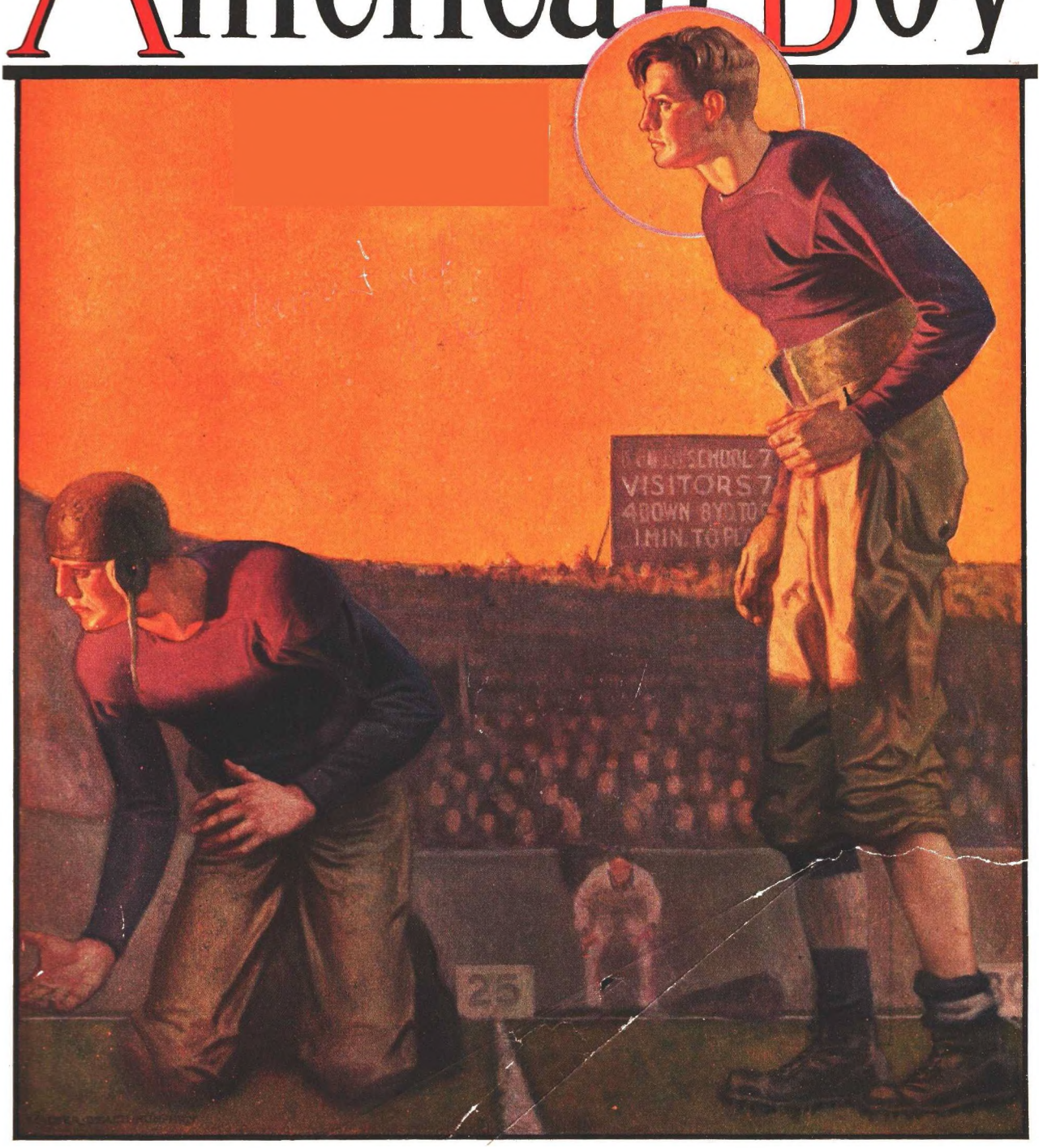
The October 1928

American Boy



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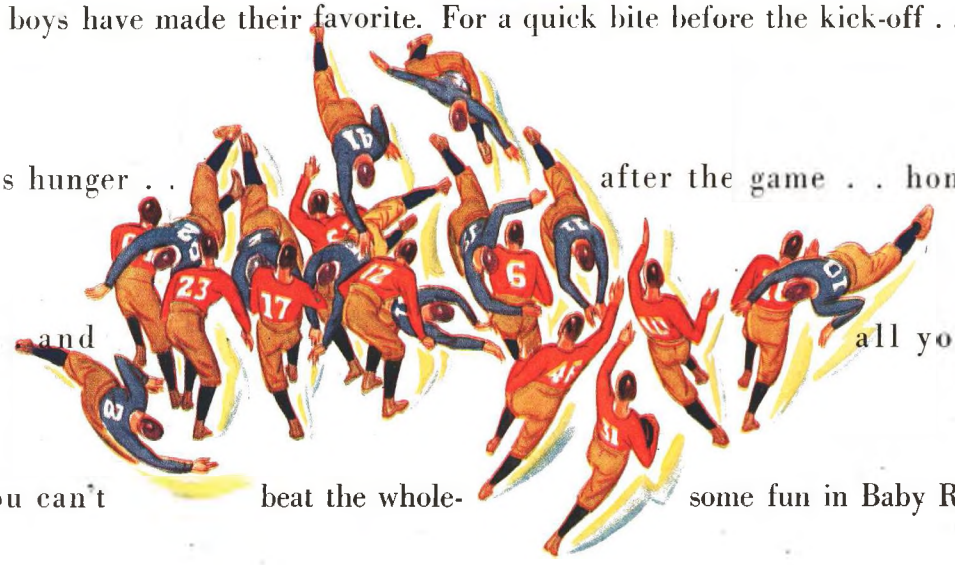

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The American Boy

Volume 29 October, 1928 Number 12

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Winged War

By Thomson Burtis

Illustrated by H. Weston Taylor

AS the little white freighter nosed its way up the lordly Panuco River, Lieutenant Russell Farrell was leaning over the rail, watching the slowly moving panorama of the north shore with eyes that were afire with interest and anticipation. This was the second time he had made this self-same trip, but his interest in the tropical country around him was even greater than it had been the first time.

At different intervals during his career as a pilot in the Army Air Service he had spent, all together, hundreds of hours patrolling the Rio Grande, and there had not been an hour of that time during which he had not, at some moment, gazed from his lofty perch over the far-flung wastes of Mexico and longed to explore them. His first visit to this country had been comparatively short; it had only whetted his zest for exploration. Now, as he realized that he was actually again down in the land that had fascinated him for years, he was as happy as only an enthusiastic young flyer could be.

That the unknown duties that awaited him promised excitement added the last touch to what constituted paradise for the red-headed young airman.

The small white fruit steamer, which he had boarded at New Orleans three days before, was making slow progress under the hand of its Mexican pilot, and the broad-shouldered Farrell had plenty of time to drink in the scene before him. Though he had seen it all on his former trip to Tampico, it had lost none of its charm.

Great "tank farms" on both banks! The rolling shore line seemed to be covered with the huge fifty-five-thousand-barrel oil tanks. And just as on his former trip, here and there along the shore great black oil tankers were at anchor, while huge pipes, leading from the tanks, poured a ceaseless flow of oil into them.

Not a day passed, he knew, without a dozen tankers' steaming slowly down the Rio Panuco to carry their precious freight to all parts of the earth. The great signs he saw, signs bearing the names of the majority of the great oil companies of the world, were evidence in themselves of the Gargantuan industry going on in the interior of Mexico.

He knew enough about the oil business to be able to visualize the scenes a hundred miles away in the interior where the thousands of wells, flowing day and night, were supplying these tank farms with their precious contents. His heart leaped to the romance of it as he saw in his mind's eye pipe lines crisscrossing the country—thousands of men bending to their toil beneath the burning Mexican sun. Suddenly it seemed to him that, were he not a flyer, he would rather be a part of the industry that wrested its riches from the earth itself, undaunted by wilderness or desert or any other obstacle, than anything else in the world.

"Getting a kick out of it?" inquired a soft voice behind him and a portly young radio operator smiled understandingly at the eager Army man.

Russ nodded and his freckled face lit up with a typical Farrell grin. "I sure am," he admitted. "Look at those boats!"

DOZENS of primitive little crafts were plying busily to and fro across the wide river. Many of them were old stern-wheelers, carrying cargoes of laughing, sombreroed peons to their work. Battered little launches, weather-beaten rowboats, and flat scows were like so many water bugs on the surface of the water.

"Pretty busy little port," agreed the radio operator. "If I remember rightly, it was second only to New York last year in the volume of shipping that was handled."

"I can believe it." And Russ grinned again.

"Just down here on a little vacation trip?" the radio operator inquired.

"I don't exactly know," Russ answered guardedly. The letter that he had in his pocket had warned him to keep his own counsel and the Chief at Washington had told him, in no unmistakable terms, not to talk too much.

"You're not out of the Army, are you?"

Russ shook his head. He removed his Panama hat and the faint breeze ruffled his curly red hair slightly.

"No, I have a six months' leave without pay," he answered. "I had a pretty tough year and felt I needed a little vacation."

"Sort of fed up with flying, eh?"

"Gosh, no!" Russ exploded, and for an instant his unquenchable enthusiasm for the service he loved better than anything else in the world burned up so brightly that it fairly glowed in his face.

The radio operator grinned sympathetically.

"It's all right for them that like it," he stated. "Well, young fellow, there's Tampico."

The ship was rounding a bend, and once more before Farrell's fascinated eyes there appeared the gleaming white buildings of the most famous oil boom town in the world. His gaze traveled from the swarming docks up the hill to the heights. The city lay bathed in the golden Mexican sunlight, and from that distance it seemed like some colorful Oriental metropolis. Gaudily dressed peons swarmed on the wharves, unloading the half dozen big vessels tied up there. Along the water front the unpainted shacks of the peons seemed to extend for miles. Some of them were built on stilts over the water itself. Starting at the shore line and extending part way up the hill, there were great sheds through which crowds of people moved slowly. Russ knew they were the public markets.

"Busy places," the radio operator remarked.

Russ nodded. "And these are busy birds," he added with a grin as his gaze shifted to the blinding sky. "Did you ever in your life see so many buzzards!"

Up there, hundreds of the big birds were wheeling slowly over the town, and along the water front the telegraph and telephone wires and scraggly trees seemed literally covered with them.

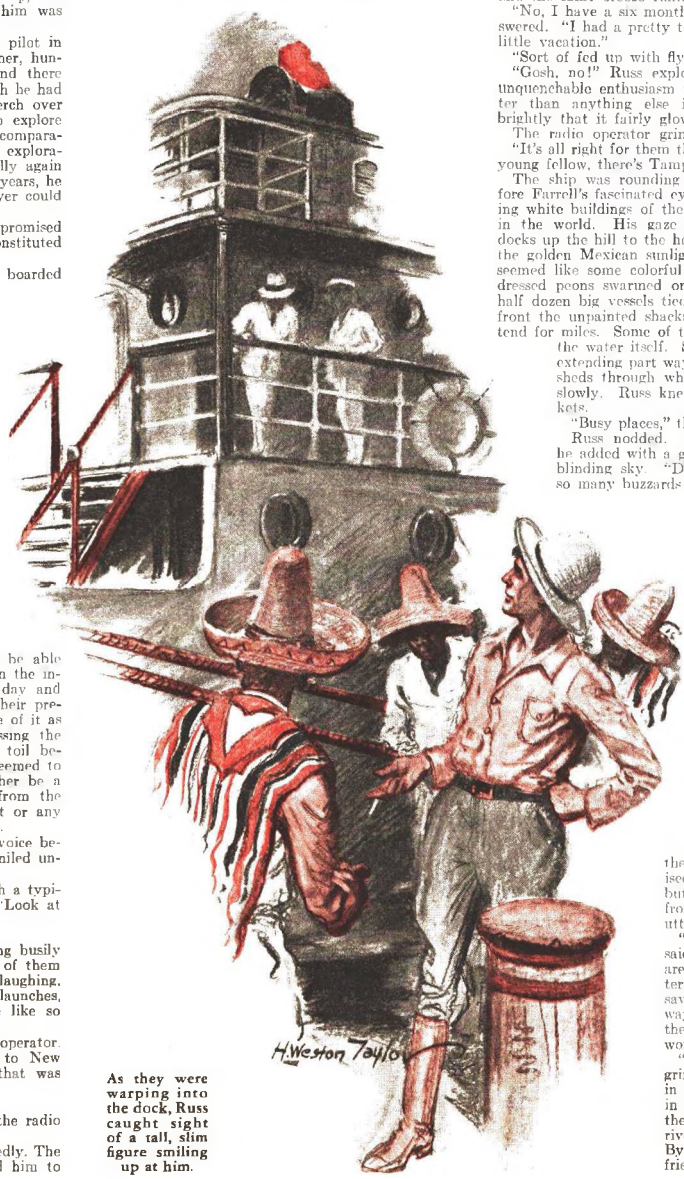
"Sure are scads of 'em," admitted the radio operator. "There are parts of Mexico that aren't so—er—sanitary."

AS the ship crept up to the wharf and the false breeze generated by its progress died, the force of his remark was increased by the evidence of Russ's nostrils. The aroma that assailed them was not a pleasant one.

Up on the hill, there were the modern buildings that promised comfort and even luxury, but down here along the water front, there was evidence of unutterable squalor.

"I know, of course," Russ said, half to himself, "that there are a lot of people in the interior that live a good deal like savages, but I can't get over the way these people down here in these shacks live. I believe it's worse."

"Well," the radio operator grinned, "I know I'd rather live in some thatched-roof hut out in the monte than in one of these town houses along the river. I take it you would, too. By the way, have you any friends here in Tampico?"



As they were warping into the dock, Russ caught sight of a tall, slim figure smiling up at him.

"Just one right now, and I expect he'll meet me," Russ told him, but even as he said the words he was wondering, for the hundredth time, whether or not he did have a friend.

They were warping into the dock now and his eyes swept the throngs of laborers eagerly. Suddenly they caught sight of a tall, slim figure, topped by a big white Stetson, shouldering its way forward. The Stetson tilted back to reveal a boldly reckless face and long, narrow, dark eyes, which focused on Farrell.

"Oh, Blackie!" Russ shouted and the next second Blackie Williams was waving his hat in the old, casual gesture Russ knew so well.

As the ship was tying up to the dock the flyer's eyes rested for a long time on that graceful figure below.

Tall and broad-shouldered, Williams was as debonair as ever. He was dressed in riding boots and breeches and a thin khaki shirt, open at the neck. Below his Stetson, his face, as always, seemed to be jeering mockingly at the world. An aquiline nose swept down over a wide mouth that seemed to droop on one side, as though smiling sardonically at life in general. His lean face was tanned a deep mahogany. When he shoved back his hat, the gesture revealed thick wavy black hair and brought out more clearly the lines of strength in the face of a born adventurer.

He stood below quietly as he smiled up at Russ, and his expression of saturnine mockery disappeared for a moment. There seemed to be real pleasure back of the smile that suddenly lit up his dark face.

"See you in a few minutes!" Russ yelled, and his voice was vibrant with anticipation as he left the rail to attend to his baggage.

He wondered exactly why that warm feeling of contentment had rushed over him at the sight of Blackie Williams—wondered the more because of tiny doubts that would not stay down.

"Don't be a fool!" he admonished himself, and he scarcely realized that that same little element of doubt subtly increased the anticipation that had now turned him into an eager boy who was almost unbearably impatient to find out what his mysterious mission might be.

"Well set up youngster," grunted the stolid Norwegian captain to the radio operator, and that portly young gentleman nodded. For the moment, there was a wistful look in his eyes, as they followed Russ across the narrow deck. The pilot's wide-shouldered body moved with a sort of pantherlike grace and the bounding vitality within him seemed to radiate from every part of it.

RUSS moved swiftly, as he collected his bags, said good-by to the crew and half ran down the gangplank in front of a procession of Mexican boys who were carrying his luggage. The next second he was shaking hands with Williams.

"How's the lieutenant?" Williams grinned, with genial mockery. "First time I ever saw you out of uniform. That white suit certainly does make that hair look three shades redder than a mad rooster's comb!"

"If we're talking about colors," Russ returned. "I might rise to remark that your face is about three degrees darker than a hearse at midnight."

"Sun, my boy, sun," Williams returned. "Well, let's get under way for the customs office, because we haven't a great deal of time."

"Huh?" grunted Russ. "What do you mean? Ships don't come in on schedule time exactly, do they? Have we a luncheon engagement or something?"

"No," Williams told him, as they made their way through the small crowd of Mexicans. "But it just so happens that three or four of the big bugs you may decide to work for are gathered right now at the Colonial Club and said they would stick around until noon, on the chance that the canoe you arrived in might make it to the docks this morning."

Russ glanced at the profile of his companion, who was slightly ahead of him. Seen from the side, Blackie's face was more hawklike than ever. His square jaw receded ever so slightly below that boldly curving nose and he looked exactly what Russ had found him to be—an indomitable adventurer, to whom the world was an oyster, and, with all his faults, a gentleman unafraid. That Russ should think so, after all that had happened between them, was a miracle to the red-headed young flyer, and again he wondered whether he was right or not.

Blackie had proved himself time and again and yet—what he had been—

Russ forgot all this, however, as he went through customs inspection, which Blackie facilitated for him by fluent conversation in Spanish. Russ noticed the extraordinary politeness of the two customs inspectors and marveled somewhat, because it was in such contrast to the attitude of the half dozen soldiers in ill fitting khaki uniforms who were lounging in the background.

"I may be wrong," he half whispered in Blackie's ear, as they stood to one side of his open grips, "but it seems to me as though some of those boys over there were not looking at us with much pleasure at my arrival."

Blackie glanced at him and his lip drooped. "It's not so much you who's annoyin' 'em as it is me," he stated.

Russ could not ask the questions that came crowding to the tip of his tongue, because inspection was over, but there were tingles chasing themselves up and down his spine as they went out to the car Blackie had ordered. He felt as though he would burst if he did not learn more about the situation within the next few seconds, and as they climbed into the car his words fairly tumbled over themselves.

"Listen, Blackie, come clean, will you?" he begged. "I got a letter asking me if I would like to do some flying down here, saying it could be fixed up with Washington, that I would enjoy it and make some money, and the skids were greased in Washington, and here I am and I don't know a thing about it."

"Well, you're here, aren't you?" Blackie drawled as they started up the rugged dirt road that led up the hill. "Don't think I'm so dumb—I knew you'd get here quicker if you didn't know what it was all about than you would if you did. What brought you here, young fellow, was excitement, and the more mystery I could throw around it the more exciting it was to you. Don't kid me!"

Russ grinned.

"Maybe you're right," he admitted. "It must be O. K. because Washington was all right. But, gosh, Blackie, what is it?"

"Wait till we get to yonder white hotel, the name of which is the 'Riviera,'" Blackie told him. "Then we'll park your grips. We'll go from there to the Colonial Club and you can get the news right from headquarters. I hope you'll like it.

"This Riviera," he went on casually, "has a bath for every room. The other big hotel is more in the center of things but there are at least three good reasons why you won't park your luggage there. One is that the Riviera has a bath for every room and the other hotel has about two baths for the whole hotel and they don't work, except at intervals.

"The second reason is that every American in town would see you in a short time in the other hotel, and some of them might be stool pigeons.

"The third reason," he continued, turning a corner on two wheels, "I won't tell you now, because you might not understand its importance."

He glanced sideward, his mouth drooping quizzically, as though enjoying Russ's mystification.

Russ's blue eyes blazed with questions.

"If you don't shoot the works," he finally declared, "I won't even go near that Colonial Club, whatever it is. Come on, Blackie, don't kid me any more. What's the lay?"

BLACKIE slowed down the car. They were driving through a paved street between low, white adobe buildings that were almost windowless. Through an occasional open door a patio, far within, was discernible.

"Remember a few months ago I was trying to get back some money I had been crooked out of by more or less strong-arm methods down here, and you came down and knocked me off?" he asked slowly.

Russ nodded. There was a brief silence, and a thousand memories swarmed through Russ's racing brain. The man beside him, technically an outlaw for more than a year for reasons that Russ found understandable if not really excusable, had always had a curious influence on him. They had waged a thousand battles against each other during Russ's days on the Border Patrol, but they had been fought as though they represented rival countries at war. Nevertheless, that he should be proud to call Blackie Williams his friend could not be explained on any other basis than that of a strong personal liking that took little heed of what Blackie was—or had been, at least.

He had seen Blackie return a fortune to the men he had stolen it from, after they had first stolen it from him by technically legal methods, and knew that the unreadable Texan had decided he would feel better if he did so. Surely, that showed what he was, and yet his reference to his outlaw past troubled Russ. There swept over him a feeling that a great disillusionment would come to him in Williams' next words. He waited tensely.

Finally, Blackie spoke.

"Well," he said quietly, his drawl more pronounced than usual. "Some other egg is doing what I did on a bigger scale. It looks as though a little war is going to be fought in the sky over this flea-bitten country and as though the notorious Blackie Williams is going to be on the side of the law. You're down here because I'd like mighty well to have you help me and about seven big oil companies and the Mexican government don't object at all, at all. These oil fields are about one hun-

Blackie's dark eyes glanced briefly at the bold signature. "That's his," he said slowly.

Hard to Tackle, That Boy!

Bud Hill, scrub half, was as deliberate as a checkers champion and as slippery as a water snake. But he warmed the bench—until the final game—and then, out on the field, he and Captain Lambert came to a showdown! Hot action in next month's grid story by Franklin M. Reck,

"The Pants Slapper!"

dred twenty miles long, and somewhere in 'em or over 'em there's a spot for Russ Farrell to do his stuff, if he wants to!"

Chapter Two

A HALF hour later, the little car that Blackie was driving drew up in front of a building just off the Plaza and Blackie waved his hand in one of his customary negligent gestures.

"This is the spot," he proclaimed, "where your curiosity shall be satisfied, and quickly."

Russ climbed out and followed Blackie up some stairs. He had scarcely noticed Tampico as they had driven through it, for his mind was racing ahead and a thousand possibilities had passed in review before him. It was a tense, excited young flyer who entered the simply furnished confines of the Colonial Club. Blackie had explained that it was the rendezvous of the leaders of the army of men who were conquering, foot by foot, the primeval jungle from which they garnered flowing gold.

The club seemed almost deserted but Blackie led him to a small room in the rear. Russ entered to face the inspection of three coatless men who were sitting around a table, talking.

"Greetings, gentlemen," Blackie drawled equably. "Mr. White, may I present Lieutenant Farrell? Mr. White, Russ, is general manager of the Korejan Oil Company, the biggest single company in Mexico.

"Mr. Ransome, Lieutenant Farrell. Mr. Ransome is the vice-president and general manager of the Gamble Company, owned by an English syndicate and a very large company.

"Mr. Harris, Lieutenant Farrell. Mr. Harris is general field superintendent for the Texas Company of Mexico. These three gentlemen, Russ, have been appointed a committee to handle certain matters for all the oil interests that have concessions in Mexico."

As the three men shook hands, Russ was conscious of the fact that they were scrutinizing him closely.

White was an enormous man, more than six feet in height and large in proportion. Russ's first impression was that he was very fat but later on he realized that the oil man's flesh was firm and hard and that his huge bulk was far from flabby. His eyes were so encased in flesh that they looked small but they were very keen and cool as they rested on the flyer.

RANSOME of the Gamble Company looked more like a city business man than an oil pioneer. He was rather small and stocky, dressed with precise correctness in a spotless linen suit, and his square face was crossed with rather ornate spectacles.

Harris was tall and spare and angular, his face tanned to a deep mahogany, with remarkably keen grey eyes looking forth beneath bushy, iron grey eyebrows.

"Sit down," White invited them in a slightly wheezy voice. He wiped the perspiration from his glistening bald head and his huge jowls seemed to become larger as he smiled. His mouth looked ridiculously small in that expansive face, almost like a baby's.

"We haven't much time," he went on. "How much have you told him, Williams?"

"Very little," drawled Williams, throwing one leg over the arm of his chair. "You'd better give him the works."

He had removed his Stetson and his thick black hair was in a tangled mass, some of it falling over his forehead. He leaned back quietly, smoking a cigarette, and scarcely seemed to be paying attention as the big oil man started talking.

Delroy's 'chute flipped open again and a second later Russ had a death grip on the shroud lines.

Russ's eyes flitted briefly to the other two men and then came to rest on White's face, there to remain.

As White talked, the dynamic force concealed in that apparently slothful body became more and more apparent to the young flyer, and he felt as though those small grey eyes were accurately appraising the effect upon him of every word spoken.

"The situation," White began, "is this: This rapscallion, Williams, here, as you know, started something a year ago. You're aware of the fact that the fields around here are more than a hundred miles long. And you know, don't you, that the country is infested with everything from small gangs of bandits, who usually pass themselves off as down-trodden men collecting funds to start a revolution, to real armies of four or five hundred, under the leadership of so-called generals, who are really on the level about doing a little government baiting?"

Russ nodded.

"Well," White went on, leaning back in his oversize chair, "of course, all the big companies have to transport hundreds of thousands of dollars every week to the camps for the pay rolls. Our pay cars were robbed so frequently that we started flying the pay rolls to the various camps. Then Mr. Williams, dog-gone him, having been given what he considered a crooked deal, though it was all a matter of business, decided to get back the money he'd lost. Being a flyer, he turned into an aerial highwayman; and you, being a friend of the men who owned the ships we used to fly the money around the fields, made a quick trip down here and showed him the error of his ways. Am I right?"

Russ nodded, unsmilingly. He darted a glance at the untroubled Blackie.

"If you want to know it," Russ said, flatly, "I think Williams did get a crooked deal, although I don't approve of the methods he used to get back what belonged to him. But he returned the money he had taken, didn't he—sent it back to your companies?"

The flyer was leaning forward belligerently as he defended his friend.

White, looking into his eyes, smiled slightly. Ransome and Harris glanced at each other, the hint of a smile on their lips.

"He did!" White said soothingly. "Now he's working for us."

Williams' lips drooped on one side.

"I found out it was better to play with you than against you," he said calmly. "Let's let that other thing rest."

"Well," White went on, playing with his watch fob absently, "as I said before, Blackie here apparently put ideas into people's heads. To make a long story short, somewhere in the interior of this country, there's a hidden airdrome and how many ships are on it we don't know. What we do know, though, is that our pay roll ships are held up on an average of once a week and that we are losing fifteen to twenty-five thousand dollars in cash money every week.

"There's more than one flyer in the crew and more than one ship. We know that, because two of our ships have been held up simultaneously and once even three.

"More than that, this gang gets information, and exact information, about what we plan to do to circumvent them; gets it in a manner we can't understand. How many stool pigeons they have in their employ, and how many of them are right in our own offices, we can't tell. How many ground men they have, we don't know. An amazing part of the situation is that, running around this town of Tampico right now, there are at least a dozen members of the gang and that somewhere, not too far from here, there's an organized band of probably hundreds of men, including ground and air men, who are thumbing their noses at the Mexican government, the oil companies, and law and order in general."

HE stopped speaking and there was a moment of silence. Ransome and Harris were still unobtrusively appraising Farrell. White's eyes were on his pudgy hands and Blackie Williams was gazing at the ceiling, his lanky body sprawled approximately on the back of his neck.

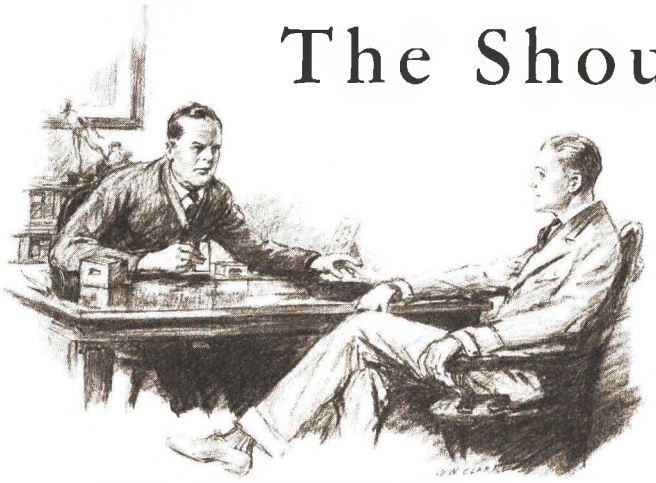
"After this man you know—I forget his name—decided to sell out and leave here," White resumed, "all the companies pooled resources and started an airdrome with a field outside of Tampico, for the purpose of flying executives up to the border and around the fields whenever haste was imperative. We laid in five good ships, Barton Eagles, and hired three experienced pilots and six mechanics, all of them, as far as we know, absolutely trustworthy. We tried hard enough to get something on them and they must be considered above suspicion as far as being in collusion with aerial outlaws is concerned.

"Everything went beautifully for a while, with the exception of an occasional forced landing, until the last five months. Then things broke loose. Now, airplanes come swooping down out of the sky at the slightest provocation and raise merry Ned in all kinds of ways. They don't confine themselves merely to holding up ships with pay rolls in them. They all have machine guns and sometimes one of them will come over an isolated camp, threaten it with its guns and keep everybody helpless while a bunch of ground men, including both Mexicans and Americans, come in and take what they like. They seem to know (*Continued on page 40*)

The Shouting Violet

By William Heyliger

Illustrated by W. W. Clarke



Slowly it was forced in upon Roberts that the coach was serious.

Part I

FOR nine years football at Grandon had been largely a matter of 'Gene Bancker. Short and massive, wrinkled and bald, the coach had done more than dominate Grandon football—he *was* Grandon football. Horsey Mott, sports editor of the Grandon *Times*, always called the eleven "'Gene Bancker's Boys." Eight-column headlines, across the top of the sports page, told the world that "'Gene Bancker's Boys Triumph Over Brandywine" or that "'Gene Bancker's Boys Fall Before Scarlet Eleven." Horsey stamped the team for what it was—'Gene Bancker's.

And yet, privately, Mott held Bancker in a sort of careless contempt.

"'Gene's a mealy-mouthed fraud," he confided to his friends in the fight clubs, the billiard rooms, and the bowling alleys, "with his talk about manhood and what a player owes to the squad. You ought to hear him talk to an audience of high school kids—he lays it on thick. And yet, what's he there for? He's there to win. He'd sell his grandmother every day in the week for a chance to beat Brandywine."

Grandon students, too, believed that Bancker would move heaven and earth to win. They, like Horsey, didn't know their man. They'd seen him at long range, from the seats of the stands, and he had taken on the color of his tearing, fighting, bucking, heaving teams. Here and there through the years, men of the squad had found the true Bancker. They didn't speak of their discovery—but they knew that Bancker, in his heart of hearts, looked upon his teams as incidentals and believed that his main job was to turn out men.

For the coach was an idealist—and it was not in Horsey Mott to understand an idealist. Beneath Bancker's granite exterior was a warm, human fire of faith and enthusiasm. To him a football field was a laboratory for the forging of character. Players were whetted to a fighting edge, hammered to a point where they acquired self-control and steeled to withstand shock and disaster. The campus thought in terms of games and Bancker thought in terms of men. For three years he kept Terry Ball on the squad, not because he ever hoped to use the boy, but because Terry was learning how to make a gallant fight against hopeless odds. Terry, graduating without his letter, carried something in his veins—put there by Bancker—with which to face the world.

And then Trimble Roberts came to Grandon. Knipe, who coached the freshman team, brought word of him to Bancker.

"'Gene, I've got a good boy in my outfit named Trimble Roberts. I'm using him at full. He can kick, run and pass—a real triple threat."

"What's he like?" Bancker asked.

"Five foot eleven, about 178—"

"Not that. You say he's good. Does he know it?"

"Yeah, he knows—too well."

The veteran nodded. "A shouting violet. Anything else?"

"He carries a smooth line of talk, and he feels that it's everybody's duty to step up and give him three cheers."

"He'll come pretty close to earning anything he gets from me," Bancker said mildly.

"The trouble is," Knipe said thoughtfully, "that he's good enough to earn it. Why don't you come over and take a look?"

"Some boy out there, Bancker," he said.

"I've never seen him in action," said the coach.

"He brought you over here to-day," Horsey said shrewdly.

Bancker didn't deny it. Nor did he confide any of his thoughts in Horsey. Though Mott carried him in the headlines, the two couldn't be called friends. There was a hard, calculating quality about Horsey that Bancker couldn't bring himself to like. As a matter of courtesy he gave Mott free run of the field and the locker rooms, but he never gave him his confidence, never honored him with a full measure of trust.

"This is the third time I've been out to see him," Horsey volunteered.

"You must find him worth watching," Bancker said a little dryly.

"And how!" Horsey grinned.

THE play had moved down the field, and the coach walked away to follow it. Half an hour later Horsey tapped him on the arm.

"What do you think of him, 'Gene?"

"Not so good," said the coach. "Swelled up like a balloon. So full of his own greatness he can't see anybody else. The team won't mean a thing to him—unless he changes his ideas."

"It hasn't spoiled his game."

"The thing I have in mind," Bancker said quietly, "goes deeper than the game. Character—that's what counts. No team can win always, but its players can always be men."

"Sure," replied Horsey. "That listens fine, 'Gene, but since when has anybody pinned a medal on the loser? What's the use of being a star if you can't shine? That's my motto. I'm practical."

The practice was over and Bancker, with an abrupt movement, swung on his heel and walked away.

Horsey laughed indulgently. "The poor nut," he scoffed, and followed the freshman team to the locker room. Roberts, coming out from under a shower, waved a greeting. They had already become acquainted.

"Thanks for that story last night, Mr. Mott."

"There'll be more of 'em," asserted Horsey. "I want to talk to you on the way back."

They left the locker room together, part of a haphazard group. Horsey waited until they had worked themselves free of the others.

"Did you see Bancker there to-day?" he asked.

Roberts nodded.

"He came over to watch you."

"I thought so."

Horsey chuckled. "You know your onions." Then his voice changed. "Trim, how would you like to be known from coast to coast as a football big gun, another Red Grange?"

The boy's eyes gleamed.

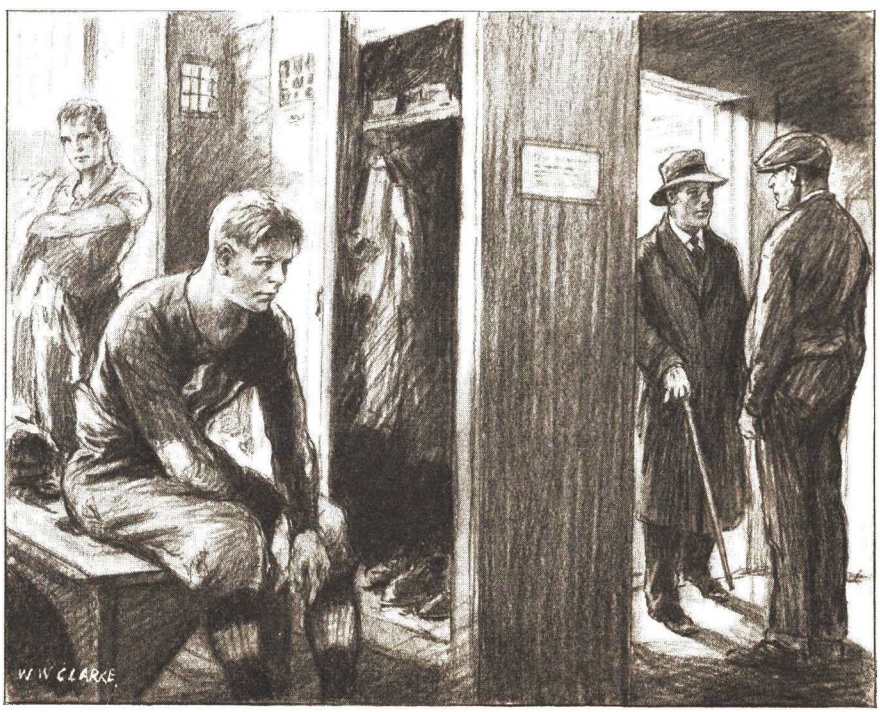
"I can fix it for you. I write the games for the wire service. I can build you up. They'll know you wherever sports are published. The 'Flaming Comet!' There's a name for the headlines."

The boy's breath came out in a long-drawn sigh.

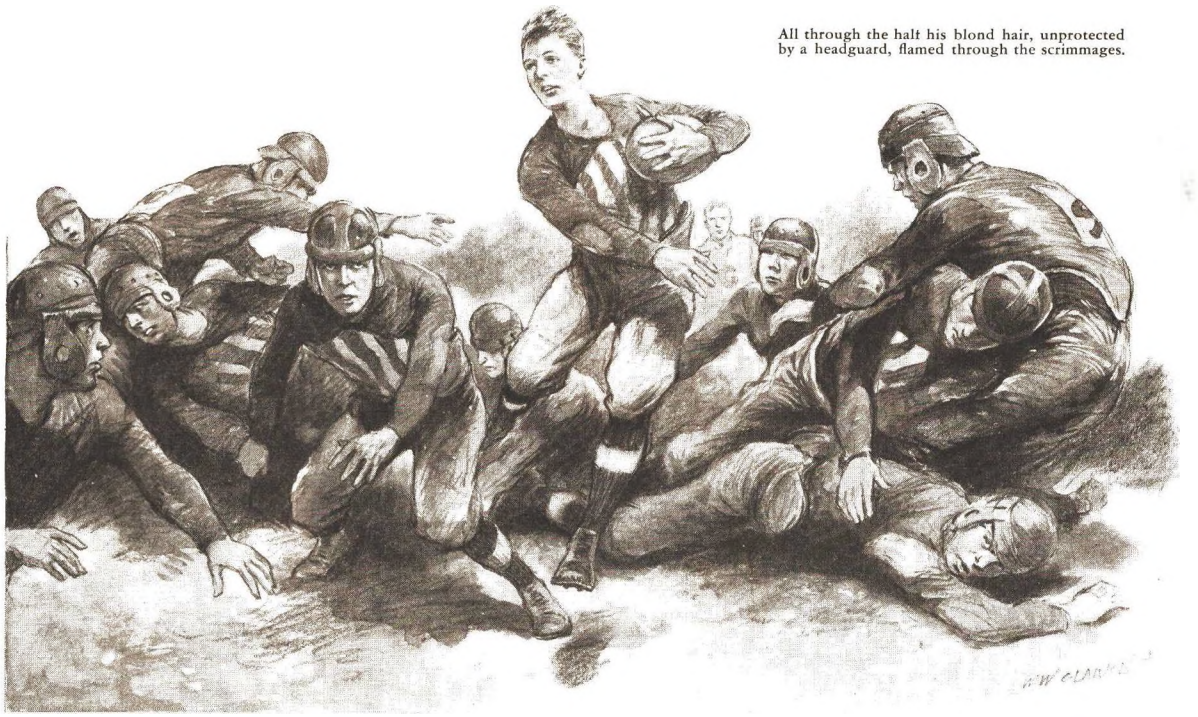
"But there's one obstacle," Horsey added.

"Where?" Trim's voice was sharp.

"Bancker," Horsey said laconically. He waited a moment. "I've nothing against Bancker, but he's a fanatic. He'll spout manhood and character at you the minute you go to the varsity squad. Every day you'll



Roberts, sitting on a bench and staring at the floor, was startled by the crisp sound of the coach's voice addressing Mott.



All through the halt his blond hair, unprotected by a headguard, flamed through the scrimmages.

be told what you owe the squad. In your case, that will be bunk. You'll be a darn sight better than anyone else on your team. You'll do enough for the team just by playing your own sweet game. Bancker will try to subordinate you to the team. Don't let him get away with it. Go out and develop yourself to the limit. Play your own game. Be spectacular. Let the rest of the team do the sacrificing; they haven't got much to sacrifice. If you finish at Grandon with a country-wide rep, what's to prevent you from signing a professional contract for a wad of money? Do you see it?"

Oh, yes; Trim saw it. The picture danced before his eyes like a golden dream. That there might be another angle—Bancker's angle, the school's angle—did not occur to him. The others had nothing to sacrifice. Horsey had made it seem plausible.

"As for Bancker—" the editor began.

"I'll handle Bancker," Trim stated confidently.

"Good boy." Horsey grinned and swung his cane with a jaunty gesture. "Give me something to write about and I'll spread you around while you're still a freshman."

TRIM gave his adviser plenty of vivid copy, and the sports pages began to take notice of a "blond comet" who was burning things up. Against Morristown the freshman gained 73 yards, and against Stevens he kicked three field goals. Horsey told him to discard the headgear.

"Let that blond mop of yours stick out," the editor said. "We'll make it our trade-mark. None of this 'Who's got the ball?' when you go down the field. We want the whole stand to yell 'There goes the Comet!'"

Trim played bareheaded against Underwood and scored five touchdowns. After that game, the casual air of superiority that he had brought to Grandon became a distinct swagger. Bancker, crossing the campus, met him walking with Knipe. The freshman coach introduced them.

"You play full, don't you?" Bancker asked, as though the player's status were just a little vague.

"You ought to know," Roberts drawled, "after having come to frosh field to look me over."

Bancker's eyes grew a little hard. This was even worse than he had expected. A minute later, when Trim had gone, he accused Knipe of having "told Roberts something."

"It wouldn't be necessary," Knipe said wearily. "When he saw you at practice, there was only one possible answer. You were there to get an eyeful of him."

"What a nice little playmate we'll have on the varsity next year," was Bancker's comment.

"You're welcome to him." Knipe sighed. "If anybody's telling him things, it's Horsey Mott. Haven't you seen the stuff in the papers?"

"I'm watching it," Bancker said grimly.

Roberts beat the Brandywine freshmen almost single-handed. Horsey, growing hysterical over this accomplishment, said in print that the freshman was sure to be an outstanding player on next year's varsity. Bancker read the article and frowned. He walked to the *Times* office.

"Horsey," he said, "it's fair enough for you to make predictions—all sports writers do. But when you say Roberts is going to be the whole show next year, you're doing the kid harm."

Horsey laughed soothingly. "Sometimes a fellow so far outclasses his field that he's down in the books months before the party. There's no question about Trim."

"Trim can't stand praise," Bancker said evenly. "He's not built that way. If you play him up this way, you'll ruin him. And you may seriously hurt the team. Lay off Roberts for a while."

Horsey bristled. "Are you trying to tell me what to write?"

"No," Bancker retorted, a hint of sharpness in his voice, "I'm telling you what it's unwise to write."

