



Vol. XIX.—No. 935.]

NOVEMBER 27, 1897.

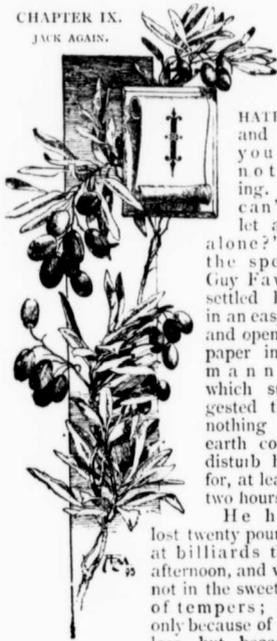
[PRICE ONE PENNY.

“IF LOVING HEARTS WERE NEVER LONELY—”;

OR,

MADGE HARCOURT'S DESOLATION.

CHAPTER IX.  
JACK AGAIN.



HATE girls, and I tell you I'm not going. Why can't you let a man alone?" and the speaker, Guy Fawcett, settled himself in an easy chair and opened his paper in a manner which suggested that nothing on earth could disturb him for, at least, two hours.

He had lost twenty pounds at billiards that afternoon, and was not in the sweetest of tempers; not only because of the loss, but because

he had grace enough to know that he was an idiot to let himself be led into playing for such high stakes.

At the same time, his remark was, to a certain extent, true, for he was anything but a lady's man, and if he did not actually hate girls, he certainly never took any more notice of them than he could possibly help.

Left an orphan at an early age, with a very fair income, he had started travelling as soon as ever he was old enough, and had led such a roving life ever since, that home-life was practically unknown to him.

At times, that is in his thoughtful moods, this was a source of real regret

to him; but then, like his great friend Jack Harcourt, he found "thinking" little to his taste, and consequently these times were few and far between. The life that suited him best was the one he was living at the present time. He went to every place of amusement that was open, and nearly every first-class football or cricket match; backed a few horses, and was to be seen at the principal races; smoked extravagantly and read little else but the paper.

Dinners and dances and "at homes" he abhorred, and he was far prouder of having rowed two years running in the Oxford eight, and got his colours at football, than of having taken his degree and come out far above the

average in mathematics. He had even been known to spend more than one morning in rubbing up the numerous silver cups that adorned his and Jack's chambers, so dear were they to his eyes.

But for all this he was not by any means a worldly or a selfish man; considering the amount of temptations he was daily subject to, and the very little good influence in his sphere, the wonder was that he kept as straight as he did.

But he and Jack were both on a par. Their chief excess was smoking; for the rest they were just two careless, kind-hearted, upright, pleasure-loving young Englishmen, who would scorn to stoop to a mean or base action.



"THEIR CHIEF EXCESS WAS SMOKING."

All rights reserved.]