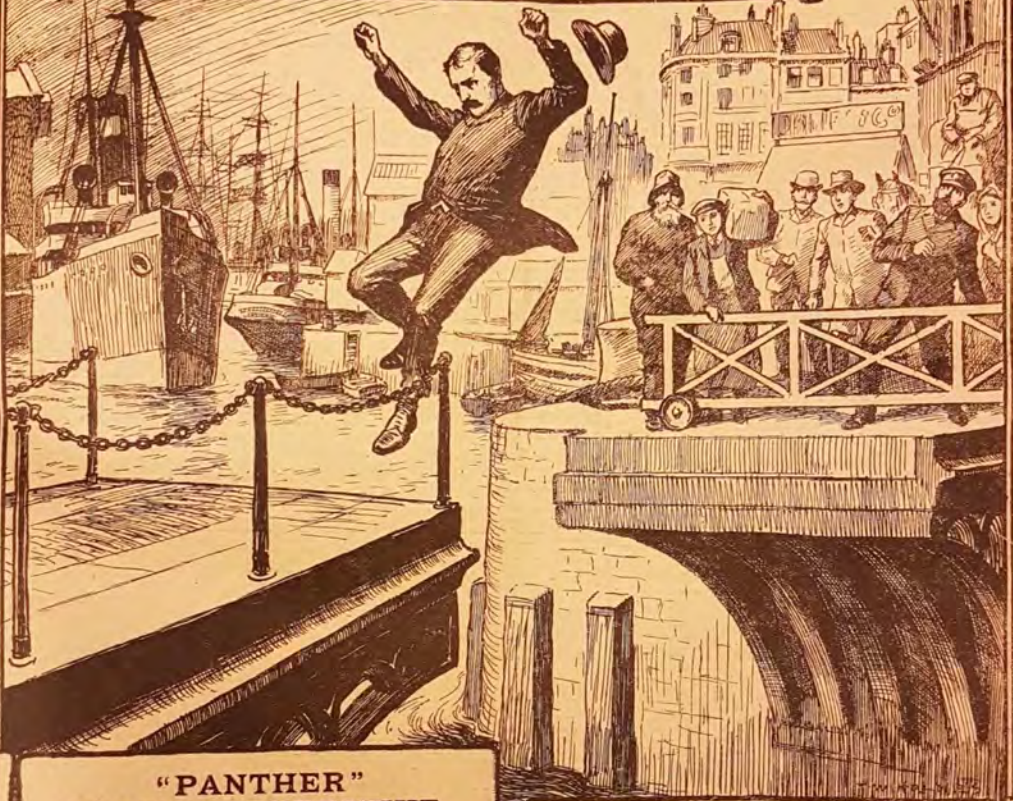


IN THIS ISSUE! **COUSIN ETHEL, "PANTHER" GRAYLE,** and, among other interesting features, **A GRAND MONEY PRIZE OFFER.**

THE POPULAR STORY BOOK

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"PANTHER" GRAYLE, DETECTIVE.

A Thrilling Tale of Mystery and Adventure.

THE IVORY FETISH.

CHAPTER I.

MR. GABRIEL CROWLEY was awakened in the early hours of a winter morning by the sound of a pistol-shot in the room beneath his sleeping chamber. For a few moments, before he was thoroughly aroused, the sound had no particular meaning for him. He sat up in bed listening, and heard the sound of his servant's voice shouting for help.

As he clambered out of bed, now thoroughly aroused, he heard a stifled cry, the sound of a heavy body dropping to the floor, and then the rattling of a window, as if someone were trying through it under the low eaves.

Mr. Crowley was not particularly a courageous man. For one thing he was elderly—well over sixty—and adventures had been scarce in the course of his quiet, studious life. He was a student, a collector of old books and curios, and he lived alone with them and one manservant in a cottage on Windy Common in Hertfordshire.

He crept to the door of his bed, listened, opened it cautiously, and listened. Save for the nervous beating of his own heart, and the stentorian ticking of the grandfather's clock in the hall, he could hear nothing. The house was silent—horribly silent.

"Mark!" he said, in a quavering voice.

"No answer."

"Mark!" he cried, in a louder tone.

The echoes of his voice lingered in the air for a moment, but when they had died away the oppressive silence enveloped the house once more.

He turned away from the door and crept towards the matchless, black-

ing with cold and fear. He knew exactly where to find a box of matches, but as quietly was his hand that he wasted three before he was able to light a candle.

He slipped his arms into a thick dressing-gown, and then, holding the candle above his head, crept down the staircase into the hall.

The sound which had aroused him had proceeded from his study, the door of which was ajar. He drew a deep breath and pushed it open.

Inside, a strong draught from the open window struck him on the face; the flame of the candle wavered and quaked, so that he was compelled to shield it with his hand.

His hand cast a great shadow over the room, and the reflected lights vanished from the pieces of polished armour and the old-time lethal weapons that decorated the walls.

But there was enough light to show him what was lying on the floor.

His servant, Marks, lay on his back, his knees drawn up, and one arm flung towards the door, so that the palm of

the hand lay uppermost on the floor. The other hand held a single-barrelled horse-pistol of the type used over a century ago. There was a strong smell of gunpowder in the room, for the barrel of the pistol had only just ceased smoking.

The old man bent down and raised the body of his servant in his arms. The poor fellow was not dead, but bleeding profusely from a terrible blow he had received right across the crown of his head.

The weapon that had wrought the blow lay between him and the window, where it had been flung. It was a heavy brass pistol, taken from the fireplace of that very room.

Mr. Crowley's eyes were fixed to the room. He could have told at a glance of the smallest article were missing. He now saw that one, and only one of his treasured possessions had been stolen. It was the effigy of an Indian deity, beautifully carved in ivory, and it had stood on a pedestal beside his bookcase.

