boat might not get too early within safety distance of her base. And it so fell out just when the skipper was calculating how many more minutes he durst hang on to the "tin-fish," a North Sea patrol of destroyers came prancing along on the horizon to north'ard. Some five-and-twenty minutes later that U-boat died violently.

The destroyers had got to work with their submarine sweeps, each of which consists of some 250 pounds of T.N.T., so towed astern as always to keep its depth. With these astern of and also below her each T.B.D. had cruised about at high speed in ever-widening spirals. And for that submarine there was absolutely no hope.

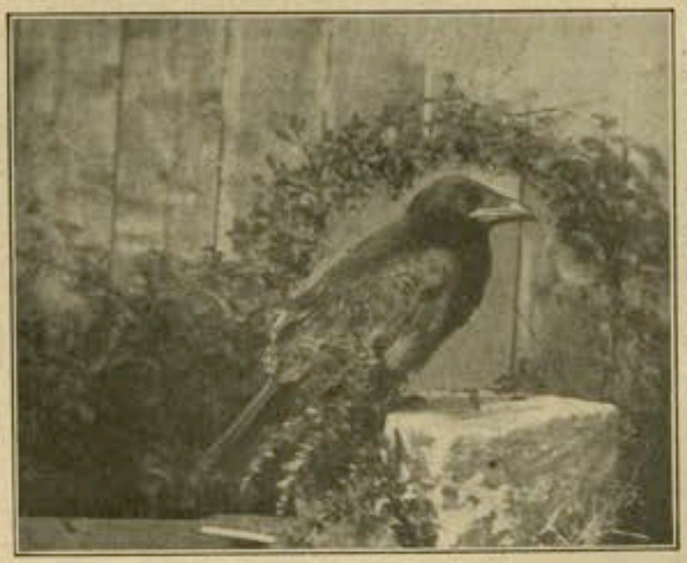
In these ways, then, the "downing" of the U-boats continues progressively, and with terrible effect.



SOME RAVENS, OLD AND YOUNG.

HE is neither friendly nor beautiful; he has no song, and no pretty ways to commend him; he can hardly be said to be useful. But, for all that, there are many people like myself who regard him with a great deal more interest than many charming members of the bird world. I must confess I have always felt a sort of fascination for this glossy-feathered black pirate, with his love of solitude and his predatory ways.

It may be partly because the Raven was one of the birds about whom romantic associations gathered early. He figured in the pages of the Child's Bible—as one of the bird-scouts sent forth from the Ark, and again as bringing food to the prophet Elijah. Then there was the story of Flokki the Viking, sailing the northern seas, who loosed three captive ravens to guide him to the nearest land, and thereby was led to the then unknown shores of Iceland.



YOUNG RAVEN, CAUGHT IN CORNWALL.
From a photograph by W. H. Nettlefield.

The old border ballads of England and Scotland had constant references to the Raven, as haunting the battlefield, and many an old English song speaks of him as the presager of misfortune, trouble, and death.

Raven stories abound also in the folk-lore of Scandinavian countries. "In Sweden," says a writer, "the country people believe that the Ravens which croak by night in the forest swamps and wild moorlands are the ghosts of murdered persons whose bodies have been concealed there by undetected murderers, and have not received Christian burial. In some parts of Germany witches, it is believed, ride astride upon the Raven, and the Evil One himself takes on the form of this bird."

Let us not forget, too, that from Scandinavia came the terrible Raven flag of the Norse and Danish pirates, who were for centuries such a scourge to Saxon England. No more fitting emblem could have been chosen for these freebooters—ruthless, fearless, swift and cruel; themselves birds of prey, scenting their victims from afar.

Another race, as fierce and pitiless as they, though with none of their adventurousness, the Redskins of the North American Continent, used the skin of the Raven for divination purposes. A medicine-man would take three of these bird-skins, hanging them over his back with the tails fixed at right angles to his body. On his head, to make him look strange and forbidding, he would wear another Raven skin, with the great beak pointing outward above his forehead.

