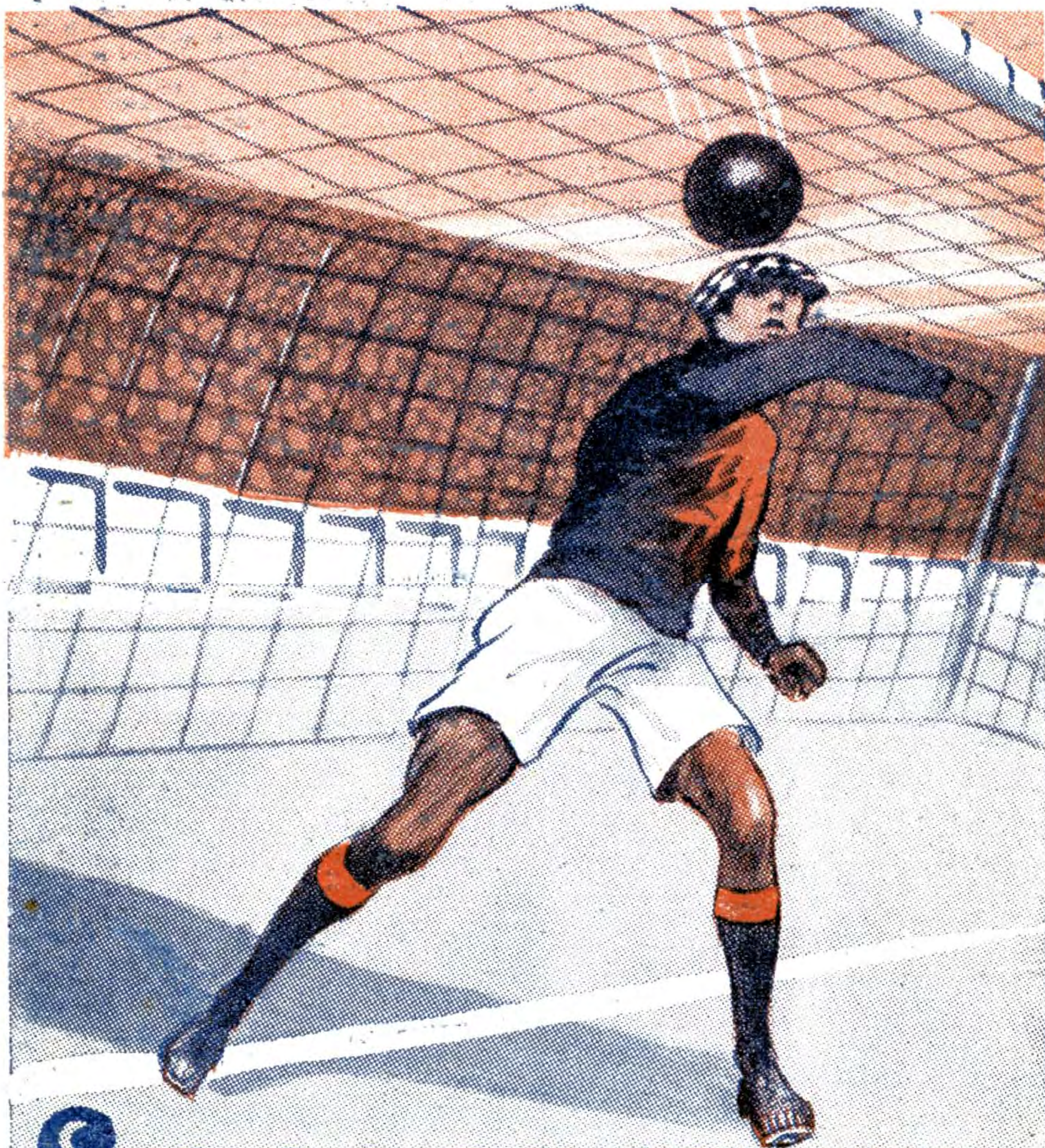


No. 334.—No Lover of Football Should Miss This Week's Story!

THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY

1½D



\$100,000 TO A SHILLING; OR, LORD DORRIMORE'S WAGER,

October 29, 1921.

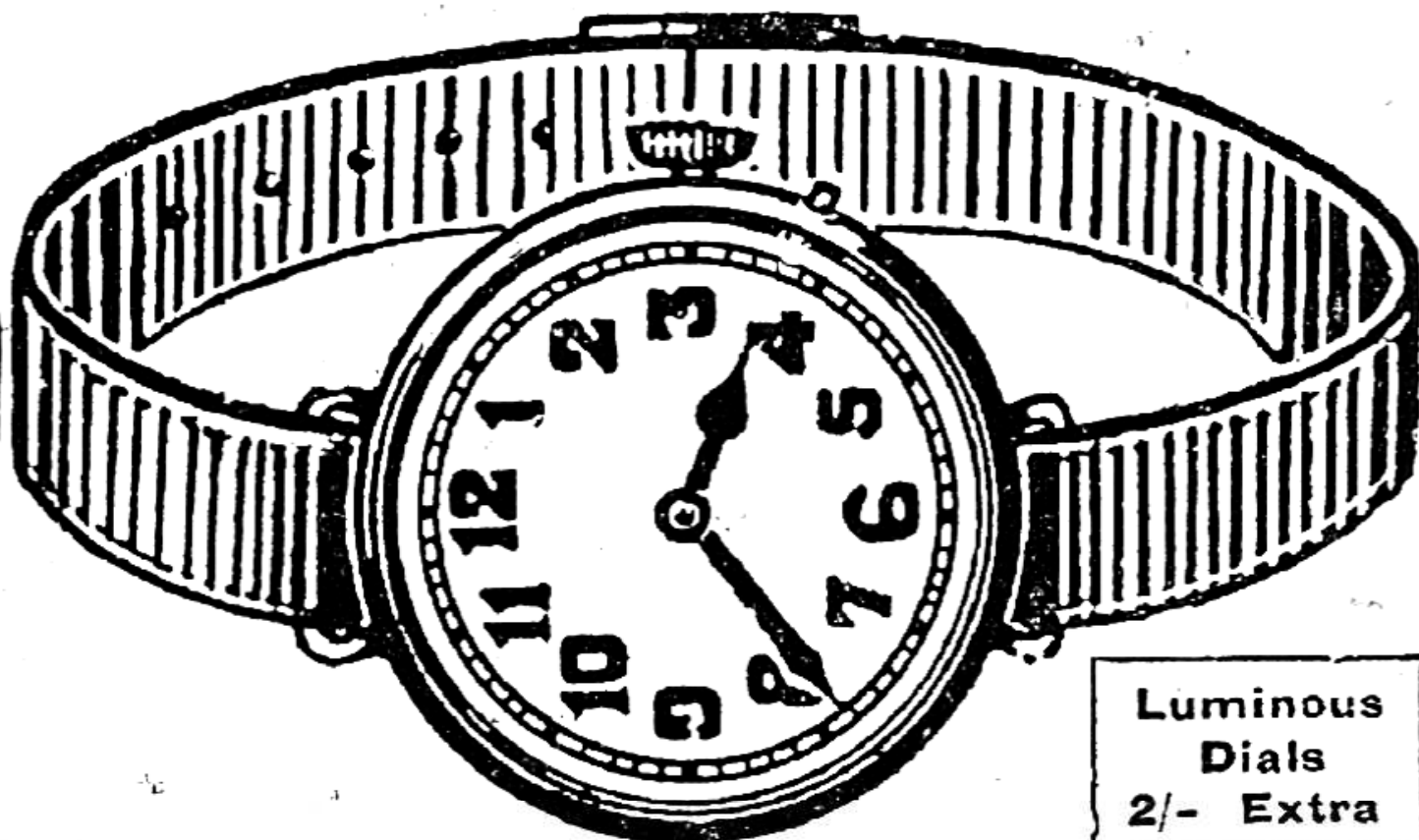
A Story of Pitt's Great Football Triumph.



NICKEL SILVER WATCHES. Yours to Wear Whilst Paying for It.

GENT'S full-size Keyless Lever Watch, Strong Nickel Silver dust and damp proof cases, clear dial, genuine Lever Movement, perfect railway timekeeper, price 15/-; or cash with order 13/6 (similar watch cheaper quality 9/- cash). Ladies' or Gent's wristlet model (a beautiful present), 4/- extra. Any of these splendid watches sent on receipt of the first payment. After receiving the watch you send us a further 2/- and promise to pay the balance by weekly instalments of 6d. each or 2/- monthly. Warranty for 10 years sent with each watch. No unpleasant inquiries. Don't risk disappointment, as this is manufacturer's stock purchased at great reduction (usually sold at 25/-). Send 2/- and 6d. extra for postage and insurance at once to—

THE WOBURN WATCH CO.,
(Desk N.L.7), WOBURN HOUSE, LONDON, W.C.1.



Luminous
Dials
2/- Extra

INSTANTLY KILLS PAIN

Everyone suffering pain should try the quickest, surest, and safest way of obtaining immediate ease. This is the VIKWIK way. No matter how the pain is caused, whether by Rheumatism, Gout, Lumbago, Neuritis, Neuralgia, Synovitis, Cramp, Sprains, Bruises, or by any kind of muscular strain, VIKWIK is the finest pain killing, curative liniment known. VIKWIK stops irritation in a remarkable manner. Chilblains and Burns yield to its soothing effects at once. VIKWIK is something different, something better than anything else. It succeeds where everything else has disappointed.

If you suffer from any kind of pain go to your Chemist and get a bottle to try. Price 1/3 and 3/4, from all Chemists and Stores, or direct post free from the VIKWIK CO., Desk 83, London, W.C.1.

VIKWIK LINIMENT

INSTANTLY KILLS PAIN OF

Rheumatism	Neuralgia	Gout
Sciatica	Backache	Nerve Pains
Sore Throat	Bruises	Cramp
Sprains	Strains	Lumbago

IN 1/3 BOTTLES, LARGE SIZE 3/-

From **BOOTS, TAYLORS, & all Chemists.**

Buy Mead

ON
EASY
TERMS

direct from factory at wholesale prices and SAVE POUNDS. World's finest Table Grands, Portable-Hornless and exquisitely coloured horn **Mead-o-phones** to select from. Grand bargains in **Columbia, Regal, Zono-phone, Pathe, Edison Bell and Deccas**. Sent on 10 days' trial, packed free, carriage paid, with 52 tunes and 400 needles. Prompt delivery. Satisfaction guaranteed. Send postcard for art catalogue.

MEAD COMPANY
(Dep. G. 105), Balsall Heath,
BIRMINGHAM.



ARE YOU NERVOUS, SHY, BASHFUL?

Send for **FREE** advice **HOW** to cure yourself of all Nervous Complaints, Blushing, Sleeplessness, etc., in a week.. Simple, private.—Adviser, 12, All Saint's Road, St. Annes-on-Sea.

PHOTO POSTCARDS OF YOURSELF, 1/3 doz., 12 by 10 **ENLARGEMENTS** 8d. **ALSO CHEAP PHOTO MATERIAL. CATALOGUE AND SAMPLES FREE**—HACKETTS, JULY ROAD, LIVERPOOL.



\$10,000 TO A SHILLING

OR, LORD DORRIMORE'S
WAGER.

A Story of School Life and Detective Adventure at St. Frank's College, introducing **NELSON LEE, NIPPER**, and the Boys of St. Frank's. By the Author of "Missing From the Match," "The Mystery Outside-Right," "The Interrupted Match," and many other Stirring Tales.

(THE NARRATIVE RELATED THROUGHOUT BY NIPPER.)

CHAPTER I.

A RIFT IN THE CLOUDS!

FOOTBALL enthusiasts throughout the country have been amazed by the revelation concerning Abdullah, the clever outside-right of Bannington, the popular Sussex club. As all our readers are aware by this time, Abdullah has been doing some remarkable feats of goal scoring for Bannington, and Bannington's position at the head of the League table is no doubt due to this remarkable player's genius for goal getting. He has displayed singular form since he first started playing for Bannington.

"Good!" said Handforth. "That's the stuff!"

"And it's true, too!" said Church.

"Rather!"

"Every giddy word of it!"

"And he's Pitt!" said De Valerie.

"My only hat!"

The juniors were collected round the Ancient House steps at St. Frank's, and they were all craning their necks to read the newspaper which Handforth held in his hands. It was a London paper, and it was folded back on the sports page.

"What else does it say?" asked De Valerie.

"Hold the paper still, Handy, you ass!"

"Let's have a squint."

"Whose paper is it?" roared Handforth, glaring round.

"Oh, dry up, you ass!"

"If you say much more, I'll jolly well take the paper away!" snorted Handforth. "It's mine, and you'll only see it when I please."

"Oh, humour him!" growled Christine. "Please, handsome and mighty Handforth, will you kindly keep the newspaper still so that we may benefit by a perusal of its contents? We beseech you to favour us!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You-you silly fathead!" roared Handforth. "I'll punch your nose——"

"Oh, my hat!" groaned Christine. "We yell at him, and he threatens to take the paper away. We use polite words, and he gets even more wild. What the dickens can you do with a chap like that?"

"Oh, don't rot!" snapped Handforth.

"If you want to read—read!"

He held the paper still at last, and the juniors crowded round. The rest of the paragraph ran in this way:

"We have occasionally referred to Abdullah's astonishing form, but we never imagined that it would be our portion to announce such a strange revelation as has been made. It is well known by now that this mystery footballer,

Abdullah, is none other than a junior schoolboy of St. Frank's College, named Reginald Pitt.

"The mere fact that a schoolboy can play in professional football is remarkable enough, but that he can play with such astounding skill and vigour is nothing short of staggering. Pitt has done wonders, and it is to be hoped that he will continue to play for Bannington in his present winning form. Whether he will be allowed to do so is a question, but it is an undoubted fact that when Bannington loses him, it will be losing the cleverest forward in their brilliant line. We are of the opinion that it will be a bad day for Bannington when Pitt severs his connection with the club."

There was a good deal more, but the fellows had not the patience to peruse it all. But there it was, in black and white.

There was no doubt about the question. The thing was perfectly true. Reginald Pitt, of the St. Frank's Remove, had been playing outside-right for a professional team. It was something to make the juniors talk—something they had been talking about—in fact, for two or three days past. No other topic of conversation was half so popular.

Reginald Pitt had always played outside right for the Remove, and he had played astonishingly well. But even the most enthusiastic of his admirers had never believed him capable of filling a position in the forward line of a go-ahead League team. And Bannington had been winning nearly all their matches.

Certainly they had gone down in the last fixture, when they played Porthampton away from home. But this was mainly due to the fact that Pitt had been absent from the team in the second half of the game.

At St. Frank's the juniors were realising, too late, that they had misjudged Pitt rather cruelly. For, when he had been mysteriously absent on one or two occasions, he had been suspected of running off on shady expeditions to race meetings, and so forth. Even Jack Grey, Pitt's own study chum, had believed this to be the truth, and the pair had had a bitter quarrel.

That had really been the starting point of Pitt's worries. The quarrel had been solely because of a misunderstanding, and even now it was not fully cleared up, for Jack Grey had not seen Pitt for nearly a week.

Pitt, rather miserable because of the feeling against him in the Remove, had

said nothing. He could not very well explain why he was playing professional football—he could not tell the fellows he was doing it because he wanted the money that the club gave him in return for his services.

And the climax had come when Pitt had been seized by a crowd of thoughtless juniors. He had been ragged unmercifully. In the finish he turned upon them and passionately told them that he was clearing out.

He had been as good as his word—he had cleared out.

But since then the truth had been revealed, and it was known throughout the school that Pitt was Abdullah, the remarkably clever forward of the Bannington Club. All the juniors were very penitent, and their one aim now, was to show Pitt that they wanted him back—that they would be only too delighted to have him once more in the Remove.

Quick to condemn, the juniors would be quick to make reparation. But so far they had had no chance of making amends.

Jack Grey was more cut up than anybody, since he was Pitt's own study chum, and since he had acted more cruelly than anybody else. At least, so Jack told himself. And now he was determined to put an end to this uncomfortable feeling.

It was tea-time now, and Friday evening. On the morrow there would be the big match against Porthampton, at Bannington. Half St. Frank's had decided to go—not because they enjoyed professional football, but because they wanted to see Reginald Pitt in a League game.

They wanted to cheer him, and show him that he was more popular than ever at St. Frank's. The Remove was going, to a man, and as many fags as could afford admission money. All manner of devices were adopted that evening in the Third to "raise the wind." Borrowing became an art.

Quite a large number of Fifth Formers and Sixth Formers decided to go, too—they condescended to grace the football ground with their presence. They laboriously explained to one another that they might just as well have a look at the "youngster," and see what he could do. In reality, they were as keen as the juniors.

But Jack Grey wanted to see Pitt before then.

He wanted to have a long talk, and to

square things up. Jack had never felt quite so contrite in all his life, and his main idea was to see Pitt, and offer his profuse apologies. He was wondering anxiously if Pitt would accept his expressions of regret—for Reginald had been badly treated.

