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BOYS' LIFE

MAGAZINE
FOR BOYS AND BOY SCOUTS



FIRST APRIL EDITION
VOL. 1 ~ ~ ~ NO. 3

BOYS' LIFE MAGAZINE

The Magazine for Boys and Boy Scouts

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Price 5 cents per Copy; \$1.20 per Year

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Published on the First and Fifteenth of Each Month by
GEORGE S. BARTON & CO., 7 Water Street, Boston, Mass.

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2323(4)



BOYS' LIFE

A REAL BOYS' MAGAZINE



Vol. I, No. 3

APRIL 1, 1911

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HIS OLD SHIP

By CAPTAIN F. H. SHAW

THE senior partner smiled sarcastically, and his eyes dwelt on the bowed gray head without a single gleam of pity. Captain Willoughby noticed with surprise that something pearly was dropping down his waistcoat. It alarmed him; he did not think any wound was sufficiently deep to make him shed tears.

"But you haven't any complaints to make against me as a master mariner, sir?" he asked after a long pause. He raised his head as he spoke, and looked fearlessly at the senior partner. Mr. Wishaw smiled again—tolerantly.

"Oh, well, as to that—no, there's nothing against your reputation, Willoughby. But you're suffering from a very prevalent disease: you're getting too old. An old man is of no use to us. We want a spry, young fellow, a man who can hold his own in—er—various ways; not a man who is so weighed down by ridiculous ideas of honor that he allows all manner of chances to slip past him and be snatched up by other men. You've never done anything wrong with the 'Moravian' that I know of, but you've never done much good with her. You've done what we said, but—oh, hang it all, man, we want some one to rush things in our interest a bit. That's all. You'll turn over the command to Captain Willings

when he comes down tomorrow, and that's all we shall require of you. I expect you've saved a bit of money, and an old man like you deserves a rest after so many years at sea."

"I've not served your firm, Mr. Arthur, for so many years for money. If that had been all I wanted I could have found many and many a better job than the command of the 'Moravian.' But—well, I suppose it was my antiquated ideas of honor that kept me true to the service I'd always been in.

I knew the old ship, sir, and knew what she was capable of. I've brought her through the biggest storms that ever blew, and she's grown as dear to me as if she was my own child. But—well, I won't make any complaints, sir. I think I can see what's the reason of this change. Mr. William"— Captain Willoughby could not get out of the old groove so easily as to call the junior partner's nephew Captain Willings—"needs a ship now he's got his certificate, and I suppose the 'Moravian' is the handiest for him. I'll bid you good-day, sir. This has



"He was observed to drag himself up on the deck"

shaken me up a bit, I'll not deny, but then—an old man has to stand a shock or two now and then." The dismissed skipper walked out of the office of Messrs. Wishaw and Willings, ship-owners, and his head was very erect. But in his heart was a feeling as if all he loved had been

snatched away from him. He felt the foundations of this universe tottering under him, and sat down in the corridor to recover his composure when he was sure the cynical eyes of the clerks in the outer office were turned from him.

He was dismissed from service! At fifty-nine years of age, after a blameless record, he was turned away like a flawed shafting, just because he was too old. And in spite of himself he could not but think of the many times he had dragged the old "Moravian" out of the jaws of death, nerved to do it simply by the strong love he bore the old craft.

"Heaven forgive you, Mr. Arthur. And may the same Power grant that you'll never rue this day." That was his only complaint to the injustice done him. Then he walked slowly out of the building, down the street, and arrived at the dock where the "Moravian" lay.

She was old and ugly; her antiquated fittings spoke of thirty years before, but she was as lovely as the "Lusitania" in the old man's sight. He and the ship had wrestled with death many a time together, and they had always come off winners. Now some other hand than his would send the tinkling messages to the engineers in the stoke-hold, other eyes than his would be glued to the leather-covered binoculars in the box on the bridge through long nights of storm and fog.

He passed slowly up the gangway, answered the quartermaster's salute absently, went to the chart-house and wound up the chronometers as he had done every day for close on twenty years, and then sat down heavily. The flimsy little deckhouse seemed to shake bodily, as if disturbed by some inward convulsion.

The new captain arrived next morning and took over the command with a breezy indifference that made the old man shake his head dolefully. When he ultimately went ashore, he was full of doubt. The "Moravian" required humoring, he said, not treated as a matter of course. But on the day of sailing, the old man could not drag himself down to the docks to see his beauty's departure. He contented himself with watching her go from behind the curtain of his window, and then the busy world seemed to grow emptier still. He walked aimlessly about all that day, but evening found him on the quay looking dazedly for the cumbersome outlines of his ship. But the empty quays showed no welcoming sight to his eyes.

He had saved a good deal of money at various times, and it had been well invested. Now, when the numbing pain had abated somewhat, he realized on his savings, and invested the entire amount in a little steamer that was for sale at a reasonable figure. The "Timones" was no more of a beauty to look at than was the "Moravian," but she had been a good ship in her day, and it was more a fellow-feeling for the little ship that decided Willoughby on her purchase than anything else. She was to be broken up if nobody bought her, but the old captain saw that she had many a day of good life before her yet.

"I'll not congratulate you on your bargain," said the owner of the "Timones" when the cash was paid over for the deal. "She's seen her best days, and she hasn't many more to run, I doubt. But you've bought her at your own price, and

I hope you'll be spared many a day to run her. If she fails you, come to me and I'll give you a berth at once. You seem to know a good deal about your business." The owner of the "Timones" was an old man, so perhaps he had a soft place in his heart for an old-time skipper.

Captain Willoughby gathered together a crew of men whom he could trust, and set forth as a private shipowner. The wound that the loss of the "Moravian" had made never healed, but the responsibilities of his new position took his mind away from dwelling on that loss, and as time wore on he grew almost happy. Success waited upon him, too. His little ventures were almost always profitable—but he spent the greater part of his earnings on his ship, making her, with a strange whimsical fancy as much like the "Moravian" as possible.

The Atlantic combers swept on in an unbroken procession of power, and the "Timones" lifted her ungainly bows to them with a courtesy that might have been coquettish twenty years before, but was now only fantastic. It was well on in the afternoon, and the storm seemed to be rising fast with every hour that sped. The ugly gray storm wrack in the sky travelled across the heavens as though borne on wings, and the howling wind shrieked maddeningly in the steamer's scanty rigging.

Yet, though the elements seemed to have conspired together against the ship, she was handled with such a deft cunning that she behaved as handsomely as if lying at anchor in a mill-pond. Her carefully nurtured engines ran with a smoothness that was almost lulling to the senses, and she seldom dipped her fore-castle under, though steaming at five knots into the very teeth of the gale. Captain Willoughby was on the bridge, muffled up to the eyes, but treading the spray-soaked planks with the step of a young man. He was in his element now. Let other men waste their energy on filling ships with questionable cargoes, let other men pit their wits against the superior wits of landsmen; this was a job after his own heart, this battling with the elemental forces of nature!

The shrieking winds were the voices of old and long-tried friends, the threshing waves were the cobble-stones of a well-known road, and the veteran laughed gleefully in the eye of the rushing gale.

"It makes me young again," he said to the second mate, who was on watch with him at the time. "I don't remember having enjoyed a gale so much for years. This ship is a dream of delight to me. What do you think of her yourself, Smithson?"

Smithson replied that she was doing as well as could be expected, but that it would be time to talk when the gale had reached its height. Being a pessimist, as many a sailor is, he preferred not to commit himself to open admiration of the tough little craft's qualities.

"This blow will try many a captain's temper tonight, I'll warrant," went on Willoughby gleefully. "These young men who do everything by the book won't know just what the matter, I think." Here he became suddenly grave. "But I sincerely hope the old 'Moravian' won't get too much of the blow," he

said slowly. "She's a very difficult ship to handle in this weather, and she's homeward bound at present, I understand."

But a sad accident happened in the midst of the old man's eulogies of his little ship. Whether it was caused by a moment of inattention on the helmsman's part or not, no one could say, but hardly were the last words out of the captain's mouth, than a tremendous sea swept bodily out of the horizon, raced madly on and on with increasing force, and fell like a thunderbolt aboard the "Timones." The ship disappeared in a swirl of hissing foam, only her vibrating masts and spark-spouting funnel appearing above the surface. Then she threw the down-bearing sea away from her with a saucy toss of her clumsy bow, and re-emerged looking somewhat scared and very chastened. She seemed to have parted with some of her fittings, too, in the course of her bath, and something like a groan burst from the captain's lips as he cast a quick look over the decks, after wringing the blinding water from his face and beard.

"She's carried away her boats!" he gasped incredulously, "every stick and stave of them!" It was true. The two lifeboats were clean gone; the two smaller boats were lying in a confused heap of splinters on the top of the fiddle. The "Timones" had paid dearly for her bath.

The last remnants of timber had hardly passed through the scuppers before the second mate snatched the glasses from the box with an exclamation, and peered intently ahead.

"What is it?"

"Can't quite make out, sir, but it seems to be a steamer in a bad way. She's got a flutter of flags at her masthead, and as far as I can make out the top flag's N."

"Must be N. C.," said Captain Willoughby. "He's in distress, that's what it is. Give me the glasses. Yes, that's N. C. He wants help—and—" the old man's voice grew pathetic—"we can't give it. Our boats have gone just when they were most needed. We'll have to run down and let them know. Perhaps they aren't so badly off as they think."

Far ahead of the "Timones," and only visible to such trained eyes as were on the ship's bridge, a steamer was laboring heavily in the trough of the sea. The two flags that tell of urgent need were splayed out by the wind as stiff as boards, and they could easily be read against the tempestuous sky. But the hull of the steamer was so overwhelmed by the sweeping waves that she was hardly distinguishable from a halftide rock.

"They've seen something to the south'ard," said Smithson, as the "Timones" was swung round toward the other steamer. "Ay, and there's the hoist down again. There goes another. What is it? Oh, yes, I've got it. 'Wish to abandon. Can you take us off?' Plew, they must be in a bad way!"

The two men's eyes were now fixed on another feature of the seascape. From the westward, her sharp bow cleaving the hurrying waves with a superb pride, her massive bulk hardly moving in spite of the raging storm, came a noble Atlantic liner. She had strength and calm impassivity in every leap forward of that quivering hull; she loomed out of the storm wrack like a castle of strength.

"Ay, that'll be something for the passengers to watch," remarked Smithson, with the calm tolerance of the tramp officer for his more fortunate liner brethren. "They're going to rescue the perishing. But perhaps they'll give them a tow home, and then the men on the wreck won't get liner fare after all."

"No, she has the mails. That Cunarder can't stop to tow, Smithson. She's at liberty to save life, but she mustn't tow. Ah, well, it's hard lines on the master of that ship. Perhaps he was as fond of her as I was of the old 'Moravian.' And he'll have to leave her now. Dear me! Dear me!" Captain Willoughby shook his head gravely. None could tell better than he what pangs racked a man's heart at parting with an old, faithful ship.

The liner still came gallantly on. Long before the old "Timones" had crawled within hailing distance of the helpless steamer, the great sea-castle had stopped her engines, had swung over her boats, had lowered her accommodation ladder, and the rescue was effected. It took less than half an hour by the clock, and those on board the "Timones" could hear the cheering of excited passengers as the rescued men were safely deposited aboard.

"They'll be happy aboard the big fellow," said Smithson. "They'll have something to take with their dinner tonight. Why—what's the matter, sir?"

He asked the question in hasty surprise. Well he might, for Captain Willoughby was leaning over the forward rails of the bridge with his glasses glued to his eyes, and strong groans were coming from his lips.

"The cowards! The poor cowards!" he said, "they've left the old ship to drown! My old ship! Why, don't you see, Smithson?—that's the 'Moravian,' my old ship, the ship I was in as my first command. And they've left her like rats. That ship sinking? No, I'll never believe the old 'Moravian' would go under for such a bit of a breeze as this."

He was terribly excited, now that he had recovered from his fixed regard. His white hair was a-bristle on his head, for he had flung his sou'wester down in his rage. His face was working convulsively, and a strange tremor came into his voice as he said:

"We can't let her go, Smithson. We mustn't let her go without an effort to save her. She's not done for yet, and while that ship floats she's not going to be allowed to die like a dog. We must do something."

"What could they do?" asked Smithson. The boats were all swept into matchwood; there was nothing that would float aboard the "Timones." The only thing they could do was to stand by and wait for the end.

"What!" cried Willoughby. "Stand by and wait for the end? No, sir! Not while I have life in me! The ship would live if there were a man aboard her who could manage her. I expect she's lost her propeller, that's all. Call the chief mate, and tell him I want him."

The chief mate was already on deck, drawn thence by the happenings of the last hour.

"We must get into communication with that derelict," said Willoughby as soon as Evans appeared.

"Can't be done, sir," replied that stolid

individual. "No boats; you can only get there by swimming."

"Then," said Captain Willoughby, and the brave old sea-fighter's soul was in his eyes, "then I'll swim to her. Stand by now, Mr. Evans. I am going to take a line across from here to there. You will run the ship as nearly aboard as possible, and I'll soon be across. I was said to be a great swimmer once. Afterwards you shall tow her, if I find that she is fit to be saved. But go I will, no matter what persuasions are put forth."

They argued with him, they almost prayed of him to consider his decision afresh, but the old man was as adamant. His dear old ship was not to be left helpless without one final effort. She had obeyed him before, he said, would she be deaf to the old voice? And so, after many a futile word, the old captain dived off the "Timones" rail as the little steamer squattered past the "Moravian," and gained the latter's gangway. He was observed to drag himself up to the deck and made fast the line he carried round his waist to the derelict's rail; then he disappeared, to return with a megaphone through which he yelled that the ship was still seaworthy.

Throughout that long night the two ships lay tossing aimlessly in the gigantic seas that reared without ceasing, but toward daybreak the wind fell a little and the sea went down. It was a long job for the old man to get a hawser across from the "Timones" to the "Moravian," but he did it somehow, sweating away at a winch like a Trojan. The great tow-rope was bent on to the lightline he had swum with, and soon a perfectly reliable communication was effected between the two ships.

"Now take her home!" he yelled through his megaphone, and his voice had a ring in it that made the listeners stare.

* * * * *

Captain Willoughby once again sat in the office of Messrs. Whishaw and Willings, but this time his head was no longer bowed with misery. Instead, he had the appearance of a victorious general on a battlefield. But the senior partner of the firm was haggard and worn, and his head was sunk between his hands.

"I don't suppose you have changed the firm's routine since I served you, sir," said Captain Willoughby, and if he smiled to himself, can it be wondered at? "You were never in the habit of insuring, and I have not heard to the contrary. The 'Moravian' was not insured?"

"No," said Mr. Whishaw hoarsely, "she was not insured. She—she—was not insured."

"Well, sir, the claim for salvage will come very heavily on you, then. You see, as she was derelict when we picked her up, we are in a position to claim at least two-thirds of the full value of ship and cargo."

"I think," he went on with the same quiet confidence, "that it would have been cheaper to have retained me in my old command. You see, sir, the 'Moravian' was not like ordinary ships. She required humoring; you had to coax her, not drive her. No doubt Mr. William is a capital seaman, but he lacks experience. Now, I would never have abandoned the old ship until her bridge was under water, for I

should have known that she would still make another effort to save herself. But then—I was not aboard her—until afterwards."

"I own up to it, Willoughby," said Whishaw wanly; "we were in the wrong. This is a heavy blow for us, a very heavy blow, for—I am not appealing to your clemency, remember—we have been very heavily dipped of late. The 'Moravian' has not been successful in getting good cargoes since you left her. She had a very rich one aboard when you picked her up, by a strange irony, but previously—she had done nothing. In fact, I do not hesitate to say that this blow will be our ruin. The Admiralty Court will uphold your claim—I am quite aware of that. Fortune has played into your hands in a wonderful manner, captain. It has come to you with both hands full, for you will not only have the satisfaction of clearing our coffers and pocketing the proceeds, but you will have the further satisfaction of having secured a very telling revenge upon us. We deserve it, I am afraid. You deserve all your good fortune, for—allow me to say it—I have never heard of a more gallant piece of work than that of yours. To swim through that sea and save the 'Moravian' as you did was a magnificent piece of work."

The senior partner dropped his head between his hands again. He was wondering vaguely what he was going to do in the future.

"Shall we be able to satisfy your claims out of court, captain?" Mr. Whishaw asked at length. "It would be better, for we cannot pretend to sustain the costs of a lawsuit. This blow will be our ruin, but we will endeavor to treat you as fairly as possible."

Captain Willoughby rose to his feet and stood, hat in hand, by the senior partner's chair. He cleared his throat nervously, and spoke:

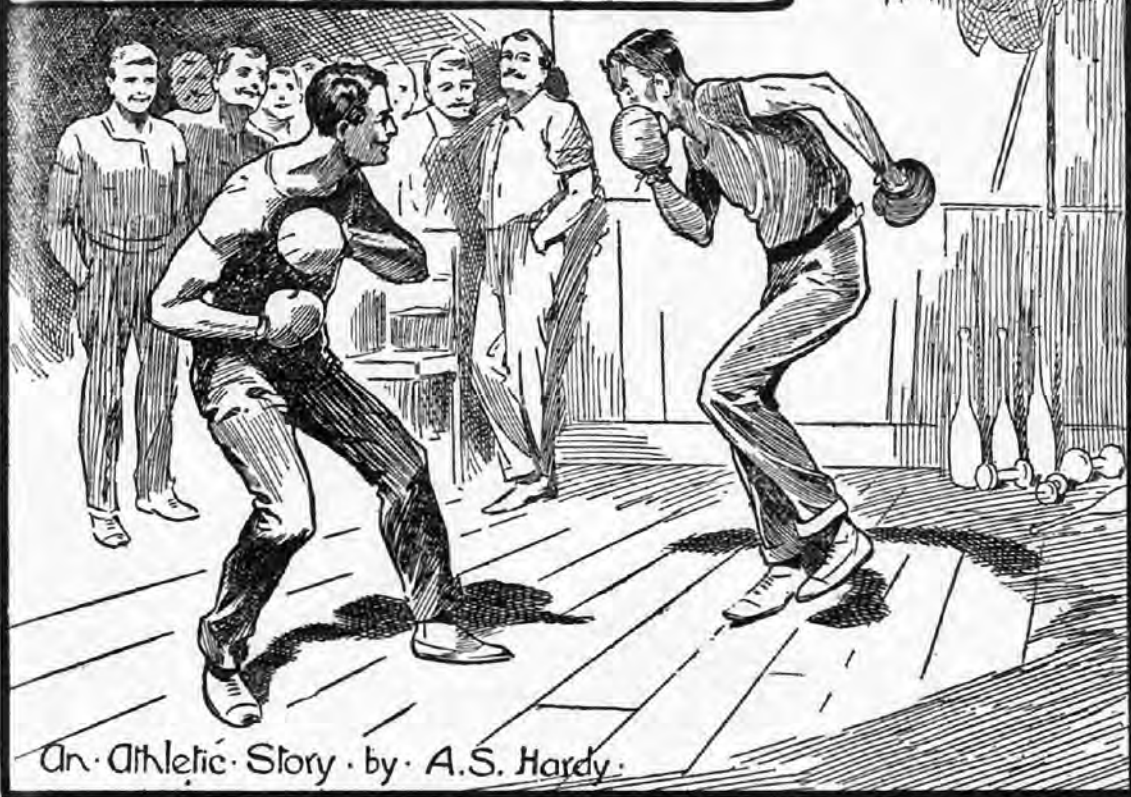
"Mr. Arthur, it is not for me to judge you and yours. When I went overboard with a line to the old 'Moravian,' when I endured long hour after long hour on her fore-castle, watching the hawser, though the seas almost swept me away, I was not thinking of what I should make out of the salvage. I was desirous to save the 'Moravian'—the ship I have loved as well as ever man loved a ship. I want no revenge on you. The ship is yours as she stands. She is still a good ship, and, if properly handled, will serve you for many a year. Take her from me as a free gift. I hereby relinquish all claims I might have to salvage—thank God, I have enough for my old age—and—that is all. Good-bye, sir."

* * * * *

He was out of the office and half-way down the street before the senior partner had recovered from his surprise. As the old sea-dog went he hummed a gay tune, for he was well content. What did money matter to him, when the ship of his heart was safe at last? But he was overtaken by a bareheaded man, who snatched madly at his hands and poured out incoherent words. . . .

"And no man shall ever walk the 'Moravian's' bridge as the old ship's captain while you live, Willoughby," concluded Mr. Whishaw with panting breath.

"CLUB-MATES"



An Athletic Story by A.S. Hardy.

THE gymnasium of the Atlas Athletic Club was in a state of uproar. Leaning with his back against the wall, his face pale, his eyes shifting uneasily to the right and left as he tried to prevent a couple of strong, muscular members of the club from forcing a pair of boxing gloves upon his hands, was a tall, anaemic-looking, weedy slip of a lad.

A group of jeering, laughing members stood around, and in their center was John Foster, the athletic instructor of the club, standing with arms akimbo, and with a pair of brown boxing-gloves upon his hands.

"Now, then," he cried, "come along, youngster! I'm not going to eat you. Only it's necessary you should learn to stand up for yourself. You'll do no good in any walk in life unless you learn to take your gruel, and the sooner you have that funk knocked out of you the better!"

"No, no!" cried the frightened member of the Atlas Athletic Club. "I don't want to box with you. I don't want to box at all. The doctor says I'm not strong enough for that sort of thing yet. Let me go, you set of cads—let me go!"

A roar of derisive laughter went up, in which every member present joined.

"Hold the beggar still, can't you, Bates?" said Morgan, who was doing the glove-tying. "I can't fix him if he wriggles. He's like an eel."

Bates, a muscular gymnast and wrestler in the middle-weights, exerted all his strength, and, pinching the poor fellow's wrist until he cried out in agony, he reduced him to a state

of passive resistance, and the gloves were quickly tied.

"You're a fine specimen of the athlete, you are," Foster said, with a contemptuous curl of the lips. "I shouldn't have enough practice to keep me warm if we had many of your sort in the club."

The poor specimen of humanity quivered as he turned his eyes on the group looking for a possible avenue of escape.

"Now, come along, Medway," said Bates persuasively; "we all want to see what you can do. We've been told you're a very heavy hitter, and that you are more than a match for the professor. Just land him one on the nose to show you mean business, and we'll rally round you like wildfire."