Talking of appearances, I may remind you that, though nobody could call the bird beautiful, nevertheless the plumage of the Raven is splendidly glossy, and far from being a dead black. In fact, at times, in a good light, it has quite a purple sheen. And his size, more massive than the more familiar rook and "corbie," gives him an important look, especially when you see his stretch of wing—often a full yard and more from tip to tip.

Like the hardy fellow he is, he sets up housekeeping long before most of what Chaucer called the "smalle fowl" begin to mate and build. An English Raven will start nest-building in January, and before February is out there will be nestlings to be fed.

Of course, as we should expect, the nest of a Raven is not a very dainty affair, or ingeniously contrived, like that of so many of the smaller birds. Like his mighty fellow-pirate the Golden Eagle, he prefers to add to the remains of a last year's nest rather than erect a new one. It has been described as being usually "a mass of sticks and heather, with a dense lining of sheep's wool, or something equally soft."

The Raven still builds in the south of England; but it is rather surprising that he does. For he must know somehow that farmers and gamekeepers love him not. Like the robber barons of the Rhine, he takes care to have his dwelling in as inaccessible a place as possible—high up, and in a lonely spot, preferably a cliff-face with the ocean waves surging at its base.

"The castle was built on a headland bare,
And looked on the wash of a whirling sea."

Accordingly he has selected such positions as the Freshwater cliffs in the Isle of Wight, and Beachy Head, and Studland Bay, and, further north, the bold white cliffs of Flamborough.

But the Cornish coast, with its broken outline and magnificent cliffs, and its less-frequented paths, apparently offers greater attractions still to this solitude-loving bird of prey. One observer who died only a few years ago records that "in a walk of moderate length along the Cornish coast from the Lizard" he had watched three Ravens busy about their nests; and the sea front of South Devon and Dorsetshire seemed hardly less in favour.

A little while ago a party of officers training in Cornwall located a Raven's nest. One of them proposed they should try to reach it and have a look into it, and offered to climb. He had not gone far up the rocky hill—it was almost as steep as a cliff, and necessitated scrambling up on hands and knees in places—when he noticed a young Raven on a ledge above him.

It was fully fledged, but did not make any serious attempt to get away.

The climber drew nearer and nearer to it and finally got his hands upon it. He descended with his prize, and the captive became the object of admiring interest on the part of the other officers.

It was found that its leg was broken, which probably explained why the young bird had put up no fight. Taken back to their quarters, the officers got their medical man to put the leg in splints, and, thus bandaged, his captor brought the bird home to his schoolboy brother at Stratford-on-Avon. It was in his possession when Mr. Nettlefield took the photograph which I am pleased to be able to reproduce in this article.

It is good to be able to add that the fractured limb soon healed, and "Tauks," as he was nicknamed, was considerately taken back to Cornwall and there set free.



ONE OF THE SHERBORNE SCHOOL RAVENS.
(Photo'd from life.)

Talking of schoolboys reminds me that Sherborne School, Dorset, has—or had until lately—a pair of Ravens which were a familiar sight in the school grounds. One of these I am able to show.

I have spoken chiefly of Ravens whose habitat has been in the southern half of Great Britain; but the bird is equally at home in Scotland. Indeed, travellers have commented on his surprising indifference to severe cold. He is met with in the horrible wind-swept wastes of Tibet, in Alaska, in Siberia, and many an ice-fringed island of the Polar Seas.

In the wilds of Inverness he is still a resident, though possibly less numerous than in the days of Charles St. John, who has left a romantic description of one Raven's nest that he knew: "The whole country within view of the lake was picturesque and bold. In the rocks near the water was a colony of wild cats, whose cries during the night deterred the shepherd from passing that way, while on the highest part of the grey precipice was a Raven's nest, the owners of which always kept up a concert with their voices of ill-omen whenever they saw a human being near their dominions."

E. M.

A FAMOUS RUSSIAN FAIR.

(Concluded from page 239.)

It is not easy to make a computation of the number of people who could be counted at one time in the fair on any day. It is not, of course, like a London exhibition, in which the turnstiles duly record the number of persons entering. And, besides, there is a continual going and coming on the part of the visitors: they may elect to stay one, three, five, ten, fifteen days, or it may be for most of the fair time.