He succeeded in dragging the body

of his servant to the wall, against which he managed to prop his head.

He now saw that Marks had been lying on, and removing with his body, a large flat bag of black glazed canvas.

Having stashed and bandaged the wound, Mr. Crowley hurriedly dressed himself, and walked into Windybury.

He returned with the doctor and two policemen.

Marks was found to be in a serious condition. He was suffering from serious concussion, and a few hours later, he was in the thrum of a bad attack of brain fever, and while he was not unconscious, he raved incessantly of a black man who had come to rob the house.

Mr. Crowley was anxious for the recovery of the stolen idol, which he had highly prized on account of its admirable workmanship. He was at last able to average the disparity also anxious to avenge the disaster by attacking on his faithful servant who had

(Continued on next page.)

COUSIN ETHEL'S SCHOOL DAYS

YOU CAN START NOW.

A TALE OF TOM MERRY'S CHUM

BY MARTIN CLIFFORD

Kerr to the Rescue.

FIGGINS stared.

"Cromwell wasn't killed," he said; "it was the Cavalier johnnies who pugged out."

"Oh, yes, of course!" said Dolores.

"The—the Cavalier johnnies. What curious name for the Cavaliers! Why did they call themselves johnnies?"

"They didn't," said Figgins.

"I called 'em johnnies, I meant chaps."

"Oh, I see! And where is the old tower?"

"Over by the beeches."

"Shall we go?"

"Of course, if you'd like to see it!"

"I should love to see it!"

"Come this way, Miss Pelham."

"But I am taking up so much of your time," said Dolores.

"Oh, that's nothing!"

"You are quite sure?"

"We're always glad to show our little sights to visitors," said Dolores, thus, with immense diplomacy, avoiding a direct answer, which Miss Pelham smiled.

"Then we will go," said Dolores amiably.

"You are so kind to show me about the place like this, and it is so pleasant to see a really interesting place with a guide who is so thoughtful, so careful, and so attentive all the time."

"I'm sure you flatter me," said Figgins, who was never known to detect sarcasm, however thickly laid on.

"Not at all," said Dolores. "I shall always remember your kindness, Mr. Figgins."

"Figgins," said the junior.

"Oh, yes—Figgins!"

They left the old tower. Figgins had a private wish that the ancient chapel of St. Jim's—interesting relic of past times as it was—would be swallowed up in the earth before he could reach it. That was not likely to happen, but something just as good and a little less tremendous occurred. Kerr came racing over the quadrangle to overtake them.

"Figgins! Figgins!"

Kerr had already changed into his football things, and had a long coat on.

His face was pink with running.

Figgins turned round.

"What's the row, Kerr?"

"Have you forgotten the match?"

"By Jove!" said Figgins.

Kerr almost glared.

"You've forgotten it!" he roared.

"Blasphemy! I hadn't!" said Figgins.

"Dear me!" said Dolores. "I remember now. You were playing a cricket match this afternoon. That was what Ethel and I came over to see."

"A football match," said Figgins, while Kerr was silent. He knew that little mistake had been mentioned on Miss Pelham's part; but Figgins never suspected a girl of being capable of "spoofing."

"Oh, yes; a football match!"

"Has it begun?"

"No," said Figgins, laughing.

"You see, that duffer's our skipper, and we can't play without him," said Kerr. "You must excuse him, Miss Pelham. Can I now see you to the Head's house while Figgins goes and changes? There isn't a minute to lose. The School House chaps will be leaving us if we're late."

Dolores looked at Kerr.

"Why, of course!" she said. "How stupid of me to forget that we were playing cricket! I mean to watch this afternoon!"

"Football," said Figgins.

"Yes, I mean football."

"You'll excuse me, won't you?" Figgins said. "It was idiotic of me to forget the match!"

GLANCE OVER THIS.

Ethel Cleveland is a new girl at St. Freda's, and on her first day at school is attracted by the personality of Dolores Pelham, a high-spirited girl of Spanish descent. Ethel subsequently saves Dolores from deep disgrace, and the two become firm friends.

Ethel one afternoon takes Dolores over to St. Jim's College, where Arthur D'Arcy, her cousin, is at school, and the Spanish girl is introduced to all Ethel's boy friends.

Figgins escorts Dolores over the old tower of St. Jim's; but his version of its history is a little mixed, as his thoughts are all the time with Ethel, who has gone to call on the headmaster's wife.

Dolores's eyes gleam with mischief as she realizes this.

"It is very interesting to think that we are standing upon the very spot where 'Cromwell was killed,'" she remarks demurely.

(Now go on with the story.)

Dolores nodded with a smile. Figgins raised his cap and raced off, and Kerr walked with Miss Pelham to the Head's house.

There was very little conversation on the way. What little there was was done by Kerr. Miss Pelham did not feel cordial towards the Scottish junior, and it was not Dolores's way to pretend that she did not feel, and sometimes she neglected the laws of courtesy when she was angry.

And she was angry now.

Why, she could hardly have told; but she was.

Kerr left her at the door of the Head's house, after it was opened. Dolores gave him the slightest of nods, and went in without a glance back.

Mrs. Holmes met her in the hall.

"You are Ethel's friend?" she said, with her kind smile.

"Yes," said Dolores.

"Yes, this is Dolores," said Ethel, coming out of the drawing-room.

"Dolores dear, this is my kind friend, Mrs. Holmes."

Dolores allowed Mrs. Holmes to shake hands with her. Her manner was polite in her stately Spanish way, but it was not cordial. Mrs. Holmes gave the Spanish girl a very curious glance. She was one of the very many people who did not understand Dolores.

"Come into my room, dear," said Ethel.

And she led Dolores up to the pretty little room she occupied when she was a visitor at St. Jim's.