HORSEY wrote no further details of Trim's coming glory—but the damage had been done. Men who had taken their knocks and had won their varsity places only after prolonged and consistent effort, resented the assumption that any freshman, untried on the big squad, had merely to take off his vest and step into the line-up. Goodwin, who had been elected to captain next year's team, tried to stem the tide of resentment.

"You can't blame Roberts for what a newspaper writes," the captain argued.

"Go out and watch this Roberts strut," said Foxen, one of the ends. "He believes every word in the paper. He's taken a crack at you already. Told some of his crowd it was queer the varsity should elect a captain who played in the backfield but had never carried the ball over for a touchdown. Believe me, this boy thinks he's a football authority."

Goodwin flushed. "It's true, anyhow. I've never gone over for a touchdown." There was a faint, almost imperceptible, regret in his voice.

"But what the blamed fool doesn't realize," Rowe, a guard, broke in hotly, "is that every time we get within scoring distance, you call some other man's signal because you think that man's play stands a better chance to go through."

Goodwin's flush deepened. "Oh, well," he murmured, "it doesn't matter." But it did matter. Horsey Mott was stirring things up and so was Roberts. Everything pointed to a mess next September when the squad turned out. In the end Goodwin took his troubles to Bancker.

"Roberts has been fed on a rich diet," the coach said. "He's put on a lot of weighty ideas. We'll have to sweat them out of him."

Goodwin knew what that meant—day after day with the rookies until a player lost his exalted opinion of himself and was eagerly willing to be good. The captain was a little troubled. "If it won't kill his fire—"

Bancker's smile was dry. "You don't know this fellow's kind of fire, Good."

And so, when the varsity candidates turned out early the following September, the coach gave no sign that he expected anything from a blond freshman who nonchalantly awaited an assignment.

"Over there with Mr. Tyndal, Roberts," he said, and Grandon's blond comet joined the awkward squad.

There were chuckles among the veterans. Tyndal began a lecture on the proper way to tackle, and Roberts yawned and stared up at the sky.

"Roberts!" Tyndal said sharply.

The boy waved a negligent hand. "Don't worry about me. I've heard it all before."

Five days later, elevens were formed and began to get a taste of the science of running, blocking, and breaking through, but the star of last year's freshman team remained with those who were painstakingly going over the rudiments.

On that fifth day Horsey, who had come to the field every afternoon, approached Bancker.

"'Gene," he asked, "what about Trim Roberts?"

A pulse in Bancker's neck began to throb. His eyes were little and hard. "Well, what about him?"

"Why—nothing." Horsey went down the field stabbing at the soft ground with his cane.

THAT afternoon Bancker posted the first cut. Every man still fooling around with Tyndal's squad went over apprehensively to read it—every man except one. Roberts merely gave the coach a mocking smile.

"Nice weather for exiles, Mr. Bancker," he said pleasantly.

Bancker knew that "sweating" had failed. Trim's egotism, his belief in a star of destiny, were too strong and lofty to be punctured.

"Refuses to be disciplined," the coach confided in Captain Goodwin. "Blandly holds out a platter for what he wants." The coach was silent a moment. "I've got to give it to him," he added. "He's a good enough player to be entitled to a chance. I'll throw him into one of the line-ups on Monday."

And on Saturday Horsey Mott's signed column of sports chat carried this:

> Why is it that an undeniably strong and powerful player is sometimes frozen out? Is it because a coach, long used to hero worship, is afraid that a rising star may eclipse his glory?

The pulse beat again in Bancker's throat. Goodwin was aghast.

"You won't use him now, Coach?"

"Yes," Bancker said slowly, "I'll use him. This will make it look as though my *(Continued on page 56)*

Barrett drew up his sleeve, and abruptly plunged his hand into the second bowl.

The Second Bowl

By Ray Cummings

Illustrated by Ernest Fuhr

ABOUT an hour before midnight, Sergeant Monk telephoned us from an apartment in the Fifties, off Fifth Avenue. There had been a burglary—a commonplace affair, he said, of the sort that frequently occurred about the city. But this one had a peculiar feature; Monk thought that Reed Barrett would be able to help him.

"I'm going with you," I announced as Barrett swung himself lithely into his overcoat.

From his six feet plus, he grinned down at me, a twinkle in the keen eyes that lit up his lean, brown face.

"I wasn't going to try to get away without you," he assured me.

Shorty, Barrett's devoted little hunchback manservant, was already getting out the big sedan Barrett commonly used for outside calls. Soon the three of us were off in this special car that was both a decidedly comfortable means of transportation and an ingenious traveling laboratory, for it had been fitted out with a folding table, racks of chemicals, test tubes, a microscope with its light, a Bunsen burner with a small tank of gas under pressure, and other useful little pieces of apparatus.

We pulled up at the curb in a quiet cross street, before an apartment house. Monk was waiting at the front entrance.

"Good of you to come, Barrett," he said. "This is a queer affair—come on up."

We left Shorty in the car. The place was what is termed a "walk-up" apartment house; there was no attendant at the door and no elevator. We went up one flight. Two apartments occupied the entire second floor. Their front doors were side by side; one was marked "Wallen" and the other, "Foley." It was easy to see which had been burglarized. Holes were bored around the lock of the Wallen door; the lock was askew and broken, with marks showing where a jimmy had pried it out; chips of wood and sawdust lay on the floor.

We went in. The big apartment had been pretty thoroughly ransacked. The three bedrooms and the dining room had been turned topsy-turvy. Bureau drawers had been pulled out and their contents scattered about. A bedroom desk stood with its drawers open, its papers scattered. In the dining room, linen had been hauled out of the buffet drawers and then flung to one side. The larger pieces of silverware had been left, but smaller pieces were missing, Monk reported.

"Routine job," he commented. "We have lots of them—you can't do much about them, and this fellow left no finger prints."

Monk's finger-print man was in the rifled apartment. The members of the Wallen family were now in next door with the Foleys—Monk had sent them there. The Wallens had been out for the evening. There were three in the household: Mrs. Wallen, a rich widow; her twenty-five year old nephew, Charles Blake; and a housekeeper, Mrs. Peters. The Foleys had discovered the burglary about ten-thirty P. M. and had telephoned at once for the police. And since then the Wallens had come home to find their apartment in this uproar.

"Where's the peculiarity in the case?" Barrett demanded. "This certainly looks usual enough. Have you a list of what was stolen?"

MONK produced a hastily written list of articles the Wallens had found missing—a few small pieces of inexpensive jewelry; a carved ivory paper knife and two or three other trinkets of that sort; and some solid silver knives, forks, and spoons.

"A hundred dollars would cover these things," said Monk. "This fellow wasn't much classier than a sneak thief. He broke in, searched in a great rush for what was small enough to stuff in his pockets— and then beat it in a hurry. But I'll show you the peculiar part—come into this bedroom."

We were in the living room—a big room, rather too lavishly furnished. It was crowded with furniture, pictures, and draperies; moreover two globes of goldfish stood on a table by a window, and two large cages of canary birds hung from brackets. Monk took us into Mrs. Wallen's bedroom. In there, was a big mahogany desk that the burglar evidently had searched in a hurry. Monk pressed his finger against a panel of the desk, a secret drawer sprang out. In this tiny receptacle we saw lying a small chamois jewelry bag.

"Mrs. Wallen left a valuable solitaire diamond ring in this bag," Monk said, "and also a string of imitation pearls. She says the pearls are worth about ten dollars —but the ring is worth fourteen hundred."

With that, Monk opened the bag. There was nothing in it but the string of pearls.

"That's the peculiar part," he said. "The ring—the only thing of real value in the apartment—is gone! Now you know, Barrett, that burglar never found this hidden drawer in all his rush. And if he had, wouldn't he have taken the bag and all?"

"I should think so," said Barrett.

"He would. Why would he stop to theorize that the pearls were phony and that he might as well leave them? Why would he? He wouldn't."

"You mean," said Barrett, "that someone else who knew about the ring—"

"Exactly! Grabbed this chance to get it and blame it on the burglar."

"I get you," Barrett agreed. "That changes things, doesn't it? Your idea is that the ring might be hidden around here now?"

"Why not?" Monk was very earnest. "Forget this professional crook—he's gone for good, unless we happen to pick up some of the stuff when he tries to dispose of it. This ring business is different. Fourteen hundred dollars is concerned—and it's an inside job with the thief right here."

"Have you said anything that would show you don't

believe the burglar took the ring?" Barrett asked.

"Not a word. I thought you might make a quiet investigation, might stumble onto some clue. You're good at that sort of thing." Monk smiled. "I had an idea we might locate the ring, might nab the thief—it's one of these people, I'm convinced. I'd like to turn in a report of a case like that."

I said, "If someone in the family—"

"Or the family next door—the Foleys," Monk interrupted. "They're in on it, too. It's like this: The burglar evidently made no noise. But at ten-thirty Foley had occasion to go out. In the hall he saw at once the broken Wallen door. Couldn't miss it. He and his wife rushed in here to see what had happened—then rushed out and 'phoned the police—me."

"So they had a chance to get the ring," reflected Barrett. "Did they know about it?"

"They evidently did. Mrs. Wallen says they did. They also knew about the secret drawer—she showed it to them once. But here are two more facts to be considered. About 10:45, Mrs. Wallen's housekeeper came home. And some fifteen minutes later Charles Blake, Mrs. Wallen's nephew, you know, came in. I've been talking with them all—you know how confused people get in reporting a thing like this—and I'm convinced any one of them had a chance alone in here, with all the excitement there was going on. Mrs. Wallen herself got home from the theater just as I was arriving here. She thought of her ring first thing—took me to the desk and we found it gone."

"Let's go talk with that crowd in the other apartment," drawled Barrett.

We found them all gathered in the Foley flat. It was a duplicate of the Wallens', but not so well furnished. The burglary was being discussed excitedly. Mrs. Foley was evidently repeating in detail how she and her husband had discovered it. We found the Foleys a plain, middle-aged, good-natured looking couple. The man was a big, heavy-set fellow, with a red, jolly face. His wife was fat and dowdy-looking, clothed now in a dressing gown.

"All I care about is my ring," Mrs. Wallen was saying as we entered.

Monk introduced Barrett. "Now then," said Barrett, "tell me all about it and we'll see what we can do."

Listening, I learned very little more than Detective Monk had already told us. Mrs. Wallen had been the last one to arrive at the scene of the burglary. Obviously each of the others had had an opportunity to abstract the ring and hide it.

I studied these people, as I knew Barrett was studying them. Mrs. Wallen was a large, fat woman of about fifty, flashily, expensively dressed. Her housekeeper was much older—seventy at least. A very small, frail woman with gray hair and a wizened face. She said little, but she seemed rather more refined than her mistress. The nephew, like his aunt, was expensively dressed. He also was fat, an overgrown chap with a beefy moon face. But he seemed likable enough, and he expressed great perturbation at the loss of the ring. Everyone seemed to take it for granted that the ring went with the burglar. Certainly they all seemed innocent enough. Was one of them a thief?

Only on one point did Barrett question them. "I understand," he said, "that you all knew of the existence of that secret drawer in the desk?"

No one seemed to deny it. Barrett added, "Which of you knew that the ring was there to-night?"

Mrs. Wallen looked at her nephew and housekeeper.

Charles Blake said, "I think I remember seeing her put the ring in there."

Old Mrs. Peters said, "I saw you put it in there, Mrs. Wallen. You remember you said to me—"

Foley interrupted, "We didn't know—my wife and I didn't know she had it in that drawer. We never thought anything about it."

"Well, it isn't important," said Barrett casually. He stood up. He was still smiling his friendly smile. "I'd like to look around in the other apartment a little more closely—see if the burglar left any clues—if you'll all stay here, please." He flashed a glance at Monk's assistant. "Mr. Johnson, will you stay with them—we'll be only a short while."

I went back to the Wallen apartment with Barrett and Monk. Barrett said, "We'll have to go on pure assumption. Let's assume one of them took it—unpremeditatedly—yielding to a chance opportunity, a sudden temptation, with only a minute or two in which to hide the ring—"

Monk looked hopeless. "How can you search a place like this loaded with furniture and junk? Anything small—this ring—why it might be anywhere. Here, or in Foley's apartment, or even—"

"Perhaps the thief still has it on his person," I suggested.

BARRETT shook his head. "Not likely. The instinct, with an amateur crook particularly, is to hide the stolen article. Get rid of it. But this was probably hidden hastily—that gives us a chance."

"The Foleys," said Monk, "might have taken their time, and then 'phoned me."

Monk opened the bag. There was nothing in it but the string of pearls.

Barrett agreed. "But even the Foleys might have hidden it in here—afraid to take it into their own place. Anyway, you can't search their apartment without making an accusation, and observing technicalities I think we'd better avoid at present."

Barrett began his examination of the Wallen premises. He went carefully over each room, not looking for the ring, apparently, but for some clue to guide him. Monk and I silently followed.

Just once Monk broke the silence. "There didn't seem to be a thing," he said to me. "But Barrett's pretty sharp—if there's any clue around at all—"

We had reached the living room when an exclamation from Barrett brought us to him. He was kneeling on the floor. "Look at this! Here's something!"

We bent over him. On the polished hardwood floor, under a small table was a small rug rug. "Come down here," said Barrett. "See here—the rug's wet. Here at this corner. Water has been spilled here."

"Water from what?" Monk demanded.

But Barrett was busy. "And look at this!" Under his magnifying glass we saw on the damp area of the rug a few flakes of green slime.

"Algae," said Barrett. "Green slime from the goldfish bowls. And there are fungus spores here also. Someone recently spilled water from those bowls. You can't miss it."

The glass bowls of goldfish were on the table directly overhead. We stood up to examine them. There seemed nothing unusual about them. Both were filled to the brim with water. The familiar green growth that Barrett termed algae was on their inside surfaces. At the bottom were pebbles, in which a few sickly green sprigs of aquatic plant were growing; and in each globe two goldfish were swimming about. An electrolier also stood on the table. Barrett lighted it.

Monk began, "If water from here got spilled—both bowls are absolutely full—"

"I'd say," said Barrett, "that somebody spilled water from one, and then filled it up again to hide the discrepancy. And wiped the spilled water away. There's none on the floor—only in the rug, where it was overlooked. And none on the table—see how clean this linen is?"

The table cover under the goldfish globes was spotlessly clean, but I noticed that it lay slightly askew. "Looks as if a fresh cover had been put there in a hurry," I suggested.

"Correct," said Barrett. "So far, it's all obvious. The water was spilled recently, or it would have evaporated and the algae down there would be dry. And an effort was made to hide the spilling; that looks like evidence of guilt. Perhaps the ring thief—"

Barrett was bending close over the goldfish globes as they stood under the strong light from the electrolier. As he paused abruptly, I saw his face break into a grin.

"Well, Monk—how simple! Look here!" He pointed to the gravel that lay a half inch deep at the bottom of the globes. "Here, in this one—here we are! See those pebbles? The algae growth coats most of them a trifle on the upper surface, which is exposed to the water, of course. But look at this little patch of pebbles over here!"

There was an obvious difference. The pebbles in the spot to which he pointed showed a much cleaner upper surface!

"Those pebbles have been turned over recently," said Barrett. "Why? Well, I'd say the thief happened to think of this as a hiding place for the ring, a place that no one would be likely to discover. Wouldn't you? The ring's here, Monk—right under those pebbles!"

BUT Barrett made no effort to reach in and see if the ring were actually there. Monk reached impulsively, but Barrett stopped him.

"Easy! Don't touch that water!"

The pebbles certainly had been disturbed in one place. Barrett took a lead pencil, probed down gingerly, and moved the pebbles. The ring was there! He exposed a segment of it so that there could be no doubt, and then carefully replaced the pebbles. Monk was surprised—all of us were—at the suddenness with which the search had ended.

"Let's have the Foleys and the Wallens in," Monk urged. "We'll question them—see if we can't get a line on who hid it there."

But Barrett shook his head. "Any one of them could have done it. Suppose you play your cards and get no results?"

"This means it wasn't the Foleys?" Monk asked.

"Probably, but not necessarily. If they were afraid to hide it in their own apartment, they might figure they'd have some future opportunity to abstract it from here. This is what happened as I see it. The thief impulsively decided to hide the ring in this second bowl. Probably it struck him as such an unusual hiding place that it would be safer than any other. So, without deliberate reflections, he reached in and poked the ring under the pebbles with his fingers. But the bowl holds only a gallon of water,

(*Continued on page 48*)

Detective Mac

By Hubert Evans

Illustrated by Frank E. Schoonover

ED SIBLEY had thought that when he had delivered the Quartz Creek gold shipment to Devon, the mail contractor at Summit City, he would also be relieved of the weighty sense of responsibility that had kept him nervously alert during the ten days and nights he mushed and camped along the mountain trail. But that evening, as he sat in Devon's cabin with a receipt for the consignment securely buttoned inside his shirt pocket, he found himself still vaguely worrying.

"Ding it all, Mac," he exclaimed, disgustedly tossing to the table the magazine with which he had been trying to divert himself. "There must be a hoodoo in those two yellow bricks. They've got me jinxed for sure."

Mac, his big Husky-and-Newfoundland leader, flicked one ear in a polite show of interest, stretched his great legs luxuriously, and rolled to warm his other flank in the glow of the wood heater near the door of the log-walled room.

"Advisin' me to take it easy?" Ed grinned. "It's a good tip. You worked as hard as me to get the stuff here safe and now you say to forget about it. Trouble is, I'm not as sensible as you. Us humans get ourselves all gee-ed up and then—Hello! Mac—you hear something?"

Even before Ed's ears had caught the brittle crunch of feet on the packed snow outside the door, the big lead dog was on his feet. Had Derry, Ed's Airedale, been in Mac's place he probably would have barked a challenge and stalked to the door to confront boldly the man whose step he did not know. But during all those grim months when Mac, alone, had roved the uncharted mountain valley which was his birthplace, he had been both hunter and hunted and he had learned the value of surprise. So it was that the next instant, when in answer to the brusque knock Ed shouted "Come!" the strange man who stood in the black oblong of the doorway did not see the giant dog in the shadows near the wall.

After the semi-darkness the man seemed confused by the white glare of the gasoline lamp on the table. "Guess I hit the wrong cabin," he began. "You aren't Devon."

"Never claimed to be," Ed smiled. "Step in anyhow. This is his place."

"Thanks, but I'm looking for Devon himself. Oliver's my name—fur buyer. They tell me he's got some pelts to sell."

STILL the stranger, reluctant to enter, did not see the black and white watcher in the shadows. "I'll look in later," he was saying; and Ed, knowing that because of the yellow treasure in his keeping Devon had planned to sleep in his office at the store that night, was framing some noncommittal reply when he heard a solid snap of teeth—a sound as startling as if a steel trap had been sprung somewhere in the cabin. He saw the man draw back his arm and grip the edge of the door as if to hurl it shut against the dog who now openly faced him.

"Lie down, Mac," Ed yelled angrily. "What you tryin' to celebrate? He isn't used to town," he apologized. "Sorry if he gave you a start."

"Nothing to speak of. Didn't notice him, that's all. Well, anyway, you tell Devon I'm ready to talk business with him. So long for now."

"You're a bit too cocky, mister," Ed chided his great Malemute when the stranger had gone. "You're not in the hills now; so better lay off that scrappy stuff. Folks don't like it—savvy?"

Mac yawned nonchalantly under the reproof. Then, as he saw Ed pick up the magazine and cross his moccasined feet on the corner of the table, he lay down beside the stove, rested his heavy-jowled muzzle on his forepaws, and curled his brush along his flank.

But he could not drowse again. The memory of the man who had disappeared into the night filled him with a persistent, growing restlessness. For the dog, there had been some hidden craftiness in the eyes that, from under the safe shadow of the hat brim, had quickly scanned the roughly furnished room and had dwelt for a significant instant on the two rifles on their pegs above the table. Without conscious purpose Mac rose and prowled about the cabin, his blunt claws tick-tacking on the worn linoleum. Ed ignored him until, after prodding his master's knee with his muzzle, Mac stalked to the door and scratched it, asking to be let out. Then Ed, absorbed at last in his story, left his seat and complied with the mute request. Quietly Mac slipped out. Under the spell of his adventure story, his master gave little thought to the dog who, from the moment the door closed behind him, began to be drawn into the plot of a drama more sinister and compelling than the one Ed read in the warm cabin—a drama that within a half hour was to rouse him to its ghastly reality with a shout out of the night—a shout of: "Get here quick! Your dog's tryin' to kill a man!"

"Look, Ed," he said, not unkindly. "Take an old man's tip and clear out."

ON the snow-packed planks outside the cabin door Mac stood and faced up wind, sniffing with muzzle high and ears laid flat against the chilling sweep of air. Above the blurred line of mountain tops Orion—that swashbuckling constellation—strode in the avenue of sky between the broken curbs of peaks. A myriad of stars danced there, lost step, and fell into step again. Night clogged the streets of the raw town.

Slowly, as if the squat buildings had been part of some difficult hunting ground, Mac began to work up wind. He started down the deserted road, whose frozen ruts had been swept bare of snow, toward the darkened railway station. Where the tracks ran east and west the dark had thinned a little before the baleful eye of the switch lamp, but everywhere else—ahead of him, across the flat, up the sidehills to the sky—night had triumphed.

The big leader did not trot carelessly as an idle dog would. He stopped frequently to sniff the hurrying air currents, to listen, and with head low to peer through the gloom. To-night in this little frontier town Mac was hunting with all the cold method he had learned to use in the days when, before he gave his allegiance to Ed Sibley, he had coursed the game trails of the mountains. The intuition which had warned him at the cabin door now drew him on to find and stalk the strange man.

The north wind thrummed the taut telegraph wires above him, sometimes boldly plucking them to discords, sometimes muting them to plaintive minors. The weird music told him nothing, but as he neared the solid hulk of the water tower, he stopped with one forefoot held high and head outthrust. Prying and pulling among the hewn props and braces of the tower, the fingers of the wind had drawn out shreds of the man-scent he sought. From the eastward an angry wail rolled down the valley as the west bound midnight freight whistled on Dome Mountain curve, but the dog seemed not to hear it as he edged closer to the black core of the tower's shadow.

A moment later his stealthy approach brought him to the origin of the scent—a suitcase hidden behind the woodwork of the tower. Fresh tracks led away from it and Mac, intent and watchful as before, started along them, followed them until they disappeared on the windswept road. Back to the cabin they led him; then they turned into the alley between the hotel and the store of the Devon Trading Company. At the end of that alley he stopped, his hackles rising, his body tense as a coiled spring. By the warm outrush of air he knew that the small window above him was open. Then, as he waited, he heard the mumble of a strange human voice inside.

Though no scent of the speaker reached him, though his only evidence was that oddly grating voice from the blackness inside the open window, Mac felt that evil was afoot. Devon was a friend of his. During the rests between mail trips Mac had become familiar with the routine of the store and now, through a window he had never seen open, there came a voice which was not the voice of Devon.

THE whistle of the west bound freight was blaring out again; its headlight was boring a tapered tunnel through the dark between the singing rails. Slowly, warily, a leg was lowered over the sill. Like some gigantic avenging cat Mac leaped. His teeth clipped together as he missed his mark. The leg withdrew. Then, while the freight came to a grinding stop at the water tower, he heard that grating voice again, a metallic click, and the tones of another voice—abrupt, commanding.

"Stow that gat. You want to wake the town?" With swelling rage Mac recognized this second voice as belonging to the stranger who had faced him at the cabin door. Even as a growl bubbled from his throat he saw the outline of Oliver's head and shoulders. "We got to

Mac stood and faced up wind, sniffing with muzzle high and ears laid flat against the chilling sweep of air.

lay that hound cold," Oliver warned his accomplice. "I'll handle him. If I don't make the freight, get in touch with me soon's you can. Come on now."

Mac heard the thud of running feet inside. After one vain leap he knew he could not pass the barrier of the window. Seeing the back door shut, he rushed around the building in time to see the big front door swing open and two men step hastily into the V-shaped entrance between the show windows.

"Run for it!" Oliver ordered as the jangle of the locomotive bell told them the train was ready to start. Then, as Mac confronted them in the entrance, both men rushed. A startled short-clipped yelp of pain came from the dog as Oliver, in the lead, dealt him a smashing blow with the pick handle he had taken from the rack inside the door.

"Lay him out," the grating voice urged. Then Mac and his assailant were alone. But even as the red haze of battle rose before his eyes, clouding his senses and numbing him to all except a deadly intentness on his principal foe, the odd quality of that voice registered itself deep in his consciousness.

Oliver, anxious to get away from the store, advanced with desperate boldness. The big dog backed away from him, and the man came on, exulting already over his victory. But it was strategy, not fear, that made Mac yield; for he knew that in the narrow entrance he could make only a frontal attack—as a young dog in an Indian village he had more than once defied a man with a club. He circled and Oliver, running now, was brandishing his club when, opposite the hotel door, Mac charged again. And this time, true as a wolf leaping to the kill, his fangs gained the hold they wanted.

Staggering, whirling in a frenzy of fear, Oliver fought to free himself. But in the strength of that plunging body, in the relentless grip of those jaws, he read the horrible truth. He was trapped and at the mercy of this dog who meant to kill him. He lurched, sent the pick handle spinning out into the deep snow along the road, then screamed for help. Even as the hotel door flew open Mac brought him thudding down. Two men rushed out and struggled desperately to break the big dog's hold. "Hey, Sibley!" one of them shouted toward Devon's cabin. "Get here quick! Your dog's tryin' to kill a man!"

NOT until Ed, filled with ghastly apprehension, seized him did the enraged leader seem to realize what he was doing. Even after Ed had him clear of the prone man he tried to renew the attack the instant he saw his enemy regain his feet. Although Oliver was almost breathless from the constricting clutch upon his throat, his muffler and the overcoat buttoned close under his chin had prevented Mac's fangs from finding his bare flesh.

"Jest stepped out to see if Devon was home yet," Oliver gasped. "You fellows saved my life. That dog's a man-killer."

A man-killer? In consternation Ed remembered the words of the old Indian from whom he had bought Mac. "Some day his chance come—then he kill," the native had predicted and as Ed, still tussling with the angry dog, followed Oliver and his rescuers toward the hotel he thought fearfully that to-night the prediction had come perilously near fulfillment.

"You only got to report it to the police," one of the men assured Oliver. "Critters like him ain't safe to have around."

"You bet I'll have him shot," Oliver promised.

Only when Ed heard the threat did he grasp fully the grim significance of Mac's actions. With two witnesses to prove his accusation, Oliver would have no trouble in convincing the police that Mac was a menace. Why, unless he himself lied, he would have to give evidence against his staunch comrade of the trails, would have to confirm Oliver's statement that he had seen Mac snap at him at the cabin door. Almost sick with dread he was telling himself that he and Mac must turn fugitives, must be safely into the hills before dawn, when above the diminishing rumble of the freight rattling off toward Division, three revolver shots rang out in quick succession. The signal of distress! Even as Devon's shout for help reached him, Ed was racing toward the store. And when he heard the trader's account of how he had been stunned, gagged, and bound while the gold shipment was stolen, a fierce exultation seized him. From that instant he was positive Oliver was the thief and that Mac, like a ghostly avenger, had discovered him and dragged him down.

During the next hour things happened quickly in that night-wrapped mountain settlement. A Mountie came on a speeder from detachment headquarters at Twenty Mile, examined Oliver, and announced him to be a bona fide fur buyer. Then Devon said that Oliver was not the man whom he had glimpsed fleetingly before he was knocked out. Swiftly the conviction grew that, in spite of suspicious circumstances, Oliver was not the robber. Moreover, Oliver, a persuasive and convincing talker, missed no chance to increase that fast-growing belief among these straight minded mountain folk and to turn attention back to Mac.

NO less than his master, Mac sensed the increasing hostility. In the big room of the hotel as he stood in leash beside Ed, he listened to the talk and understood something of the meaning in those unfriendly eyes about him. Erect and watchful, his glance never wavered from Oliver, for though he did not understand the man's words he knew there was deceit and cunning in his pose. With no suggestion of contriteness about him, the big dog of the wilds stood there, always with his eyes on the enemy—the man whose very presence there was a maddening lie. Once when Oliver spoke loudly a threatening growl rumbled in his throat.

Ed, with the weight of opinion against him, regretted that sound of unwavering hostility, for he knew that Mac, the only true witness of the night's happenings, was playing into the hands of his enemy.

"See here, young fellow," Oliver blurted out angrily, "you know that dog's waiting his chance to kill me—you saw him try to get me at the cabin. I'll give you a last chance. Either you get him out of town quick or I'll have him shot. Take your choice."

The man's cold insolence blinded Ed to all consequences. "I'll believe my dog before I believe you, Oliver," he rapped out. "He says you're a crook. Well—that's good enough for me. Get me?"

At this, his master's first open show of hostility, Mac would have leaped forward to renew the battle had not Ed, recovering himself quickly, laid a restraining hand on his shoulder. Oliver, sure of his position, sneered and shrugged. The hotel keeper interrupted the murmur of disapproval at master and dog's belligerence by stepping toward the door and beckoning for Ed to follow him. "Let's talk outside, Sibley," he urged.

"Look, Ed," he said, not unkindly, when they and Mac were outside, "Oliver's got you and Mac right where he wants you. I've nothing against Mac, but—take an old man's tip and clear out."

"And leave him here to brag? Not much!" Ed retorted hotly.

"If you stay he'll have the dog done in. Nobody knows what really did happen here to-night and chances are nobody ever will. But Oliver can talk and Mac can't. Anyhow, a dog's evidence won't go far in a court of law. I know how you feel, son, but take my advice and go."

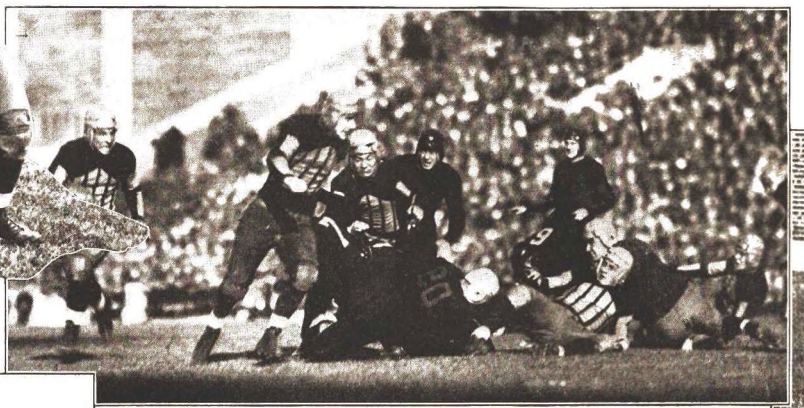
(*Continued on page 26*)

Here's How It's Done!

Bob Zuppke's Big Ten Champions

Study these pictures if you want to know how to play winning football. They were posed especially for you by the

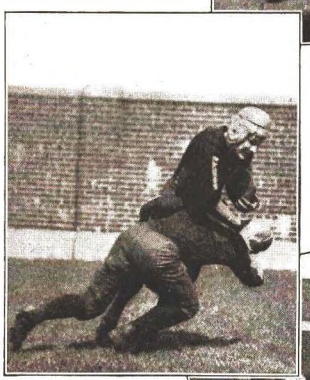
To pass right get your fingers around the ball, back of the middle. Carry it far back and whip it forward like you would a baseball. Jud Timm, speedy back, shows you how.



Action! Jud Timm, star Illinois back, is skirting Chicago's left end, with Russ Crane, All-American guard, as his personal interferer. Nowack, third Illinois player from the left (the Illini may be identified by the light canvas strips on their jerseys), is about to throw himself over Number 7 of Chicago, who is attempting to recover after being partially blocked. Timm is carrying the ball as though he meant to keep it, and running in good form. And he's ready to use that stiff arm at an instant's notice!

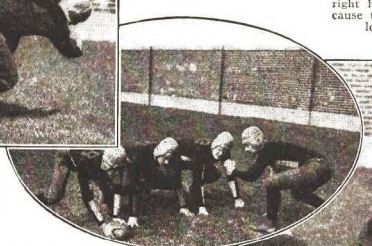
Photo by *Chicago Herald & Examiner*

If catching punts is your job, take a lesson from Humbert. Keep your eyes glued on the ball. Hold your hands so that you can guide the ball to your stomach. Brace your legs to start the moment you catch the ball.

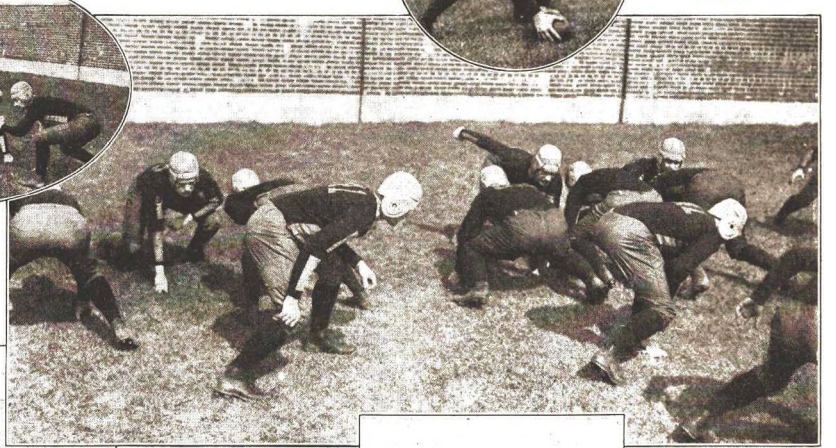


Fred Humbert, smashing Illini fullback, is a hard, sure tackler. Here he illustrates how to bring down your man when you charge at him from the side. Drive low in order to get under that stiff arm. Throw your body across the path of the runner. Pull his legs together and drop him to earth. A moment after this picture was snapped, Humbert had his arms tight around the runner's legs. The force of the tackle carried the pair a yard to the left!

At right—Captain Bob Reitsch, All-Conference center, shows you correct stance. Weight evenly distributed so that you can charge instantly after the pass. Have your right hand forward and under the ball because the right hand does the passing. The left hand merely guides the ball.



Here's the correct crouch for center, guard, and tackle. Low, but not too low. Weight evenly distributed. Every man looking at the ball. The blocky defensive tackle is A. J. "Butch" Nowack, captain of this year's fighting Illini. He's got one hand up, ready to use it as he breaks through.



At left—Ward off that would-be blocker with your stiff arm! Notice the defensive back's right hand on the side of the blocker's head. By deflecting the head, he can turn the whole body. But he shouldn't have both hands on the blocker. One is enough. And the blocker should be looking at the halfback's thigh, because that's his objective.

Above—Here's the start of a play in which two men—guards—leave the line for interference. Notice the holes left in the line as they pull out. They're already in full stride, running low, and they'll turn up the field at the point of attack, running shoulder to shoulder. The stunt of using linemen for interference is becoming increasingly popular with good teams. On trick plays you sometimes spread your backfield men so that they are no longer in position to give interference. The linemen can do the job. But there's danger in using linemen for this purpose—the danger that you'll leave your line open. The picture just opposite shows you how to overcome the danger.

At left—This is the way to hold the ball at center for a spiral pass. Place the right hand forward and well under the oval. Spread the fingers. In reality, the spiral is a one-handed pass. You throw the ball with the right hand and merely guide it with the left. *Don't* lean with too much weight over the ball or you'll not be able to pass with a free, easy, arm motion.

At right—Here's Humbert getting his man from the front. The viciousness of his tackle has carried the ball carrier off the ground. He's deprived the ball carrier even of the small gain that would come from falling forward. The runner is clutching the ball with both hands to avoid a fumble. That's important! No matter how hard you're tackled—no matter whether you gain or lose ground—keep possession of the ball!

Get Out and Try It!

Show You the Best Way to Play

University of Illinois' Big Ten Champions under the personal supervision of Assistant Coach Milton M. Olander.

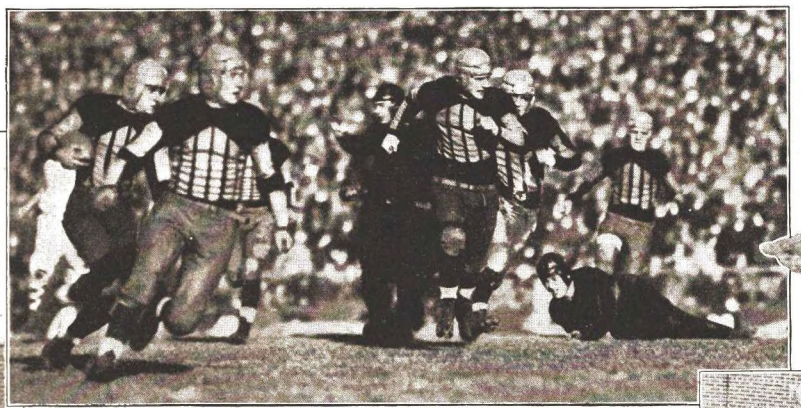


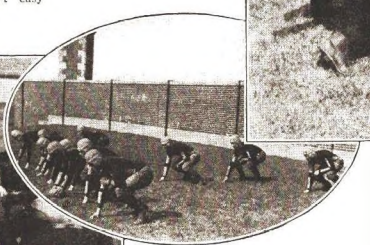
Photo by *Chicago Herald & Examiner*

Speaking of interference, F. H. Walker, Illinois, has plenty! Fred Humbert, directly in front of him, is his personal bodyguard. Russ Crane, All-American guard, and Cecil Perkins, tackle, are swinging over to join the advance guard. Even A. E. Wolgast, left end, is crossing over to the line of attack. Few runners can gain ground alone. One reason Illinois men gained high yardage last year was because every man on the team was alert to help his mates.

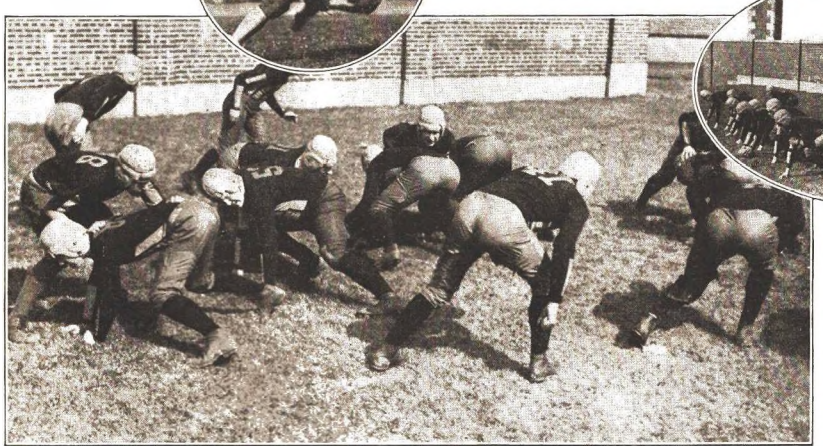
Get your hands on that pass!

Follow through—right up into the air—if you'd add ten yards to that punt! K. E. Fields, halfback, has put all his energy into this boot. Notice that his toe is pointed.

At left—Practice changing direction. Garland Grange, brother of the famous "Red" and a star in his own right, isn't easy to tackle.

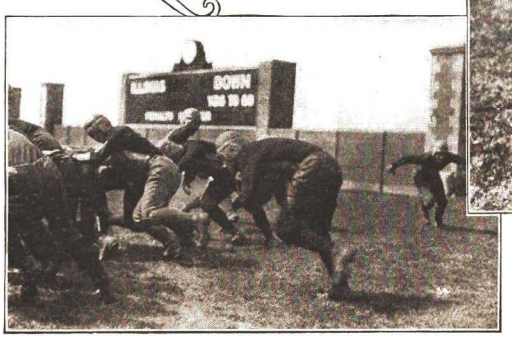


If you want to block a troublesome defensive lineman, team up! Charge into him low, one from either side, and keep your weight forward so that you can follow up with hard, determined driving. In that way you'll force the defensive man completely out of the play. When you're on the defense, don't ever be caught in so upright a position as the player in the picture.



All set to slant off right tackle! Every back has his eyes on the ball. Each is crouched, ready to start. Note that the line is unbalanced—two men on the left of center, four on the right. Notice, however, that the right end is in a faulty position. With his weight pitched forward on his hands he's unable to charge quickly or with power.

Above—This is the second stage of the "guards out" play, taken an instant later than the opposite picture. The offensive center and right tackle, by swinging around, have blocked those gaps in the line. But the center—at the extreme left of the picture—isn't blocking in good form. His shoulder should be against the thigh of his opponent and he should be in position to follow up his charge with hard leg driving. Now glance at the defensive back near the center of the picture. He's moving toward the point of the attack. Behind him races the offensive left end who will attempt to block off the back before he reaches the point of attack. In every play, there's a job for every man. If he falls down on the job, the play fails to go through. Here, if the center and tackle fail to swing around and block the holes, or if the offensive end fails to go after the defensive back, the play might flop. If a team is to gain ground, every man must fill his assignment!



Forty yards or better this time! Point the nose of the ball up to insure a high, long spiral.

At right—Fred Humbert is starting a fullback smash in this picture. Last year, in actual competition, he averaged better than five yards for every time he carried the ball! He goes in low, but his head is slightly raised so that he can pick his hole. Both arms are on the ball. This type of hard-hitting, heads-up football is the kind that wins games. The interfering back in front of Humbert should be running lower and looking straight ahead.

Mark Tidd in Sicily

By Clarence Budington Kelland
Illustrated by Dudley Gloyne Summers

MARK and I slipped along through those dusty Sicilian fields till we came to a place where we could see the road to Taormina, and there stood our two cars and the two bogus drivers we'd escaped from. They were gesturing and jabbering fit to kill.

"L-look at 'em!" says Mark. "They're p-part of the p-p-plot against John P-peter all right."

"And the plot," I says, "is getting too thick to be pleasant."

Here's how things were. Mr. Tidd and we four boys had come to Sicily to see the sights. Then at Taormina we'd scraped acquaintance with John Peter Sense and his guardian, Mr. Grecco. Mark did the scraping. He was curious about John Peter because we'd seen a man shoot two holes in John Peter's hat and then skedaddle.

He scratched upon the window and spoke in a voice of fear.

But John Peter couldn't guess why anyone should want to shoot holes in his hat. He hadn't any enemies in Sicily, he said. His parents were dead and he'd always lived in New York City with his guardian, and they'd come to Sicily to see the sights, too.

Well, we were all seeing plenty. It was plain that a dark Sicilian mystery, maybe something the Maffia was mixed up in, was tied up somehow with John Peter.

First he'd been shot at. Then he'd been spied upon by a little hunchback. And someone had left a black-magic thing in his bureau drawer—a lemon stuck full of pins. Donna Vanna, the wise old woman we'd gone to with the lemon, had said charms over it to make John Peter safe, but we got the idea that she knew a lot about him he didn't know himself, and that he was anything but safe in Sicily, charms or no charms.