Medway almost blubbered. The tears could be seen standing in his eyes, and the merciless members of the Atlas burst into a roar of satisfied laughter. Possessing the best of health as most of them did, they had the utmost contempt for a weakling like Medway. They could not understand a youngster being nervous and timid to such an extent. It was decided at a council of war held two nights before that they should make a man of Medway, and they were now proceeding to knock the funk, as they called it, out of him.

The frightened youth bit his lip. He saw that he would never be able to break through the solid circle of humanity which had surrounded him.

"Come along, sir," said the instructor; "don't keep the company waiting. Just hit out at me, and I'll teach you something in the noble art of self-defence."

John Foster shaped as he spoke, with hands held up in the orthodox way, and feet shifting swiftly.

"What beats me," said Morgan, in contempt, "is why you joined an athletic club at all, Medway!"

"I was advised to," answered the unfortunate Medway, his voice quivering with emotion. "The doctor said I wanted building up. And Bob Andrews said it would be a good thing for me."

"He ought to know," said Bates derisively. "We think a lot of Bob Andrews in the Atlas—I don't think! He interferes a jolly sight too much. It's a pity he isn't here now, Medway. He might want us to let you off. But we're not going to. You've been in the club a couple of months now, and it's made us tired to see you ambling about the place doing nothing."

"I have to begin by easy stages," protested the unfortunate youth. "The doctor said I wasn't strong enough to stand the strain of heavy work just yet. It would all come in time, he said."

"All come in time!" cried Bates. "It will never come at all if you don't learn to put the gloves on against somebody, and to stand up for yourself. Breathing exercises, a turn on the bar, a rub down, and ride home in the tram won't build you up or give you an appetite. You've got no pluck, and we've no use in the club for anybody who's a funk. Just you have a go at the professor, and we'll think a bit better of you!"

And Bates winked slyly at his chum Morgan. The members of the club crowded round closer.

"Go on, Medway," they cried, "have a go at him!"

And once more the youth was pushed in the back, with such force this time as to almost send him on to the professor's gloves. John Foster took advantage of the proximity of the novice to give him a flip across the nose with his open glove. The hit stung, although there was no force behind the blow, and Medway reeled back a step, holding his nose.

"I can't do it," he cried—"I won't do it! I hate boxing. I don't mind trying anything but boxing and wrestling! But I hate both, and I won't do it!"

"It's a pity," said Morgan, looking at Medway, with a sneer, "that Bob Andrews isn't here to see his friend and toady now. Maybe he'd think a little less of him!"

Medway's face flushed.

"Anyway," he retorted, "Bob Andrews is a gentleman and a jolly good chap, and that's more than any of you can say, you set of cads!"

Morgan stepped forward.

"That's good enough," he said. "He's getting cheeky. He'll show fight, maybe, in a moment. Foster, put him through his paces. We're tired of this. He'll let his tongue wag if he won't put up the gloves. Go on, Medway, you've got to box. We won't let you off. You've got to go through with it, or we'll keep you here all night!"

"I won't!" said Medway resolutely, for he

was as stubborn as a mule, even if he were a poor, insignificant specimen of humanity. "I won't! You can tear me to pieces first, but I won't do it, you set of cowards and bullies!"

Bates once more pushed Medway along, and this time the professor, winking and grinning at the members of the club, whose sympathies he knew were with him, advanced on the unfortunate Medway with the full intention of giving him a bit of a dressing. He didn't mean to hurt the wretched lad, but he meant to try and instil a little pluck into him, and this could only be done, according to his lights, by administering a little gentle chastisement.

Bates, seeing the professor advance, pushed Medway right on to him, and Medway, impelled by the instinct of self-preservation, no doubt, raised his gloved hands. The professor ran on to them, and they stung him a bit.

The gymnasium roared, and the professor, thinking that the miserable Medway had really tried to hit him, upraised his right fist and caught him a blow on the side of the head which stretched him full length upon the boards. The professor did not intend to hit the fellow hard, but he was so accustomed to scientifically placing all his strength and weight behind the blow, that it had its effect, and it was at once seen, by the manner in which Medway's head rolled loosely on his shoulders, that the victim was on the point of fainting.

John Foster, the professional instructor of the club, stood looking down on Medway in astonishment.

"Well, I'm blessed!" he said. "He is a weed! He ought to be put in a glass forcing-frame. He's no good in an athletic club. His mother oughtn't to allow him out!"

"Take the gloves off him," said Bates contemptuously, "and take him to the bath-room and put his head under the tap. That will soon bring him round. Upon my word, you can't even play a joke on him!"

Medway groaned, and lifted a limp hand to the back of his head.

"My head! Oh, my head!" he cried.

Some of the fellows laughed. Then there was a sudden movement on the part of those behind.

"Here comes Andrews!" said someone.

The effect of the announcement was electrical. The majority of the members of the Atlas might have formed a dislike for Bob Andrews, and might indulge in sneers at him when his back was turned, but it was astonishing how diffident was their attitude toward him when he was in the club. They were never very friendly in their advances, but then, on the other hand, they were never actually defiant or rude.

Bob Andrews, seeing a group gathered in a corner of the gymnasium, and noticing that someone was lying on the ground, strode rapidly forward. He was wearing his street clothes, and held a batch of papers in his hands, with his gloves and walking-stick.

He was a fine specimen of the American athlete, and a good all-round man. Standing close upon six feet in his boots, he was slender, and yet well proportioned. His bronzed and healthy face showed how fit he was, for he was indoors, working hard most of the week, and yet managed to keep fit and well. His walk

was springy, his eyes bright. His good-looking face wore a grave expression, which was habitual with him. He smiled but seldom, and when he did the smile was good to see. He was a staunch friend, and a dangerous enemy. Just the sort of fellow one would like to make a chum of, if one had any judgment at all.

He frowned now as he crossed the gymnasium, and seeing Bates there he looked sternly at him.

"What's the matter now?" he said. "You and Morgan been indulging in some more of your horseplay, Bates?"

Bates flushed. It was curious how Bob Andrews seemed to go direct to the root of things.

"No," he answered. "Your friend Medway has been trying to show the professor how to box, and has got the worst of it."

Bob Andrews uttered a cry, dashed his papers, stick and gloves to the ground, and sprang forward. In a moment he was kneeling by the side of the half-conscious youth. Medway looked at him with a dazed smile.

"What have they been doing to you, Medway?" asked Andrews. "Who did this?"

"I—I don't know quite how it happened," said Medway, with an attempt at a smile. "I—I suppose I was foolish. I—I wanted to box with the professor, and I—I found I hadn't the strength, that's all."

Morgan, as he heard the lad he had thought a coward speak, felt a flush of shame stealing over him; but, somehow, he felt relieved, too, for he had been scared by the serious, set look of Bob Andrews' face.

Bob got upon his feet.

"I don't believe a word of it!" he cried. "I know the gang. It was Morgan and Bates who were the ringleaders in this, I'll be bound. As for you, Foster, you ought to be downright ashamed of yourself!"

"Why?" asked the professor defiantly.

He was one of the many in the Atlas Athletic Club who did not like Bob Andrews. Bob was far too off-handed and uncomplimentary to please him.

Bob set his lips grimly.

"I'll tell you why," he said.

The members gathered round.

"I induced my friend Medway to join the Atlas," said Bob Andrews, looking sternly at the group, "because he was weak, and of poor constitution. He's been ailing from a child, and the doctor, who had forbidden him to take any violent or muscular exercise for years, at last came to the conclusion that physical culture, if it were not too strenuously indulged in, might work a power of good in him. Well, his family and my own have been friendly for years. Medway was a weakling, but a better-hearted little chap doesn't breathe. It would be good for some of you hulking, muscular brutes if you had half his generous nature. Well, I induced him to join the Atlas, and I promised his mother, who was afraid for him, that he should only take the very lightest forms of exercise until his nerves were stronger, and he felt he could adapt himself to the more strenuous exercises, such as advanced gymnastics, wrestling, boxing and running. Now, you know the truth about Medway, and I think it is a ghastly shame

that you should try to bully a lad who, on the face of it, shows that he hasn't the strength to hold his own with you."

Morgan ventured an explanation.

"It's a pity you weren't here to see, Andrews," he said. "You wouldn't have found much to cry out against."

"Oh, I know you, Morgan and Bates, and the rest of your clique," said Bob, regarding the bully with no friendly glance. "You wouldn't spare a child if you thought you could get some amusement out of it. As for the professor, he likes boxing. He's so fond of it, and so eager for it, that he'd better have the gloves on with me."

John Foster's eyes gleamed. He disliked the stern and strong young athlete, who always seemed to dominate the club when he was within it. He had often wished to have a serious bout with the gloves with Andrews.

The two had not sparred together for months. There was no love lost between them. Andrews had kept apart from the professor for the simple reason that he feared he might lose control if he did put up the gloves against him. He disapproved of the professor's method of teaching the members of the club, especially the weak and growing juniors, and he had stated over and over again that the professor was not the right sort of instructor.

He found Foster now eager to accept the challenge.

"You go and get your gloves on, and change, sir," he said. "You'll find me waiting for you when you return."

Bob helped Medway up from the floor.

"That's right, Medway," he said. "You look more like yourself now. Just come along with me to the dressing-rooms, and afterwards you shall second me in my bout with the professor."

Medway looked at him with a frightened glance.

"I daren't," he muttered. "And you'd better not box with the professor. He—he'll kill you!"

Bob Andrews laughed.

"I think I can take care of myself, old man," he said.

In less than ten minutes' time Bob re-entered the gymnasium, which he found crowded with members in gymnasium costume, or clad in their street clothes, many new arrivals having just come upon the scene.

The word had gone forth that Bob Andrews was about to box with the professor. This, added to the story of the professor's treatment of Medway, roused club interest to fever-heat.

Bob was known to be a good all-round man, and a hard nut to crack, besides being plucky beyond the average. It was reckoned he would make the professor go.

Some of the members had hastily placed the stakes and ropes of the ring in position, and Bob Andrews approached this with a grim smile. Medway, now dressed for the street, walked by his side. Bob motioned to the professor to enter the ring.

"I don't think we need waste any time," he said, in that off-hand way of his which was so characteristic.

The professor looked sullen and determined.

Practice bouts were always of two minutes' duration, with a minute between. The professor—whose muscles stood out like knots—wished with all his heart that they were three-minute rounds instead. He would give the amateur such a pasting then that he would forever after regret having issued the challenge.

"Time!" called Bates, and the men faced one another.

Bob's shapely arms were not composed of a lot of tightened sinews and bound muscles, but all the necessary material was there, and they were elastic, and well under control. His shapely body was composed of hardened muscle, well placed, but not over-developed, as one might have said the professor's was.

His legs were well balanced, and there was a suggestion of strength about the sweep of the loins which would have pleased an expert and have satisfied a carping critic. He held his hands easily, and was well balanced on his feet. But was it all style? as the other members of the Atlas suggested; that was the question. This was, and always had been, the professor's contention, and John Foster now set to work to prove it.

Before he had taken up the duties of athletic and gymnastic instructor, John Foster had seen a good deal of the ring, and had fought many money matches with varying success, his greatest achievement being his victory over Bill Griffin, the Californian black, who had come to the East as a world's champion in the middle-weights. That fight had made John Foster's reputation, and he had lived on it ever since.

He possessed many tricks, most of them good ones, and he made use of one straightway, drawing Bob Andrews into attack, and then hitting out with a swift left and right, which he intended should leave his antagonist weak and groggy in the opening moments of the fight.

But, to his astonishment, he missed. He saw Bob feint, dodge with his head, and shift his feet swiftly, and the next moment he received such a welt on the side of the head, and another on the body, that stars danced in the gymnasium, and a ringing sounded in his ears such as he had not heard for many a long day. He lost his temper, and weaved in at some close work. He found Bob nothing loth, and the two hammered and pummelled away at one another, until at last the professor clinched, to save himself. They were still in holds when the gong sounded, and they broke apart.

John Foster went to his corner and sat on a chair, whilst Morgan towelled him, glaring across at Bob Andrews as if he would like to eat him. How the lad had hit! He felt sore about the ribs, and he could feel a lump rising on the side of his chin as big as a plum.

"Well done, Bob!" said Medway in Andrews' corner. "I never thought you could have done it. But he'll beat you, won't he?"

"Not he!" said Bob contemptuously. "I'm not afraid of him. Only he may save himself if he continues to clinch, and I haven't got a referee here to see fair play."

The men walked to the center of the ring and faced each other for the second round.

The professor looked determined and grim. He knew that if he wished to win the bout, and he felt that he must win it for the sake of his reputation, he would have to go all out, and finish his man before he himself weakened. If he left it too long Bob might get the better of him, for it was obvious to his experienced eyes that the lad was in far better trim than he himself.

Fast and furious became the hitting, the men circling round one another, and lashing out left and right, it seemed, with little regard to science. But Andrews had a pair of sharp eyes, which were quick to notice the slightest opening, and presently, with a tremendous left-hand blow, he levelled the professor to the floor. John Foster rose with a cry of rage, and dashed at his man, leaving himself open in his fury. Once more out shot that telling left, and yet again did the professor's body strike the boards with a dull thud. He attempted to rise, looking about him with clenched teeth and glaring eyes. He uttered a cry of baffled rage. Bob stood quietly waiting for him to get up with a smile on his handsome face, which had been bruised by one or two of the professor's mighty blows. At last, inside the ten seconds, which one of the members of the club had started to count as if this were a real earnest battle, and not the club spar it ought to have been, John Foster struggled to his feet, and with a yell of rage dashed at his man.

Bob did not want to hit him again, but he felt he would have to do it if the man rushed in. He drew his right hand back to administer the coup de grace, but at that instant the members of the club invaded the ring. They did not intend Bob Andrews to secure the full measure of his triumph; they were determined that he should not knock out the professor, and getting between the two men, John Foster meanwhile struggling and snarling like a wild cat, they wrenched them asunder, took down the padded posts and ropes of the ring, hustling Bob away into a corner.

"That will do, Andrews," said one of them. "We thought you were only going to have an exhibition sparring bout. We didn't know you were both going at it in real earnest. We thought it best to stop it for the good of the club."

Bob smiled. He knew the members a bit better than that.

"Oh, I don't care!" he said. "I'd got him beat, and he can meet me again whenever he likes, if he thinks he stands any chance against me. I don't want to upset the club, only I want the members to clearly understand that the Atlas, as an athletic and physical culture club, is to be open to all, the weak as well as the strong, and when a defenseless and sickly youngster like Medway joins it for the sake of his health he is to receive fair play, and not be bullied and browbeaten by a lot of hulking brutes who ought to know better."

The members listened to this outburst in silence. There were many amongst them who knew that the charge was true.

"What chance do you think we have of making the club popular, and extending the membership so that it will pay, if you frighten off the weaker members?" continued Bob

heatedly. "It's all very well for Bates and Morgan, who are both bullies and cowards, if the truth were known to try and boss the Atlas, but it's not good for the club. Nor is it good for the club to have an instructor who will stoop to the level of such members, and be a party to the bullying of a weak lad."

His voice trembled. He was literally carried away by his feelings.

"I want the club to be a success," he cried. "If one could become cock of the walk by licking the rest of the members I should have been head of the club a long while ago. I have the ability to do it, as I demonstrated by drubbing the professor just now. But I don't believe in that sort of thing. At the same time, if there is anyone among you who thinks he has a grievance against me, I am willing to face him in the wrestling platform or the boxing ring, now or any other night he likes."

The members listened to the broadcast challenge, but there wasn't one of them would reply. Then Bob turned to Medway, who was looking at him with eyes beaming with admiration.

"Come along, youngster!" he said. "Just you stand by me, and as soon as I get my things on I'll go along home with you."

* * * * *

The Atlas Athletic Club had been in existence a couple of seasons when the ill-feeling between the rest of the members and Bob Andrews, who was one of the founders, came to a head with the scene in the gymnasium we have just narrated.

That scene was nearly the ruin of the club. Bob Andrews' triumph had been complete. Morgan realized it, Bates realized it, the professor, who very nearly met with the most disgraceful defeat of his career, realized it, and for many, many nights the gymnasium was almost empty.

Bob Andrews was one of the few consistent members who did not vacate his post. Another, too, who turned up three nights a week, and rapidly improved in physique, thanks to the constant care and supervision of his friend Andrews, was Medway, whose weakness and inefficiency had once been the laughing stock of the club.

Professor John Foster, who had expected to receive his dismissal from the secretary and committee, went about his duties in a sullen, half-hearted manner. He had lost his halo in the eyes of the members who had once looked upon him as an invincible hero.

Still, he did not receive the sack, and after a while, when the incident began to be forgotten, he plucked up courage again, and slowly but surely began to win back the regard of the members, who, facing him, and thinking they could emulate Bob Andrews' handling of the man, found him a very different proposition, and suffered accordingly.

The professor was still facile princeps with the majority of the members, and he soon got a firm hold of them again, although his old propensity of bullying and knocking the juniors about had vanished.

Instead, he was a kindly, fatherly, judicious instructor, who studied the lad he had to bring along, and did the work by easy stages.

Secretary Hamlin, still rejoicing in the friendship and helpful advice of Bob Andrews, conducted the club's affairs with tact and discretion, and gradually the membership increased. Morgan, Bates and their chums found that they no longer swayed the opinion of the Atlas; in fact, they were very much in the background, and their opinions were very seldom listened to, and then never seriously.

They complained loudly that the club was going to the dogs, but with an increased list of members and a crowded gymnasium, and all the winter runs of the harriers section more fully attended than they had ever been before, it seemed their calculations were a little out.

It was exactly a year after the unfortunate bullying of Medway in the Atlas gymnasium, and one evening, when he entered the gymnasium, Hamlin, the secretary, smiled as he saw Medway with a pair of gloves on standing up to the professor in that very ring where Bob Andrews had taken the professor's number down.

"Keep your head up, sir, and your eyes on mine," said the professor, as Medway stood away, breathing hard, flushed of face, but looking fit and well, nevertheless, "and tightly close your mouth. You don't want your tongue chopped in half, do you? That's what's likely to happen if you hold it loosely like that. Now, in at me, and try to hit me fair and square. I shall only guard, that's all."

Medway, whose frame had filled out, whose cheeks were fatter by far than they used to be, and wore a pink flush, did as the professor requested, with the result that he landed a very fair blow on the instructor's nose, which John Foster really did try to avoid.

"That's better, sir," he said; "you're getting on. Why, a month ago you never would have been able to have hit me like that! I shall make something of you, after all."

"Do you really and honestly think so?" asked Medway, dropping his hands, and looking pleased.

"I do indeed, sir. I wouldn't say so if you were an absolute duffer. Only, now that you're beginning to build up muscle, you'll come on fast, and I'm glad to see it, for you're the best tryer of all the lot I've got under me."

Here was a difference, and as he listened to the professor's words, Secretary Hamlin marvelled at the change in the man in a twelve-month.

He knew that it was all due to Bob Andrews. Bob was the making of the club, and he would be the making of the professor before he was done, although the old sore was not healed yet.

Medway drew off his gloves, and, pleased with his bout with a man whom a year ago he had been frightened to face, but whom he now stood up against with all confidence—ay, and took his grueling, too—he slipped out of the ring and made for the bath and dressing-room.

"Professor," said the secretary kindly, "I want a word with you."

John Foster flashed a quick glance at him. What was it? he wondered. The secretary was of the stern type of man who is never seen to smile, who is always serious, and who looks at you when he speaks to you as if he is about to

make a serious charge against you. Foster wondered what he had done wrong now.

"What is it, sir?" he asked.

"Oh," said the secretary, "as you know, the club has made a distinct advance during the past six months. Our list of members has almost doubled, and we have more applications. You have been much harder worked of late than ever you were before. Of course, you get your fees, and all that sort of thing, apart from your regular salary, Foster; but, at the same time, the committee have come to the conclusion that you are not paid sufficient wages, and so they have told me to tell you that you are to receive another three dollars a week, the increase to start from the first Saturday of next month."

John Foster's eyes sparkled. Instead of dismissal, which he had always feared as long as Bob Andrews was on the committee, they had raised his wages. Of course, he knew that nobody could have worked harder or more conscientiously than he had done for the club after he had recovered from the fit of sulks into which he had fallen when Bob Andrews had nearly thrashed him ignominiously; but he had never expected such recognition. It always seemed to him that Andrews went about sneering at him and his work, and many a time he had thought of complaining about it.

"Thank you, sir!" he said, delighted. "And if it's not a rude question, whom have I to thank for this?"

The secretary hesitated a moment, then he smiled grimly.

"Well," he said, "after all, it isn't a state secret, and I don't see why you shouldn't know who are your friends in the Atlas. It was Bob Andrews who moved that your wages be increased, and he spoke so well of you and your duties during the past six months—which time he has been watching you carefully—that the committee had no hesitation in granting the increase."

Secretary Hamlin turned away and left the professor to think it out.

He stood stock still, thoughtfully drawing the gloves off his hands, and his expression was one to behold. Andrews had asked for the increase in his wages, and he had always looked upon Andrews with suspicion, and had disliked him, even as Bates and Morgan, who talked of resigning the club because he had so much to say in the direction of its affairs, disliked him. Well, it beat everything he had ever heard.

And while he was thinking it out, he saw Bob Andrews crossing the gymnasium floor, clad in his gymnastic get-up, with a smile on his face, and a meaning look in his eyes.

Andrews stretched out his hand to the instructor.

"Hamlin has told you what we have decided to do, professor," he said; "I wish you luck, and congratulate you."

The professor stared at him blankly; then, with his cheeks reddening, he took the proffered hand.

"Mr. Andrews," he said, "I've always misjudged you. My stupid pride and conceit stood in my light, I suppose. But I know now who is my friend, and I think it was a jolly good

thing for me that you nearly knocked me out a year ago. I hope we'll be friends, sir."

"Not a doubt about it," answered Andrews cheerily.

"And I don't mind confessing to you, sir," said the professor, his eyes twinkling, "now that we are friends, that the way you held your hooks when you faced me in the ring—in real earnest was an eye-opener to me. Frankly—not because you licked me—I think you'd lick any middle-weight in the world."

"I might or I might not," answered Bob Andrews with a smile; "but I have no liking for ring work. I prefer wrestling. Professor"—and he looked keenly at Foster—"I'm glad to see you are taking so much pains with Medway. He's a nice little chap, and he deserves it. You'll find him improved."

"He has improved, sir," answered the professor; "out of all knowledge. I'm going to fashion him into one of the best feather-weights we've ever turned out, and instead of being the coward we all thought he was a year ago, I've discovered he's got a heart as big as a bullock."

Bob nodded.

