

hindered, and could not get round for it before," said the man, who spoke in a cultured tone, despite his rough appearance.

"Uncle Bob has not been home since the morning, and I don't know anything about the report, but I will go and ask my aunt," said Elgar, and for the first time a misgiving about the length of his uncle's absence came into his mind.

"Not been home?" exclaimed the man, in a puzzled tone. "Why he was coming straight home when we parted, for he said so. I hope he did not get a thump on the head when the explosion came."

"What explosion?" demanded Elgar, while a cold chill crept down his back, for his uncle was the most unfortunate man, that he knew of for getting into danger, having accidents, and all that sort of thing.

The man detailed the experience of Bob Townsford and himself as they stood talking, heedless of the warning blast of the siren, and said that he had himself escaped without any damage, and supposed his companion to be equally fortunate.

Elgar groaned, and made a move towards the room behind the shop. "I must ask my aunt to catch hold here, while I go out and look for my uncle," he said.

"I'll go along and help you," replied the man with the squint, "I'm afraid that he must have got a thump on the head, and was taken to the hospital tent, without any of you folks being the wiser."

Elgar nodded, that was his own idea, only he had lacked the courage to put it into words.