We liked Mr. Grecco, but we knew he was holding out on John Peter, "wailing for the proper time to come" before he told him things.

Then Mark and I had visited the gardens of the Duke of Rendazza, and there we'd caught sight of the little hunchback hobnobbing with an aristocratic, unpleasant looking man with a pointed beard. He wasn't the duke, we knew, because the old duke had just died and there was a mix-up about who should be the new duke; so there wasn't any yet. But we suspected the spike-bearded man of somehow being in the plot against John Peter.

And we'd just seen one more man who knew things about John Peter. That was the fine looking old fellow who had been so solemn when he came on John Peter exploring the town of Rendazza with us. It was plain he was sorry John Peter was in Sicily at all.

I was sorry about it myself when we had to pile out of our cars on the way back from Rendazza to Taormina and pretend we wanted to hike clear off across the fields in all that dust. Mark made us do it. He'd seen that somewhere they'd switched drivers on us, and he suspected that our new drivers were out to get John Peter.

It looked like it to me, too, now that Mark and I had left the others and sneaked back to see what the bogus drivers were doing. They were certainly all het up over something.

Finally one of them set off to follow our tracks. The other one stayed with the cars. He was the man for us to get. But I didn't want him.

"I'LL BET," says I, "he's loaded down with stilettos and all kinds of stabbin' gadgets. He's sure one of those Maffias."

"M-mebby," says Mark.

"We dassen't tackle him," says I.

"Hain't got no intention of t-tacklin' him," says Mark.

"What then?" says I.

"Wisht I knew," says he.

"It can't be done," says I.

"It kin," says he. And then, "You go s-s-sneakin' back and tell the folks not to pay no attention to n-noises they hear unless there come three hoots like an owl. Then they're to come hyperin' here as f-f-fast as they kin leg it. And you come right b-back."

"What you goin' to do?" I says.

"And f-f-fetch an orange. I guess Pa's got one in his pocket. He m-mostly has."

"You're always hungry," says I.

"I don't cal'late to eat this one," says he kind of dry. "Git a wiggle on you."

So I went and told the rest what Mark said, and came back again as fast as I could. I didn't want to come back and get mixed up in what he was going to do, but there didn't seem to be any good way to get out of it. And I couldn't very well leave him there alone, could I?

When I got back he was sitting like a bump on a log, and he grinned and says soft and cautious, "Git the orange?"

"Yes," says I.

"Got your s-s-sling shot?"

"Sure."

"S-slip down that way about t-two hundred feet, and let him have it," says Mark. "Don't l-let him s-see ye, but l-let him have it, and then count ten slow and l-let him have it again."

"What'll you be d-doin'?"

"I got a s-sling shot, too," says he. "Don't be scairt by no n-noises you hear."

"What noises?"

"Any noises," he says. "Now git."

I got and found a good hiding place a couple of hundred feet down the road, and settled myself and got out my sling shot. I had some ammunition, too, and I got on one knee and took aim at the Sicilian's hat.

Though I say it as shouldn't, I'm about as good a shot with one of those things as there is in Michigan, and when you say that you cover a whole lot of territory. The shot hit *plop* right on the band of his felt hat and 'most knocked it off. He jumped and turned, and then I guess Mark must have let go because he clapped his hand to the seat of his pants and let out a yelp and jumped the other way. So I counted ten and give him another belt; and it was on the elbow where he kept his funny bone. But he didn't seem to see anything funny about it. He seemed to want to turn four different ways at once, and was most pulling himself to pieces trying to do it. And then Mark let fly another, and then I clipped him on the back of the hand, which is a tender spot, and Mark soaked him on the knee-cap.

AND THEN I heard a horrid kind of screech that most froze me solid. But I guess it kind of froze the Sicilian, too. I never saw a body get so stiff or have his eyes bulging out that way. Then I gave him another shot, and there was another screech.

Then I saw something drop in front of him and roll, and it was yellow, so I knew it was Mark's orange. Right on top of that came another scream, and the Sicilian took one good look at the orange and didn't wait for anything, but set off to find somebody who was a long way off and was in a hurry to see him.

He jumped the wall without ever touching it and disappeared among the lemon trees. Then Mark let out three owl hoots and I made for him.

"J-jackknife," says he.

"What for?" says I.

"P-puncture the tires of the last car," he says. "Don't waste time. I'll start the front one."

I went at it and haggled some holes in the tires and out came the air, and I called over to Mark, "What was the idee of the orange?"

"Just to cap the climax," says he.

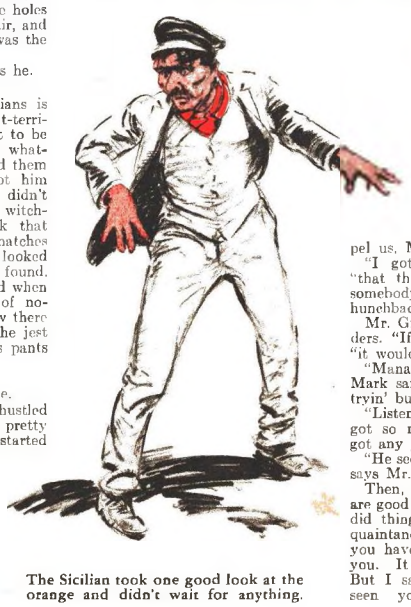
"What climax?"

"Why," says he, "these Sicilians is pretty superstitious, and this t-territory around Mount Etna is apt to be full of spooks and witches and what-not. So them shots of our'n and them screeches must 'a' kind of got him perty scairt. But maybe he didn't think it was the Evil Eye or witch-craft or something; so I took that orange and poked it full of matches and pins and everything till it looked a lot like the lemon John Peter found. I made bad magic out of it, and when he see that come rollin' out of nowheres right to his feet, he knew there was evil spirits and magic; so he jest took hisself by the seat of his pants and went away."

"Huh," says I.

"Here come the rest," says he.

And so they did. Mark hustled them into the car and it was pretty crowded I can tell you, and we started off lickety-split. Mark was driving, and maybe he was a good driver. But I didn't like the way he did it, and there were times when I had to give him some advice about turning corners on two wheels and such-like. He didn't pay any attention, though, but kept on as fast as he could go.



The Sicilian took one good look at the orange and didn't wait for anything.

We didn't know the roads, but we did know the general direction we had to go in and so we couldn't go very far wrong. We passed through a couple of towns and pretty soon we came to the railroad and the water, and then we turned to the left, and there, up on top of its hills, was Taormina. And you can bet we were glad to see it. We drove up to the hotel and got out and asked Zambo where Mr. Grecco was, and he said he was in the garden. So we went there and found him on a bench.

"Ah," says he, "back again, are you?"

"But we wouldn't have been," says John Peter, "if it hadn't been for Mark Tidd," and he went ahead and told his guardian all about it, and Mark put in and told how I helped do the shooting.

MR. GRECCO didn't let his face change a bit, not to look mad or worried or anything, and all he says was, "It ended fortunately. We are indebted to you, Mark Tidd."

"Say, Mr. Grecco," says Mark, "who is the big old man that looks like a lion that everybody in Rendazza's so p-polite to? And who says a thing like this: 'The Donkey-lifter is a bold man. There will be big trouble and grief, and things will happen that might have been averted.' Who's sich a man, Mr. Grecco?"

"A large man with white hair? Broad of shoulder and with a head like a lion? Ah. . . . Once I knew such a man—and he was indeed a man." He nodded his head. "Yes, Mark Tidd, you have seen a man. Do not forget him."

"I hain't likely to," says Mark. "What's his name?"

"He is called," said Mr. Grecco, "Cola the Rock-breaker."

"I bet," says Mark, "he could do it with his fists."

"He was not unfriendly," said John Peter. "He acted as if he were sorry for something."

"He is not unfriendly; neither is he friendly. Cola the Rock-breaker walks the middle road; nor does he turn to the right nor the left without reason. But when he turns *with* reason, then a thing happens that men remember."

"I bet you," says Mark Tidd, "he'd g-give a feller a square deal."

"He never acts hastily. But even the most just man may be blinded by plots and lies. Yes, even Cola the Rock-breaker cannot always know the truth by looking at it with the naked eye."

"It l-looks to me," says Mark, "like John Peter better stay p-perty clost to home."

Mr. Grecco nodded. "And fifteen years is a long time," he said slowly. "In fifteen years men might forget."

This was meat for Mr. Tidd. "Fifteen year hain't nothin' a-tall," he says. "Why, I recollect plain things that happened a couple thousand year ago. That's hist'ry. I don't figger anythin' important ever was for-got. It gits wrote down, or it gits handed down from mouth to mouth. No, siree, fifteen year hain't more'n the tickin' of a clock."

"It would seem," said Mr. Grecco, "that you are right. It might have been better to have waited another ten years. Then men might have died and their recollections with them. But it could not be so. One must move when he must move. If we could always pick the hour to suit ourselves! But we so seldom can. Events compel us, Mr. Tidd."

"I got an idee," says Mark, "that things 'ud go smoother if somebody was to squash that hunchback."

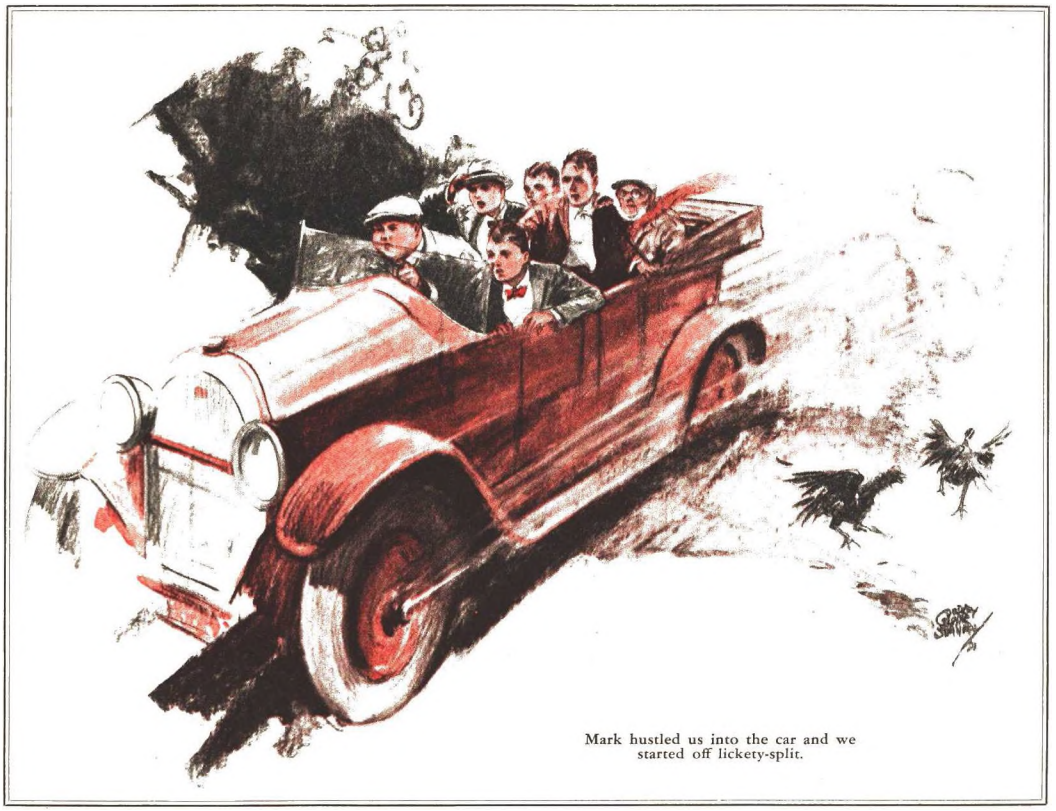
Mr. Grecco shrugged his shoulders. "If it were not he," he said, "it would be some other."

"Managin' the lost dauphin," Mark said with a grin, "must be tryin' business."

"Listen," says I, "if John Peter's got so many enemies, hasn't he got any *friends?*"

"He seems to have found some," says Mr. Grecco.

Then, rather solemnly, "Friends are good and friendship is a splendid thing. But you boys are acquaintances of a week. For what you have done I am grateful to you. It has been providential. But I say to you: if you have seen your fill of Taormina,



Mark hustled us into the car and we started off lickety-split.

go to Syracuse or Palmero, and go without delay."

Mark blinked and kind of moved his nose around in circles like he can do if he wants to. Then he says, "Some folks is interested in s-s-scenery and some is all excited over r-ruins."

"Yes," says I, interrupting him, "but all you're interested in is gittin' into trouble."

"Or gettin' out of it," says he.

"Friends of John Peter's," says Mr. Grecco, "are more likely to get into trouble than out of it."

"It seems to me," says Mark, "they'd be l-less apt to git into trouble if they knew jest what kind of t-trouble was layin' around."

"Even John Peter doesn't know that," said Mr. Grecco.

"I been p-puttin' two and two t-t-together," says Mark, "and I cal'late I know considerable. But things don't t-tie up. I can't jest see my way clear."

"Nor can I," says Mr. Grecco.

"What I can't git through my head," says Mark, "is how John Peter got recognized here. . . . Unless it was you bein' with him, Mr. Grecco, and you was recognized and f-folks drawed conclusions from that."

"I think it goes back further than our visit here," Mr. Grecco shook his head gravely. "But one cannot tell."

"I think," says Mark, "I kin understand why the man with the p-p'inted whiskers is after John Peter, but when men like the lion-lookin' feller in Rendazza pops up, then I git confused. This here is a plot that goes back a long ways."

"A very long way," says Mr. Grecco.

"And the m-more I think of it," says Mark, "the more I think that big old man was right."

"In what respect?" asked Mr. Grecco.

"When he says the Donkey-lifter was a bold man."

But Mr. Grecco only smiled and looked off across the gardens at the mountain.

Chapter Twelve

"THE WAY it looks to me," says Mark Tidd, "is this: If suthin' hain't done to s-s-stop it, these here enemies is goin' to git John Peter sooner or later."

"They're bound to have luck sometime," says I.

"So," says he, "the only way to s-save his bacon is to git right to the s-s-source of things. We got to know *why* enemies are tryin' to git him, and jest who they are."

"Sure," says I. "But we don't understand this Sicilian language, and how we goin' about it?"

"John Peter talks it," says Mark.

"I bet you," says I, "that old Donna Vanna could tell a heap."

"Binney," says Mark, "there's times when you ain't a dead loss. We hain't h-half p-p-pumped that old lady. Let's git John Peter to talk the l-language and go see her."

So we banged on John Peter's door and he came out and Mark said to come on for we were going to make a call. So he came, and we walked down to Donna Vanna's house.

She was sitting in front, and got up and brushed her lap and kind of smoothed her hair and made a sort of courtesy to John Peter.

"A good day to you, Mother," he says.

"May Saint Pancratius have you in his keeping," she said, "and may the Sacred Beheaded Dead guard your steps in this rocky place." Then she stopped and smiled kind of knowing. "I was expecting you," she says.

"How could you expect us, Mother?" says John Peter. "We didn't know we were coming until a minute ago."

"There are those who know what you will do before it comes into your mind to do it," she said mysteriously. "Ohe! I hear your steps on the stones in the night. I know it is the steps of the one called Giovanpietro. Three nights I hear them; so I know you will make yourself to arrive."

"Ask her why she calls you Giovanpietro?" says Mark.

"Because," she says when this was translated, "it is the custom to speak to a person by his name."

"But that is not all my name," says John Peter.

"Many people," she said, "own two names—as some wealthy persons own two donkeys, or two fields. What would you? Your American name I cannot make my tongue to speak. . . . But tell me, is it the truth, or is it a lie, that in America there are buildings as high as Etna?"

"The buildings are very high, Mother, as high as the Hotel Timeo piled upon itself fifty times. . . . But I have not two names. My name is John Peter Sense."

SHE SMILED slyly. "If you convince yourself of that," she said, "then why do you come to me? I am a wise woman; my wisdom is not for those wiser than myself."

"Your pardon, Mother," said John Peter. "We come to sit at your feet. We ask; we do not tell."

"That is well," she said, and nodded her old head eight or ten times. "There should be a proper respect for age. And I am very aged." She acted as if she was pretty proud of this. "There is none on the whole island who has greater age than I."

"Nor greater wisdom," says John Peter, and she liked that and grinned so we could see what teeth she had left, and it wasn't many. "Will you tell me the other of my two names?"

"I think," she said, frowning. "I remember the years—the years before you were born—and before your father was born—and before *his* father was born. It is well to take all the truth and lay it side by side before one says this thing or that thing."

"We're in no hurry," says John Peter.

"The Donkey-lifter has told you nothing?" she asked.

"Nothing."

"Not the reason for your coming, nor what you are to do?"

"No."

"Caution is well," she said, "but sometimes too much caution is as bad as too much rain for the crops. It brings ruin."

"Yes," says John Peter.

"I have no son," says Donna Vanna, "which has been a great grief to me. If I had a son he might send me from America a machine to lay eggs so there would be no need to keep hens."

"There is no machine to lay eggs, Mother. The machine only hatches chickens from the eggs."

SHE considered this. "I do not think the saints would convince themselves that such a birth was of Heaven," she says calculatingly. "Nevertheless it would be very useful."

"I think, Mother, you would rather have a dress of purple brocade than a machine to hatch chicks. Such a dress you shall have. It is a present."

"If I speak," she says crossly, "it is without presents. Nevertheless, the neighbors would envy such a dress. It was purple brocade you said?"

"With button shoes of shiny leather."

She sighed contentedly. "No," she says, "I had no son, but I was mother to a daughter—who is dead—and she was mother to a daughter—who is also dead. I live. I was the strong one of the family." She eyed us proudly.

"And the handsomest in your day, I'll bet," says John Peter.

"If you make sport of an old woman," she says, but not angrily, "you will awake with a twisting pain in the bowels."

John Peter laughed and picked up her hand, but she, with a kind of a fierce gesture, lifted his fingers to her lips and kissed them.

"Because," she explained, "the daughter of my daughter was first to touch you when you came into this world. Ohe! It was but the day before yesterday —and such a running about. And the old man was pleased, for the family would continue. It is well to be assured the family will continue." She nodded her head a number of times. "Families are important things."

"Yes, indeed," says John Peter.

"But there was one who was not pleased," says Donna Vanna, "and there was a serpent in his heart. Because, if you had not been born, the whole would have been his when the old man died and when your father died."

"But my father was a young man," says John Peter.

"Nevertheless," says Donna Vanna, "he died."

SHE STOPPED there and would say no more for quite a few minutes, and then she sighed and says, "And now the old man is dead, and the Donkey-lifter brings you here. And I convince myself that it is better to live in America and have one name than it is to have another name in Sicily and have an evil happen to one."

"That," says John Peter, "is wisdom."

"Because," she says, "it is not easy, even with the aid of the most powerful saints, to kill a lie that has lived for fifteen years. A lie with the age of fifteen years becomes almost the truth."

"And this lie?" asks John Peter.

"That," she says, "is the very meat in the nut."

"Did this lie kill my father?"

"As if it were a knife fresh from the whetstone," she says.

"And it will kill me?"

"You have seen what you have seen," she says simply.

"Then," says John Peter, "you must teach me how to kill this lie."

"Ask her," says Mark, "if your other n-n-name is Giovanpietro Cenci?"

John Peter asked her, and she stared hard at Mark, and says:

"Who is the Fat One? He is over young for much wisdom. Yet how does he know this thing?"

"You'd be s-s-surprised," says Mark with a grin, and she smiled right back at him and nodded her head some more. "Ask her," he says, "if a man with pointed w-w-whiskers that walks in a g-garden overlooking the s-sea is the one that m-made up the lie?"

Again she looked at Mark when the question was translated to her, and she blinked her eyes and says, "Do the ladies tell you these things? Do they come to dance in your room by moonlight?"

"N-nothin' dances in my room," says Mark. "I jest f-f-figgered it out from s-seein' him and the Crooked One together, and from p-piecin' together this and that."

"All wisdom is a kind of magic," she said. "Good wisdom is white magic; evil wisdom is black magic."

"But what," says Mark, "has the old man in Rendazza that looks like a l-l-lion got to do with it?"

She frowned at him now. "Say to the Fat One," she says, "that now he approaches dangerous matters."

"I bet you I know," says Mark.

"There are times to speak and times to be silent," she said.

"But where is my mother, and why was I taken to America?" asked John Peter.

"She died upon the dreadful night," said Donna Vanna, "and you were carried away in haste and secrecy that one surely of the blood should be left alive. . . . Because it was an order that none who wore the name and bore the blood should live."

"The man with whiskers l-lived," says Mark.

"For that there was a reason," says Donna Vanna.

"And the old man l-lived—the one that was John Peter's grandfather."

"Because he was rich to hire guards, and because he traveled in distant lands, and because it was not to the interests of such a one as you know of that he should die." She stopped there a minute. Then she went on, sort of slow:

"Not only," says Donna Vanna, "did the father of Giovanpietro die, but a lie clung to his memory. A lie believed by many. It was said that he was a traitor."

"To whom?" says Mark.

"To those to whom it is not wise to be a traitor if one would live to be of great age," says Donna Vanna.

"And there is a s-s-sentence of death against John Peter because his f-father was called a traitor?" says Mark.

"It is the truth."

"But that was f-f-fifteen years ago. Would the s-sentence be carried out—if the one with the pointed whiskers did not mix himself up in it?"

"Who knows?" she says. "Memories are long and vengeance is hungry."

The hunchback came into the room and stopped suddenly when he saw us and scowled as black as ink.

"I don't b-believe it would be," says Mark.

"For what reason do you believe this?"

"Because I talked with the old man who looks like a lion. He said there had been no orders."

"Orders," she said, "were given fifteen years ago. Those who carry them out to-day are only obeying. There would have to be other orders contrary to the first. And those could come only if the lie were proved to be a lie."

"Then, by golly," says Mark, "we got to prove it. Can you help us, Donna Vanna?"

"Not on this day. But I shall consider, and you may come again."

"I'm sure we're m-m-much obleeged," says Mark, and then he turns to John Peter and says, "Come along, Your Grace."

"What's the idea?" says John Peter. "What are you Your-Gracing me about?"

"Because," says Mark, "it's c-c-comin' to ye."

"I thought I was the lost dauphin," says John Peter, and he chuckled.

"You was, for gen'ral p-purposes," says Mark, "but now we got to git down to b-business. No, you hain't the l-lost dauphin, but you be the Duke of Rendazza."

"Like the mischief I am," says John Peter.

"Ask her," says Mark, and John Peter turned to Donna Vanna.

"Is it true that I am the Duke of Rendazza?" he asked.

She nodded. "The Fat One speaks the truth," she says.

Chapter Thirteen

WELL, you never saw anybody in your life so flabbergasted as John Peter was when he realized that he wasn't just a kid that had gone to public school in America and played baseball and everything. And when it sunk in on him that he was a duke he didn't seem happy a bit.

"Fellows," he says kind of slow and serious, "I don't know that I like it."

"There hain't no need for you to w-w-worry yet," says Mark. "You got to git to *be* a duke. I mean you are one, but you hain't got none of the doo-dads that g-goes with it. For all p-p-practical p-purposes you're nothin' but a kid. Till we l-lick the enemy and p-put you on the throne, or whatever it is that dukes sit onto."

"But I'm not sure I want that," says John Peter. "I haven't been raised that way. Maybe I'm Sicilian, but I feel American. I'm used to it and I'm used to thinking American. So I don't think such an awful lot of dukes. It seems to me I'd rather be just a fellow."

"No reason," says Mark, "why you can't b-be b-both. I been kind of th-thinkin' it over, and seems to me there hain't nothin' discreditable about b-bein' a duke. The title is kind of fancywork and all, but a duke that's a good duke ought to have a perty good j-job. Now take you: If you cut off this here t-t-title what is the Duke of Rendazza? He's jest a big f-farmer, with f-farms and l-lemon groves and whatnot. Now nobuddy objects to bein' a farmer. Anybuddy 'd druther be a big f-farmer 'n a little one. So, as near's I kin make out, the Duke of Rendazza wouldn't be nothin' but a f-farmer with a lot of t-trimmin's that might be fun."

"Maybe," says John Peter, "but the idea's sort of hard to get used to."

"I'd be willin' to try it," says I.

"You'd b-be a swell lookin' duke with them f-f-freckles and that n-n-nose," says Mark.

"I've seen worse," says I. "You can't be called a beauty yourself."

"There's been f-fat *kings*," says Mark. "Lots of 'em are that way. I b-bet I l-look more like a king than you do l-like a duke."

"What you look like," says I, "I shan't mention because I don't want to fight."

"The question is," says John Peter, "what'll we do now we know?"

"Talk to the D-d-donkey-lifter," says Mark.

SO WE WENT back to the hotel and found Mr. Grecco talking to Mr. Tidd about Roman history and fishing and how to half-sole shoes, and toggle joints and internal combustion engines and lemon groves and camels. It was kind of a hit-or-miss talk from what I could make of it, but they acted as if they were enjoying it; so it wasn't anybody's business.

John Peter he waited for a chance, and then he pipes up, "We've just been to see Donna Vanna."

"Ah," says Mr. Grecco.

"And she recognized me," says John Peter.

"Helped some by Mark Tidd," Mr. Grecco says, kind of grim.

"I done s-s-some g-guessin'," Mark says as modest as a violet.

"So," says John Peter, "I know who I am, and I think it is only right I should be told all about it."

Mr. Grecco he thought a minute, and then he says, "I think the time has come. It was as well you knew nothing until now—nothing of your parentage, or of why we lived in America, or why we came here at this time. But you are old enough and have common sense to act in accordance with what I tell you."

"Thank you, sir," says John Peter.

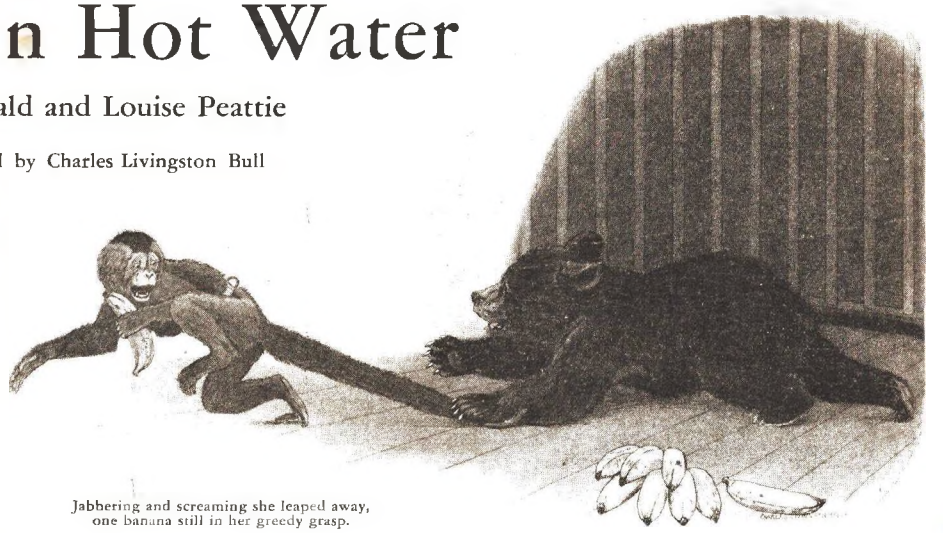
"You are," says Mr. Grecco, "the Duke of Rendazza. It was your grandfather who just died. The villa on the hill below, with its beautiful gardens, is yours. The great estates inland are yours. Our purpose in coming to Sicily at this time was to establish your identity and to come into possession of the title and the property."

"But why is someone *(Continued on page 61)*

Hunks in Hot Water

By Donald and Louise Peattie

Illustrated by Charles Livingston Bull



Jabbering and screaming she leaped away, one banana still in her greedy grasp.

HIS mother told him not to. His mother, Old Hunks, the lone bear of the cove of Lost Bride Falls, had told him in gutteral, terse warnings that he was too small a cub to tackle that bee's nest. But in the fat, furry belly of Young Hunks was more greed than there was wisdom in his small, square head. Accordingly, while his mother, sitting on her haunches against a great rock, her padded feet outthrust to the cool running water, her snout sunk on her chest, dozed in the warm sunlight of a Carolina spring, the cub pattered around the rock and out of her sleepy gaze. Then under cover of the uproar of the waterfall that filled all the gorge with cool music, he scuttled as fast as short legs would carry him to the foot of the sourwood tree. There among the high branches where the blossoms spilled in spikes of silvery bells, the bees of Lost Bride had hung their castle and fortified it with their own irritability.

It was the sudden roar of the disturbed nest, rising high above the eternal falling of the water, above her young one's anguished yelps, that put life in the great, lazy hulk of Old Hunks and sent her scurrying to the sourwood. There, high up in a crotch, sat the cub, pawing with impotent little fists at his eyes and ears and nose, curled up like a ball, while around him the inmates of the torn nest swarmed and roared and vented their rage in fiery torment. An old bear, on a bee-hunt, plans his campaign; if he cannot, being high in a tree, run for water, he takes the stings on his thick hide, and so far from relenting in his destruction of the hive, keeps steadily on, well knowing that when the bees discover that their citadel is fated to fall, they will suddenly quit its defense and try each one to fill his pouches with what honey he can salvage before the enemy claws the golden treasure all away.

But Young Hunks, being Young Hunks, and having that dangerous thing, a little knowledge, had surrendered at the first attack on his tender muzzle, and now, stung to unendurable torture, his agonized grip relaxed and he fell, clutched, struggled, and fell—plop on his mother's great soft bulk. Mother and baby scuttled for the pool at the foot of the waterfall, and there, plunging into the cool depths, sending the rainbow trout flying in a shimmering school, they shook off their tormentors.

Not that the affair ended there. Unfortunately the little thief in his first wild grab had torn into the honey cells, dug out one pawful of the sweet store and gobbled it down. And as the luck of Young Hunks would have it, the mountain aconite was in flower upon the meadows. The poisoned honey that would in time have worked a dark ill upon the hive proved instead the instrument of their revenge. Young Hunks was exceedingly ill.

He got over it—soon enough to have regained full measure of his calamitous curiosity when one tranquil twilight evening he met a skunk family out for a stroll. But that is a tale better left untold!

SO it was, by saddening ventures and hairbreadth escapes, that Young Hunks blundered through to the fervid heat of a southern July. By noon, when the sun had reached long fingers into the deep gorge, even between those ferny walls the air danced in a heat maze; yet always was there coolness in the spray of Lost Bride's waters. There Old Hunks would bask away the hours, sprawled in the hot sunshine, just within reach of any misty shower blown from the falls by a casual breeze, contentedly watching her cub as he rolled at her feet, playing in miniature fury with a pine cone or a big oak gall. This was happiness for Old Hunks, by the cool pool, in the hot sun; this was life. Lost Bride was her undisputed domain; her one treasure, the furry tumbler on the rocks, was beside her; life was good. And out of such a sunny hour she would rise, and amble heavily to the tall sycamore that leaned over the falls, and rearing on her haunches would make her mark in a long, proud claw-gash upon the blotched bole.

But the fatal luck of little Hunks shattered their paradise. On a day when the bees bumbled drowsily in the horsemint, when the sun glinted with a metallic brilliance on the rhododendron leaves, when the old she-bear lay dreaming, in her cave behind the falls, of the great days of her youth before men came to Brushy Mountain and drove the bear-lords to such shy retreats as this—on this last day of happiness Young Hunks went wandering again.

With a gleam in his buttony eyes, panting a little in the noonday heat, he pushed through the laurels that laved in the brook all the way down to the mouth of the gorge. Never before had he ventured so far, never had he guessed that a greater world lay beyond the ravine's steep sides. But when he penetrated the dense shrubbery at the glen's mouth, he came smartly out upon a little lumbering encampment—two tents pitched, and a dozen or so of mountain men come for the white pine that was dusky on these virgin slopes.

Peace was on the camp, in the long languor of afternoon, and Man and his ally Dog were at their siesta. Snores rumbled gently forth from under the shade of the trees where the long, slack mountain figures lay moveless, and the dogs beside them dreamed, head on paws, only their noses still awake.

But Young Hunks had come upwind, and undiscovered he stood staring until interest got the better of his native fears. Then he ventured out of the rhododendron, nearer. Bear-like, he was directed not so much by what he saw as by what he smelled, and his hopeful nose led him to the pile where cans and scraps of food were dumped in an unsightly mass. He sniffed at meat tins and empty bean cans, and wrinkled his rubbery muzzle over rinds of fruit, and then to his delight he discovered a molasses can! He inserted a small snout, licked with an ecstatic tongue, and at last, greed growing, tried to drag the can from the pile.

Cling, clang, clatter! The pile tumbled about his ears; in an instant the dogs were up, and baying, and the cub, with the can still on his nose, scuttled with all speed for the deep heart of the gorge.

With no thought, such as an older bear would have had, of throwing his followers off the scent, with no thought but to get home to mother, Young Hunks dashed through the undercover, scraping off the blinding tin can as he went. After him came the clamor of dogs and the strange and terrifying cry of human throats. For the lumbering men, rested from labor and bored with tranquillity, had sprung joyously to the hunt, after one glimpse of that scuttling rump disappearing up the leafy ravine.

OLD HUNKS, in her happy dream, had never missed the adventurer. To her, in the gloom of the cave, came the sudden high wail of hounds announcing quarry found. In a second she was up, in a moment more she realized Young Hunks gone, and knew, by the unsleeping instinct of mother-fear, his peril. She clambered with clumsy speed out of the cave.

He was there, breathless and terrified, almost up the rocks, and the dogs were bursting out of cover below the falls. The bears drew swiftly back into the cave, into the safe, sweet gloom of home, and there Young Hunks sank whimpering while his mother loomed above him, big, dark, savage, her little eyes red in the half light, staring out the cave mouth.

In another two minutes the troupe of dogs was at the entrance, yelping, boasting, daring each other to go in, but none caring to take the first leap. Then sounded the shouts of men coming up from below. At that signal the whole pack rushed forward as one, and then as suddenly reeled back. An old hound lay dead in the narrow entrance.

"Whang!" spoke the rifle, and searing light flashed before Old Hunks' eyes, speeding a hot river of pain along her side. With a howl of rage she backed away, and rumbled back down the steep passage to the heart of her lair. Above the reverberation of the waterfall the hunting clamor came to her, and the hated smell of man and dog stung her nostrils.

Harried to her ultimate retreat, she sank down, heaving, licking the streaming gash along her side, waiting. Dog or man, she could face her enemy in that narrow passage where only one at a time could enter, and feel confident of victory in the dark encounter. But none ventured in—the hounds were wise, and the men worked in the unpredictable way of human creatures. Old Hunks waited. And by her side Young Hunks trembled, quieting gradually, regaining a measure of his confidence, of his interest even. The afternoon sun, slanting west, reached a pale finger into the cave's heart.

And then, faintly, creeping evilly, a new terror assaulted Old Hunks' nostrils. Smoke! Strange, choking smoke, infernal. In a moment the demon thing was on them, a blazing tar keg rattling down the incline of the cave straight at them. They leaped aside, out of its fiery way, and scrambled up from the back pit, up the steep passage to the perilous mouth. The smoke rolled up around them, stifling, blinding, maddening. The cub was sneezing, rolling on the ground, trying to rub the stinging torment out of his eyes with his paws. Old Hunks coughed and shook her head, and bared white teeth in terrified defiance of the panting dogs that pressed to the mouth of her lair.

SUDDENLY, tortured beyond endurance, the crazed cub bolted out of the cave, into the very jaws of the joyful pack. And then it was that Old Hunks rose to the top of her mightiest rage and leapt out of the cave with a snarling roar, upon the tangle of dogs that wrangled over her little one.

They writhed back, yelping, at the impact, and in that second the cub wriggled out and behind a tumbled cairn of rocks at the cave's mouth. Old Hunks was whelmed in a turmoil of murderous jaws that tore her flesh and clawed for her throat, twenty to one, with the shouts of the men coming closer. But she was a wilderness mother, she was sovereign of this gorge, she was Old Hunks, and the hounds fell broken before the mighty onslaught of her last great rage.

Up the rocks, over the bowlders they struggled, snarling and yapping and biting, up to a big flat rock that hung perilously above the falls. There, as a mountain man ran up, flinging a rifle to his shoulder, Old Hunks shook free of the leaping horde of her tormentors and reared for one instant to her full height, eyes blazing red defiance to the end. The rifle cracked, and the great furry bulk toppled, down, down, through the laughing veil of waters, down to the still deep pool at the foot.

It was so that Young Hunks saw her last, a dark hulk lying moveless with the rippling water lapping at her flank. Half choking in the noose of rope around his neck, half stupefied with terror, he sank down crouching there beside her, whimpering, nosing, while the mountain men gathered in a group to inspect their prey, prodding her with an inquiring boot-toe, lifting her heavy head to let it fall carelessly on the rock again.

"Shore is a right pretty pelt, that," said one with satisfaction, and the others chorused laconic agreement.

But the rawboned boy who held the cub jerked at him by the rope noose. "A live bear cub's better'n a dead old 'un," he exulted. "An' I reckon this'n's all mine, all right. 'Twas my dogs got him out o' them rocks."

Jocularly they made over all claim to the cub. Young Massy was a favorite with the lumberers, a smart hand with the accordion and a cheerful one to help his bet-

ters. "A growin' cub like that'll eat up every cent goes into your jeans," they warned him.

"Won't git a chance, this'n," Lem Massy predicted knowingly, and then with another choking jerk Young Hunks was dragged away, away from the kind old furry side, from the protection that had guided him through his short life. At least he did not have to see the lumbermen's skillful stripping of the pelt from the worthless carcass of the dead she-bear.

The lumbermen were noisily glad to break camp next day and trek back to the one-street, no-railroad hamlet that was "town" to them. There luck awaited Lem Massy and his bear cub—good luck for Lem, and for Young Hunks his usual variety. Twittyville was astir with excitement; all down its one street banners flapped in the breeze, lettered with incredible legends, and in the little grassy mountain meadow at the village end were pitched two round tents, dirty but gaudily bannered, and three or four brightly painted wagons stood at rest with their tired shafts nosing the ground.

Upon a more usual occasion, Lem might somewhat have stirred the sleepy town with the advent of his bear cub, but now there was no interest left for him, as he stood with his dejected captive in the halter at his side, while he drank up the posters blazing in the noonday sun outside the quiet tents.

"MAGINNIS' MAMMOTH SUPER-SPECTACLE! Ten Cents, Only a Dime for the Side Show!"

"See BERTINI, The Handcuff King, Who Has Been Shackled by Chiefs of Police in All the Principal Cities of the World!"

"BAMBOOLA, the Last of His Race!"

"MME. MILO, Snake Charmer of the Orient!"

"Daring Acrobats, Jugglers, Wonder-working Miracle Men, Uproarious Clowns!"

"Come One, Come All!"

OVERHEAD, in the polished sky, a buzzard tilted lazily, swept the incongruously crowded meadow with its floating shadow, and soared away again. Nothing sounded, save the creak of a rocker, and now a few bars of hymn tune, quavered high in a nasal camp-meeting soprano. And then a man came suddenly out of the tent flap, and stopped, his derby on the back of his head, surveying Massy and the cub.

Massy shifted from one foot to the other, and grinned, embarrassed. Young Hunks lifted his head, and looked up with hopeless misery in his eyes. This was only another of these terrible, unpredictable men-beings, with their stifling odors of tobacco and leather, with their loud voices, their startling abruptness. The talk of Massy and the man Maginnis, their movements, the passing of a greenback between them, all was meaningless to Hunks. Only it was Maginnis now who dragged him, choking, by the rope.

As they came around the tent a woman, rocking in an old red chair upon the humpy ground, rose, put down her knitting, and looked down at Hunks over spectacles. He looked up, and the misery in his shoe-button eyes found an answering kindness in the woman's brown gaze, a kindness that reached even to his bewildered bear heart. She spoke, and put out her hand, and though her words to her husband were only human noise, when she spoke to Hunks, coaxingly, he found meaning in her voice, and ambled timidly two steps nearer. And then she touched him with a hand from which he did not startle, and went and got him a big bowl of bread smeared with molasses, and Young Hunks knew that in this desolate world there still lived mother-kindness.

So it was that the heir of Lost Bride Falls, the last of a line of the lordly and free, came to be the chief exhibit in "Maginnis' Super-Spectacle Menagerie," squatting wretchedly on the floor of his cramped wagon cage under the noisy scrutiny of the mountain people that passed and loitered and passed, always staring, frequently poking, unchanging from town to town through which the caravan went. He had companions in ignominy, it is true, but they seemed to feel it not one whit—not the Japanese dancing white mice whirling idiotically in their bowl, nor the bald old red and green parrot who hid his senile foolishness under the name of Solomon, nor Susie, the trouble-making monkey who had the run of the camp. She was the property and pet of Willie the Wop, who, wandering the Carolina trails with Susie and his organ, had met and joined forces with Maginnis, so that now while Susie fortified the menagerie at performances, the organ wheezed and Willie cried popcorn and crackerjack in a broken Italian tenor. These fellow members of the ludicrous zoo, as well as the careless rough-voiced men, the bear cub heeded not at all, as he crouched in his prison, his little snout sunk on his chest in melancholy meditation. For this misery of Young Hunks loved no company.

Save only the gentle hand, the coaxing voice, of Millie Maginnis. Slowly, carefully, she campaigned to win him, and the loneliness in his little black eyes looked out gratefully to her, and met there—did Hunks in his wild, shy heart recognize it?—a loneliness, an exile's misery like his own. For Millie Maginnis, even when she put on the red silk waist of Mme. Milo and looped about her head strings of beads and around her neck a festoon of logy serpents, was still, heart, soul, and body, mother-woman, hearth-woman. They came to her, the vagrant members of the troupe, and her own scheming, irresponsible, irrepressible, barn-storming husband, with torn clothes or bruised feelings, as she sat outside the tent, knitting in her rocking chair. And when they had gone, mended or consoled, she would cross the little camp to the cage of Hunks and stand and talk to him in a low, kind, unhappy voice, and he would blink and come close enough to feel her hand in his shaggy coat, to remember vaguely the gutteral speech of the old bear who had been his dam, so different, so alike in its power to comfort.

"Seems as if we'd die here, don't it," the woman would be murmuring. "If I could jes' get back to Plainsville, and sit on the porch, and look at the same old fields every day, good'n flat, and know I was *home*."