"I know," he said. "I realized that year ago. I'm glad you think I wasn't wrong when I took up a firm attitude about the club twelve months back, professor."

John Foster scratched his ear.

"I tell you what, sir," he said, "I've a favor to ask you."

"What is it?"

"We've got a few bouts down for the gala meeting in the gymnasium at the end of the season, sir, but we've not one class enough to my fancy. Will you spar a six-round contest with me?"

Bob Andrews laughed.

"To be sure I will," he said. "Let bygones be bygones, Foster, and when the club sees us standing face to face with the gloves on in friendly rivalry, they'll know that the past has been wiped out, and that everybody in the club is working in harmony. I'm your man."

And so it was arranged, and when the eventful gala evening came round, and the spacious gallery of the huge gymnasium was filled to overflowing, ladies being present in large numbers, Bob Andrews and the professor stepped into the ring, and fought their battle over again. But this time it was not in grim deadly earnest, although some stiffish exchanges were made; they ended up with a fine rally and about equal points, to a round of tremendous applause.

Morgan and Bates were not there to look on. The signing of a truce between Andrews and the professor had been the last straw. They really did see the club going to the dogs, and they decided to resign before the smash came.

And it was just as well, for if they had been present, and had seen the now strong and muscular Medway, with a heart as big as a lion's, carry off the club's feather-weight championship, they might have had a fit of apoplexy. As it was, they weren't even missed.

We aim to give the boys the very best store and if you are pleased with our efforts let us know. We want to give you only that which you like.

The Talisman of Amlak



CHAPTER I The Fugitive

WHEW!" muttered Carlyle Forsyth, as he sauntered out from his tent.

"What's the matter, old man?" queried a young fellow who was stretched full length in the shade.

"Matter? Why, this heat is enough to kill a black! We've had nearly three months of it already; but, by Jove, I never remember a more stifling evening! Here, get up, lazy, and tell old Ali to bring us a couple of pegs of something cool—long pegs! Don't forget!"

"Get up, be bothered!" laughed his companion. "Here, shy a boot at the beggar—that will rouse him!"

And, suiting the action to the word, he picked up a shoe lying beside him, and hurled it at the form of the Arab squatting at some little distance from them.

The above conversation took place at a small encampment a few miles from Harar in Southern Abyssinia, where Carlyle Forsyth and his young brother had pitched their tents beside a grove of giant baobab-trees, whose spreading branches and huge white flowers threw a grateful shade.

The elder of the two had come out at the instigation of a New York engineer to survey the route of the proposed railway from Harar to Zeila; and as his younger brother had just left college preparatory to entering the medical profession, he determined to accompany him for the sake of the holiday and change of scene.

The survey had been satisfactorily carried out and despatches sent home, and they were

awaiting the mail which would inform them whether they were to return or carry their investigations any further.

With a profound salaam, the Arab approached them, and, obedient to orders received, departed, to return almost instantly with two huge tumblers filled to the brim with that peculiar sparkling sherbet that only Orientals can successfully concoct.

He was in the act of handing it to his young masters when he suddenly paused and gazed intently across the long stretch of country that swept gradually upward from where their little camp lay toward the rocky uplands in the distance.

"What's up now?" demanded Carlyle.

"Sunstruck, I suppose!" laughed Frank, his brother.

"Pardon, O my lords," added the Arab, again tending them the cooling drinks, "but something moved on yonder plain!"

"Moved? Well, what of that? A prowling hyena, or something of that sort."

A supercilious smile spread over the wrinkled features of the old native as he gravely answered:

"Hyenas throw not up a cloud of dust."

"Cloud of dust! What on earth is he talking about?" remarked Frank.

"See!" cried the old man, pointing with his long arm.

Both brothers simultaneously rose to their feet and gazed in the direction indicated. "By Jove, he's right!" For even as they gazed, some small object topped one of the distant hills, and for a moment was silhouetted against the crimson sky; then diving down into one of the numerous hollows, disappeared from view.

That it was moving at a tremendous pace could not be doubted, and the old Arab's words were true, for to the American's keen eyes were plainly visible the cloud of dust that it left behind in its wild career.

"What on earth can it be?" queried Frank.
 "It looks awfully like a man on horseback," answered Carlyle.

"Well, it can't be a native. Those gentry don't hurry themselves as a rule."

"Perhaps he can't help it," responded Carlyle thoughtfully. "Ah, I thought so!"

"Thought so! Why? But yes—yes, I see!" chimed in the younger, for on the top of the hill that had but recently been vacated by the horse-man, appeared three or four more moving objects, each one leaving a trail of dust behind.

"That fellow's being pursued, that's what it amounts to. But by whom?"

"If I dare to speak, O my lords," said Ali, "I think yonder pursuers are priests of Islam. I caught a glimpse of their robes as they rounded the crest of the hill."

"This is getting exciting," said the boy, with a flush on his face. "I say, Car, old man, you're not going to stand here and see one man chased by half a dozen, whoever they may be?"

"Certainly not! We'll go forward and meet him."

And, diving into the nearest tent as he spoke, he brought forth a couple of Winchesters and two belts of ammunition.

Each slinging a belt round them, and shouldering their rifles, the two young men set off, accompanied by Ali, who, with the pertinacity of a native, contented himself with his long-barrelled muzzle-loading gun.

They had not proceeded far before the form of the approaching horseman became plainly visible, and they were able to distinguish that it was apparently a middle-aged man wrapped in a long, dark-colored cloak. On he sped, but our friends were not long in ascertaining that the horse that bore him was almost exhausted, for its stride was uncertain, and it stumbled ever and anon as it made a gallant attempt to respond to the urging of its rider.

"Looks as though his mount had had enough of it," remarked Carlyle. "But here—ready with the rifles—here come his pursuers!"

And even as the words left his mouth four or five white-robed figures galloped into view. Crack! And the foremost of them had discharged his long rifle, but without effect—a signal that was instantly taken up by the others, for shot after shot sped toward the fugitive, who, bending low in his saddle, replied as well as he could with a brace of pistols.

The pursuers were rapidly gaining on the man, when again a couple of shots rang out, and this time with such effect that horse and rider rolled together in the dust.

"Let them have it!" shouted Carlyle, and instantly the three guns spoke; there was the unmistakable crack of the Winchesters, and the loud boom of the Arab's long gun.

Two of the men reeled in their saddles, and only by an effort retained their seats, whilst the whole party, utterly taken by surprise, reined in their horses and gazed around—for our friends had taken advantage of the seclusion afforded by a clump of fig-trees to become unseen spectators of this race for life or death.

"Pick off that tall man on the black horse!" shouted Frank. "I'm going for the one next him!"

Again the rifles cracked, and the tall man,

throwing up his arms, plunged headlong from the saddle and fell with a crash to the ground, as his steed, finding itself riderless, galloped across the plain.

For one moment everything was in confusion, then apparently at a given order the remaining men wheeled their horses round and dashed back in the direction whence they came, Ali satisfying himself by taking a pot-shot at their retreating forms, which, however, apparently had no effect.

"Go to that fellow in white over there," shouted Carlyle to Ali, "and if he is not dead, secure him! We will see after the other."

And, utterly heedless of the intense heat, the two young men dashed forward to where the pursued and now stricken man had fallen.

He lay on his face, while a stream of blood welled out from a great wound between his shoulders in the region of his lungs, as he convulsively clutched at the tufts of coarse grass that protruded through the sandy soil. Tenderly they turned him over, and discovered that he was a fine-looking fellow of some forty years of age, with a short-cut dark beard, but evidently not an Abyssinian, although the native clothing he wore denoted that he belonged to some superior rank.

Carlyle addressed him both in Amharic and Geez, but whether the man understood him, it was impossible to say. He only moaned and pointed to his mouth.

"We must get him back to the camp as soon as possible," said Carlyle. "Here, Frank, you and—Ah, here comes Ali! How about that man in white?"

"Dead, O most noble! Your bullet crashed clean through his skull, and by now he's food for the hyenas."

"Then go, cut some branches from those fig-trees; we will make a litter and carry this man into camp. Frank, while he is doing that, put that poor brute out of its misery." And Carlyle pointed to where the horse, with its hind legs broken, lay moaning on the ground.

Without a word, Frank strode up to the suffering animal, and placing his Winchester to its ear, gave it the coup de grace, and returned just as Ali came up bearing some long branches.

With great care, the wounded man was placed upon this improvised conveyance, and then Frank having started off to instruct their followers to prepare for their arrival, Carlyle and Ali set forth with their burden.

After what seemed an age to them, they at last approached their camp, where some of their bearers relieved them of their load, and a few moments later the stranger was reposing on a pile of skins in the grateful shade of the baobab-tree.

Water was instantly procured and poured between the sufferer's parched lips, whilst Frank, who had an elementary knowledge of surgery, proceeded to dress the wound. It was necessary, however, to remove the patient's clothing in order to do this, and then it was discovered that suspended round his neck by a stout cord was a small leather bag, which, weak as he was, he managed to grasp firmly in one hand, whilst they inwardly noted with surprise that the skin of his chest and arms was many degrees lighter than that of his face and hands.

"What do you make of it, Frank?" asked Carlyle, bending over the prostrate form.

"He'll never get over it, old man. He's been hit by one of those explosive bullets, and unless you could get him into a proper hospital with all appliances, I would not give a rush for his life. He may linger, but I think only for an hour or two."

The stranger gave the speaker a sharp glance from his large brown eyes.

"Seems as though he understood English," muttered Carlyle, and again the man pointed to his mouth.

This time the young men gave him more water to which had been added a little of their small store of brandy; and then to their unutterable astonishment the stranger addressed them in perfect English.

"Yes, I understand you, for I am an American—at least, my mother was. Your friend says I cannot live long. I know that, for I can feel death creeping over me. But I thank God that before I die, I have met some of my race again."

He paused and gasped for breath, whilst the two brothers gazed at each other in mute astonishment.

"Well, I'm hanged!" at length ejaculated Frank.

"Hush!" said Carlyle. "Don't disturb him."

And he once more bent over the prostrate man.

"Raise me up a little," said the wounded man in a weak voice. And, obedient to his behest, they propped him up with mattresses snatched from their camp beds; and then with many a gasp and frequent interruptions the stranger poured into their ears a tale so strange and thrilling that it will have to be reserved for another chapter.

CHAPTER II

The Mysterious Amulet

It would be wearisome to our readers to describe how with halting words and frequent pauses the stranger narrated his weird story. Suffice it to say that, as he had already explained, his mother was an American, and that he had received his early education in the country of her birth, but that when a lad he had been brought out to Abyssinia, where his father had obtained grants from the Emperor Theodore, who was then on the throne; and that shortly after his arrival, his young sister, some ten years his junior, had been spirited away, presumably by some Islam priests in revenge for his father disclosing some of their illicit practices to the emperor.

He briefly related how years had been spent in vainly searching for the lost child, and how at last, bowed down with grief, his father and mother had died, leaving him as a solemn legacy the task of continuing the search.

Graphically he described how he had learned from a native who had escaped from the clutches of the priests a rumor of a beautiful live idol that lived in a temple in the mountains in the far East—a temple that could only be traced by means of a special and carefully guarded amulet. How, after various adventures, he had at last secured it, and was making off with it

when he was detected by Amlak, the high priest, and pursued, with the result already known to my readers.

Snatching the little leather bag from his neck, the dying man placed it in Carlyle's hands.

"Follow up the clue," he faintly said, "and if I can watch over you from the land of shadows, rest assured I will. And be certain of this. If you succeed, your reward will be great. There are—there are—"

But a convulsive movement shook his frame. His face contracted in agony. He tried to rise, but without avail, and with a long-drawn sigh, his head fell back. He had passed forever from this world, leaving his unfinished task to strangers.

* * * * *

"What on earth do you make of it all, Frank?" queried Carlyle some few hours later, as he sat smoking his pipe by the camp fire. "I've read a lot of romances in my time, but I never heard anything to equal this. Do you think the poor fellow was out of his mind?"

"Out of his mind! Not a bit of it! He was as rational as we are. But here comes Ali with the bearers. They have evidently finished piling the stones over the poor chap's grave. Ask him."

"O my lords," said Ali, on being questioned, and lowering his voice as he glanced cautiously around, "I have indeed heard tales of the beautiful live idol, but the priests who worship at her shrine are all-powerful; they can hear and see without being seen, and even now might cast the 'evil eye' upon you."

"Evil fiddlesticks," snapped Carlyle. "All right, Ali. Tell the bearers to throw some more wood on the fires, and you may go."

The man paused. "Most noble," he slowly ejaculated, "it is not for thy servant to speak, but—"

"But what? Out with it!"

"If a servant's advice be good in your eyes, seek not the accursed place, or much evil may befall you."

"Which means," added Frank with a laugh, "that if we decide to go on, you would rather be paid up and left behind."

The old man drew himself up. "My lord wrongs me. I have pledged my word, and until you say 'Go!' I remain; and where you go, I go also." Then, salaaming profoundly, he withdrew.

"Fellow's got a touch of blue funk," laughed Frank.

"Can't say that, old man," answered Carlyle. "Anyhow, he's a man to be trusted, and that's saying a lot for an Arab. But, by Jove, we haven't yet examined this so-called amulet that will direct us in our search should we undertake it." And so saying, he drew the small leather bag from his pocket and slowly opened it, revealing to their astonished gaze a small lizard beautifully carved out of red sandstone.

Without a word, Carlyle carefully examined it, then handed it to his brother, who, after turning it over and over, and regarding it most critically, handed it back again, whilst they both stared at one another in silence.

Carlyle was the first to break the silence. "Well, I never!" he slowly ejaculated. "I

thought, to find some plan or chart or something; but how in the name of goodness this curious stone carving is going to direct us is more than I can make out."

"I begin after all to think the man was romancing," remarked Frank, "although one part of his story was true enough. That he was pursued we all know, and Ali declares his pursuers to have been of some order of priesthood. But what are you shaking it for?"

"Shaking it! I'm not moving."

"Then—! But, I say, this is rummy! Look at the thing!" And they both gazed intently at the small stone lizard in Carlyle's hand. Were they dreaming, or was it a reality that the quaintly carved reptile was endowed with life, for a curious twitching was noticeable? Steadily they both gazed at it, and as they did so an extraordinary thing happened. The red stone lizard gradually but slowly turned round till its head pointed due south.

"Well, of all the—!" And at a loss for words, Frank snatched it up and again thoroughly examined it, even going so far as to tap it sharply with a stone, when it gave out the unmistakable clink of one stone striking against another.

"Let's try it again," said Carlyle, as he drew nearer the fire, placing the reptile in his palm whilst they both leaned over it and waited in silent expectation.

For some seconds the thing remained motionless. Then once more the strange quiver seemed to pass over it, and, as on the previous occasion, it began to slowly turn round.

"Watch it, watch it!" shouted Carlyle excitedly. "Throw some more logs on the fire."

Frank instantly seized some small logs and flung them on the glowing embers, causing a bright flame to leap skywards; and as he did so, his gaze caught an object that held him spellbound.

From out the blackness of the night loomed a dim figure that hovered over his brother. It was barely distinguishable from the surrounding gloom, the only actual visible objects being a pair of gleaming eye-balls and a long, outstretched arm that held a knife, the keen blade of which flashed back the rays of the fire.

For a fraction of a second Frank paused, whilst Carlyle, utterly unconscious of the impending drama, intently regarded the object in his hand. Brief as the pause was, the knife was raised, but before it could descend the young man had flung himself forward and clutched the outstretched arm. But in doing so he scattered the fire in all directions, leaving that portion of their camp in utter darkness.

Instantly all was confusion, the shouts of Frank and Carlyle causing the native bearers to come rushing up with flaming branches plucked from the fires round which they had been reclining, whilst instinctively thrusting the amulet in his pocket, Carlyle snatched up his rifle and sprang toward where a dim mass of struggling humanity could be faintly discerned.

He knew that Frank was in the clutches of some unknown foe, but their movements were so rapid and the light so uncertain that he dare not fire; so, throwing down the Winchester he had momentarily raised, he drew his hunting-knife and dashed forward. But quick as he was, Ali, who had rushed up with the others, was

before him. He saw the old Arab fling himself upon the struggling pair. There was a hoarse shout as Frank staggered to his feet, whilst Ali darted off at full speed through the night.

"Are you hurt, old man?" anxiously inquired Carlyle.

"No" panted his brother. "Glad to say I am all right; but that beggar nearly knifed you, Car, old boy."

"What man? How did it happen?"

And then Frank quickly related how he saw in the firelight the form of a native with an upraised knife, and how he had tried to secure him.

"Well," said Carlyle thoughtfully, "you've saved my life beyond a doubt," and he held out his hand. "I can't say much, dear old chap, but you know what my inmost thoughts are."

The brothers affectionately clasped hands, and Frank quietly remarked: "There's more in this yarn we've heard tonight than we dream of. Depend on it, Car, it was one of those priests we put to flight today who, watching his opportunity, stole into camp and tried to regain possession of that little stone lizard."

"Yes. We must take more care of it in the future."

"And ourselves, too, if we wish to get through this adventure with whole skins. But we'd better set out after Ali, and see that he hasn't come to grief."

"I don't think there is much need for that, for, if I'm not much mistaken, I can make him out coming this way." And then, clearly revealed by the light of the flaming branches, their faithful servitor could be seen approaching.

Instantly they began questioning him; but he could only state that, after seizing Frank's assailant by the throat, and forcing him to release his hold of the young American, the Abyssinian, who was almost devoid of any clothing, managed to elude his grasp, and darted off; and that when in pursuit of him his foot caught in a trailing vine—with the inevitable result that he fell, and upon recovering himself, the intruder had disappeared.

"My words come true, O most noble," said the Arab. "The priests of Amlak can reach far. Is not this a warning to you?"

"Yes; it is a warning to us to be more on our guard in future."

"Have you seen anything to make you believe there are more of them about?" queried Carlyle.

"Of a certainty," replied Ali. "For on my way back to camp I passed the spot where we left the one you slew but a few hours ago, and the body was gone."

"What think you? Are they likely to attack us again?"

"If there are enough of them, they surely will."

"Then we will take every precaution. We've had quite enough surprises for one evening." So setting the natives to work, Carlyle had large fires lighted encircling their camp, but at some distance; then, after posting several of the men as sentinels, he and Frank and Ali, fully armed, prepared to take turn and turn about through the long hours of the night. They were not, however, destined to meet with any further adventures, for, with the exception of the senti-

nels being changed, and the occasional replenishing of the fires, nothing disturbed the stillness except the savage cry of the prowling hyenas, or the distant growl of a lion, and the hundred-and-one noises inseparable from a tropical night.

CHAPTER III

A Frustrated Ambush

The early mists were rolling in huge cloud-waves up the steep sides of the almost perpendicular rocks enclosing a narrow valley as a small procession of men wended their way at their base. It was a curious company. First

Slowly they passed along toward where a shallow grave had been recently dug. Then, at a signal from one of them, who appeared to be their leader, a slow and weird chant arose, gradually gaining in volume as they advanced, till it ended in an almost ear-piercing cry as the bearers deposited the body on the ground.

Then, as if it were a preconcerted signal, every stone and bush in the immediate vicinity seemed to spring into life, for from behind each possible cover emerged a white-robed figure, and crowded round the grave-side till at least quite twenty were assembled.

Although a casual observer might possibly have imagined that all those present had gathered

round the grave, such was not the case; for, crouched behind a pile of rocks some twenty yards from the main group, was a native who regarded the gathering with anything but a friendly eye.

It was our old acquaintance, Ali, who, having set out at the first streak of dawn, had fallen across the encampment of priests, and in the dim light, aided by his costume, had managed to mingle with the followers of Amlak. Well he knew that he carried his life in his hands, and that any unwary speech on his part might betray him to foes who would know no remorse. Still he crouched and waited, immovable as a marble statue, keenly endeavoring to ascertain any details that might be of service to his young masters.

The burial service—if service it could be called—was soon over, and then four of the priests who, judging by their long flowing beards and superior clothing, were evidently of higher rank, detached themselves from the main body, and, drawing to one side, were soon seated on the ground, as luck would have it, within a few yards of the rock behind which Ali lay hidden.

Speaking in Amharic, with which the Arab was familiar, the first spokesman reviewed

the late events, recalling how the sacred amulet had been stolen, and how that it was known to be in the possession of the white infidels—as he designated Carlyle and Frank; and he urged his comrades to at once advance, and at one stroke exterminate the strangers and recover the stolen property.

He was listened to with great respect, but another and older man rose to his feet and addressed his colleagues, pointing out that doubtless the white men would follow the clue that the sacred lizard would give them, and which would undoubtedly lead them through the valley in which they then were. That to



With noiseless steps Amlak advanced towards the lads and the girl, whilst from the surrounding gloom a number of white-robed priests formed up behind him

came two men robed in white, upholding aloft long poles to which were affixed a clever imitation of a red lizard, whilst behind them came four others bearing upon their shoulders a rude bier, upon which reposed the body of the man whom we have already learned found his death through the unerring marksmanship of Carlyle Forsyth.

The body with the exception of the head, was covered with wraps composed of the skins of gazelles and antelopes; whilst round the face of the corpse was a wreath of tamarind blooms, easily distinguishable by their yellow color, freely marked with red.

attack them in the open now that they were fully prepared would be folly, for they were well armed and had numerous bearers who also carried weapons, if only old trade guns; so that, if they remained in ambush where they were, they could fall upon their enemies and easily despoil them.

After some argument this plan was finally settled upon, and Ali, who had remained an unseen listener to their debate, having learned all he wished, quietly wriggled through the stones and undergrowth, as only an Arab can, till, having placed a fair distance between himself and the priests' encampment, he rose to his feet and started off at a long, swinging stride toward where the Americans had pitched their tents.

* * * * *

"So you've quite made up your mind to go through with the adventure?"

It was Frank who spoke, as he hastily swallowed a cup of coffee—the remains of their breakfast.

"Rather! I should think so! Why, if we come out of it all right, we shall be able to write up a three-volume novel on our experiences—let alone the chance of the great reward the poor fellow we tried to save hinted at."

"Then you feel certain—"

"That this curious carved lizard will show us the way? Yes, I am quite certain! I don't attempt for one moment to explain or even understand the cause; but, as you know, I have tested it several times this morning, having even taken it a mile away from the camp, and from some unknown reason it always turns around and points its head in one direction—due south."

"Yes; at present. But I have an idea that if we wandered in the wrong direction, it might point due east. Anyhow, I feel convinced it will lead us to the shrine of this beautiful live idol."