And so Jack Grey had come to a decision. He would go off this very evening—at once. He couldn't wait until tomorrow. He would rout Pitt out, wherever he happened to be. And Grey did not think it would be a very difficult matter to find the absent junior.

Without waiting for tea he got his bicycle out and went to Bannington. This was his first opportunity of seeing his chum, for Pitt had not been in Bannington until to-day. He had only returned from London that morning.

I had explained this to Grey, for I knew some of the facts. And I had told Grey that it would be useless for him to go to Bannington until this evening. And so Jack was going, as fast as his bicycle would take him.

He arrived at the football ground to find everything quiet and deserted. The big doors were locked, and even the side gate was fastened. Grey hardly knew what to do, and he was just turning away when he heard a bolt drawn, and the door opened.

A short, thick-set man appeared—a man attired in a sweater with a jacket over it. He regarded Pitt inquiringly.

"I—I say, can you tell me where Pitt is?" asked Grey, walking up. "You know—Abdullah."

The thick-set man frowned.

"Pitt is in the dressing-room just now," he replied. "He's been doing some training with the boys. If you want to see him, it can't be done. My name's Hogan, and I'm the trainer. I can't allow Pitt to be disturbed."

"Oh, but I want to see him—badly!" said Jack eagerly. "I sha'n't be long. I know you won't mind, Mr. Hogan. I'm Pitt's chum from St. Frank's. Can't you manage it?"

The trainer pursed his lips.

"Well, if you're his particular chum, that makes a difference," he said. "Everybody knows the truth now, so there's no secret about it. All right youngster, you can go in. Walk straight down the cinder-path, and go behind the grand stand. You'll find the entrance to the training quarters down there."

"Oh, thanks awfully!" said Jack Grey eagerly.

He didn't wait for any more, but hurried in, taking his bicycle with him. When he got inside he found that the dressing-rooms were behind the stand, just as Hogan had said. Pitt propped his bicycle against the wall inside and walked in. He found himself facing a cheerful-looking young man in a well-cut tweed suit.

"Hallo, how did you blow in?" asked the young man.

"I've just met Mr. Hogan, the trainer, and he told me I could come. I'm looking for Pitt."

"Oh, I see," said the other. "My name's Howard. I suppose you're one of Reggie's friends from St. Frank's?"

"Yes."

"Right you are. You'll find Reggie in his own little dressing-room," said Howard. "The third door on the left—just over there."

"Thanks."

Jack rushed across and burst open the door that Howard had indicated. He found himself in a small, somewhat bare apartment. But Jack hardly noticed this. There, against the window, fastening his tie, was Reginald Pitt. The latter turned as Jack entered, and his eyes lit up.

"Reggie!" exclaimed Jack Grey impulsively.

"Hallo, old son!" said Pitt. "Why, what—"

For Jack had rushed up to him, and was fairly hugging him.

"Can you forgive me, old man?" whispered Jack huskily. "It's not right of me to expect it after the rotten way I've treated you—"

"Oh, ease off!" said Pitt uncomfortably. "There's nothing to make a fuss about, Jack. I've forgotten all about it. I'm not a vindictive bounder. That's all right. I'm terrifically pleased to see you."

Jack Grey swallowed something with difficulty.

"You're a brick, Reggie!" he muttered. "What a squabble we had! And all my fault, too. I've never been so ashamed of myself in all my life, Reggie. If ever a chap deserved to be kicked, I do!"

Pitt grinned.

"Rats!" he said cheerfully. "We did have a pretty decent scrap, didn't we, though? My only hat! We went for one another, hammer and tongs, and distributed black eyes and thick ears galore!"

"That's what makes me so miserable," said Jack. "It was all my fault, right from the very start. I—I accused you of all sorts of rotten things, Reggie. I said you'd been out with bookies, and that you'd attended race meetings, and all that kind of thing."

"Well, you had a certain amount of reason to come to those conclusions," said Pitt. "I was secretive, and I oughtn't to have been. I realise that now, Jack. I ought to have told you the whole truth at the start; but I'll make up by telling you now. That is, if you're interested."

"You bounder! Of course I'm interested!"

"Right-ho!" said Pitt. "Squat down on that seat and I'll spin the whole yarn. I expect you're jolly puzzled—wondering why I ever came to this club and played professional football."

"Puzzled!" said Jack. "I can't make it out—it's an absolute mystery to me. But, of course, I can understand where you went to on those mysterious occasions. You came here—and played for Bannington as Abdullah!"

"Exactly!" said Pitt. "Well, at first it was really a matter of chance. I happened to make friends with Tom Howard—one of the players here—and then I got playing in a match. It was only a practice affair, but after that they wanted me to play in the regular fixtures."

"And you've been doing marvellous things, too——"

"Well, I don't know about that," said Pitt. "I've been doing the best I could. I simply couldn't stick it at St. Frank's any longer. After the way the chaps treated me—and after our bust up—I thought the best thing I could do was to clear out."

"But you're coming back?" asked Jack anxiously.

"I hope so—but not until things are cleared up."

"What do you mean—cleared up?"

Pitt hesitated.

"Well, my people are in a pretty bad position," he said, in a low voice. "I'm telling you this, Jack, because I know you'll keep it mum. This is what I ought to have explained at first. I—I saw a chance of getting some money this way, and—and I took it."

Jack Grey looked grave.

"You—you mean to send to your people?" he asked softly.

"Yes."

"Oh, why didn't you tell me at first?" whispered Jack. "I should have understood, Reggie—you needn't have been afraid. All these misunderstandings just because you didn't like to tell me! I—I suppose your pater was in a bank smash or something——"

"No, worse than that," replied Pitt, his voice suddenly becoming grim. "A rotten scoundrel named Simon Raspe swindled my pater out of every penny he owned. He took everything, including our house and home! He left my people absolutely penniless—and that's why I didn't like to speak about it."

Jack took a deep breath.

"But can't this awful rogue be brought to justice?" he asked.

"He is being brought to justice—now!" replied Pitt. "Mr. Lee has the matter in hand, and I think he's been doing a lot of work, too. But Nelson Lee won't say much—he keeps things to himself, you know."

"Doesn't Raspe live near Bannington?"

"Yes—at Thornton House," replied Pitt. "I can't go into all the details now, but Raspe has been up to some terribly shady tricks. He even tried to get me arrested for assaulting him!"

"Great Scott!"

"But that all blew out—Mr. Lee put things right," said Reggie gratefully. "Mr. Lee's a brick! I don't know what I should have done without him. And he'll put things right for my pater, too!"

"I'm absolutely sure of it," said Jack Grey.

"But can he do it in time, that's the thing that's worrying me," said Pitt anxiously. "You see, Raspe has put our home up for auction, and the sale takes place on Monday—only three days! If that's sold we shall never get it back, because a dealer might get it, and then all the furniture and everything else will be distributed broadcast. The home will be completely broken up."

"But can't you do anything at all?"

"My people can't," replied Pitt. "But there's just a chance—a chance in a million. You'll absolutely howl when you hear it, but it's true. I saw Lord Dorrimore yesterday, and he's made a wager with me."

"A wager?"

"Yes—ten thousand pounds to a shilling!"

Jack Grey stared.

"You're joking!" he said incredulously.

"No, I'm not—it's true," said Pitt. "I know Dorrie doesn't think I shall win—and I don't think I shall, either. But it's a chance. If I do win—by a miracle—I sha'n't accept his wager, of course, but there's something else I can do."

"But I don't quite understand," said Jack. "What have you got to do to win the wager?"

"Score five goals in to-morrow's match against Porthampton."

"Five goals!" yelled Jack. "Off your own boot?"

"Yes, or my head," replied Pitt. "It doesn't matter how I get the goals as long as I find the net five times."

"But it's impossible!"

"I suppose it is," said Reginald Pitt gravely. "Still, I can try, can't I? If I get five goals in to-morrow's match I shall win this wager—and ten thousand pounds."

"Phew!" whistled Jack. "Dorrie must be dotty!"

"He doesn't think I'll win!" exclaimed Pitt. "But if I do I'll take the money as a loan—I shall have an excuse then. And with that sum I can go to that giddy sale and buy the whole property—everything! It can't possibly go for as much as ten thousand."

"What a grand idea!" said Jack enthusiastically. "You—you mean you'll buy it all in without telling your people anything about it, and then give them a ripping surprise afterwards?"

"That's the idea, exactly," said Pitt. "And it all depends upon this match. You see, I couldn't borrow ten thousand pounds from Lord Dorrimore in any ordinary circumstances. But if I win this wager I shall have a kind of right to the money. Later on the pater will pay it back, or, if Dorrie won't accept it, he'll make him a present of something that costs the same amount. But the main thing is to go to this sale and and buy in the property."

"And you can only do that if you score five times to-morrow?"

"Yes."

Jack Grey was silent. It was quite plain that he thought the task an impossible one. Reginald Pitt thought so, too. But it could be done—such feats had been accomplished on the football field—it wasn't an impossibility. And

with so much depending upon it, it was just possible that—

But Pitt did not like to let his thoughts run on. He was simply holding himself in hand until the morrow. Then he would try—try as he had never tried before. And within him he had a wild hope that things might come all right.

"I wish you luck, old man," said Jack, at last. "I'll be here to cheer you, anyway. But there's just one little thing I wanted to ask you. Do you remember that day at St Frank's when I came in and surprised you writing a letter—when I saw those notes on the table?"

"Yes, of course," said Pitt. "You thought I'd made the money at cards, or something. But, really, I was just home from a match, and I was getting the money ready to send home. They give me six pounds a week, you know."

"Yes, and you're worth double!" said Jack stoutly. "You've made this club go right forward. But I was talking about that evening. Do you remember when I came close to you I said that you smelt of spirits? That's what really set me against you, but I felt sure that there must be some good explanation."

Pitt smiled.

"There is," he said quietly. "But I can't tell you even now, Jack. You'll have to take my word. I can only tell you this—and I could have told you the same thing then, if you'd been inclined to listen."

"Oh, I was off my rocker, I think!" muttered Jack.

"On my way home from the football match I fell in the river" said Pitt. "I got a good wetting and felt rather bad after it. I was jolly dazed, in fact, and—and somebody pulled me round with a good swig of brandy. I can't go into details, because I gave my word to somebody—"

"That's all right, Reggie, I don't want to hear any more," said Jack quickly. "By Jove! What a fool I was! To suspect you of boozing and gambling! I do hope you forgive me, Reggie?"

"I've forgotten all about it," said Pitt quietly.

He had omitted to tell his chum that he had fallen into the river rescuing somebody from drowning, and that he had nearly got drowned himself in the process. But the worrying little point

was cleared up, and that was all Jack required.

Pitt was greatly cheered up by his chum's visit. And, somehow, he had a feeling within him that things would soon be coming right. But the great question was—would he be able to score five goals in the Porthampton match on the morrow?

Reginald Pitt didn't know it, but before that matter was decided some highly dramatic events were destined to take place.

CHAPTER II.

SIMON RASPE'S DISCOVERY.

SIMON RASPE was not looking very well. He sat in his library, at Thornton House, near Bannington, and swore somewhat forcibly as he laid his head back upon some soft cushions. At the rear of his scalp there was a large patch of plaster. His nose was puffed and swollen, and one eye was in that peculiar greenish state which denotes the healing of a black eye. He was not a very handsome man at the very best of times, and at present he looked positively repulsive. His baggy face, with the flabby pouches under his eyes, his double chin, and his peculiarly sharp nose gave him a most unpleasant appearance. And now he was in a sour temper.

Stretton, his confidential secretary, had had some difficulty with him all day. For the millionaire financier was in pain, and he chafed against the enforced rest which his injuries entailed.

Stretton was really Raspe's accomplice in many criminal dealings, and the two men understood one another perfectly. It was they who had brought about the colossal swindle which had ruined Reginald Pitt's father, and had sent Mr. Pitt's secretary, Stanley Lockwood, to prison on a trumped up charge.

Even now, Simon Raspe thought himself absolutely secure. He did not even suspect that Nelson Lee was engaged upon the case.

Stretton had been out, and he came back to find his chief still grouchy.

"Any news?" growled Raspe.

"No, nothing of any importance."

"How about the boy?"

"I'm hanged if I know," replied Stretton. "The police seem to have dropped it all. Pitt's still going about

in Bannington, and it seems that Jamson is doing nothing."

"Didn't you see the inspector?"

"Yes, but he says that he can't arrest Pitt until he has got further evidence," said Stretton. "Anyhow, he hummed and ha'ed about it, and made all sorts of objections. I believe the school people have bribed him, or something."

Simon Raspe cursed.

"I'll see about it when I'm well enough to go out," he snapped. "I'm well enough now, but I don't want to make a public exhibition of myself. Hang the boy!"

"You mean Lockwood, don't you?" asked Stretton. "It was Lockwood who knocked you about, and Lockwood seems to be at liberty still. If you'd only take my advice, Raspe, you'd clear right out of this for a month or so. Go to the South of France—Scotland—it doesn't much matter where."

"I think I'll do as you say," replied Raspe. "But I wanted to be certain about Lockwood first. I don't like the idea of him being out of prison."

Lockwood, in fact, had escaped, and he had visited Simon Raspe in the night, and had given Raspe the thrashing of his life. Owing to certain facts, Reginald Pitt had been suspected at first. Raspe had even accused the boy of the outrage. But Nelson Lee had convinced the police that there was nothing in the story, and Inspector Jameson had dropped the case.

"You can't do better than get out of this district for a bit," said Stretton. "Lockwood can't do you any harm, and he's bound to be captured before long. And what about those papers, Raspe?"

"You know as well as I do they're in the safe," replied the other. "As long as they're in my keeping no harm can come of the fact that they're still in existence. I know well enough that they're incriminating. If they got into the hands of the police things would be bad for me."

"You ought to have destroyed them," said Stretton. "I am involved as well as you, Raspe—"

"Oh, don't get into a panic!" snapped Simon Raspe. "How can any harm come when the papers are in my safe. I want them—there are a great deal of figures I need to go over, and if those papers are destroyed I shall be in a muddle. I tell you they're safe enough with me."

"Hadn't you better go over those

figures at once and make your notes, and then burn the lot?" suggested Stretton. "There are some letters and documents among those papers that would send us both to gaol."

"I never knew such a fellow for getting alarmed over nothing," grumbled Raspe. "If it'll please you I'll start on the job at once."

He rose from his chair and went over to a small safe that was built in the wall. It had a combination lock, and it could only be opened by the knowledge of a certain combination of letters.

Raspe set the lock and then turned the big handle. The safe door swung open, and Raspe took out a sealed brief-sized envelope from a drawer.

"What on earth you want to worry about I don't know," he said gruffly. "Who knows anything about this? Nobody! I'm not suspected by a living soul, and I'm absolutely safe. If there had been the slightest chance of any police inquiries I wouldn't have kept these papers for an hour."

Stretton said nothing, but he was very glad that his chief had decided to start on the work at once. Raspe was quite well, except for his appearance, and he occasionally had a pain in his head. He sat down at his desk and lit a cigar. Then he turned the envelope over in his hands.

It was quite a plain envelope, sealed up, with one word scrawled upon the face of it in blue pencil. This word was "Pitt."

Raspe looked at it closely and frowned. "Queer!" he muttered. "It doesn't seem like my writing, Stretton. I must have been in a hurry, I suppose."

He ripped open the envelope and withdrew a bulky batch of papers. He spread these out before him with the intention of looking through them. Then he gave a start and stared incredulously.

The top sheet was blank!

"What in Heaven's name——" he began.

He turned the sheets over rapidly. The second was blank—and the third, in fact, every one of those sheets was blank! These were not the papers that he had placed in the envelope. Simon Raspe stared at the sheaf in silent, cold stupefaction. All the blood had fled from his face, leaving it putty coloured and haggard.

Stretton noticed for the first time that

something was wrong. He had been attending to the fire, and he turned round to find Simon Raspe sitting like a statue, with an ashen face, and bulging eyes.

"Man alive, what's the matter?" gasped Stretton, alarmed. "Are you ill?"

"Look!" shouted Raspe, in a strangled voice. "Look—look at these papers! I must be mad! I—I——"

His voice choked in his throat, and Stretton came across and seized the papers feverishly. His attitude was very different to that of his chief. He flew into a panic at once, and flung the papers down with a wild cry.

"What can it mean?" he shouted. "You put the right papers in the envelope, didn't you?"

"Yes—yes——"

"They must have been changed!" gasped Stretton.

"You infernal fool, that's impossible!" snarled Raspe. "How could they have been changed? The safe's been locked all the time! Only you and I knew the combination. By Heaven! Have you done this, Stretton?"