But some idea may be gained from the sale of loaves, for all of us must have bread. Reckoned by this means it would seem that the daily population of this Fair-City fluctuates between 75,000 and 150,000: this is exclusive of the inhabitants of the city proper, away up on the higher ground across the river.

In late September the great fair comes to an end. The piles of merchandise which have been brought thither across so many leagues of desert and mountain and river have all changed hands. Purchasers have been found for the innumerable articles—curious, pretty, or serviceable—which have adorned the walls and counters of the various booths. And the throng of traders cease at last from their chaffering, and pack up their belongings ready for the homeward journey.

Eastward and westward, northward and southward, the inhabitants of the short-lived city stream away, and by early October a dreary silence broods over the deserted shops and warehouses, not to be disturbed until July comes round again.

HOW JOEY SAVED THE SHIP.

A TALE OF THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

By PATRICK VAUX.



STANDING beside the wheel-house door on the bridge of the steamship *Arran*, Joey looked about him. All was intense activity in Hamilton Harbour, Bermuda, that afternoon, as the cool Atlantic welled in to lap and gurgle against the shipping moored alongside the wharf and quays. On the 5th of August, 1914, there was not a military or naval base of the British Empire's but rang with systematic hurry-skurry for hostilities against the enemy.

The cargo steamer *Arran* lay at the east end of the harbour. On board her the din and dust of discharging cargo had suddenly stopped. Already her carpenter was battening down the hatches, and the boatswain was hurrying the grimy discontented hands, now slacking and hauling aboard the mooring wires.

"Dad," said Joe, crossing the bridge to where the captain was leaning on the rail, watching the men, "doesn't it look as if something is wrong with the hands? They're making no great speed to get the *Arran* out to sea. Are they scared?"

"Why, young' un, have your sharp eyes seen that also?" Captain Holinshed replied, affectionately placing a hand on the lad's shoulder. "They are slack—working as if it was a month of Sundays. Gilmour?" and he hailed the mate who was passing the foot of the bridge ladder. "What's put the men out of gear?"

The first mate, red-faced and perspiring with his exertions vocal and muscular, looked up from under the bridge-deck awning, shading his eyes with his right hand.

"They are slack, sir, very slack!" he answered, wiping his face with his free hand. "Seems to me the instructions for us to go to Halifax at once with them Government stores has put some of them out of their reckonin', somehow! Perhaps they thought ye intended shippin' fresh stores for 'em."

"Fresh stores!" snapped the captain; "nonsense! The owners do make it a point to ship crews of foreigners, but they don't save on the provisions. In this ship there's no to'g'lan tea or dogchowder for the men. Either some one is getting purposely at the men, or this sudden war is turning their heads."

The mate threw up a hand in reply, and passed forward.

"Do you really think someone is tampering with the hands, father?" asked Joey.

"What makes you ask that, lad?" Captain Holinshed put gravely, struck by a certain note of interest in the boy's voice and in his bright brown eyes.

"Well, I saw," came the hesitating answer—"I saw, yesterday, the 'chief' run Mr. Redhelt out of the stokehold, double-quick, for gassing with some of the firemen, and I know he has been making himself cheap among the deckhands—the port watch, mostly, and they are almost all foreigners!"

Holinshed frowned a little to himself as he looked down on his fragile-looking youngster. Even amidst his present grave anxiety the thought occurred to him that the voyage was bringing Joey health and strength.

"Redhelt, did you say, sonny? Think, too, he is not just straight? Well, let us hope he's no blackguard, for all he is a German. Ah! here comes the pilot aboard: we'll soon be backing out now."

It was just on sundown when the *Arran* slowed down outside Hogfish Cut, and her pilot clambered down the sea-gangway man-rope and dropped into the sternsheets of the sailing craft awaiting him there. To the snicking of her engine-room telegraph "Full speed ahead," the British merchantman surged northward for Halifax, and—the hostilities.