"Then nothing remains but to strike camp, and be on the march. But I wonder where Ali has got to?"

"Oh, he'll turn up soon, never fear. He started at daybreak to have a look around, and we shall see him before long."

The necessary orders were soon given, and the bearers were busy striking tents and loading the packmules, when, without a word, Ali glided into camp. Rapidly he recounted to the brothers all he had seen and heard.

"And in which direction, say you, lies their ambush?" queried Carlyle.

"In that direction, O my lord!" replied the Arab, stretching forth his hand.

Carlyle and Frank exchanged a swift glance, whilst the former laughed softly.

"Did I not say so?" he remarked quietly, for the direction in which the Arab's arm was extended pointed due south.

By this time everything was packed ready for a start, and Carlyle, having personally seen that each one of the party was fully armed, and also supplied with a sufficient quantity of ammunition, the order to march was given; and then, under the guidance of the little sandstone lizard, the two young men and their followers started off on a quest that led they knew not whither.

Leaving the grateful shade of the trees behind them, they soon emerged upon a sun-baked plain, where vegetation was scarce, and where only jagged rocks and coarse grass protruded through the loose sand upon which they trod. A long vista of parched ground stretched in front of them, till, some four miles distant, it terminated in the spurs of a range of lofty mountains, whose peaks, still further on, could be descried still shrouded in morning mists.

"How about this ambush that is lying in wait for us yonder?" asked Frank. "It's all very well to be prepared, but for myself I prefer a fight in the open. I don't relish being potted at from behind a rock, or something of that sort. And, depend upon it, those priests have got their scouts out waiting for our arrival."

"Quite right, old man! I've been talking over the matter with Ali, and I think we have hit on a plan that will, anyhow for the time being, outwit these beggars."

"Good! What is it?"

"Don't be in a hurry, boy! You'll have to use patience, and then you'll see. But have you noticed in which direction the wind blows?"

"No! But now you mention it, I can see that it evidently blows direct from behind us, and therefore—"

"Must be blowing straight through the narrow pass where our friends, the priests, are waiting for us."

"Just so! But what of that?"

"Only this. Ali tells me the sides are so steep that they would be almost impossible to climb, whilst they are thickly lined with scrub, which at this season of the year is as dry as tinder."

"Well?"

"Well, what would happen if that scrub caught alight, with the wind as it is now?"

"By Jove!" ejaculated Frank, clapping his brother on the shoulder. "By Jove, you are a genius! Why, they'd be smoked out like a swarm of bees! But who is going to set it on fire?"

"I am!"

"You?"

"Yes; I! Why not? You remember how I served with the Yeomanry in the late war, when I was unfortunately captured by the Boers. By keeping my eyes open, I learned a thing or two, and one of them was the way in which those fellows managed to find cover out of almost nothing. Now, don't begin to raise objections, old man! I'm going to see this plan carried out. What I want you to do is to keep on at a steady march—only not at too quick a pace. If any of those skulkers should show themselves, don't take any notice unless you can help it. Let them believe we are walking into the trap they have laid for us. Now listen! Directly you see a column of smoke rise up from the pass, sprint on with all the men except those in charge of the mules, for I may—or I may not—want help."

Seeing it was useless to attempt to dissuade his brother from the attempted task, Frank listened fully to the instructions and final minor details, and then, after a hearty handshake, they parted.

Carlyle, leaving his rifle behind, and only armed with a revolver and a hunting-knife, proceeded some hundred or so yards to the right,

where some huge boulders rose that would effectually conceal his movements from any outpost thrown out by the enemy; then, with the calm assurance of a trained hunter, threw himself upon his hands and knees, and soon disappeared from the view of friends and foes alike.

Left to himself, Frank called a halt, in order to allow his brother sufficient time to forge ahead of them whilst Ali detailed off certain of the men to attend to the animals, leaving them some assistance in the rear; and then between them they arranged their fighting-line, extending it in open order so as to make as big a show as possible, and also avoid the fatal mistake of advancing against an unseen enemy in a dense mass.

Slowly they marched on, Frank ever and anon scanning the mountains they were gradually approaching through his field-glasses, anxiously waiting to see the expected column of smoke.

"I hope nothing has happened to him," remarked the young man to Ali, after they had proceeded in silence for quite an hour.

"Fear not, O most noble! The white chief knows well how to protect himself. But see!" And he grasped Frank's arm.

Yes, a thin blue vapor rose from between a cleft in the rocks and curled upward. But not for long did it remain like this, for even as they gazed it grew in intensity, till a huge column of black smoke was being drifted onwards at a rapid rate.

"Hurrah!" shouted Frank, snapping his binoculars into their case. "He's done the trick! Now, forward all!" And with a rush, the party started across the uneven ground, each man striving to be first.

"I can see him! I can see him!" panted Frank. "Hurrah, Car, old boy! Here we come! Cantabs to the rescue!" he shouted, giving vent to his old 'Varsity cry, as he excitedly waved his pith helmet in the air, and in a few minutes the two brothers met.

"You've succeeded?" gasped Frank.

Carlyle made no reply, but taking his brother by the arm, led him toward where they could gaze into the narrow valley. Many feet below was the blackened, smoking earth, whilst further up, a huge fire roared and cracked, rushing onward like a legion of fiends.

CHAPTER IV

The Beautiful Live Idol

Once again it was night, and a million stars twinkled in the firmament. Suddenly at the foot of a gigantic rock that reared its head upward, a small light flashed out, only to be almost instantly extinguished.

"Which way does the lizard point now?"

"I'm rather inclined to think upward," replied the voice of Carlyle Forsyth. "And I noticed before the vesta went out that just above our heads is a large aperture in the face of the cliff."

"Ten to one that's the place we are after," whispered Frank. "Anyhow, we'll get up there and see."

"Good!" And in a few moments our friends were, aided by the starlight, slowly ascending

the precipitous side of the cliff that frowned above them.

* * * * *

It will be necessary here to explain that the brothers soon found that Carlyle's plan had worked beyond expectation. The fire created in the narrow valley had completely driven the priests out, and their small cavalcade had marched through its entire length without so much as once firing a shot. Over the blackened and scorched earth they trod, whilst at almost every step they came upon traces of its late occupants—a flintlock gun here, a half-destroyed wallet of provisions there, proving with what haste their foes had quitted the inferno Carlyle had created for their benefit.

Once out of the pass, they had journeyed on for two whole days, always guided by the red sandstone lizard that Carlyle constantly consulted, until after many difficulties in crossing the swollen waters of the River Hawash, they had arrived at the base of the huge mountains near Ankobar.

Their followers had been left a quarter of a mile behind them, for Carlyle and Frank determined to explore on their own account, recognizing the fact that two could possibly gain access to places that it would have been impossible for a body of men to reach.

So they had left their camp with full instructions that no lights were to be shown. But they took the precaution of carrying with them a few blue flares, and their trusted follower Ali had instructions that in the event of one of these being fired, he was to advance at once with every available man. And so we find them groping their way up the precipitous sides of the cliff.

"Steady! Now, steady! Mind the loose stones! Here, I've got a firm hold. Give me your hand! Now, then!" A long pull, and a steady pull, and Frank found himself seated on a small natural platform in the rocks, behind which loomed a large opening; though what was concealed within its gloomy portals it was impossible to conjecture.

For a few moments the two young men paused to recover their breath after their arduous climb; then they once more slowly crawled forward. Soon they were well within the cover of the ragged rocks that masked the opening in the mountain side.

"Do you think it would be safe to have a light?" whispered the younger.

"Yes, I think so. Judging by the current of air we must have just passed an angle of the rocks that would conceal a light from anyone outside. Anyhow, we must chance it, otherwise we stand a great risk of breaking our necks."

Immediately after having spoken, Carlyle struck a match and ignited a coil of wax taper, and the two young men gazed around.

What a sight met their eyes. How is it possible to describe it?

Most of my readers have read of, and possibly some may have seen, the gorgeous temple of Karnak, in Egypt, whose special beauty is the Hall of Columns. Imagine, therefore, if you can, this magnificent hall dwarfed into insignificance; for whereas that relic of ancient

Egypt has lofty pillars beautifully carved and painted, yet in this case the long row of columns that seemed to fade into the distance were not only painted and carved with many a strange hieroglyphic, but were so thickly encrusted with jewels that they flashed back as if in defiance, and from a million points of light, the feeble rays of the recently lighted taper.

"My!" gasped Frank. "We seem to have reached a perfect El Dorado!"

"Softly, softly!" replied his elder brother. "you're right, old man! For a half-dozen of these jewels would prove a king's ransom! But don't forget the old saying: 'Never count your chickens before they're hatched!' There seems something strange to me that we have been allowed to enter this temple unmolested. But remember one thing. Although we're in, we've got to get out again. Have you got your revolver handy in case of emergencies?"

"Of course I have."

"Well, then, come along! Keep your eyes open, and we must chance to luck."

Carefully they wended their way onward through the massive columns, their light showing up many quaint carvings of bygone deities—strange and almost inconceivable figures that seemed to bow and grimace at them in the flickering light, whilst all around flashed the rays of myriad gems.

After what seemed a terrible long period to the two adventurers, they gradually neared the end of the spacious hall, and found that it terminated in a comparatively small square stone doorway.

"What on earth can be inside there?" whispered Carlyle, for the solemn stillness of the place was having an appreciable effect upon even his buoyant spirits.

"Goodness only knows!" whispered Frank. And as he did so, the echo, through some strange construction of the place, took up the words: "Goodness only knows—only knows," was reverberated from all sides, till it finally died away in the distance. Without another word, Carlyle touched his brother on the arm and pointed to the open doorway—an invitation to which the latter responded with a curt nod. Then holding their light aloft, and each man with his revolver clasped in his hand, they boldly stepped in.

For a moment they were unable to distinguish anything except the few feet of ground that was illuminated by the feeble rays of the light they carried; then suddenly a slight grating noise caught Carlyle's ear. He turned, and as he did so he grasped Frank's arm, for an immense stone that evidently worked in grooves was slowly descending in the doorway through which they had just passed, and all hope of retracing their steps in that direction was gone forever.

Fascinated and rooted to the spot, they stood and gazed at it till at length with a clang it struck the ground. And hardly had the sound died away before a peal of what sounded to them like unearthly laughter rang through the lofty chamber, and at the same instant a gust of cold air caught the light they carried, and extinguished it.

Where it came from, they were never able to make out; but as their feeble light died away

a strange phosphorescent glow that gradually increased in force illuminated the huge chamber, and, glancing around, they discovered that, unlike the one they had just quitted, its walls and roof seemed composed of unhewn rock, with this exception—that at the further end was a raised altar of pure white marble, upon which reposed an exquisite statue of a draped female, with one arm held aloft, and bearing in her hand a replica of the red sandstone lizard Carlyle still carried in his pocket.

To say that they were not awed would be departing from the truth, for although as stout-hearted young Americans as ever lived, yet their surroundings were so uncanny as to have caused the bravest man to quail.

"S-sh!" said Carlyle, pointing to the figure. "What does this mean?" For a mist seemed to be surrounding it, whilst the light that had originally illuminated the cavern died away.

Slowly the thick mist hid the figure from view, and then faded away. But in that brief space what a difference! The cold stone had become endowed with life. Instead of the sightless eyes of stone were two that flashed a keen glance around. The color of the blood that coursed through the veins showed faintly through the skin, and the voluminous drapery was slightly stirred by the heaving of her bosom, whilst her luxuriant dark hair, only slightly confined by a circlet of gold, floated in profusion over her shoulders.

"The beautiful live idol!" cried both, almost in one breath.

They paused irresolutely, uncertain how to act, when a strange, faint odor assailed their nostrils. Although pungent, it was sweet, and at the first breath almost acceptable, acting on their somewhat overstrung nerves like a stimulant. They began to feel as though treading on air, and laughed aloud in their exultation. But—but why did the beautiful figure smile on them and beckon them toward her? What was this feeling of drowsiness that crept over them? Who were those white-robed figures that seemed to spring into life from thin air? Where were they? Was it a dream? But—but—and then consciousness forsook them, and with once again a mocking laugh ringing in their ears, they fell prone on the floor at the foot of the altar.

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With an awful racking pain in his head, Carlyle turned over. Where was he? What had happened? Who had disturbed him? Why couldn't he be left alone to rest? These and a thousand other queries flashed across his mind. But there was no mistaking the slight grip he felt on his arm, whilst at the same moment a small hand covered his mouth.

Pulling himself together, he glanced up. What was that he saw bending over him? For revealed by a small light she carried in her hand, was the willowy form, the lustrous eyes, and the long flowing hair of the beautiful live idol.

"S-sh!" she whispered. And then, speaking in Amharic quickly said: "You are the first white men I have seen since I was quite a little girl. Something tells me that you have come here to help me. But time presses. You can

do nothing as you are now, but use this!" and she handed him, as she spoke, a keen knife.

Then for the first time Carlyle realized that he was bound hand and foot.

"I am unable to use it," he replied, as he raised his tied hands.

"Ah, I see!"

Then with a quick stroke of the knife she severed the cords that bound his wrists.

Instantly he seized the knife, and cut the thongs around his feet. It was all so strange. He moved like one in a dream. He had not thought to question who this fair girl was, nor how she had come to his assistance. Quickly raising himself, he glanced around as well as the dim light would allow, and his heart seemed to stop beating. Where was Frank?

Instinctively the girl read the unspoken question in his eyes.

ward, she seized his arm, and almost flung herself behind him.

"See!" she cried, pointing to a distant corner, where the darkness was, if possible, deeper than the rest. "See! He comes!"

"He comes! Who?"

"Amlak, the High Priest!" interrupted a hollow voice, as a tall, commanding figure loomed in sight.

CHAPTER V

A Tight Corner and a Way Out

The words and the man's appearance were so unexpected that Carlyle instinctively stepped back one or two paces, and from force of habit placed his hand to his hip. Thank heaven, he still had his revolver, for evidently the Islam priests—having bound him as they thought securely—had omitted the precaution of disarming him.

In an instant Frank was at his brother's side.

"Your revolver, Frank!" cried Carlyle. "Have you got it?"

"Yes, thank goodness!"

"Then we can, at any rate, hold our own for a bit, or, if necessary, sell our lives dearly."

With noiseless steps Amlak advanced toward them, whilst from the surrounding gloom a number of white-robed priests formed up behind him, each man armed with a long spear, though the lads noted, to their inward satisfaction, that they could not distinguish any traces of firearms amongst them.

"So, O white men," said Amlak, "'tis even you who slew a brother of our Order, and then drove the rest of them out of the Sacred Valley by fire! 'Tis you we meet in this the temple of the Gods. Knowest thou that this sin of thine alone will have to be

atoned for by death from torture, and would have been carried out ere this had it not been for yon girl?" And he pointed to the trembling girl who now crouched at their feet. "But a worse fate awaits her."

"Know, O Amlak," said Carlyle, adopting the peculiarity of speech affected by Eastern tribes—"know that thy threats run like idle water down a brook! What thou boastest of thou canst not perform."

"Not perform!" almost screamed the High Priest, as his brows contracted in a deep frown. "Boast not thy idle boast!" And he clapped his hands three times. Instantly the same curious light they had seen once before filled the chamber, revealing at least twenty guards, who, with levelled spears, advanced toward them.

Frank raised his revolver, and took a deliberate aim at the High Priest.

"Don't fire," shouted Carlyle, "but back—back to the wall! We can stand at bay there!"



From out of the darkness of the night loomed a dim figure that hovered over Carlyle. In its hand was a knife, the keen blade of which flashed back the rays of the fire

"There!" she said, pointing to a corner that was far removed from the rays of the light.

Carlyle sprang forward, and soon found the form of his brother.

"Frank! Frank!" he whispered.

"You!" responded his brother. "I thought—thought— But where am I?"

"Never mind, old man! Don't ask questions! Every moment is precious. Ah!" he exclaimed, as he quickly perceived that his brother was bound, as he had been. But a few strokes of his knife soon overcame that difficulty, and he helped Frank to rise.

"Don't speak above a whisper," he added excitedly. "I don't understand things myself yet, but that strange vision—the beautiful idol—has come to our rescue, and even now—"

His words were interrupted by a piercing shriek, and if he had had at any moment a doubt as to the living personality of the idol, they were quickly dispelled; for, rushing for-

And seizing the almost unconscious girl, he, followed by Frank, darted backward till they reached the termination of the cavern, when by a strange irony of fate they found they had placed their backs against the very stone slab that only a short time previously had imprisoned them. But as Carlyle glanced at it a quiet smile spread over his features.

Possibly with the intention of prolonging the agony of their supposed victims, the retainers of the High Priest advanced with a slow and measured step, their long spears levelled, forming a glittering hedge of steel.

In front, and as if unconscious of any danger, stalked Amlak himself.

"It's all up with us, Car," said Frank hoarsely. "Let's bring down as many as we can, and then die game, anyhow."

"Pick off that fellow to the right of the priest," whispered Carlyle. "I'll see to the one on the other side."

Almost instantly their revolvers rang out, and, true to their aim, their bullets each found a billet, the stricken men falling almost simultaneously. Then, before Frank could grasp his brother's idea, and long before the echoes had died away, Carlyle sprang forward and seized Amlak in a grip of steel. Exerting all his strength and using an old trick that he had learned from a professional wrestler in his college days, Carlyle flung the man bodily across his shoulders, and before the onlookers had recovered from their astonishment, had borne him back and flung him to the ground, where he lay half stunned. Then, kneeling on the chest of the prostrate man, he placed his revolver to his ear.

"The first man who moves a step," he cried, in ringing accents, "sounds the death-knell of Amlak, your High Priest."

Instantly the advancing men paused and glanced at each other in uncertainty, whilst Frank kept his revolver ready.

"If I had but cords to bind him with," muttered Carlyle.

"May not these do?" interrupted the voice of the girl, who had by that time recovered her presence of mind. And so saying, she seized her long, flowing robe and tore off long strips.

"Splendidly!" echoed Carlyle, "Here, Frank, bind his hands and feet, whilst I still keep the pistol to his head."

Bursting with rage, the remaining priests looked on, powerless to help, for there was such a determined expression in the young Briton's face that they did not doubt for a moment but that he would carry his threat into execution should they advance.

In less time than it takes to describe, Amlak was securely tied up, and in doing so a handsome collar he wore round his neck, and which was thickly inlaid with diamonds, fell off.

"If ever we get out of this place alive, this may prove useful," muttered Frank, as he thrust it into the pocket of his shooting-jacket. Amlak gradually opened his eyes, for he had been partially stunned when he was hurled down by Carlyle.

For a few moments each actor in the strange drama stood motionless. Surely no such scene had ever been witnessed before. Two young Americans calmly facing quite twenty armed foes, whilst at their feet lay the High Priest bound,

and behind them crouched the lovely girl whom they only knew as the beautiful live idol.

Waiting till Amlak had recovered sufficiently to understand his words, Carlyle sternly addressed him:

"Answer me, O Amlak, and remember your life hangs on your words. Thou knowest well the secret how this stone door is raised. Tell it unto me."

With sullen eyes their captive gazed at them. "I tell thee nothing, thou cursed infidel!"

"Once again I ask you," demanded Carlyle, and he thrust forward his revolver till its cold muzzle touched Amlak's forehead.

The man shivered, and then with his eyes almost starting from his head, slowly said:

"Half a man's height on the left side ye will see a carved lotus flower. Pluck this, and the stone will rise."

"You heard what he said," Carlyle remarked to the girl. "Search and see if such be the case, whilst we stand here on guard."

Quick to do their bidding, the girl examined the wall, and soon, amidst the quaint carving, discovered the flower described. With feverish haste she seized it, and it instantly yielded to her touch, and then, with a rasping noise, the stone slowly moved upward.

"Thank heaven!" muttered Frank, as he saw the opening momentarily growing larger.

"Now!" cried Carlyle, as soon as there was room for them to pass. "Stay!" he shouted, as the girl was about to dart through. And he dragged Amlak's body forward till it lay under the ponderous stone. "He might give some secret signal and have it dropped on us and crush us, but he will hardly do that as he lies there."

"Have you still got those flares in your haversack, Frank?"

"Yes, I think so. Yes, here they are."

"Then take this girl to the edge of the outer temple, and when outside on the ledge of rocks, light one, and Ali and the men will at once come on."

"But what about you?"

"Oh, I am all right! In this narrow doorway I can hold my own and keep the men back, especially as Amlak is a prisoner. But back! back!" he shouted.

There was a loud crack overhead. Evidently something was wrong with the hidden machinery, for without any further warning the immense slab of stone fell with a crash, and although Carlyle made a frantic endeavor to clutch the priest, he was too late; it descended with terrific force, instantly killing the priest, and, for the time being, placing an effectual barrier between the fugitives and their foes.

* * * * *

We need not go into all the details of how the brothers and their fair companion hurried away from the ghastly scene. Suffice it to say, they soon reached the outer air, and, having lighted their blue flare, instantly saw it answered by a similar one in the distance, and in a very short space of time their own men, headed by Ali, came rushing up. Without any delay, they helped the girl down from her perilous position on the ledge of rock, and at once made their way to their own camp.

Although momentarily expecting to be pursued by the priests, they were for some reason or other left unmolested, and after several days' march struck the coast at Zeila, where the girl, being utterly exhausted by her wanderings, Carlyle and Frank procured a native dhow with its long latteen-sail, and, having paid off their bearers, all three, accompanied by Ali, embarked, and, aided by a favorable wind, set out on the long voyage up the Red Sea to Suez, where, after many years of trials, the beautiful live idol was once more restored to civilization.

During the voyage the brothers learned as much of her history as she could tell them, she having been kidnapped by the priests and kept in almost solitary confinement for many years. How she had been forced to pose at the back of the stone idol which, when shrouded by the incense the priests burned, revolved on its base,

she thus taking its place, so that the credulous were led to believe that Amlak possessed the power of giving life to the stone image, with the result that every petty chief for miles round bowed down to his supposed powers.

Carlyle is now in a capital way of business as consulting engineer, having spacious offices in New York, and he and his dark-haired wife often gaze at a small red sandstone lizard that reposes in a glass case in their dainty drawing-room and wonder what magnetic power compelled it to draw them together.

Frank is a highly esteemed medical practitioner in the Midlands, where he is sometimes visited by Ali, when his old master can allow him the time. And as for the jewels taken from the collar of the dead High Priest—well, perhaps the brothers' respective bankers could say something about them if they wished.