Mrs. Holmes glanced after them. She was thinking what a charming contrast there was between Dolores's dark beauty and the fair skin and lovely blue eyes of the English girl. She was thinking, too, that Ethel's new friend probably had a trying temper, and that Ethel must need all her sweetness of disposition to keep on terms of close friendship with her.

About Figgins.

"SO this is your room?" said Dolores.

She had noticed, of course, a constraint in Ethel's manner, but she seemed determined to be in high spirits and see nothing. She went to the window as she spoke.

Outside the window rose the big branches of an elm-tree, but beyond that was a wide view of the old quad and the playing fields.

Fellows could be seen already gathering on the junior football ground for the match.

"Yes," said Ethel.

"What a charming room!"

"Yes."

"And you have it all to yourself?"

"Except when Mrs. Holmes's niece is here," said Ethel. "She is a dear girl, and a kind friend of mine."

Dolores's dusky face clouded.

"You have many friends, Ethel?"

"Yes."

"You love this other very much?"

"Very much."

Dolores compressed her lips.

"And she is your chum, as you call it?"

Ethel smiled.

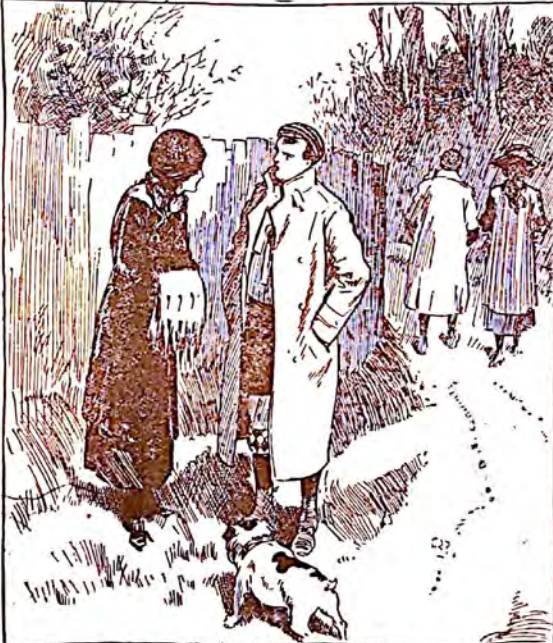
"Oh, no, not that! You see, she is nearly ten years older than I am—

quite a woman. But we are great friends."

The Spanish girl's face cleared, but the shadow on it, though only momentary, had shown what a depth of jealousy there might be in the passionate heart.

"I don't like you to have other friends beside me, Ethel," she said. "I know it is silly of me, but I shall never have another chum."

Ethel was silent. She could not help thinking that if Dolores valued



"Yes, I am very fond of dogs," said Dolores brightly, "especially spaniels." Herries jumped. "Spaniels! I said Towser was a bulldog!"

her so much, she might have acted in a different manner that afternoon.

But Dolores was resolved not to see that anything was the matter. Dolores was in one of her most willful moods that day.

"What a charming old place this is, Ethel!" she exclaimed. "And the boys are very nice! Will you help me with my hair, love? That dash in the trap has made it quite untidy. What a dear fellow your cousin is!"

"Arthur is always kind."

"Very different from the tall person," said Dolores, with a yawn, as Ethel unbound her thick masses of hair—"the—Wiggins, I think his name is."

"Figgins," said Ethel.

"Yes, Figgins. What an extraordinary name!"

"I have never noticed that it is

extraordinary. Figgins is one of the best and kindest boys in the school," said Ethel, with a little warmth.

Dolores gave her a sidelong glance. "And a very particular friend of yours, Ethel dear?" she asked.

"Not more than the others."

"Honour!"

"Of course!" said Ethel, with the first appearance of irritation she had shown. "How oddly you talk, Dolores! I don't quite understand you."

"You have not noticed that Figgins—"

Dolores paused.

"Suppose we don't discuss Figgins," suggested Cousin Ethel quickly. "We shall have to hurry, dear; they will be beginning the match."

"Well, we don't want to see the beginning," said Dolores. "It will be a frightful bore, of course. Football matches always are."

"I don't think so."

"Oh, you have such curious fates, Ethel! What is there to see in a football match?" said Dolores impatiently.

"But, of course, if Figgins is playing—"

"I wish you would not mention all the boys."

"Very well. I suppose you know all the boys?"

"Yes, I think so."

"How lucky you are to have a cousin like Arthur! What did you say?"

"We shall have to be quick, dear."

Dolores yawned.

"Oh, very well! But I do love to have you do my hair, Ethel! It makes me feel calm and contented; and I am not always calm, am I?"

Ethel smiled a little.

"No, indeed you are not, Dolores."

"But I am enjoying this afternoon," said Dolores. "It is delightful! Figgins is a curious fellow. I can see quite easily that he attaches immense importance to his game of football, and it seems very odd to

that their minds did not run in the same groove on all matters.

Dolores was ready at last, and they descended.

As they emerged into the quadrangle several fellows took their hats off to Cousin Ethel and her comely friend, and the Spanish girl was the recipient of many glances.

Four or five fellows came out of the School House in coats and mufflers over their football garb, and greeted Cousin Ethel warmly. Jack Blake and Herries and Digby and Monty Lowther and Manners and Tom Merry were presented to Dolores.

They went down to the junior ground in a body, and Herries, as it happened, walked besides Dolores.

Herries was not much of a lady's man, but the brawny Fourth-Former man, but he felt it his duty to be polite, and he felt it his duty to talk to the visitor. He told her about his dog Towser; an inexhaustible subject with Herries of the illustrious breed.

Fourth-Former Dolores listened with a charming smile.

"You ought to see him," said Herries, delighted to have found someone interested in a listener. "I'll take you to see him after the match, if you care to, Miss Pelham."

"Oh, I should love to!" said Dolores. "I am so fond of spaniels!"

Herries jumped.

"Spaniels!"