"I?" panted Stretton. "Don't be a fool, Raspe! Why should I touch them? Have you gone out of your mind? I've never looked at the package—I've never interfered with it at all! You must have made a mistake! Think, man—think! Didn't you put the papers somewhere else——"

"No, I didn't!" rapped out Simon Raspe.

He leapt to his feet and rushed across to the safe. Feverishly he turned over all the papers, thinking perhaps that there was another envelope. He knew all the time that there wasn't. And he found this was the case. He turned away from the safe with drooping shoulders, and with a hoarse breath.

"Stretton, there's been some treachery here," he said, with deadly calmness. "Somebody has been to this safe—somebody has tricked me! Those papers have been taken, and these worthless blanks substituted."

"But who—who?" shouted Stretton frantically. "Who could have taken them? Who knew anything about the matter? And how in the name of Hades could anybody open this safe without knowing the combination?"

"Keep calm, you fool—keep calm!"

snapped Raspe. "Getting into a fury won't do any good. We've got to face this thing squarely. Heavens above, the very worst might have happened!"

"Might have happened!" echoed Stretton. "It has happened!"

"We don't know—we've got to think!" exclaimed Raspe. "Neither you nor I have been to this safe for three days. I've been in bed, and you've had no occasion to use the safe. I put those papers away four or five days ago, and I haven't looked at them since."

"Then they might have been taken three days ago!" ejaculated Stretton hoarsely.

"Yes, they might," agreed Raspe. "Lockwood might have done it. He knocked me senseless, and he could have opened the safe before you got in—"

"That's impossible!" interrupted Stretton. "I smashed open the door twenty seconds after you'd been knocked out. Lockwood had no chance to open the safe, even if he had known the combination."

"But somebody did it—somebody who came into this room," said Raspe, pacing up and down with clenched fists. "We've got to consider this matter carefully, Stretton. We know for a fact that nobody could have got in at night. I keep a dog in this room all night long—every night. If anybody attempted to break in that dog would create havoc. The papers were taken during the day. It seems absolutely impossible, but it's the only other explanation. If we eliminate every impracticable suggestion, what remains must be the truth."

"It's no good relying upon theories of that kind—"

"Yes it is," said Raspe curtly. "Think! Who have we had in this library during this week? You've been here alone sometimes, Stretton. Have you ever had any strangers with you?"

"No."

"Neither have I," said Raspe. "Oh, but wait a moment! There was that infernal fool of a colonel. You remember? It was the day of the gale—he forced his way in, and railed at me about one of my trees that had fallen across the road."

"By Jove, yes!" said Stretton. "But you were with him all the time, Raspe."

The financier banged the table.

"I wasn't!" he exclaimed tensely. "The colonel fainted—went into a fit,

or something. I rushed out, and was away for three or four minutes. Providing he knew the combination he could have opened the safe and made the substitution in that time."

"But what could that old colonel know about the affair?"

"Was he an old colonel?" asked Raspe shrewdly. "Several times I've thought about it, Stretton, and I've never been absolutely satisfied in my own mind. And now it becomes significant. By Heaven! I know it's the truth—that man was a spy! He came here deliberately—with the set intention of getting those papers!"

"But—but—"

"Can't you see?" went on Raspe fiercely. "He came to the door and I wouldn't see him. So he forced himself upon me—forced his way right into this library. Then he worked up that apoplectic fit so that he should be left alone!"

"I believe you're right," said Stretton. "But who was he, Raspe? Not—not a Scotland Yard detective?"

"No—no!" snapped Raspe. "There isn't a detective at the yard who could disguise himself like that. It must be somebody who knows about this business—Great Heaven!"

Raspe suddenly came to a halt and stared at Stretton.

"Lee!" he said tensely. "Nelson Lee!"

"What?"

"I'll guarantee that Nelson Lee is the man," went on Raspe. "He's about the only one who could disguise himself so perfectly. He's here, Stretton—on the spot, practically! We know he's a Housemaster at St. Frank's, and it's owing to his influence that the charge against Pitt was withdrawn. I'll guarantee anything you like that Lee is in this case up to his neck. While we've been thinking ourselves absolutely safe, this cursed busybody has been working in secret. There's no question about it—it's not really a guess. Nelson Lee is the man who has those papers in his possession."

"But how did he know the combination?" demanded Stretton.

"That's a point that neither you nor I can tell," replied Raspe. "Perhaps he's been prowling round here—listening. He might have heard me mention it to you—I don't know. But that doesn't matter. What I do know is this

—Lee took those papers and he's got them now!"

Stretton gasped for breath.

"Then—then we're finished!" he panted. "Lee might swoop down at any moment! We must fly out of the country, Raspe—we must get away at once!"

Simon Raspe swore.

"Not yet!" he snarled. "Not until I've settled accounts with Lee! No, Stretton, we're not clearing out yet. By Heavens, no! But I can tell you straight out that I mean to set my wits to work. And Nelson Lee will suffer!"

Simon Raspe went over to his easy chair and sat down. And he remained there for a full hour, almost motionless. When he finally looked up there was a grim, dangerous light in his eyes.

"Well?" asked Stretton nervously.

"Listen," said Simon Raspe. "I've got something to tell you."

CHAPTER III.

SOMETHING LIKE A RECEPTION.

EDWARD OSWALD HANDFORTH burst into Study D.

"Oh, here you are!" he exclaimed breathlessly. "You silly asses! What the dickens are you doing here? It's nearly time for lessons, and I've been looking for you everywhere!"

Church grinned.

"Queer chap you are, Handy," he said. "We told you ten minutes ago that we were coming to the study, and yet you say you didn't know where we were! But what's the matter? What are you looking so excited about?"

Handforth glared.

"Who's excited?" he demanded.

"Oh, nobody," replied Church. "I was wrong, Handy. You're not excited at all. You're as cool as an iced cucumber."

Church said this for the sake of peace. He didn't want to start an argument—there really wasn't time, because morning lessons would start within a few minutes. It was Saturday, and brilliantly fine.

"Look here, my son, I've got an idea!" said Handforth. "It struck me as I was strolling about the Triangle. A ripping idea—a first class, gorgeous wheeze! What do you think of it?"

"Oh, magnificent!" said McClure sarcastically. "What is it?"

"You—you fatheaded ass!" roared Handforth. "Don't waste time! I'm asking you what you think of the wheeze, and I expect you to give me a straightforward answer without any of your silly rot!"

"Oh, anything to oblige," said McClure. "The idea's first-class Handy."

"Ripping!" said Church.

Handforth beamed.

"Glad you like it," he said. "Now, lemme see—Why, you silly asses! I haven't told you what the idea is, yet!"

"Haven't you?" asked Church, in amazement. "Well I'm blessed! Now you come to mention it, Handy, I don't seem to remember hearing what this hair-raising wheeze is. You must have forgotten it."

Handforth looked at his chums suspiciously.

"But you just said the idea was ripping!" he roared.

"Well, we had to say something—you kept on demanding our opinion," grinned McClure. "Don't be an ass, Handy. There's not much time before the bell goes, and I expect this idea of yours will take a deal of valuable time to explain. Out with it! We're all ears!"

"You are!" said Handforth pointedly.

"What the——"

"Now, listen," went on Handforth, before his chums could continue. "We've already planned to go over to Bannington this afternoon to give Pitt a ripping reception. We're going to cheer him to the echo."

"Oh, splendid!" said Church enthusiastically.

"Glorious!" declared McClure.

"Eh?"

"Isn't this the idea?" asked Church.

"No, you babbling donkey, it isn't!" bellowed Handforth.

"Sorry," said McClure. "Our mistake."

"We're going to Bannington, I say; and we're going to give Pitt a fine reception," said Handforth. "We've forgiven him for all his sins——"

"But he hasn't committed any sins——"

"Oh, don't quibble!" snorted Handforth. "I know he hasn't committed any sins, but we thought he had, and that comes to the same thing. We want Pitt back—we don't see why he should

be cast out like this. He's required in the Remove, and what we've got to do is to show him plainly that we're going to have him."

"Fine!" said Church. "A splendid idea!"

Handforth nearly choked.

"I haven't got to the idea yet!" he thundered.

"My hat! It's a long time coming!"

"How can I tell you anything when you keep interrupting?" asked Handforth grimly. "Now this is the idea——"

"Get ready!" muttered Church, nudging McClure.

"This is the idea!" repeated Handforth fiercely. "We're all going to see this match—we shall all be on the football ground. Well, when Pitt comes on we'll cheer him, won't we?"

"Rather!"

"To the echo!"

"Well, my idea is to do something better than that," said Handforth. "We'll train ourselves first—every fellow in the Remove. I mean. And, at the word, we'll all shout out the same thing—'We want you back!' We'll keep on yelling that to the boulder."

Church and McClure were silent.

"Well?" said Handforth glaring.

"Eh? What's the matter?" asked Church.

"I've told you the idea——"

"Oh, was that it?" asked Church, with a start. "You ought to have told us so, Handy. So that was it? Topping! Magnificent! Hold me up, Clurey—I feel quite faint with the stupendousness of it!"

Church collapsed into McClure's arms, and Handforth stood looking on with a face which was rapidly reddening. Church and McClure read the danger signs, and suddenly became more sedate. They felt it would be dangerous to rag their noble leader any further.

"Well, it's not a bad idea," said Church critically. "Of course, it's fearfully new, and I expect you dug it out of the Ark!"

"What?" roared Handforth. "It's my own idea—I thought of it absolutely off my own giddy bat!"

McClure nodded.

"I thought you didn't think of it with your brain!" he remarked. "A crowd of fellows shouting the same thing in one voice has been done millions of

times. But that doesn't mean to say it isn't a good wheeze. And it's certainly very effective. We'll all yell 'Pitt, we want you back!' It simply needs somebody to beat time, and there can't be any bloomer."

"My idea exactly!" said Handforth. "But that's not all. Directly after the match we'll swoop down on the field, grab Pitt, and carry him off."

"Oh!"

"What do you think of that?" went on Handforth. "We won't take any rot from him, but just swoop down and lift him away. Then we'll carry him shoulder high through Bannington and bring him right home to St. Frank's. How's that?"

"Well, it's not so bad, but supposing Pitt doesn't want to come?" asked Church. "We can't jolly well force him, can we? It's all very well to plan these things, but they don't always work out in the right way."

"Well, I've got another idea——"

Clang-clang!

"Thank goodness!" said Church fervently.

It was not often that he welcomed the sound of the bell for morning lessons. But even morning lessons were preferable to hearing another of Handforth's ideas. And the juniors trooped into the Form-room.

Lessons were a decided bore that morning, and Mr. Crowell found his class somewhat difficult to control. The fellows were all eager and anxious to be at liberty, for they were thinking of the big match at Bannington that afternoon—in which Pitt was playing for the League.

Saturday morning was always rather a difficult time for Mr. Crowell, and he was generally lax. And, at last, lessons came to an end, and all the fellows trooped out into the passages and the lobby and the Triangle.

Jack Grey was looking serene and happy.

"Everything's all right!" he said to me genially. "Nipper, old son, it's glorious to know that everything's O.K. again. I've made pals with Pitt, and I expect he'll be back at St. Frank's before long."

"Of course he will," I said. "This trouble of his will soon be over, and then we shall have him for ourselves—we shall be able to play him in all our

matches. His presence in the team will make a tremendous difference."

"Rather!" said Jack. "But fancy him playing in a professional game! My hat! I'm tremendously anxious to see him this afternoon!"

Grey was more anxious than anybody else.

For one reason, he wanted to see his chum on the field, and for another reason he knew that Pitt was going to try his utmost to get five goals on his own—so that he could win Lord Dorrimore's wager.

It would be a great match, indeed!

And, after dinner, there were signs of activity—not only in the Remove, but in almost every other Form. It seemed that St. Frank's was making a general exodus to Bannington.

On foot, on bicycles, and by train, the crowds went. The majority used their cycles, of course, but quite a number of fags set out early on foot. They had just scraped up enough money for admission, and there was nothing left for fares. The wangling which had gone on in the Third would have turned a City financier's hair quite grey.

Members of the Fifth and Sixth went by train, for there was one which left Bellton at a handy time. Still, it was necessary for everybody to get to Bannington at least an hour before the match started, for there was certain to be a record "gate."

There had been a great deal of talk in the papers of late about Abdullah, the mysterious forward. It had become known that he was really Reginald Pitt of St. Frank's. And to-day Pitt would be playing without his disguise. He would be himself—for the first time on the Bannington ground.

The club's supporters had been amazed to hear the truth about their most popular idol—for Pitt had indeed become the best liked member of the team. To find out that he was a St. Frank's junior had taken the crowd by surprise. And there were hundreds of other people in Bannington—who didn't usually attend the football matches—who would visit the ground on this particular afternoon.

So it was necessary to be in good time.

When the Remove arrived—in one big force—it was found that the grand stand was practically full up. Not that this mattered to the Remove. They weren't bothering about the grand stand. There

was plenty of room on the opposite side. In the shilling enclosure they made themselves comfortable.

There were a good few people standing at the railings already. But, somehow, or other, the Remove edged these unfortunates out of the positions they had taken up. When a big body of school-boys really gets on the go, that body needs a bit of stopping. And, within five minutes, the Remove was in sole possession of that section of railing. The juniors formed themselves up in an orderly fashion after the first rush. I was there, of course, with Sir Montie Tregallis-West and Tommy Watson, and Jack Grey was near by.

"We've got an hour to wait yet," said De Valerie.

"What does that matter?" asked Bob Christine. "It's a glorious day, and there's plenty to see. Besides, we can fill up the time by singing, or something of that kind. It's surprising how quickly the time flies."

"Let's practise that war cry!" roared Handforth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What war cry?"

"We all sing out together—in one voice," shouted Handforth. "We want Pitt back! See? Now, hold yourselves ready, and yell when I drop my hand."

Handforth raised his hand and got ready. It was absurd of him to scratch his nose just then, because all the juniors took that to be the signal, and they let fly. Some were late, and the result was a scream.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's no good!" bellowed Handforth. "We've got to do it properly!"

They tried again, and several times after that. But, at last, after practising for about fifteen minutes, the result was quite pleasing. Handforth raised his hand, and then dropped it sharply.

"WE WANT PITT BACK!"

All the juniors yelled in unison—in one solid voice. And the shout rang out with such tremendous gusto that it was probably heard in the far corners of Bannington. If Pitt was within a mile, he must have heard it.

As a matter of fact, Reginald Pitt appeared.

He came to the doorway of the dressing rooms—whence the players would emerge at the right time. He waved his hand, and a perfect roar went up from the

juniors, and from a crowd of fags who had just arrived.

"There he is!" bellowed Handforth. "Come on!"

Edward Oswald excitedly commenced climbing over the railings.

"Come back, you ass!" I roared.

"Rats!"

Handforth was over, and he turned.

"Come on!" he gasped. "We'll speak to Pitt now!"

For a moment the fellows hesitated. Then one or two of them followed Handy's example. That settled it. Twenty or thirty juniors leapt over the railings like hares, and the next moment they were rushing across the football field at full tear. Handforth was still leading.

Shouts came from all parts of the ground, but the juniors took no notice. And they arrived at the dressing-room doorway just in time to seize Reginald Pitt before he dodged back.

"Hi, steady on——" he began.

"You boulder!" panted Handforth.

"You spoofing rotter! What the dickens do you mean by it?"

"Good old Pitt!"

"Hurrah!"

"We want you back at St. Frank's, old son!"

"Lemme do the talking!" bellowed Handforth. "Now, then, Pitt you've got to give an account of yourself! Of course, I knew all along that you were Abdullah——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course you did, Handy," grinned Pitt. "It's amazing to me that everybody else didn't know. After all, the disguise was a very simple one, and there was nothing in it. It's decent of you fellows to come here like this——"

"Rot!" said Owen major, pushing his face forward. "I say, Pitt, I've got to—to apologise," he went on, turning very red. "I was the chap who stirred up that trouble against you—when you were ragged, you know. We—we didn't know everything then, and—and we thought all sorts of rotten things. I—I hope you'll let bygones be bygones."

"My dear chap, you needn't say any more about it," interrupted Pitt. "It was very decent of you to come here like this. But you'll all get into a row if you're not careful—and you might be turned out of the ground. It's against all rules to——"

"Blow the rules. This is an exceptional occasion."

"Rather!" said De Valerie. "And don't forget, Pitt, we shall be watching you, and cheering you. You've got to play well to-day."

"Well?" repeated Pitt. "I don't know—I'll do my best."

He was thinking of that wager with Lord Dorrimore. He had to obtain five goals himself in order to win that wager. And the matter had been preying on his mind—he had not slept with his usual soundness during the night.

And now he had an uncomfortable feeling that these juniors would hamper him somewhat. They had the best intentions in the world, but Reginald Pitt was not altogether grateful for their expressions of approval.

"There's something I want to ask you," he said suddenly.

"Go ahead!"