Young Holinshed on the bridge watched the starboard watch stow derricks and all deck gear fast in case a northerner came down, as is often the case in these latitudes. On hearing his father address the second mate, who was now officer of the watch, he turned and looked at Redhelt.

"We're all tight and shipshape, if it does blow hard," observed the skipper; "once the starboard watch finish. What makes the men talk so much, Mr. Redhelt?"

"They tink much, sir," the second mate replied.

The impudence in the Hamburger's voice and showing on his heavy features made Joey clench his fists. Though he had never had any liking for the "Sauerkrauter," as the chief engineer derisively termed Redhelt. It came to the lad, too, that the second mate's usual taciturn expression was gone. A covert elation seemed to be in its place.

"They had better clap a stopper on their tongues," Captain Holinshed snapped nastily, as the jabbering forward rose louder, with hardly a word of English in it all. "Sing out, to make less noise there."

"Schweig'da, kerls!" roared the second mate, thrusting himself out over the weather-cloth.

Instantly all the men on deck wheeled amidships. Silence ensued. It was followed by nods, winks, and whispers among the foreigners.

"Mr. Redhelt, keep an English tongue in your mouth, on board this English vessel," quoth the skipper in a sharp voice.

"Dey mind did forget me. So wenig Englisch is spoken in dies Englisches ship!"

The captain winced under the ill-disguised contempt. But Joey could have stamped with fury.

"You mind your duty, my

man," Holinshed rejoined curtly. "Speak in English, or I'll show you what you won't like."

The relieved wheel, a Swede, grinned to his mates as he went forward. The demeanour of the watch, their sidelong looks at the second mate as he came down the bridge ladder making for the saloon companion, much puzzled the captain.

"Yes, Joe, lad, I'll need to dress him down," said he to his son, who had joined him. "Hello, what's this?" Holinshed shot out to the third mate, coming on watch, as a loud chaotic chattering echoed from the forecastle.

"Not a word of English in it all, Perris," he ran on with; "just hear them! What the dickens is wrong?"

Then Joe, with the others on the bridge, saw seamen and firemen pouring out of the tall forecastle. The watch on deck joined their mates. Louder waxed the hubbub as the threatening, remonstrating throng advanced to the bridge.

"They're out for a row, dad," cried Joe. "Somebody has worked them up over the grub!"

"Not one of them worth a pinch of salt, sonny," the skipper blurted out, his voice thick with anger. "I'll go down and talk to them. You stay on the bridge with Perris. It's all right—the other officers are coming."

Already the rest of the "after-guard," including Norris, the chief engineer, spanner in hand, were gaining the bridge by the after-ladder. Coolly the skipper went down a step or two of the forward one, and faced the hands.

"What's all this about?" he asked strongly. "You there, Ebers," pointing a forefinger at a bellowing Dantzicer, "shut your mouth!"

Joey swelled with pride at his father's unconcernedness and the masterfulness of his bearing. The crowd felt the weight of him also, for it became suddenly silent, save for two stokers jabbering and flinging their hands about.

"What d'ye want?" cried the skipper. "What's this play of Mumbo-Jumbo for, eh?"

A trimmer out of Antwerp, dirty and ugly, thrust forward a dishful of cold victuals. The expression on his ape-like face was of vindictiveness, not disgust or anger.

"Ve shay diss now is bad, it is! It makes te shtomach-acke, capitan."

"Ya! Ya! An' dies brot ist nicht gut!" shouted a dog-faced Hessian, officiously thrusting forward his chunk of soft tack to offer it to the captain.

"Not good? Not good?" Holinshed repeated, in a voice that his son knew to dread.

He smelt the scouse. Giving his attention to the bread, he ate it slowly. It was just then that he and Joe and the rest of the bridge saw the second mate, wiping his mouth and mumbling to the men, shove an easy passage through the excited throng and come to a stand at the foot of the ladder, where he watched the scene with eager cat-like glances.