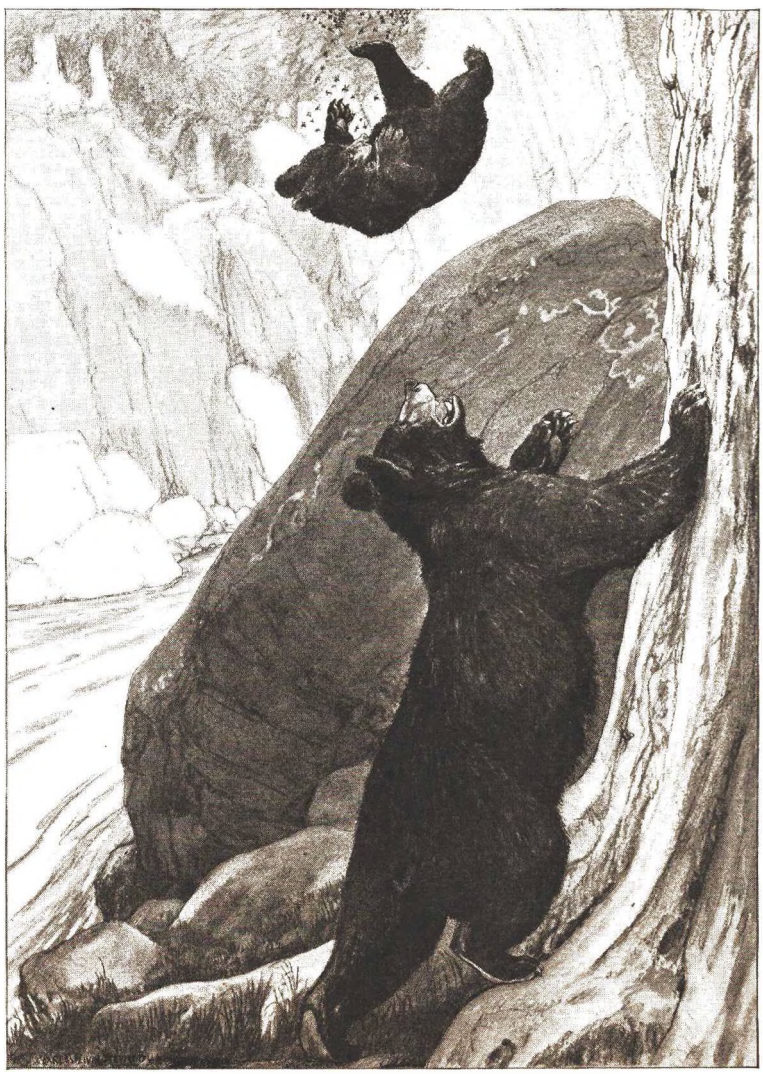
Home! Hunks did not understand that word; only he stood, while she caressed his head, and dreamed of the cool spray of Lost Bride, of its endless murmur, remote, serene, of the old cave hidden at the back of the rocks. And then the organ would begin to wail, as Willie felt a longing for some strains of Verdi to brighten a dull day, and Susie to jabber, and Old Sol the parrot to scream derisively, "Crackerjack! Cracker*jack!*"

SUSIE was the worst, with her prying, snatching little black fingers, for she was thin enough to slip in through the bars of the bear's cage, agile enough to escape his tormented lunges. Summer had passed to fall, fall to the dragging winter, and it was one windy March night, when all the camp was quiet, and only one lamp burned still in the smaller tent where the men were heavily asleep, that Susie came stealing in the dark, to the silent cage that held so much mute misery, drawn by the irresistible odor of bananas.

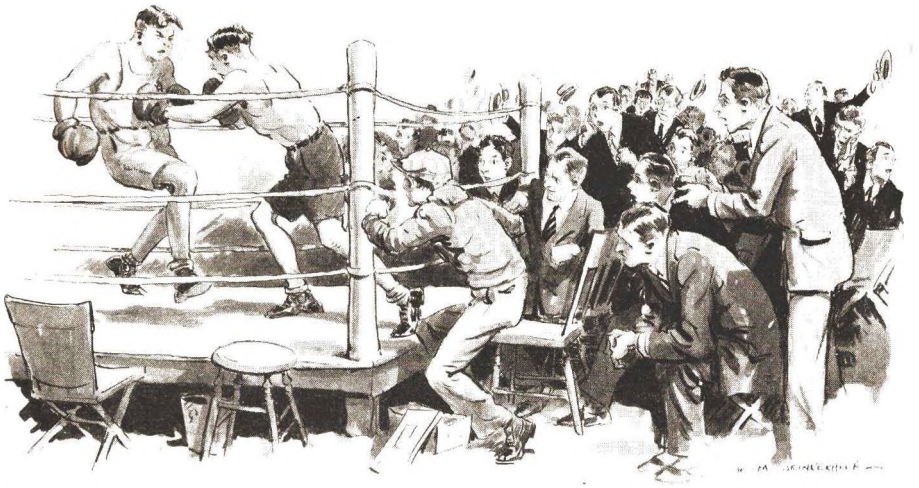
Now Hunks had not only been the object of disparaging curiosity, but he had been submitted to the slow torture, the unhappy disgrace, of learning tricks. Maginnis was a good trainer, and in no way cruel, and truth to tell there came to lie a certain melancholy pleasure for Hunks in his ability to walk, upon his hind legs, to pass the hat, to waltz slowly and ponderously to the strains of "Just a Song at Twilight," played on Willie's hand organ. Not yet had he been put to the test, to the torment of exhibiting these simple accomplishments in the noise and blare of the crowded tent; Maginnis had not yet been sure enough of him. But to-day Hunks had done so well and willingly at practice that Maginnis had awarded him a great bunch of bananas, and had determined that to-morrow, when they should open in a return engagement before all Twittyville, to-morrow Young Hunks, all unsuspicious, should enter the final stage of his degredation from sovereign to clown.

But Susie wanted the bananas. While the tent ropes creaked in the dark March wind, while Hunks lay crouched unsleeping, muzzle on paws amid the scant straw of his cage, Susie came creeping, springing and swinging by little black wrinkled hands and feet, out of the men's tent, in through the bars of the bear wagon. Hunks heard her, scrabbling softly among the bananas, and the heart of Hunks was sore with a great agony of nostalgia. He made one swipe at Susie, and the clawed sledge hammer of his paw caught the tip of her tail. Jabbering and screaming she leaped out and away, one banana still in her greedy grasp, over the dry short grass to the tent where Willie the Wop, her protector, slumbered. Old Sol was there too, drowsing on a tent bar where the long shadows lay, cast up by the kerosene lamp that Maginnis, falling asleep over his newspaper,

(*Continued on page 38*)



Stung to unendurable torture, his agonized grip relaxed and he fell.



The sock that ended the bout came when the first round was just sixty seconds old.

Pignapped!

By Franklin M. Reck

Illustrated by R. M. Brinkerhoff

RALPH PICKENS is incurably athletic. So far, in a little over two years at State College, he has tried out for seven sports, including golf. Six sports didn't need him, but in swimming he won his letter because he carries just enough round, solid bulk to make a good plunger.

And then, just when he was off to a nice, illustrious career in the plunge, the Intercollegiate Committee banished his event. But Ralph refused to be cured.

"I'm going out for boxing," he announced to me.

"Good night!" I thought, looking over his ample lines and his full, pink cheeks. "If that doesn't cure you, nothing will!"

I was with him, acting as his second, on the night of the tryouts. He was matched with Freddy Welch. Their weights were even, but Ralph's 160 pounds were assembled chiefly around the belt, while Freddy's were distributed evenly over the shoulders, arms, and the lank, graceful back. Still, Ralph was hard, and resilient, and I had hopes.

My hopes lived just one minute. During that time, Freddy, flashing an attractive smile, walloped the earnestly perspiring and wildly flailing Pickens with every blow he had ever learned, and a few he invented on the spur of the moment. The sock that ended the bout came when the first round was just sixty seconds old. It was a short jab to the wind, delivered just as my battler was letting out air. The rest of Ralph's wind left him with a grunt, and his gloves dropped to his stomach where they lovingly remained.

Freddy could have hit him with the medicine ball after that, but it wasn't necessary. Ralph was done for the evening—but not cured.

"I'm going to make that team yet!" he declared, earnestly, on the way home. "If Freddy hadn't hit me in the wind, I might have won."

"Sure," I agreed, sadly. There's no use trying to discourage Ralph.

But during the following week, Ralph had little time to think about boxing. Me either, for that matter. We were too busy pressing pants and shining shoes for the initiated members of the Digam fraternity. Ralph and I were just pledges and, along with eight others, we were experiencing the joys of probation week. If we performed all our duties cheerfully, and were successful on the Friday night "crusade," we would be initiated into the fraternity the following week.

We didn't mind pressing pants, but we were doubtful about the crusade. The crusaders went out in pairs before midnight—so much we knew for sure. But we had no idea of what was going to happen to us. Vague tales of past crusades led us to believe that we'd be up all night, traveling over the beautiful, but dark, countryside, encountering enough adventure along the way to last us until we were old men, with gout. But then, those yarns were probably exaggerated.

JUST the same, when Ralph and I stood on the porch of the Digam house on Friday night, dressed in our oldest clothes, listening to Don Cleve—he's our probation chairman—exhorting us not to come back until our quest was finished, something stirred inside of me. A slab of fried fish had taken refuge with me at supper time, and I could feel it nibbling at my Adam's apple. As for Ralph, he was saying, "yessir" every time Don opened his mouth.

"Stick to it until you bring home the bacon!" Don emphasized, and sent us away with a gentle tap of his four-foot paddle.

Once we were started, things seemed kind of tame. Our first orders, written out on a long slip of paper, directed us to the shores of Lake La Mud—that's what we call the campus pond—and our second sent us out north of town. For three hours after that we trotted from one place to another, locating and deciphering the mysterious messages. One o'clock in the morning found us traveling through a cow pasture about eight miles south of the campus. I was sleepy, but Ralph was all pepped up.

"In a way, it's detective work," he was saying. "Reading code messages, making deductions, following clues. . . . You can almost imagine we're out after a gang of dangerous criminals—drawing the net tighter and tighter—inexorably closing in, until we have the knaves cornered!"

"Yeh," I agreed. You might as well agree with a fellow when he gets warmed up that way.

"Hey!" exclaimed Ralph. "There's another party!"

He pointed to the east about a quarter of a mile where three human forms showed dimly against the sky.

"Poor dubs!" I yawned. I wasn't surprised to see them, because nearly all the fraternities on the campus had their pledges on crusades that night.

At two o'clock we were on land belonging to Dean Crossland, head of the agricultural college, searching the orchard for our sixth message.

"Ten miles from home," I gasped, "and nothing's happened yet."

I was tired. Wading through damp grass had soaked my heavy R. O. T. C. shoes, and the chilly air was beginning to penetrate my sweater. I stumbled wearily from tree to tree,

(*Continued on page 52*)

She squealed and grunted, kicked and wriggled, but in less than two minutes they had her safely in the sack.

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Friendly Talks With the Editor

Common Sense

IT is a peculiarity of Common Sense that it doesn't sound like it to other folks at first. Somebody gets a scheme in his head, and other folks like it. Then along comes a fellow who pokes a hole in it with Common Sense and everybody sits on his head. It always works that way. But in about a week some other fellow gets the notion *he* thought of the Common Sense first, and then another and so on until the one who thought up the nonsense in the first place gets aboard the band wagon. Nonsense can't stand up against Common Sense very long. But you have to give folks a chance to think it over, because Nonsense sounds a lot more attractive. So don't be discouraged. Just shoot off your Common Sense and wait for it to hit something. If it is real Common Sense it seldom misses in the long run.

Clay Pigeons

ONCE a lady wrote us asking if we wouldn't start a crusade to stop the cruel practice of shooting clay pigeons. We just mentioned that because we happened to think of it, and because we were shooting clay pigeons up in Maine a week ago. Not a pigeon complained. And a lot of them escaped scot-free. We found the cruelty was to the shooter because we were using a 12-gauge automatic gun with no recoil pad, and every time it went off it knocked us so far they had to send a motor car to fetch us back. It came under the general head of pleasure, and we love the smell of arnica. If you can find any moral in this you have us beaten.

Lazy

IT'S so easy not to work that we wonder anyone ever does it. For two weeks we haven't done a tap. You would think a fellow would have to go to a lot of trouble to get out of working, but you don't at all. All you have to do is pick out a spot and sit on it. It's wonderful. We would take it up as our life's business but for one thing. From now on we would sit and look, maybe, and never move or think a think—if it weren't for just one thing. And that is that we get hungry three or four times a day. We've never found anyone willing to bring us groceries just for the pleasure of the trip. Maybe there are folks who love to work. We hope not at this minute. We despise anyone who likes to work. But here we are working like the dickens just because we'd hate to see a mealtime roll around without any meal in the middle of it. Besides, we have a hunch that by next week, say, we'll be despising people who don't like to work, and wondering why they can't see how stale and flat life would be if there weren't any work to do.

College

ARE you thinking of going to college this year, or perhaps a year from now? Probably a lot of you are, and we wonder why. Have you a good reason for it, or are you going to college because it's the stylish thing to do? Of course, if you're going to be a professional man such as a doctor or a lawyer, you've got to go. But if you're going to be a wholesale grocer or an author or the president of a bank, what can college do for you? The answer is, a whole lot. But you'll have to do your share. If you expect college to give you a broad, useful background of information, if you expect it to give you the sort of training that limbers up your mind and makes you a good judge of men and ideas, if you expect it to give you the friends and experiences that will help you get the poise and self-confidence every man needs—why, go ahead and go to college. You'll have to work for what you want, but you know that. If you don't want these things bad enough to work for them, don't go to college. Why clutter up the campus? College is a great place for a good time, and it should be; but it should be reserved for the fellows who want a lot more than a good time.

Money

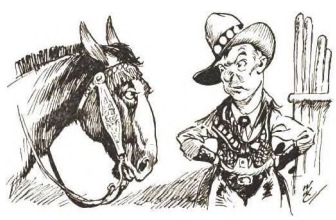
WE had an interesting talk the other day with a man who is almost fifty, who has earned big money all his life, and never saved a cent. He had never discovered there are two kinds of money—Saving money and Spending money.

Laughing

WHAT the world needs most, to our way of thinking, is more to laugh at. There's enough in it now to be serious about. We would like to run for President on a platform that called for Gloom Relief. We claim that every citizen is entitled to a good, deep, roaring laugh at least once a day. And we'll bet the average man doesn't get a ration of a first-class laugh a month. It's all wrong. Everyone is so busy doing something serious about some serious problem that no one takes up this matter of laughing, which is of first importance. Let's get together and do something about it.

Disappointment

EVERYONE is always disappointed. People love to be disappointed. They like to say the circus isn't so good as it was last year; or that it would have been a fine day if there hadn't been mosquitoes; or that it would have been a great meal if only there had been turnips instead of succotash. Nothing ever turns out to be as fine as you thought it was going to be. There's always some drawback. We suggest that everyone be fined ten dollars or given ten days in jail every time he's disappointed. We'd soon have the thing discouraged, and the country would grow great and prosperous.



MEX ADVISES

By EARL W. SCOTT

"Mex," I says, "old pony,
I've a problem tuh propose:
Straw boss an' me, we can't agree—
Shall I bust 'im on the nose?"

Mex just wisely shakes his head,
I laughs an' says, "All right,
As long as I can't hit 'im
An' yuh won't allow the fight,

"I asks yuh, dang ol' buckskin,
What proposal *do* yuh make?"
An' then the little devil
Raised his hoof tuh shake.

"Can't I tell 'im nothin'?"
He nods an' winks 'is eye,
Then lays down an' stretches out
Like when I tells 'im, "Die!"

Fear

WE'VE come to the conclusion it isn't the Fright; it's the Timidity. Almost nobody ever gets really frightened, but a heap of folks are always in a lather from timidity. They're nervous in an automobile and trembly in a boat. They're all crowded up with apprehensions about catching a germ, and they're jumpy about thunderstorms. These things don't scare 'em. They're just timid about them. But what of it? There's nothing we can do about it but mention it and hope for the best. Personally we intend to be just as nervous as ever the next time we get into a car.

Tang

TAKE sundry whiffs of blue smoke and add as much haze as you have handy; mix with gusty bits of breeze and the rustle of leaves and the pungent smell of the first chrysanthemums—and you'll have *tang*, the tang of fall. We like it. We sat out in the garden late last Sunday afternoon with a young fellow just out of college who had dropped in for an unexpected old-fashioned friendly call, and fairly soaked up tang. It was great, and his call was a particularly fine finishing touch. Why don't people make friendly calls oftener? It's that sort of thing that puts a tang into everyday living.

Talk With a Tang

THE tang wasn't only in the air. It was in that young fellow's talk as well. Perhaps he gets a special feeling of freedom out of fall; at any rate, he pleased us by loosening up rather surprisingly. He seemed to shake the cramps out of his mind and spread out his private, personal thinking so that we could look it over. He let us make remarks about it, too. And he quite forgot that we're older than he is and argued with us just as if we were his own age. We liked that, also. It takes manners to mix with older people like that. Any cub can be stiffly respectful. But a young fellow who can be comradely is a winner.

He Wanted to Know

OUR caller earnestly asked us what at first seemed a queer question. He wanted to know, "Why don't people ever tell you about the things you ought to do?" We said guardedly, "For instance?" You see we've had an uncomfortable hunch that some day we might be abolished as a public nuisance because we've spent so much time explaining to other people what they ought to do. "Well," he said, "for instance, why didn't anyone tell me when I was in high school that I should dig in and get a good start in French or German or Spanish—that every man should be able to speak at least one language besides his own? Why didn't someone tell me clear back when I was a skinny, cocky kid that the way to master any sport is to get down and master form? Why didn't someone tell me before you did to-day that the fellow who wants to get down to bed rock in labor problems should work as a day laborer some summer vacation while he's in college? Why *don't* people tell you things at the time you should know them? The lucky guys who get told, get ahead."

Why Didn't He Ask?

"PART of the answer," we decided, "is that we older men get to exercising an undue amount of self-restraint just because we're afraid of spilling too much advice. Now I'll ask you a question. If you want suggestions from older men, why don't you ask for them? Pick out a fairly friendly, fairly successful older man and go and fire questions at him. Probably all he tells you won't be so; precious few of us are right about everything. But some of it will be so, and the rest will set you thinking. Why *don't* you young fellows ask questions?"

Everlasting Askers

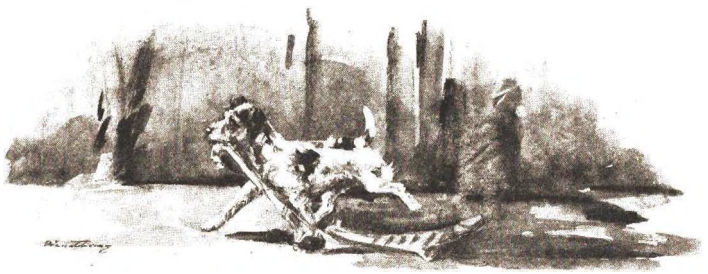
AN airplane came humming over the garden and we both tipped back our heads to follow it as it vanished into the twilight haze. Then we came back to earth and to the matter of asking questions. "The Wright brothers asked questions, didn't they?" reflected the young fellow. "And 'they gave the world wings!' Guess it's the everlasting askers who do things, all right."

Something to Yelp About

By Bigelow Neal
Illustrated by Diana Thorne

WHEN Min came from somewhere out of the darkness, crossed the porch, and pulled open the screen door with one forefoot, Ted knew she was on mischief bent.

Ted was a terrier too, and theoretically he was Min's mate, but practically they had little in common aside from blood and general appearance, for Ted was a gentleman of his kind, while Min was a four-legged daughter of mischief. She had one gift that was supernatural. No matter what dark crime she committed, she always managed to depart the scene in time to leave Ted in possession of all the glory and punishment. Sometimes, just for variety, Bruno was called upon to absorb a share, but Bruno was a giant compared to the little terriers. His dignified position of shepherd and valuable cattle-dog kept him busy and he consequently escaped most of the shifted disgrace.



She was walking cornerwise, so to speak, dragging a sock behind her.

Meanwhile, Min eased herself through the door and disappeared in the inner darkness. For a moment, Ted remained on the old sheepskin coat which served as his bed, but finally his curiosity got the better of his judgment. Slowly he rose to his feet and followed her into the house.

He met her as she was coming from the master's bedroom. She was walking cornerwise, so to speak, dragging a sock and garter behind her. Ted sat down directly in her path. According to his code, the personal property of his master was inviolable. He felt the call of duty and set his teeth in the end of the dragging garter.

When Min came to the end of her rope—or garter if you wish—Ted set his forefeet and turned his head to one side. His attitude plainly said: "I'll fight it out on this line if it takes all night." Feeling the righteousness of his cause, he began to growl. Min tried a violent tug and pulled Ted a trifle along the carpet, but since that kind of progress didn't justify the effort, she changed her tactics and jerked suddenly to one side. Temporarily off balance and rapidly losing his temper, Ted redoubled his growls and sat back with all his strength.

AN ANNOYED human voice came from the bedroom and for a moment both dogs suspended hostilities. But Ted's conscience was clear and Min didn't have any. Sitting back, she dug her claws into the carpet, and the noise of battle rose to the volume of a genuine dog fight. The pounding of angry bare feet sounded in the hallway. The garter, stretched almost beyond its limit, pulled loose from the sock and hit Ted directly in an upturned eye. The screen door opened and shut and Min was safe, but Ted had yet to suffer his usual martyrdom. He suffered it in full, with repeated doses exactly where the hair was shortest, and when he finally shot out through the screen door like a white bean from a sling, it was to stand on a pile of coal slack in the back yard and whimper. He stood because sitting down had become temporarily unthinkable.

Bruno had watched the drama of the terriers with but mild interest. They were always getting into trouble. Furthermore, he felt himself on duty, for he knew something that Mrs. Bates should have known and didn't—that the master, disgusted with cream that would not churn into butter, had gone to bed and left the big barrel churn uncovered. Even Bruno didn't know that the churn was unlocked and therefore would turn on its bearings. But he did know that nothing so tempting ever escaped the sharp eyes and nose of Thomas Bates, the big tomcat.

When Min faded into the night Bruno paid her little attention and when Ted yelped a painful way along in her wake he opened his eyes and then closed them again. Plainly it was none of his business. But presently Min returned and climbed the porch with the air of one who has done her bit and done it well. She was even a little playful. Coyly she snapped at the nose of the big shepherd and then at his other end, until he got up with some show of dignity and sat down again, on his tail.

Now Min had done something the night before that seemed to her especially worthy of repetition. In her constant search for new beds she had tried, at some time or other, everything from boots to stovepipe, and the night before had settled on the churn because someone had carelessly dropped a gunny sack into its bottom. Now, a bit weary from her sock-and-garter fight, she decided on a nap. A leap took her to the edge of the churn. The night before, the experiment had produced results that were pleasing indeed, but to-night the results were considerably less gratifying. Bruno leaped to the rescue of his master's property just in time to receive several gallons of cream full in the face.

The end of the scene was another tragedy. Min, of course, was absent when the master appeared, but Bruno was very much in evidence. In fact, the evidence covered him from head to feet. Later, when the master's razor strop had ceased throwing cream to the ceiling, Bruno moved slowly out to the pile of coal. There, by the side of his small companion in misfortune, he sat down to meditate upon the injustice of fate.

It got so that Bruno and Ted dreaded the approach of night. Night meant a foray by Min. And a foray by Min made the two gentlemen dogs very sorry. They were sad the next night, when, from their observation posts on the coal pile, they silently watched Min once more paw open the screen door. Uneasily they lifted their paws and set them down. Ted already felt the sting of a harsh hand, Bruno, the flailing razor strop.

Their worst fears were realized when Min backed out of the screen door a few minutes later pulling a limp piece of goods that rippled with a lustrous sheen in the moonlight. Bruno, eyeing it with curiosity, suddenly pulled in his tongue and shut his jaws with a click. This was worse even than he had feared. He recognized the limp object. His master's blue silk shirt—more precious to him than the mistress's entire garden to her! Bruno had been chastised for raising his joyous front paws to the master's chest when that silk shirt had adorned it. He had been chased for going too close to the shirt when it had hung on the line. On the contrary, he had rarely been punished for strolling through the garden—unless he had ventured too near the sweet peas. The shirt must be saved before Min's eager little jaws got in their work.

Lifting himself with great determination for so big and easy-going a dog, Bruno started after Min. Ted, whose eye was still sore from the snapping garter, did not follow.

With a lumbering rush that resembled the assault of a tank, Bruno bore down on the little terrier, bowled her ears over tail, and stood growling ominously over the shirt. For a moment he listened to Min's indignant soprano barks. Then he looked at the shirt. It already had a long rent up the back. That made it bad. And Min, redoubling her cries, was up to her infamous trick of rousing the master.

WITHOUT a moment's hesitation, Bruno fastened his jaws into the shirt and bore it off. He would have liked to have acted more honorably, but it would have brought merely punishment—and the shirt was ruined. Without examining too closely into his conscience, he lumbered to the pile of dirt, dug a hole, and carefully dropped the precious shirt beside a week-old bone. A few swift hind-foot strokes covered it, and he was able to stroll innocently to the coal pile in time to see the puzzled master admonish Min to shut up or he'd give her something to yelp about.

Bruno resumed his seat on the coal pile with no sense of elation. He was no happier than before. The world was just as black. And as long as the night was black, Min would get into trouble. A sudden sharp series of yelps from the other side of the house justified his pessimism. Neither Bruno nor Ted batted an eye.

For a time the excited yelps (*Continued on page 46*)

Ted and Min stared in open-mouthed astonishment. Bruno merely pulled in his tongue on one side of his mouth and let it hang out the other.

The big white form kept on sailing back and forth.

They Gave the World Wings

The Story of the Wright Brothers

By Mitchell V. Charnley

Illustrated by Ernest Fuhr

"WHO moved our shed?" Wilbur and Orville Wright looked at each other, looked again at the obviously askew "hangar" waiting there on the Kill Devil Hill sands of North Carolina to greet them. Something had happened to it—it wasn't sitting where they had left it, a year before, when they returned to Dayton. This did not seem an auspicious start for their 1903 experiments—experiments they expected to be the most important they had ever conducted.

For, with a new airplane, a new motor, two unproved propellers, the Wright brothers were going to try what nobody had yet been able to do. They hoped to fly—to make a machine take off under its own power and actually soar through the air. Back in Dayton, Ohio, where they had made their living for years by building bicycles, people thought them "cracked." But that didn't bother the Wright boys—boys of thirty-six and thirty-two years, now. They had studied aeronautics for seven years; since 1900 they had been making annual visits to Kill Devil to fly their gliders.

At first they had hoped only to learn to ride through the air on wind. Marvelous sport, that! Their first machines hadn't performed as tables said they should, though; and after the 1901 experiments they tore up the tables, spent a winter experimenting and compiled their own theories and charts. The result had been a glider on radically different lines—one that had done so well that they had commenced to think of power flight.

XIV—Would It Fly?

HERE they were, then, with the equipment they hoped would take them into the air. And they were faced by a hangar containing their successful 1902 glider, twisted and misplaced as if some giant hand had seized it and wrenched it off its moorings.

It still held together—still sheltered the glider and kept it undamaged. But it was completely off its corner foundation posts. The two men asked old-timers—members of the near-by Kill Devil Hill life-saving station crew, by now trusted friends and assistants to them—about it.

"Back there last spring," said one, "there was an almighty powerful wind storm. Reckon that was what did it?"

That seemed to be the answer. At any rate, there was plenty of time to repair the hangar, for they were still awaiting some of the parts for the new machine, coming from Dayton by freight. So Will and Orv calmly and systematically went about the job of setting it back where it belonged and anchoring it there. Then they constructed a second hangar—one to house the new machine. This turned out to be no easy job, for the weather that fall on Kitty Hawk Beach—selected for their experiments because its winds were usually mild—was cold and windy. Just as the structure was completed, a hurricane roared up the coast, and the brothers spent an anxious day wondering whether the tar-paper roof would stand the strain.

It did; and the gale brought with it the freight shipment the brothers had been awaiting. For three weeks they were busy; then, early in November, the world's first successful power airplane was nearly ready.

Would it fly?

Dr. Octave Chanute, the man whose gliding experiments they believed most valuable, had his doubts. He looked at the elaborate chain drive they had rigged up for the two propellers; he shook his head.

"If you've allowed only five per cent for loss of power from friction, you won't get off the ground!" he said bluntly. "Engineers allow twenty per cent."

This was a blow, for a rough test to determine probable loss had convinced the Wrights that they were working on an insufficient margin of power. If this chain and sprocket were to use up twenty per cent of the force their little four-cylinder motor delivered, how could the machine fly?

They had to find out. After Chanute had returned to Chicago, they made a more careful test. A chain was hung over one of the sprockets; at each end hung heavy sand bags. Gradually extra weight was added to one end, and at length the heavier side sank slowly.

It was with relief that they discovered the added weight corresponded almost exactly to the first figure they had reached—five per cent.

"There should be no serious error in finding the amount of loss in this kind of test," Orville noted. "Just the same, I'll feel more certain when we actually hook everything up and try it all out."

On November 6, the machine seemed ready to fly. Wings were built, elevator and tail attached, motor installed, chain drive connected. It was another of those nervous moments to which the Wrights had had to inure themselves. And it developed that their ability to take misfortune with a grin was badly needed.

For, in the very first trial, a flaw in one of the doubly-strong tubular propeller shafts developed.

There was nothing to do but send it back to Dayton. In Dayton their shop foreman knew what they wanted done, and had the facilities to do it. Out here on the North Carolina coast they might have sought facilities and workmen for months without success. So back to Dayton the shafts went.

FOR two weeks the brothers glided and tested. With the 1902 glider they made flights of unprecedented success—often they soared and actually rose above their starting point, for more than a minute at a time. They planned that long-anticipated first flight a hundred times. Then, on November 20, the new shafts arrived and were installed.

A new trouble developed!

This time the sprockets could not be made to hold fast to the shafts. Nuts of opposite thread, muscle, monkey wrench—all failed to keep them in place. The jar and shake of the motor persisted in twisting them loose. Hours of working and pondering failed to solve the problem. Then Orv had an idea.

"Tire cement!"

Back in the Dayton bicycle shop they had used tire cement for everything from holding rubber to wood to the repair of a stop watch. There was nothing to be lost by trying, anyway.

So sprockets and shafts were heated; tire cement was melted into the threads. Sprockets were screwed on, and the cement allowed to harden.

And another problem was solved. The cement held.

At last, then, the machine seemed ready for its initial trial. Motor, sprockets, shafts, propeller appeared satisfactory.

"No reason why we shouldn't fly to-morrow," Will said.

But the weather man took a hand, and supplied plenty of reason. For some time the days had been so cold that careful work out of doors had been impossible. Now conditions became even worse. The wind, always keen at that time of year, switched into the north and changed rain into snow. For several days it blew as though it came direct from Hudson's Bay, at twenty-five to thirty miles an hour—far too great a rate to permit trial of the untried Wright craft.

So the brothers worked at minor adjustments for the hundredth time, and put in hours on a combined stop watch, anemometer and counting machine—one of the first airplane instruments known. On November 28, they were making an indoor motor test.

"Sounds to me," Will declared suddenly, "as though something's wrong with the propeller shafts!"

It was a discouraging suggestion. Twice they had removed and remodeled and repaired shafts. But the motor was stopped, and Will proved to be right. One of the tubular shafts had given way—it showed a diminutive crack.

"That settles it," asserted Orv. "A tubular shaft simply hasn't enough spring in it to absorb unequal strains, no matter how strong it may be. We'll do best to give tubes up entirely, and to substitute something that'll work satisfactorily."

"Solid tool steel," Will replied. "Tool steel of smaller diameter than the tubular shafts. They'll allow a certain amount of spring, and they'll carry the load as well."

They agreed on it. Almost at once Orville was on his way to Dayton, leaving Wilbur at camp. In Dayton he plunged into work at the bicycle shop, and turned out the new set of shafts. They responded satisfactorily to every test to which he put them.

"They ought to do!"

Then he was on his way back to Kitty Hawk. It was Friday, December 11, 1903, when he arrived.

XV—Will Wins a Toss

IN November, when the machine might have been ready to fly, the weather had been too severe. Now, on Saturday afternoon, when the new shafts were in place, the weather was too mild!

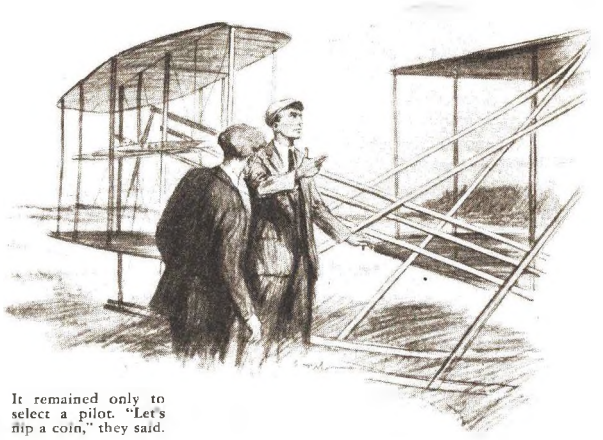
"Not enough wind to take her off the ground," Will muttered disgustedly. "Nor time, before dark, to carry her up a sand hill!"

The Wright method of take-off required exactly the proper conditions. They had built a sixty-foot track along which the plane was to run before lifting into the air — a wooden monorail. It could be used either on a level or on a hillside. And it made possible a machine without wheels. The airplane did not need them for its start, and for landing it was provided with a pair of very light, strong skids something like sled runners, extending out before the plane to prevent its rolling over forward.

Sunday was the same kind of windless, cloudless day. Monday dawned as fine.

"Let's get the track up on Kill Devil!"

So the first attempt at power flight was made from the same slope on which the first undulating, jerky free glide had been made, just three years before. The track was laid 150 feet up the hillside, with the eager assistance of five members of the life-saving crews, called to watch by pre-arranged signal. With the incline of the hill, the thrust of the propellers, and the wind directly ahead of the plane, the brothers believed they should attain their goal.



It remained only to select a pilot. "Let's flip a coin," they said.

At last everything was ready. The machine was placed, the motor tested, the wind right. It remained only to select a pilot. Wilbur and Orville Wright—men who had no thought of glory—had not bothered to think of this. Twinkles in both pairs of eyes, they looked at each other.

"Let's flip a coin!"

They did. Wilbur won.

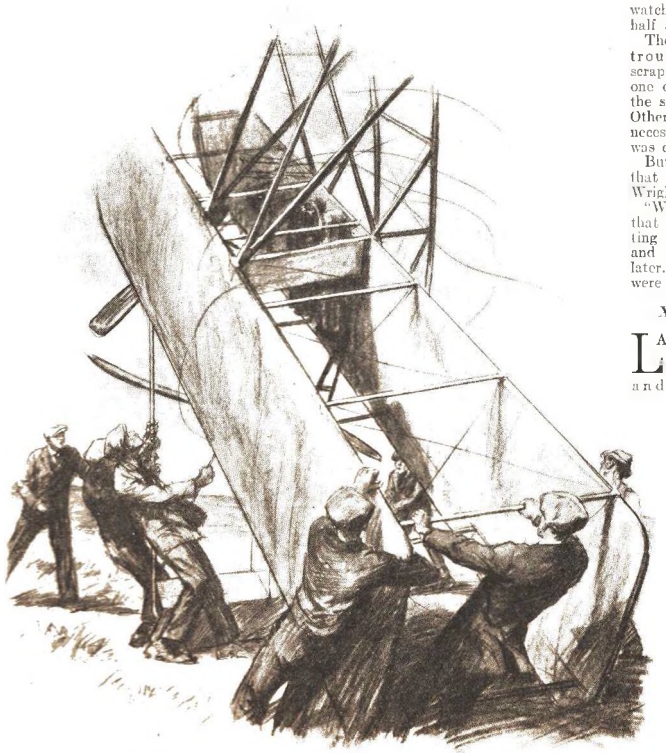
In cloth cap and his working clothes, the thin-faced, close-lipped elder brother took his position prone on the ship's lower wing. He seized the controls, listened to the clatter of the motor—released the catch that held the plane back. With a rush it darted forward.

Forty feet down the track it sped; then it lifted, and a faint cheer arose from the life-savers. But the cheer became a gasp as the machine took a lunge. Wilbur, over-anxious, had nosed it too steeply into the air. It climbed for an instant, then it stalled. Will reversed the elevators, the machine swept down the hillside, settled to the ground. Orv's stop watch showed three and a half seconds.

The landing was disastrous. The left wing scraped the ground, and one of the skids dug into the sand and was broken. Other minor repairs were necessary. Flying that day was ended.

But it took more than that to discourage the Wrights.

"We had demonstrated that our method for getting into the air was safe and practical," Orv said later. "On the whole, we were much pleased!"



All efforts were in vain. The machine rolled over and over.

XVI—Orv's Turn

LATE in the afternoon of December 16, two days later, the skid and other damaged parts were repaired. The next day — if a favorable wind arose—it would be Orv's turn.

The wind that came up during the night was not altogether suitable. It was cold and bitter—turned puddles to ice—and it prevented much outdoor work. But the Wrights' impatience, the next morning, got the better of them. They were going to try — wind or no wind! So up went the signal for the life-savers, and before the track had been laid on the chosen level spot a hundred feet north of the hangar four men and a boy were watching. They were J. T. Daniels, W. S. Dough and A. D. Etheridge of the life-saving crew, W. C. Brinkley of Manteo and Johnny Ward from Nag's Head.

By 10:30 o'clock, in spite of the cold, things were ready. The wind velocity was twenty-seven miles an hour as the machine was faced into the breeze and Wilbur looked at Orv.

"Your turn!" he said.

Orville climbed into the machine, tested controls, listened to the motor, peered down the track. Settling himself in place, he released the wire holding the plane back, caught his breath as it started slowly forward. Would it get away from him, too?

It picked up speed slowly—the wind against it was strong. Will, running beside the wing to help balance it, stayed with it for forty feet. Then, like a great white bird, it rose slowly into the air.

It accelerated and climbed a little, and Will was left behind. Orv found his hands full. He did not know the tricks of this particular machine. The air was uncommonly rough—full of sudden currents and whirls that hampered the machine's flight. And the elevator proved to be faulty. Balanced too near the center, it tended to flop from one extreme to the other.

So the course of that flight was far from smooth. Up and then down, at lightning speed, the plane shot. Ten feet off the ground one second, it would dart to within a few inches the next. And at the fourth downward dart it went too far and struck the sand.

One hundred and twenty feet from its starting point, the excited brothers found. Twelve seconds in the air!

Not, on its surface, a startling record. And yet it was the first time a plane had managed to lift itself from the ground and ascend, had sailed forward at constant speed, and had finally landed successfully at a point as high as its starting place.

Man had flown! The two Dayton bicycle makers had made history that day—history in the wings and propellers and motor of that awkward, hopping machine. It was the precursor of all the accurate, successful airplanes the succeeding decades were to bring.

Will and Orv, characteristically, were not unduly excited, now that their dream had become a reality. Their principles were right; now they needed to perfect details.

They indulged in a little mathematics as they took the machine back to the track, for Will's attempt. The speed of the machine had been ten feet a second; the wind speed was thirty-five. Thus the machine went through the air at forty-five feet a second; and in calm air this rate would have covered 540 feet in twelve seconds.

"Some day," prophesied Will, "somebody's going to build a more powerful motor—then you'll hear of airplanes going more than thirty miles an hour. Imagine it!"

ORVILLE WRIGHT, in a magazine article, has told the story of the further experiments on that day, December 17:

"At 11:20 Wilbur started on the second flight. The course of this flight was much like the first, very much up and down. The speed over the ground was somewhat faster than that of the first flight, because the wind was lower. The duration was less than a second longer than the first, but the distance covered was greater.

"Twenty minutes later the third flight began. This one was steadier than the first an hour before. After soaring easily for a good distance, I had to manipulate rapidly to avoid a crash that threatened when a sudden gust from the right lifted the machine. The right wing struck the ground first, but was not damaged; the time in the air was fifteen seconds, and the ground

distance a little more than two hundred feet.

"Wilbur started the fourth and last flight, just at noon. The first few hundred feet were up and down as before. The course for the next four or five hundred feet had but little undulation. When eight hundred feet out, however, the machine began pitching again, and, in one of its spurts, struck the ground. The distance over the ground was 852 feet, the time of flight fifty-nine seconds.

"The frame supporting the front rudder was badly broken, but the main part of the machine was not injured at all. We estimated that the machine could be reconditioned in a day or two."

Then came calamity—calamity told in the matter-of-fact, dispassionate manner that only a Wright could tell it.

"While we were standing about discussing this last flight, a sudden strong gust of wind struck the machine and began to turn it over. Everybody made a rush for it. Wilbur, who was at one end, seized it in front; Mr. Daniels and I, who were behind, tried to stop it from that angle, attempting to hold on the rear uprights.

"All efforts were vain. The machine rolled over and over. Daniels, who had retained his grip, was carried along with it and was thrown about head over heels inside the machine. Fortunately he was not seriously injured, although he sustained bad bruises from falling about against the motor, the chain guides and so forth.

"The ribs in the surface of the machine were broken, the motor was injured, and the chain guides badly bent, so that all possibility of further flights with it during that year was at an end."

Nevertheless, they had flown. And their first act, after the accident to the plane, was to wire to Bishop Wright in Dayton.

That was Thursday. Before another week was up the wrecked machine was crated and shipped to Dayton, tools and extra materials with it. Soon afterward Will and Orv were on their way.

They had plenty to talk about, now. For, within ten days after Professor Langley's second failure to fly, they had proved their theories of flight successful. Now they had to improve on what they had done—to plan for the construction of a new plane, new motor, new propellers.

"Next year—" they were saying, as the train roared toward Dayton with them. "Next year—"

XVII—The Second Airplane

NEWSPAPERS—hence the world at large—took little notice of the things happening down on the North Carolina sand hills. Harry P. Moore, traveling correspondent for the Norfolk, Virginia, *Virginian-Pilot*, followed the Wright experiments, and on December 18, 1903, his paper had an account of the epochal events of the day before. Kevil Glennan, city editor of the paper, sent a brief synopsis of the story to a half dozen metropolitan papers. Beyond that there was no public recognition of man's first flight.

The United States government was only dimly, cautiously interested. Several technical experts from Washington journeyed to Dayton to talk with Wilbur and Orville; but they did not seem to be much impressed. At any rate, the high officials they represented kept carefully away from commitments.