"Well, when the game starts, will you keep yourselves in check as much as possible?" asked Pitt quietly. "Yell as much as you like, of course, and cheer as much as you like. But please don't shout directly at me. You know what I mean. It's liable to take a fellow off his play if he has a whole crowd addressing him personally, and advising him what to do, and all that kind of thing. I want to play the best game of my life to-day, and you'll all help me tremendously by keeping yourselves in hand."

"Right!" said Handforth. "Don't you worry, Pitt."

"We won't bother you, old son!"

Just then Mr. Page came along, and two policemen hovered in the offing.

"Now then, you boys, we can't allow this, you know," said Mr. Page, good-naturedly. "I'm afraid I must ask you to go back to your places."

"Right you are, sir!"

"No harm done, sir!"

The juniors caused no trouble, but went back across the field in a body, climbed the fence, and took up their old positions. They were feeling more cheerful now, for they had seen Pitt at close quarters, and they had told him what they thought.

By this time, the band had arrived, and the enclosures had practically filled up. In about twenty minutes the game would commence, and enthusiasm was already running high. Bannington had been beaten by Porthampton at the away

match, and to-day all the supporters were hoping that Bannington would take their revenge.

In the grand stand, in one of the best seats, a tall, well-built gentleman sat. He did not look particularly rich or distinguished. But he happened to be Lord Dorrimore, the millionaire sportsman.

And Dorrie had come down specially to see Pitt win his wager. For, somehow, Dorrie had an idea at the back of his mind that Reginald Pitt would succeed. It seemed a hopeless proposition, but it was possible.

And then things speeded up.

The band was playing its final piece, and the crowd was getting ready to cheer. And cheer they did, a moment later, when the Bannington team ran briskly out on to the field, with Pitt among the first four.

"Hurrah!"

"Play up, the bonny boys!"

"Good old Abdullah!"

"Pitt—Pitt!"

And then came one roar above all the others.

"We want Pitt back!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Somehow or other, a feeling of intense excitement was being worked up—not only among the St. Frank's contingent, but also among the regular supporters of the club. They had a feeling that this game was going to be something exceptional.

This enthusiasm had spread to the players themselves. They, too, were eager and anxious for the tussle to start. They had a double reason for going all out. Firstly, they wanted to please their own supporters; and, secondly, they were anxious to take their revenge upon Porthampton for the previous defeat.

Reginald Pitt looked very different now. The crowds hardly recognised him at first. For he was no longer dark brown, but just the same as the other players. Now that everybody knew, however, they easily recognised that well-known figure—well-knit, supple and agile. It was the figure of Abdullah, the winger who had been doing such marvellous things for the side.

Pitt himself had one thought in his mind—and one only.

He had to win that wager.

To-day he would play his game of games—and he would depart completely

from his usual procedure. He had already decided upon that. Not a soul had been told of his intention—that is, not a soul in the team. It was Pitt's intention to play his own game—and to find the net as many times as he could!

Would he succeed in his well-nigh hopeless object?

CHAPTER IV.

FALLING INTO THE TRAP.

NELSON LEE sat in his study at St. Frank's, and held before him a most peculiar-looking document.

It had arrived by that morning's post, and Lee had scanned it several times already. It was now afternoon, and to be precise, almost exactly the time that the big football match between Bannington and Porthampton was about to start. But it is necessary that these events should be set down in their proper order.

Nelson Lee regarded the document closely.

"Yes, I must certainly go," he said to himself. "It is most important that this whole affair should be cleared up as quickly as possible. And, by keeping this appointment, matters will probably be speeded up."

The document was really a kind of letter.

Lee examined the envelope again. It was a plain manilla envelope, but it contained no writing. Indeed, printed words had been cut from newspapers, and so forth, and the address had been completed. "Lee, Ancient House, Frank's College, near Bannington."

The postmark was Bannington, and there was no clue whatever to show who had written the letter.

The letter itself was just the same. It had been pieced together from printed words, and these words were stuck upon a plain sheet of notepaper. Thus there was not a scrap of handwriting at all.

And the letter itself ran in this way:

"Must see you to-day. Please be in spinney near bridge half-mile from Edgmore at three o'clock afternoon. Have important information for you. Lockwood."

Nelson Lee was looking highly satisfied. Things were working out well. This letter, obviously, had been put together by Stanley Lockwood, the private secre-

tary who had been sent to prison on a false charge.

Lee had been wanting to see Lockwood, but had not had the opportunity so far. Lockwood had not been available. He had probably been hanging about somewhere, but he had not made himself known to anybody.

And now this letter had come.

It was just what Nelson Lee had wanted. He would certainly keep this appointment, and he was sure that good would come of it. He knew the little spinney near the bridge at Edgmore, and there would be no difficulty in meeting Lockwood.

Quite possibly the convict had been lurking in that little wood ever since his escape. In any case, Lee would see the man and have a long talk with him. He was quite innocent, and Lee was confident of being able to establish his innocence before many days had passed.

An interview with Lockwood was necessary for the furtherance of Nelson Lee's plans. Indeed, he had been wondering how he could get into touch with the man. And now this letter had come, solving the difficulty.

Lee glanced at his watch, and saw that the time was nearly a quarter-to-three. He rose to his feet, knowing that he would have to be starting at once. He was going on his bicycle, and he could just do the trip within twelve or fifteen minutes. He started off without delay.

And he rode along fairly easily, thinking deeply all the time. Just as three o'clock was striking on the old church at Edgmore he came within sight of the little spinney. He dismounted from his machine and placed it against the hedge.

Then he broke through a gap and entered the wood. He went cautiously, looking about him all the time, expecting to see the sender of the letter at any moment. But Lee walked on, and all was silent.

At last he had penetrated into the centre of the spinney where the trees were thick, and where the shadows were deep—for a considerable amount of foliage still remained on the trees. Lee paused when he got into the heart of the wood, and looked about him.

"Lockwood!" he called softly.

There was no reply. And then, suddenly, a startling thing took place.

There came a crackling snapping of the twigs in the rear. Before Nelson

Lee could look round he was seized by two men. He twisted at once, whirling round to find out the course of this unexpected attack.

And he found himself in the grasp of Simon Raspe and Stretton!

"Quick, man!" snapped Stretton. "Down with him!"

Lee clutched for his revolver, but was too late. Stretton's foot hooked itself round his ankle, and the next moment Lee crashed over on his back. Before he could attempt to defend himself or make any effort at attack, Raspe and Stretton were upon him, holding him down so that he could hardly move.

"The rope—quick!" snapped Simon Raspe. "Come on, man!"

Stretton pulled a length of rope towards him. Lee's hands were bound, and then his ankles were securely tied. It was a neat capture, and Lee had had no opportunity of outwitting these rascals. He could not even speak, for a big scarf was bound round his face.

And there he lay, helpless.

"Now, Mr. Nelson Lee, I rather think we hold the trump card!" panted Simon Raspe triumphantly. "You have not displayed a large amount of sagacity this time, eh? You fell into the trap very neatly."

"It's no good talking here!" muttered Stretton. "Somebody might come, you know—our best plan is to take him straight into the cottage. We can't afford to take any risks, Raspe."

Simon Raspe nodded.

"You are right," he agreed. "The whole thing could not have been planned better. By sending that decoy letter, purporting to come from Lockwood, Lee was deceived. Our scheme has worked out well, Stretton."

Without further delay the two men picked up Nelson Lee and carried him by his shoulders and feet through the wood. They went in the opposite direction, and finally emerged just at the back of a little cottage which faced a tiny by-lane. There was a wooded garden at the rear of this cottage, with a spinney immediately behind.

Therefore, it was not necessary for Raspe and Stretton to expose themselves while carrying Nelson Lee into the cottage. They entered the weed-grown garden, and quickly carried their burden up towards the rear door, which was standing ajar. Lee was carried inside

and deposited upon the bare floor of the front room. The room was almost in darkness, for shutters were fixed outside, and the whole of the window was boarded up.

The cottage, in fact, was in a state of semi-decay.

It had probably been lying empty for many years, and Raspe could not have selected a better place for the scheme he had in mind.

Stretton went to the back door and securely bolted it.

Then he came back and found that Raspe had removed the scarf from Nelson Lee's mouth. The detective was looking quite calm, although there was a dangerous light in his eye. But he must have known that he was beaten.

"Well, Mr. Simon Raspe, what is the meaning of this?" he asked. "Surely this is not the act of a peace-loving country gentleman?"

Raspe waved his hand.

"I think we can dispense with that kind of talk, Mr. Lee," he exclaimed softly. "We understand one another, I feel sure. I am not mincing matters—it is my way to get straight to the point. You have been actively engaged against me for some little time, and I am aware of that fact. It suits my purpose to act drastically, and that is what I am doing now."

"I can quite believe that," said Nelson Lee grimly.

"I got you here by means of a simple trick," went on Raspe. "The letter you received this morning, as you now can guess, was not sent by Lockwood at all, but by myself. I was certain that you would fall into the trap."

"You appear to have won all along the line," said Nelson Lee grimly.

"Not yet, but I am hoping to do so," replied Simon Raspe. "It is not my intention to explain matters fully to you. But I know that you have been operating against me, and I have made no mistake in getting hold of you in this way."

"Your conversation is very interesting," said Nelson Lee. "May I asked in what way I have been operating?"

Raspe bent forward.

"Do you remember Colonel Skinner?" he asked tensely.

Nelson Lee chuckled with amusement.

"Oh! I understand!" he smiled.

"And so at last you have jumped to it. We can talk more freely now, Mr. Raspe. So you have come to the conclusion that I was the hot-tempered Colonel Skinner?"

"I know for a fact that you were!"

"You are right," said Nelson Lee. "It was I who forced my way into your library, Mr. Raspe. Don't you think it was rather a neat plan?"

"I'll give you the credit for what you did," said Simon Raspe. "It was an exceedingly clever dodge, and it was successful in its object. For you obtained a package of papers from my private safe. Is that true?"

"Yes," said Lee. "Why should I refuse to answer since you appear to know all about it? And, after all, it matters little whether I answer truthfully or not. As I am habitually truthful, however, there is no necessity for me to resort to falsehood. I did take the papers."

"You infernal spy!" snarled Stretton.

Nelson Lee shook his head.

"Hardly that," he said. "Not a spy, Mr. Stretton. I am a detective, and I have been engaged in the task of obtaining incriminating evidence against a pair of singularly blackguardly rogues!"

"You—you—"

"Keep calm, Stretton!" interrupted Raspe. "Let him talk—let him insult us. Words do no harm, and we have the upper hand. If it relieves Lee to explode—well, let him explode."

"You are very generous," said Nelson Lee mockingly.

"And now we must get to business," went on Simon Raspe. "You may think that I have made a mistake in revealing my hand in this way, Lee. I am not of that opinion. Something definite had to be done. You have those papers in your possession, and I need them. By careful thought and concentration of mind I arrived at the conclusion that you had the documents. My conclusions were correct."

"Quite!" said Nelson Lee.

"By breaking into the school at dead of night we should have made a grave mistake," went on Raspe. "For you would have been on the alert, and the documents, no doubt, are safely enclosed in your desk or in your safe. Therefore, I hit upon this scheme. My plan is to appropriate your keys, and you will be left here. To-night I shall visit

the school, and I shall ransack your property—quite a simple matter, since I shall be armed with all your keys.”

“A very astute idea, Mr. Raspe,” said Nelson Lee. “But have you not overlooked the most important point? What if your valuable papers are not at the school at all? How will you go on then?”

“I have thought of that,” replied Raspe. “This is only the first move. I believe the papers are at the school, and I shall search there first. In the meantime you will be held a prisoner. If I fail—well, I shall adopt other measures—I shall compel you to divulge the secret.”

“Oh, I understand,” said Nelson Lee, his eyes glittering. “You rogues! If you dare to tamper with my safe—”

He snapped his mouth shut abruptly. Simon Raspe burst into a low laugh.

“Ah!” he said softly. “So we have hit the nail upon the head, eh? Thank you, Mr. Lee! That little outburst of yours was most illuminating. So the papers are in your safe? Good! It simplifies my task greatly.”

Lee struggled desperately at his bonds.

“You—you infernal hounds!” he panted. “Yes, certain papers are in my safe, but you need not think that you will succeed in your object. Many hours will elapse between now and the night. I shall not be content to remain here—”

“Whether you are content makes no difference—you will remain,” interrupted Raspe. “Stretton will guard you the whole time—you will not be left for a moment. And when those papers are recovered you will not be released.”

“What do you mean?” snapped Lee.

“Surely you must realise that it would not be safe for us to give you your liberty back?” said Simon Raspe cunningly. “I have my own skin to think about, Mr. Lee—that is of more importance to me than yours.”

“Are you threatening to—to murder me?” asked the detective.

“Dear me, no,” replied Raspe. “Nothing so drastic as that. But there is no need to go into details now—details can wait until afterwards.”

Lee gritted his teeth and made no comment. And Simon Raspe and Stretton retired to a corner of the room and talked in low tones.

“The whole thing is easy now,” mut-

tered Raspe. “I was sure that this plan would succeed, Stretton. Lee has given himself completely away—the papers are in his safe.”

“It seems like it,” said Stretton.

“There’s no doubt about it—”

“But do you think it’ll be safe to break into the school?” asked Stretton.

“There is no need for you to be alarmed—I shall do that part of the work, anyhow,” replied Raspe. It will be quite safe, Stretton. Lee’s absence will cause no comment—since I shall send a wire to the Headmaster, in Lee’s name, stating that he will not return until to-morrow. I have thought everything out.”

“And what shall we do with Lee afterwards?”

“That can be left until later,” replied Raspe grimly. “I have certain plans. The main thing, Stretton, is that our papers are in Lee’s safe. Once we have recovered them not a single atom of evidence remains. We shall be safe. No matter what the police suspect, we can snap our fingers at them.”

Stretton breathed hard.

“Thank goodness Lee hasn’t handed those documents over to the police,” he said. “That would have been a terrible calamity.”

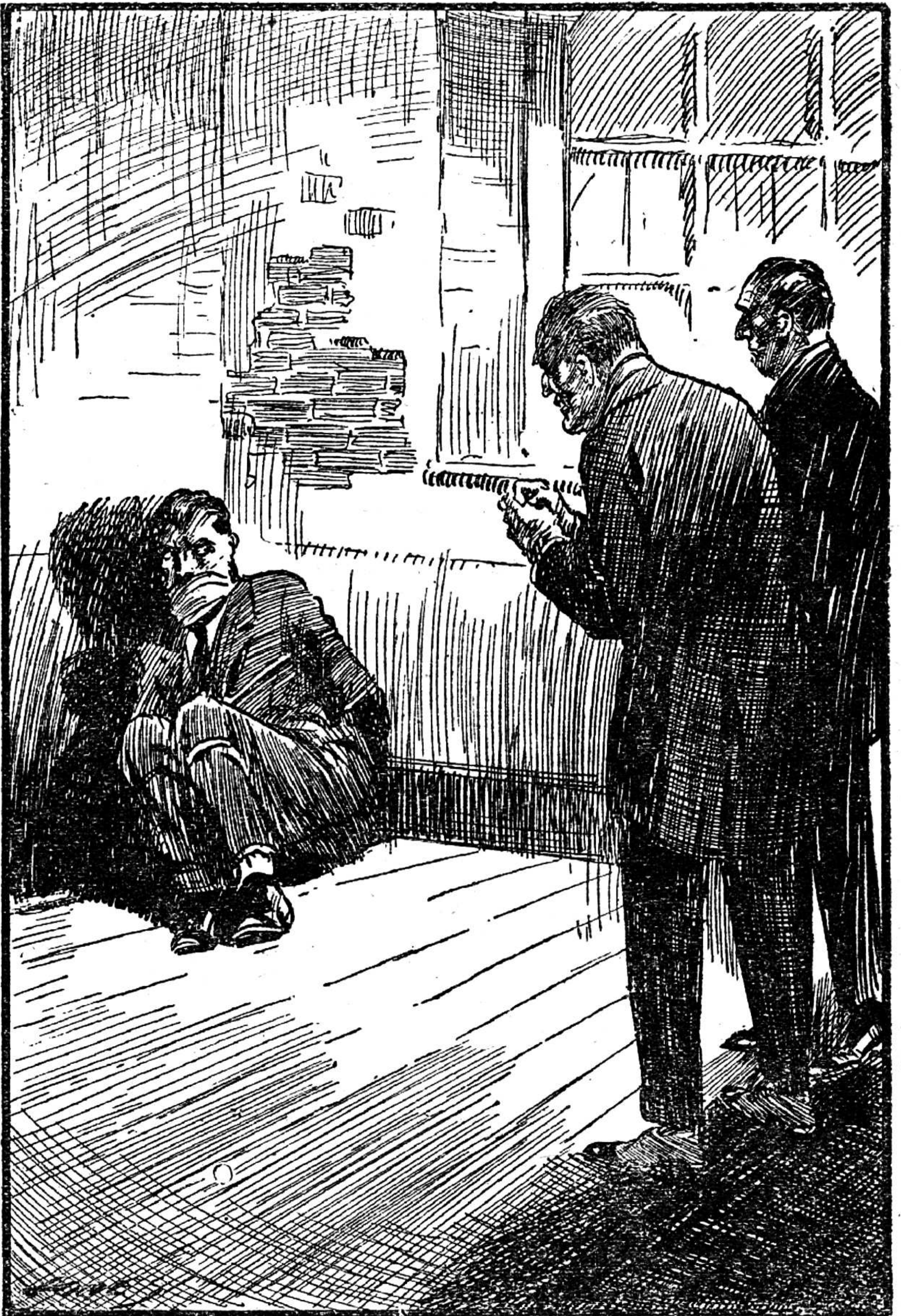
“It would,” agreed Raspe. “But it is always the same with these private detectives. They never like to take their cases to the official police until the last moment. I had always supposed that Nelson Lee was a very smart man,” he added, in a louder voice, so that Lee could hear. “But this affair has proved to me that his cleverness has been greatly over estimated.”

