in a few well-chosen and carefully enunciated words, as he had done several times before, and then he

would ask her to be his wife.

She took a book and set her mind deliberately She took a book and set her mind deliberately on the text and when she had read for what seemed quite five minutes she looked up. It was one minute to six. She read again for a long time without taking in a word of the sense. This time she was afraid to look; five minutes past! Hope lay dead, and it seemed to Athol that in setting a limit she had slain him with her own hand; still trains were late, cars delayed, she would wait till a quarter after. The sickness of hope deferred was upon her, a great emptiness within and without.

When the hands pointed to the quarter she closed her book and rese wearily; she had been the dupe of her own faith in a saving chance, and

closed her book and rose wearily; she had been the dupe of her own faith in a saving chance, and suddenly she felt old. Well, she would dress, for to-night must be lived through—and to-morrow would bring Arthur Dobson! Already she saw his ghost sitting in the armchair, waiting. Of course she knew if she asked for a week or two weeks longer she would get it; one of her chief grievances against him was that he always gave in. Then the

thought of that bluish-white envelope came to her mind with its warning. There were many other white envelopes, thin ones, on their way to her, she Why wait? It would be better to over; fortunately there would be unlimited credit for the future Mrs. Dobson. She felt very sorry for herself and two great tears that had been long held back rolled down over her cheeks.

There were wheels outside but she had listened

There were wheels outside but she had listened so often without cause that now she paid no heed. They stopped and her heart seemed to stop with them. A ring, a step in the hall and a man's broad shoulders in the doorway, and the girl stood with trembling knees, for he had come!

One moment Hebdon hesitated, his eyes un-

accustomed to the light, then he crossed straight

to her.
"What! Crying?" he said, and a tender raillery in his voice seemed to add, "Is this a reception for

Again the eyes, star-innocent and clear, were raised to his.

"I was afraid you wouldn't come," she said

Then he took her in his arms, and because she saw he was laughing at her Athol hid her face in his coat. She felt his lips touch her hair softly. "I have a pledge to return," he said, "a pledge of sincerity," and she allowed him to do it with interest.

"Why didn't you write?" she asked presently, when she conveniently could, and John Hebdon, smiling at the eternal feminine, answered honestly:

"Your letters were too clever, little woman. I saw you could run with any class and knew I could not; so I was afraid of wearying you with my own dullness, for I wanted you to want to come with me as well as to do it. We leave to-morrow evening. I have taken a passage for myself and my wife sailing Thursday, and I must have one day in New York."

To-morrow! This was his will then, and well she knew he would take no denial! She felt the mastery in his voice, and the strength of him, and his arms about her, and she laughed aloud, joyfully, right in the face of the Dobson Ghost.

THE END.

BEGGAR TO CHEER

A COMPLETE STORY BY IAN MACLAREN

It was a hot summer day, and there was not a breath of air in the schoolroom where the prizes were being given. For an hour the boys had gone up to the platform and received their honours from a distinguished general officer, who had come in full uniform, because he was going to review the cadet corps, and seemed to be on the verge of apoplexy. The refrain fell as a soothing murmur on one's ears. "Second Form, first prize, Tomkins, junior. Second prize, Gregory Tertius. Special prize for Latin prose, Denham. Third Form, first prize," and we had it over again with only a change of names. I was falling into a pleasant mood of meditation, and was just withdrawing within my subliminal self, as the Psychical Research Society would say, and hastening away to Research Society would say, and hastening away to some foreign land, when my nephew, for whose sake a middle-aged and moderately stout gentleman was making a Christian martyr of himself, nudged me unceremonically and brought me back from my unceremoniously, and brought me back from my wanderings.

Wake up, and watch for all you're worth." were on friendly terms. "Biggest event of the "Wake up, and watch for all you're worth."
We were on friendly terms. "Biggest event of the day coming off, and we are all as keen as mustard to know who is the winner. Latin verse? I should think not, nor any of that rot. It's the merit prize, and this is how they work the show. Old Daddy—that's the head, you know—and the form masters meet, and after a big pow-wow they settle who's the fellow that has done best in the school over the whole concern. See?" And when I didn't quite see, he explained at greater length. "It's the fellow who has done his work as well as he could, whether he got any prizes or not, and who played the games like a good sportsman whether he was smart or slow at them, and who was a decent, straight, goodlike a good sportsman whether he was smart or slow at them, and who was a decent, straight, good-natured chap in his house, and a fellow that the school liked. The masters are pretty cute, and know more about the fellows than they think, and if it isn't old MacKinnon pulls it off, I'll—well, I'll eat my hat." And I had never seen my hopeful nephew in such a state of honest and unselfish excitement.

It was not necessary for Dick to pay forfeit in the way he promised, or perform any other sleight-of-hand trick, for after the head had given an elaborate and didactic explanation of the theory of this prize, during which the General nodded approval and twisted his moustache, he approached the crisis, and it was the only moment in the day when there was anything approaching stillness in that room.