"Yes. Didn't you say he was a spaniel?"

"I said a bulldog."

"Oh, a bulldog!"

"Yes," said Herries; "a real-bred one, you know, and bites like a vice. If you put your hand in his mouth he'd have it right off in one snap."

Dolores gave a little shriek, and Herries roared with laughter.

Jack Blake gave him an inquiring look.

"I'm just telling Miss Pelham about Towser," chuckled Herries.

"Miss Pelham is fond of dogs."

"Yes, indeed I am," said Dolores brightly; "and especially collies!"

"Towser is a bulldog, Miss Pelham."

"I mean bulldogs, of course," said Miss Pelham, with a charming smile.

Herries looked a little puzzled. But they had reached the ground now, and the subject of dogs had to be dropped.

Camp-chairs in an advantageous position had been arranged for the two girls when it was pleasing to them to sit down, but for the present they stood to watch.

The two teams turned out into the field. Ethel's eyes ran over all her old friends. She gave them nods and bright smiles.

There were Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn on the New House side, prominent among the rest of the team. On the School House side Tom Merry was captain, and D'Arcy and Digby, Blake and Herries, Lowther and Manners, Reilly and Noble, Glyn and Dane backed him up. They were two fine teams, and towering over them was Lefevre, of the Fifth, who was referee, in Norfolk jacket and whistle complete.

The kick-off fell to the School House, and the ball rolled, and the two teams dashed into the game with great vigour.

It was junior football, with plenty of rush and kick, but it was fine football all the same. House matches were very keenly contested at St. Jim's, and both Tom Merry and Figgins had their men in splendid form.

Dolores glanced at the School House junior captain with a new interest in her face.

"Who is that, Ethel?" she asked.

"Tom Merry," said Ethel.

"Oh, that is Tom Merry?"

"Yes. Do you like him?"

"He is very good-looking," said Dolores.

And once more Ethel was conscious of a jolt. It had never occurred to her to think whether Tom Merry was good-looking or not. Why did Dolores think of such things—above all, speak of them?

Ethel did not reply to the remark. She kept her eyes intently fixed on the game, which was growing fast and furious.

School House versus New House.

"GOAL!"

"Hurrah!"

Dolores had turned away to watch the flight of a bird across the clear blue sky. The loud shouting of the crowd drew her glance back to the field of play.

She looked at the game.

Fatty Wynn, the New House goalkeeper, was stretched on the turf.

(Continued overleaf.)

COUSIN ETHEL'S SCHOOLDAYS

(Continued.)

He had made a wild clutch to save, but the leather had evaded his finger-tips, and the ball was in the net. The School House players were grinning with delight; the School House crowd round the ropes were roaring applause.

"Goal!"

"Bravo, Tom Merry!"

"What is it?" asked Dolores.

"A goal," said Ethel.

"Who has taken it?"

"Tom Merry—for the School House."

"Oh! And is the game finished now?"

Cousin Ethel laughed.

"Oh, no! They play for an hour and a half, and the greater number of goals wins the match, dear."

Dolores stifled a yawn.

"An hour and a half!" she said.

"Yes."

"And they have played ten minutes so far," said Dolores, looking at her little gold watch.

"Yes, about."

"Oh!"

Cousin Ethel looked at her. Fatty Wynn had fisted out the ball a little crossly, and the players were retiring to the centre of the field for the rest.

"Are you tired, dear?" asked Cousin Ethel.

"Oh, no!"

"Will you sit down?"

"I may as well."

Dolores sat down in one of the camp chairs. Cousin Ethel sat down beside her. Ethel felt more out of harmony than ever with her friend. Why had Dolores come to the match if she were tired of it in ten minutes? The answer, of course, was obvious. Dolores had come for the excursion, not for the football match; watching it was the price she was willing—or unwilling—to pay for the outing.

It was not an uncommon case, of course. Ethel remembered the enclosure at Lord's during a public school cricket match—sisters and cousins and aunts waiting or walking about listlessly while the cricketers played, wondering all the time what the fellows could see in the game, and how long they would be, and why they should prefer bowling a leather ball at three sticks in the ground instead of coming to have a cosy tea and chat.

To a girl who did not understand the game, after all, it was bound to be a bore; and a fellow who took a girl to see one, without acquainting her with how it was played, deserved to suffer the result. But with Dolores it was not only ignorance of the game—it was complete indifference. Ethel tried to explain to her, but the Spanish girl was hardly listening.

"You see Blake now," explained Ethel. "He is taking the ball along the touch-line. He is outside-right. He is trying to beat Kerr—outside-left on the New House side. I don't think he'll beat Kerr—he is too sharp for him. There, see, Kerr has sent the ball to his inside."

"Why didn't Blake pick it up?" asked Dolores carelessly.

Cousin Ethel could not help laughing.

"This is Association," she explained. "Hands are not allowed. It is in Rugby that the ball is passed by hand."

"Oh, indeed! Are there two kinds of football, then?"

In the face of a question like that, Ethel hardly knew what to say.

"Yes, dear," she replied at last.

"But I saw the plump boy—that do you call him—"

"Wynn, the goalkeeper,"

"Yes, well, I saw him pick up the ball in his hands."

"Yes, the goalkeeper is allowed to handle the ball, within his own area, you see."

"Oh, I see!"

"Ah! There! Listen! Hands!"

The School House crowd was roaring.

"Hands! Hands!"

"Yah!"

"Play the game!"

Prait, of the New House, at half, had handed the ball down, quite unintentionally, in the excitement of the moment. But the crowd were vigilant. The roar rang like a storm over the footer field.

"Hands!"

"Where's the referee?"

"Yah! This ain't Rugby!"

The referee's whistle rang out. Prait was penalised, and Cousin Ethel went on to explain the matter to Dolores; but she soon found that the Spanish girl was not listening. The play was growing hotter and hotter, and Ethel was keenly interested, and she soon left Dolores to her own devices.