Stretton laughed contemptuously.

“He is as easily caught as a country policeman!” he exclaimed.

“Possibly!” rapped out Nelson Lee. “We cannot always be prepared, my friends. I was caught easily, perhaps, but you may find that it will be a very difficult matter to hold me.”

“An idle boast!” sneered Raspe. “I shall take good care that you have no opportunity of escaping—so do not get any false hopes in that direction. I have exposed you for what you are—a very ordinary person with no particular brain power. You may have flashes of cleverness now and again, but this afternoon’s affair has proved that you are not always up to standard.”



In the opinion of Mr. Raspe, Lee had been very neatly trapped. But there was a glint in the great detective's eye that suggested a short-lived triumph for the rascally financier.

It rather pleased Simon Raspe to sneer at Nelson Lee in this contemptuous way. Inwardly, Raspe knew that Lee was very clever. And he had only fallen into this trap because Raspe himself had been cleverer. That was the long and short of it.

Raspe turned to his companion.

"There is no need for me to remain here," he said. "I must go into Bannington at once and see about sending that telegram. There are one or two other little matters which must be attended to. I will leave you now, Stretton, and return about six o'clock."

"Right!" said Stretton.

"On no account leave this room," went on the financier. "Don't allow Lee to be by himself for a moment. He is as slippery as an eel, and we cannot afford to give him the slightest chance."

"You needn't be afraid," said Stretton. "I won't leave him."

Raspe nodded and prepared to go. He donned a hat and overcoat, and lit one of his big cigars. Then he made his way to the rear of the cottage—since the front door was screwed up and could not be opened.

Stretton remained in the doorway of the front room, and he suddenly observed that Nelson Lee was smiling with serene calmness, and there was even a twinkle of amusement in his eye.

"You seem particularly pleased!" snapped Stretton. "Do you enjoy this kind of thing, Lee?"

"Under the present circumstances, yes," replied Nelson Lee smoothly. "Really, I am feeling quite sorry for Mr. Raspe. He will receive a terrible shock very soon—and so will you, Stretton."

"I don't think so," said Stretton gruffly.

Raspe opened the back door and strode out. But he only took half a stride forward. For, singularly enough, a very burly individual was barring his path. He was a sturdily built man with a square type of face, clean shaven, and with a grim look in his eyes. He was attired in a lounge suit and overcoat and bowler hat.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Raspe," he said calmly. "Just the very man I wanted to see."

Raspe started back.

"What the——" he began.

Then he gave a hoarse cry. The burly

man had come forward quickly. He gave Raspe a heavy push and sent him reeling back into the cottage. At the same moment he gave a sharp command and three other men appeared. They all crowded into the cottage. Raspe whipped his hand round to his hip pocket.

"No, I don't think so!" said the burly one curtly. He seized Raspe's wrist and whirled him round. The next second the financier was staggered to find his wrists secured by a pair of jingling handcuffs!

Stretton, too staggered to move at first, now made a desperate dash for the rickety staircase. He was captured at once and handcuffed. The surprise was complete and absolute.

"You—you fools!" raved Simon Raspe. "What—what is the meaning of this? How dare you?"

"It means, Mr. Simon Raspe, that I have here a warrant for your arrest," said the burly man grimly. "It may interest you to know that my name is Lennard—Chief Detective Inspector of Scotland Yard."

"Good heavens!"

"We—we've been tricked!" shouted Stretton thickly.

"Exactly!" came an amused voice from the front room. "I say, Lennard, just send one of your men here to cut me free."

The Chief Inspector obliged at once.

"There—there is some mistake!" said Raspe hoarsely.

"There is no mistake, Mr. Raspe!" exclaimed Lennard. "It is my duty to arrest you on a charge of conspiracy and fraud, and I must warn you that anything you say will be taken down, and may be used in evidence against you. Take my advice and say nothing."

"But—but——"

Lennard took no notice of him, but was warning Stretton in the same way. The pair were absolutely staggered. This was the last thing in the world they expected. They couldn't understand it.

Nelson Lee strolled into the rear room, smiling.

"Not quite so successful, Mr. Raspe, eh?" he observed. "I rather think it is my turn to do just a little gloating now. Don't you agree with me that the tables have been very neatly turned?"

"Curse you!" snarled Raspe. "What does this mean?"

"It means that your little career is at an end," replied Nelson Lee smoothly. "You thought that you deceived me with your precious letter. Not at all, Mr. Raspe. I guessed the truth at once—I was sure that the message was a decoy, and so I took due precautions."

"You—you confounded busybody!"

"No, I am simply furthering the ends of justice," said Nelson Lee. "I took measures at once, Mr. Raspe, and—well, this is the result. The representatives of the law are here, and you are under arrest."

"But—but there is no case against me—"

"On the contrary, the case against you is of the strongest possible description," said Nelson Lee curtly. "The papers I obtained from your safe were very illuminating, and the police have found them to be of great interest. Your precious plot against Mr. Pitt is now exposed in all its details."

"You fool, Raspe!" snarled Stretton thickly. "I knew what it would be! I told you to destroy those papers at the very first. If you had only taken my advice, everything would have been all right."

"Fortunately, Mr. Raspe did not take your advice," put in the Chief Inspector. "It is only owing to these mistakes that such gentry as you are bowled over. I have never met a criminal yet who hasn't made a blunder at one time or another. Now, you will please get yourselves ready."

"What are you going to do with us?" demanded Raspe frantically.

"I have a car waiting outside, and you will be conveyed to London at once," replied the Scotland Yard man. "Your arrest will not be made public for a day or two, and no reports will be allowed to come out in the newspapers."

Raspe and Stretton, utterly dejected, were taken by the plain clothes men out of the cottage, and into the waiting car. Lennard stopped behind for a few minutes to have a word with Nelson Lee.

"Went off like a dream, old man," he said cheerfully. "Upon my soul, you always manage to work things just right, Lee. You must have been putting in some careful work on this case."

"As a matter of fact, I have," said Nelson Lee. "You see, I had my eye on Raspe all the time. I knew he was guilty, but the main point was to get the

evidence. Well, by adopting a comparatively simple trick, I did so. I was quite satisfied with that evidence, and I passed it on to you at once."

"The case will be quite a neat little one to set down," said the Chief Inspector. "Raspe and Stretton don't stand an earthly. They'll probably be sentenced to about ten years."

"It's the biggest fraud that has been engineered this decade," said Nelson Lee. "I am highly delighted with the result of my efforts. For not only Mr. Pitt will get his fortune back, but several others of Raspe's victims will see justice done. The case has ended very satisfactorily."

"With a surprise for the pair at the finish," chuckled Lennard. "They tried to spoof you, Lee, and you spoofed them. These dramatic stunts are quite in your line. It was my plan to go straight to Raspe and collar him in his own house."

Leo nodded.

"That certainly seemed to be the best way," he said. "But when I got that letter this morning, I knew what it meant, and I didn't see any reason why Mr. Raspe shouldn't play a part in this final incident."

Shortly afterwards, Chief-Detective-Inspector Lennard took his departure. And Nelson Lee, smiling with satisfaction, mounted his bicycle and rode into Bannington. He made his way to the football ground. For he knew that Dorrie was there, and he was quite keen about seeing his old friend.

CHAPTER V.

REGINALD PITT'S ASTOUNDING PLAY!

"THEY'RE off!"

The referee had just blown his whistle, and the match had started.

Thousands of eyes followed every movement of the players. It could not have been a better afternoon for the game, and everybody was worked up to a pitch of excitement and enthusiasm.

Even the Porthampton players were on their mettle as they had never been before. Bannington were the champions, and Porthampton had beaten them once. It was the ambition of the visitors to beat Bannington a second time.

"Go it, the boys!"

"Play up, Bannington!"

Bannington were playing up, and

Pitt was just finding his feet. During the first five minutes of the game he hardly had any opportunity of displaying his special qualities.

The ball was not passed to him, for the Bannington half-backs were finding great difficulty in mid-field. The visitors were very aggressive, attacking with vigour and vim.

And, during that short period, the Bannington goal was besieged, and was in danger on two occasions.

Then, at last, the ball was sent out into midfield. The Porthampton men failed to keep it, and it was sent straight out to the left wing. But the Bannington forwards on that side could not keep control of the leather, for the defence was strong. And the next moment the ball was passed right across the field. Hearne, the centre-forward, dashed in and sent in a first-time shot which the visiting goalie had great difficulty in dealing with. But he managed to scramble the leather out, and it was cleared by the left-back.

This man kicked hurriedly—there was no time to do anything else. The ball fell almost at the foot of the Bannington right-half—who passed it quickly and accurately to Pitt. The junior was upon it in a second, and away he went up the touch line like a racehorse.

The St. Frank's crowd burst into a roar.

"Pitt—Pitt!"

"Now is your chance, old son!"

"Centre—centre!"

But Pitt did not centre. He had a splendid opportunity of doing so. Both Hearne and Howard—the inside men—were in position for scoring, and if Pitt had passed he would probably have given his colleagues a chance of scoring on the spot.

But, quite contrary to his usual play, he didn't pass.

He took the ball right up, and then found himself beset by a Porthampton back. Even now he had plenty of time to centre the ball. Instead of doing so, he indulged in some fancy work, fighting quite a duel with the back.

The crowd yelled itself hoarse.

"Centre!"

"Don't play about with the ball!"

"What's the matter with you?"

Pitt took no notice of these yells. He had one thought in his mind. Every goal that was scored must be scored off his own boot. He bitterly realised that

his colleagues would accuse him of selfishness. But that wouldn't be helped, for they would be right. In this game he was selfish—he wanted to score himself—it would be no good passing the ball to others.

And it must be admitted that his tactics were astoundingly clever. He almost made circles round that back, and finally left him behind. Then he streaked for goal, taking no notice of Howard, who yelled to him to pass.

The crowd now roared with excitement. Pitt had not lost the ball, and once again the spectators were with him. And Pitt looked extremely dangerous as he dashed up. He took the most astounding chances.

The Porthampton centre-half had come tearing up. Pitt ran round him, and left the man yards away. He ran towards the goal, and the custodian rushed out upon him. Pitt steadied himself, and kicked.

It was a powerful, low drive—a shot that went in with terrific, devastating force. The goalkeeper flung himself at full length, but failed. And the leather simply crashed into the back of the net, and went clean through.

"Goal!"

"Oh, well played!"

"Good old Pitt!"

"Goal!"

The spectators went nearly off their heads.

Pitt stood quite still, breathing hard. He was as cool as ice, and now a glow of satisfaction went through him.

"One!" he muttered tensely.

The next moment he was surrounded by his colleagues, who shook his hand vigorously. And they were all astonished.

"Why didn't you pass?" asked Howard. "It doesn't matter, of course, but it was fearfully risky——"

"I scored, anyway," said Pitt steadily.

"Yes, that's all right—but you mustn't take those chances again," put in Fred Hearne. "Be more careful, young 'un."

Pitt nodded, and the players went to their positions. There was a slight delay while the net was being roughly repaired. And when the game was restarted, the Bannington Eleven went forward with renewed vigour. That early goal had given them great encouragement. The Porthampton men were just as determined.

For some little time it was a fight in midfield, each team working hard for the supremacy. Porthampton nearly scored, their centre sending in a hot shot which Carden only just punched out. The ball fell in a handy position for the Bannington left-back to clear.

And then Pitt seemed to go mad again.

Instead of keeping to his usual place, he streaked down the field, reached the leather before the back could get it, and away he went. It was the most extraordinary action that a forward could possibly take.

"Oh, good man!"

"Now then, Pitt—let's have another!"

And this was Pitt's intention. He didn't keep to his usual position even now, but seemed to imagine that he was centre-forward. For he streaked right up the field like one possessed. The other players simply stood still, watching him, unable to account for his singular change of tactics.

Three members of the enemy he beat to the wide, working his way round them without pausing in his stride. And from fifteen yards' range he sent in a shot which certainly ought to have scored. But the goalkeeper simply hurled himself at it, and tipped it over the bar.

"Corner!"

"Oh, well played, Pitt!"

"Better luck next time!"

Hearne rushed up to Pitt breathlessly.

"What's the idea?" he demanded.

"Have you gone out of your mind, Pitt? You nearly scored then, but why can't you keep to your place? That might have been a goal if you'd run up the touch line and then centred——"

"I can't help it," muttered Pitt. "I'm doing my best!"

He rushed away for the corner kick was about to be taken. He was extremely glad that it was on the left wing—otherwise he would have been obliged to have taken the kick himself. Now he had a chance of netting the ball.

He waited, all his nerves on stretch. The winger sent in a good centre, but it fell rather too close to the goal mouth, and the custodian had no difficulty in punching the leather clear. It went high, and everybody assumed that no goal would materialise.

Then Reginald Pitt leapt high into the air. It was a desperate jump, and it

seemed impossible that any good could result from it. But Pitt met the ball with his head, and he put a peculiar twist on it that nearly ricked his neck, but the ball jerked back, scraped the left upright a few inches from the crossbar, and then bounded off just behind the goalie, who leapt up to clear this unexpected danger.

He was too late—the ball rolled over him.

"Goal!"

"Good old Pitt!"

The excitement was absolutely tremendous, and it was beginning to be understood by everybody that something of a very exceptional character had taken possession of Reginald Pitt. Not one man in a thousand would have dreamed it possible to score from that corner kick. And yet Pitt had done so. He had scored because he was grimly determined.

"Two!" he muttered, with wild satisfaction. "Can it be done? Oh, I believe there's a chance!"

Howard came up to him, and thumped his back.

"Good man!" he said. "I'm blessed if I know what's the matter with you, but we're two up, and Porthampton's chances are pretty slim. Keep it up, Reggie, old son—but don't forget that we're here."

In the grand stand, Lord Dorrimore was grinning cheerfully to himself.

"Well, the young bouncer's got two already—an' the game's only been goin' half-an-hour," he murmured. "If he goes on at this rate, he'll get ten! By gad! I've got an idea he'll do the trick—an' bang goes my ten thousand!"

Dorrie grinned again at the thought of it—for, to tell the truth, that was just what he wanted. And he was enjoying this game with all his heart. It was a very exceptional game in every sense.

Pitt was aware of the fact that the Porthampton men were eyeing him rather strangely. And now Pitt was a marked player. No matter where he went he found at least two of the enemy dogging him like shadows. Every movement was followed, and he found great difficulty in getting away with the ball at all.

But, in spite of this, he made several breaks, and on two occasions he looked like scoring again, but failed at the last moment. Once he raced up the touch line in his usual style, and sent over a

beautiful centre. Exactly two seconds later, Tom Howard had the ball between the posts.

"Goal!"

The crowd was cheering with delight now. Three—nothing! Porthampton were practically wiped out of existence, and they certainly had no chance of winning. But football is an uncertain game.

There were exactly twelve minutes left before half-time. And during those twelve minutes the Porthampton forwards attacked the Bannington citadel with the utmost vigour. Pitt never saw the ball. It remained up the other end of the field the whole time.

Corner kicks came with unpleasant frequency, and from these Porthampton found the net twice. The Bannington defence crumpled up. They could do nothing right, and even Carden, who was generally a most reliable goalkeeper, seemed to get into a panic. For just as the whistle was about to blow for half-time, he allowed Porthampton to get a third goal. A weak shot was sent in which a baby could have saved. But Carden slipped, sat down violently, and turned round just in time to see the ball roll gently over the line.

The crowd was positively disgusted.

Just when everything was going well—just when Bannington seemed to be in an unbeatable position—this collapse had taken place. And the two teams left the field with honours even—a most extraordinary state of affairs.

Until twelve minutes before half-time the Porthampton players had been nowhere. Then they had got a goal, and the other two had followed rapidly. But an occurrence of this kind is by no means uncommon in League football.

"Rotten, beastly luck!" growled Tom Howard, as he sponged himself down in the dressing-room. "Carden, you ought to be kicked!"