"After the most careful and impartial consideration, my colleagues and I have unanimously agreed to present for this honour, in certain ways the highest given in this ancient school, the name of Donald Ian MacKinnon"

est given in this ancient school, the name of Donald

MacKinnon." Before the name was out, my scapegrace, by way of being in the front flight, had already one foot on the form and on the tail of my coat, and before the first syllable of MacKinnon's former Christian name had passed the master's lips, he was standing bodily on my coat, and at the last syllable of the surname he let off the first yell. After which it was pandemonium, and although I have heard noises in my day, and seen tumults. I never witnessed anything like the uproar which followed on the award of the merit prize. Every boy stood on the highest thing he could find, and so wrought upon susceptible

relatives and old boys present that they also hastened to climb wherever they could get foothold, while mothers and sisters, as well as the young women generally, carried away by the contagion of emotion. clapped their hands and waved handkerchiefs, and made some gallant attempts to join in the cheer. Personally, I object to any commotion, and especially inside a building—I do not see why people should not control themselves, and express their approba-tion quietly; but in sheer self-defence, because everyone round me was standing on something, and I was left, as it were, in a pit, and in danger of being suffocated, I scrambled up—though quite unsuited now for mountaineering-beside Dick, and according to the libellous accounts he gave in the family, "cheered like old boots, and made a bigger shindy than any visitor in the room." This was, of course. a pure and scandalous invention, but I secured one advantage by joining my nephew on the form. I had a full and satisfying view of the winner of the blue ribbon. What the General said to him was as

'Proud to give you this-eh-prize. Most hon-Shows lots of pluck and-ehourable-ha-hum. staying power. Made good start—eh. Stick in and be—er—credit to school and country and—er—good soldier of the Queen. Like to shake hands with you."

During this masterly deliverance I could only see MacKinnon's back, which suggested indescribable misery, and when he turned round, amid cheers able misery, and when he turned round, amid cheers that might have rent the roof, I was rather disappointed by the front view. He was short and stocky, powerfully but clumsily built, with a heavy and unintelligent face, and I could see in him no sign of talent and no grace of distinction. He came heavily down the little stair and stumped along the passage, white and scared looking, and plunged in among a group of his fellows like one anxious to hide himself after some disgraceful escapade.

in among a group of his fellows like one anxious to hide himself after some disgraceful escapade.

"No," said Dick, when I questioned him about this favourite of the school, "he's not what you would call clever at his class work, for he'll never get past the fourth form, and he's not very strong in games—never was in his house eleven or fifteen; he can run a hit and he came in third for the mile. he can run a bit, and he came in third for the mile, but of course he isn't made for a sprinter. Fact is," said Dick with some reluctance, "old Donald is a bit heavy all over." And then, as some further explanation was necessary, Dick opened the mystery.

"He does as well as he can, and a fellow can't

do any more, but the strong point about old Don is that he's so jolly glad when another chap pulls off the event, and he's always round about with a off the event, and he's always round about with a cheer. He goes with his house team to every match and if a fellow drives a four or kicks a goal you could hear Don a mile off, and if some beastly swat gets a scholarship at the 'Varsity and Daddy preaches a sermon over it, Don will scream himself hoarse, as if he had got the scholarship himself. He's always doing decent things to little chaps, and always glad if another fellow has luck. Don't know whether you quite catch on, but that's why he's the best-liked fellow in the school. He's such a beggar

Three years afterwards Dick had obtained his commission, and was under orders for South Africa. He came down for a final visit, and after we had

talked of many things I inquired what had become of MacKinnon, and Dick woke at once to enthusiasm.

"Well, you see, he had horrid bad luck in the Sandhurst exam.; if the examiners had had the sense of a tom-tit they would have let him straight through, for he has the constitution of a jackass and nerves of steel, don't you know; and he can see further than any man I ever met; and he has more sense in his head than all those fool examiners together. But they stuck him in French or German—it doesn't matter which; so the poor chap didn't get into the army. There's no end to his pluck, though—and if he didn't get a commission in his militia battalion up in the north, and have another shy for the army through their examination; but the fools plucked him again. Horrid hard lines, and a pretty jolly loss to the army, missing old Don. How he would have drilled his men! And how he would have got them to work and fight too!"

"It will be all the worse for him, since the war

has broken out, if he can't get to the front. He seems to me just the kind they want for South Africa; not a book soldier, but a first-rate sports-

"He is that to the ground, and it would have been a black shame if Don had been left at home when so many weeds are prancing about. But he isn't, you bet—I'm coming to that. He never gives anything up; first or last, he gets to the post, and he's going out in spite of them all. Know how he did it? When he couldn't get in through the militia, and he got wind of the war, if he didn't join the volunteers, and what do you think he's done? He's raised a section of fellows where he lives up north, and he's going out in command. Leaving Southampton next week; and I only wish we were going as soon, for there is going to be some pretty stiff fighting. They couldn't keep Don at home, don't you know, when there was something hot going on." And it was evident that the old admiration was still as strong for the winner of the Merit

They all went out, sooner or later, Dick and Don and the rest of them, till there seemed nobody left of the strength of young Britain; they all landed and disappeared into that mysterious and sad Hinterland, where so many strange and regrettable incidents took place, and so many promising and gallant young fellows laid down their lives. We were greedy for news at home, but we only heard of men if they had greatly distinguished themselves. of men if they had greatly distinguished themselves, or if they had made the last sacrifice, and in neither list appeared the names of Dick or Don.

Rumours then began to filter through the press of an incident which was not regrettable, and which, if it were true, might be called romantic, something to cheer and comfort the folk at home. It appeared —for by-and-by the news grew clearer—that when one of our columns had been out-manœuvred and obliged to retreat with heavy loss, a small detachment which had been stationed to hold a position strategic importance had either been forgotten and not called in, or had been intentionally left to make such fight as they could and hinder the Boers for a few hours before, like larger bodies of troops, they hoisted the white flag. Nothing was heard of

(Continued on page 21)