Oddly, it was the government of another country that first approached the Wrights definitely. In 1904 a Colonel Capper of Great Britain came to Dayton to find out about this strange contrivance. The Wrights received him courteously and with a certain pride; but they decided they should not talk with him about the sale of their plane and patents.

"For one thing," they said, "we haven't perfected our machine enough. It is still in the experimental stage—we must do a lot more work on it. And for another, we feel that we should offer it to our own government first."

They had thought of the possibility of selling airplanes. They realized that their somewhat limited capital would not last forever, particularly since they had given up the bicycle shop. They kept their expenses as low as they could, and they still had means for further experiment; but they would eventually need to replenish their money. What better way than to sell perfected planes to the United States?

Meanwhile experiments with a second airplane were progressing. The scene had changed—they had selected an open area known as Huffman's Prairie, eight miles east of Dayton, as their air field. It was near enough to town to be very accessible, yet far enough away to discourage crowds of curious onlookers, they thought. In a new shed there the assembly of the second machine commenced.

The 1904 machine differed little from the first. It was heavier and stronger, but it was operated much as was its predecessors. Its additional power, the inventors thought, would make it perform more satisfactorily, and they decided to make its first flight a kind of public ceremony.

Consequently word was sent to the Dayton newspapers—always a little skeptical about the flying aspirations of these West Side bicycle manufacturers—and on the mild spring day set for the attempt some fifty persons were present. It was the largest assembly the Wrights had yet faced, and its size caused them to break one of their firmest rules.

For, although the wind was so light—three or four miles an hour—that they believed it impossible to get into the air, they decided to make the attempt. It seemed only fair to the crowd which had journeyed out for the "spectacle," they thought.

Their fears proved well grounded. The plane, when the restraining wire was released, slid slowly along the track, but merely slid off to the ground—never lifted an inch. Badly disappointed, Wilbur turned to the crowd:

"No flight to-day. Maybe to-morrow will be better."

This first failure deepened the skepticism of the onlookers; and the failure the next day—for the motor misbehaved, and the plane made no more than a sixty-foot glide—strengthened the doubts of newspaper men and spectators.

So firm were these doubts that, not long afterward, reports of successful flights were not believed. Yet the successful flights commenced almost at once. At first, with overhauled motor, the machine was able to make hops of only a few seconds. But as the brothers' flying experience increased, as they learned to take advantage of wind and propeller-blast, the hops lengthened. Soon they lasted several minutes and covered more than a mile.

The Wrights had at last made a machine that would fly at will.

IT was not long before they were attempting a new feat—turning their plane in full flight.

"A machine for flying, to be effective, must be able to circle easily and come down exactly where it took off, or wherever the pilot desires," they reasoned.

So they set to learning to circle, and ran into one of the flying problems that troubles every student-pilot—stalling on a turn. The Wrights did not call it that. Wilbur explained it as a tendency of the machine to turn over on its side when circling, although it could easily have been righted when flying straightaway.

A major problem that. It meant crushed wings, hours of repair work, added expense. And it meant many hours of puzzling over the newest problem. What was wrong with the controls—the rudder, elevator, and flexible wings—that would keep them from doing, in circling flight, what they did so excellently when the machine was going straight ahead?

It defied solution. Farmers in near-by fields, travelers on the highways that bordered two sides of the field, passengers on the electric cars, became accustomed to the phenomenon of Huffman's Prairie—the big white bird that clattered and soared and roared and descended. Finally, on September 20, they saw it complete a circle and come to earth squarely beside the track from which it had started. But still the problem went unsolved—the plane still wanted to "stall on a turn."

Experiments continued—and the Wright bank account diminished.

A big temptation came to them one day. Charles R. Flint of New York, later known as the "Father of Trusts," and a partner of P. T. Barnum came to them and proposed a kind of traveling aerial circus.

"We'll advertise every place, and charge admission to the grounds wherever we fly, and we'll make a mint of money!" they promised.

But Will and Orv recoiled from this suggestion almost automatically. They were not showmen—they hated attention, publicity, ballyhoo. They were incurably modest. Moreover, they felt that charging the public for seeing their plane was a kind of betrayal—the airplane was, in a sense, a public venture.

They believed that, when they had improved it to their satisfaction, they might conscientiously make and sell planes—that was business. But show it off like a curiosity?

By no means. They rejected Mr. Flint's proposal — never dreaming that, years after, they were to work directly with him.

XVIII—1905 Flights

IN the meantime, the financial problem became more pressing. Everything the brothers had had gone into their ship. At last, after fifteen years, they had decided to use the nest egg of $5,000 given them by their father in 1889.

But even that $5,000 would not last indefinitely. They would have to look further.

"When we finally get a practical plane," they decided, "we can offer to sell it to Washington. That way the government will get the benefit of it, and we will get back some of our money."

First, though, there was that flying problem to work out. An airplane that wouldn't go round a corner without skidding would not do anybody much good!

So, in the third power machine they had built—a plane with forty feet of wing spread and a weight of 925 pounds—trial flights at Simms Station continued. Whenever weather permitted before the astounded eyes of a growing knot of watchers, the plane rose, circled, soared—occasionally crumpled a wing. The flights grew longer, however. On one trial Orville was forced to end a trip of more than six miles because a threatened stall almost dumped him onto the thousands of spines of a honey-locust tree—only the most frantic manipulation of rudder, elevator, and wings kept him out of it.

And at last they figured out the fault. The one different force working on the machine when it turned was centrifugal force—the tendency of an object to fly away from the center of the circle in which it is moving, as a rock whirled on the end of a string swings out.

"Maybe, if we try tilting the nose of the plane down a bit," they decided, "we can counterbalance that centrifugal tendency."

That was in September of 1905. And that solved the problem. For flights immediately began to lengthen—they were no longer in constant fear of stalling on a turn—and Wilbur and Orville decided that at last they were ready for business negotiations.

The first step was to get a letter off to Washington. Was the government interested, they asked, in a machine that would rise with a passenger from the ground, fly at will, and descend wherever its passenger-pilot wanted to land it?

Then experiments went on, and flights grew. On September 26, the machine covered eleven miles. But crowds of spectators grew, too.

"We'll soon have too many people here," Will worried. "Have to stop flying if the crowds increase much more."

The crowds wanted to know all about things. How did it feel to fly; was it thrilling; or scary; or breath-taking? Could anybody fly a plane? Why didn't the thing tumble the minute it left the ground? Was there gas in the wings, as in a balloon?

Wilbur once undertook to explain.

"An airplane stays up," he declared, "because it hasn't got time to fall. You know how a skater can go over thin ice—even ice so thin that, if he were standing still on it, it wouldn't hold him for half a second. He's moving so fast that the strain is on the ice and off it—moved to another part of its surface—before it has time to break.

"That's part of the story of why a plane stays up. It's not all of it, by a long way (*Continued on page 63*)

Nothing Atoll!

A Gripping Drama—But for What Reason?

By Melvin T. Puffer

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

WALTER Dishno, during his summer vacation from the correspondence school, has been sent by his uncle, Ugo Wamble, the wealthy mining magnate, to be overseer in the Little Dandy mine in the High Sierras. His pal, Arthur Bosboom, goes along as supercargo. In the dining car of the limited bound for San Francisco, the youths meet a black-browed man who says he is Abner Hicks, a waiter in the Y. M. C. A. cafeteria in Seattle, but who is, in reality, *Le Petit Chou*, (the Lone Wolf) king of a gang of international jewel thieves.

As trouble is expected from the Reds working in the Little Dandy mine, Dishno has changed his name to Smith. His pal has also changed his name to Smith, and though both boys are beardless, they are constantly being taken for the Coughdrop Twins.

In the baggage car ahead is an Abyssinian wart hog named Astrolabe, who is being shipped to his new home upstairs over a vacant lot in Saratoga. He likes chips; so is naturally elated at the rise of his fortunes. Smith (Dishno) and Smith (Bosboom) are in the baggage car viewing the wart hog when they smell a sweet sickish odor and everything goes black. When they revive they find themselves bound and gagged and lying in bunks in what appears to be the forecastle of a schooner. The wart hog is nowhere to be seen, which is a relief.

"Smith," says Smith (Dishno), "there has been foul play here."

"Smith," says Smith (Boshoom), "if you haven't spoken the truth, may I break out all over. And goodness! What an uncomfortable bed this is."

"It's the bunk!" said Smith, with the ready wit that had had him thrown out of so many schools.

A demoniacal laugh is heard, and *Le Petit Chou* (the Black Panther) appears down the companionway, followed by a Mexican sailor garbed in a *tortilla*.

If this is all clear you may go on with the story.

Chapter Seven

"WE are lost!" the captain staggered as he shouted down the stairs.

It was nearly true. If not lost, the barkentine *Happy Daze*, eastbound out of San Francisco for Fiji with a cargo of snowshoes and parchesi sets was badly mislaid. The mate had used the sextant to pound down a nail in his starboard boot, the chronometer had stopped at half past Thursday and the telescope was so warped by the sea air that you could use it only to look at things in back of you. The *Happy Daze* was in a bad way, and the captain was shouting about it, but it didn't seem to do much good.

"Try whispering, sir," suggested the colored cook, obsequiously, in his rich old Southern dialect. "Oi dinna know sae mooch aboot ze sea, bein' as it's me foist vyge—"

"Shiver my timbers!" shouted the captain. He was evidently not paying attention.

The cook tripped over a bucket of whitewash and turned pale.

"Let go the jib!" The captain had an idea. (He had another idea once.) (And he may have a third, but that will be in *Chapter Twenty-six*.)

"Let go the jib!"

"Who's touching the beastly thing?" asked a Norwegian sailor named Sweeney.

This led to words. The captain knew more words than the Norwegian; so the jib was found, after considerable search, and let go. (It comes back in *Chapter Seventeen*.)

Meanwhile the intrepid youths in the forecastle were devising a stratagem. They changed their names again. Smith (Dishno) became George Hooper and Smith (Bosboom) decided on George Simpson because he was fond of animals and had once owned a dog named Poncho.

The dog had been run over by a steam roller when George Simpson (Smith, Bosboom) was fifteen years old, and though considerably flattened, was not improved. However, George hardly thought of this at all.

"We must foil them," said George between clenched teeth.

"The sails?" asked George.

"No," said George, putting an anchor in his pocket so as to look nautical. "You don't foil sails."

"You do in New York," said George. He had him there.

"What time is it?"

"It's Saturday."

"My gosh! I've got to get off here."

"But you can't swim."

"Neither can you."

"I'll take a bar of soap and wash ashore."

"I'll go with you; I have my duck trousers on."

"Mr. Bones," said George, blacking himself up and getting into the spirit of the thing, "can you-all tell me why a pig looking out of the second-story window is like the moon?"

"No, suh, Mr. Tambo, I can't. Why is a pig looking out of the second story window like the moon?"

"Because he looks round."

"Ah, but there I have you, Mr. Tambo! The moon does not always look round."

"No, suh; neither does the pig."

THE two youths saw this wasn't getting them anywhere. *Le Petit Chou* (the Cobra) had shown signs of *mal de mer* (leprosy) and had vanished whence he came, wherever that was. Silence reigned in the forecastle, except for the gentle splashing of washes against the binnacle and a quaint old song from the galley where the colored cook was beating a steak.

"How do you feel?" asked George.

"Worse," answered George.

"Worse than what?"

"Worse to that effect."

This was too much for George. With a convulsive effort he burst his bonds asunder. He was growing fast; so that made it easier. He liberated his companion and the two of them ascended the companionway. On deck the captain was pacing up and down in a fury.

"Captain," said George boldly, "Captain—I believe I haven't had the pleasure of meeting you."

"Captain Pierce," replied the captain, laying aside the fury in which he had been pacing. "Captain Pierce, formerly of the *Hypodermic*."

"Ah, yes," said George. "My people crossed in her last year. I remember they spoke highly of her pick-up in traffic."

"Those were the days," said the captain, doing a few steps of the hornpipe to put the youths at their ease.

"Why did you leave her?"

The captain blushed.

"One of the passengers fell overboard," he said modestly, "and I threw him the anchor."

"Did he sink?"

"No," said the captain, "he realized my mistake and came aboard on his own steam. But it took two days to blot him."

"Speaking of catfish," said George, who had hitherto taken no part in the conversation, "have you heard—?"

"We weren't speaking of catfish," said the captain, taking considerable umbrage.

"I was," said George, taking the umbrage away from him.

"When?" asked the captain.

"Then," said George.

"Oh!" said the captain.

"It seems there were two Irishmen named Levy and Moskowitz—"

"I heard that one," said the captain, "and I'll save you trouble by laughing now." And he laughed so long he got his tonsils sunburned.

During this conversation a gale had sprung up.

"Isn't this weather terrible?" said the captain. "Come below; I always feel my neuralgia when it gets like this."

(*Continued on page 30*)

Drawings by R. M. Brinkerhoff

They listened to the tropical zephyrs among the palm trees and ate cocoanuts that the monkeys tossed at them.

Detective Mac

(*Continued from page 11*)

Incoherent with protest and with the futility of his cause, Ed hesitated; then with a mute farewell to his grizzled adviser, he called his dog and disappeared into the night.

AT Devon's cabin while he made up his pack and brought his snowshoes from the shed, the raw injustice of it all was almost more than he could bear. He looked at the clean limbed giant who sat gravely watching him and in those fine direct eyes he read no trace of guilt. "Nobody but me thinks you're a square-shooter. But I believe in you, old boy . . . I believe in you." Then, before turning out the lamp, he threw his arms around the dog, holding him with a fierce affection. Abruptly he got up, shouldered his worn pack, and started on the long trail, the tortuous trail, of the fugitive.

But before he and Mac crossed the railway tracks they were hailed by a tall slim figure standing in the shadows beside the deserted railway station. The watcher was Tomlinson, the Mountie from Twenty Mile.

He came forward casually as if the wind-swept road were the most natural of meeting places. "Don't do it, Sibley," he said.

From his manner the words might have been merely a polite suggestion but Ed, who knew the type of man Tomlinson was, understood them for what they were—an order.

"A trifle drafty out here," Tomlinson went on. "Let's you and me and the dog wander back to Devon's cabin and have a little talky-talk."

When it had ended, that talk seemed the most absurd and disconnected affair imaginable. Tomlinson scarcely spoke of the robbery at all. He sat there and simply chatted about fly fishing, about the amusing antics of a mountain goat kid he had once watched, about the years he himself had spent as a dog driver in the Land of Little Sticks. He seemed to know a great deal about dogs and all the while he talked, all the while his smooth voice rose and fell, he hardly looked at Ed. He seemed to be watching Mac, studying him as he sat there in the shadows near the heater.

"Devon's somewhat of a shrewd chap," he remarked during the few minutes he was speaking of the robbery. "Too bad he can't tell us more about the affair. He did hear, or thinks he heard, something that may help later on. And by the way, you mustn't think too harshly of Oliver. He seems quite a decent chap—been buying a lot of fur up and down the line lately. Has quite a lot of customers—the station agent tells me he frequently has long distance calls for him. Good sort, the agent. I've invited you and Mac and myself to spend the evening there."

And so Tomlinson rambled on and as he talked he kept watching the dog whose ears lifted and fell at every change in his well modulated voice. "Now I must go and have a little shut-eye," he concluded. "Until to-night, then—and bring the big fellow with you. I must keep my eye on him. Under the circumstances it's only wise."

Ed and Mac spent a weary day. On the advice of Tomlinson they did not leave the cabin, but from the trader they learned that the gold had not been recovered nor had any clue about the robber been found. Oliver, who insisted that Mac be shot, had been told by the Mountie that "something would most certainly be done about it."

AFTER supper Tomlinson dropped in and himself put a leash on Mac before they went to the station. Mac, now virtually a prisoner, walked stolidly at the heels of the two men, and when they entered the railway office lay down under the agent's desk at Tomlinson's soft command.

"Anything come through yet?" he asked. When the agent shook his head, the officer remarked that the evening was young yet. The three men were settling themselves to a game of dummy bridge when the phone buzzer on the desk sounded the Summit City call. Someone had a message for Mr. Oliver—someone speaking from the Commercial House at Division, forty miles to the west.

As the agent reached for a pad to write the message Tomlinson's manner changed. The speaker's voice was amplified by the receiver so that it could be heard anywhere in the room, and as it droned on the Mountie tiptoed to where he could watch Mac beneath the desk. Mac felt the keen eyes upon him and looked up questioningly, but in a moment he forgot the man observing him so strangely, for out of that nickel-plated instrument came a sound that roused vague memories within him, a human voice whose oddly grating qualities tantalized him.

Yet, probably because of the strange medium by which it came, he showed no signs of recognition. He was interested; for some reason he himself did not quite understand he got up and faced the desk—but still he gave no hint that he had ever heard the voice before or that he recognized the speaker.

Tomlinson reached across the desk and wrote on the blotter: *"Keep him talking!"* Then, while the agent slowly asked the sender to repeat, the officer took the receiver from the agent's hand and held it toward the dog at the full length of the cord.

"Please — quote — your — best — price — marten —," the rasping voice droned on as Mac, his cheek teeth gleaming between his lifted lips, leaned threateningly forward. Every slow word helped to dispel his former disturbing doubt. Whether he even now knew when he had heard that voice before was by no means certain, but from his subconscious self came a warning that in some obscure way there was hostility behind it. His senses, sharpened by the harsh necessity of his wild life, told him that here was a sign of some danger he had faced before. And for Tomlinson, who knew dogs as only men who have worked with them can know them, it was evidence to strengthen his former slender clues.

As soon as the receiver clicked into the hook he rapped out an order, "Get me the room number." When he had it he asked to be put through to the inspector at Division.

The next moment he was talking. "Tomlinson, sir. It's room Forty-four—Commercial. Yes, sir, I think it's sound evidence. A witness identified the voice when he called his pal here just now. Yes, sir. . . . Very good, sir, I'll stand by."

Twenty minutes later the inspector was on the phone again. "Go ahead at your end," he instructed. "We got the stuff—he hadn't had time to hide it. Went all to pieces—we're getting the full confession now."

"It was a long shot—but it worked," Tomlinson said as with Ed and Mac, he started for the hotel. "Devon was pretty foggy about what took place—naturally. But as he was coming to he caught the word 'freight' and got an impression that he heard someone say something about 'keeping in touch with' someone else. He thought he might have dreamed it. But thanks to Mac it's going to prove a bad dream for somebody. I figured Mac must have kept Oliver from making a getaway. I knew from what Devon heard that there were two of 'em and that the other one must've grabbed the freight. That call to Oliver and Mac's evidence cinched it."

Oliver was coolly playing cards in the hotel when the front door opened and Mac stalked in—alone. Scraping back in his chair he tried to get behind the table. But Mac came no nearer than the center of the room. Cold, invincible, accusing, he watched every move of his enemy—the man he alone had known from the first was guilty. Then Tomlinson and Ed came in.

"You don't trust him, Oliver?" Tomlinson asked cheerily.

"Trust him? Say—"

"Can't say I blame you. Under the circumstances you'll like him less. Oliver, you're under arrest for robbery with violence. You're nailed on the evidence of a dog. Your partner's confessed but that was the dog's work too." And Mac, grave, stern as the Northland law itself, stood watching as the handcuffs were snapped on.

Use this ballot (or make one to avoid cutting your magazine) to tell us what kind of reading you like best. Help us give you just what you want.

My "Best Reading" Ballot

"Best Reading" Editor,
THE AMERICAN BOY,
550 W. Lafayette Blvd.,
Detroit, Michigan.

Date.....

The best story in the October AMERICAN BOY is.....

.....

.....

by .....

The second best story is.....

.....

by .....

The third best story is.....

.....

by .....

The fourth best story is.....

.....

by .....

Remarks .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Name..... Age.....

Address .....

MAIL YOUR BALLOT TO-DAY

Billy *drives* the Silver Anniversary Buick★

Buick Dealer (pulling up at curb in new Buick beside Billy, who is walking home from school): Well, Billy, when are you going to drive this new Buick?

Billy (startled): Gee, I never heard you coming! Why—any time you say. Right now? Sure!

Buick Dealer (getting out): Jump in . . . All set? . . . Let's go!

Billy: Let's see—this is the starter, isn't it?

Buick Dealer: What do you want of the starter? The engine's running already. Buick's vibrationless engine fools a lot of them, Billy! You're all set to go. Just let your clutch in. That's right!

Billy: Boy! Some clutch, I'll say! Isn't that smooth? And she steers as easy as pie!

Buick Dealer: One of the easiest steering cars in the world, my boy. And that clutch is brand new, too. She can't take hold any way but smoothly.

Billy: See how I stopped for that cross street? I hardly touched the brake. And boy! What a pickup! Say, I'll bet she's got some speed,—she just feels like it!

Buick Dealer: She'll do plenty, Billy,—plenty! And that means she'll hit it off all day at more moderate speeds without crying about it. Suppose you take her up High Street hill there. They used to bring their cars over here to see if they could make it on high.

Billy: We haven't room to get any start.

Buick Dealer: You don't need any start with this bus. See that?

Billy: Well, what do you know about that? She's picking up on the hill! Say, I never saw anything like this in my life! Shall I pass this truck?

Buick Dealer: Not on the hill, Billy. But you don't need to pass it. You can follow it right along up in high . . . . Attaboy! All clear now? Then go on around him . . . Fine!

Billy: Zowie! Look at 'er go! There's power for you!

Buick Dealer: Power is right! Buick's engine is a whole lot more powerful than ever, and it was already the most powerful engine of its size in the world. That's because of its valve-in-head design, you know.

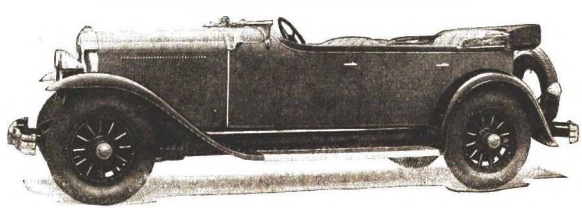
Billy: I can believe it, after this ride, all right! But I guess I don't know much about "valve-in-head design," and all that. Could you show me, some time?

Buick Dealer: Sure! I'd be glad to. You come back any time. Come in now, if you like.

Billy: Nope. I'm going home and tell Dad about this bus. I want a Buick!

Buick Dealer: That's fine, Billy. Bring him in, and we'll give him a ride too.

BUICK MOTOR COMPANY, FLINT, MICHIGAN
Division of General Motors Corporation



WHEN BETTER AUTOMOBILES ARE BUILT, BUICK WILL BUILD THEM

THE SILVER ANNIVERSARY BUICK

WITH MASTERPIECE BODIES BY FISHER

*This is the second of a series of stories describing Billy's experiences with the new Silver Anniversary Buick. Next month Billy learns about the famous Buick Valve-in-Head Engine.

In the Morning Mail

"BY all that's bony!" muttered Pluto, the office pup, hoisting a hind paw to his paper covered desk. "Here's a letter from a chap named Jack Loughner of San Francisco—not the airplane model champ—who says that a curio shop in San Francisco sells Mexican fleas—four for ten cents! Imagine anybody paying for fleas!"

"Good idea," replied the editor. "If there's a market for fleas you can get rich supplying 'em to dealers. No need to stay on THE AMERICAN BOY staff."

"I'm going to stay on the magazine as long as there's a Morning Mail fan left," Pluto yapped back. "The letters they send me are worth all the money in the world. The bunch this month is particularly good."

And it is, too. The summer mail is heavy and this month has brought news from all over the world. But the prize-winner is from Kermit Lang, Des Moines, Iowa. Lang makes a great suggestion for an AMERICAN BOY contest. He suggests a Best Reading Contest!

"Pick a certain month," he says, "and tell every contest fan to send in a ballot rating every fiction story in the magazine. With the ballot have each one send in a two hundred word comment.

"First prize would go to the boy who rates the stories most correctly and gives the most interesting comment. I believe that because of the greater number of ballots you would receive and because of the opinions you would get, such a contest would be extremely worth while."

Lang has made a constructive suggestion. Many thanks from Pluto and the editors!

All kinds of mail, this month, from other countries. Flemming Kiorloe, Copenhagen, Denmark, sends in his application for membership in the Airplane Model League of America. (There's an announcement on page 62 telling of the League's great 1928-29 program).

B. Megear, Biarritz, France, tells Pluto all about the school he's attending. It's located in an old castle dating back to 1590. There's a moat around the castle and a drawbridge over it.

"You almost expect to see knights in armor riding up the road," he says.

Alastair Bayne writes from a banana farm in Puerto Castilla, Honduras, Central America.

"Do you like bananas?" he asks Pluto. "We have lots of 'em, as well as possums and squirrels for you to chase. It takes a trained man to cut bananas off the tree. He does it with a broad-bladed knife on the end of a pole, and a machete. His machete—a sort of a small axe—he uses for everything from sharpening pencils to killing an enemy. He half-cuts the tree about three-quarters of the way up so that the top part falls over but doesn't hit the ground. The mule man loads the stems on a car and takes them to the port. Perhaps you are eating bananas from our farm!"

John Walsh, who lives in Mexico on the border line between that country and the United States says that many Mexicans do not like Americans, but that they like to have him translate the jokes in THE AMERICAN BOY!

"Taking THE AMERICAN BOY is just like going to college," writes Jack Way, Merion, Pennsylvania, who has been a reader for seven years. "You learn a lot and you make a lot of friends." Way suggests that the editor issue a diploma to boys who have subscribed for 10 years. Pretty good idea—not so, Purp?

Albert Cox, 15-year subscriber, wants Catty Atkins back in the magazine. You are not the only one, Cox! So does John Campbell, 7-year subscriber from Alhambra, California. And many others! For the benefit of new subscribers, Catty Atkins was the hero of a series of stories by Clarence Budington Kelland, author of Mark Tidd—stories that ran in the magazine a few years ago.

Cox informs us that Wallace Palmer, who took second place in the June AMERICAN BOY contest, is an orator. Palmer won fifth place in the 1927 semi-finals of the National Oratorical Contest sponsored by a group of newspapers.

Forrest R. Kyle, 5-year reader from Decatur, Illinois, wants more Tidd and Tierney stories. He's going to get them.

Eldon E. Smith, Wausau, Wisconsin, lists his favorite authors as follows: Kelland, William Heyliger, Warren H. Miller, Thomson Burtis, James Willard Schultz, John A. Moroso, and Stephen W. Meader.

Mr. Heyliger, author of "The Shouting Violet" in this issue, has been vacationing at the Scout camp, Camp Henry Kohl, Stockholm, New Jersey. Some fellows wonder where he gets the ideas for all his stories. In one afternoon, enough can happen to Mr. Heyliger and his sons and daughters to give him ideas for a dozen stories! In a recent letter he wrote:

"Margaret slipped coming down a mountain trail and gave her ankle a gosh-awful sprain. Small Catherine tried to do tricks in a hammock and came out on her head. Bill got a fish hook in his hand and had to have it taken out by a surgeon. Mrs. Heyliger got bitten on the eye by a wasp and I sat on an artificial frog whose hooks weren't in an inviting position!"

There have been lots of pros and cons on whether or not the magazine should run a science department. Myron Hirsch, Albany, Georgia, wants one. Edward T. Mize, Juneau, Alaska, doesn't.

"I am against this science proposition," states Mize emphatically. "Many periodicals to-day are devoting a section to science chat and there are about five magazines devoted entirely to the subject. If the readers of THE AMERICAN BOY want science, let them read about the airplane models described each month."

There's a great deal to what Mize says. Airplane model building and flying teaches you to experiment with the laws of physics, with mechanical forces, and measurements. And during the coming year, the magazine is not only going to give you the plans for record-breaking models, but it's going to teach you in a series of articles, illustrated with photos and diagrams, *just why airplanes fly!* Your instructor in this work is going to be one of the great airplane designers and engineers of the United States—Professor Alexander Klemin, who has not only designed army and navy planes, but has helped to install the U. S. Air Mail. There's science for you——fascinating aeronautical science.

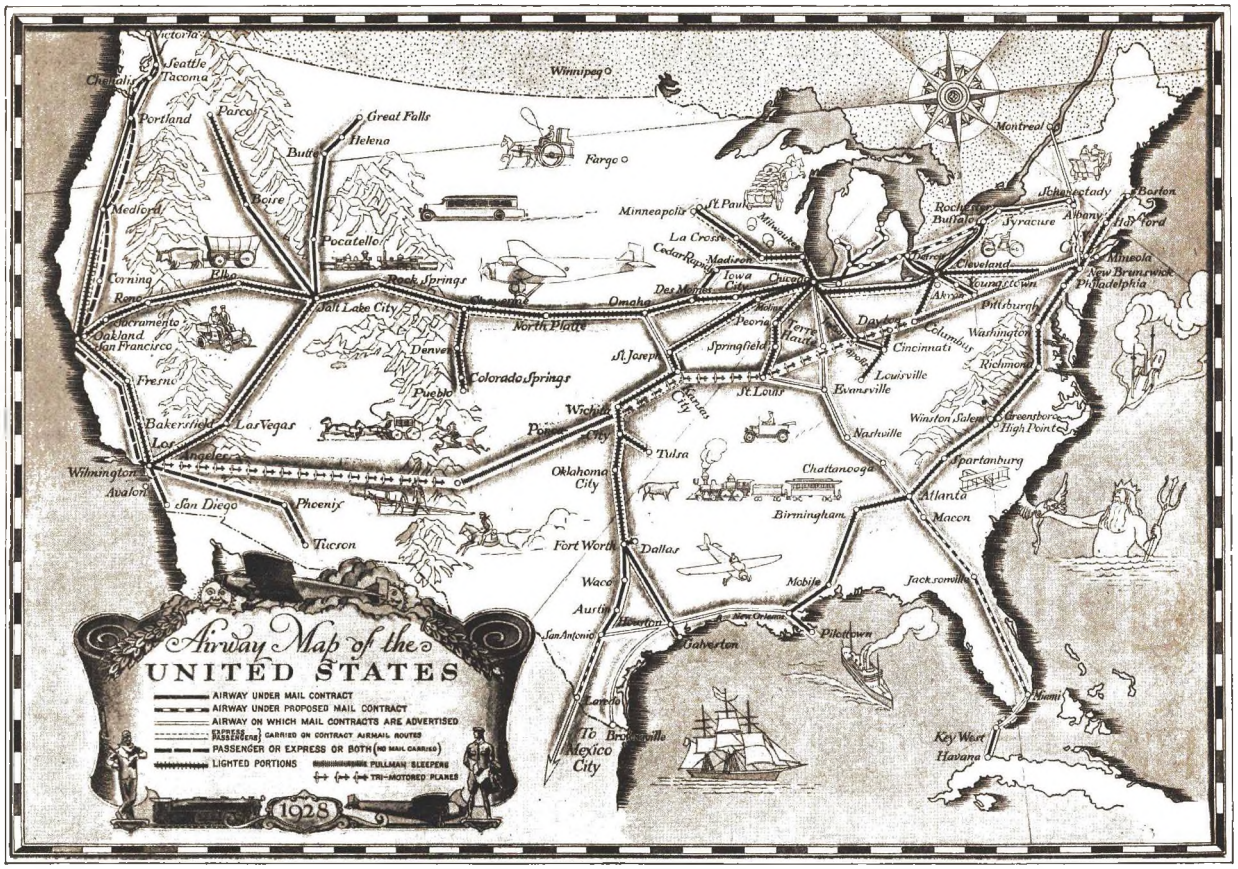
Wish we had more space for the many interesting letters that have come in. Archie Cashion, University of Arizona student, noticed in a copy of the University of Michigan *Gargoyle*—monthly humor magazine—the name of Gurney Williams, author of "Two Boobs Abroad," "Three Thousand Miles of What Next" and other AMERICAN BOY stories. Correct—Archie—Williams is now a student at the University of Michigan.

Earle W. Crawford, Maryville, Tennessee, plays a game when he gets his magazine each month. As he turns the pages, he covers up the name of the artist, and by examining the illustration tries to tell who the artist is. He's got so that he can recognize instantly the work of Dudley Gloyne Summers, Frank Schoonover, Anton Otto Fischer, W. W. Clarke, J. Scott Williams, Charles Livingston Bull, R. M. Brinkerhoff, Paul Bransom, Ernest Fuhr, and many others.

There's the letter from John Wernette, Clay Center, Kansas, enclosing a photograph of one of our magazine covers. Wernette's father is a photographer. Another from Ashley Potter, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who had to wait three weeks before reading his last copy of the magazine, because of eye trouble.

But space is running out. Send in those letters. The best one, each month, wins five dollars of Pluto's salary.

AIRPLANE MODELERS! See Page 62 for the full announcement of THE AMERICAN BOY'S new program.



THE HIGHWAYS OF THE SKY

Two rackety wood-burning locomotives halted by the shores of Great Salt Lake, and two dusty groups of bearded men in stovepipe hats descended. A gold spike was driven into a tie. *The iron highway was open from Coast to Coast, reducing travel time from three months to three weeks!*

That was in 1869. . . .

Some time in 1920, perhaps your chief clerk remarked casually, "They're carrying first-class mail by air now all the way across the continent." No outburst of feeling marked the event! *Yet a golden feather should have fluttered from the sky to symbolize for American business this dawning of a new age in transportation. Space had been conquered . . . time reduced to hours!*

Today, less than eight years later, privately owned and operated Air Mail lines are reaching into 31 states, giving efficient postal service to a commercial area embracing close to 70,000,000 people! Literally hundreds of planes are streaming along the highways of the sky continuously, carrying freight, mail and passengers.

Last year private mail planes alone flew 3,823,214 miles, carrying nearly sixty million letters. Every conceivable object that calls for swift delivery is being transported by them . . . letters, bank exchanges, bullion, jewelry, samples, films, replacement parts, medical supplies, engraved plates, hundreds of products of commercial importance.

It took years for the railroads . . . after suffering serious losses from bus competition . . . to awake to that danger threatening their short-haul business. Alert railroad men of today are recognizing that the new winged vehicle presents as great a threat to long-haul business! *Probably the most significant development in commercial aviation this year has been the organization of the first transcontinental passenger Air-Rail Line!*

This line is a merger of the transportation facilities of both railroad and airplane . . . railroad by night, for the more spacious comfort of a Pullman sleeping-car, tri-motored plane by day for speed and the enjoyment afforded along the highways of the sky.

This is a most logical use of the commercial plane. For America is only at the beginning of the development of its great resources. Hundreds of thousands of miles of rail must yet be laid; millions of miles of hard-surfaced roads will yet be needed. *The airplane simply expands the scope of America's possibilities, by trebling the speed of its communications!*

It is already of immense importance to American business that dependable transportation at a hundred miles an hour over the trunk lines indicated above is available day and night throughout the year.

This map does not show many thousands of miles of well-established intermediate and branch lines, connecting virtually all the major cities of the United States . . . with extensions to Canada, Mexico and Cuba.

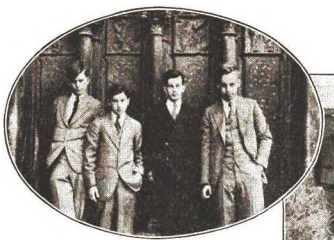
The Ford tri-motored, all-metal plane, with a record of over a million miles of regular commercial service, carrying freight, passengers and mail, has proved the safety and efficiency of this commercial type . . . practical, economically sound, and useful. All the resources of the Ford industries have been at command in its production . . . *in the firm belief that it will take and hold its place with honor in the service of commerce along the highways of the sky.*

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

They're Back From Europe!

Why Not You, Next Year?

Photos by courtesy of Canadian Pacific Steamship Company



Hill, Abgarian, Grant and Loughner paused and posed in the twelfth century entrance to Notre Dame Cathedral.

At Croydon, London airdrome, American and British model experts competed. Honors were divided.

Lady Heath, famous aviatrix, presented Grant his prize check.

NO trans-Atlantic flier, no Lindbergh, or Byrd or Chamberlin, ever got more fun from his trip to Europe, and the feting and honors and receptions given him there, than did America's airplane model champions on their prize tour of the world's most famous cities. You have the word of Tom Hill and Aram Abgarian for that—and they know!

Grinning and a bit fagged (and ready to do it all over again), Tom and Aram came down the gangplank from the *George Washington*, big United States liner, in Hoboken on August 17. With them were Merrill Hamburg, secretary of the Airplane Model League of America, and Jack Loughner and Ford Grant of Detroit, two airplane model experts who had made the trip "on their own" with the party of three who were guests of THE AMERICAN BOY. Tom, 16, of Winston-Salem, N. C., and Aram, 15, of Detroit, won the trip at the First National A. M. L. A. Contests in Detroit June 28-30—Aram became world's indoor champion, Tom boy's national outdoor champion.

And what a time they had! Last month THE AMERICAN BOY told how they visited and were entertained in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal; how they boarded the Canadian Pacific liner *Montcalm*, and launched a tiny white model over the cold, hard-surfaced North Atlantic in memory of men who had tried—and failed—to fly across it.

They first set foot on European soil in Liverpool, and they wasted no time in getting on the boat train for London. They had hardly become accustomed to the queer, small, side-entrance European railroad coach when they were whisked into a station in Europe's biggest city.

S. H. F. Crouch, secretary of the Society of Model Aeronautical Engineers, had made arrangements for an international model contest at Croydon, the famous London airdrome, and they had to put final touches on the outdoor models they had built on the *Montcalm*. The contests were held on a gusty day, with the wind doing loops and whirls and chutes; Tom, Aram and Jack, former national outdoor champion, all "cracked up" models trying to get them into the treacherous air. But Ford Grant, with his third—and last—plane, made a better-than-two-minutes flight, and it won for him the first international title for the "flying stick" type of model.

And then Lady Sophia Heath, Britain's famous air-woman, not only presented them the prizes, but invited all the American party to ride with her in her trusty little Moth plane. She entertained the group at tea, and they later were guests of honor at a dinner attended by Sir Sefton Brancker, British air minister.

They found time to see the Tower of London, to thrill in the impressive depths of Westminster Abbey, to see the other sights of the great city; they visited Shakespeare's Stratford-on-Avon. Then they flew to Paris, landed at Le Bourget, and took a honking, hustling French taxi to their hotel looking out across the Seine.

Their time in Paris, too, was jammed. Sidney B. Veit, president of the Paris chapter of the National Aeronautic Association, had made arrangements for them to visit aircraft factories, landing fields, places of historical note. They mounted the Eiffel Tower; they took an excursion to Louis XIV's Versailles where the peace treaty was signed in 1919. They saw the Gothic magnificence of Notre Dame, the gaiety of Paris' cafes and boulevards and theaters, the quaintness of its twisty side streets and musty, ancient buildings.

Here, too, they received another signal honor. They were taken to the Hotel de Ville—we call it City Hall—and asked to sign their names in the famous Gold Book. Heretofore only the great leaders in aviation were listed in the book—Orville Wright's name was the first, and among the more recent were Chamberlin, Byrd, Lindbergh, Costes, le Brix.

Then—after Aram recovered from a bad cold—they left for Geneva. There they were entertained by officials of the World Y.M.C.A., and of the League of Nations; they were shown through the official League halls by John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

After Switzerland and the Alps, then, came Venice—two days in the winding, quiet canals, the brilliance of St. Mark's Square and the Palace of the Doges, the easy smoothness of gondola rides and the fun of splashing in the surf on the famous Lido beach. Florence was the next stop. Here the boys viewed one of the world's finest collections of paintings by Raphael, Titian, da Vinci, scores of others; they walked across the Ponte Vecchio, a bridge made famous by Cellini; they saw castles that have come down unchanged since the warring, bloody days of the Medicis and the Borgias.

And Rome—Rome with its Colosseum, its Forum, its St. Peter's and its pictures of Mussolini everywhere! Rome claimed them for three hot, hurrying days. And if they missed seeing anything, they'd like to know what it was!

Time for returning home was approaching, so they took their one sleeping-car ride in Europe—twenty-eight hours from Rome to Paris. For four days they bought souvenirs and gifts and went to shows and saw the Bastille and the Louvre and the parks and the near-by World War battlefields. Then—regretfully—they boarded the boat train for Cherbourg, and on August 9, they turned toward home again.

Wherever Mr. Hamburg and the boys went, their label-spotted model cases accompanied them! This was in London.

Official receptions were not over. In New York dapper "Jimmy" Walker, mayor, received them in his office in the City Hall, to welcome them back to their own country.

And then the party broke up. There were honest tears in Tom Hill's eyes when he said farewell to the others—the kind of tears that no fellow is ashamed of.

"It was the best time I—or any fellow—ever had," said Tom. "Now, next year—"

But none of them is so sure about next year. There will be another national contest next year, and prizes will again include trips to Europe. But—

"You can't tell about model contests," declared Aram. "We all want to try—but lightning can't strike twice in one place!"

The Air Marking Campaign Is Under Way!

THE AMERICAN BOY Magazine Air Marking Campaign is bringing results.

Already, readers have air marked four cities. Chris Barros and Robert Savage, Fort Smith, Arkansas, chipped in the necessary money and marked their housetop in big white letters with arrows pointing to the nearest field and the distance to the field.

Marvin Michael, Garden City, Kansas, has painted the name of his city in 75-foot letters on the roof of the Herald building. Valuable aid to aviators! Stanley G. Hone painted Beacon, N. Y. on the roof of a large warehouse.

The "Wings" chapter of the Airplane Model League of America, in Little Falls, New York, marked the name of the city and an arrow pointing to the nearest airport together with the miles to the airport on the roof of a large factory building. The factory president gave his ready consent, a painter sold the paint at cost. The American Legion paid the expenses and the members of "Wings" did the planning and the work. Great stuff!

These groups are eligible for the honorable discharges signed by Herbert Hoover, General J. E. Fechet, Admiral William A. Moffett, Colonel Paul Henderson, president of the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce; Charles S. Jones, operations manager of the Curtiss Flying Service; Grover Loening, president of the Loening Aeronautical Engineering Corporation; C. M. Keys, president of the Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Company, and Griffith Ogden Ellis, editor of THE AMERICAN BOY Magazine.

In five other cities, the campaign is actively under way. Carlton A. Winchester, Richmond, Indiana, has organized a club, and has been commissioned by Mayor Lawrence A. Handley to air mark the city. A scout troop is carrying on the work in Philadelphia. John Wilson Harner, Uniontown, Pennsylvania, has organized an Air Marking Association, has solicited subscriptions to defray expenses, and is going ahead with the support of the entire city. Each merchant who subscribes to the campaign will receive a poster to put in his window. Before the campaign is done, the city and its outskirts will be well marked for the pilot who finds himself in an emergency.

Ted York, Harvey, Illinois, is painting a roof 20 feet wide and 60 feet long. Clark J. Trudeau, Virginia, Minnesota, is co-operating with the Chamber of Commerce.