It seemed ages to Dolores before the whistle rang for the interval. As the play ceased, and the players trooped off the field or lounged about it, resting, Dolores turned eagerly to Ethel.

"Is it over, Ethel?"

"The first half."

"Oh!"

"There will be an interval of five minutes."

"And then—"

"Then the second half!"

"Oh!"

A group of players came over towards the edge of the field where the two girls were. Figgins beamed at Cousin Ethel.

"It's a warm game, Cousin Ethel."

"Yes, indeed, and I'm enjoying it," said Ethel.

"We haven't scored yet," Figgins remarked. "Sun against us, you know."

Cousin Ethel smiled.

"Yes, I know," she said.

"It will be a bit different in the second half, of course."

"Wahah! not!" said D'Arcy. "The sun hasn't anything to do with it, dear boy. We're not beatin' you in the sun—we're beatin' you in the earth!"

"Beating us!" said Figgins.

"Look here, if you are going to be humorous—"

"Weally, Figgins—"

"Don't crow too soon, Gussy!" said Tom Merry, slapping the swell of St. Jim's upon the back. "Many a slip 'twixt the ball and the goal, you know."

"Weally, Tom Merry—"

"I wasn't quite ready for that goal, either," said Fatty Wynn.

"You won't be weady for the next, dear boy."

"Rats!"

"If you say wats to me, Fatty Wynn—"

"And many of 'em!" said Fatty Wynn emphatically.

"Weally, Wynn—"

"Don't crow, Gussy!"

thunderous cheers from the New House supporters.

Ethel clapped her little hands.

"Bravo," she cried.

Dolores looked at her.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Another goal!"

"No; Wynn is saving splendidly. There were two that looked certain, and he has stopped them both!"

"Oh!" said Dolores carelessly.

"It is very interesting, Dolores, if you would only take a little interest in it," said Ethel, with a touch of reproach in her voice.

Dolores laughed.

Harder and harder the School House pressed their attack, but Fatty Wynn was too good for them. As fast as the leather was whizzed in, a Welsh fist or a Welsh foot was ready for it, and it came out again.

And at last the backs cleared, and the fight went swaying away to middle field. The School House rallied, and strove to press home the attack again, but the New House held their ground.

The School House had shot their bolt for the present, at least. The New House advanced, and Tom Merry realised that defence was needed now.

He brought his men together to defend the goal, and a tussle waged in the School House half, Tom Merry & Co. striving in vain to clear.

And now Kerr, out on the wing, captured the ball, and ran in well, and beaten by Herries at back, passed in to Figgins. Figgins captured the ball, beat Glyn easily, and slammed it in. And Dane in goal had no chance.

There was a roar from the New House crowd.

"Goal!"

"Hurrah, Figgins!"

"Goal! Goal!"

It was the first score for the New House. And as Figgins's name rang out in a wild yell of applause, Dolores showed a little gleam of interest.

"That was Figgins?" she asked.

Cousin Ethel did not reply. She was on her feet, clapping her hands, and her eyes were dancing.

Dolores smiled strangely.

Cousin Ethel set down again as the teams lined-up for the restart, and then Dolores repeated her question.

"That was Figgins?"

lead of Figgins—and came back into the goal like a stone from a catapult, and Dane wasn't ready for that rapping return. There was a roar!

"Goal!"

"Figgins's done it!"

"Hurrah!"

"New House wins! New House wins!"

"Bravo, Figgins!"

Truly, the New House had won, for there were but two minutes more of play, and the whistle went with the score unchanged. The New House had won with three goals to two, and Figgins—the great Figgins—had scored all three of the winning goals!

It was glory for Figgins, and no mistake!

His comrades clustered round him as he came off the field, thumping him on the back, while the crowd cheered themselves hoarse.

Figgins was the hero of the hour. Even the School House fellows, little pleased as they were by their defeat, joined in cheering Figgins.

"Figgins! Figgins! Bravo, Figgins!"

"Good old Figgins!"

Figgins bore his blushing honours thick upon him with a good grace. There never was a more modest fellow than Figgins, or a fellow less likely to suffer from an attack of swollen head.

Best of all to Figgins was a clap from a pair of little hands, and a bright glance of congratulation from big eyes.

Dolores looked almost irritable.

"What has Figgins done, Ethel?" she asked.

"Won the game," said Ethel.

"All by himself?"

"Well, he kicked all the goals for his side."

"Is it over now?"

"Yes," said Ethel, laughing.

"Thank goodness!" murmured Dolores.

Great Preparations!

TOM MERRY & CO. were pretty well fagged out by that grueling match; but after a rub-down and changing their clothes, they felt pretty well themselves again. Looking very ruddy after the exercise, they clustered round Cousin Ethel and her friend in the best of humours. Every School House fellow had a separate explanation

although the question did not seem really very appetizing. It was agreed that it was a tea. And if everybody were determined to be in a good humour and make things easy for everybody else, surely the party would be bound to be a success. In fact, all the parties, at all times and places, would be successful if that golden rule were carefully observed.

Leaving the question of the tea in charge of Figgins and D'Arcy and some other juniors, the Terrible Three had gone off to their study after the match to get the tea ready. Dolores knew that tea in a study was coming, and she wondered very much what it would be like, and was looking forward to it with curiosity.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther set to work cheerfully in the study. It was always considered a privilege to entertain a girl to tea, and even a girl as Cousin Ethel was an acquisition anywhere.

Tom Merry cast an anxious glance about the familiar old study as he entered. It seemed to him a little shabbier than usual.

Perhaps it was the contrast after Cousin Ethel's bright face and pretty frock. The hero of the Shell looked round him quite disapprovingly. "Better dust up the study a bit," he remarked. "We had a disturbance, I remember. We had a disturbance where it is, Lowther?"