The goalie looked penitent.

"I deserve to be," he exclaimed. "I think I must have been dotty to let that ball get by a third time. I tripped over a patch of wet grass."

"Oh, don't make excuses!" grumbled one of the others.

"What we've got to do is to buck up and get the lead again," said Hearne grimly. "We can't let things go on like this. And what's the matter with you, Pitt? You've never played such a queer game before."

"Don't go on at him," said Howard. "He played queerly, I'll admit, but he scored twice, and that's something. If we can only get another goal in the second half—"

"It's no good talking about what we might do, and if this and if the other!" broke in Hearne. "The main thing is to work together. The best team in the world falls to pieces if there's no combination."

This, as Pitt well knew, was intended for him. Hearne didn't like to say much, because Pitt had always played so well, and after all, he had found the net twice. But it was certainly true that Pitt's changed tactics had put the whole team in a state of uncertainty.

Just before the second half was about to commence, Mr. Page came bustling up, and he went straight to Pitt and laid a hand upon his shoulder.

"I was watching you closely in the first half, my boy," said the manager. "Try and work more with the others for the rest of the game. I quite understand your eagerness to score—all your school chums are watching you. But you mustn't let that interfere with your game. Do your best for the team—and not for yourself!"

"All right, sir," muttered Pitt.

As he supposed, everybody was thinking that he was trying to show off before his school chums—everybody believed that he had departed from his usual game so that he could get all the glory.

But Pitt set his teeth and determined to play his own game.

To win that wager he had to score three goals in the second half—a well nigh impossible feat. The first two goals had been easy, perhaps—but three more! It almost made his heart fail him as he thought of it.

Then he pulled himself together and walked on to the field with the set intention of thinking only of himself. Whenever the ball came to him he would do his best to score. He wouldn't think of centering and he wouldn't think of passing. He had to score! Those three goals could never be obtained in any other way.

And Lord Dorrimore, in the stand, was feeling very cheerful as the teams took up their positions in the second half.

"By gad!" he muttered. "I believe the boy's going to do it!"

CHAPTER VI.

VICTORY

PHEEP!

The referee blew his whistle, and the second half started.

Everybody was on tenterhooks. Three goals each, and nothing decided. At the conclusion of the first half, Porthampton had been on top with regard to the quality of the play. The spectators were hoping that Bannington had had time to pull themselves together. But it was soon seen that matters were not much improved.

At the very start of the second half the Porthampton men got possession of the ball and kept it. The forward line worked with perfect understanding, and took the leather down towards the Bannington goal, passing with the precision of a piece of well oiled machinery.

The Bannington backs were beaten again and again. But Carden, between the posts, had recovered his coolness and confidence. And again and again he saved with great cleverness and presence of mind. But for him, Bannington would have been three more goals down within seven minutes.

"Buck up, Bannington!"

"Let's see what you can do!"

"Put some life into it, boys!"

The crowd yelled all sorts of encouragement and advice. But, somehow or other, the Bannington men had got into one of those moods which sometimes occur even in the best teams. They couldn't do anything right. They mis-kicked, had the ball robbed from them in the easiest manner, and when they did get a chance of shooting, they shot wide. It wasn't because they were below the standard of Porthampton, but because things had gone wrong. And when things go wrong in this way they can never be accounted for.

Unfortunately, however, the crowd doesn't understand—and the crowd is rather liable to say hard things about their favourites.

Ten minutes gone and no further score.

Pitt suddenly felt himself growing into a panic. He would never do it—if things went on like this he wouldn't have a chance. The ball didn't come his way at all. It was exasperating.

Pitt got himself in hand, and made up his mind.

And then, the next time the leather came into midfield, he didn't wait for it to be passed over to him, or to the left wing. He dashed right in and deliberately robbed the ball from his own centre-half, who was about to pass it to the left. The crowd was speechless with astonishment.

Pitt had the ball at his feet, and there was no danger of his being pulled up for off-side, for both the Porthampton backs were in front of him, and one of the half-backs as well. He had three men to beat before reaching the goal, and nobody thought for a moment that he was going to attempt to run through.

But he did attempt it!

In the centre of the field, with Hearne close by ready to receive the ball, Pitt dashed on, taking absolutely no notice of the centre-forward. Two men were racing up behind him, but Pitt was like a hare, and he outdistanced them with ease. The Porthampton left back came charging at him.

Pitt tipped the ball aside, leapt round the charging back, and snatched up the leather just as it was being taken by the other Porthampton fellow back. And now Pitt was just within the penalty area. The back flung himself down and deliberately reached out his hand—probably he did this in the excitement of the moment without realising what his action entailed.

He touched Pitt's ankle, and the junior fell full length.

"Foul!"

"Penalty—penalty!"

Pitt picked himself up shaken and bruised. Then, as he put his left foot to the ground a thrill of anguish went through him. His ankle was ricked! He tried to stand, but collapsed on the spot.

The crowd howled and hooted and advised the referee to hurl the offending back off the field.

The referee signalled for the trainer, and Hogan came running up with a wet sponge. Pitt found himself surrounded by the other players, and his ankle was attended to.

He struggled hard to rise.

"I'm all right!" he gasped. "We can't waste time—let's get on with the game! Every minute is of value!"

"You shouldn't take chances, Pitt!" grumbled Hearne. "It was entirely your own fault—"

Hearne didn't say any more, because Pitt was on his feet now, stoutly declar-

ing that he was all right—although he certainly wasn't. His ankle was paining him badly.

The crowd was roaring with approval now, for the referee had pointed to the penalty spot, and, further, the referee had addressed a few severe words to the Porthampton back.

Pitt rushed up to Hearne.

"Let me take this kick!" he panted huskily.

"No, certainly not!" said the centre-forward, "I'm taking it myself. Your ankle's bad, Pitt, and you couldn't possibly—"

"Please let me take it!" insisted Pitt. "Oh, you don't understand! Be a sport, Hearne! I was fouled, and it's only right that I should take the kick!"

"We can't argue here," began Hearne. "It's no good, Pitt—"

"I'll score—I promise I'll score!" said Pitt desperately.

Only for a second did Hearne hesitate, then he nodded.

"All right!" he said briefly.

There was something very peculiar about Pitt, and Hearne knew it. He couldn't stand there arguing, and, although he felt certain that the shot would fail, he gave in.

The other members of the team were staggered by the captain's decision. Even the spectators were surprised.

Reginald Pitt leapt forward and stood ready. The goalie was on the alert, all hands and feet. Pitt stepped back several yards, and then rushed forward. In that second he forgot all about his hurt ankle—he forgot everything. He only knew that he had to score.

The ball rose from his foot with terrific speed. He had judged the shot with extraordinary accuracy. The goalie was fully expecting a ground shot. But the ball rose and went straight towards the right hand corner at the top. Up went the goalkeeper with outstretched hands, and he just managed to touch the ball as it struck the upright with terrific force. But it was a glancing blow, and it went right over the goalie's head into the net.

Pitt had scored!

"Goal!"

"Oh, good old Pitt!"

"Goal!"

But Pitt was on the ground. He had stumbled forward after kicking, and had rolled over like a shot rabbit. He

picked himself up, dazed and bewildered, hardly knowing what had happened.

But the first thing he saw was the ball at the back of the net. And he grinned with sheer pleasure, forgetting about his pain. His arm was pumped until he felt weary, and then he went back to his position. But Hearne came running after him.

"Feeling fit?" he asked quickly.

"Yes."

"I'm glad I let you take that kick," said the captain. "Splendid, young 'un! Look here, would you like to change places with me for the rest of the game? I'll take the outside position if you like—you seem to be doing all my work as it is."

"No, it doesn't matter, thanks," said Pitt. "We won't change now, and I expect I'm finished for the game, anyway."

But he had scored three times, and there was just a faint chance that he might score again. He didn't have much hope now that he could get the five.

That goal had given Bannington fresh heart, for they were now leading. And very shortly afterwards Fred Hearne managed to get through, and he placed Bannington further ahead. The score was now five—three, and Porthampton were flagging in their play. They were beginning to lose heart, for they knew now that they could not possibly win.

Pitt was in great pain with his ankle, but when he managed to get the ball he forgot the pain and ran with almost his usual speed.

He didn't know exactly what the time was, but he was comparatively certain that only ten or twelve minutes remained, and still he had two goals to get! But while the game was alive there was a chance.

Try as he would he couldn't get hold of the ball until four minutes had elapsed. Then it was passed to him by Howard, who had a feeling, somehow, that Pitt was particularly anxious to score once more. Howard had an excellent chance himself, but he gave it away to Pitt.

And the latter took advantage of it.

The way he raced up towards the Porthampton goal was a revelation. A moment before he had been limping about, but now he rushed in just as though he had never received any injury at all.

It was a superb effort.

At fairly close range he kicked, and the goalie met the ball with his two fists, and punched it back. It came straight to Pitt, and again he kicked. And once more the goalie managed to clear—this time placing it at Fred Hearne's foot. The later, without a second's hesitation, slipped it over to Pitt, who rammed it home hard.

"Goal!"

"That's the way!"

"By gad! My ten thousand's gone!" muttered Lord Dorrimore.

"Let's have another, Pitt!"

And now Pitt was beginning to feel that he might do it. The Porthampton players were fagged out and weary with defeat. Six—three! And only two or three minutes more to go. There was really no need to make any effort—whatever happened now it wouldn't make much difference.

The visitors were fairly convinced that Bannington would not make any strong attempt to score. Surely they were satisfied with six.

And the quality of the play deteriorated. The ball was just kicked about rather aimlessly, and the times it went over the touch-line was pitiful. Everybody seemed to be kicking out, just for the sake of wasting time.

The referee already had his watch in his hand, and he was preparing to blow his whistle. And during this time Pitt had had no chance.

He had only received the ball once, and it had been robbed from him before he had travelled five yards. Since then the leather had remained exclusively on the other side of the field.

It was there now.

And the referee was about to blow his whistle! Pitt was desperate. The ball had gone into touch, and it was even being thrown back into play. Pitt raced right across to the left wing.

From the throw in he got possession of the ball at once, much to the surprise of the other Bannington players. The referee had the whistle to his lips. There wasn't even time for Pitt to make a run for goal.

He kicked—wildly and desperately.

And that shot was the best one of the whole game. It came from the left wing, and rose high. Then it commenced dropping. And it was so excellently

judged that it fell right towards the goal-mouth.

With the setting sun in the goalie's eyes he had some difficulty in seeing the leather. He punched wildly but missed, and the ball bounced on his head, rebounded against the cross bar, and dropped into the net.

The referee held his whistle.

"Goal!"

"No—time was up!" shouted one of the Porthampton players.

The referee didn't say anything, but pointed to the centre of the field. That was enough. It was a goal, and Pitt had won his wager.

The teams simply lined up, and at the first kick the referee blew his whistle. Pitt felt limp and weak. He had never expected that last kick of his to materialise. But, in the last second of the game, he had won. And the reaction was such that he felt that he hardly had strength enough to crawl off the field.

Then he was galvanised into action.

A great crowd of St. Frank's juniors were racing across, yelling and cheering. If they got hold of him he would be mauled about unmercifully. He broke into a run and simply fled. And he arrived in the dressing-room just in the nick of time. The yelling St. Frank's crowd was left outside.

"We want Pitt!" roared Handforth. "We're going to carry him round shoulder high!"

"Leave him alone, you ass!" I shouted. "He's just about spent, and he doesn't want to be bothered now."

"Good old Pitt!" said Jack Grey enthusiastically. "Think of it—five goals! By Jove! He's done it! He's won!"

"What do you mean—he's won?" asked Church.

"Oh, nothing!" said Jack hastily.

For the moment he had forgotten that the others didn't know of the wager. But Jack Grey himself was filled with joy at the thought of Pitt's success. It had been a tremendous effort, but Pitt had succeeded.

In the dressing-rooms, Pitt was being sponged down, and he was also being pestered with hundreds of questions from his fellow players.

"You've got to explain yourself,

young man," said Hearne. "You played a fine game to-day, but it's been practically nothing else but you the whole time. What's the idea? Why didn't you stick to your own position as outside-right?"

"I—I can't explain," said Pitt.

"But I can!"

And Lord Dorrimore strolled in accompanied by Mr. Page. All the players turned at once and stared at the stranger.

"Boys, this is Lord Dorrimore," said the manager. "His lordship has honoured us with his presence during this match——"

"Dorrie!" exclaimed Pitt, rushing up. "I—I didn't know you were here, sir!"

"That was all the better, perhaps," said Dorrie. "Well, you fellows, I'm very pleased to meet you all. Has this youngster explained how much depended on this match?"

"He hasn't explained anything," said Tom Howard.

"The young bounder!" said Dorrie calmly. "I dare say you've been rather surprised at the game he's been playing, eh? It's the most extraordinary thing I've ever seen. He performed wonders!"

"I agree with you, sir," said Hearne. "What we can't understand is why he kept leaving his place——"

"I can explain in one breath," interrupted Dorrie. "I made a wager with him that he wouldn't score five times in this match."

"Oh!"

"And the youngster has won!" added Dorrie.

"By George, so he has!" exclaimed Tom Howard. "He did score five times! That's why he was so anxious to take that penalty kick!"

"We're seeing daylight now," said Hearne. "Why on earth couldn't you tell us, Pitt? If we'd known about this wager we'd have fed you at every opportunity, and given you more chances of scoring."

"I didn't like to—I didn't want to say anything about it," replied Pitt. "But I've won the wager, and—and that's all that matters."

"What were the odds, sir?" asked Howard, turning to Dorrie.

"Ten thousand pounds to a shilling!" said his lordship calmly.

"What!"

"How much?"

The footballers fairly yelled.

"A bit startlin', I'll admit," said Dorrie, with a grin. "But it was a fair wager, an' here's the money. Pitt, my son, you get ten thousand quid over this job, an' it gives me great pleasure to hand it over."

Pitt looked about him rather bewildered.

"I—I want to speak to you alone, sir," he said. "I hope you chaps won't mind——"

"Not at all," said Hearne promptly.

He and his colleagues were staggered by what Lord Dorrimore had said—indeed, they thought that it was a joke. Dorrie and Pitt went into one of the small dressing-rooms alone.

"Well, what's the trouble?" asked Dorrie.

"I can't take that money, sir," said Reginald Pitt huskily.

"Nonsense!"

"It wouldn't be right, sir," persisted Pitt. "A wager like this is impossible! I didn't mean to take it, anyhow——"

"My dear kid, you're talkin' out of your hat!" said Dorrie. "I made a fair an' square wager with you, an' I've lost. What kind of a cur should I be if I backed out of it? I set you a Herculean task, and you accomplished it."

Pitt shook his head.

"I don't want you to give me the money, sir," he said. "I'll take it as a loan—on behalf of my father. He can pay you back when Mr. Lee has squared everything up—when Simon Raspo has been brought to justice."

"You'll take the money now, an' I don't want to see it again," put in Dorrie. "Good gracious! You don't suppose I shall miss it? I've millions—I don't know what to do with the money I've got! An' this wager was a fair one. So put your fist over this, an' hang tight to it. It'll come in useful on Monday."

Pitt looked up quickly.

"What—what do you mean, sir?" he asked.

"There's an auction sale on Monday," said Dorrie calmly.

"Then—you guessed?"

"Bless your life, of course I guessed!" grinned his lordship. "That's what

you've been playing for. With this cash you can go to that sale and buy the whole shoot! You can give your parents the biggest surprise of their lives by buying their property an' givin' it to them."

"I—I believe that's why you made the wager, sir!" he exclaimed. "I believe you made it deliberately because you thought I'd win—because you thought I could get this money and use it at the sale!"

"Your powers of deduction are astounding!" grinned Dorrie. "Of course, that's why I made the wager! But it makes no difference, young'un! I stood a chance of losin', an' I stood an equal chance of winnin'—"

"A shilling!"

"Figures don't count," said Dorrie cheerfully. "A wager's a wager. Here you are—stick tight to it, an' do your best. I've never lost a wager more willingly. Go to that sale on Monday, an' surprise the natives."

Pitt took the money in a dazed kind of way—ten thousand pounds in bank-notes. It didn't seem much—just a few crisp pieces of paper. But what a tremendous lot it meant.

With that money he could do everything—he could buy back his old house and home which his parents had thought to be lost for ever. But Pitt was determined upon one thing.

No matter what Lord Dorrimore said, he couldn't look upon this wager as a serious thing. And if Dorrie wouldn't accept the money back—well, there would be some other means of repaying it. Dorrie couldn't refuse to take a present costing the same amount. And Pitt was quite certain that his father would make Dorrie such a present when everything was straight.

Pitt didn't know that Nelson Lee's plans had materialised—that Simon Raspo was in the hands of the police, and that everything would shortly be cleared up.

In any case, it made no difference. Even though Raspo was arrested, many legal points had to be settled before Mr. Pitt received a farthing of his money back. And Pitt had the chance of going to that sale. He had the money, and he thrilled at the very thought of what he had planned to do.