HINTS FOR STAMP COLLECTORS

Edited by JOSEPH J. LANE

"Forbidden" Stamps

It is a fact, perhaps not known to every philatelist—and certainly unknown to the great majority of the general public—that many stamp albums contain stamps to which their owners have no legal right. Yet we do not allege that such stamps have been stolen or wrongfully obtained. In nine cases out of ten they have probably been secured by purchase or by exchange in a perfectly bona-fide manner—and yet the fact remains that these stamps are not legally the property of the persons in whose albums they repose.

Now all this sounds paradoxical, not to say impossible. It is, however, easily explained.

In nearly all the countries comprised in the Postal Union, official postage stamps are in use for the prepayment of the mail matter of the principal Government Departments and for other official purposes. For an example, we cannot quote anything more familiar to the great bulk of our readers than the "I. R. Official" stamps of England—the ordinary British adhesive stamps with the overprint "I. R. Official." These are of various values from $\frac{1}{2}$ d. up to £1. We have lately heard it stated that the £5 stamp has also received the surcharge, but as to this we have no definite information. However, we mention the "I. R. Official" stamps merely as an instance of an issue which is intended only for official use.

Such stamps are supposed not to reach the hands of the general public in an unused condition—nor, as regards the higher values, in a used condition. They are issued solely for the use of Inland Revenue officials in all parts of the country, and the stocks of them are jealously guarded and doled out with great exactitude by officials appointed for the purpose.

The $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. "I. R. Officials" are common enough—especially the 1d. stamp, which, as every dog-lover knows, is to frank the correspondence of the functionaries whose duty it is to requisition the annual dog-tax. Letters

to taxpayers generally are franked with this penny "I. R. Official," which is consequently quite as common as, say an ordinary 1s. British stamp. But the higher values of "I. R. Officials," such as the 2s. 6d., 5s., 10s., and £1, are put to no such ordinary use, and these are, theoretically, if not in actual fact, Forbidden Stamps, since the private individual is not supposed to possess them. However, as many hundreds of collectors' albums will testify, specimens of the stamps do leak out, both used and unused.

So much is fairly common knowledge; but how many people know that the possession of unused "I. R. Official" stamps, even though they have been bought in perfect good faith, for far more than their face value, is contrary to law? The Government, if it cared to exercise its full rights, could swoop down on such of these stamps as it could find, and confiscate the lot!

Those readers fortunate enough to possess specimens may, however, enjoy a perfect sense of security. The British Government is not likely to do anything of the kind. We are merely stating what could be done.

Other countries besides ours have "Forbidden" stamps. In this country the large U. S. A. Newspaper and Periodical stamps are, or were, until the issue of the famous Government reprints of 1899, strictly tabooed. They were simply used to frank large packages of newspaper mail matter from one post office to another, and to the public they were supposed to be things that were often heard of but never seen. It is well known, however, that large numbers of them leaked out, and in 1897 the Post Office Department took the extreme measure of impounding a quantity of these stamps found in the hands of a Washington stamp dealer.

To the present day the Unpaid Letter, or Postage Due labels of the United States are not intended to be obtainable by the public in the unused condition, but they are obtained,

and the proof of it is that certain values are catalogued as low as a penny and twopence each, unused.

The South Australian "O. S." issues are another instance that comes readily to mind because only recently we gave publicity a semi-official statement that large numbers of forged "O. S." stamps of this colony had been placed on the stamp market in London. That report, happily, proved to be unfounded; but it is a fact that the Colonial authorities, if they cared to avail themselves of the powers conferred upon them by the legislature could seize all the "O. S." stamps held by philatelists both in the Colonies and the mother country. They are not in the least likely to do it, but the power is assuredly theirs.

These facts seem to us fully to justify our startling headline, "Forbidden Stamps," which at first glance seems to smack of the sharp, stern measures of Peking or the Golden Horn. But it must not be thought for a moment that all official stamps are thus railed off (or supposed to be railed off) from the philatelic public. In the lesser countries of the world there is no unwillingness to sell the stamp collector anything for which he is prepared to pay. In fact, special and most unnecessary varieties of so called "official" stamps are frequently created with a special view to the requirements (?) of the philatelic community.

Used or Unused Stamps

A great amount of discussion among medium collectors takes place at times as to the relative merits of collecting unused or used stamps, and numerous good reasons are brought forward in support of either side. Each one of us has to decide what is for him, the best method, and act upon that decision.

In the first place let us look at a few of the arguments in favor of collecting unused stamps. From an artistic point of view unused stamps have a better appearance in a collection than stamps which have been partly obliterated at the hands of the post office officials. The watermark is more easily distinguishable and forgeries can be more readily detected, whilst financially it is contended that unused stamps are the better investment as they increase in value to a far greater extent than used ones in the great majority of cases.

On the other side, some people contend that a stamp is not really a postage stamp until it has done its duty by passing through the post, and it must be generally admitted that this is a great point in favor of the collecting of used stamps. Then again, there is a certain amount of interest and sentiment connected with a stamp which possibly bears on its face the source and date of origin.

The arguments on both sides seem so sound that one is bound to admit that the best way of settling all disputes is to collect, as far as possible, an unused and a used copy of each stamp, but this method is not always practicable, besides making an extra expense. Personally I prefer a lightly postmarked copy to an unused one, in the generality of cases. It is, however, a question which each individual collector must decide for himself, after studying the "pros and cons" of the case.

HOW TO BREATHE CORRECTLY It Gives Increased Vitality, and Promotes Refreshing Sleep

There are careless ways of sitting and standing that draw the shoulders forward and cramp the chest; and it is as hard for the lungs to do good work when the chest is narrow and constricted as it is for a closely-bandaged hand to perform graceful penmanship.

Then there are lazy ways of breathing, and one-sided ways of breathing, and the particularly bad habit of breathing through the mouth. Now, the nose was meant to breathe through, and it is marvellously arranged for filtering the impurities out of the air, for changing it to a suitable temperature for entering the lungs.

The mouth has no such apparatus, and when air is swallowed through the mouth instead of breathed through the nose, it has an injurious effect upon the lungs. A story is told of an Indian who had a personal encounter with a white man much his superior in size and strength, and who was asked afterward if he was not afraid. "Me never afraid of man who keeps his mouth open," was the immediate reply.

It is well to establish the habit of deep breathing if it does not already exist, but, in addition to this, the reserve air which is left in the lungs after an ordinary expiration should be expelled and the lungs thoroughly ventilated at least twice every day.

First, then, see to it that the air in the room is as pure and fresh as outdoor air can make it. Then, with all tight and superfluous clothing removed, lie flat on the back, and, with the mouth firmly closed, take a full, deep breath. Hold it eight or ten seconds, and then let it out. Take another, and yet another breath in the same way.

After that, take a breath into the lungs as speedily as possible, beginning to fill them at their lowest extremities, and inhaling gradually until they are filled to their full capacity, when the air should be exhaled in the same slow and steady manner in which it was taken in. Repeat this exercise three or four times.

When you have taken this exercise again to make sure that the shoulders are in good position, throw your arms vertically over your head, and take another inhalation, swinging the arms rapidly to the sides close to the body and back again over the head. Swing the arms up and down four times on the same breath, and repeat the exercise three or four times.

A few such exercises as these, for five or ten minutes at night and morning, will promote refreshing sleep and give increased vitality for the duties and occupations of the day; and it may be noted in conclusion that an anaemic or low condition of the blood is seldom found where there is an established habit of full, deep breathing with the mouth closed.

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Telling how a Young Fellow Proved His Mettle

By J. ST. LAWRENCE

A Perilous Errand

NOW, then, my lad," said the grizzly old barrack-sergeant, "look alive. The Chief wants you."

Dick Travers straightened himself. The moment for which he had so long and eagerly waited had come at last. He was about to be ushered into the presence of the Chief of the Melbourne police, and to be given a start.

Like many another young fellow, Travers had landed in Australia with a few hundred dollars in his pocket, and with golden dreams of a speedy fortune; but fortune fought shy of him all along the road. He had drifted from one thing to another, until, finding himself stranded in Melbourne, he saw, by a notice in the papers, that troopers were wanted for the Mounted Police, and determined to join the force.

A well-set-up, athletic young fellow; he had passed all the preliminary tests with flying colors. These consisted of such feats as clearing a five-barred gate without saddle or bridle, and with arms folded. But he had not yet been allowed to don the trooper's uniform or been assigned any regular duties. The time, however, had now arrived.

The Chief of the Melbourne police at that period—it was back in the Sixties—was Major Trench, a good type of the seasoned cavalry officer, who knew how to handle his men.

Travers found him posted on the hearthrug in his private room and evidently awaiting him. The young fellow brought his heels together, saluted, and stood at attention. The Chief ran a keen eye over his tall, upstanding figure, and seemed to note its promise of strength and activity with inward approval. Then he spoke.

"Your name?" he asked abruptly.

"Richard Travers," was the answer.

"How long in the Colonies?"

"Three years, sir."

"Hum! the old story, I suppose—came out to make your fortune and ended by joining the police. Well, you might have done worse. There is a good opening in the force for young fellows with plenty of grit. But it is rough work at times, and with a considerable spice of danger, too. You will soon learn that, for I am about to give you your first start."

Travers pricked up his ears. For weeks he had been hanging round the barracks, waiting for his turn to come, and was ready for even the most hazardous service.

"I must warn you," continued the Chief, "that the man you will have to deal with is a noted and desperate criminal; one of the most determined rascals we have in the colonies. To get the better of him you will have to display shrewdness and resource and be prompt to act when the proper time comes. Above all, let him have no inkling that you are in any way connected with the police; that would put him on his guard at once. It is for this very reason I do not propose to send one of the older and more experienced troopers after him. He knows every one of them by sight, and would be careful to give them a wide berth. So, you see, you will have all your work cut out for you. If you acquit yourself well in the business you will have every prospect of speedy promotion; if not——"

He concluded the sentence with a meaning gesture, and Travers was not slow to perceive that if he failed in this venture his career in the Mounted Police would be ended before it was well begun.

"The matter is simply this," went on the Chief, coming to the point at once. "Certain Government documents of a secret and important nature have been stolen. The man into whose hands they have fallen—the fellow of whom I have been speaking—knows their value, and will not stick at a trifle to keep a tight hold on them. They must be recovered before he has time to turn them to bad account, or there will be a regular flare-up.

"Now, I have received private information that this fellow—Curran is his name, a reckless and dare-devil Irishman, once employed by the Government—is on his way in here at the present moment disguised as a swagsman. He has the packet of papers in his possession. Once he strikes the city there are so many secret haunts open to him that it might be difficult to track him down. He must, therefore, be intercepted on the road."

"Very good, sir," replied the young trooper. "Can I have a description of the fellow? What sort of man am I to look out for?"

"Wait a moment. I must tell you in the first place that we do not particularly want to get hold of the man himself. There are reasons,

indeed, why we should wish to be well rid of him, once we have taken it out of his power to do mischief. No; all we require is the papers. You understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Only employ such force, then, as you may deem necessary. You must not do the man any permanent injury. No shooting, mind, on any account."

"All right, sir. When am I to start?"

"At once. The fellow is coming in from the Bandona direction. You will ride a good way out and lie in wait for him on a lonely part of the road. And, remember, those papers must be here, in my hands, by noon tomorrow."

"As to the man himself," concluded the Chief, "you will look out for a tall, powerful rascal, with reddish hair and high cheekbones. Wait," he added, crossing to his desk and taking a printed paper, headed with the Government arms, from it. "Here is a full description of him. You will notice, among other things, that the lobe of his left ear is missing. It was bitten off, I believe, in a furious rough-and-tumble fight he had in a low drinking den."

Travers took the paper and read through the description, the Chief closely watching his face as he did so. The young fellow showed no signs of hesitation, however. He quietly pocketed the paper, saluted the Chief again, and stepped briskly from the room.

Some whispers of what was in the air had got abroad amongst the troopers, and several of his comrades crowded round him when he reached the barrack-yard. Most of them appeared to know the dangerous character of the man whom Travers had been set to entrap, and their comments were by no means consoling.

"To tackle Curran?" exclaimed a senior constable named Halliday. "So the Chief has set you to tackle that desperate rascal? Lad, you have a pretty stiff job before you! If he suspects you, and once gets his great bony hands upon you, he'll crack your neck in a jiffy."

"There may be two views to that," quietly replied Travers, as he mounted his horse and rode out of the barrack-yard. In glancing back he saw the troopers looking after him and whispering among themselves in a way he could not understand.

They evidently considered him far too young and inexperienced for such a dangerous venture, and that he would come back with nothing but failure to his credit. The thought put him upon his mettle. He determined to render a good account of himself in the affair, come what might.

Still, he could not conceal from himself that his task was likely to prove an extremely difficult as well as a dangerous one. To be pitted against a daring criminal, a man of the worst reputation apparently, was not the pleasantest duty which could have been assigned to him as a start. Moreover, the restrictions laid upon him by the Chief would be certain to hamper him when he fell in with his man, and seriously interfere with his prospect of success.

It was just upon noon when he rode out of the city and struck along the Bandona road. It ran, for the most part, through a sandy, scrubby waste, where he met with few wayfarers. There were none bearing the slightest

resemblance to Curran; nor, from what the Chief had told him, did he expect to fall in with the fellow until he was a long distance out.

All through the long, hot afternoon he rode steadily forward, his mind busy with all kinds of schemes whereby he might be able to get the better of the rascal Curran and secure the papers. He decided at last that there was no way out of it but to trust blindly to chance, and concoct some plan when he met the man face to face.

There was one precaution which he deemed it necessary to take, however. The animal he rode had all the appearance of the steady-going troop horse. Curran's sharp eye would be sure to detect this at once, and it was bound to put him on his guard. So, when he had left the city a good twenty miles behind, Travers halted at a lonely bush inn. There he put up his horse, saying he would be back later in the evening, and set out again on foot.

The road still ran through flat country; but a mile or two further on it took a sudden dip over a ridge, where there were a few scattered pine-trees. Travers found that it led down into a sort of gully, which was spanned at the bottom by an old stone bridge. Beyond, the road rose again in a pretty long incline, so that anyone coming from the Bandona direction would be clearly in view for some time before he reached the spot.

Travers halted on the bridge and had a good look round. The place was lonely enough in all conscience, and he decided that he could not select a better spot for his purpose. Here, then, he determined to wait.

To make it appear as if he had halted there by chance, he leaned on the parapet of the bridge and commenced flicking pebbles into the stream, which gurgled under the single arch. Yet he was keenly on the watch all the time, and his eyes went incessantly around in the direction whence he expected Curran to appear.

For close upon an hour he continued his idle occupation; but not a soul appeared upon the dusty incline. He began to grow restless and fidgety. The sun was sinking lower and lower; night was coming on; and once darkness had set in his task would be rendered doubly difficult. If he allowed the man to slip past him under cover of night and gain the city, he would scarcely dare to face the Chief again.

Just then an idea crossed his mind which, if it proved correct, would undoubtedly upset all his calculations. Perhaps the rascal had got some inkling of what was in store for him and taken another route? If so—

Hardly had this thought occurred to him than, in glancing round for the hundredth time, he saw a tall figure appear over the brow of the slope and come down the incline at a swinging pace. His heart gave a sudden bound. There was little doubt that this was his man; the rascal Curran himself.

Travers instantly resumed his occupation of flicking pebbles into the stream. He waited until the man had gained the bridge, and then swung sharply round, as if he had just caught the sound of his footsteps.

One glance at him was enough to knock all the conceit out of the young trooper, for, in spite of what his comrades had said, he had

flattered himself that he could hold his own if it came to a tussle.

The stranger had halted in the middle of the bridge. He was six-feet-three, if an inch, a great, hulking, brawny rascal, with fists like sledge-hammers. His reddish hair, high cheek bones and square jaw gave him a most determined and uncompromising look. If any doubt remained as to his identity, it was set at rest by the fact that the lobe of his left ear was missing—a point which Travers was not slow in noting.

Over his shoulder he carried a stout stick, from which his bundle was suspended. He was also provided with the blue blanket of the Australian tramp, or sundowner, which was rolled up and strapped to his back.

He laid his bundle down at his feet and produced a short, black pipe. He appeared to have tramped far, and seemed disposed to rest for a bit and chat.

"Well, mate," he said, as he rammed the tobacco into his pipe, "how goes it?"

"Not over well," replied Travers, mindful of the difficult situation in which he found himself.

"How's that? Down on your luck, eh?"

"A bit; just at present."

"Bound for the city?"

"I am."

"So'm I."

The stranger proceeded to light his pipe, shooting keen glances across at Travers as he did so, as if he could not quite sum him up to his satisfaction. Travers, on his part, had a wild notion of springing suddenly upon him while his hands were occupied, and endeavoring to wrest the papers from him. A moment's reflection, however, convinced him that such an attempt would probably end in the powerful rascal whipping him up in his arms and flinging him over the bridge into the stream. His only chance was to gain time and await a more favorable opportunity.

"You're not going to tramp all the way to the city tonight, are you?" he said.

"H'm!" returned the stranger, glancing at him suspiciously. "Are you?"

"Not if I can help it."

"What's your fix?"

"Oh, just the need of a supper and somewhere to rest for the night."

"Well, if that's all you want, I can help you out. I've got enough grub in my swag for two. Come, there's a nice sheltered spot up there among those pines. We'll camp there for the night."

By the Firelight Gleaming

Travers fell in readily with the proposal. If chance favored him, he might manage to get hold of the papers during the night. He fancied he knew where to find them, for he thought he detected a suspicious bulge in his companion's breast-pocket, and felt sure that the valuable packet was secreted there. To attempt to obtain possession of it by main force was out of the question, unless, as Trooper Halliday had said, he ran the risk of getting his neck broken.

On reaching the clump of pines, the stranger selected a suitable spot for their camp, and in a few minutes had a fire kindled. Then he set about preparing supper in a way which seemed to show the practiced hand of the bushman.

Travers, squatting on the ground close by, watched him closely. He was still trying to evolve some plan for getting possession of the papers; but the more he thought of it the more difficult the problem seemed. It was tantalizing to think that the stolen documents were actually within reach of him at the moment, and yet he was unable to lay his hands upon them.

Both men made a hearty supper, after which they lighted their pipes and fell to chatting in a friendly manner. It struck Travers, however, that his companion was keeping a questioning eye upon him, as if as yet not quite sure of his intentions. He was evidently a man who was not to be caught off his guard easily.

At last the stranger knocked the ashes out of his pipe and opened his powerful jaws in a tremendous yawn.

"I've had a long tramp today," he said, "and must be on the road again at sunrise. I'll try and get a good snooze meanwhile."

He built up the fire for the night—a proceeding which Travers viewed with considerable uneasiness. Then he unfolded his blanket, wrapped himself up in it, and lay down with a mumbled "Good-night."

Travers stretched himself at the opposite side of the fire, and at some little distance from it, purposely turning his back upon his camp-fellow.

After a time he feigned to drop off into a sound sleep; but sleep was far from his thoughts. His brain was busily at work. To secure the all-important packet was the one thing on his mind. But how was it to be done? He knew that he had a remarkably ticklish job on his hands, and that one false move would ruin everything.

For the first couple of hours he lay perfectly still, listening to the heavy breathing of his companion opposite.

He watched—listened. The man seemed to be sunk in the soundest sleep; oblivious to everything. Now, if ever, was the young trooper's chance.

With a stealthy movement, Travers turned over until his face was toward his companion. Then he lay still again, anxiously watching the great, hulking form opposite.

The man never moved; never betrayed the slightest sign of consciousness. His heavy breathing was occasionally interrupted by a gurgle which resembled a snore. Travers had him at a disadvantage.

Flat on his face and hands he began to worm his way toward him, like a Red Indian creeping upon a sleeping enemy.

Fortune seemed to be on his side. He got within a yard or two of the man without disturbing him in the slightest degree. He drew closer. Cautiously raising his head, he tried to get a peep at the fellow's face; and—well, never in his life did he experience such a sudden and disconcerting surprise.

Instead of being fast asleep, as he had imagined, the man's eyes were wide open. They were fixed upon the young trooper in a grim and threatening manner, while his brows were knitted in an ugly scowl.

"Ha! so that's your game, is it?" he cried, flinging off his blanket and making a furious effort to get on his feet.

But Travers was too quick for him. He flung

himself upon the fellow, bore him back to the ground, and endeavored with all his might to get at his breast-pocket.

The tables were quickly turned, however. Travers never knew exactly how it happened, but he suddenly found the rascal's knee on his chest, and the next moment was sent flying backward. He fell with a thud that almost knocked the senses out of him; but, realizing his danger, he was on his feet again in an instant.

He was just in time to meet the charge of his powerful adversary, who rushed at him with something like a bellow of rage. The two men met, and in an instant were locked in a fierce embrace.

Travers quickly realized that he stood no earthly chance. In the first bear-like hug the breath was well-nigh squeezed out of his body, his ribs almost crushed. But he was an active young fellow, and had learned a trick or two at wrestling which now stood him in good stead.

With a sudden twist of his body, he dived his head under his opponent's arm, and fairly wriggled out of his clutches. In doing so, he jerked the man's arm violently backward, giving it an unmerciful wrench. The fellow set up a howl of pain and flopped straight down on the ground. All the fight seemed to have gone out of him.

Travers pounced quickly upon him, and in an instant had got hold of the coveted packet. Without giving the man a further thought, he hurried to the fire, kicked it into a blaze, and set about examining the papers. The Chief had instructed him to do this, so as to make sure he had got hold of the right packet.

The surprise which awaited him was astounding, bewildering. Each paper he drew out, though headed with the Government arms, was nothing more than a blank sheet. There was not a scrap of writing of any sort or description! He was utterly at a loss to understand what the whole thing meant.

At last he came upon a sheet which contained a few lines. Bending down close to the fire he read them eagerly. They ran as follows:

"Bring this paper to the Chief of Police in Melbourne. This is your test for service."

Travers looked up. His late opponent was still seated on the ground, nursing his injured arm with a very rueful countenance.

"All right, old man," he said, in answer to the young trooper's bewildered look. "For a raw hand you've done remarkably well. Confound you, you've nearly dislocated my arm."

"What does it mean?" asked Travers.

"Well, 'twas a put-up job; that's about the size of it. It's one of the Chief's little ways of testing a new recruit. I'm Sergeant Grogan, of headquarters, and he generally pitches upon me for a thing of this kind. I'll give him a good account of you, my lad. By the way, that was a neat little trick of yours. I wish you'd teach it to me."