Other letters are pouring in, telling of work just begun. In all, nearly 700 boys have enrolled. Backing them, in addition to the sponsors named above, are William P. MacCracken, assistant secretary of commerce for aeronautics; P. F. Johnson, president of the Boeing Airplane Company, and Frank A. Tichenor, publisher of *Aero Digest* Magazine.

Enlist now. The campaign needs the services of every air-minded reader of the magazine. Fill out the coupon below, send it in with a two-cent stamp, and you'll get back a plan of attack telling you how you may serve in a most vital way the cause of aviation.

American Boy Air Marking Headquarters,
550 West Lafayette Boulevard,
Detroit, Michigan.

I wish to enlist for service in the American Boy Air Marking Campaign. I enclose a two-cent stamp to cover postage on the plan of attack.

Signed .....
(Write clearly)

Street .....

Town .....

State..... Age.....

Pignapped!

(*Continued from page 19*)

feeling in the lower forks for the message.

"I've got it!" chirped Ralph excitedly, after a quarter of an hour's search. I walked over to where he was fumbling with a slip of paper. We read it together, by matchlight. This is what it said:

"Bring in One (1) Berkshire Hog."

"Does that mean," Ralph whispered in awe, "we've got to bring in a live pig? A real, live pig?"

I had a sinking sensation. I was taking animal husbandry, and I knew all about the dean's pure bred hogs. We'd been out here twice studying them. They were too valuable to monkey with. I looked more closely at the message.

"That's not a Digam order," I murmured, relieved. "Ours are typewritten. Put it back."

Ralph put it back as if it had been red hot.

"I don't want to wake up any sleeping pigs," he said. "They're prob-ly tired, and would be irritated if we disturbed them."

WHILE we continued our hunt, Ralph asked me questions about Berkshire hogs. They were especially valuable for their bacon, I explained. And they had wrinkled snouts, like bulldogs. The dean's hogs, I told him, were among the greatest prize winners in the country.

"See there," I said, pointing over the near-by fence to where an individual hog house, about four feet high, stood in the pasture. "In that lonely castle lives a beauteous maid by the name of Broadbeam Jenny, Third. She's only a child—hardly weighs an ounce more than you do—but the dean expects her to take a blue ribbon at the State Fair next year. She has a nice long side of bacon, straight legs, and a beautifully arched back."

"A pig with a personality," remarked Ralph.

"A pig with a pedigree!" I snorted. "Her grand-dad was English—"

"Sh-h," Ralph put his hand on my shoulder and leaned close. "There's somebody else in the orchard."

I listened, and heard a twang or two, as if somebody were climbing the wire fence.

"The dean's manager, maybe," I guessed apprehensively. "We're sunk. He's a big guy, with an arm like a fence post."

Ralph shook his head. "Another probation party," he whispered back.

We could vaguely make out three figures moving among the trees, and they looked like students. Ralph wanted to step out and greet them as fellow sufferers, but I had a different idea.

"Let's see what they do," I murmured, pulling Ralph back into the shadow of the grapevine that overhung the orchard fence. The group had stopped at the tree where we had discovered the wrong message, and was reading something by flashlight.

"This is the party that has to fetch home the hog," I hissed. "They're playing with fire if they do. Taking a pure bred hog—even as a joke . . ."

We watched the three pledges as they walked toward the fence where we were hiding and scrambled over it just two fence posts away. I could hear Ralph's heart pounding.

"There's a pig out there," a voice came to us faintly. "I can hear him snoring."

The voice sounded vaguely familiar.

"Was that Freddy Welch?" I asked Ralph.

He shook his head doubtfully. "Dunno."

We rose to our feet, peered over the vine, and saw them walk toward the hog house that I had pointed out as the home of Broadbeam Jenny.

"They're going to kidnap our lady of the sty," I said, almost aloud. "They don't know what they're getting into. Listen—"

"You hold the sack," we heard one of them saying, "and tip over the pen. Shorty and I will hop on him."

"Him!" grunted Ralph. "They called Jenny 'him'!"

"Caitiffs!" I gritted.

"Worse than that!" Ralph growled. "They're—they're pignappers!"

We watched the action that followed with rising ire. One fellow tipped over the hog house. Before Jenny had time to rise to her front feet, the other two leaped upon her.

Jenny did her best, but she didn't have a chance. She squealed and grunted, kicked and wriggled, but in less than two minutes the hounds had her safely in the sack and were sitting on her. After a short rest, they started dragging her across the pasture toward the road. We followed them down our side of the fence until they had bumped their squealing captive through a gate, onto the road. We could hear them discussing the problem of taking her to the campus.

"He's too heavy to carry," complained one.

"And if he squeals when we're going through town, we'll have a cop after us," contributed another.

"Well, let's start dragging," we heard a third say. "Two of us pull, and one rest."

I turned to Ralph. His eyes were wide, and burning fiercely.

"Listen, Sir Galahad," I muttered, "Jenny's got to be rescued and taken back to her castle."

Ralph agreed. "Let's climb the fence and charge 'em!"

"Lower your visor," I cautioned, "and let's go."

We climbed the fence quietly, dropped to the ground, and crouched close to each other. The three culprits started hauling their protesting prisoner along the road.

Letting out a chivalrous whoop, we dashed over and dove into the crowd. I landed on the first man I reached and let him have it. One sock was all I could get in. If I could disappear over the horizon as fast as he did, I'd be out for cross country. The other two were close on his heels.

"The field is ours," I observed, feeling very quiet and triumphant, "and we have saved a fair lady from being pignapped."

Ralph didn't answer. I could dimly make him out, sitting on the sack, and holding a hand gently over his round middle.

"Are you wounded?" I asked.

Still no answer.

"Let's see if one of those fellows left his fist in your stomach," I suggested solicitously, crawling over. "Maybe I can draw it out without hurting you."

"Knocked-the-wind-out-of-me—" Ralph sputtered.

The captive in the sack let out a stifled grunt.

"And you're knocking the wind out of Jenny," I reproached him. "You hadn't ought to sit on her."

Ralph, whose breath had finally returned, slid off the wriggling sack contritely, keeping a protecting hand over the open end. "Shall we let her out?"

"You don't know pigs," I told him. "It's almost impossible for two fellows to chase a scared one through a narrow gate. We'll carry her back to her domain."

"Let's rest a minute," Ralph exhaled.

I had no more than found a comfortable seat on the road bank before I heard something swishing through the tall grass behind me. In another instant a big, black form loomed over us and a quiet, cold voice was talking.

"What you got in that sack?" the voice asked. I recognized it as belonging to Mr. Barrie, the dean's manager, and for some reason I couldn't answer. For one thing, Mr. Barrie had a shotgun slanting from one arm, and I'm nearly always speechless when I look into one.

Jenny answered for me,

with a suffocated grunt.

"A pig!" exclaimed Mr. Barrie. "Where did you get her?"

"From three other fellows," I stammered. That's probably the least intelligent answer I could have given. When I think how it must have sounded to Mr. Barrie, I get sick to my stomach. Ralph added to the effect.

"We rescued her," he said.

"Lucky I had a sick cow," observed the manager, "or I'd never have caught you. Do you make a regular business of rescuing pigs?"

"No, sir," I protested, trying to make the truth seem reasonable. "We just caught three fellows taking Broadbeam Jenny—"

"Broadbeam Jenny!" Mr. Barrie shouted.

"—Yes, and we hopped 'em."

"Where are these three fellows?"

"They're gone," Ralph enlightened, with a grand gesture toward the south.

"Get up!" Mr. Barrie commanded, almost as sternly as an R. O. T. C. corporal. "Drag Jenny inside the gate and turn her loose."

Ralph and I bumped heads, bending over the sack. We were both very eager to co-operate with Mr. Barrie, and in no time at all, Jenny was scampering for her overturned castle.

MR. BARRIE was very hospitable. He invited us to the farmhouse, and allowed us to precede him there at a very rapid rate. We stopped just once, while our escort tossed the gunny sack that had recently contained Jenny into the seed house. In the farmhouse, our host showed a lively and flattering interest in us, getting our names and addresses, and taking Ralph's wallet containing his identification card, as a keepsake of our visit.

At five in the morning, feeling worn and creaky in the joints, like a couple of antiques, we were sitting in Don Cleve's study, telling him what had happened.

"Well," Don said slowly, when we had finished, "we're all in the same boat, because I sent you out on the errand. As a matter of fact, I sent you out to buy one egg of Mr. Barrie and get a receipt. But I don't suppose we can convince the Governing Board of that."

"The—who?" I asked, a little faintly.

"The Governing Board," Don repeated.

"Oh, yeh," I replied, feeling weak. I'd heard of others who had been before that committee of weary—and a little skeptical—deans and professors. They constituted a sort of trial court for misbehaving students.

Don's steady, blue eyes restored some of my backbone. "*If* we're called," he said, "we'll be taken on one at a time. You'll be alone—but don't lose your nerve. Just stick to the truth."

We left it that way, and dragged ourselves to bed. Six o'clock, with the sparrows holding their morning session in the vines outside the dormitory window! I was so tired I couldn't sleep.

Three hours later, I was sitting in farm crops lab, above the livestock pavilion, trying to draw a picture of the inside of a kernel of corn. Freddy Welch was working across the table from me.

"Get through your probation stunt all right?" I asked him sociably.

"Sure nuff!" Freddy laughed, delightedly. You should see his laugh—a hearty noise, all surrounded by a clean cut chin, a straight nose, and the merriest eyes you ever saw. It was contagious, and I felt cheered up.

"We ended up at Goone, four in the morning," Freddy explained, "with orders to bring the chief of police a hamburg sandwich and get a note of thanks from him! Got it, too! Where'd you go?"

"South of the campus," I told him, "to buy an egg."

Before I had a chance to say anything more, somebody tapped my shoulder. I looked around and saw the campus messenger, a sophomore who works his way through school running errands.

"You Art Weed?" he asked. I nodded.

"Message for you," he said, handing me a small, serious-looking envelope. I opened it, a little nervously, and read the note. It was very courteous:

"Kindly appear at Room 212, Agricultural Hall, at eleven o'clock, this morn-

(Continued from page 33)

ing, for a conference with the Governing Board."

I can certainly recommend a little note like that for people with slow pulses. Kernels of corn didn't interest me any more; so I gathered up my work, and strolled out for a little fresh air and sunshine. I forgot to excuse myself to anyone. At eleven, I met Don Cleve and Ralph at the brass rail in the rotunda of Ag Hall.

"Hail the third victim!" greeted Don. "They just got through with us, and the chair is vacant."

"How did it—go?" I asked, trying to swallow a watermelon somebody had shoved halfway down my throat. I was expecting a kind of third degree, with the culprit sitting under a strong light, haggard and sweating, while a burly dean shook his fist under the prisoner's nose.

"I told them that I had sent you out to buy an egg," Don recounted, "and that you had rescued a pig instead. I offered to prove this by the written orders. But Mr. Barrie—gee, he's mad — pointed out that we could have written those orders any time, and that we had probably doped them out this morning."

I turned to Ralph, who looked worried.

"They asked me to tell the story in my own words," he explained, excitedly. "And I did. I told them we were in the dean's orchard, looking for our sixth message, when we discovered three students trying to make away with Jenny. I told 'em our anger was aroused, and we charged 'em, fell on 'em, and routed 'em, and—" Ralph was perspiring in the grip of his own narrative "—and got caught with Jenny!"

"Gosh," I murmured, the watermelon in my throat growing larger, "I wouldn't believe that story myself if I didn't know it was true."

"And then," went on Ralph, "the dean asked me—in a friendly way—if we knew who the three culprits were, and I told him that after the first blow all we had seen was their cowardly backs, and we had no chance to identify 'em. When I said that, the dean grinned, kind of sympathetically, and Mr. Barrie grunted."

I felt panicky. "What do I do?" I asked. "Go right in?"

"Go up to 212," Don told me. "The steno in the outer office will ask you to take a seat. She's sympathetic, and while you're waiting, she will look at you and smile gently, every once in a while."

I didn't have long to wait in the outer office. The stenographer stepped into the inner office, and in a moment was out again.

"All right, Mr. Weed," she said, smiling brightly.

THEY were sitting in an irregular circle, looking very much at ease. Professor Shattuck, the chairman, stern and rugged, with one hand in his lap and the other on the arm of his heavy oak chair; Mrs. Simpson, white-haired dean of women, fingering a handkerchief; a couple of profs I didn't recognize; Mr. Barrie, rubbing the back of one big, red hand with the other; and Dean Crossland, looking half humorously, half sternly at me. One chair was vacant. Professor Shattuck asked me, in a friendly tone with rough edges on it, to sit down.

No use going into the proceedings. After I had told my story, Mr. Shattuck explained that while the Board wished to believe us, the fact that we were caught with the pig made them feel—not unfairly—that we were in the best position to explain her capture. They would give us until Wednesday to collect proof to bear out our story. And in the meantime, they, too, would conduct an investigation.

"What will they do to us," I asked Don, when I had returned downstairs, "if we don't clear ourselves?"

"Probably make us take an extra course for graduation," he replied soberly. "That's the usual punishment for such offenses. They usually soak you with Sociology 3."

"Ouch!" I groaned. "A five hour course."

"An eight o'clock," Don added. "That means we'll get up as early as freshmen, every morning from Monday to Friday, next quarter."

"And two four-inch thick notebooks," I sighed. "Anyone seeing us lug them over the campus will be able to make a good guess why."

"And field trips," elaborated Don, "to police courts, to watch justice meted out to criminals. Worst of it is, those field trips usually come on week ends, just when there's a game or a dance—"

"And s-s-statistics," shuddered Ralph. "Pages and pages of s-s-statistics!"

The horrible details left us weak. The course would simply raise hob with our schedules, and as for Don, who was a senior, it might mean an extra summer session before he could graduate.

Don turned to me. "You told me you thought you recognized Freddy Welch's voice, last night."

"I wasn't sure," I answered. "Freddy told me this morning he was in Goone."

"Maybe his probation chairman cautioned him not to talk about the pig business," said Don. "Let's go over and ask him what he knows about it."

That appealed to us as a straightforward way of getting at the facts. We cut straight across the campus, through the pine grove, over the car tracks, across Lincoln Way, and pulled up at the Colonial entrance to the Chi Chi house in less than five minutes. The brothers were eating, but one of the student waiters called Freddy to the porch.

He was certainly cordial. "Hello, fellows! What brings you over this way? C'mon into the living room."

"Thanks, Freddy, but we haven't time," Don replied. "We just want to ask you if you know anything about Berkshire hogs."

Freddy looked at us blandly. "Berkshire hogs!" he repeated, and pursed his lips thoughtfully. "That's a pretty name for a hog—one of the prettiest."

"Were you and two other Chi Chi's out at Dean Crossland's farm last night, attempting to—reduce the hog population?"

Freddy hesitated a moment. "The next hog census should tell you that," he smiled.

Don turned to me. "Art, go in and ask Spike Main to come out." Spike was the Chi Chi probation chairman.

Spike was even more cordial than Freddy. He asked us to come in and have a bite to eat. But when we quizzed him, he certainly was hazy about where he had sent his pledges last night.

"Why do you want to know?" he asked us.

"Well, to tell you the truth," replied Don, "we aren't anxious to take Sociology 3, when somebody else should be taking it."

Spike laughed. "I don't blame you. . . . I've taken it, and it's a knockout!"

WE saw there was nothing to be learned from Spike and Freddy, so we excused ourselves. As we went down the walk, I took a quick look back—just in time to catch Freddy and Spike gazing out of the window, with

(Continued on page 36)

"Spies of Suleiman"

By DONALD and LOUISE PEATTIE

Time:
A dark night in 1522.

Place:
Secret tunnels under the city of Rhodes.

Persons:
Two boys, serving besieged Knights.
A band of sixteenth century thugs, serving Suleiman I.—

and they meet in the tunnels!

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IN NOVEMBER

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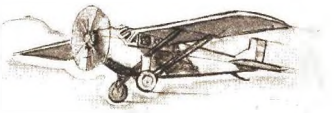

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For such a distinctive, serviceable shoe, Cleeto is surprisingly low-priced. It comes in gray, white or brown canvas, snappily trimmed. Cleeto belongs to the Grips family of distinctive sports shoes. Ask for it by name. Look for the word "Grips" on the ankle patch and the "Top Notch Cross" on the sole. If your dealer hasn't it, write us.

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(*Continued from page 34*)

broad, unkind grins on their faces. When they caught my eye, they both ducked, bumping their heads smartly together. Thank goodness for small favors, anyway!

"Didn't they let us down nicely?" ejaculated Don, when we were out of earshot. "Let's go out to the scene of the crime and see if we can't find a clue. Maybe the culprits left some kind of identification."

We hustled to the Digam house, had a bite to eat, hopped into Sam Greene's bus—the chattering chariot, he calls it—and headed for the country. In a short time we were alongside the domain of Broadbeam Jenny. We searched it from one end to the other, even tipping over the castle and chasing Jenny out of her bedroom. We didn't find a thing. Not a shred.

Don and I stared at each other helplessly. We looked around for Ralph, who had wandered off by himself, and noticed him standing about ten yards away, with his head bent and his lips moving.

"The master mind is at work," I remarked to Don. We walked over.

"The sack," Ralph was muttering. "The sack."

"The Sack of Troy?" I asked. "Or do you mean what we're going to get next Wednesday?"

"The sack Jenny was in," Ralph replied, looking up. "Those three fellows had the sack with them when they arrived last night. Do you suppose they brought it from their fraternity house? If they did, maybe it has a tag on it—like the potato sacks we get at the Digam house."

"Good old Sherlock!" I said, warmly. "That's an idea!"

Mr. Barrie had dropped the sack in the seedhouse, last night. Maybe it was still there.

We hustled to the farmhouse to get Mr. Barrie to let us into the seedhouse. We wanted him for witness, so it wouldn't look as if we'd planted the sack. But Mr. Barrie had just left the farm to go to the college, his assistant, a shriveled up, oldish man, informed us.

"Do you have any gunny sacks?" we asked him.

"Gunny sacks!" he exclaimed. "You're the second party's asked me for a gunny sack to-day. Yes—guess I k'n let you have one."

He led us to the seedhouse, opened the door and invited us to help ourselves. There was a pile of sacks on the floor, and we pawed over them. A few of them had tags, but they were all addressed to the farm.

"A party came by about half an hour ago," Mr. Barrie's assistant chattily informed us. "One of these tourists—wanted it to keep his chains in. Barrie give it to him."

We took a sack for which we had no earthly use, thanked the assistant, and left.

"Well," Don said, as we climbed into the chariot, "if there *was* a sack with a telltale shipping tag on it, some tourist has it. And that's that!"

THE next three days yielded us nothing in the way of information, and on Wednesday we prepared to meet our fate. Ralph hadn't been of much help to us after Saturday—he seemed kind of abstract, meditative.

At quarter of two on Wednesday, I met Don at the brass rail in Ag Hall. He was scheduled for two, I was on for two-fifteen, and Ralph was due to arrive at two-thirty. For fifteen minutes, Don and I leaned against that good old brass rail—just waiting for two o'clock. I don't think we said a word in that time. There seemed to be nothing left to say—or do. When the Campanile chimed the hour, Don went upstairs.

With him gone, the brass rail seemed uncompanionable, and I went out onto the broad front steps of the building.

Five minutes later, Don found me there.

"What's the matter?" I asked, feeling foolishly hopeful. "Has the Board postponed the meeting, or something?"

And then I noticed his glinting eyes, his disgusted face, and set jaw.

"Sociology 3!" he announced, with a short laugh. "That means I take twenty-one hours next quarter! Ye fishes!"

We stood there, looking at each other. The punishment was bad enough, but the idea of three others, running around the campus at large, probably grinning up their sleeves at us, burned me up.

"Better go up, Art," suggested Don, quietly, "and get it over with. They're waiting."

The thought of that dignified, important Board waiting for me, seemed to shrivel me up. As I lifted myself up the steps, I kept getting tinier every minute. My feet rattled inside my shoes, my neck didn't even touch my collar, and my cap slipped down over my ears.

But it was all very short. Inside of two minutes, I was back on the front steps with Don, planning a heavy schedule next quarter.

"I hope Ralph isn't late," Don said, half worried. "They'll soak him if he is."

Across the campus, nearly three hundred yards away, appeared two small figures, coming toward us. As they came closer, we recognized, with relief, the round bulk and the short, quick walk of Ralph. The other fellow was taller, and moved with a graceful stride.

"There he is," Don murmured, "but who's that with him?"

I looked hard for a moment. "Freddy Welch!" I exclaimed.

Don had a hunch. "Something tells me," he said, "that we shouldn't be seen."

The front steps of Ag Hall are graced with very large Ionic pillars. They must be at least three feet in diameter. Don and I each selected one, and as the walkers drew near us, we followed the circumference of the pillars around, so as to keep out of sight.

"I gottu go up to 212 a minute," we heard Ralph saying affably, as they passed us, "to get something. C'mon up."

To get something! Low as I was feeling, I almost snickered aloud.

"I'll wait for you down here," returned Freddy.

I wondered, from my listening post, how Ralph would meet that development. He rose to the occasion nicely.

"*The walk will do you good,*" he said, jocularly. "And maybe you can help me get what I've come after. C'mon."

My spirits rose a notch higher.

After the pair had passed inside the building, Don and I fell in and followed them, at a safe distance. We had just arrived outside of 212, when Freddy—already in the outer office—realized the destination of the stroll.

"Where are you taking me!" we heard him burst out.

"IN THERE!" came Ralph's firm, righteously triumphant voice.

We stuck our heads in the outer office just in time to see Ralph propel his unwitting prisoner unceremoniously into the inner office, before an astonished Governing Board. I had a glimpse of Professor Shattuck jumping to his feet.

"What in— What—!" And then the door closed.

DON and I strained our ears, to hear what went on behind that thick oak door. We could distinguish the voices, but they were too muffled for us to get the words. First Ralph talked—then Professor Shattuck—and then Mr. Barrie. After that, a babble, in which everyone seemed to be talking at once. Then a short silence, followed by a low mumbling, as if one person were talking, and having a hard time of it. Suddenly there was dead silence—unbroken until the door opened and Professor Shattuck beckoned Don and me to enter.

The discomfited Freddy was sitting in a chair, listlessly crumpled up. Ralph was sitting beside him, beaming. The members of the Board smiled at us cordially.

"We—" Professor Shattuck cleared his throat deeply. "This young man—" indicating Freddy, "—has just confessed to the attempted theft of—uh—" He looked appealingly at Dean Crossland.

"Broadbeam Jenny," smiled the dean.

"—Broadbeam Jenny," continued the professor. "We can't tell you how sorry we are that we have caused you all the

(*Continued on page 38*)

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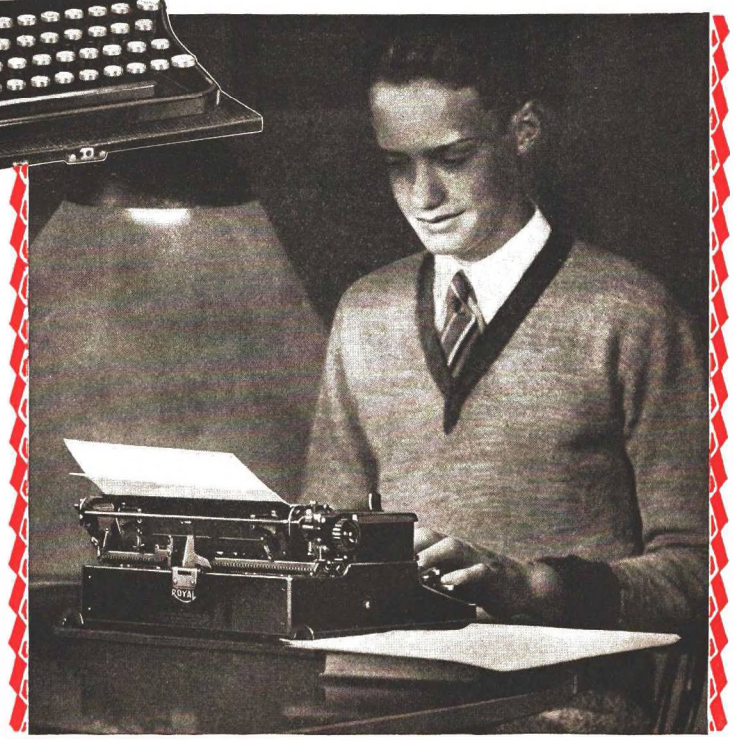

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(Continued from page 36)

mental distress you must have undergone the past few days. Needless to say—

I was too happy to remember what else he said. I was wondering how Freddy was going to like Sociology 3, and what Spike Main—who had already taken it—would get!

As we strolled over the campus toward the fraternity, Don put his arm around Ralph's well-upholstered shoulder.

"Of all the super-sleuths," he chuckled, "you're the king!"

"You've got it all over Sherlock Holmes," I added, "because you combine a keen detective sense with an alluring method of bringing your prisoner before the bar. How did you do it?"

"Just met Freddy after class and asked him if he had time to walk over to Ag Hall with me. He was very polite about it, and we had a nice chat—until he found out where I was taking him. Then it was too late for him to escape."

"We saw that," I grinned. "But how did you get the dope on Freddy?"

"I didn't," Ralph blushed, "exactly."

"You didn't?"

"No—"

"Then, why did you bring him over here?"

"Make him face that board and confess!" Ralph exclaimed, emotionally. "Make him suffer the way we've suffered!"

Ralph fairly bristled with indignation.

"But you must have had some kind of evidence against him—"

"Didn't need any," insisted Ralph. "I just felt it."

"But why?" I wanted to get to the bottom of this. "Did you recognize Freddy's voice the night of the pig-napping?"

"No." Ralph reddened more than ever, "the sock."

"THE WHAT?"

"The sock—the sock in the wind," Ralph explained in a tiny voice. "Freddy eliminated me from the boxing tryouts with a sock in the wind. I'll never forget it—" fervently "—and I never want another one like it."

Don was bewildered, but light was beginning to dawn on me.

"What does that prove?" Don asked.

"I got another sock just like it Friday night," Ralph murmured, "when we were rescuing Jenny. I recognized it."

"A sock with a personality," I commented. "Still, that's no proof—"

"Proof enough for me!" Ralph burst out, indignantly. "I'd know that sock any time I met it!"

WE digested this remarkable bit of detective work in silence.

"Very well, Sherlock," I finally said, "the sock. But you didn't expect to tell the Governing Board that!"

"Course not." Ralph replied, getting pink. "Huh—horses couldn't have dragged it out of me."

"Then how did you get Freddy to confess?"

"The sack," Ralph enlightened us.

"First the sock," muttered Don, slightly awed, "and now the sack. Go on."

"That was really luck," Ralph apologized. "The minute I got Freddy before the Board, Mr. Barrie recognized him as the 'tourist' who had stopped at the farm for a gunny sack Saturday noon. They had had quite a chat, it seemed. Freddy couldn't explain why he had gone ten miles out in the country for a gunny sack—so he confessed."

Don and I began to see daylight. Freddy must have gone out to the farm the minute we had finished talking with him on Saturday. We had put him on his guard, and he wanted to destroy every last bit of evidence—particularly a gunny sack on the dean's farm, with a Chi Chi shipping tag in it. He had beat us to the farm by half an hour, obtained the sack and probably gone home by another road.

He must have felt supremely secure when he had tossed the sack into the Chi Chi basement. But there was just one bit of evidence he had failed to destroy—

That sock in Ralph's wind.

Hunks in Hot Water

(Continued from page 18)

had neglected to put out. Old Sol saw the banana—he loved a quarrel, and he swung down to meet Susie's hysteric excitement with a raucous shrieking of his own. The men on their bunks sat up, sprang up, stumbling and growling.

But whether it was Sol, or Susie, or the boot Maginnis threw that knocked over the kerosene lamp, no one will ever know. Only with sleep-sodden eyes the men stared to see the red light leap to the newspaper, to the mosquito-net, to the oil-soaked bedding, and then there was only time for them to make a shouting, terrified escape before the whole tent was a crackling inferno that sent little red threads of wickedness racing over the dry grass to the other tent, to the wagons, huddled in a crowd. The March wind laughed and leaped and flung itself into the battle on the side of the ancient brother element of flame.

TO the nostrils of Hunks the rolling black billows came with a horrible remembrance of the past. Smoke again—smoke and death! The black panic that can seize a beast had him by the throat. He crowded against the bars that held him, staring with wild blank eyes at the running figures black against red, at the great luminous clouds that rolled up to the stars.

A voice, the one voice that could have reached him, came to him. Millie Maginnis was there, fumbling at the lock. The bear turned to meet her face that shone radiant in the light of the holocaust.

"It's the end of the show, Cubby," she was saying softly, breathlessly, exultantly. "It's the end of the road at last. It's home for you and me."

And the door of his prison swung open.

The dark woods crowded all about the clearing, pressing close upon the struggling borders of Twittyville, silently claiming their own. Young Hunks had not forgotten, in his winter as convict and clown, the painful, dusty journey from home. Those miles of mountain trail that he had traversed in halter, scraping along on stubby resistant legs, were buried deep in the dark places inside his furry, square head. Under the stars, in the free March wind, he took them again, following the memory that beckoned, faint, insistent, certain. And as he pushed through the screening laurel at the gorge's mouth, there came to him the murmur, rising as he lumbered on, over rocks cool and kindly to his pads, of Lost Bride Falls, that spoke of healing, that chanted of home.

He is there still, in the damp old cave that Twittyville men have forgotten, but if you find the labyrinthine way to Lost Bride gorge you will not very easily catch sight of him. For he is warier now, is Hunks, and the little black eyes that gleamed once with so irrepressible a curiosity, twinkle now with wiser humor. You will search the glen in vain for him, though he may be watching you from behind some ferny great rock, but if you look up at the sycamore that leans over the leaping water you will see that there are old scars on it, almost healed now, and fresh ones, long, strong, arrogant, a full two inches above the old, the sign and signal that a king has come into his own once more.

Coming in an early issue—"The Quest of Quicksilver," by Donald and Louise Peattie.

PRIZE CONTEST

$100.00 *in* Cash For Boys

Announcing an interesting and instructive contest—an easy opportunity to win one of 122 cash prizes. First prize $100.

Here is your chance to win a splendid cash prize and to bring credit to yourself and to your school. The Burroughs Adding Machine Company wants every boy to realize the importance of up-to-date accounting methods and equipment in modern business. So Burroughs is offering two first prizes of $100 each and 120 other cash prizes to boys who will send in the five easy key words giving the five major reasons for Burroughs success; and who will write the best short essays on "Why I should expect to find Burroughs equipment in any business I may enter."

In order to find out these five key words it will be necessary for you to read very carefully the Burroughs advertisements appearing in the November, December, January, February and March issues of The American Boy.

In order to write a good essay you will need to read a fascinating free booklet, which Burroughs will send you, called "The Story of Figures." This book is given to you absolutely free. Write for it at once so that you will have plenty of time to study it. Even if you fail to win a prize you will be glad to have this interesting, illustrated book.

To get the valuable book fill in and mail the coupon at the bottom of this page.

To make the contest fair for all entrants, the prizes have been divided into two groups. Boys under 15 years of age have the same opportunity to win a prize as older boys between 15 and 18.

Read the rules of the contest very carefully. Write for the free book. And don't forget to read the November, December, January, February and March Burroughs advertisements.

BURROUGHS ADDING MACHINE COMPANY
BURROUGHS AVE. AND SECOND BLVD., DETROIT, MICH.

Burroughs

RULES OF THE CONTEST

1—The contest is divided into two groups with an equal share of prizes awarded to the winning entries in each group. Boys who are 15 and not more than 18 on March 31, 1929 are eligible to compete in Group No. 1, while boys under the age of 15 on March 31, 1929 are eligible to compete in Group No. 2. Those whose immediate families are in any way connected with the Burroughs Adding Machine Company are ineligible.

2—There are just two things to do:

First, find in each Burroughs advertisement appearing in this magazine in the November, December, January, February and March issues the five key words which reveal the reasons for the dominant success of Burroughs machines. For example, by carefully reading the November advertisement you will notice that *speed* is the key word. The remaining four will appear in succeeding advertisements, and will be just as easy for you to find. List these five key words.

Second, in not more than 250 words write an essay on the following subject: *"Why I should expect to find Burroughs equipment in any business I may enter."*

3—For the correct list of key words together with the best essays received from each of the two competing groups the following prizes in cash will be awarded:

Group No. 1

15 years of age and not more than 18 on March 31, 1929

1st prize	$100
2nd "	50
3rd "	30
4th "	20
5th "	15
6th "	10
55 seventh prizes of $5.00 each	275
Total	$500

Group No. 2

Under 15 years of age on March 31, 1929

1st prize	$100
2nd "	50
3rd "	30
4th "	20
5th "	15
6th "	10
55 seventh prizes of $5.00 each	275
Total	$500

TOTAL CASH PRIZES
$1,000

Additional Awards of Honor:

The winner of the first prize in each group will be further honored by having his name inscribed on a Burroughs Portable Adding Machine which will be awarded to the school he attends. In the event that he has left school it will be awarded to the school he last attended. These machines will be presented to the School at a public meeting by the local Branch Manager of the Burroughs Adding Machine Company.

Note: Write at once to the Contest Judges, Burroughs Adding Machine Company, Burroughs Ave. and Second Blvd., Detroit, Michigan, and ask for a copy of the free book "The Story of Figures." Read this fascinating book carefully from cover to cover. It will give you all the facts necessary to the writing of a good essay and winning one of these substantial prizes.

Conditions: The five key words and essay must not be mailed before March 1st, 1929. All five key words must be seen before you can list them correctly. The advertisement containing the final key word will not appear in this magazine until the March, 1929 issue. Contest closes midnight March 31st and no entries will be accepted postmarked after that time. Address all entries to Contest Judges, Burroughs Adding Machine Co., Burroughs Ave. and Second Blvd., Detroit, Michigan.

Write plainly on one side of the paper, using either typewriter or pen and ink. At the top of the first sheet of your essay write your name and address, and give the age you will be on March 31st, 1929 and give the name and address of the school you attend or the one you last attended.

You may obtain information that will help you from your parents, from your school-teacher or any source you wish. But the essay itself must be your own original work. Prizes will be awarded strictly on merit, including correctness, neatness, and clearness.

All essays become the property of the Burroughs Adding Machine Company and may be used in advertising or otherwise. None will be returned. Each boy will be permitted to submit only one entry.

Prizes will be awarded June 1, 1929.

Announcement of winners will be published in the American Boy Magazine in the October, 1929 issue.

The judges will be JOSEPH BOYER, *Chairman of the Board, Burroughs Adding Machine Co.*, G. OGDEN ELLIS, *Editor, American Boy Magazine*, LOUIS C. KARPINSKI, *Professor of Mathematics, University of Michigan.* Their awards will be final.

This Book Free: A beautifully illustrated book called "The Story of Figures" and giving the history of figuring from the earliest times will be sent *absolutely free* to any boy sending in this coupon. Print your name and address clearly on this coupon and mail it to the Contest Judges, Burroughs Adding Machine Company, Burroughs Ave. and Second Blvd., Detroit, Michigan. You will find facts in this book which may help you win one of these cash prizes.

*Name*_____

*Address*_____

*City*_____ *State*_____

Winged War

(*Continued from page 5*)

when there is a considerable amount of money in any camp safe and to have a secret service system that absolutely covers the field."

Russ was leaning forward tensely, drinking in every word as it fell from the huge oil man's lips.

"You've no idea who the leader is?" he interrupted.

"Not exactly," Harris put in suddenly, his voice deep and harsh. "Whoever he is, he is the dog-gonedest character since Robin Hood and we think we know who it is. There's only one reason why we don't say we know exactly."

"What's that?" Russ demanded.

Blackie Williams shifted in his chair. A colored servant passed the door of the room, looking in inquiringly, only to be waved away by the ponderous White.

For the first time since his introduction to Russ, Ransome spoke. He took off his spectacles and his words were as precise as his clothing.

"The man we suspect," he said in clipped phrases, "fits into the part of the Hawk — which is what this bandit calls himself—exactly in every particular but one. That one exception is that our suspect, as far as we can find out, has never been off the ground in his life."

"Which," drawled Blackie Williams, "seems to be a very important difference between the two."

RUSS looked around the circle slowly. Before his mind there was the picture of a group of daring outlaws under the leadership of some superman, hidden far away in the depths of the jungle and laughing at the tremendous forces aligned against them. Though in no way did he approve of what they were doing, their reckless daring and ability was like a zestful challenge thrown in his face, and the entire situation called to every bit of the adventurer in him. He forced himself to speak slowly and calmly as he said:

"Then the actual fact is that you have no idea who composes the gang or, more important than that, who the leader is. Are you sure the leader actually flies? Maybe his men do all the flying."

"Apparently they don't," White told him incisively.

"No, it's a cinch they don't," Blackie Williams agreed with negligent ease. "They do some of it, Russ, as Mr. White here says, but on every big job, such as knocking off the fifty-thousand-dollar pay roll that was being carried in two ships, it seems a certainty that the boss himself was on the job—and a great egg he is, too, whoever he is."

"Why do you say that?" Russ demanded.

"Well, in the first place," Blackie drawled, "he's a big, tall fellow, powerfully built, and he always wears a pair of goggles that have dark glasses—they are sort of set into the combination leather helmet and mask that covers his entire face, except for a hole for his nose and a little slit for his mouth. His other men wear that too. But this egg goes about his business as though he was having the best time in the world. He laughs and chuckles to himself while he is getting the dough, kids the men that he takes it from and, in general, seems to be having the time of his life.

"And he's a flying fool, besides. He gets his ship down in places that you and I wouldn't think of, goes hedge-hopping and zooming and whatnot all over the place. Seems to be one of those birds that can do everything better than anyone else can. A half dozen times, it looked as though it was going to be a cinch to catch him, but he always gets away as easy as pie and then laughs at the world."

"Calls himself the Hawk," the lantern-jawed Harris put in harshly. "Grandstander!"

"He didn't start to do that," White reminded them, "until the Mexicans and rough-necks hung the title onto him."

"And ever since," Blackie said, "he's been dropping little notes here and there, giving directions and signing them 'The Hawk!' Just a nice little play boy, Russ, raising Cain all through the oil fields—and how the peons love him!"

"That's the worst of it," Ransome put in in his meticulous way. His square face registered no emotion whatever and his voice was as expressionless as though he were reading words he did not understand.

"There's something about a character like that that appeals to a lot of people who forget entirely that, at the bottom, he's nothing but a thug and a thief and a potential murderer. His exploits have been such that not only do the ignorant peons about the fields, who delight in seeing the rich gringos victimized, look on him as a hero, but it is the solid truth that about seventy-five per cent of our own American employees chuckle delightedly over his adventures and, I believe, really admire him.

"In other words," White said forcefully, "one might say that public sentiment is against us and on the side of a bandit whom a large number of people would hate to see caught—"

"Listen!" Russ interrupted, as though unable to bottle up his words. "Doesn't that account for all the information he gets? About your movements, I mean. If that's the way they feel, he could have hundreds of these peons willing to help him out!"

"Of course," White said. "In addition to other people, and some of them in high places, who give him very definite information. How many hundreds of people throughout the fields have secretly helped him with food and supplies of various kinds, and perhaps shelter, no one knows."

"He's this kind of a guy," Blackie drawled, grinning quizzically. "Six brand new airplane motors, a dozen propellers, and a lot of other supplies are shipped in here and put out on the dock. We leave them there over night. The next day, so help me, about four tons of material have disappeared right here from the wharves of Tampico and there's a nice little note from the Hawk, thanking us for it—and he and the stuff have disappeared in thin air. What are you going to do with a guy like that?"

RUSS took a deep breath and his blue eyes were shining like stars. Suddenly, he threw back his head and laughed as he had not laughed in weeks.

"Excuse me!" he chortled apologetically. "But this guy is certainly good."

White's heavy-jowled face widened in a rueful grin and even Harris' granite countenance lightened for a moment. Ransome, however, never changed expression.

"Who's the man you say you'd suspect if he could fly?" Russ asked finally.

"A driller named Arch Avery," White replied. "He answers the physical description of the Hawk exactly and has been an adventurer all over the world. College man, about thirty-eight years old, who has dabbled in oil from Persia to Venezuela—finally landed here broke, and became a driller.

"A while back, he drilled a wildcat on his own, about seventy-five miles out here in the monte, and brought her in. He tied up a lot of acreage and got his money to drill the well from about twenty-five pals of his."

"Yes," nodded White. "There were twenty-five men, more or less of Avery's stamp, interested in the wildcat with him. He brought in a good well. Of course, he didn't have any pipe lines or pumping station—only one storage tank and the big sumps that he built. He wanted to get rid of his oil. His price was all right but no big company wanted to fool with it unless they could have the whole tract and really develop it—see?"

Russ nodded.

"But the price he wanted for his acreage," White went on, "was entirely out of reason. No big company would touch it. Consequently, there was nothing they

(*Continued on page 42*)

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A handsomely illustrated booklet with pictures of America's greatest athletes and why they think there is nothing like cycling for combining the greatest fun ever with splendid exercise—both interesting and instructive.

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"Joyous-Teens" know what they know;
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To school and football and husking bee,
Movie and dog roast, dance and tea.
And a peppy Bike for a "Joyous-Teen"
Makes a hop-off sure and a landing clean.

Your Local DEALER will show latest models

(Continued from page 40)

could do. Avery wanted to develop the tract himself and have the big oil companies build pipe lines to handle his oil. None of the big companies wanted to go to the vast expense of doing all that and trust to Avery to develop the tract to its utmost potentialities—they took just the usual stand on that. Consequently, we couldn't do business. We just sat around and waited for him to come to our terms. He got sore—he's a hot-headed fellow—and wouldn't sell for a fair price. Plugged up his well—he still owns the acreage—after all the sumps he could build were full of oil. Then disappeared. This was three or four months ago and coincides almost exactly with the start of operations of this so-called Hawk."

"You get it, don't you, Russ?" came Blackie's softly slurred voice. "There's a hundred thousand barrels of oil lying up there in the monte that he never got a nickel out of, a lot of good acreage that is lying there, unused, and Avery has disappeared—"

"Meaning," Russ said, his eyes probing White's steadily, "that he didn't think he was getting all the money that he and his partners deserved out of the territory they had proved up and the well they had brought in and, rather than take less, he preferred to see to it that you people didn't get any benefit out of it at all."

"Just a dog in the manger," Ransome said, unemotionally.