He had made good in this match, but, after all, everything depended on—Monday!

THE END.

To My Readers.

It often pays a detective to let his adversary think that he has got the upper hand. This was very cleverly demonstrated in the story you have just read, where Lee walks into a trap seemingly innocent of any treachery, while all the time he is merely allowing his quarry to ensnare themselves.

To the regret of many of my readers, next week's story, "FOR HIS PARENTS' SAKE!" will conclude the present series. After that there will be a special Fifth of November story which will lead up to a grand, new, powerful series that is to mark a memorable week in the history of our little paper. I am now hinting at a very pleasant surprise in store for you. It would be a little premature to disclose what that is this week. Anyhow, be on the look-out for an important announcement in the near future.

THE EDITOR.

BOXING, SCHOOL,
FOOTBALL AND
CIRCUS YARNS
ARE ALL TO BE
FOUND IN THE
CURRENT NUMBER
OF : : :

THE MARVEL

EVERY 2d. TUESDAY.

ABSORBING LIFE
STORIES OF
FAMOUS FOOT-
BALLERS IN ITS
SPLENDID 8-PAGE
SUPPLEMENT. ALSO
£1,000 FOOTBALL
COMPETITION.

The Ghosts of Marsh Manor



BEGIN TO-DAY THIS THRILLING NARRATIVE OF

THE GREAT DETECTIVE OF GRAY'S INN ROAD.

CHAPTER XVII. (Continued.)

The Prisoner in the Monks' Punishment Cell.

OVERHEAD was a network of massive oak beams, supporting the sloping roof. The walls of the attic were of brick between the studwork, and had been thickly plastered. But the thing that attracted his attention was the enormous quantity of ancient furniture with which the original Varnays had adorned their dwelling, now ranged in long rows and piled in heaps round the attic.

"By Jingo! Wouldn't the dealers like to get hold of all this clobber?" thought the boy, climbing out and crossing the room to the door, the timbers of which were so stout that he could make no impression upon them.

In vain he tried several skeleton keys which had served him well in days gone by, but he knew from the start that they were useless. And then he beat a furious tattoo until his hands were quite sore.

"What an ass I was not to have brought a revolver with me!" he said bitterly. "That would have done the business. It would have roused the maids, at any rate, and they'd have given the alarm. Now, then, what's to be done?"

One wall of the attic was pierced by a row of dormer windows, but they all looked out upon the hostel and its garden, and Nipper, reflecting, knew that there was no friendly creeper, no stout ivy root on that side of the house by which he could have made a perilous descent. The windows were impossible for another reason, for the roof was steeply pitched there, as he remembered, with the tiles overhanging the eaves. It would have been death to have attempted anything in that direction.

"The old man was right, after all," he mused, and, picking up a joint stool, he dealt blow after blow upon the door.

But the Tudor woodwork was stronger than the stool, which broke in his hands, and there was no response.

It was maddening to feel that he was actually in the house and yet unable to communicate with his friends, and the watch told him that it was half-past nine! No

sliding panel came to his aid, and his mind seemed to suddenly grow blank.

"I'm done this time!" he thought, "unless I try burning the door down."

His fingers went to the little pocket where he always carried a box of silent matches; but it was no longer there, and angry tears started to the boy's eyes.

"I'm nothing more than a miserable worm," he muttered, "and the earth's the best place for me! I'll go down again."

Warned by Boyle's narrative, he found the topmost rung of the ladder with his toes before he lowered himself, and, leaving the lid of the chest open, went round and round that circular staircase once more, his heart sinking lower with every step he took.

When he reached the butler, after carefully reconnoitring to make sure that the coast was clear, he found Boyle staring away across the vault, and he made a sign with his hand as Nipper approached.

"That's the noise I told you about," he whispered. "Isn't that somebody sobbing?"

The sound was unmistakable. A woman was crying bitterly some little distance away, and Nipper lost no time in investigating the matter.

The sobs ceased, dying away into a piteous little moan; but he had already located the spot—a solid iron-strapped door in the wall, with a grating in it.

He flashed his torch through the narrow bars, and was rewarded by a rustle of straw from within.

His mind instinctively went back to the woman with the furs, whom the stockbroker had met at Peterborough on that night when he surprised him at the cloak-room; but he was on the wrong tack altogether.

He tapped on the rusty bars, and a bent figure, whose outline he could just see crouching in the corner, lifted up a white face.

Its marble pallor was so remarkable that he instinctively thought of a corpse, but the magnificent eyes into which he gazed had a fierce, smouldering light in them that was very much alive.

"I say, you know, I'm a friend," said

(Continued on page 30.)

WRIGLEY'S OFFER OF 100,000 FOOTBALLS AND PAIRS OF FOOTBALL BOOTS

THE 25,000 footballs we first offered went like hot cakes, but we have secured another 100,000 Footballs, and we have also made special arrangements to include 100,000 pairs of Football Boots in this Offer. The Ball is honestly worth 24/-, and so are the Boots, but you can have either for 12/- only.

The Football is made by Spalding's, of the toughest English hide, full-size, hand-sewn, with a bladder of the finest red rubber. It is exactly the ball used by the premier clubs. The Boots are Spalding's famous Hotspur pattern. Light Russet, laced to toe, with strap; raised shank waist; bevel-edge sole, rivetted—as worn by the crack players.

To get either the Football or the Football Boots, all you have to do is to —

SEND 50 wrappers saved from ½d. bars of WRIGLEY'S, together with a postal order

for 12/- for the Football or the Football Boots. State clearly which you want, and in the case of Boots the size must be given. It is best to send a pencil outline of your stockinged foot. Whichever you choose will be sent with the chewing sweet carriage paid within 3 or 4 days.

ALTERNATIVELY, send 14/- for a box containing 48 bars of WRIGLEY'S Assorted Flavours, and the Football or the Boots. Don't forget to give your address, and say Football or Football Boots.

YOUR MONEY WILL BE INSTANTLY REFUNDED if you are not delighted with your bargain. If you prefer a Rugby shape ball in the same quality or Black Rugby Boots with bars, say so in your letter. Address :

WRIGLEY'S LTD. (Desk 28),
235, Westminster Bridge Rd., London, S.E.1.

WRIGLEY'S CHEWING SWEET

THE
FOOTBALLER'S
COMPANION

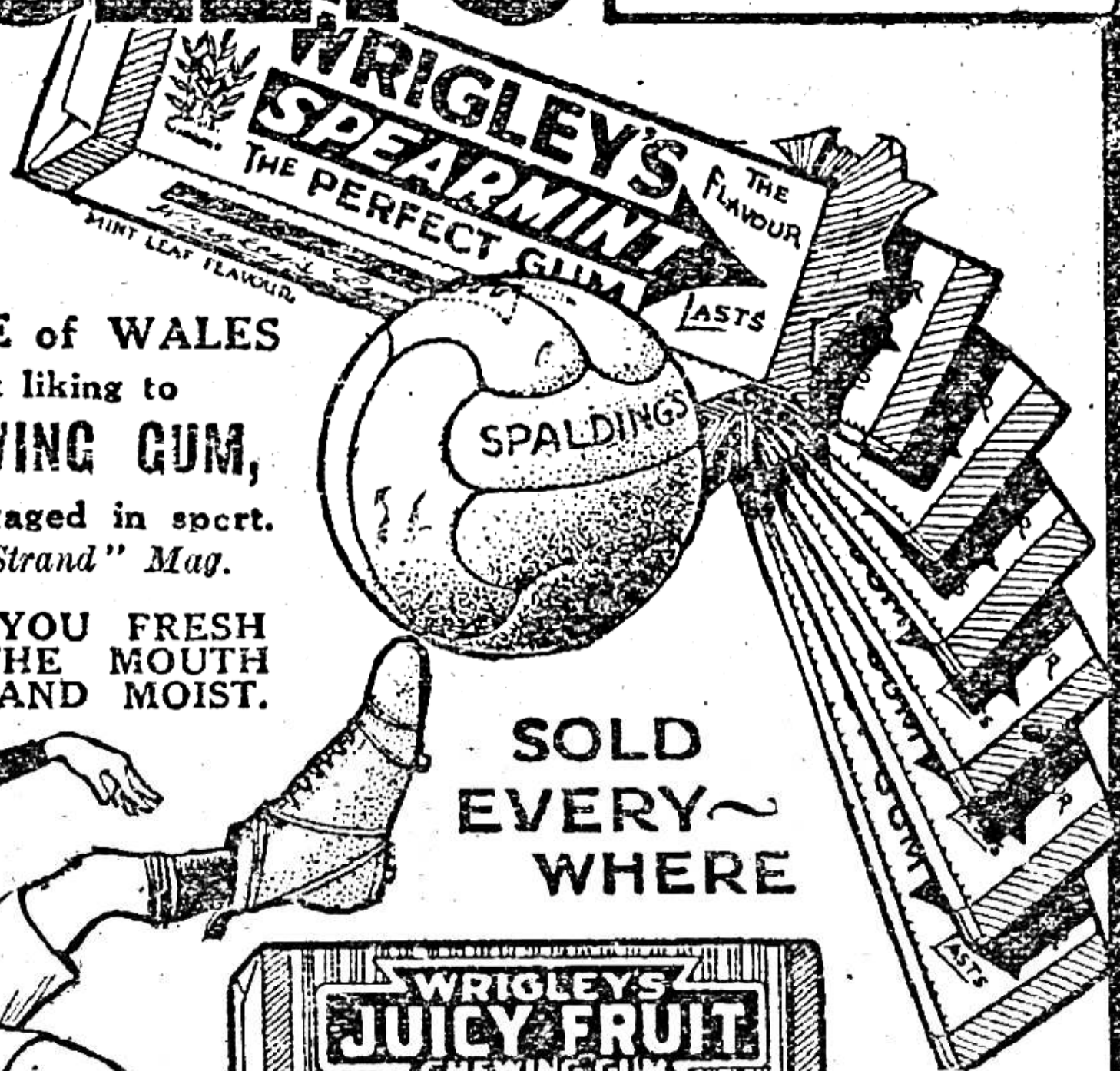
H.R.H. The PRINCE of WALES
has taken a great liking to
WRIGLEY'S CHEWING GUM,
particularly when engaged in sport.
—Vide "Strand" Mag.

KEEPS YOU FRESH
AND THE MOUTH
COOL AND MOIST.



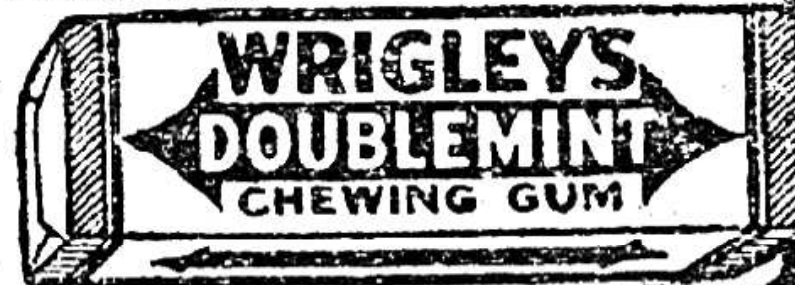
SEALED TIGHT
—KEPT RIGHT

The Flavour
Lasts!



SOLD
EVERYWHERE

3d PER
PKT.



(Continued from page 28.)

Nipper. "Who are you, and what are you here for?"

The girl continued to stare fixedly at as much of the speaker as she could see, for the grating was high up in the door, but she rose slowly, as one cramped by long and close confinement in a narrow space.

"Did you say a friend," she said, in a voice, which, in spite of a trembling quaver, had something of mocking scorn in it. "I am Evelyn Ingleby-Charteris! But who are you? A new gaoler, I suppose."

The boy could scarcely speak for a moment as he remembered the strange disappearance of the stockbroker's niece, and a thrill of tremendous indignation shook him from head to foot.

"Great Scott!" he cried. "My name's Nipper—I'm Mr. Nelson Lee's assistant. You must have heard of the great detective, and I'm going to get you out of this in a brace of shakes. Tell me, how long have you been here?"

"Fifteen months," replied the girl. "Do you really mean what you say? Is this a snare, or are those villains trapped at last?"

"They are trapped, Miss Ingleby-Charteris," said the boy; "but I won't deceive you. We're trapped as well. I don't know how it's all going to end, but I can take you to a hiding-place from which we're bound to be rescued sooner or later."

He slid the bolt back as he spoke, thankful

to find the door was not locked, and as she tottered out she seemed to him like some beautiful hothouse flower that had wilted in the shadow and the dark.

"Quick, quick! Take me away—anywhere—before they come back!" she implored. "No one knows what I have suffered. He hoped that I should die, or else lose my reason. It is my uncle who has done this."

"Yes, I know that now," said Nipper, supporting her. "By the way, is there any food we could take with us? For Heaven only knows when we shall get out!"

She looked, with an expression of infinite loathing, at the old monks' punishment-cell, which had been her prison for so long.

"The Belgian woman brought my supper, but I could not touch it to-night," she said, and, darting back, Nipper saw a tray on the floor, with cut ham and a roll on a plate and a jug of water.

"I'll bolt the door, and they'll think you're still here," he said. "Are you sure you can walk? It's a long walk and a tremendous climb."

He had something on the tip of his tongue to tell her, but, seeing the wild excitement that buoyed her up, he wisely kept the news to himself for the present.

"I can walk," said the girl, and she stepped out beside him with an energy that surprised her deliverer, putting her hand in front of her eyes as they met the electric glare.

She clutched Nipper's arm as they came in sight of poor Boyle, but the boy reassured her.

"It's all right," he said. "He's one of our people—but you'll hear all about that later on," and, whispering a few words in the butler's ear which made Boyle's mouth open wide in blank astonishment, he piloted his precious charge through the inner vault, checking her as they reached the little door.

"One moment," he said, running to a bench, where lay Sol Clitters' coat and waistcoat and felt hat, which he gathered up.

"Lucky thing I spotted these!" he said, laughing for the first time. "I'm hoping they'll think he's gone."

"Who's gone?" said Miss Ingleby-Charteris, as Nipper pressed the button of his torch.

"An individual named Sol Clitters."

"The American?" exclaimed the girl.

"Why, surely you don't know him?"

"Only too well!" she cried. "But for that man my uncle would never have got entangled with these scoundrels. It was Clitters who first suggested a ready way of making money. But, for pity's sake, let's get on. We can talk afterwards."

"You're quite right," said Nipper. "I'll lead the way until we get to the steps, and then you'd better go first."

Nipper, alias Barton, alias Peter Johnson, looked at his watch and made a grimace.

"It's twenty minutes past ten," he said. "The Belgians must be just about leaving

(Continued on page 32.)

GREAT MUSICAL DISCOVERY. A BRITISH INVENTION.



A Pocket Instrument that plays in

all keys as perfectly as a violin without the laborious study of scales. The

Range 3½ Octaves.

only British-made Pocket Instrument on the market. Post free, with full instructions, 19. Better quality 29, from R. FIELD (Dept. 15), Hall Avenue, Huddersfield.

STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Full particulars free.—**FRANK HUGHES, Ltd., 7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1.**

"**CURLY HAIR!**" "It's wonderful," writes E.: 10,000 Testimonials. Proof sent. Ross' "Waveit" curls straightest hair. 1/3, 2/5. **ROSS, (Dept. N.L.), 173, New North Rd., London, N.1.**

HOME CINEMAS! FILMS!
LARGE STOCKS. FREE BOOKLET.
Universal, 23, Tothill Street, London.

FUN FOR ALL! Ventriloquist's Voice Instrument. Invisible. Astonishes. Mystifies. Imitate Birds, Beasts, etc. 1/- P.O. (Ventriloquism Treatise included).—**Ideal Co., Clevedon, Somerset.**

ANSWERS

EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2:

Home Handiness

means Reduced Expenses

Mr. J. Flynn, Dundee, writes:

"I find the 'Amateur Mechanic' excellent, instructive, and profitable. It should be in every home, as there are so many things a working man requires to be done which he could do himself if he had these books, thereby saving many a shilling."

"The Amateur Mechanic"

TEACHES YOU HOW

To paint and paper a room—To sole and heel and patch boots and shoes—To make a pair of hand-sewn boots—To restore colour to old brown shoes—To make household furniture—To re-seat chairs—To upholster sofas, etc.—To instal a speaking-tube—To clean a Primus or other stove—To repair bicycles—To overhaul a motor-car—To repair motor-cycles—To work in metal—To colour metals—To make a garden frame—To repair water-taps—To varnish a violin—To remedy damp walls—To repair the piano—To make a padded chair from an old cask—To stuff animals—To dress furs—To stuff and mount birds—To do wood inlaying—To cure a smoky chimney—To prepare working drawings—To renovate a grandfather clock—To make garden furniture, arbours, arches, seats, summer-houses, tables, etc.—To use metal-drilling

tools—To renovate mirrors—To upholster furniture in leather cloth—To mend broken china—To do fretwork—To build a boat—To make a canoe, etc.—To lime-white poultry houses—To do gold-plating and silver-plating—To clean a watch—To mend keyless watches and ordinary watches—To distemper ceilings and walls—To make picture-frames and frame pictures—All about curtain fittings—To make metal castings—To clean paint off glass—To fit up a motor workshop—To clean boilers—To fix an anthracite stove—To re-gild and restore picture-frames—How to use spanners—To make doors and windows draught-proof—To paint walls—To make a garden path—How to do nickel-plating—To cure noises in hot-water pipes—India and glue varnishes—To clean and repair locks—All about plaster casts, etc., etc.