As soon as we feel that the boys want it, we will increase the size of the issue to 64 pages. Why not subscribe today? \$1.20 a year. 60 cents for six months.

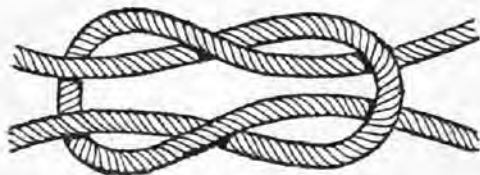
KNOTS WORTH KNOWING

How To Tie Some Useful Knots

Here you can learn the best knots. We shall tell you each week how to tie a fresh one. Last issue described the making of the figure of eight knot.—Editor.

THE SAILOR'S SQUARE KNOT

The perfect tie for joining the ends of two ropes is the sailor's square or reef knot. This is a grand knot; it will never jam or become hard, and it cannot loosen anyhow. Whenever you want to join two short ropes so as to make a long one and a strong one, never use the clumsy and treacherous overhand knot or the more reliable figure of eight, but use the square knot, and you may trust your life to it. Sailors use it for tying reef-points, securing sails, and a number of other purposes. It is made this way: Take one end of a rope in each hand, pass the left over and under the right, then the right over and under the left. Remember the process—left over, right over.



It consists really of two overhand knots, one on top of the other; but the upper one is cast contrariwise, so that each end comes out of the same hole in the knot and lies along its own part.

There are more complicated knots than this, but none more perfect. Make a square knot and then examine the turns and see how beautifully the loops lock together.

To loosen the knot you have merely to take hold of the two parts of the rope on each side of it and bring the hands together, when the loops slip over one another at once. It is the easiest knot of any to untie.

The well-known bow or rosette knot is a variation of the sailor's square knot. The first part of the process of making is the same—left end over, right end over—but the upper knot is formed with loops.

You should always do up your boot-laces with this knot, and they will never come adrift.

In the explanations which are given the *standing part* of a rope means the main part, or long portion; the *loop* (most knots begin with a loop) is termed the *bight*, and the short part of the rope, which is used in forming the knots, is called the *end*.

Parent: "Willie, didn't you go to the trunk-maker's yesterday and tell him to send round the trunk I ordered?"

Willie: "Yes, father."

Parent: "Well, here is the trunk, but no strap. Didn't he say anything about the strap?"

Willie: "Yes, father, but I told him I thought you hadn't better have any strap."

FOR HIS VOW'S SAKE

A Wild Dash to a Strange Land

By WARREN KILLINGWORTH

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

While at college, Cyril Guest joins a society, the members of which have to promise, on oath, to go to the rescue of any of their number who call for aid, by a secret code, in the agony column of the *Times*. After leaving school he sees such a call for help from Mongolia, and, with the object of keeping his oath, makes arrangements to accompany Horace Greville (a mining expert) on a journey across Russia to Mongolia. Guest tells Greville nothing about his mission until they are well on their journey; but the latter, although thinking that the call might be part of some plot, promises to stick by his companion.

Arrived at Krasnolarsk, the two obtain a sledge and a yemshik (driver), and set out for the Mongolian frontier via Siberia. They are forced to stop a night at a post-house on the road, however, owing to another traveller, a Mongol, whom they see, having hired the only fresh horses available. They go to bed, Greville promising to keep first watch to see that they are not robbed. In the night Cyril is awakened and discovers the Mongol, who had gone off in his sledge the night before, searching through their luggage by the light of a candle. Greville is sound asleep, and Cyril at once surmises that he has been drugged.

The Mongol, with a knife between his teeth, seeing Guest watching him, puts out the light and rushes toward him. Cyril just has time to grasp his revolver when a pair of strong arms seize him from behind and drag him backwards. He is gagged, bound, and left to wait until Greville, recovering his senses, releases him. The travellers discover that nothing has been stolen, and, unable to account for the return of the Mongol (whose knife they obtain from the post-house keeper who assisted their midnight visitor), they prepare to continue their journey. Their yemshik refusing to accompany them any further Greville drives the sledge. They follow the course of a frozen river until fears for the staying powers of the horses force them to stop. Leaving Greville in the sledge, Cyril goes up an inlet of the river to look for signs of habitation. Hearing a shot he returns, and the two are attacked and overpowered by braggadas (escaped convicts), who force them to exchange clothes with them and steal their passports, luggage and sledge.

Clad in the braggadas' sheepskins and left to their fate, Guest and Greville suddenly hear the bark of a wolf, and Greville tells Cyril to run for his life.

CHAPTER V

"HARK!" ejaculated Cyril, returning the pressure of his companion's hand. "What was that?"

A short bark, followed by another and another, resounded through the forest.

Then in the dusk there appeared moving shapes with gleaming eyes.

"Dogs?" queried Cyril, straining his eyes in the gathering dusk.

"No, wolves!" was Greville's horror-stricken reply. "Come along! Run for your life! In another minute the whole pack will be at our heels!"

Wolves! The very term was sufficient to strike horror to the heart of even the well-armed traveller sitting behind fleet horses, but to face a famished pack while on foot and practically unarmed was a situation calculated to wing the heels of any fugitive.

"Which way?" gasped Cyril, his hand closing upon the haft of the Mongol's knife, which weapon he had been allowed by the braggadas to retain. Greville had also been granted a similar weapon as a means of defence.

"Anywhere but the open," replied Greville; "the forest track—quick!"

As they tore along past the spot where the forerunners of the pack squatted in a circle, afraid to attack except in force, Greville, swerving from the path a moment, gave vent to a

wild halloo, at the same time stamping on the ground and waving his arms.

The skulking beasts retreated instantly, vanishing like apparitions into the thick brushwood, whereat Cyril uttered a cry of triumph.

"Don't waste your breath in shouting," gasped the other, "those chaps are only the scouts."

On and on they ran, deeper and deeper into the forest, having only one aim—that of shaking off those dread pursuers.

Death from exposure might be their fate ere the dawn of another day; but life, despite that hopeless outlook, was none the less worth an effort, and, spurred on by a pressing danger, they ran as though shaping a definite course toward a sure refuge.

"Hark at that!" ejaculated Greville, as a fearsome, long-drawn howl, sounding far in the rear, caused them to redouble their desperate efforts.

"They're on to us!" gasped Cyril. "Stick to it for all you're worth!"

It was only too true; for the main pack, having within a few minutes of the starting of that cruel race for life hit upon the fugitives' trail, was now in full cry after them.

Nearer and nearer sounded the yelping pack in their rear. It was the only test they had of distance—that ever-increasing volume of sound, and still nothing appeared ahead save the endless white track glimmering amid the dense gloom of the forest.

At length the yelps of the rearward pack sounded so close that the fugitives fancied they could feel the fetid breath of the ravenous beasts and hear the ominous snap of their fangs.

Making a last desperate spurt, both fugitives swerved from the track, and back to back, knives in hand, stood in a clearing awaiting the onslaught.

In a few seconds the vanguard sprang into the opening, recoiling a moment as the gleaming eyes rested upon their would-be victims in an attitude of defence.

But the throng pressing in the rear, made bold by superior numbers, thrust the skulkers forward and overflowed the clearing.

Then the fight began.

How long it lasted, whether seconds or hours, neither of the principals in that unequal combat was ever able to say.

All they recollected was slashing and stabbing with their knives for dear life without any apparent result, for every wolf slain seemed instantly to come to life again as those in the rear mounted over and supplied the place of dead and dying with fangs as eager and yelps every whit as fierce and exultant.

But though their clothing was torn to ribands

and blood flowed freely from wounds inflicted by the gnashing fangs, never for one moment did either man lose heart.

They fought for life, it is true; but in their phenomenal exertions was to be traced an emotion having its origin in the recent robbery by braggadas. But for this they would long ago have found some refuge for the night, and every blow given with those ready knives upon the carcasses of their vulpine enemy was a forcible protest against that arch outrage, and went far toward sustaining them in that unequal combat.

At length, when death stared them in the face and they no longer felt capable of warding off the attack another moment, the clearing rang with strident yells, sounding strange and uncouth in their American ears.

At that supreme moment, however, the sweetest strains of music could not have been more welcome; for they knew that assistance had arrived, sudden and unexpected, as though it had descended from the clouds.

Attacked in the rear, the cowardly brutes broke and fled, leaving clear to the rescuers' view the two friends, still standing back to back, their clothing in tatters, exhausted, unable to speak; but with such a look upon their set white faces as made a lasting impression upon those whom both Cyril and Greville very soon recognized as their captors.

The leader of the Cossacks—for it was a squad of these irregular horsemen who had effected the rescue—moved forward a few paces and called upon the two heroic figures to surrender at discretion.

Greville answered in English that they were American subjects, having no cause to surrender to anyone, and who, besides, had a claim for compensation against the Russian Government in respect of highway robbery by escaped convicts.

At this the Cossack leader lifted his knout as though about to strike, and Greville repeated his remarks in Russian. A snarl of ridicule met this statement, which increased upon Greville going into further particulars.

"What is it they say?" asked Cyril.

"That they never yet heard of a braggada sparing life under any circumstances, and therefore my story of robbery must be false."

"Then they don't believe one word of what you say?"

"No; and, on the whole, I can't say I altogether blame them. Appearances are very decidedly against us."

Orders were given that the prisoners should march ahead, accompanied by threatening gestures clear enough for even Cyril to understand, though the literal sense of the accompanying brutal utterances were lost upon him.

The Cossacks cantered briskly in the rear, and thus mile after mile they trudged, their wounds stiffening under the searching iceladen wind, yet never daring, from fear of the cruel knout, to show any signs of slackening pace, though either would have been only too pleased, so utterly weary were they, to throw themselves down by the roadside and sleep the sleep that knows no waking.

A fact hard to account for was that of the Cossacks driving them along the route they had

originally been following instead of, as Greville had expected, to the northward toward the far-away convict settlements.

At the point where Greville had drawn up the sledge awaiting Cyril's return the Cossacks crossed the river, and, passing the inlet Cyril discovered, halted their prisoners in the straggling street of a village, nearly a mile lower down and within fifty yards of the river bank.

"Halt for the night evidently," whispered Greville.

"Thank Heaven!" murmured Cyril.

A peremptory knock at the door of a log-built hut resembling the post-house of the night before was answered by a moujik very similar in form and features to their treacherous host who had assisted the Mongol in his attempted overhauling of their baggage.

The same interior was disclosed to view, with an identical stove, at sight of which Cyril's mind insensibly reverted to the Mongol. Indeed, the only difference between this latest experience and that of the night before lay in the fact that then they were free, well-appointed, and duly accredited, and now prisoners, nameless and suspect, clad in filthy vestments rendered the more repulsive from their recent desperate fight with the wolves.

From the obsequious behavior of the post-house keeper toward the Cossacks and the scornful looks cast upon the two nondescript prisoners, neither of the latter could augur aught but ill.

Cyril took occasion to venture an opinion in a whispered aside to Greville that could some magician's wand transform them to their former state this moujik would be taught a stern lesson, whereat Greville laughed, being called to order by the Cossack leader with threatening gesture.

CHAPTER VI

Their frugal supper finished, a few branches of dried fir were spread upon the floor in a corner of the outer room which was to serve the prisoners for mattress and bedding.

Hardly had he stretched himself upon the sweet-smelling fir than Cyril, overcome by weariness, dropped asleep—to dream, not of wolves, but of a breathless sleigh ride with an immense horde of braggadas in pursuit. How long he slept he knew not, but he was awakened by a tug at the wrist, an exclamation of surprise being checked by a hand placed over his mouth, while Greville's voice at his ear enjoined caution.

Instantly a sense of their position became borne in upon him, and he lay without moving, waiting for his companion to speak.

"Guest, old chap!" whispered the latter.

"Well; what's up now?"

"Something mighty important, or I wouldn't wake you up in the middle of the night. That Mongol business gets more and more mysterious."

"What about the Mongol?"

"He's in front somewhere on the road."

"How do you know?"

"From the cross-examination I heard of the post-house keeper by the leader of the Cossacks. He evidently thought we were both asleep, though my eyes were closed my ears were open."

"Go on; I'm listening."

"The man was asked whether he had seen any travellers passing that evening. On the

moujik answering in the negative, he was next asked for a description of the last traveller who had called."

"Well?"

"And," continued Greville, "he vouchsafed the information that a stranger bound south, whose description closely resembled our friend of the curious eyes, had called early in the afternoon."

"Ha! that's interesting. Anything more?"

"Yes. The Mongol, it seems, had warned the moujik of the approach of two Americans,

"Then," exclaimed Cyril, "the mission will never be fulfilled. With the authorities against us what hope is there of our getting through?"

"Can't say right off the reel; requires thinking about," replied the other.

"Anything more you heard?" asked Cyril after a moment's pause.

"From what afterward was said I was able to solve the braggada mystery. Seems one of the two who robbed us of our belongings was a noted political prisoner. The Cossacks' orders were to take him at all costs, dead or alive."

"Then that fact accounts for our getting off with our lives. The braggadas reckoned upon our being arrested in their place, thus putting the Cossacks off the scent."

"You've hit it exactly."

"Then how do we stand now?"

"Not very much better than before."

"How's that?"

"We are suspected of intrigue, and would, in any case, have seen the inside of a Russian prison. There we should have stopped until our bona fides were established. The Cossacks haven't caught the big fish they expected, but the fact of having tumbled across a couple of plotting foreigners is a certain compensation, and, we shall fare all the worse for that confounded Mongol and this blabbing moujik."

"What chance have we of clearing ourselves?"

"Very little now. In the ordinary course we should have had to wait until we could be traced back to where our passports were last vided."

"Then," exclaimed Cyril, "we must contrive to escape."

"Easier said than done."

"It's worth an effort."

"Certainly; but I can't see any daylight myself."

For some considerable time silence ensued, Cyril being engaged in weighing the chances for and against a bold bid for liberty while endeavoring to scheme a plan of escape. At length a brilliant thought struck him.

"Greville!" he whispered.

"Well, what now?"



"All they recollected was slashing and stabbing . . . for dear life."

who were travelling toward the frontier on a mysterious errand. Should they turn up at this house, the moujik was requested to delay them all he could and send a messenger post haste to the next village reporting the fact of their arrival."

"There's no doubt whatever now," whispered Cyril, "that we are the travellers in question. Did the Cossack leader suspect our identity?"

"Tumbled to it directly," replied Greville.

"It has struck me the Cossacks won't be content to canter behind us all day tomorrow. They'll be wanting to dispose of us more quickly than that."

"Well, supposing you are right?"

"What more likely than that we shall travel by sledge in preference to trudging at three miles an hour, with our captors itching to be after a quarry more important than we."

"Still, I don't see how we are to get away even then."

"I've got my knife still," replied Cyril. "Our chances of overpowering a yemshchik would be greater far than turning on a mounted guard."

"Supposing the yemshchik is not a Cossack armed to the teeth! It's no go, Guest, I'm afraid."

An unexpected movement on the part of their guard here caused the two friends to feign sleep once more.

Between half-closed eyelids they counted four out of the six Cossacks, preceded by the moujik carrying a lantern, pass through the apartment and out into the night.

In a few minutes the moujik returned alone, disappearing within the inner room.

"Tumble to that move, Greville?" queried Cyril. "Four of them continued the chase after the political, while the remaining two are left behind to do police work."

This splitting of the forces decidedly improved the outlook, as Greville had to admit.

"Worth waiting up for, wasn't it?" said Cyril.

"Wait a bit," replied the other. "I'm thinking."

Before Greville was able to communicate the result of his cogitation, however, the moujik again passed through the apartment carrying his lantern, this time alone.

In an instant Cyril had made up his mind how to act.

"I'll eat my head if he isn't going out to get the sledge ready."

"What if he is?" gasped Greville, laying a restraining hand on the arm of his companion, who had started up.

"I'm going to stalk him," was the reply.

"You'd never succeed," whispered the other; "you forget the Cossacks."

"Judging from the amount of vodka they put away last night, they'll not be in a hurry to move until compelled. Anyway, I mean to chance it. While I'm gone you be ready to intercept them if they do move."

"But, Guest—"

Cyril had, however, sprung to his feet; already he was half way to the door, and the remainder of Greville's utterance was lost.

Walking on tiptoe after the unsuspecting moujik, Cyril slipped out like a shadow and without a sound, save the painful sledge-hammer beating of his heart.

Halting a moment in the dark shadow of the doorway, listening intently, he noted the livid band of light illuminating the eastern horizon.

"Day is not far off," was his mental rejoinder, "and time presses."

His right hand convulsively grasped the Mongol's knife, while in his heart was the stern resolve to use it if need be in the cause of liberty.

Anything, so long as an escape from such humiliating thralldom were effected.

The moujik, meantime, had gone round to the stable, his footsteps being plainly discernible in the freshly fallen snow. Cyril could hear him speaking to the horses in the Russian manner—half entreaty, half furious threats.

Thither Cyril moved light and swiftly, hugging the wall and keeping within the shadow of the lean-to roof.

Peering into the stable, he watched the moujik harnessing three horses, and his heart rose at the sight.

When, however, the moujik, having finished his work with the horses, turned toward the stable door, Cyril drew back under cover of a wood stack, his heart in his mouth. In another minute the door was opened and the moujik appeared, dragging out the horses, which he left standing within a few yards of Cyril's hiding place while he went to another shed, whence in a few moments he reappeared dragging a sledge.

Should he strike now or await a more favorable opportunity on the open road, returning meanwhile to his bed of fir boughs? Weighing all the chances in the balance, Cyril watched the moujik making preparations for the coming journey.

As he made fast the arched dooga or yoke, the bells with which it was adorned rang out a peal.

"Now or never," whispered Cyril to himself, and instantly sprang upon the moujik in a manner that would have done credit to a brigada.

Between his teeth was gripped the knife whose glittering blade he had first seen under such startling circumstances at the first stopping-place.

With both hands gripping the moujik's throat, while one knee was pressed into the small of his back, Cyril dragged the peasant backward.

An inarticulate cry of terror escaped the man's lips, but in another moment Cyril was kneeling upon his chest and had raised his knife with so threatening a gesture that further utterance died away in the moujik's throat. Hardly had he accomplished this when, looking upward, he beheld Greville standing beside him, his eyes glittering with suppressed excitement.

"You see the sledge," gasped Cyril. "Make ready."

"We must tie this man up first," cried the other, seizing as he spoke on some spare straps which lay on the ground.

This done, both sprang up and made for the sledge. Day had broken, and the path of liberty was open before them.

Greville sprang in and gathered up the reins, while the moujik, finding voice, gave vent to a yell. Almost at the same instant out from the post-house rushed a shaggy-coated Cossack.

Looking right and left for his prisoners, his glance fell upon the sledge, and in an instant he had sprung forward to intercept them.

(To be continued)

Another long installment of this story will appear in the next issue. To be certain of getting a copy, place your order with your newsdealer at once to avoid disappointment, or better still, send in your subscription direct to the publishers.

ROUND the CAMPFIRE.



All letters relating to organization, questions on Scouting subjects and Scout news should be sent to the "Scout Editor," **BOYS' LIFE**.

Letters concerning matters purely editorial, contributions, questions, subscription and advertisements should be addressed to **BOYS' LIFE**, 7 Water St., Boston, Mass.

About Ourselves

In Round the Campfire this issue, I am printing a few of the many letters received from my readers. I am very glad to say that so far I have received no letter expressing dissatisfaction with **BOYS' LIFE**.

Of course many readers have made suggestions as to the kind of stories, departments, etc., which they would like to see in the magazine. These are just the kind of letters I like to get, as they show me that the boys are taking a great interest in the magazine. Some of the ideas submitted will be incorporated in an early issue of **BOYS' LIFE**.

How You Can Help Boys' Life

Now, boys, you know that I am giving you the liveliest, brightest, boys' magazine in the country, but there are many fellows who have not as yet seen a copy of the magazine, so when you have finished with this number I want you to hand it to one of your chums who have not had the good luck to secure a copy.

I also want you to watch our advertising pages carefully and give the advertisers in **BOYS' LIFE** the preference when purchasing. In writing to advertisers, be sure to mention **BOYS' LIFE**.

"Scouting for Boys"

I am receiving many requests for information as to the organization, etc., of "Patrols of Boy Scouts." This is rather a lengthy subject to be answered in this department, so I will refer my correspondents to Sir Robert Baden-Powell's hand book, "Scouting for Boys," which may be obtained from Smith & McCance, 38 Bromfield Street, Boston, Mass., upon receipt of fifty cents. I have read this book with a great deal of interest and can heartily recommend it to anyone desiring information upon this subject. In addition to this book I would advise Scouts and Scoutmasters to carefully follow the new series in **BOYS' LIFE** entitled "Trials and Troubles of a Boy Scout," edited by Sergt.-Major Edwin R. Short, who is an old time Western Scout and Indian fighter.

An Apology

I must apologize to those readers who sent me stamped addressed envelopes for a reply through the mail, for not as yet replying to them. The great amount of work connected with a new publication has delayed me in answering these letters, but I am now catching up with

them and in future all letters will be answered by return mail.

Watch Boys' Life

In a few issues I hope to make an announcement which will be of great interest to all my readers.

In the second March edition of **BOYS' LIFE** I published a story entitled "The Test," under the impression that it had never before appeared. I now find that this yarn appeared in the "Argosy" for July, 1910, so I take this opportunity to give full credit to the Frank A. Munsey Co.

Your Editor,

GEORGE S. BARTON.

A FEW LETTERS FROM READERS

Lewistown, Pa., March 15, 1911.

Gentlemen:

I understand you are Editors and Proprietors of the magazine known as the **BOYS' LIFE**, and that the subscription price is \$1.20 a year. You will find enclosed check for said amount in payment of subscription for myself for one year.

In the Borough of Lewistown we have four troops of the Boy Scouts. I am Scout Master of Troop No. 3. There had been a great number of fires and attempts at arson committed in our town for some time past, and almost invariably the fires or the attempts occurred on Saturday night. Last Friday evening, the 10th inst., the individual members of our Troop were sworn in by the Borough authorities as special policemen to guard the town the following day, Saturday, from 7.30 P. M. to 6.30 A. M. Sunday morning.

Very truly yours,

F. W. CULBERTSON.

Morgantown, W. Va., March 4, 1911.

Managers of the Boys' Life, Dear Sirs:

I suppose you did not expect to hear from a fellow in West Virginia, but I am one from the "Little Mountain State."

I received a copy of the **BOYS' LIFE** and I think it a very fine little magazine. I took it to the troop meeting last night to let the fellows see it. They all liked it and are buying it at the store as I write this.