FARRELL'S eyes stole toward Blackie. Blackie had been squeezed in a similar way a year before and, as the Texan's eyes met his, there was the suspicion of a wink.

"You're sure your price was fair?" Russ demanded impulsively.

"Absolutely," Harris said, banging his fist on the table as though that were a tender point with him. "Avery wanted to be whole hog or none—that's what it amounts to. We're competitors down here, Mr. Farrell. The three men you see sitting here represent three different competitive interests. Not a company in the field would meet his terms, because they were ridiculous."

"Of course," Blackie put in smoothly, "there's such a thing as an agreement and Avery had not been so popular."

"For very good reasons," Ransome declared levelly. "His methods of getting machinery that he needed in a hurry and other items weren't exactly open and above board."

"They were open enough," White said flatly, "but distinctly illegal. He took what he wanted, whether we wanted to give it to him or not. Why, he took three hundred feet of pipe from our Blazer No. 1, when we refused to give it to him."

"Of course," Blackie said calmly, studying a smoke ring with apparent enjoyment, "you weren't using the pipe at that time and perhaps he couldn't understand why, when he needed it so desperately, you wouldn't lend or sell it to him."

"Enough of that!" White said suddenly and his eyes were very cold and hard as he spoke. Suddenly it seemed that his ponderous body was vitalized and that dynamic forces within him had been unleashed.

"He isn't the general manager of the largest oil company in Mexico for nothing," Russ reflected.

"I've got about twenty minutes more," White said, "and we might as well get down to facts. Regardless of anything else, the situation sums down to this—an unknown outlaw, heading a band of men, with two or three flyers and a ground force of unknown size, is systematically robbing the oil companies of Mexico. This band of illegal workers, criminals, are making a laughing stock of the law—and they're doing worse than that. The Mexican government has tried, and is trying, with every means in its power, to enforce the law and it's as helpless as we are ourselves, for this confounded daredevil Hawk is too smart for all of us. Well, things are getting embarrassing from a diplomatic point of view. The head offices in New York, London, Holland, and elsewhere, representing the vast capital behind these companies, can't understand why they should be brazenly robbed of many thousands of dollars when their investments are supposedly under the protection of a recognized government.

"I tell you, gentlemen, that the extermination of this bandit gang may be far more important than any mere matter of giving us financial security. The situation, as it is, is international dynamite that may be exploded with unpleasant effects at any moment. If we can't catch the Hawk, it may not be long before certain captains of industry request certain government officials to write somewhat strong notes, inquiring why the lives and property of their countrymen cannot be protected. Do you understand what I mean, Lieutenant Farrell?"

Russ nodded, wordless. His freckled face was very serious and, temporarily, he had forgotten the appeal the unknown bandit held for him and had snapped back into the mental attitude that had been his since the first day he had sworn to serve his country as one of its officers.

"I may say, Lieutenant Farrell," Ransome said quietly, "that this angle of the situation might possibly be the reason for your so easily obtaining a six months' leave of absence—not that you're considered to be on duty in any sense of the word, but possibly your chiefs would not object to your helping in the situation down here if you care to do so."

FOR a moment, there was silence. The three oil men were watching the stalwart young flyer. Finally Russ said:

"How did you come to pick on me and what do you want me to do?"

"I picked on you," Blackie said easily, "because when I was flying against you, so to speak, I found out that you were the best, luckiest, and craziest flyer I ever saw at the stick of a ship. I'd rather fight the Richthofen Circus in the air than I would you, because you don't give a nickel what happens to you and carry four-leaf clovers all over your ship."

Russ grinned briefly at the saturnine Williams. Then he turned to the oil men.

"Just what d' you want me to do, then?" he reminded them.

White glanced at his watch. "I have only ten minutes left but that will be long enough," he wheezed. "Now listen!

"We have confidence in Blackie as a man and as a flyer. We have reached the conclusion that, with the approval of the government, we must take this matter into our own hands. Consequently, we have bought, and now have set up on the field just outside of town here, three Curtiss Bullets, which, we understand, are the best two-seated fighting planes the market affords. They are armed with Lewis machine guns in the back seat and synchronized Brownings, shooting through the propeller, in the front. That we have bought the ships and are making you and another man a proposition, we have endeavored—we think successfully—to keep a secret. We desire you, Blackie, and Duke Delroy to man these ships, sometimes singly and sometimes in pairs, as the situation may dictate, for the purpose of rounding up, capturing, or otherwise exterminating the Hawk and his gang, by methods which you yourselves will figure out from your idea of aerial tactics."

White was now speaking with a direct, forceful clearness that made his words seem like the product of a mentality that worked like well-oiled machinery.

"It has been decided by Blackie and us that there shall always be at least one ship at an oil camp next to a primitive little Mexican town in the monte named Rebrache. When you look at a map of the fields, you will see that that is a strategic point from which you can reach quickly a large portion of the sector in which the Hawk works."

He leaned back in his chair and mopped his perspiring bald head as he smiled—that curiously baby-like smile.

"I feel as though I were back in the days when I read Nick Carter," he said in his throaty voice. "'Sector in which the Hawk, the notorious outlaw, works'—doesn't that sound as though it came from a book?"

"Believe me, this bird is one for a book," Blackie drawled.

"We make you this offer, Lieutenant Farrell," White went on and, in a second,

he had been transformed once more into the aggressive director of big affairs. "We'll give you a lump sum, an amount to be agreed upon, satisfactory, for your services as an aerial detective, let's say. You get this sum whether it takes you and the other flyers two weeks or six months to do the job, and should it happen that at the end of six months you boys haven't been able to do it, you get the lump sum just the same. We have confidence in your loyalty and sincerity. I may say that your acceptance of the offer will not be frowned on officially in the States as you doubtless know. Now, does the offer interest you?"

"Does it? I'll say!"

It was like an exultant explosion from the red-headed pilot, and involuntarily the composed oil men smiled in unison. It seemed as though something electric in Russ momentarily communicated his enthusiasm to his companions.

"How about—" White hesitated and then named a sum that made Russ's eyes open wide. "Furthermore," White went on, "we'll give you half of it in advance. You may find opportunities for advantageous investments around the oil fields and some cash on hand may be the means of making you a comfortable little sum. Army officers aren't overpaid, I believe. Williams represents the combined oil companies and knows this country. In general, your tactics will be worked out by yourselves."

AS White finished Russ turned his head quickly. A snatch of song had reached his ears from behind the closed door that led to the stairway. The words reached his ears clearly in a rich, crooning baritone, and something about the combination of song and voice struck him. It grew louder as the unseen singer climbed the stairs.

"Duke Delroy approacheth," Williams remarked casually, "singing his favorite hymn."

For some reason Russ found himself awaiting the advent of his unknown comrade-to-be with tense expectancy. His foot tapped nervously in time to the eerie rhythm of the negro spiritual that Delroy was crooning:

"Some o' dese nights 'bout twelve o'clock
Dis ol' world's gwine to reel 'n rock.
Pharaoh's army got drownded.
Oh, Mary, don' you weep.
Oh, Mary, don' you weep—don' you moan—
Oh, Mary, don' you weep—don' you moan—
Pharaoh's army got drownded.
Oh, Mary, don' you weep."

No one spoke. It seemed as though all were waiting Delroy's appearance, as though nothing could be said until he arrived.

"That guy would sing at his funeral," Blackie mumbled, as though to himself.

The unseen flyer was close to the top of the stairs now, as he swung into another verse.

"Ah don' know but Ah been tol'
De streets o' Heaben ah paved with gol'.
Pharaoh's army got drownded—"

The outside door, which Russ could see through the open door of the room in which they were sitting, was flung open as the song stopped and a tall figure paused momentarily in the doorway. Delroy glanced around the reading room, as though in search of someone.

"Over here, Duke," Williams called to him and Delroy waved casually as he started across the foyer. Russ's eyes never left him for a second. He was to find out later that such centering of attention was a not uncommon phenomenon when strangers first met Mr. Lawrence Delroy, otherwise known as "the Duke."

He was taller than the average, very slender, dressed in riding breeches and boots and a white shirt open at the neck. The slenderness of his body was accentuated by his attire. He moved with an easy grace that indicated steel muscles under marvelous control. It was his face, however, that held Russ. It was topped by a shock of golden blond hair that seemed fairly to radiate light. It was

(*Continued from page 43*)

crisp and wavy, as though there were something electric in it and, below it, a youthfully handsome face was tanned to a golden bronze. Delroy was grey-eyed and square-jawed and his mouth was wide Below a straight, thin-nostriled nose.

As he caught sight of Blackie, he grinned a greeting and his face lit up until it was positively radiant. In every line of it, there seemed to be an unquenchable zest for living and even in his gestures, as he greeted the oil men, there was a sort of sublime devil-may-careness which indicated that Duke Delroy found life good and had no worries. His grey eyes sparkled as they rested on Russ, and when he shook hands that flashing smile played over the army flyer like a searchlight.

"Glad to know you, Russ," he said breezily. "Welcome to our city. The three musketeers are now complete, whether you like it or not. And maybe we'll have fun—what?"

Russ's answering grin came as though a button had been pressed and he could not help himself. He was aware that he had met a magnetic personality, and he sensed the fact that following the trail of Duke Delroy would be a very interesting journey.

"Everything all set?" Delroy inquired smilingly. "Lord, it's hot! How about it, Mr. White? This Delroy lad is rarin' to go."

He sat on the edge of the table and swung one slim foot back and forth slowly.

"Speak," he encouraged the oil man. "You're among friends."

SUDDENLY, as the newcomer turned his head away, his profile leaped out at Russ. Some of the youthfulness disappeared when Delroy's face was seen from the side. The nose was bolder, the cheek bones seemed higher, and the line of his jaw was clean and strong. When he looked around again and smiled, it seemed to wipe five years from his age and to turn him into a good-looking college boy. That is, it did until one noticed the level competence in those clear grey eyes. Blackie seemed mature alongside him and the saturnine cast to his dark face to be more pronounced in contrast to the youthful abandon and joy in living that was in Delroy's.

"Mr. Delroy, otherwise known as 'the Duke,'" White said dryly, "is to assist you and Blackie, Lieutenant Farrell. He was in the French Air Service during the war—"

"Among others," Delroy said airily. "Don't let them kid you, Russ. I wasn't in it long. Our friends, the enemies, got too smart for me—"

"After you had out-smarted them by knocking seven of them down," Blackie interrupted.

"My life history," remarked Delroy, "is a matter of little moment at this time. There are three Bullets ready to go to the field and panting to be tested. Is Russ hired?"

"He is," Russ grinned.

"At a good salary, I hope," Delroy laughed. "By the way, Mr. White, being only a half-time guy myself—"

"What do you mean 'half-time,'?" Russ asked him.

"Oh, I'm drilling myself a little well away back up in the monte," Delroy told him lightly. "What I mean is that I'm amusing myself digging a two-thousand-foot hole in the ground for no reason. I don't believe there's any more oil up there than there is in this table, but we boys must have our fun; so Delroy No. 1 is being drilled seventy miles from the nearest improved territory, thereby establishing beyond question what everyone has always suspected—that my life wouldn't be safe in a squirrel cage."

"I hope you get something but I don't believe there's a chance," Harris said, as he got to his feet. He pulled at his small, iron grey mustache thoughtfully. "I wish you were going to be on the job all the time, Duke."

"Business is business and flying is fun," Delroy grinned. "But the Delroy lad will be ready to leap into his ship at the slightest provocation four days out of a week, on an average. The rest of the time I must spend with my baby, Delroy No. 1. I have the field all cleared up there so that I can take the ship in and be on call any second."

"By the way, is the portable radio up?" White asked him, and Delroy nodded.

"Going to use radio, eh?" Russ said in astonishment.

"The Hawk," Ransome said, in his meticulous way, "has a habit of cutting telephone and telegraph wires."

"Calling Lieutenant Farrell," came a voice from outside.

"Here," Russ shouted quickly. "Gosh! Who knows I'm here?"

A WHITE-COATED club servant stood at the door with a note on a tray. Russ picked it up mechanically. It was a plain white envelope, addressed simply to "Lieutenant Russell Farrell, Colonial Club."

"Where did you get this?" he asked the negro absently.

"Mexican boy just brung it, suh."

Russ ripped it open and for a second he could scarcely realize the import of what he was reading. His eyes widened in utter astonishment and he felt as though he were in a dream.

"Some old friend of yours smoking you out?" Blackie inquired and the words seemed to cut through Farrell's mental fog. Before he could speak, Harris' voice, a curious vibrancy in it, broke the silence. The lean oil man had glanced over Russ's shoulder.

"That's the bird, signature and all!" he burst forth.

"What do you mean?" snapped White.

"Listen!" Russ said slowly and read the few typewritten words:

Dear Lieutenant Farrell: It is indeed a pleasure to welcome you to Tampico but may I suggest that your stay will be more pleasant if you look upon it strictly as a vacation?

"And it's signed 'The Hawk,'" Russ said steadily. "Is that his signature all right?"

Blackie Williams was on his feet as though shot from springs. His dark eyes glanced briefly at the bold signature and, suddenly, they were flashing as they swept the group.

"That's his," he said slowly. "That came straight from the Hawk. So help me!"

Delroy's rollicking laugh rang through the room.

"'At-a-boy, Hawkie!" the blond pilot chuckled. "The battle's on! How do you feel, Russ?"

For a second, Russ didn't know himself. Then, as he looked at Delroy and Blackie, his mind seemed to clear and in a split second a thousand thoughts had flashed through his brain. Suddenly his freckled face was aglow and his grin was as wide and his eyes as bright as Delroy's. His heart was pounding as he half shouted:

"Great!"

Chapter Three

TWO hours later, Russ was sitting in the cockpit of one of the Curtiss Bullets, warming the twelve-cylinder motor. Blackie was in the rear cockpit behind him, and alongside the ship was its twin, being warmed up by Duke Delroy. The sun was beating down pitilessly on the flat flying field, and had turned the three corrugated iron hangars into huge ovens. Russ was accustomed to Texas heat but it seemed as though he had never been so warm in his life before, although he was dressed only in coveralls and underwear.

A mechanic stood beside each ship, ready to pull the wheel blocks and, over in the shade of one of the hangars, two of the regular pilots of the Oil Field Flyers, Inc., were waiting to observe the first test flights of the new ships.

Russ, despite his physical discomfort, was exuberantly happy as his eyes swept from oil gauge to tachometer, to voltmeter. The rest he had had on shipboard seemed to have revived all the mad delight in flying that strenuous duty had temporarily dimmed in him. The duties that lay ahead of him were in themselves a marvelous prospect to the young flyer, but the last element necessary to make his happiness complete was the trim craft he was to fly.

To him it was a beautiful sight as it glistened there in the sun, and periodically his eyes left his instruments to glance over it, as though caressing every strut and wire.

Streamlined to the last degree, constructed almost entirely of duralumin, with all-metal propeller, and with compartments for clothes and emergency rations, capable of one hundred seventy miles an hour when flown wide open, with a landing speed of only sixty miles an hour, and with brakes for the wheels and an adjustable stabilizer to assist in making landing safer—it seemed to him practically perfect. Could he have built a dream ship for the perilous duty ahead, it did not seem to him that he would have changed a detail.

He forgot the vaguely annoying thoughts that had bothered him for the last two hours, and as he signaled to his mechanic to pull the wheel blocks he was like a bird, eager to reach his native element far above the earth.

The wind was coming from the west and the ship was headed that way. Slowly he eased the throttle forward until it was wide open. The Bullet seemed to leap into full career with the speed of its

Come On, Fire!

By LeRoy W. Snell

Gee, the hike was sure a blinger!
And the trail we followed here
Ran beside a foam-capped river,
Clambered hilltops, crossed a mere,

Through a wood, and so it led us—
An adventure-bordered trail.
Bill just missed a skunk by inches,
Harvey raised a flock of quail.

Buttski killed a diamond rattler;
Sliver plunged headfirst in muck.
First we pulled him out feet foremost;
Then we ducked him just for luck.

So, we tramped, with shouts and laughter,
Till we reached this grassy plot,
Where the lake steals through the rushes,
Just an ideal camping spot.

Now the boys are pitching pup tents,
Getting grub out to be cooked,
Steve, who's on the shore a-fishing,
Yells he's got a pickerel hooked.

Me, I promised I'd be fireman
And I've sawed my fingers numb,
Busted up three sets of bowstrings—
Guess my fire stick's on the bum.

No, by heck! I've got her started!
There's a little whiff of smoke!
Now I'd have to keep on blowing
Even if my bellows broke.

Puff! Puff! Puff! Keep coming, fire!
Don't you dare go out on me.
If I fail to keep you coming,
I'll get jeered till I can't see.

Hip, hurray, gang—see that flicker?
Get some kindling, Ben—that's right!
Now you sausages, get busy,
Heat some grub—let's have a bite.

namesake, and within seventy yards Russ felt it leave the ground in a rush of seemingly resistless power. He gave the instruments a last brief glance. Oil pressure, 25, voltmeter charging 2, R. P. M. 1950, temperature 85 Centigrade—all was well.

He tried to climb gradually for safety's sake but it seemed as though the ship were eager to leave the earth below as quickly as possible. Russ could scarcely believe it when he looked down at the edge of the field and saw that he was fully a thousand feet high.

As he circled he throttled the motor to 1550 revolutions and glanced back at Blackie with eyes that shone behind his goggles. Blackie nodded and, for a moment, his answering smile was as full of enthusiasm as his young companion's.

"What a ship!" Russ breathed as he sent it circling higher. "I feel as though I could lick a thousand Hawks in this!"

Eastward, three miles from the field, lay Tampico, gleaming in the sun. It was a far cry from the squalid, ramshackle huts that fringed the banks of the river to the shining white castles on the outskirts of town. Spread before him was Mexico epitomized—highly developed civilization, side by side with squalor and ignorance so primitive that it was scarcely a degree above savagery.

BRANCHING off from the Panuco River, which wound like a great snake through the monte until it disappeared from view, was the Tamesi, a gleaming rift between banks that were covered with foliage of tropical luxuriousness. As far as eye could see, on three sides, was the brooding monte, and eastward was the sea.

Russ, looking at the scene with his flyer's eyes, almost forgot to watch the performance of his ship. Automatically he shifted his body on his seat-pack parachute to attain more comfort but his eyes and thoughts never left the jungle. There would be hours and hours of flying over that tangled mass of tropical undergrowth and it seemed to him, for the moment, that it was a far more dangerous menace than the aerial bandit who would be lying in wait for him somewhere in that wilderness.

He sent his ship roaring out over it as though to become better acquainted with the impersonal enemy with whom he and his motor would fight a never ending battle. Narrow dirt roads ran here and there through it, leading to the oil camps that were buried in its depths, and occasionally a small length of buried pipe line was exposed to view.

The great terminals along the river were left behind as Russ, in the grip of the jungle's fascination, flew steadily southward. His mind was busy speculating on all that lay hidden in those tangled depths. Bandit gangs drove through its seemingly impassable fastnesses and, in small groups, indomitable oil men were fighting their battle against it. There would be pipe-line gangs cutting their way through it and, here and there, he could see a single automobile crawling along a road that was scarcely more than a trail. Civilization might be slowly conquering it but the conquest was far from complete.

Reflections such as these turned his mind back to the vaguely foreboding thoughts that had somehow become stronger since that astounding letter from the Hawk.

"No one is above suspicion," White had said—

Suddenly Russ' every muscle grew tense and his head snapped back like a scared animal's.

Without any warning, the rhythmic roar of the 400-horse-power motor died. His hand darted to the throttle and worked it back and forth frantically. His eyes swept the gauges but they told him nothing.

"It must be ignition trouble or the motor wouldn't go dead that way!"

He looked down and, as he saw the panorama below him, he cursed himself savagely.

"What a fool I am!" he raved bitterly. "Test flight and I have to get where there isn't a landing field within miles!"

He circled to look behind him but the

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Something to Yelp About

(*Continued from page 21*)

continued, then the tone began to change by degrees until it became obvious that Min was reaching the last stage of exasperation. Evidently, because neither Bruno nor Ted appeared according to schedule, her tones now carried a note of belligerency. Presently the yelping broke off altogether in favor of a soprano growl followed in turn by more yelps, this time of surprise and pain.

Realizing that this must be more than the customary false alarm, Bruno got to his feet, curled his tail over his back to a position of interrogation and trotted slowly and stiffly toward the scene of battle. Ted followed in the wake of the larger dog but with an air of protest and an extreme lack of interest.

They rounded a corner of the house and passed through the gate leading to the flower garden, where they came upon a scene well calculated to stir the city-bred interest of Ted and the prairie-bred disgust of the shepherd. Min, in the middle of the pansy bed, was dividing her time between short angry barks and wiping one forepaw and leg along the side of her head. In front of her, hunched into a gray ball about twice the size of a football, squatted one of the queerest animals that ever came out of a biscuit factory. In color he was mostly gray, although a series of dark bands, beginning on his back, narrowed to a point on his short flat smudge of a nose. His tail, short and broad also, lay on the ground and appeared to be the only mobile part of his make-up, for it kept up a nervous, side-to-side motion that, coupled with the expressionless gleam of two beady eyes, gave him an air of deep perplexity.

One look and Bruno stopped. Another and he sat down. A third and he let his tongue hang out one side of his mouth. He was ready, now, to return whence he had come and try to forget the humiliation of the moment. Bruno knew a badger when he saw one and this one he recognized as a four-legged battleship of the prairie. An animal with the will to fight at any time, with a puncture-proof hide, and a business end as warm as the lid of a red hot stove! All in all, Bruno asked for nothing more. He had seen enough.

If Ted had possessed the knowledge of the big shepherd, if Min had owned the common sense of a worm, the quarrel would never have gone further. All three dogs would have retired to attend to their own particular business. But Ted knew almost nothing and Min considerably less. Bruno had no way of warning the little dogs and to retire alone under the reproachful eyes of Min was unthinkable. Too wise to start what he couldn't finish, too much of a gentleman to leave the field, he did all that he felt was possible under the circumstances—he continued to sit.

BUT the trouble, as always, was with Min. Her nose still smarted and her disposition was running true to form. With Bruno and Ted at her back and facing an animal scarcely larger than herself, her courage mounted almost to the point of personal combat. At any rate she had no idea of retreat while there remained a chance of involving her companions in the scrap. Suiting her actions to her instincts, she began to circle slowly around the stranger, stopping occasionally to explode a series of yelps or to make harmless, puppy-like charges.

Now a badger is a sort of a cross between a weasel and a bear. Contrary to the popular conception of such matters, the bear end is in front and the weasel brings up the rear. The weasel end, like those of his cousins, the mink and the skunk, is dangerously odorous, but the bear end is armed with broad, powerful jaws and the highly efficient claws of an animal adapted to a burrowing life beneath the ground. All that prevents the badger from becoming the most formidable fighter on the prairies is the fact that he is a pacifist by nature and that he has a brain capable of about two ideas a year.

When Min had circumnavigated the badger's position two or three times, the gray-clad warrior's mind began slowly to function. His tail ceased its nervous, side-to-side motion and he blinked his beady, black eyes several times in quick succession. Then, as the yelping terrier circled again, he suddenly shifted his field of operations to a spot under the hedge of sweet peas. There, in soil which had been deeply spaded, he proceeded to give a perfect imitation of a well auger. Born, raised, and trained in the school of trench warfare, he was digging in.

Ted and Min, momentarily startled by this sudden maneuver on the part of their supposed prey, sat and stared in open-mouthed astonishment. Bruno, who had been expecting something of the sort, merely pulled in his tongue on one side of his mouth and let it hang out on the other. Presently, however, he drew it in again and showed a revival of interest by stretching his neck to watch the badger at his work. He had seen this same phenomenon taking place before, and he realized that if nothing happened to stop the badger, within a matter of minutes the quarrel would solve itself and Min would have nothing to bark at but a hole.

In a moment, the head of the badger disappeared, in another his shoulders had gone, and by the time the little dogs had moved closer for a better view, there was nothing to see but a mound of dirt surmounted by a waving plume of gray tail and spurts of dust.

But now Min, driven to exasperation by the inactivity of her shock battalion, could no longer hold herself in check. Darting forward, she buried her teeth in the waving plume and held on with all her strength. Not only did nothing happen but worse yet, nothing ceased to happen. The digging went on. If the badger knew that the little dog was clamped to the end of his tail, he gave no evidence of the fact. True, his tail no longer waved above the hole, but the rollicking motion of his body continued unchecked and the puffs of dirt still burst with rhythmical precision above the mound. And in spite of Min's pulling and tugging, in spite of her sharp little claws fighting into the ground, her nose was drawing, inch by inch, over the rim of the hole.

IT was then that the chivalrous heart of Ted drove him to the aid of his mate. Forgetting that she was the cause of so much unmerited suffering on his part, forgetting that going to her aid in the past had netted him nothing but trouble, he fastened himself to the badger's tail, nose and nose with Min.

Again nothing happened, but this time there was a difference, for the combined efforts of the two terriers served to cramp the badger's style. Although he still dug, only occasional puffs of dirt came from the hole, and it was evident that the gray warrior could use only one foot for digging because he needed the other as an anchor against the tugging dogs.

Up to this time, Bruno had contented himself with a display of mild interest. Personally, he had no quarrel with the badger. All his past badger fights had been humiliating blots on the pages of his fighting career. Min might be a lady dog, but he had already come to grief once too often in her service. If the badger wanted to pull her into the bowels of the earth, it was all right with Bruno. There was nothing holding her to the animal's tail but her own teeth and she had the option of opening her mouth at any time.

But now the situation was suddenly complicated. Ted had gone to the rescue and obviously needed help. Bruno was not a coward, and in spite of his opinion of Min, he hated to have her believe him one. And now that Ted, his gallant comrade of many fights, had seen fit to espouse the trouble maker's cause, it seemed as if the issue had been taken from his hands. There was only one thing to do. Getting to his feet with the

bored air of one who tackles an extremely unpleasant task, he moved forward until he stood above the combatants.

Here, again, there seemed to be no choice. All things being equal, he would have much preferred the tail as a point of attack, but the tail was already occupied. There was nothing left for him but the poorest hold of all, a short expanse of back just above the badger's hips. Not only was it a poor hold but a dangerous one. In case the badger should change his mind and decide to fight it out, he could change ends as rapidly as he could change his mind, and then Bruno would find himself suddenly transferred to the business end of the engagement.

Baring his teeth, more on account of distaste for his job than because of any personal rancor, Bruno set them firmly in the badger's fur and began to pull. He understood full well that he was fastened to something considerably more potent than a stick of dynamite, and as he pulled he kept a watchful and experienced eye on the excavating end of the enemy.

Now the digging ceased altogether. The powerful jaws of the shepherd had turned the scales and the badger was having more than he could do to hold his own. Slowly but surely he was coming out of the hole and the realization of coming victory brought shrill yelps of joy through Min's clenched teeth. Even Ted felt a share of her enthusiasm. Hastily he spit out a mouthful of hair, took a fresh hold, and sat back with all his might.

Then came the real beginning of the fight. Bruno sensed it first. It came to him as a premonition of evil when the badger's claws began to slip. And so it happened that when the bear-end changed places with the weasel-end, and the beady eyes and blunt jaws of the outraged excavator shot out of the hole like a bolt of lightning, Bruno was no part of the reception committee.

But Min was. The cry of exultation in the throat of the little terrier died in a gurgle of horror. Now that it was too late, she realized that it was all a mistake. Of a sudden she felt the call of pressing business elsewhere—anywhere. Somehow she felt that the affair of the badger had become a matter for Bruno and Ted alone, but for once she was too late in her getaway. The vengeful teeth of the badger, missing the little dog's nose by a narrow margin, had buried themselves in her collar. For the time being the terrier and the badger had become as one.

MIN'S cry of triumph changed to a symphony of terror that aroused Ted in spite of himself. He gave up his share of the badger's tail and made a wild plunge for the throat. His aim was accurate and his intention of the best, but here he dealt with an element new to him in the realm of animal warfare. A badger's skin is something like the envelope of a dirigible balloon. While it surrounds him and goes where he goes, it is no part of his vital organs. For an instant, Ted had the badger by the throat. Then the throat was gone and he held nothing but a mouthful of hair and skin. Making the best of a bad bargain, he shut his eyes, clamped down hard with his jaws, and braced all four feet. He had only one privilege left—the inalienable right to hope.

When Bruno returned to the field of battle after the short scamper that had carried him beyond reach of the outraged badger's jaws, he knew that the time for decisive action had now arrived.

It was now a genuine fight in which someone had to be the victor and someone the vanquished. If the badger remained satisfied with a hold on Min's collar, all might yet be well, but Bruno knew badgers and also knew that it would be only a question of time until the short-legged battler had a new idea. Then Min would lose an ear, possibly a part of her nose, or even the rest of her tail.

Because the badger had rolled under the hedge of sweet peas, Bruno rushed around to the other side and attached himself to the gray battleship's tail. Then he sat back with a violent tug. He didn't think of the pea vines that had climbed a wide stretch of woven wire a foot above the ground. The result was more and greater tragedy.

The original sweet pea seeds had cost the mistress five cents apiece, partly because they were a rare variety and partly because the seed house needed money. In the eyes of the mistress their value was approached only by the value of the silk shirt in the eyes of the master. Their propagation had been a labor of love extending over many hours of careful nursing. Their destruction required hardly enough time to be worth mentioning. At Bruno's first tug an ominous plop sounded from the end of the row, and the roots of one pea vine dangled in the air. Not to be outdone, Ted and Min tugged in unison and the *plops* were multiplied by three. Bruno countered with his end of the badger and the terriers held their own. As a result the last two or three dollars' worth of plops sounded like the tearing of an old piece of oilcloth. Then the *plops* ceased and the pea vines had gone the way of the shirt.

Bringing up against a heavy cedar post, Bruno felt that the era of *plops* had gone for good. Darting under the hedge, he found a lucky hold on the back of the badger's head. True to his nature, the badger redeemed his head and left Bruno with a mouthful of hide. But the pressure had forced the animal to evolve another idea. Loosening his hold on Min's collar, he shifted to a far better one which included the greater part of Ted's tail, and, while Min made a good retreat that ended only on the porch of the farmhouse, Ted took his turn at the pangs of remorse and sorrow.

From then on, the battle became a panorama of rolling, tumbling white and brown and gray. Finishing up the pansy bed, the fighters shifted their scene of activity to the garden proper. Row after row of bulbs and plants gave way before the onslaught, even as the sweet peas had done before. Then the badger changed his tactics. He clamped his tail tightly between his legs, rolled himself into a ball and thrust his nose beneath it and gave himself over to a period of acquiescence. Ted chewed until he got a cramp in his jaw and the badger made no comment. Bruno chewed until his tongue swelled beyond the confines of his mouth, but the results were precisely the same. Ted knew no better, but Bruno did. He knew that no dog could appreciably damage the hide of a badger, and when his brain began to function, he sat down and allowed Ted to enjoy himself without any interference.

But Bruno was thirsty, and he soon started for the creek. As a matter of course, Ted followed. When they returned, they found that the badger had taken advantage of their absence to leave the scene of hostilities. They also found, there in the middle of the ravaged garden, under the cold, gray light of dawn, the master and mistress.

Bruno took his punishment in solemn dignity. He had come to regard a thorough thrashing as part of the daily routine. Ted, however, rent the air with

A Seal Swims Forward!

The laughable trick Brett Conrad teaches a Puget Sound seal turns into a matter of life or death.

Look next month for Kenneth Gilbert's story—

"Olhiyu Remembers"

(*Continued from page 47*)

yelps of protest, partly because he didn't have any dignity and partly because of his shorter hair.

Locked in the granary, with nothing more than a pan of water for breakfast, dinner and supper, the two warriors lay panting in the heat and meditating upon Min's playful frolicking about the yard.

Evening came, and Bruno sat on the floor of the granary studying a limited area of yard through a knot hole in the door. He saw the master and mistress cross the yard and stop by a pile of dirt, while Min frisked about them still licking traces of her supper from her nose and whiskers. She, too, stopped at the dirt pile and began to dig. Bruno thought of the bone in there. Even a bone would taste good to him now. His tongue dripped hungrily.

It was then that the iron hand of Retribution hovered close to Min. And into Bruno's mind crept a glimmering of the old adage that right will win and the criminal some day gets it in the end.

Min was digging for the big dog's bone. Safe in her virtue, and valiantly performing before her approving master's eyes, she made the dirt fly nearly as fast as a badger could. Her enthusiasm was her undoing. When she pulled out the bone, a shred of cloth came with it. Even under its covering of dirt, it rippled with a lustrous sheen. The master's hand descended, grasped the cloth, and drew it slowly out. A sad remnant of what had once been the pride and joy of his heart —his blue silk shirt! Then it was that the master's hand, letting go the tattered cloth, became the iron hand of Retribution.

When twilight came, Min was leaning against a fence post over by the barn. It was her turn to stand now, because the place on which she usually sat was out of commission.

Bruno and Ted, released from confinement, lay on the floor of the porch, in comfort and content, fully forgiven. The pendulum of justice had swung, and the warriors had come into their own.

Don Learns Obedience

By Marian S. Sprague

"COME here," meant nothing to Don.

Don is a German shepherd, rangy in build and with the strength of an ox in his shoulders. He's playful—too playful for his size and strength. People shy from him as they would from a wild animal—until they notice his wistful, brown eyes, set well apart in his head. Then they conclude that he's gentle.

He is gentle—and friendly. But all through puppyhood and early doghood he refused to learn the meaning of a summons.

Here's Don.

As he grew bigger and more fierce-looking, I decided that he must learn obedience. I practiced calling him—and he came if he felt like it.

Fearing my voice was not strong enough, I used a whistle — a shrill one—but Don paid it no attention. And then came a stranger who all at once taught Don the virtues of obedience. The stranger was a large collie—an old, wise scrapper.

I saw the collie sitting on the terrace. Then I caught a glimpse of Don, running up from the beach for a romp with the visitor. I scented trouble in the offing, and called and whistled to Don. Without paying any attention, he sat down beside the collie and gave him a teasing bat across the face.

With a snarl, the collie turned on him and tore the flesh on his left flank. Frantically, I called again. But the call was superfluous. Yelping and whimpering, Don flew to my side and pushed so hard between me and the screen door that he nearly knocked me off my feet.

It was the perfect lesson. Don comes now when I call. A stranger has taught him the wisdom of prompt obedience.

The Second Bowl

(*Continued from page 9*)

and it was brimful. In his nervous hurry, the thief forgot that his hand and arm, going in, would spill the water out. But they did. And he saw right off that the partly empty bowl and the water on the table and the floor would be a dead giveaway. So he cleaned up the mess and added fresh water to fill up the bowl. Anyone, even one of the Foleys, could easily do that. The sneak thief had scattered all the linen around the dining room—this table cover was probably right at hand. The ring thief snatched it up and slipped it on the table. Then table and bowls looked as they always do. Both bowls are kept brimful—you can see that by the slime on the inside surface; it extends right up to the top."

"But how can we find out who did this submarine hiding?" Monk demanded. "And how are you going to prove it?"

"I think I can do both," said Barrett. He went into the kitchen; returned with two empty drinking glasses. "I'll give Shorty samples of the water in each bowl. We'll see what the analysis shows—it should be interesting."

With another glass he carefully refilled the bowls, and then took samples down to the car. "I've been talking with Mrs. Wallen," he said, when in ten or fifteen minutes he rejoined us. "Got her alone so as not to let the others suspect anything. She doesn't know what I'm after herself—but she says her nephew takes care of the goldfish. They're his. He changes the water completely, every other night. Doesn't touch the gravel—siphons the water out with a rubber tube. He did that night before last—to-night was his night to do it again. But naturally with the robbery, he hasn't done it yet."

Barrett sat down with us. "Shorty will be busy a while yet. Here's the idea. You know, of course, that a fish breathes by taking water rapidly in and out its gills. It takes oxygen from the water, and gives to the water carbon dioxide, a poisonous gas. So if you didn't change the water, those goldfish would die. If that water has been in the bowls for forty-eight hours now, it must hold an unusual amount of carbon dioxide and be extremely deficient in oxygen. Well, we'll soon see."

"But," objected Monk, "what the deuce has that got to do with who hid the ring in there?"

"A great deal," said Barrett. "The thing really is simple enough. We'll assume that forty-eight hours ago both bowls were full of fresh water. They hold the same amount of water and they have the same number of aquatic plants—otherwise, the chemical result might be altered. And they each have two goldfish, all the goldfish being of the same size. Normally, therefore, the condition of the water now would be the same in

both bowls. I want Shorty to find out if it is."

"It won't be the same," I said, "because to that second bowl where the ring is hidden, the thief added fresh water!"

"You've hit it exactly," Barrett smiled. "Don't you see, when Shorty gives me the oxygen and carbon dioxide content of those samples, by comparing one bowl with the other I can compute how much fresh water was added to the second bowl—in other words, I can tell how much water the thief spilled?"

"Why," demanded Monk, "do you want to find that out?"

"In order to compute who the thief is," Barrett retorted quizzically. "Wait a minute. I'll see how Shorty's coming on."

HE returned presently. "I have the figures," he announced. "Give me time to do a little calculating; then I'll have it."

We sat silent, watching. It seemed a strange way of catching a thief—snaring him with mathematical formulas.

"Here we have it." Barrett triumphantly showed us, at the bottom of his formulas, his algebraic equations, the small fraction of a cubic foot that represented the volume of spilled water.

"Well?" said Monk.

"That," said Barrett, "indicates clearly enough to me who hid the ring."

"It doesn't to me," said Monk.

"But it will in a moment. If you think an instant, you'll see clearly that anything immersed in water displaces a volume of water equal to its own volume.

"Now," Barrett went on, "a hand and forearm went into that water. We know the volume of the water displaced—and the volume of that hand and forearm up to the point of immersion is the same as that of the water displaced!"

He checked Monk's exclamation. "Under laboratory conditions such a result could be figured to a mathematical nicety. Practically, however, with the conditions I've had, I can get only an approximation. But it's quite close enough! I know now the volume—the approximate size—of the thief's hand and forearm! Bring those people in, Monk—we'll surprise one of them!"

They faced him in the Wallen living room.

He said abruptly, "You'll be startled to learn that the burglar who broke in here did not steal your diamond, Mrs. Wallen. In fact, we have the thief right with us now—and here is your ring!"

BARRETT drew up his sleeve, and abruptly plunged his hand into that second bowl. The water spilled out; it ran over the table and down to the floor and into the rug. The goldfish swam against the glass bowl in fright. Barrett's hand within the bowl looked queerly distorted by the water and the circular glass; his fingers probed the gravel. Then they came up, holding the huge gleaming solitaire in its platinum setting.

His audience gasped, but Barrett gave the thief no time to recover from the shock of this surprise. "It was easy to find, and we know who hid it! You, Mr. and Mrs. Foley, are quite stout, even fat, if you don't mind my saying so. And so are you, Mrs. Wallen—and you also, Mr. Blake. That's fortunate—a state of affairs that made it unnecessary for me to calculate very closely. You don't know what I'm talking about? Well, someone here in this room plunged a hand into that bowl and spilled water—as I did just now. Your hands and forearms are all somewhat large and bulky—very different from your thin hand and arm, Mrs. Peters! You stole the ring and hid it—and you can't deny it!"

The thin, wizened little housekeeper, with skinny arms and blue-veined hands like claws, was suddenly trembling. Under the stare of everyone in the room her wrinkled face went white. Hardly a criminal, she had no composure, no strength to hide her guilt under this sudden, direct accusation. Her head went into her arms; she began sobbing.

It seemed abruptly pathetic, this frail grey-haired old woman silently admitting her guilt. Barrett felt it, for he added more gently, "You realize we know you did it."

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She raised her head. "Yes, I did it. I went to the desk, to see if the burglar had stolen Mrs. Wallen's ring—I was all alone for a few minutes, for Mr. Blake hadn't come home yet, and Mrs. Foley had gone home to answer their telephone and she'd made Mr. Foley go with her because she was so nervous. I ran in to the desk to see if the ring were there—and when I got the ring in my hands it looked—it looked so beautiful and I thought what I could do for my sister out West with all that money. And I thought if the burglar had taken it, Mrs. Wallen would have lost it anyway. And she has other jewelry—"

"I know," said Barrett. "A sudden, unexpected temptation—and our reasoning often gets rather ridiculous when we're tempted."

He turned away from the sobbing old woman, and handed Mrs. Wallen the ring. "She's being punished now, Mrs. Wallen—I doubt if she'd let herself be tempted again. It's your right to prefer a charge, of course. But I'd think it over first. I imagine she'll still make you a good housekeeper. Don't you?"

Nothing Atoll!

(Continued from page 25)

"What do you take for yours?" asked George.

"I'll take anything that anybody offers; I'll even give it away."

The two youths followed their host to the dining saloon, which was tastefully decorated with confetti and sleigh bells.

Dinner was mostly on the table.

"You have your thumb in the soup," said George, reproving the steward.

"That's all right: it isn't hot."

"What kind of soup is it?" asked George.

"Solid cold soup," replied the steward. He was fooling.

GEORGE knew he was expected to ask, "What's solid gold soup?" and the steward would answer, "Fourteen carrots," and the joke would be on him (George). So George kept silent and the steward was so disappointed that he rushed on deck and fed himself to a shark.

The meal progressed merrily with quip and quibble, although the steak was so tough that neither George nor George could even cut the gravy. The captain was just conveying a knife-load of plum duff to his mouth when there was a terrific shock. He nearly cut his throat.

"We've struck a rock!" shouted the mate.

"Well, see that you don't do it again," said the captain.

"We're sinking!" added the mate.

"Oh, dear!" said the captain pettishly. "This boat is always sinking. It's getting monotonous."

On deck a scene of turmoil met their eyes. Some of the crew were running to; others were running fro; the cook was dashing hither. The ship's cat had even made a leap for you.

"Sir," said the mate, "we can't find the life-boat."

"Oh, didn't I tell you?" laughed the captain. "My wife wanted it to grow nasturtiums in; so I left it in the front yard at Grand Rapids."

"What sort of luck are you having with nasturtiums this year?" asked the mate.

"Well, since you ask me," replied the captain, "I'll tell you. I'm not satisfied at all. It's been too rainy, for one thing, and the topsoil wasn't mulched properly for nasturtiums."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the mate. "I'm very partial to the hyacinth myself."

At that moment a captain fell off the yard-arm and hit the mate on the head, rendering him more unconscious than ever.

"Where was I?" mused the captain.

"When?" asked George.

"Oh, don't tell me—I know," said the captain. "The ship is sinking. Now let me see—"

"Heave the lead," suggested George.