"Blessed if I do!" said Lowther.

"Manners, old man, what late you done with the duster?"

"Haven't seen it for monkey's years," said Manners.

Tom Merry sniffed.

"Look here, we must dust the study."

"Better get tea," said Monty Lowther. "Figgins & Co. are coming in at five exactly, and they'll be peckish. You know what Fatty Wynn is, and the girls—"

"Yes, but I ought to make a study decent for the girls."

"Well, use a pocket-handkerchief."

"Right-ho!"

Tom Merry jerked Lowther's pocket-handkerchief from his pocket, and began to dust the mantelpiece with it. Lowther gave a roar.

"You ass! Gimme my hank!"

"I'm dusting."

"Give me, you frabjous ass!"

"Well, it's jolly dusty now, if I did give it to you," said Tom Merry. "You'd better go and get another, old Lowther."

And Monty Lowther, with a sport of wrath, did go and get another. Tom Merry grinned, and continued to dust the study. He certainly made an improvement, but the handkerchief was in a decidedly grubby condition by the time he had finished.

"Gettin' on all right, dear boys?"

It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's voice at the door.

"Hallo!" said Tom Merry. "Come to lend a hand?"

"Yaas, watahah!"

"Right-ho! Get in some coal, will you?"

D'Arcy paused.

He was dressed in his most elegant garments, and fetching in coal certainly did not seem quite in accordance with his appearance.

"Ya-a-as, dear boy," he said at last.

And he bore away the scuttle in a gingerly manner.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Manners. He was not alone. Jameson, of the Third, was carrying the scuttle, full of coal. Jameson was grinning. It was peculiarly so grubby that a little coal-dust made no difference to him.

He brought the scuttle into the study, and set it down, and was presented with sixpence by the swell of the Fourth. Jameson bit the sixpence to make sure that it was a good one—a proceeding that D'Arcy viewed with silent indignation—and then went out with a chuckle.

"Anythin' else, dear boys?" asked D'Arcy.

Tom Merry looked round the study.

"Yes; make the toast."

"(The)—the toast."

"Certainly," said Manners. "I've cut the bread already. We only want about a dozen rounds made, and the fire's burning beautifully. Go ahead, and mind you don't burn it!"

"Veey well, dear boy," said D'Arcy feebly.

He was rather regretting by this time that he had come to help. But he could not retreat. He sat on the end of the fender with the toast-fork, and began to toast. Monty Lowther came back to the study, and grinded as he saw D'Arcy at work.

"Good old Gussy!" he exclaimed. "Go ahead! Are you fond of making toast?"

(Further adventures of Cousin Ethel and Dolores will be described in next week's number of the "Empire" Library.)

Tell Your Chum about Cousin Ethel.

"Weally, Blake, if you hint that I am ewoin'—"

"Phip!"

"Hallo! There's the whistle!"

"You are intewwupthi' me, Tom Merry."

"I wuss to be called an ass. And you are intewwupthi'—"

"Oh, come on!" said Blake, grasping his chum by the arm, and rushing him off towards the centre of the field, and D'Arcy's voice died away in vain expostulation.

"They are beginning again?" asked Dolores.

"Yes."

"Another three-quarters of an hour?"

"Yes. I am sorry you are so bored, Dolores. If you had told me, I would not have come here to-day. We could have done something you would have liked better."

"Oh, no; I am glad to come," said Dolores.

But her expression as she watched the resumption of the footer match was a sufficiently plain indication that it was not the football that she was glad to come for.

Glory for Figgins.

TOM MERRY and his merry men were pressing the New House hard now. In spite of the advantage gained by the change of ends, Figgins & Co. did not seem to benefit much. A sustained attack by the School House resulted in a goal scored by Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, with a splendid long kick that beat Fatty Wynn all the way. Fatty Wynn did not look pleased. He was the star goalie of the New House juniors, and he had been beaten twice between the posts. Fatty Wynn did not mean it to happen again. He was all eyes and hands now. The School House attack was still pressing hard, but Fatty saved, and saved again, amid

"Yes," said Ethel, "that was Figgins. He has taken a goal!"

And she was watching with all her eyes now.

That success had heartened the New House attack, and they were fairly swarming round the School House goal within a few minutes after the whistle.

Figgins was thinking of Ethel's eyes upon him, and like a knight of old, he fought far more valiantly with a fair lady's eyes to watch his deeds. Figgins seemed to play like two men that afternoon. Alone, almost, he beat the School House halves, and kicked for goal with the backs almost upon him. And again Clifton Dane was beaten, and the ball rolled in the net. Figgins rolled himself on the grass the next second, with Herries rolling over him; but what did Figgins care? He sat up, dazed, to hear the inspiring roar round the crowded field:

"Goal!"

"Bravo!"

The score was equal now, with ten minutes more to play. Both sides were pretty well played out; but they went at it again hammer and tongs, equally determined that the game should not end in a draw. There was no more show play; no skying of the ball just for bluff. It was deadly play, with the best the fellows had in them thrown into it. Both sides meant business; and here and there could be seen a fellow simply stranded, gasping for breath, with never a run left in him.

Lead rose the shouts of the crowd now.

"Go it, School House!"

"One more goal, Figgys!"

"Buck up, New House!"

"Play up there! Play up!"

But the minutes were creeping on. The struggle was in midfield now, but it broke and eddied up to the School House goal. Twice Dane lunged out the ball, and yet again, but this time it met a hard head—the

tion why the School House hadn't won. The explanation did not at all tally one with another, but that did not matter. The New House explanation of the circumstance was that they had played a better game, an idea that was scouted by the School House fellows as absurd. But there was high good-humour on both sides; the fellows knew how to give and take, and football successes were so evenly divided between the two Houses as a rule that honours could be considered easy. And the presence of Cousin Ethel made it impossible for anybody to be in anything but a good temper.