THIS IS SOUND MONEY-SAVING KNOWLEDGE.

Over 85,000 citizens are now using "The Amateur Mechanic."

MR. DYSON, Marsh, Huddersfield writes: "The 'Amateur Mechanic' is a splendid work. Regarding my own trade, the instruction for amateurs is simplicity itself, and will be most useful for those learning. I hope I find details of other trades for my own use as simple; and I have no doubt I shall."

MR. W. BROTHERS, Belfast, writes: "I thought I knew a lot until I received your 'Amateur Mechanic,' and then I found I was only starting to learn, and I am still learning. Since I have got it I have been enabled to do jobs that I could not have undertaken before. I am classed as a handyman, and in the future I'll have confidence to take on any job."

SEND FOR FREE BOOKLET TO-DAY 

GRATIS 

"The Amateur Mechanic" contains 4,000 Money-Saving Recipes, with 6,000 "How-To-Do-It" illustrations.

To the **WAVERLEY BOOK CO., Ltd.** (N.L.L. Dept.)
96, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Please send me, without charge or obligation to order, your Free Illustrated Booklet, containing all particulars of "THE AMATEUR MECHANIC," also information as to your offer to send the Complete Work for a nominal first payment, the balance to be paid by a few small monthly payments after delivery of work.

Name.....
(Send this Form or a Postcard.)

Address.....

N.L.L., 1921.....

(Continued from page 30.)

the Manor House now, and Lee is wondering what on earth has become of me."

The boy was sitting on the lid of the bottomless chest, which he had carefully locked, and Evelyn Ingleby-Charteris lay back in a great armchair, which the gallant Nipper had dusted for her with his handkerchief.

The tortuous climb had taxed her strength to its utmost limit. She had had to rest many times before they reached the attic, but, though months were to pass before the colour returned to her cheeks, a sense of freedom had already come to the poor bruised heart that had almost given up hope.

"I say, Miss Charteris," said Nipper, after a long pause, "do you mean to say that you had been where I found you for fifteen months?"

"I do, and it seemed like fifteen years to me. But for you I should never have been seen again. You don't"—and she hesitated—"you don't know anything about Major Rogerson, do you?"

"Oh, yes!" said Nipper cheerfully. "We know him very well. He doesn't believe you dead, and spends all his time searching for you."

For the life of him, the boy could not bring himself to tell her that her fiancé was even then under the same roof.

He had eagerly searched the pockets of

Clitters' coat, hoping to find his pistol, but the crook had laid that carefully on the table beside the printing-press, and, in his haste, Nipper had not seen it.

There was nothing for it but to possess their souls in what patience they might, for there they were, and there was no getting out of the attic until somebody came to the rescue.

So the boy listened to the tragic story of the girl, who, on the eve of her marriage, had been spirited away by the man she had looked upon as her guardian and protector, who had met her at Selfridge's with the Rolls-Royce and decoyed her to that evil dungeon, where she had remained, until at times it seemed that her brain must go.

"It is the most absolutely abominable thing I ever heard of!" said Nipper. "But what was his motive—why did he do it?"

"I will tell you. I had discovered his secret. In a foolish moment I taxed him with it, and he knew that once married to Major Rogerson I should tell my husband his real character. He was afraid. His life of crime had been too successful. He was already a millionaire, and Ingleby-Charteris values nothing in this world but money."

"I see it all," nodded the boy, inwardly boiling lest the scoundrel might take alarm at the last moment, and escape the punishment he deserved, but outwardly thinking only of the girl with the great pathetic eyes, who had suffered so cruelly, and longing for daylight to come.

(To be continued.)

Grand Value-for-Money Story Books.

**THE
BOYS'
FRIEND
LIBRARY.**
Fourpence
Per Volume.

- No. 575. **THE LUCK OF THE CUP.**
A grand yarn of the footer field. By W. E. Groves.
No. 576. **THE FEUD IN WEST HOUSE.**
A topping school tale. By Jack North.
No. 577. **THE SWORD OF THE TEMPLES.**
A fine story of the great rebellion. By Edmund Barton.
No. 578. **CHAMPION OF THE CUE.**
A splendid Billiards yarn. By A. S. Hardy.
No. 579. **THE CIRCLE OF THIRTEEN.**
A thrilling detective novel. By W. Murray Graydon.

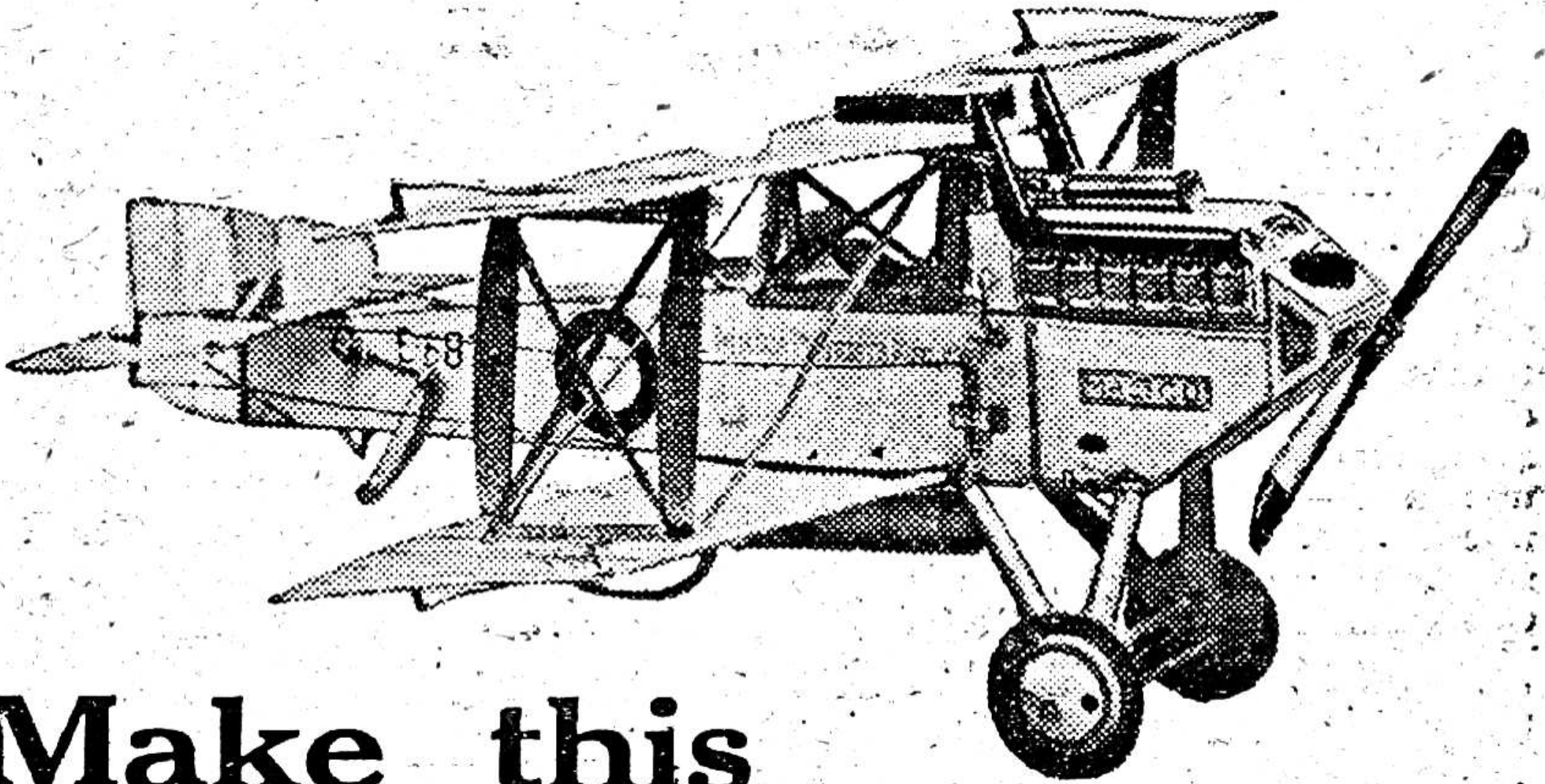
**THE
SEXTON
BLAKE
LIBRARY.**
Fourpence
Per Volume.

- No. 193. **THE SACRED CITY.**
A wonderful story of detective work in London and Benares, introducing Granite Grant and Mlle. Julie.
No. 194. **MAROONED.**
A tale of adventure in the South Seas, featuring Sexton Blake, Tinker, and M. Jules Vedette.
No. 195. **STATE SECRETS.**
A magnificent romance of detective adventure.
No. 196. **PAYMENT SUSPENDED! or, THE ADVENTURE OF THE WHISPERING VOICE.**
A stirring story of a Bank Crash.
No. 197. **THE YELLOW FACE.**
A story of fascinating Chinese mystery.

**THE
NUGGET
LIBRARY.**
3d. Per Vol.

- No. 59. **THE SCAPEGRACE OF ST. FRANK'S.**
A rollicking Long Complete Story of fun and adventure, introducing Nipper and Co.
No. 60. **THE DIAMOND MOUNTAIN.**
A splendid long complete story of an adventurous expedition into the jungles of Africa. By W. Murray Graydon.

Now on Sale. Buy Your Copies TO-DAY!



Make this Miniature Biplane.

(British Prov. Pat. 24377/29 U.S. 1377867.)

PLAY nights are getting short, and you'll soon be wanting something to keep you occupied indoors. Here's the very thing. Build this big, sturdy aeroplane. It's ever so interesting, and teaches all about how real aeroplanes fly. It has all the parts and controls that you'll find on the big planes. . Elevators, ailerons, rudder, dummy machine guns, pitot-tubes, wind-screens, propeller, and all the other "gadgets" that the airmen use. All you have to do is to cut out the paper parts, and then erect the model—just as if you were building a real 'plane. The illustrations and plans in the eight-page instruction book show you how. When everything is complete, take it out and fly it. Just think how envious your chums will be when they see you with this fine model, looping and banking, and gliding gracefully down to the ground to finish its flight with a perfect landing. You can make the model do everything a big 'plane can do, as it's built just like a real one. It lasts a long time too, because it's built of strong paper and card, and has shock absorbers on its landing gear and tail-skid. It's a big model too—12 in. long and 12 in. span—in fact it's the very thing for you.

PRICE 1/-

SEND 1/. P.O. OFF TO-NIGHT FOR THE COMPLETE SET OF PARTS AND ILLUSTRATED INSTRUCTIONS.

Two or more sets at 10d. per set. Colonial orders 2½d. extra.

THE MASCO PATENTS MFG. CO. (Dept. N), Rosebery Crescent,
Newcastle-on-Tyne.

RHEUMATISM CURED QUICKLY & EFFECTIVELY.

URACE, and URACE alone, can cure rheumatism. Nothing is more certain than that. It cures on a new and common-sense principle. It directly attacks the cause of RHEUMATISM—uric acid—dissolves and expels the uric acid from the system and prevents its reappearance. That is why it CURES and CURES QUICKLY.

Urace Tablets are sold by Boots' (600 branches) and all Chemists at 1/3, 3/- and 5/- per box, or direct post free, from the Urace Laboratories, 77, Woburn House, Store Street, London, W.C.1.

URACE TABLETS

THE ACKNOWLEDGED REMEDY FOR

Neuralgia	Cramp	Nerve Pains
Lumbago	Rheumatism	Kidney Troubles
Gout	Backache	Sciatica



GREAT SALE

To clear stock quickly we offer renovated Government Bicycles at HALF usual prices. Cash or Easy Payments. B.S.A., Royal-Enfield, Kynoch, New-Hudson and other celebrated makes—all in excellent riding condition. Many equal to new. No reasonable offer refused. Tyres and Accessories at big reductions from shop prices. Write for Free Lists.

MEAD Cycle Company, Inc.,
Dept B. 607 Birmingham.

SHORT OR TALL? A deficiency in height can rapidly be made good by the Girvan Scientific Treatment. Students report from 2 to 5 inches increase. Successfully practised by business men, actors, soldiers, etc. Send a postcard for particulars and our £100 guarantee to Enquiry Dept. A.M.P., 17, Stroud Green Road, London, N.4.

CUT THIS OUT.

The Nelson Lee Library. Pen Coupon. Value 2d.
Send 13 of these Coupons with only 2/9 direct to the Fleet Pen Co., 119, Fleet Street, E.C.4. You will receive by return a splendid British Made 14-ct. Gold Nibbed Fleet Fountain Pen, value 10/6 (Fine, Medium or Broad nib). If only 1 coupon is sent the price is 4/9, 2d. being allowed for each extra coupon up to 12 (Pocket Clip 4d. extra). This great offer is made to introduce the famous Fleet Pen to NELSON LEE readers. Satisfaction guaranteed or cash returned. Foreign post extra.

Lever self-filling Safety Model, 2/- extra.

Printed and Published every Wednesday by the proprietors, The Amalgamated Press, Limited, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Subscription Rates: Inland, 11s. per annum, 5s. 6d. for six months. Abroad, 8s. 10d. per annum; 4s. 5d. for six months. Sole Agents for South Africa: The Central News Agency, Limited. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Limited; and for Canada: The Imperial News Company, Limited.

No. 334.

D/Y

Bang!
Bang!!
Bang!!!



Blaze away, boys—100
shots without reloading

The 'QUICFIRA'

1/3 Post Free.

Postage abroad 3d. extra.

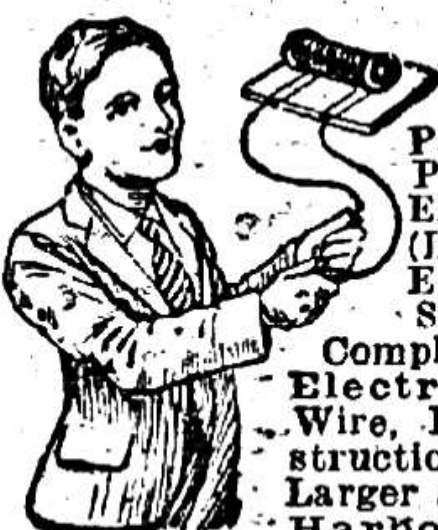
Perfectly harmless, but just the thing for
Amateur Detectives and Scouts.

Write your name and address very plainly on a
sheet of paper, attach this advt., and send with
P.O. 1/3 to

F. GILMAN,
8, Grange Rd., Smethwick, Birm'gh'm.

NERVOUSNESS

is the greatest drawback in life to any man or woman. If you are nervous, timid, low-spirited, lack self-confidence, will-power, mind concentration, blush or feel awkward in the presence of others, send 3 penny stamps for particulars of the Mento-Nerve Strengthening Treatment. Used in the Navy from Vice-Admiral to Seaman, and in the Army from Colonel to Private, D.S.O.'s, M.C.'s, M.M.'s and D.C.M.'s—Godfrey Elliott-Smith, Ltd., 527, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C.4.



**BOYS, MAKE A SHOCK
COIL FOR 1/9!**

Shocking Coil! Set of
Parts for making, 1/9. Battery
Parts, 1/6. Postage 3d. each.
Electro Magnet, 9d.; postage 3d.
(Lifts 1 pound.) Box Electrical
Experiments, 3/-; postage 6d.
Special Cheap Telephone Set,
Complete, 1/9; postage 4d.

Electric Light.—Battery, Switch,
Wire, Lamp, Holder, Reflector, In-
structions, etc., 4/6; postage 6d.
Larger size, 8/6; postage 9d. (Cat. 4d.)
Harborne Small Power Co.,

38 (A.P.) Queen's Rd., Aston, Birmingham.

**7d. (PICTURES 7d. 100). POCKET PICTURE
PALACE.**



Powerful Lens,
Stereoscope &
Picture Holder,
2 1/2 ins. long, 7d.
post free. Real
Kinema Film
Pictures, any
number up to
1,000 all different, 7d. 100; post free.
Delight or Money Back. Free Cata-
logue of Numerous Bargains. **PAIN'S Presents**
House, Dept. 34K, HASTINGS.

FREE.—Triangular Stamp free to those sending
postage and asking for Approval Sheets of Stamps
of 'Prince of Wales's Tour.—FLORICK, 179,
Asylum Road, Peckham, London.

October 29, 1921.