Staunton, Va., March 10, 1911.

George S. Barton & Co.:

I purchased a copy of the **BOYS' LIFE** and I think it is one of the best boys' magazines I have ever read.

Its stories are clean and instructive and no boy should fail to get a copy, for that one will convince him that it is a good magazine.

I will close with all due respects and wishing you success,
Yours respectfully,

Dear Sirs:

Akron, Ohio, March 12

I bought one issue of **BOYS' LIFE** and it is certainly fine. I shall always read it. I shall never miss another issue of **BOYS' LIFE** as long as my pocket holds five cents.

Dear Mr. Barton:

Rutland, Vt.

I bought a copy of **BOYS' LIFE** from a local newsdealer and I think it a dandy paper. I take several magazines but

think that BOYS' LIFE is the best for the money. I expect to get a copy every month from now on or rather twice a month. I wish you would have more stories of Faversham's Scouts. I remain,
Sincerely yours,

ROCHESTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

March 3, 1911.

My dear Mr. Barton:

Enclosed please find a postal order for \$1.20, for one year's subscription to your BOYS' LIFE. Our boys ought to be one of our greatest considerations; that is why I send my subscription for your paper. I think much more can be done in furnishing the right kind of literature for our youth. Boys must have reading suitable for them. Yours is a splendid opportunity, coupled as it is with that finest and best of boys' movements, the Boy Scouts, to give considerable help and impetus to the production of

attractive and helpful periodicals and books for our "young Americans." God speed you in your work!
Respectfully yours,

JOHN SAMUEL.

Danville, Indiana, March 8, 1911.

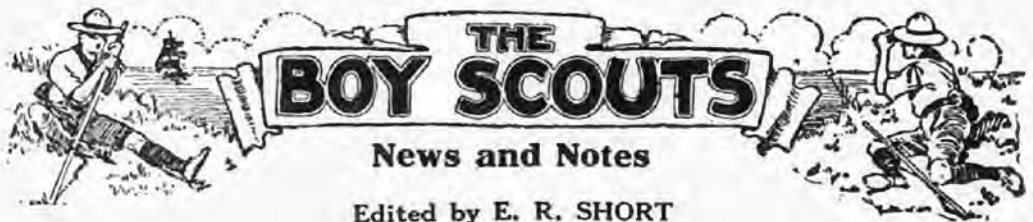
Dear Sirs:

I purchased a copy of BOYS' LIFE from my newsdealer, and after reading it, I found it to be the best boy's magazine I ever read. The story, "The Lost Express" could not have been better. In my estimation BOYS' LIFE is the very best boys' magazine there is. Wishing you success, I remain,
Your friend,

St. Johnsbury, Vt., March 7, 1911.

Gentlemen:

I have read the first edition of BOYS' LIFE and its stories are some of the best I ever read.
Hoping success to your paper, which I think every boy should read, whether scouts or not, I wish all success to BOYS' LIFE.



ENGLEWOOD, MISSOURI

Fifteen Boy Scouts, members of troop number 2 of this city, recently took an eight-mile tramp in the woods. Archibald Gould, scoutmaster of the troop, detailed a party of three to scout the route out ahead, and another party of two to trail the rear guard. The formation of the troop was changed frequently en route so as to give the boys experience in all positions. Lunch was cooked and served by the boys in the woods. The troop holds its regular meetings every Friday evening.

ST. JOHNSBURY, VERMONT

The St. Johnsbury patrol number 1 reports great interest in the movement. Milo F. Brown, the Scout Master, seems well pleased with the efforts of the boys under him. The boys have not got their uniforms yet but are saving the money to buy them. Several of the doctors of St. Johnsbury come to their drill the first of every week and give interesting talks on "First Aid to the Injured." The state of Vermont has offered a "First Aid Kit" to every Boy Scout who passes the examinations and secures an average of ninety or over.

NOTE

To Scout-Masters

It is the intention of the publishers to present in each issue the news of the Boy Scout Movement throughout the country and to attain this end we ask that Scout-masters send us as soon as possible all the news of their patrols for publication.

New England Boy Scouts

OFFICERS OF PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE

Chairman—Everett F. McLean, Everett, Mass.
Vice-chairman—Ernest W. Gay, Somerville, Mass.
Secretary—Edwin R. Short, Somerville, Mass.
Treasurer—George S. Barton, Somerville, Mass.

PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE

Rev. J. Van Neice Bandy, Brookline, Mass.
Charles H. Thompson, Jr., Somerville, Mass.
Lieutenant Charles H. Urling, Cambridge, Mass.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

G. Stanley Hall, President Clarks University, Worcester, Mass.
George S. Chase, president Bates College, Lewiston, Maine.
Hon. Frederick W. Dallinger, lawyer, Cambridge, Mass.
Mathew Hale, lawyer, Boston, Mass.
Dr. Charles E. Ames, Ipswich, Mass.
Rev. Geo. A. Lyons, Jamaica Plain, Mass.
Rev. John M. Richardson, Bridgeport, Conn.
Rev. E. Graham Guthrie, Burlington, Vt.
General Henry S. Ward, U. S. Army, retired, Amherst, Mass.
Arthur B. Leach, secretary Federation Boys' Clubs, Boston, Mass.
W. S. Dillon, superintendent Somerville Boys' Club, Somerville, Mass.
Louis R. Cheney, banker, Hartford, Conn.
Major John Wilcox, president Hartford Trust Company, Hartford, Conn.

20,000 PEOPLE CHEER MARCHERS IN GREAT EVACUATION DAY PARADE IN BOSTON

Fine Appearance of New England Boy Scouts Receives Enthusiastic Praise All Along the Line of March

On March 17 in Boston, there occurred the annual Evacuation Day parade.

Twenty thousand rejoicing citizens thronged the line of march despite the chilly winds, to celebrate the day when 12,000 British troops fled before the attack of 2,000 Americans, and the day which for hundreds of years has been sacred to the memory of Ireland's patron saint.

Nothing was lacking to make the day a success; Governor Foss was there with his staff; Mayor Fitzgerald was there, smiling, as usual. And the sun shone.

The New England Boy Scouts in their cocked

Commanding Scoutmaster F. S. Leighton, Dorchester Troop. Scoutmaster L. J. Sands, Adjutant.

Staff Scoutmasters, Joseph J. Lane, C. H. Thompson, Jr., Ernest W. Gay, Harold McCarthy and Ralph Johnstone.

Dorchester Troop Leader, Leo O'Leary.

Jamaica Plain Troop Leader, Albert Downey.

Everett Troop, Scoutmaster E. F. McLean.

Brookline Troop, Scoutmaster J. Van Ness Bandy.

The Scouts were reviewed by Governor Eugene N. Foss, Lieutenant-Governor Louis A. Prothingham, Adjutant-General Pearson, M.



[BROOKLINE TROOP, NEW ENGLAND BOY SCOUTS, ON PARADE

felt hats and khaki uniforms received enthusiastic applause as they came marching along. They ranged in age from eight to seventeen years, and the eight-year olds had to stump along with unusual vigor to keep up with the rapid pace set by the older men.

The youths of South Boston seemed dazed by the Boy Scouts. Wherever the khaki-clad youngsters went, they were followed by immense crowds of future voters, who examined the uniforms and equipment of the Boy Scouts with great curiosity. The scout staffs, which resemble nothing so much as enlarged broomsticks, were coveted by many.

All along the line favorable comments were heard about the appearance of the Scouts and it reflected great credit upon Major Short of the New England Boy Scouts and his assistants.

There were about one hundred and seventy-five Scouts in line, all in full uniform.

The roster of staff and troops was as follows:

V. M., Hon. John F. Fitzgerald, Mayor of Boston, and many other prominent men.

After the parade the Battalion marched to the headquarters of the Dorchester Troop, where after music and songs a lunch was served when the Battalion was dismissed.

It is to be hoped that before long another demonstration of this sort will be held, and that the Boy Scouts will have another chance to show what they can do in the line of marching.

SOUTH BOSTON, MASS.

The opening night of the Boy Scouts of America, Troop Three, of South Boston, was held on the evening of March 2nd.

The feature of the evening was the Lecture delivered by Mr. H. W. Gibson, the subject being, "The Unity of Boy Scoutism," which was very edifying and instructive.

Conditions were never better since the Troop organized than they are at present time and a steady increase of membership is looked for.

BOY SCOUTS RECEIVE POLICE AUTHORITY

Troop No. 3, Boy Scouts of America of Lewiston, Pa., patrolled the streets and alleys of the town Saturday, March 13, with the purpose of protecting the town from fire. That the brave Boy Scouts foiled an attempt of a firebug to start another Saturday night fire is the story that the Scouts proudly tell.

For some weeks past, every Saturday evening, there have been depredations, hold-ups and fires occurring in the town of Lewiston, and the town authorities were greatly hampered by a lack of police protection.

Each of the Scouts was sworn into service by Burgess Foltz Friday evening and given full police power to make arrests. They were dressed in their uniforms and carried clubs and "dummy" revolvers.

Between 2 and 3 o'clock Sunday morning,

TO PROMOTE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA F. N. Cooke, Jr., Engaged by Boston Council

In Boston on March 16 was held the first meeting of the executive committee of the recently organized Greater Boston council of the Boy Scouts of America.

This committee comprises president, Major Henry L. Higginson; vice-presidents, Fr. David D. Scannell, Frank L. Locke, Louis A. Crossett, David A. Ellis; secretary, Frank S. Mason; treasurer, Charles C. Jackson; executive committee, Joseph Lee, James J. Phelan, Arthur Astor Carey, Carl Dreyfus, Mitchell Freiman and Harold Peabody.

Major Higginson, presiding, called for a report of the sub-committee on by-laws and organization and Frank S. Mason, chairman, offered for ratification a set of by-laws for the administrative management of the affairs of the Greater Boston council. Mr. Mason ex-



TROOP NO. 3, LEWISTON, PA., BOY SCOUTS

Patrolman David Kline and his band of Scouts discovered a man sneaking around in the alley between Market and Third Streets, in the vicinity of a burned stable. The boys chased the fellow, who ran toward North Dorcas Street and then disappeared, but was later seen in the alley at Henry's blacksmith shop, where he was cornered by Patrolman Darlington Kulp and his band of Scouts and by Night Policeman John Martin. The fellow drew a revolver and fired at his pursuers and jumped over a high board fence near the blacksmith shop, making his escape through a rear yard.

The forty-two boy scouts of Troop No. 3 were divided into four patrols, over which Scout Master F. W. Culbertson and Assistant Scout Masters John Clarke and John Anderson had general supervision.

The alley between Market and Water Streets was guarded by a patrol under the direction of Patrolman Geo. R. Phillips.

Patrolman David Kline and eight boy scouts patrolled the alley between Market and Third.

plained that the constitution presented followed closely the suggestions drafted by the national council of the Boy Scouts of America, and laid down in a model charter for the guidance of the district councils throughout the country. These by-laws were adopted.

To the Greater Boston council has been delegated authority to assist the national body in organizing the scout movement throughout New England. The executive committee voted to engage Frederick N. Cooke, Jr., as executive secretary in charge of the Boston office and to apply to the national headquarters for Mr. Cooke's enrollment as scout commissioner for the metropolitan district of Boston. Mr. Cooke is associate superintendent of Theodore Parker Memorial, and has been giving considerable time to the organization of the Greater Boston council. The management of Parker Memorial of Boston desiring to co-operate fully to promote scouting for boys, has consented to loan the services of the associate superintendent to the Greater Boston council.

TRIALS AND TROUBLES OF A BOY SCOUT

THE FIRST OF A SERIES THAT WILL INTEREST
ALL BOYS, WHETHER SCOUTS OR NOT

Conducted by MAJOR E. R. SHORT

STARTING as a single troop, the Boy Scout movement is now one of the largest organizations the United States has ever seen.

In some localities it takes no little courage for a boy to become a Scout. He has often to face the jeers and laughter of his comrades, who, unable to understand the Scout law themselves, make fun of those to whom it appeals. It is not pleasant to be called "Monkeys on poles," "Teddy bears," or "Scatty Scouts," and these expressions, despite their stupidity have deterred more than one eager youngster from enrolling himself under the "Scout Flag." But an extensive knowledge of Scouts has taught me that the boys who are thus frightened from their course are comparatively few, and not exactly the kind of boy of whom the best Scouts are made.

There is now a patrol, if not a troop, of Boy Scouts in almost every village in the country, or district in the larger towns, but should there not be, the boy who would become a Scout has a splendid opportunity of being the first to start the movement in his own neighborhood. All he need do is to get a few boys to join him, who will then select a patrol leader, and nominate one of their number as a corporal. This done, it would be as well to get some grown-up man to become Scout-master, who might then approach the principal people in the district, and secure support for the movement.

Begging is strictly forbidden by Scout law, but subscriptions from friends can often be readily obtained, and the uniforms bought as funds will allow, first poles, then hats, shirts, knickers, haversacks, belts, water-bottles, etc., until the whole patrol is fully equipped.

The best plan is to have a patrol fund, to which each boy contributes as much as he can afford each week until his uniform is paid for. The money thus collected will go to provide uniforms for other boys who may join, so that in time quite a large troop can be equipped with very little money as a start; indeed, I know a very strong troop in which every boy has his uniform, and all necessary equipment, which started with the magnificent sum of five dollars, subscribed in pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters, by their fathers, mothers and friends.

Every Scout should pay ten cents as an entrance fee. Not only is this of great use to the troop funds, but it also keeps out the slackers—namely, boys who only join for a lark, and soon tire of what they only look upon as a game. I may tell you that the true Scout does not regard scouting as a "game" by any means. He is deadly in earnest, and the more he learns about scouting the more he realizes that it was a very serious step he took when he donned the khaki uniform and fastened the colors of his patrol on his shoulder. Now, don't run away with the idea that scouting is all work and no play; on the contrary, I am certain no boy gets so much thorough enjoyment out of life as the

Scout. He learns things he would scarcely have heard of had he not been a Scout, and as exercise, drill, and outdoor games strengthen his body, he enjoys life more than he ever did before, because he is healthier.

The first thing a Boy Scout has to learn is the Scout law, for before he can be enrolled he must promise on his honor:

To do his duty to God and the country.

To help other people at all times.

To obey the Scout law.

Now, the Scout law is not by any means difficult to live up to, for it only requires of every boy just what he would do of his own accord if he followed the dictates of his own heart. The Scout must never lie, swear, or do anything to make him ashamed of himself, or bring shame on his comrades. He must be always on the lookout to help others, or, as it is put in "Scouting for Boys," "to do a good turn to someone every day." He will find he is not taken on as a Scout at once, but a month after he has joined he will be required to pass for the Tenderfoot badge.

Many boys fail in this at first, especially in summer time, for there is so much drill to be learned, so many hints on scouting to be listened to, that they are apt to postpone their studies until the very evening when the Scout-master, or, if there is no Scout-master, the patrol leader, calls them up to pass the test. Then, after floundering about, trying to tie all kinds of impossible knots with the result that he is turned down and told that he must give more time to study ere he can hope to pass.

The tests for the Tenderfoot badge are not difficult. The boy must know the Scouts' law, the sign, and the salute; the composition of the Flag, and the right times to fly it; and—here many Scouts are floored—four of the following knots: Reef, sheet, bend, clove hitch, bowline, middleman's, fisherman's or sheepshank.

These tests passed, he is enrolled, takes the oath, and is entitled to wear the buttonhole badge.

(The article in the next issue will explain exactly how a boy should prepare for these tests.)

Traveller—"Yes, in the Mediterranean I sailed through schools of sardines."

Listener—"Nonsense! How could you swim in those heavy tin boxes?"

"Anything fresh here?" asked the reporter as he sauntered into the theatre-manager's office.

"Yes," replied the manager, "there's some fresh paint. You are leaning against it now."

Debt Collector: "I have called to get that bill I left here a few days ago."

Tenant (relieved): "Sure, an' ye can have that. It was the money I was afraid ye were after."



By STANLEY GORDON

STAND over, Etta. Good girl! There, now, I see you've eaten your oats. Good! What, want some more? No, my dear, you've had enough. Mustn't fill you up too much, you know; there's that race to come off tomorrow, and you must be in good form for it. You'll win, old lady; I know that."

Jack Cummins stroked the mare's sleek, arched neck, rubbed her small, daintily-pricked ears caressingly. He loved this little mare passionately, though he was only a stable boy, who had the work of feeding and tending the few horses belonging to his master, the proprietor of the Arlington Hotel, in Saratoga, the great racing city.

He was making his final round prior to turning into his rough bed in the office adjoining the livery stable, which Dan Mackinnon owned in conjunction with the hotel.

"Etta V.," as the mare was known in the Stud Book, was old Dan's pride and joy, and, when the Circuit races were announced to be held at Saratoga, he showed no hesitation in entering her for the contest, though she did not pace regularly. She was a beautiful little beast, with a large strain of the Arab in her blood; her clean legs, delicately-arched neck, and small head showed that there was much to justify Dan's confidence in her. Her coat was as glossy as spun silk; she had Jack to thank for this mostly. He spent all the spare time he had—though that certainly was not much—in grooming her. And well she repaid his efforts. Her nostrils were blood-red—another sign of the racing blood in her.

"Well, good-night, my dear." Jack was turning to leave the stable, when the door opened and two men walked in.

He recognized both of them; one was a Mr. Brown, a gentleman from New York, who owned another pacer which was to enter the coming match. The other was Brown's driver, a man named Ratchett.

"And how's Etta?" Mr. Brown asked of Jack, who stood by, waiting for him to speak.

"As fit as she can be, sir," answered the lad with enthusiasm. "She'll give the others a great run tomorrow. I know her, and what she can do. I've had her out every day for the last month, and she'll win as easily as winking."

The light of Jack's lantern fell upon the face of Mr. Brown, and the lad was almost sure that he saw a slight, sardonic smile quiver round his lips.

"We'll know better about that tomorrow boy," he said. "What time do you turn in?"

Jack replied that he was on the point of doing so at the very moment of Mr. Brown's entrance, and the two visitors left the stable.

Jack settled himself between the blankets, but, try how he would, sleep would not come

to his eyes. Perhaps it was the excitement of the coming race that kept him awake; and, again, perhaps it was a vague, indescribable feeling that everything was not altogether right. Anyhow, he lay there and vainly courted repose.

The room in which he slept was really a portion of the barn, boarded off to serve the purpose of an office. He could hear every sound that came from the stable.

Presently he heard one of the animals rise suddenly to its feet, as though someone had disturbed its rest.

He sprang noiselessly from the bed, opened the door of the office, and peered out. A man was standing in the passage that ran between the two rows of horses.

"Who's there?" he called.

He heard a sound as though the man growled something beneath his breath, but no answer came to his challenge. Instead, the figure bolted through the outer door, and the stable was once again devoid of human life.

So someone had been to accomplish some shady work! Jack pondered deeply over the man's visit. It was not his custom to lock the stable door, as every man is judged to be honest. But Jack could not help but think that there was a dishonest motive connected with this night visitor. What could the motive be?

Ah! He remembered the momentary look of cynicism that had crossed Mr. Brown's face an hour before. Mr. Brown? Nonsense! Why, he was known as one of the keenest sportsmen in America. Why should he visit the stable at the dead of night? Perhaps—yes; he had it! To drug Etta V.

There were five thousand dollars on the morrow's race, Jack remembered, and Brown's horse, though entered for it, did not show that it bore any more than an ordinary chance of winning.

What should he do? Tell his employer? No; Dan Mackinnon would not listen to him. Who would believe a mere stable lad before the word of a respected gentleman like Dexter Brown? Nobody.

The lad racked his brain for a plan. That a second attempt would be made he was sure. Ah, he had an idea!

He entered the stable, and the next few minutes were spent busily, and, when he crept into his bed again, he fell instantly to sleep, his face bearing a smile of perfect contentment, as that of a man who had done his duty.

The big sliding door of the livery barn opened, and a man entered, looked furtively around him, then crept to the office, in which Jack was sleeping. The deep, regular breathing convinced him that the lad was sound asleep, and, satisfied, he returned, walking straight to

Etta's stall. Noiselessly he scraped a match along his trousers, and applied the flame to the wick of a bull's-eye lantern, which he set on the ground immediately behind the animal.

"Yes, that's her," he muttered. "Third stall on the left from the door. Good! Now, old girl, step over! I've got something nice here for you!"

The animal in the stall made no commotion as the man seized its nose, making it open its mouth. Then something was forced therein; the tongue was held in an inexorable grip, until, with a spasmodic motion of the muscles of the throat, it swallowed. Something sweet went down its throat, and the man, with a chuckle of satisfaction, put out his light, and stole outside as noiselessly as he came in.

The next morning Jack was up at daylight, and all the time he was feeding his charges a strange smile curled about his lips.

"Well, Etta," he said to that animal, "and how do you feel this morning, eh? Pretty fit?" Etta pawed the ground, and Jack dashed a measure of oats into her feed-box, the same smile on his face.

Mr. Brown came in after breakfast, accompanied by Dan Mackinnon.

"Etta's looking fine this morning, Jack," said Dan, eyeing the mare critically. "I'll bet she'll win. Say, Brown, I'll lay you an even thousand that she can give your Chimes a couple of seconds and lick him. D'you take me?"

"Certainly, Dan," answered Brown, booking the bet, "as you seem to be so keen on losing your money."

Jack watched Brown as he wrote, and saw the same cynical smile as of the night before; but he was not in the least anxious.

"Whose going to drive Etta?" asked Brown. Mackinnon looked a little puzzled.

"I don't quite know yet," he answered. "My man sprained his wrist last night. Don't know who to get."

"Let me, sir," interrupted Jack. "Etta and I are great chums, and I think I can drive her as well as Sanderson. She always tries to do her best when I am out training her."

Dan Mackinnon looked doubtful. "Let the lad drive, Dan," put in Mr. Brown. "He's the only one. Plainly, you can't do it yourself, you're too heavy."

Dan looked down ruefully at his ample proportions and sighed.

"It wouldn't be the first time I've been on the track," he said. "But I've put on fifty pounds since then. No! I guess that I'll have to let you do it, Jack. Be ready."

To say that the lad was delighted would be but to express his emotions indifferently; he went about preparations walking on air.

"If you don't lose a cool thousand dollars over this day's work, Mr. Brown," he said to himself as he bent over the pneumatic-tired sulky to see that it was in good order, "I'll be much mistaken! And it'll serve you right, too, you beast! A man that'll drug a horse at any time is bad enough, but one who'll do it before a race ought to get ten years."