"These stores bad, you say? Eh, what?" Captain Holinshed rapped out. "I am eating the same as you. I suppose none of ye have ever sailed in a Vaterland ship with her stinking cabbage and bacon and putrid pickles. It is just anything for a row, with you! Bad stores? Get for'a'd with you, ye lazy lubbers!"

The captain stalked down the ladder as if he intended brushing the hands into the forecastle. They scattered before him. The watch scuttled back to their stations. The boatswain's voice trumpeted furiously. It was then Holinshed turned to his second mate.

"Redhelt, if I find you tampering with the hands," he said sternly, "you'll find yourself in irons. Mind that! Already I am of a mind to make you a prisoner, ay, and the rest of you Germans on board, for we are at war. However, the Halifax authorities'll deal with you."

But that—as Joe sagely remarked afterwards—was what the second mate, otherwise Gustave Redhelt, Unter-Lieutenant zur See-Ersatz, did not intend to occur.

Ting-tang went five bells on the bridge. Ting-tang answered the forecastle head. The lookout there examined masthead and sidelights, sang out, "All ees vell, sar; lights burn bright"; then resumed pulling on his pipe.

"Faugh, very warm to-night! Not much sleep for me, at any rate," remarked the skipper to the third mate, on coming out of his deck cabin. "What, the fo'castle not yet quietened down? Seen Joey about here? I wonder where the youngster has got to—he's not in his bunk! Hello, what d'ye see there?"

The officer of the watch who had been staring to port, removed the night glass from his eye.

"I fancied some time ago, sir, seeing four vessels in line, passing ahead. Joe, sir? No, I haven't seen him since I noted him passing forrud."

"Four vessels in line ahead?" repeated the captain. "I expect they are our North American squadron out of Bermuda Dockyard; they completed stores this afternoon." Then he added: "Joe went for'a'd—I hope he gets into no mischief. A spark fires loose gunpowder, Mr. Perris, and it looks as if we have too much of it lying around in this ship!"

The night was very dark. The sea lay calm with a light ground-swell from the south-west, and sending out a strong, salty smell. Damp and sultry blew the westerly wind, too faint to move the vapour cloaking the myriad stars. Dipping and rolling, the steamer swisled onward at nine knots. In the waters, edged with a thin lip and foam where they eddied along the side, tremulous fires of blue, green and purple phosphorescence flickered and coiled.

Joe slipped noiselessly off the top of the forward ladder, and crossing the bridge touched his father on the left arm.

"Dad, the hands are going to break out," he uttered in a low, breathless voice; "I'm sure of it. Redhelt has been with them for a long time under the break of the fo'castle."

"How d'ye know?" the skipper asked, bending down to listen.

"I slipped under the canvas cover of the for'a'd starboard boat an hour ago, and have been listening, but very little English has been spoken. Redhelt spoke aye in German."

Captain Holinshed bit his lips, and frowned at the funnel's smoke, that as it trailed downwind showed grey for a few feet in the haze of the masthead lantern.

"A very daring thing for you to have done, sonny, with the men in the temper they are at present. I can hear them from here; something is afoot. They mean something, or nothing; but I can't risk anything with all these Government stores aboard for Halifax. Tell Gilmour and the 'chief' to come up at once. Only seven Britishers, counting you, old son, against the thirty-five of 'em. Turn in all standing into my bunk in the charthouse, Joey, and don't fall asleep. It is war-time, and I know you'll do your duty. Ah, I wish you were safe at home, sonny lad!"

When at midnight Redhelt came on with the middle watch, the skipper scrutinised him out of the tail of his eye. The Hamburger's face was flushed, or so it seemed in the illumination of the binnacle light. He looked about him quickly and comprehensively. He wore the air of authority. As if unaware of the captain near by, he addressed the Dantzicer at the wheel in his native tongue.

"Speak English, will you!" raged Holinshed, gripping him by the shoulder. "None of that lingo aboard my ship!"

The second mate wrenched himself free, just as Joey, warned by the sound of his father's voice, jumped out of the bunk. He heard the German roar:

"Schweinhund! Now is this ship a German ship. Now is the war. Vorcastell there! Arner, Ebers, Guttersohn, Wessel. Mir an die hand geh'n!"