Tom Merry immediately he knew that Cousin Ethel was coming to see the match that afternoon, had planned a really gorgeous tea in the study for the entertainment of the two girls from St. Freda's, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had insisted that the feed should be in his own study; but Tom Merry pointed out that his room was larger and that the number of guests would be considerable. D'Arcy gracefully conceded the point, but only on condition that he was allowed to contribute a full half towards the feed. That was agreed to, and Fatty Wynn, of the New House, had been entrusted with the shopping—a task he was fully equal to, for, of course, Figgins & Co. had to come to the tea. Whenever Cousin Ethel had tea in the School House, there was a general feeling that Figgins ought to be invited, though, as a member of the rival House, he was liable to be seized and bumped severely if he entered the School House on any other occasion. The four chums of Study No. 6 were coming, too, and, of course, Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther would be there, and with the two girls, Tom Merry's study was likely to be well filled.

But did that matter? "Kind hearts are more than coronets," Manners said, when the subject came up; and

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THE LAND OF THE BLACK.

(Continued.)
nights when I found the elephants getting so cheery. I knew they'd charge the camp one of these nights before they'd finished. Seems to me I saved a few odds and ends, anyway.

"Golly!" said Harold, and went back to bed.
A cool, calm act, quite characteristic of Harold Saxon, by the way.
They had now been four days in the land of Morr, and had marched perhaps fifty miles, and, as Harold expected, the character of the land began to change soon after they began their forward march on the day after the elephant raid.
It was curious, this change of country. It ceased gradually to be like other land all over Africa that is so far known to the white man; it became quite a land of its own—in other words, in fact, it became just Morr.
Gradually the colour of the soil darkened. Mile after mile, as they marched, it turned from light sandy colour to light brown, then the chocolate, and then to black. The plains and rolling slopes vanished. Rocks, cliffs, piles of boulders, ravines, and single fangs of rock began to frown above the trees on each side.
(This thrilling adventure yarn will be continued next week.)



THREE COLUMNS to Ourselves

The object of these three columns is to interest and amuse, to help to make happy all who read them, and to worry those who don't into doing so.

HAPPINESS is a jolly fine thing except to write about. It's no great shakes then. I've already found that out since I started this column.
If you were asked to write about happiness, you would jump for joy, no doubt, if you could get somebody else to write it for you, but you wouldn't if you couldn't.
Now, before losing myself in this great subject, I am going to make somebody happy by offering a prize of 2s. 6d. to the reader who sends the best-written letter describing how he likes this paper and what faults he can honestly find in it to

kind of feeling, and you don't forget to make him better-looking.
Then you are happy and he is not, until his father helps him shut the place with you; then he is happy and you are not. But when you meet him out by himself again, "What ho!"
Some can find happiness in taking their friends' portraits; but my advice to all who have to suffer from this derangement of the liver is to charge your friends so much an hour for standing, for every kind of happiness has to be paid for, believe me, except one, and that is when you can help a chum over the stile.

had been snapped while having his ears pulled, climbing an apple tree, a garden wall, or falling into a ditch. But standing still—never!—never!



A SMART BOY.
"Bobby, I sent you to the grocer's, and told you to hurry back."
"Gazing wistfully at the works of art therein because I don't like to be seen walking along eating bananas, there was one of the specimens in the

The Rivals of St. Kit's.

By CHARLES HAMILTON.

A Short Instalment of this Popular School Tale for Old Readers.

Squire Lacy's Last Blow.
AT that moment he dared anything. Mr. Slaney was already reaching up to grasp him from within, rather to save him from his own rashness than to make him a prisoner. The squire cluded his grasp, set his teeth, and desperately sprang.
Mr. Slaney gave a cry of horror. "He is lost!"
He clambered upon the sill. Where had the desperate man gone? That frantic spring had carried the squire upon the nearest branch of an adjacent tree, but the branch was not equal to his weight.
His hands grasped it, his fingers closed upon it tenaciously, and the branch bent and cracked and broke!
One wild, despairing cry escaped the lips of the wretched man as he shot downwards into the darkness. "Heavens!" muttered Mr. Slaney—"heavens!"
A faint, dull sound from the darkness below, a deep groan, and silence! Mr. Slaney stepped down from the window, white as chalk. The hand that held the lamp trembled and shook.
"Who was it, boys? Do you know? A burglar, of course?"
"it was Squire Lacy of Lymwood!"
The chums of the Fourth Form returned to where they had left Talbot. He had taken off his jacket. In the light of the lantern his face was deadly white, and his shirt showed red, drenched with blood. Pat uttered a cry.
"Pat, you are wounded!"
Arthur Talbot smiled faintly. "It is only a scratch," he said. "He meant ill enough, but it was a blow at random. It is only a scratch. Where is the squire?"
"he jumped from the window at the end of the corridor, and fell in the Close," answered Pat quietly.
Within the ancient walls of St. Kit's the Squire of Lymwood lay dying!
There had been no hope for Rupert Lacy from the first. The fall from the window had shattered the strong frame, and the marvel was that he yet lived. He lived, half-conscious, while another day ran its course. Night was falling again, and with the spent day the life of Rupert Lacy was ebbing.
There had been strange news for St. Kit's when the school awoke that morning. The discovery that had been made overnight had cleared the name of Arthur Talbot. The most obstinate of his enemies could not doubt him further.
His innocence was proved. Eldred Lacy had been the thief—or, to be more correct, had brought about the theft in order to throw guilt upon Talbot. He had succeeded for a time, but he was known in his true colours now. Of the intention to steal himself he might be acquitted, but there