He looked up from his work as Brown's driver, Ratchett, entered the stable.

"Hullo!" said this worthy with a grin that was meant to be cheerful, but which only made

him look so that Jack felt it his duty to kick him. "How's Etta?"

"You seem mighty interested in Etta!" snapped the lad, rubbing away angrily at the sulky. "What business is it of yours?"

"Oh, don't get angry," said the man soothingly. "I'm only interested in horses. Who's going to win?"

"Etta," replied our hero promptly. "That is," he continued meaningly, "if she has fair play."

Ratchett started slightly and looked searchingly over the racing cart and ignored him.

Brown's driver strolled to Etta's stall and watched the mare as she munched away contentedly enough at her hay.

He met his employer outside, and drew him into conversation.

"I don't like the look of that mare," he said. "That ball ought to be doing something before this."

"That's all right, my man," answered Brown airily. "I know my business. D'you think I'd have given you a drug that would have stretched her out in the stable? No; she'll look fit until she starts to go, then the action will work the stuff. I'm cute, and don't forget."

Ratchett was satisfied, and resumed his walk through the town, entering the Arlington, where he made a bet with a bar-tender that his master's horse would walk away from Etta V. The man behind the bar took him up readily; he had great faith in the little mare.

Etta pranced gaily as her young driver harnessed her to the sulky and took his seat, heading her for the fair grounds, where the best race track in America was laid. She shook her head skittishly, but Jack had no difficulty whatever to keep her in control. She seemed to know that the lad she loved was holding her, and repeatedly turned and whinnied to him.

Her every action was the picture of equine grace; her skin glimmered in the light of the summer sun, making her almost dazzling to behold.

Perhaps the proudest being in the country that day was Jack, who sat on the seat of the sulky, beaming to everyone who met him.

"Go it, Jacky!" cried those who knew him. "Let her rip!" "She'll win." "Do your best, lad, show the others how to run." And so on all the way to the scene of the race meeting.

The grand stand was thronged with people in their gala dress, for this was an event for the folks of Saratoga to enjoy and remember for some time to come. Gaily-dressed ladies chatted with stalwart, sunburnt men who represented every trade and profession in the country. Around the track the competitors for the race were speeding, "to get limbered up."

The drivers had passed inspection; a few preliminary races had come off in varying degrees of excitement. But it was plainly to be seen that there was only one event that interested the assembly to any great extent; all these people had met together to cheer Etta V., the mare they knew, and were sure would win. At last the judge cleared his throat, and a deep hush fell on the spectators.

"The 2.5 Pace is the next event," announced the judge. "The entrants are Etta V., The Chimes, Little Billy and Sammy. There will only be one heat."

Great clapping filled the air as the mare's name was mentioned, amidst which the jockeys lined up and awaited the word to start.

Jack, while trembling with excitement, was perfectly self-possessed. Etta was pawing the ground impatiently for the signal. She knew



The scoundrelly Ratchett gave an almost imperceptible movement of the nearside rein, and The Chimes swerved ever so slightly towards Etta. Jack, who had seen this little piece of foul play, lashed out with his whip.

what was in the air, and the quick flash in her eye denoted that she was anticipating the pleasure of the coming struggle as much as any of the watchers.

"Go!" cried the judge, and the four started. It was a bad start. The Chimes driver let him go a second too soon. But the eagle eye of the judge was upon him, and a fresh start had to be made.

This time all four passed the judge's stand abreast, and the crowd strained forward to watch every inch of the race. For half of the first lap none gained an inch. After that Little Billy dropped hopelessly behind. Gradually The Chimes and Etta V. drew ahead of Sammy, until it was easy to be seen that the race lay between these two.

"Etta wins!" cried the crowd.

The mare was leading now by half a length. Ratchett was in a state of mind bordering on frenzy. Was the drug never going to work? But still Etta kept her unflinching way, gaining, inch by inch, on her opponent. Frantically Ratchett plied his whip, and The Chimes leaped ahead, coming abreast of her rival.

"The Chimes! The Chimes wins!" The cry

came from the few of The Chimes' sympathizers; Etta's followers maintained a grim silence.

Jack set his teeth savagely. He had not used his whip at all so far, and was loth to do so.

"Etta," he cried. "On, girl! Beat him; you can do it!" Etta heard the loved voice, and put forth a little more of her strength, gaining a foot in the effort. Ratchett mumbled beneath his breath. He saw that his horse was out-classed, and a plan surged through his mind.

The drug had failed, but there was still a chance of winning. An almost imperceptible movement of the near-side rein and The Chimes swerved ever so slightly toward Etta. The mare saw him, and snapped at him with her teeth.

At the same moment Jack, who had seen this little piece of foul play, lashed out savagely with his whip, and caught Ratchett a violent blow. The man let out a howl, and involuntarily twitched the off-side rein.

The Chimes obeyed, and a collision was averted.

The rest of the race was a walk-over for Etta. The Chimes had expended all his strength in a final effort; after that he flagged, and amidst the plaudits of the crowd Etta romped past the winning post, a winner by six lengths. Gradually Jack drew her down to a walk, then turned and drove back to the grand stand, where the people went crazy with delight. A groom ran up, swaddled the mare in a huge blanket, and Jack climbed down to the ground.

Old Dan Mackinnon was beside himself with joy.

"I knew she'd do it," he roared, waving his hat. "Who says Etta can't run? Thanks, Jacky, boy! You did well."

"I say Etta can't beat The Chimes," said an angry voice behind him. And Dan turned and came face to face with Mr. Dexter Brown. A dark scowl disfigured that gentleman's visage, and, if looks could kill, Jack would have stood a very poor chance at the moment.

"Well," replied Dan, "she just showed you that she could."

"That's not Etta V!" went on Brown, pointing at the retreating mare. Dan gasped.

"What in thunder are you talking about?" he demanded. "No, Mr. Brown, that won't go. You owe me a clear thousand; I'll thank you for it."

"As soon as you can prove that she is Etta I'll pay," said Brown, anger and hate largely written on his face.

"That's easy," said Dan with a laugh. "Any-one you ask will tell you who she is. Who is she, Jack?"

"Etta, of course," replied the lad promptly. "Then, how—" Mr. Brown mopped his forehead furiously.

"I think I can tell you something that might

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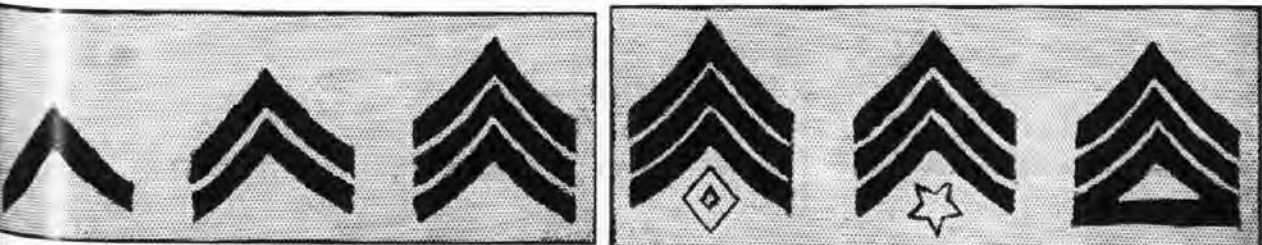
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interest you," said Jack quietly. "That is Etta. The horse your man drugged—"

An imprecation stopped him, and Mr. Brown turned deathly pale. Old Dan looked from one to the other as though he did not credit his own senses.

"What are you talking about, Jack?" he asked.

"I'll tell you," was the reply. "You see that man? Well, he, or else his driver, tried to drug the mare last night. But I got ahead of him, though. You believe me, sir, don't you?"

Mr. Brown's ashen face was sufficient proof of his guilt, and Dan was satisfied that his own driver was speaking the truth.

"Go on, Jack," he said quietly.

"Last night," Jack resumed, "I lay awake and heard someone come into the stable. I got up and shouted; the man disappeared. Then I thought that someone was thinking of doing mischief, and to make sure that Etta would come to no harm I took her out of her stall and put that little livery mare—Kitty—in her place. You know, sir, that they are very much alike, except that Kitty has white feet, while Etta's feet are black. Well, I painted Kitty's feet, and put her in Etta's stall. I expect that Kitty got the drug," he said simply, "and I am sorry. But it was better that she should get it than Etta should. You wonder why I let an animal be drugged at all. Well, I thought you wouldn't take my word before Mr. Brown's, so I let Kitty be doped so that I could prove that Mr. Brown is a scoundrel. That's all."

"And it's quite enough, too," roared Dan, shaking his fist at the cowering Brown. "You scoundrel, sir, I've a mind to horsewhip you till you can't see!"

Mr. Brown retreated before the angry owner of Etta V., and the crowd in the grand stand, who had watched the scene in wonder, were treated to a sight that they did not pay for.

The angry Dan seized Mr. Dexter Brown by the collar of his coat, and belabored him with Jack's whip until lack of breath compelled him to cease. Then he hauled the beaten man before the judge, and told him the whole story.

Mr. Dexter Brown was straightway expelled from the Jockey Club, and, as the judge had seen the little act on the part of Ratchett, that worthy was forbidden to drive another pacer in Saratoga.

On adjourning to the stable it was found that Kitty, the unfortunate animal that had been victimized for the sake of Etta V., was not well, and the veterinary who was summoned diagnosed her ailment as due to the effects of a sedative that had been administered, thus verifying Jack's story, even if he had not been believed before.

As it could not be definitely proved whether it was Brown or his driver who committed the actual act of drugging Kitty, no prosecution was made.

But Mr. Dexter Brown never showed his face round Saratoga again.

The Editor wants to know what the readers like. Tell him what you think of this story.

BOYS' LIFE

THE REAL BOYS' MAGAZINE

"BOYS' LIFE" is a handsomely illustrated and printed magazine of 48 pages, issued on the first and fifteenth day of each month. The yearly subscription price is \$1.20 payable only in advance. Single copies five cents. PLEASE SEND REMITTANCE by Post Office Money Order, Express Money Order, Bank Check, Draft or Registered Letter.

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E. W. GAY and C. H. THOMPSON, Jr., *Circulation Managers*.

England's Well-Known Balloonist Now Builder of Aeroplanes

The rapid strides made in aviation during the past few years have established the fact that man has at last solved the problem of flight. Aerial navigation is now no idle dream but a reality that will play its usefulness in the world of progress. Where birdmen made flights of only a few hundred yards two years ago, they now make distances of some hundred miles of continued flight.

Furthermore, the over-water flights that were made last and this year by foreign and American aviators are many and marvelous. The recent flight of Renaux who flew from Paris to the summit of Puy-de-Dome at Clermont-Ferrand, thereby winning the \$20,000 Michelin Prize has more than astonished the seasoned veterans of the air lanes. The difficulty of making this flight may be gained from a statement of Wilbur Wright, who in an interview two years ago, just after this prize was offered, said in part to Mr. Michelin:

"I do not think your grand prize journey from Paris to Clermont-Ferrand will be realized for a long time. It is not the distance that will retard aviators, but what I am afraid of is crossing the valleys, where air currents from all directions will be met. It will be a difficult task to get to the top. The proposition seems to me a difficult undertaking at least for the present. However, aviators have until 1918 to win."

Among the firms that lately have taken to manufacture sky craft in this country can be mentioned the house of Carter & Son, with headquarters 99 Nassau Street, N. Y. The partners of the firm are the consulting engineers William H. Carter and H. Graham Carter. The latter is the well-known English balloonist, who holds the world's record for parachute jumps. His first record jump was made in 1905 at Blackpool, England, when he dropped from a height of 5,000 feet. He duplicated this feat in 1907 at Crystal Palace, London, and last year in London he made another record by jumping from a parachute at a height of 5,050 feet.

It is fifteen years since Mr. Carter took up ballooning and parachute jumping and ever since has been greatly interested in aeronautics. Three years ago he became a great devotee of the heavier-than-air machines and has made a close study of the different types of record flyers. He arrived in New York last December and since then organized the firm of which he is the head and which now manufactures flying craft.

Mr. Carter is now building a machine to be known as the Graham Carter Monoplane and with this he will enter the race for the Hearst transcontinental prize.

All parties who are interested in aviation to the extent of securing machines, would do well to communicate with Carter & Son before making any purchase, since this firm is well provided to turn out the very best in the line of sky craft. Their advertisement appears on page 48 of this issue.

The Chaplain's Talk

—No. 1—

Cultivate the Best Companions

My dear Boys:

By far the most important thing in a boy's life is the company which he keeps. Whether you wish it or no, you gradually become like the people you associate with, and I have known numberless boys go down simply through this, and forget all that their mothers taught them because their pals laughed at their standard, and in the end caused them to turn their backs on their early ideal.

I remember a young man telling me how he traced his ruin to the fact that it was considered a fine thing among the boys to go the pace, and to see life. At first he hated it, but he got drawn away further and further from what he knew to be right, till he no longer cared. Take my advice, and remember that it does not matter one little bit what the other boy thinks, but it matters a great deal what God thinks. And who can tell but that, if you make a stand, you may lead the rest upward, instead of being led by them downward?

If you wish to become leaders of men, you can never afford, as boys, to sink to the level of your inferiors, but you must practise, whilst quite young, being worthy of yourself, realizing that you will be known by your intimates, and will always be judged by those with whom you spend most of your time. If you would like, after reading this letter, to make me glad, you will do so by resolving that hereafter you will practically have nothing to do with anyone who does not at least help you toward becoming a Christian and a gentleman.

Always your affectionate friend,
 "THE CHAPLAIN."

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No scout's equipment is complete without a knife and none is so well suited to his every need as our "SCOUT" knife. Selected steel blades, solidly built, stag, white bone, ebony or rosewood handle, ring and chain, complete, just as above shown. A practical knife for every phase of scouting, easy to open and cannot get lost.



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THINGS ALL SCOUTS SHOULD KNOW

EDITED BY JOSEPH J. LANE

The paragraphs below explain many little things that are well worth knowing. If during your travels you come across items which seem suitable for this page, forward them with the correct explanation to me. The senders of those which I use will be rewarded.

"TAKE A SEAT"

If you ever find yourself in the unfortunate predicament of the Irishman who was "hanging between nothing and space" with only a rope to hold on to, you should be able to form quite a comfortable little seat if you hold the rope as depicted in this sketch.



All you have to do is to hang on for a moment or two with your left hand, catch the end of the rope with the right, and bring it up under you in the form of a loop. Then grip both the end and the rope itself together, and you will find yourself sitting in the loop, and easily able to support your own weight.

HANDY TWEEZERS

Tweezers are things one rarely sees about, and they are always *not* in evidence when required; that is, when one is unfortunate enough to run a splinter into one's hand.

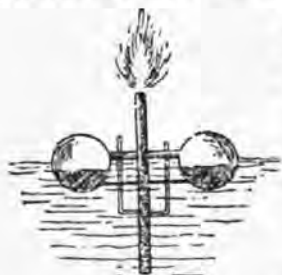
When scouting one is always liable to get thorns and splinters into the flesh, and if one carries a pen-nib on one's person it will be found the best of tweezers. In the illustration a hand in which a splinter has entered is shown, and this is the method by which it is ejected.



Press the nib firmly at B, just in front of the splinter, when it will open. See that the splinter is between the two divisions, then press the nib along each side of the splinter and let it close up. The splinter will come out without any trouble.

FOR SAVING LIFE AT NIGHT

The object shown in the illustration is termed a night life-buoy. Many of these buoys are to be found on large sea-going vessels. The two globes are hollow and are made of metal. They are so buoyant that when in the water a man's weight will not sink them. The vertical tube contains a composition of calcium and phosphorus which, when brought into contact with water, immediately ignites.



Should a man fall overboard when it is

dark one of these buoys is thrown to him, and he, perceiving the light, makes toward it, if possible, and holds on until the arrival of a boat. It is much more effective than the ordinary life-buoy, which could not be discovered at night time.

PREVENTS SLIPPING

You may have occasion at one time or another to hoist some heavy article from one place to another.

If you are doing this by means of a hook, you should know the correct way of roping the article on to the hook.

A "Black wall Hitch" should be used, and this is simply and quickly made by looping the rope over the hook in the manner shown in the illustration.

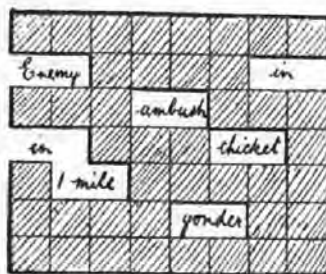


This is safer than merely hanging the rope over the hook, as it is not nearly so likely to slip.

A NOVEL CODE

Here is a splendid method by which a message can be sent from one party of Scouts to another without the fear of it being read correctly if intercepted by a third party.

A piece of cardboard is taken, squares are drawn upon it, and a certain number of the squares are cut out. Each of the sides communicating with one another is provided with a similar piece of cardboard.



Now the Scout sending the message places his cardboard on a piece of paper and writes his message in between the spaces cut out and, taking off the cardboard, fills up the paper with any writing he can think of;

the real meaning of the message.

For instance, the message on the paper may be—"Enemy no longer in supposed ambush. Move stores in morning to thicket one mile and a half to rear. Join you yonder with medical comforts."

But with the aid of the cardboard mask the Scouts in the secret will read it as it appears in the illustration.

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If a self-inking stamp pad is desired (colors red, black or violet) enclose fifteen cents extra. This is a special offer and these prices are quoted only if you mention "BOYS' LIFE."

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Our advertisers are all reliable firms and we are willing to recommend them to any prospective buyer.

—The Publishers.

STEADIES THE PAILS

Any device which saves labor is always to be welcomed, and the following should prove quite a useful tip for Scouts. When carrying two buckets full of water, one in each hand, there is always a tendency of the liquid splashing about when rough ground is traversed and owing to uneven balance of both arms.

To remedy this the water-carrier should obtain a hoop of some description and pass it over his body, and in such a manner that it rests on the edge of each pail with the handles outside it. It will then be found that the hoop steadies the pails and relieves much of the weight from the arms.



PHOSPHORUS SAFETY LAMP

The first necessity for a night watchman is generally supposed to be a good lantern of some kind, but when he happens to be employed in a powder magazine this rather alters the case. You can make a light which combines absolute safety with sufficient illumination to read the time by a watch and other things in the following manner.



Place a piece of phosphorus about the size of a pea in a small bottle of clear glass. Then fill the latter one third full of the best olive oil heated to boiling point, and cork it tightly. When a light is required the cork should be removed to allow the air to enter, and then replaced. The whole of the empty space will at once become luminous.

A FIELD FILTER

Scouts in the United States, when they become thirsty on the march, have never far to go out of their way to find water which is fairly pure and when boiled will be fit for anyone to drink. Still a Scout should know how to look after himself anywhere and be equal to any emergency.

Supposing a Troop or Patrol were so placed that their only water supply consisted of the liquid contained by the average ditch.

They would have the necessity to drink it to satisfy their thirst, but if they possessed a bucket of some description, a little sand, and a few stones, there should be no reason for them not drinking their water in a fairly pure condition by constructing the filter as shown in the diagram. It is made as follows:

SECTION OF FILTER



A hole is made in the bottom of the bucket,

and into it is inserted a piece of tubing of fairly large bore. Then place in the vessel A, large stones; B, small stones; C, coarse sand; and D, fine sand. Fill the rest of the receptacle with the muddy water, and after a time it will filter through in a clear state ready for boiling and drinking.

WORTH REMEMBERING

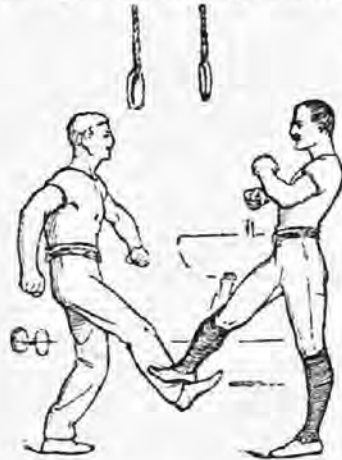
This small picture serves to pictorially explain the point of the following dialogue in a gymnasium.

Gymnastic Instructor (to pupil): "Now, tell me, what would be your method of defence if, during an altercation, some cowardly ruffian tried to kick you?"

Pupil (after a pause): "Well, I really don't know of any way of defence against a kick."

Instructor: "No? Well let me show you a very good one. Now make a kick at me."

Pupil (after making a gentle kick): "Oh! I had never thought of that."



Instructor: "Yes, that is what you should do. As you kick me, instantly I kick at, and as it were, across, your leg as it approaches me. What you should aim at is that your kicking assailant's shin-bone shall come in contact with the heel of your boot. If you can only thus catch him low enough down, just above the ankle, his own ruffianly act may very likely disable him, and, of course, the harder he has kicked, the worse punishment he so receives. You may never have to make use of the hint, but, as an old Army man, I've met a few rough characters in my time, and there's nothing like having a trick or two up your sleeve."

Pupil: "Quite right, sergeant; and I thank you for your little hint."

THE YOUTH'S COMPANION IS FOR EVERYBODY

Of course if you are too young to read, or so old you've forgotten how, you may not enjoy *The Youth's Companion*. That's rather a sweeping statement, however, for hosts of children love to have the stories and jingles of the children's page read to them. There's many a grandfather and grandmother whose eyes are dim who like nothing better than to sit and listen to *The Companion* stories and articles. Many a blind person and even those who in addition can neither speak nor hear have been cheered by *The Companion*, its contents having been communicated to them through the finger-tips of friends. The reading of *The Youth's Companion* is a pretty sure cure for all kinds of loneliness. Robinson Crusoe would have been a happier man if he could have had his *Companion* Thursday as well as his man Friday. Just send for a sample copy and see if you don't like it.

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We furnish you with subscription blanks, you get the \$1.20 for a year's subscription, and keep your commission. Get sixty cents for a six months' subscription and keep part of it for yourselves. A magazine is mailed every other week. Send in your report every week and send money by postal money order, after deducting your commission. To the first hundred boys sending in five yearly subscriptions, we will give a year's subscription besides commission. Write today for a supply of blanks, commission rates and sample paper, enclosing 2 cent stamp for postage. Have your parents sign their name to your letter. Today is the time to start. Do not delay.

BOYS' LIFE MAGAZINE

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| Fencing | Track and Field |
| Foot Ball | Skating |

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Clothing a Specialty*

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|-------------------|--------------------|
| College Flags | Moccasins |
| Dumb Bells | Snow Shoes |
| Home Exercisers | Skis |
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