Joe stood for a second or so in the doorway of the charthouse, saw his father hit the second mate under the chin and send him reeling—saw the wheel throw himself against the captain's knees, and bring him down—and then he jumped into the fight.

Yelling men were streaming amidships to reach the bridge. But Joey threw himself on the Dantzicer, who was hammering at his father. From the deck guttural cries of triumph arose as the few Britishers there were secured.

The German officer rushing forward on the bridge dealt Joey a blow that sent a horrible stinging pain flashing through his head. The lad staggered aside, dazed with the hit, and with his outspread hands clutching the empty air. But, as he pitched headlong to the bridge-deck, his righthand fingers fell across the syren lanyard; and he fell gripping it.

From the great steam-heart below there burst forth a gigantic, long-drawn moan as if the foghorn and all the ship were in agony; and the immense volume of sound rolled over the night sea.

Redhelt leaped to jerk the lanyard away.

Out of the night to westward sprang a three-mile long white beam of light, to be reinforced by three others. They wavered for a few seconds, then settled on the *Arran*. The low, sullen report of a distant gun followed almost instantly.

The British North American squadron was on the alert.

"Eh, what," mumbled the bruised skipper, half an hour later to the Boarding Officer; "me saved the vessel from these German reservists you've got roped up! It was my bit son Joey, here, from first to last. He has done his duty. Eh, what? He has kept the *Arran* from being the first prize of the Germans at sea."

Joey, feeling sick and tired, looked stupidly at his father. He himself could hardly realise what he had done. He only knew that something had happened, and that the danger was overpast.

A Cavalry Charge.

THE fighting on the Western Front has only at long intervals given our splendid Cavalry a chance of showing how efficient they are, though they have rendered excellent aid, dismounted, in the tedious trench warfare which prevailed till the present year.

In March one of these chances came. They had already been in action round Guivry, when on the 26th they were moved up to reinforce the French, who were stemming the enemy pressure on Noyon. Our squadrons had their left flank exposed when they were ordered to hold Porquericot Ridge, on which the enemy was moving.

"They went at full speed," says Mr. Philip Gibbs, the War Correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, "pressing their horses forward to something like a gallop, and the infantry soldiers cheered at the sight of this living tide of fine men and fine beasts streaming over the slopes.

"The enemy was already on the ridge, but our cavalry held the southern side of it, stopping the enemy from gaining the heights. When the Allied line withdrew to Divette River it was necessary for the cavalry to conform to this movement, which they did, with the enemy again on their left flank, so that Lancers, Hussars, and Canadian Cavalry were under a furious machine-gun fire.

"After supporting our infantry round about Marcelcave the dismounted cavalry with one mounted squadron made a gallant attack through Moreuil Wood and cleared out the enemy. Afterwards, however, it was again filled with Germans, who had many machine guns, and cavalry were again asked to clear it.

"It was a perilous task, for two battalions of the enemy held the wood, and their machine-gun fire swept through the glades, but in this wood of Moreuil on the morning of April 1st our cavalry did a feat as fine as the Balaclava charge, and this also should be made into a ballad and learnt by heart.

"Twelve hundred men, who had been riding through the night, went forward in three waves and charged that dark wood next morning at a hard gallop. The first wave rode to the edge of the wood and the second

wave rode to the centre, and the third went right through to the other side, riding through the enemy and over his machine guns, and in the face of a tattoo of bullets from hidden machines. They cleared the wood of Moreuil and brought back prisoners and thirteen machine guns. But there were many empty saddles, and many men and horses fell. That was the finest exploit of our cavalry, but elsewhere they did splendid work."

No doubt, when the story of the War is fully told, we shall find that such gallant charges as the one above described have had their counterpart on other and more remote (and therefore somewhat less closely watched) fields of fight. In certain of these other spheres, such as Palestine and Mesopotamia, our regular cavalry, British and Indian, our Australian troopers, and our doughty Yeomanry, have had full scope for the display of their fine quality, and have given an excellent account of themselves.



From a painting by F. C. Hardy.