was no doubt that he had planned to ruin Talbot, and that but for the chums of the end study his success would have been complete.
Now the truth was known.
It came as a stunning blow to the prefect. He had not dreamed of this; when he least expected it, his fate had found him out.
But the accident to the squire threw even this into the shade.
It was impossible to expel Eldred Lacy from the school when his brother lay dying within the walls of St. Kit's.
The Head spoke to the prefect plainly—very plainly; it was made clear that Lacy was to leave St. Kit's, and there the matter ended.
Talbot received congratulations from all sides. Fellows who had been down upon him all the time came up and begged his pardon openly; and as Arthur was not a fellow to bear malice, he allowed bygones to be bygones.
Trimble and Cleve left St. Kit's that morning, it being pretty well known that they had been expelled, although the expulsion was not public; and so the greatest enemy of the chums was gone, never to trouble them again.
The hours that brought death nearer to the Squire of Lymwood brought recovery to Seth Black.
His first demand when he awoke to his surroundings was for Arthur Talbot.
Talbot came to his bedside at once. The injured man turned a pale and ghastly face towards him in the shaded sick-room.
"Is that you, Master Talbot?" he asked, peering at the athletic figure beside his bed.
"Yes," said Arthur quietly.
"how did I come here?"
"You were picked out of the river and carried here."
"Who did it?"
The ruffian's voice and look were strangely eager.
"I did," said Talbot quietly.
"I thought so. I had a sorter feelin'—as if I had dreamed it—that I was in the water, and I seed your face, Master Talbot. I felt it must be you who had saved me."
Talbot nodded.
"You must not talk much," he said. "You can only stay a few minutes with you."
"I'm in a bad state, I know. But I shall get well."
"The doctor says so."
"Good! I shall get well, if that murderous villain does not get at me again. You know who threw me in the river?"
"Yes, I think I know."
"it was Squire Lacy."
"I thought so."
"he met me on the bridge that night, pretending to give me money, and he tricked me down to the bank and struck me down. A wonder he didn't kill me; he meant to!"
The ruffian gritted his teeth.
(To be concluded.)

ONE OF US.
The "Empire" Library,
23 23, Boulevard Street,
London, E.C.

There are thousands and thousands and thousands of ways of getting happiness—breaking windows, for instance, eating until your buttons pop off, hopping the wags, scaring your collar inside out, taking your baby brother into the park and forgetting all about him while having a "go" round the houses on a chum's skates, being invited out to tea and

While passing a photographer's the other day, I was struck by the important pose adopted by some of the sitters. A few looked very concerned, while nearly all had an anxious look upon their faces that seemed to say: "I hope I come out better-looking than I really am, because if I don't, I shall go somewhere else next time. See!"
Gazing wistfully at the works of art therein because I don't like to be seen walking along eating bananas, there was one of the specimens in the



How Monkey Nuts ought to be photographed.

not turning up, watching the back of your schoolmaster disappear, hearing that your school has blown down, taking the boy who has never given you a birthday present to the dentist's, falling downstairs so as to be on hand when your rich aunt comes round, etc., etc., etc., etc.
The boy next door may find it for a time in making faces at you over the garden wall, or by pressing his pretty face against the window-pane of the jerry-built house his papa is supposed to pay rent for. But his happiness is very transitory—for when you drop across that boy, you drop across him with that now-I've-copped-you

window that particularly caught my eye.
This was a portrait of a fellow in my class, named Monkey Nuts, whom I was surprised to see in an unnatural position—for him. He was standing still!
Dressed in his very best clothes, the coat of which (vide advertisement) was skillfully cut, and hung in perfect balance from the shoulders, etc.—I don't think—he was poised with his baggy trousers crossed beside a modern, up-to-date, antique, deferred-payment sideboard. In one of his fists he held a book, which might have been a treatise on "How to get out of a pantry quickly," or "How to make a chicken-run." It might have been nothing of the kind.
The other paw was gracefully grasping a large bunch of pickled cabbage. It might have been his sister's hat. A rather worried look was scattered over his face—what shall I call it? If I say ugly face, I shall be complimenting him unduly. If I say his handsome face, I shall be telling a lie. So I'll split the difference, and say his handsome ugly face.
Now, I think a lot of Monkey Nuts. I have to. He hit me once, oh, such a conk, and my admiration will last until that happy day arrives when I shall be cleverer than he is with my fists. I am practising muscular development on the quiet night and day for that very purpose, and kidney punctures.
Quite overcome at the strange sight, I flew into the nearest tuckshop, and devoured two pennorth of bapenny buns and four sausage-rolls, for Monkey Nuts is the last boy I know to stand still. Whenever I see him he is either itching for a fight, getting into a scrape, or getting out of one; and it's my humble opinion that he would have looked more natural, more true to life, more artistic if he



How Monkey Nuts is photographed.

HERE IS A TRICK YOU MIGHT TRY.

Can you pick out a marked shilling from a 3s. 9d. covered hat? The hat is not obliged to be a 3s. 9d. hat. A 3s. 9d. hat, a 6d. hat, a 3d. hat will do as well, as long as it's a hat. I've tried it, and failed.

These are the directions:
Procure three coins, if you can. Three halfpennies will do; three shillings will do better. When sun that they are quite free from the warmth of the pocket or hand, drop them into a hat, and cover them with a handkerchief.
Ask a friend to select one—no more—and mark it so that it can be recognised again.
Hold out the hat for it to be replaced. Put your hand in under the handkerchief, and take out the coin, which will be warmer than the remaining two.
Don't hurry over the production of the coin, or you will give away the trick.
I learnt these directions so well that I could recite them backwards, frontwards, and sideways. I talked about them in my sleep, and whenever I could get anybody to lend me any coins, I followed them in—i.e., the directions. But I had such rotten luck in borrowing the money, that by the time I had found somebody who was silly enough to oblige me, I had forgotten how the trick went.

ONE OF US.



BONES: "I don't know what to do with that son of mine; he's always at the foot of his class."
JONES: "Make a chiropodist of him."