"Wheeve the foretopgallantstuns'l to the marlinspike with a bowline and belay," said George, always ready in an emergency.

"Will somebody get my rubbers?" shouted the captain.

Nobody paid any attention to this because they knew that a black-browed stranger had nailed the captain's rubbers to the cabin floor and filled them with glue. The sailors had remarked at the time that it looked like a diabolical plot, but they had thought no more of it.

When the ship finally sank, they all started ashore in all directions.

"George," said George, swimming with the easy crawl that made him captain of the swimming team at college, "we must devise another stratagem."

"You're right, George," said George, with the polished diction that made him captain of the debating team. "You said a pageful. Turn over."

"Let us change our names."

So it was that upon the glistening coral beach of Bungo-Bungo the thunderous surf cast up Elihu P. Boomer and Egbert Grandison. Wearily they threw themselves down on the warm sand and listened to the tropical zephyrs among the palm leaves and ate cocoanuts that the monkeys tossed at them. But little did they guess that, concealed behind a native ukulele player, crouched *Le Petit Chou* (the Striped Hyena). With malignant eyes he crouched, ready for a spring; in his clenched hand was a Malay *kris*. There was no crease in his trousers.

(To be continued in the March number.) (1936.) (Probably.)

If our gang had a shack

IF I were a boy and my crowd had built themselves a shanty, I'd be careful about the light we used. It's *awful* easy to start a fire. I'd have *electric* light—with Eveready Flashlights. Better than lanterns or candles. Safer—no danger of burning down the clubhouse. You can use a flashlight for a hundred other things, besides. Every boy knows that.

Most regular fellows have the flashlight habit nowadays. They own the best—an Eveready—and they are particular about what's inside. None but the most dependable batteries for *them*—Eveready Batteries, those long-lasting, old reliable light-makers. You can't beat them for service. They last and *last* and LAST! When you become a full-fledged flashlighteer, you'll always want genuine Eveready—they're worth holding out for. Insist on them when you reload your flashlights.

Mark Tidd in Sicily

(*Continued from page 16*)

trying to harm me?" asked John Peter.

"That," says Mr. Grecco, "is at the very root of the story. It is a mystery. A great wrong was done, but we do not know how it was done. There was guilt, but we do not know whose guilt. There was a traitor, but we do not know who was the traitor. Although," he says slowly, "your father was executed as guilty of betrayal."

"But he wasn't," says John Peter as positive as could be.

"I knew your father well. He was a great gentleman. He could not have been guilty of a betrayal," says Mr. Grecco. "Rather than betray a friend or an organization he would have allowed himself to be torn to pieces. But it was proved to the satisfaction of those in authority that he was guilty, and so he died. It was a black and terrible treachery, so that the sentence was that not one of his blood should be left alive."

"It must 'a' been p-perty bad, then," says Mark.

"It was."

"Not agin the gov'ament," says Mark.

"No."

"Nor agin a f-f-friend in b-business."

"No."

"But," says Mark, "agin a kind of a society."

"Yes," says Mr. Grecco.

"The Maffia," says Mark.

"The Maffia," says Mr. Grecco. "And it was the Maffia that executed Giovanpietro's father and pronounced sentence of death against his son. . . . Someone betrayed to the authorities a political plot engaged in by certain members of the Maffia for the good of all Sicily. As a result two men were sentenced to death and three to imprisonment for life. And the scheme came to nothing."

"Was my father of the Maffia?"

"Even though he was the heir to a dukedom," says Mr. Grecco, "he was affiliated with the Maffia."

"Then," says John Peter, "it can't be so bad after all."

"It is not evil," says Mr. Grecco, "though evil men cling to the fringes of it. Deeds are done and laid upon the Maffia which their hands have not caused. . . . And so, when it was too late to save your father, or even to fight for him, I took his son and fled to America where we have hidden for all these years."

"But why did they not kill my grandfather?" asked John Peter.

"It may be because he was so well guarded," said Mr. Grecco. "It may be they spared him because of his age, though that seems improbable. There may have been another reason. I do not know."

"And," says Mark, "you think John Peter's pa was killed because of what somebody else done—and put onto him."

"Yes."

MARK kind of squinted and pinched his fat cheek like he does so much when he is thinking hard, and then he says, "Somebuddy must 'a' done it."

"Truly."

"Somebuddy that knew," says Mark.

"Yes."

"Somebuddy," he said, "that wanted to do John Peter's f-father harm."

"Yes."

"In f-fact," says Mark, "the whole thing m-mebby was a p-plot to git him out of the way."

"It may be so."

"Who," says Mark, "w-wanted him out of the way?"

"That," says Mr. Grecco, "is the question."

"Um. . . . If John Peter and his father was dead, who would be duke when the old d-duke d-died?"

"A cousin of John Peter's father."

"Does he w-wear p'inted whiskers and a m-mustache shaped like a c-couple of carrots?"

"He does."

"Huh. . . . And now the Maffia is t-tryin' to execute John Peter?"

"It would seem so."

"Or," says Mark, "m-mebby not."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean s-s-somebuddy may be gittin' men that is Maffias to b'lieve it's their duty to kill him—when the Maffia would kind of forgit it if they was left alone."

"What makes you think that?"

"An ol' man that l-looks like a l-lion," says Mark, "that we see in Rendazza."

"Ah," says Mr. Grecco.

"So," says Mark, "what we got to do is p-prove John Peter's pa never was no t-traitor, and then the Maffia will lay off of him and mebby t-take care of the man that really done the b-betrayin'."

"But how—after all these years?"

"What m-made you come back here to Sicily?" says Mark.

"To try to place Giovanpietro in the house of his fathers."

"But you had s-some scheme."

"I hoped to conceal his identity until I could make investigations and try to find things long hidden. But he was recognized at once."

"That m-makes it l-look as if s-somebuddy knew where he was all the time—and as if they didn't b-bother with him till he come back and got dangerous."

"It does."

"And he hain't d-dangerous to the Maffia?"

"No."

"And if it was the Maffia who knew where he w-was, they'd have carried out the s-sentence?"

"Yes."

"I guess that f-f-etches us to the p'int where it's jest one man that wants John Peter done up, and that's the man that don't want him to git to be duke."

"That is excellent reasoning."

"So we got to kind of concentrate on that f-f-feller."

"Exactly."

"But we got f-f-friends," says Mark.

"Who?"

"Donna Vanna kin tell you t-that. . . . And we got one that hain't exactly a f-friend nor an enemy. But is kind of sad over it all."

"And that is?"

"The old man who l-looks like a lion."

"Ah," says Mr. Grecco, "and who is he?"

"I got an idee," says Mark, "but we won't do no t-talkin' about that jest now. I bet you he c-comes in handy. No, we g-got other things on our mind."

"Such as?" says I.

"Diggin' into the p-past," says Mark. "If you kin git secrets f-five thousand year old out of the tombs of Egyptians, and kin dig up s-secrets of the Medici family that lived f-five hundred years ago, and kin find out things about the Borgia—why, it don't l-look to me like it is impossible to git at real f-facts about the Duke of Rendazza that happened only f-fifteen year back."

"I don't know why," says Mr. Grecco, "but somehow I feel more encouraged today than I have ever been."

"You jest depend on Mark Tidd," I says. "He's bound to get you out of it. He's the all-firedest feller for gettin' at things you ever saw."

Mark kind of frowned and then he grinned and says he's glad somebody thinks he's got brains. "But," says he, "what we got to do is lay out a p-p-plan of campaign."

Chapter Fourteen

"YOU C-CAN'T do nothin'," says Mark Tidd, "without l-leavin' a mark. It don't matter what it is, why it s-stands to reason it makes t-tracks some'eres. If a f-fly lights on a puddin' ye kin s-see where he drags his feet jest the s-same as ye kin see where an elephant w-walks through a marsh. If you t-tell somebuddy a lie, why, there's allus the f-feller you told the lie *to*, and hidin' back some'eres is the truth ready to pop out. That lie 'll make tracks like a fly on a puddin' or an elephant in a s-s-swamp."

"Yes," says Mr. Grecco.

"And," says Mark, "once ye know there's a l-lie hangin' around, you're in a

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fair way to git at the t-truth."

"I'm not so sure of that."

"It's info'mation," says Mark. "It's what ye might c-call a c-clue. If you know there's a lie and you know the f-feller that t-told it, why, you're quite a piece along. Most lies hain't told jest for fun. And a lie hain't a lie unless it's told *to* somebuddy."

"That certainly is true."

"And," says Mark, "there's allus somebuddy *knows* the lie is a lie, even if it's only the f-f-feller that told it."

"To be sure."

"And," says Mark, "if it's a very b-bad lie and important-like, that f-feller's goin' to worry about gittin' ketched in it, and he's goin' to tell m-more lies and d-do other things to hide it. And fust thing you know, he's jest a-livin' right on top of a p-pile of lies that don't b-balance, and all you got to do is jerk out one l-lie and the whole kit and b-bilin' comes a t-tumblin' down around his ears."

"You are right," says Grecco.

"So," says Mark, "we got to go lie-huntin' j-jest like a body would go r-rabbit huntin'. And once we ketch us a good fat lie the job's p-perty near done."

"But we have the lie," says Mr. Grecco.

"No," says Mark, "we jest know there *is* one. It's the difference between knowin' there's a s-s-squirrel in a hick'ry tree, and havin' that squirrel ketched in a box trap."

"I see your point," says Grecco.

"But what do we do?" says I.

"We git our lie-hound," says Mark, "and put him on the t-trail."

"Say," says I, "if Johń Peter is the duke, why doesn't he go and *be* it? I mean wouldn't he swing a heavier oar if folks know he was the duke than he does just as a tourist?"

MARK he looked at me as if I was a complete stranger, and he took off his hat and says, "The n-name hain't Binney Jenks, is it?"

"Who's denyin' it?" says I kind of sharp.

"Nobuddy," says he, "but I didn't recognize you fust off in that disguise."

"What disguise?" says I.

"Actin' intelligent," says he, but he kind of grinned so that it wasn't a mean crack but a compliment. It made me feel pretty good I can tell you, for Mark Tidd doesn't throw compliments around like they're waste paper. Not that he isn't always willing to give a boy credit, but you got to *earn* the credit. He kept on looking at me and then he says, "Binney, I dunno but what we'll have to p-promote ye."

"To what?" says I.

"We'll make ye Fust Grand Exalted Idee-Gitter of the Ancient Order of Lie-Ketchers," says he, and then he turned to Mr. Grecco and says, "Kin you do it?"

"But why?"

"To force this other f-f-feller to come out into the open p-pasture instid of hidin' amongst the hazel bushes," says Mark. "If John Peter sets up as the Duke of Rondazza, why this f-feller with the whiskers has got to do s-s-suthin', hain't he? I s'pose ye kin p-prove John Peter's the duke?"

"I have the necessary documents."

"Then," says Mark, "git busy and use 'em."

"Perhaps you are right," says Mr. Grecco.

"Hain't no p'raps about it," says Mark. "It s-starts the war right out on the b-battle field instid of havin' a kind of guerrilla f-fight in the woods."

"Very well," says Mr. Grecco. "I will take immediate steps."

"And I," says Mark, "will t-t-take immediate s-s-steps to see what this feller does about the immediate s-steps *you* t-take."

"It's worth trying," says Mr. Grecco. "We will make our claim publicly. He will have to dispute it."

"You b-bet," says Mark, "or he'll have to git John Peter out of the way quick."

"I don't suppose," says John Peter, "it has occurred to you this might be kind of exciting for me."

"It's been excitin' right along, hain't it?" says Mark. "You can't have p-pie 'thout p-pickin' apples."

"Oh, never mind me," says John Peter. "I'm just the goat anyhow. I can hide in the cellar."

"What's the name of this f-feller with the p-p'inted whiskers?" says Mark.

"Andrea Cenci," says Mr. Grecco.

"Um. . . . So John Peter's name is Cenci and not Sense?"

"Yes," says Mr. Grecco.

"Giovanpietro Cenci is a heap different," says I, "than John Peter Sense. It's not so American for one thing."

"Go on right ahead," says John Peter, "and do whatever you want to with me and my name. The next thing you'll be telling me I'm Santa Claus."

"I dunno," says Mark, "but a few dukes raised in the United States might be a g-g-good thing for this here nobility. It'd bring in new idees."

"I bet," says John Peter, "I'll be a funny duke till I get the hang of it."

"Aw," says Mark, "it's easy."

"Is it?" says John Peter. "When were *you* a duke to find that out?"

"I was jest p-pertendin' I was right then," says Mark. "And if you p-pertend hard enough why you git to be what you p-pertend. I cal'late I was as much a d-duke as anybuddy fer a while. And I didn't find no d-difficulty to speak of. Why, you jest go right on b-bein' what you allus was, only you wear a d-different hat. That's all it amounts to. Folks calls you Your Grace instid of Mister. It don't make no difference inside of you, and scarcely any outside. You kin paint a white house green, but that don't move the kitchen into the parlor, and the bedrooms stays on the second floor."

"Mark," says John Peter, "I shouldn't be surprised if you were right."

"Sure," says Mark, "and now Mr. Grecco, if I was you I'd s-s-scurry around and set John Peter up in the duke b-business."

"Very well," says Mr. Grecco. "I shall set the law in motion and make public our claim."

"Good," says Mark, "and the rest of us 'll kind of cast an eye on this Andrea Cenci and his rat-ketchin' ferret that they call the Crooked One."

"Me," says Mr. Tidd, "I cal'late I'll go some'eres cool and quiet and read a mite out of the *Decline and Fall.* It kind of quiets a body, and what with one thing and another, I'm all a-tremble. I dunno but what I'm goin' to get as well pleased when I git back home to Wicksville and Ma Tidd. Still in all, a couple of hours of them old senators and lictors and what-not gives a body a comfortable feelin'. They didn't have no dukes then."

"Go ahead, Pa," says Mark, "but if you c-cal'late on goin' out where folks is around I dunno but what I'd put on a necktie instid of that there tidy you p-picked up off'm the bureau. And you b-better either wear t-two shoes or t-two slippers. Don't make no d-difference which."

"I cal'late," says Mr. Tidd as mild as milk, "I wasn't noticin' p'tic'lar when I got me dressed."

WELL, Mark turned to Plunk and Tallow and says, "I wisht you f-f-fellers would go out and scour around and s-see if you kin see the Crooked One. And if you kin, f-fasten on to him like you was b-bloodsuckers. Don't let him git the idee you're f-follerin' him, but s-stick to him tighter 'n a burr to a p-pair of woolen pants."

"Where you goin'?" says Plunk.

"Binney and me," says he, "is goin' to t-take after this here Andrea Cenci."

"And how about me?" says John Peter.

"You," says Mark, "go and s-s-spend the time with Donna Vanna, and t-t-talk yourself black in the face. She knows a heap. Make her t-t-tell you everythin', and don't f-forgit a word she says. No t-tellin' when some l-little thing will set us on the t-track."

"Well," says I, "that puts everybody to work. So let's fly at it. I'm tired of settin'."

So we all started off different ways, and Mark says to me, "I bet you this here town 'll b-b-boil over when it gits the news about John Peter."

"I bet a heap of things 'll boil over," says I, "and I hope I don't get scalded."

"It's a good idee," says Mark, "to git

acquainted with the enemy. A f-feller ought to know 's much as he kin about him. Now we don't know nothin' about this here Cenci man exceptin' that he's got funny idees about how to wear whiskers."

"How'll we find out more?" says I.

"I wonder," says Mark, "if he t-t-talks English?"

"Most of these dukes and such does," says I. "And he cal'lates to be a duke."

"Anyhow," says Mark, "we kin t-t-try him."

"What d'ye mean?" says I.

"Why," says Mark, "we kin make a afternoon call. Mebby he'll invite us to t-tea."

"Yes," says I, "and put Paris Green into it."

"Dog-gone," says Mark, "I wisht I could talk this here Sicilian language."

"Well," says I, "you can't."

"It's a drawback," says he, "but we'll have to m-manage somehow."

"Pretend you can," says I. "You're so all-fired good at pretendin'. Maybe you can pretend so good you'll find yourself speakin' it."

"I got a harder job p-pertendin' than that," says he kind of placid-like.

"What's that?" says I.

"It's p-pertendin' you hain't a double-j'inted s-smart alec," says he, and after that we talked along together and didn't say much for a while. But then I got curious.

"Just where," says I, "are we goin'?"

"We," says he, "are a-goin' to m-march up to the f-front door of the Duke's house and r-ring the bell and say we come to t-talk over international r-relations."

"We won't get in," says I.

"Mebby not."

"And if we do," says I, "we'll get into trouble."

"Well," says he, "what *I* want to know is how kin a body git *out* of trouble if he don't git *into* it? You jest lay back your ears and t-t-tell me that."

"Who wants to git into it?" says I.

"You don't have to come," says he.

That made me kind of mad. "Here's the front gate," says I. "Jamb your thumb agin the bell."

So he jammed it.

Chapter Fifteen

NOTHING happened for a spell after Mark pushed the button; so he pushed again, and then a man came and opened the gate and stood looking at us as if we were fish peddlers, but Mark spoke right up and says, "Is Mr. Cenci in?"

The servant he said something back in Sicilian, and I see we weren't getting any place at all. But Mark had another try at it. "Signor Cenci," says he kind of loud. "Signor Cenci! Signor Cenci!"

The servant he puckered up his face as if he was trying to think, and he says something again, but all Mark did was keep right on repeating "Signor Cenci!" till I nearly screamed. But after a while the servant got tired of hearing it, I guess; so he pointed to the ground and made motions that we understood meant we were to wait there. So we waited while he went off some place.

"He's goin' for reinforcements," says I. "We'd better get while we're all healthy."

"He's gone for Signor Cenci," says Mark with a grin, and that's how it turned out to be; for in about four minutes the man was back, and right behind him was the gentleman with the pointed whiskers. The man showed us to his master as if we were something in a cage and Mister Cenci looked us over pretty cool and offish.

"How be ye?" says Mark. "I hope y-you kin s-s-speak English."

"Rather better than you do, I fancy," says Mr. Cenci, talking like an Englishman.

"What you s-speak," says Mark, "is English English. What I t-t-talk is United States English. It's got the m-modern improvements."

"You asked for me," says Mr. Cenci. "We got a h-hankerin' to see you," says Mark. "We hain't n-never talked to the r-relative of a duke. So we jest m-made up our minds we'd c-come and

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see a m-member of the nobility."

"American tourists," says Mr. Cenci, "are crazy."

"Mebby so," says Mark as gentle as a lamb. "But they're harmless. You see we hain't got no n-nobility to home, and it's only natural we sh'ud want to s-see the s-sights when we git abroad."

"Well," says Mr. Cenci, "now that you've seen me, what?"

"Why," says Mark, "we'd kind of l-like to come in and visit. I bet you you're an interestin' f-feller to t-talk to."

Mr. Cenci shrugged his shoulders. Almost everybody in Europe shrugs his shoulders. It's a disease. "Why not?" he says. "You might be amusing, and the morning is dull."

"You hain't got no idee how a-a-musin' we be," says Mark.

"Then come in," says Mr. Cenci, but you could see he had something in the back of his mind besides letting us entertain him. There was some idea there, and I made up my mind to be pretty careful what I said and did. And I nudged Mark Tidd, too. Mark he just grinned. So we went in, and Mr. Cenci led us to the house and into a big room with pictures on the wall that were hand-painted. They were pictures of people mostly, and Mark says, "Is them your ancestors?"

"That," says Mr. Cenci, pointing to an old gentleman, "is the late duke. The one next is his son."

"He's the duke now, hain't he?" says Mark.

"He is dead," says Mr. Cenci.

"Oh," says Mark kind of innocent. "Was he sick l-long?"

"He was never sick," says Mr. Cenci. "He was killed."

"Automobile accident?" says Mark.

"A knife," says Mr. Cenci kind of sharp. "The story goes that he interfered with things that were not his business—a very unhealthy occupation in Sicily."

"He hadn't ought to of d-d-done it," says Mark.

"People," said Mr. Cenci, "should learn valuable lessons from such happenings."

"I bet you they do," says Mark. "I b-bet you, with enough p-practice, they could l-learn how to meddle and not git killed at all."

WELL, just then the hunchback that was called the Crooked One came spang into the room, and stopped sudden when he saw us and scowled as black as ink. He says something quick to Mr. Cenci and Mr. Cenci says something back again, and then they both got to stringing out the lingo as fast as a barrel rolling down hill. But about half a dozen times I caught two words and they were Donna Vanna. I looked across at Mark to see if he had noticed, but his face was kind of mild and simple; so I knew right off he was noticing everything. Whenever you see Mark Tidd look like he was about half-baked why that's the time to look out. I watched the Crooked One's face and Mr. Cenci's, and it seemed to me they were mad and kind of worried, too. Then they jabbered about us, and the hunchback scowled at us some more and turned around and went out.

Then Mark spoke up and says, "If the duke is dead and his s-s-son is d-dead, too, who's a-goin' to be the n-next duke?"

"I am," says Mr. Cenci as cool as a cucumber.

"That'll be n-nice," says Mark. "I bet you you're l-lucky. It hain't often a whole row of f-f-folks dies off so a feller kin git to be a d-duke, is it?"

"Will you wear a crown?" says I.

"Dukes wear cornets," says Mark.

"How can they?" says I. "You can play a cornet in a band, but you couldn't ever get one to stay on your head."

Mark grinned kind of half-witted at Mr. Cenci and says, "You got to excuse him, Mister; he's kind of dumb."

"I am not," says I, "and I bet you you couldn't wear a tuba, let alone a cornet. Next thing you'll be sayin' an earl wears a snare drum."

"Are you staying long in Sicily?" says Mr. Cenci.

"Not long," says Mark.

"It would be too bad," says Mr. Cenci, "if you had to stay longer than you like. You're fond of the United States, aren't you?"

"It s-suits us perty good," says Mark.

"If," says Mr. Cenci, "I were in your place, I should go back to it."

"I thought," says Mark, "d-d-dukes allus lived in p-palaces."

"Some of them," says Mr. Cenci, "are contented with villas."

"I don't see," says Mark, "how you git along. There ought to be retainers and a s-s-secret passage and b-battlements and sich-like. Is there any s-secret p-passages in this house?"

"None," says Mr. Cenci.

"Or s-secret rooms where a body kin h-hide?"

"None," says Mr. Cenci.

"Or even s-secret d-drawers to p-put the jewels?"

"Why should there be?"

"Because all families of d-dukes ought to have family s-secrets," says Mark. "And they ought to have the documents about 'em hid in a secret drawer so as n-nobuddy kin find 'em—not till the rightful claimant comes along and ousts the usurper."

MR. CENCI frowned and says, "What d'ye mean by that?"

"I was jest kind of p-pertendin'," says Mark.

"He's always doin' that," says I. "You can't half the time tell whether he's doin' what he looks as if he's doin', or if he's makin' believe."

"How interesting," says Mr. Cenci.

"You bet it is," says I, "but sometimes it's kind of bewilderin' to folks that don't understand."

"Um. . . ." says Mark, "I bet you all this f-furniture and everything is genuine antiques."

"It is very old," says Mr. Cenci.

"That cabinet there," says Mark, "l-looks like it was homemade."

"That," says Mr. Cenci, "is a *Credenza*. It was made in Venice during the fourteenth century."

"Gee!" says Mark. "That was before Columbus discovered America."

"We are rather older than America here," says Mr. Cenci kind of patronizing.

"Well," says Mark, "we're much obleeged to ye. And now we'd b-better be goin'."

"Won't you have some refreshments," says Mr. Cenci, kind of sarcastic. "I regret it is not afternoon so I might offer you tea."

"We hain't h-hungry, thank ye," says Mark. And then he kind of grinned. "Hain't no relative of the Borgias, be ye?"

"No," says Mr. Cenci.

"That's good," says Mark. "I didn't know but you m-might be, and I wouldn't want to drink no teas s-served by anybody that was kin to them Borgia folks. Though I never heard tell of 'em p'isonin' tea. Mostly it was wine, wasn't it?"

"Why," says Mr. Cenci, "should I poison you?"

"No reason," says Mark, "but them Borgias done it for f-f-fun. It was a kind of a game. Every t-time they p'isoned a feller it counted points. If they p'isoned a common man it was one point and if they p'isoned a duke it was t-ten points. Kind of like that. I cal'late they run up a big score."

"Well," says Mr. Cenci, "if you *must* go—"

"We got to," says Mark. "We got b-business."

"I hope it turns out successfully," says Mr. Cenci.

"That," says Mark, "is what we cal'late to m-make it do."

So Mr. Cenci showed us to the gate and we went out into the road and started back for the hotel.

"Now," says I, "what good did that do?"

"What?" says Mark.

"Callin' on Mr. Cenci."

"Scouts," says Mark, "have got to s-scout."

"Are we scouts?"

"We're the hull b-blamed intelligence d-department of the army," says he.

"And not so dog-gone intelligent at that," says I.

"But," says he, "we got important information."

"I didn't," says I.

"Proba'ly not," says Mark, "but I did."

"Then," says I, "let's have it."

"Fust," says he, "I f-found out they was worried."

"I didn't see any signs of it."

HE JEST shrugged his shoulders. "And s-second," says he, "I f-found out they was worried about Donna Vanna."

"I noticed them s-speakin' her name," says I.

"I bet you the Crooked One was t-tellin' Mr. Cenci that John Peter had gone to see her."

"Why should that worry them?"

"Because," says Mark, "they got an idee she knows s-suthin'. I got the same idee."

"Then why doesn't she tell it?"

"Mebby she hain't found jest the r-right day fer it. I bet you she's got her reasons."

"She's a witch," says I.

"I druther she was our w-witch than their'n," says Mark.

"Well," says I, "mebby she told John Peter suthin' to-day—when he went to see her alone."

"Mebby," says Mark. "Let's go f-find out."

So we went back to the hotel and after a while John Peter came in, and so did Plunk and Tallow, all swelled up and important because they had been spyin'. And we went to our room and sat on the floor and on the bed, and Mark says, "Did Donna Vanna tell you anythin' important, John Peter?"

"She was strange," says he, "and did something that looked like magic, and then she said the day was near and things like that."

"Yes," says Mark, "but did she s-s-say anything important?"

"There was one thing," says John Peter. "She said there was a message from my father."

"What?"

"Yes. She said that somebody brought her a message from him on that night of terror as she calls it—after he had been captured and taken away. The message was funny."

"What was it?" says Mark all excited.

"Donna Vanna said to me, 'This one comes to me out of the night. He makes himself to scratch upon my window, and in a voice filled with fear he speaks words'."

"What words?"

"She said, 'The one who scratched spoke painfully and with panting breath. "A last word from the master," he said. "Himself he could not help. They came upon him too suddenly. But before he died he sent this message: 'When the day comes, tell my son to press the Lion's Claw'."

"Gosh," says Mark, and his eyes almost bulged out of his head he was so tickled and excited. "You jest can't beat that."

"Beat it?"

"For mystery and r-romance and all. *Press the Lion's Claw!* Fellers, I dunno's I could s-stand much more."

"I don't see that it helps much," says John Peter.

"Ye don't! Jest wait till we press the Lion's Claw!"

"But what lion's claw, and where is it to press?"

"That," says Mark, "is the f-fun of it. We don't know. We got to p-puzzle it out."

(To be concluded in the November number of THE AMERICAN BOY.*)*

The Shouting Violet

(Continued from page 7)

hand was forced. That's unfortunate, but it doesn't change the facts. He's entitled to his chance."

On Monday Roberts, smiling and winking at his friends, sauntered over to the third squad. Before the week was out he was on the second team. Three days later he was tearing things wide open for the varsity. To Bancker he was studiously polite—with a politeness that almost bordered on insolence.

"Trim," said Bancker, "you follow your interference a shade too closely."

"Yes?" Trim spoke in a lazy drawl. "I thought you wanted speed?"

"I also want headwork," the coach said quietly. "If you're on the heels of your interference and it is stopped dead, you pile right into it. Give yourself enough room to swing one way or the other in case of a jam."

"Now let's have the straight of this," the fullback said easily.

Bancker waited.

"Isn't the real trouble the fact that the interference is too slow? Of course it's easier to slow down a fast man than it is to speed up slow men. You don't have to beat around the bush when you're talking to me." He strolled into the locker room and began to strip for the shower.

"What did Coach say to you?" Foxen asked curiously.

"It happened," Roberts announced lightly, "that I said it to Coach."

FOXEN made an expressive cut across his throat with his fingers and began to whistle a dead march.

"Tell me that after the Bradley game," Roberts invited.

Against Bradley he ran wild. Twice, when the holes he shot for didn't open, he shunted off to one side, picked narrow gaps, and went through for nice gains. Once, in a broken field, he dodged, sidestepped, squirmed, reversed his field, and ran sixty yards for a touchdown. He threw one long forward pass that put the team in line for another score, and his punts hopelessly outdistanced the rival kicker. Against freshman competition he had been great; to-day, against varsity competition, he was greater. The final whistle sent the team to the locker room jubilant. Roberts, his shoulders swaying, passed among them as a god.

"Did you see me break loose from my interference and get away?" he demanded.

"I remember Coach telling you how it should be done," Foxen said coldly.

"He told all of us," Roberts spat back, "but I seemed to be the only one who could do it."

Goodwin, who feared a row, began to sing a Grandon song, and the quarrel was drowned out.

It was dark when the team came in a body from the locker room. A newsboy was at the first corner.

"*Times* football extra! All about the big game. *Times* extra!"

The football crowd swamped the newsboy. Roberts, getting the first paper, held it out where it caught the light from a street lamp. The story was right across the page:

BLOND COMET TRIUMPHS OVER BRADLEY

"Well," Roberts said with a thrill of excitement in his voice, "it looks as though 'Gene Bancker's been pushed out of the headlines."

Somebody uttered a startled, warning "Sssh!" Roberts, turning his head leisurely, saw Bancker only a few feet behind him.

"Oh, hello, Coach." His tone was casual. "Care to see what the *Times* says?" He held out the newspaper.

THERE were those on the squad—Foxen, Rowe, Bloodgood—who expected Roberts to come to swift and sudden football grief. Bancker had never built up a reputation for softness, and Grandon players were not in the habit of slapping him in the eye and getting away with it. But, after the Bradley game, the fullback continued to fill his niche in the team, and Horsey continued to haunt the field and the locker room, and there was much whispering between them.

The situation worried Goodwin. A certain studied insolence on Roberts' part had become a habit—it seeped out of him in all his dealings with the coach. And although Bancker remained outwardly calm and unruffled, the captain saw that jumping pulse in his neck and tried to warn the star.

"That stuff makes me tired," Roberts yawned. "You're the fourth fellow who's tried to tell me the goblin will get me. Bancker's never liked me. Now, it happens that I'm just a little too good to put up with a coach's grouch—"

"When did he ever hand it to you, Trim?"

"Have you forgotten how long he kept me with Tyndal's squad?"

"But, good heavens, Trim, other men have been kept—"

"Not star men," Roberts said complacently. "I'm too good to be handed treatment like that, and I'm too good to be chucked off the team. I'm the boy that scores touchdowns. No offense, Good, but it's true. Bancker ignored me at the start, and I'm just giving him back a little of his own medicine."

"Do you think," Goodwin asked in scorn, "that Bancker will put up with this all season?"

"He may have to," Roberts said calmly. "Horsey Mott says— Oh, well, I'm not worrying."

The interview did not lessen the captain's worries. He knew that one-half the team's strength was built around the fullback, and he knew, too, that at any moment that strength might be lost to the team. Some day Bancker's patience would snap, and then there would be a reckoning.

Roberts starred against Carlton. The Carlton team, heavy and brawny, wore itself out driving at the Grandon line. Time and again it cracked the line, skirted the tackles, skidded around the ends—only to lose the ball in Grandon territory and have Roberts' driving foot recover whole slews of distance. For three quarters the blond comet's kicking stood between Grandon and disaster. Then Carlton, discouraged and exhausted, lost her edge, and Grandon worked a painful passage down the field into position to give Roberts a shot at the goal posts. From the 35-yard line he put the ball over, and the game was won.

The fullback got the headlines again. Horsey did himself proud:

COMET'S SENSATIONAL KICKING WINS FOR GRANDON

"Too bad the newspapers are giving Bancker the short end," Roberts said in the locker room. Fortunately, Goodwin thought, Bancker was not there at the moment. The next instant this sense of relief was swallowed by the realization that, had the coach been present, Roberts would have strutted his stuff just the same.

The following Tuesday night Horsey brought a bundle of newspaper clippings to Roberts' dormitory rooms.

"From all over the country," the sports editor said with a flourish. "Boy, we're cashing in. One of the newspaper syndicates wired me to-day for a special story about you with photographs. Watch me go to it! We're coming along, and there mustn't be any stops. You know what that means, Trim—something spectacular every game, something I can spread."

The fullback's eyes snapped.

"Pick at least one spot in every game for a show," Horsey went on. "You may have to fight for that spot. Well, suppose you do. You can get away with stuff that those other dubs wouldn't attempt. You're the Blond Comet. Don't let them forget it. If Bancker tries to step on your neck, tell me. I made him see reason once; I can do it again."

Roberts brought the most lurid of

the clippings to the gym and pasted them on the door of his locker. Mutterings ran through the squad—bitter talk and derisive laughter. Bancker gave no sign that he saw the stories.

"Trim!" Goodwin spoke sharply but in an undertone. "You're not going to leave those clippings there?"

"Why not?" Roberts' voice carried the length of the room. "That's what a man gets for scoring touchdowns."

"Haul off, Good, and poke him in the jaw," Foxen cried in disgust.

The captain sweated with a fear that open warfare would break out in the team. If Roberts was going to keep this up . . . He paid a visit, after supper, to the house off the campus where Bancker lived.

"Afraid I'll throw out our shouting violet?" the coach asked with a quick look at the boy.

"No." Goodwin shook his head. "I was afraid of that at first. What worries me now is a smash-up within the team."

"If I ever get rid of him," Bancker said slowly, "it won't be because of what he's done to me, but what he does to himself. As for a smash-up in the team, forget it. We've got the Manhattan game to think about."

The clippings stayed on the locker and were studiously ignored. Goodwin was thankful for that. Friday night, Horsey's before-the-game story predicted victory for Grandon "provided the Blond Comet comes through with his usual game." The story was loaded with danger, but the squad took it without comment. Goodwin wondered if Bancker had spoken to Foxen and one or two of the other firebrands.

The day of the game brought a clouded sky and a threat of snow. A strong wind blew out of the north and Horsey, coming to the locker room while the team made ready for the field, shivered and wished he had worn a heavier coat. He avoided Bancker — something in the coach's face gave him warning—but he spoke to the players. Foxen answered him curtly. Goodwin didn't answer him at all. The sports editor caught Trim's eye and gave his cane a derisive twirl.

Bancker's instructions to the team were short and curt.

"This wind," he said, "isn't going to last. If we guess the toss we'll take the north goal. Roberts will kick as soon as we get the ball. We'll let Manhattan wear herself out battering at the line. That's all."

They crowded out, Roberts the third or fourth player and Horsey almost at his shoulder. The moment they passed through the door the writer spoke.

"Remember what I told you, Trim. Watch for your chance."

Goodwin caught a word here and there—enough to comprehend. He looked around for Bancker, but the coach, trailing the squad, had not yet reached the door. When he did come out, Horsey was almost at the stand on the way to his seat. Goodwin, in a shaking voice, told what had happened.

That telltale pulse leaped again in Bancker's throat. "Outside coaching?" he asked.

"It looks that way," Goodwin choked. "Because he's always written our games we give him the freedom of the field and the locker room and he—"

"Save your energy for the game," said Bancker. "I'll attend to Horsey."

GOODWIN won the toss and took the north goal. Roberts kicked and the ball, helped along by the wind, went far out of bounds, to be brought back and put into play. In three plays Manhattan made a first down. Another smash at the line netted eight yards. Then Manhattan fumbled, and Foxen scooped up the ball and ran forty yards for a touchdown. The score board showed a 6 for Grandon, and Roberts stepped out to kick for the extra point.

With his blond hair blowing in the wind he was a picture. The crowd broke into a roar, giving him a hero's acclaim and mentally adding a point to the score.

But the great Roberts missed.

An audible sigh of dismay ran through the stands. Roberts stamped his foot and jawed at Bloodgood, who had held the

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ball. The next instant, as though conscious that this was not the type of show that would get him anything, he tried to cover his display of spleen and went down the field for another kick-off.

All through the half his blond hair, unprotected by a headguard, flamed through the scrimmages. To the stands, he was plunging into the line with furious zeal, but Bancker, appraising every move with the knowing eye of experience, knew that Grandon's shouting violet was playing in a temper. Against Bradley and Carlton he had been a shatterer of enemy morale; against Manhattan he was a picturesque but futile threat. Once he was thrown for a staggering loss. Stung by his failure he lost his football rhythm. He fell away from his football instinct and began to play wild.

At the end of the half Grandon still led, 6 to 0, but the confidence that had come with Foxen's run was gone. The team was tired. The players panted as they trotted to the locker room.

Bancker, watching the door, was the first to see Horsey Mott cross the threshold of the room. The sports editor's face wore a frown of anxiety, as though some weighty and important project had gone amiss. Roberts, sitting on a bench and staring at the floor, was startled by the crisp sound of the coach's voice addressing Mott.

"Anything on your mind, Horsey?"

The sports editor, too, was struck by something in the voice. He had always been at home here, sure of his welcome, confident. Now, strangely, his step faltered as though he were suddenly conscious of a vague and disquieting change.

"I want to talk to Roberts, 'Gene."

"You'll have to see him after the game."

"But this won't take a mo—"

"After the game," said Bancker.

The room had grown very still, and Horsey was conscious of the eyes of the players, staring at him with a curious intentness. The uncertain atmosphere grew clear and definite; he recognized it for hostility.

"Look here, 'Gene," he said angrily, "don't make the mistake of going off half cocked. I'm a valuable man to have as a friend. I've always had the run of this place—"

"But you can't stay here now," the coach interrupted flatly.

"Are you ordering me out?" Horsey asked incredulously.

The coach nodded.

"Why, you—you—I've tooted your horn, I've built you a faked reputation. I've—"

At the forbidding look in the coach's eyes, Horsey Mott's sputtering voice died. For several heartbeats he stood his ground, furious and uncertain. One of the players vented a nerve-tensioned laugh. Abruptly the sports editor jammed the cane under his arm, swung on his heel and was gone.

"Somebody close the door," Bancker said quietly.

BUT in the stands the crowd was singing "Glorious Grandon" in a mighty, rolling chorus. Rowe complained of his shoulder, and Bancker examined it with complete concentration, as though he had already forgotten the clash with Horsey. Foxen lay back, relaxed, and smiled dreamily at the door through which Horsey had disappeared. Goodwin was wondering if the row, coming on the heels of that terrific first half, would sink the team. The sledding would be hard if Roberts grew sulky. And yet he would not have had Bancker act otherwise.

Roberts hadn't stirred from his bench. The quarrel had come as a shock, but after the first flush of amazement his eyes followed Bancker with all the old insolence. The whole thing was plain to him. The coach, huffed because he was no longer heralded as the great god of Grandon, had gone out for revenge.

"First," Roberts told himself, "he tried to hold me down, and now he goes after my friends. He can't throw me, and he knows it. I'm too good."

He had to stand by Horsey. The thought took hold of him. The trainer adjusted the bandage on his right ankle—he was scarcely conscious of the act. A voice said "Five more minutes," and Bancker began to speak in an endeavor to hearten his players for the gruelling half to come. The fullback didn't even attempt to catch the drift of the talk. How could he help Horsey? Why, by giving him real stuff to write about. Every time he starred, every time he pulled off a spectacular play, he would provide Horsey with a new nail to hammer into Bancker's sensitive hide. He gave the coach a sidelong glance of triumph.

Bancker caught it, but gave no sign. "That's all," he said quietly. "They'll probably score a touchdown this next half. I count on you to score one, too. They'll probably score first; don't let it worry you. Everybody out."

Once away from the locker room there was a low-voiced speculation among the squad. Roberts caught some of it as the players trotted toward the field. Would Horsey go after Bancker in the newspapers? Horsey was a tough man when it came to roasting. If he started to get nasty—Roberts shrugged his shoulders. Bancker would deserve anything he got.

The blond fullback's temper, his uncertainty, were gone. As he pawed the ground with his feet, waiting for the kick-off, he noticed that the wind had gone down. Kicks would ride under their own power, and would ride true. All he needed was a shot or two at the goal posts. The whistle shrilled, and as the oval arched toward him, a corner of his mind held to the thought that in this half he had to pick a spot for a show.

Goodwin gave him the ball for the first play, and he slid off tackle for six yards. Bloodgood tried the right end, and was stopped at the line. A moment later Roberts smashed center for first down. Grandon's song thundered from the stands.

Manhattan had weighed Roberts in the first half and had found him wanting. Now the Manhattan captain revamped his opinion. Two men were detailed to cover the Comet and not let him get away. At once Grandon seemed to lose her punch. Twice Roberts tried, and twice two Manhattan tigers got him before he could start. Grandon kicked.

The Manhattan machine, denied in the first half, now swarmed over the Grandon line. Straight, old-fashioned plunging, mixed up with crisscrosses, shifts and short forward passes. The Grandon team dug in and heaved, grunted and went down. The blond hair of Roberts, flaming, disordered, marked the disastrous tide of the battle. With a final thrust, Manhattan put the ball over for a touchdown—and kicked goal. The score was 7 to 6.

"All right, fellows," Goodwin panted. "Bancker said she'd get one touchdown and get it first. Now it's our turn."

Roberts wiped the sweat out of his eyes. Up in the stands they were probably saying that if he hadn't missed

that point after touchdown the score would be tied. The fear of being blamed for defeat, the dread that his fame would dwindle, charged him with volcanic power.

His kicking that day made kicking history. It became increasingly evident as the game ran on that Manhattan was the stronger team—and yet she could not score again. A blond giant braced the line, put a stop to the enemy's forward passes by an uncanny ability to guess where the pass was to go, and undid every Manhattan offensive with a long, ground-gaining kick.

The stands grew hoarse shouting, "Roberts! Roberts! Roberts!"

And then, taking the ball on her own twenty-eight yard line after one of the Comet's terrific kicks, Manhattan made her second fumble of the day. There followed a riot of arms and legs! A roar swelled from the crowd! When the heaped players were untangled, Goodwin had the ball, and the Grandon stands had a moment of madness. Twenty-eight yards from a touchdown! Grandon shrieked its prayer:

"Come on, Trim! Come on, you Comet!"

Bancker's face was impassive, but the pulse in his neck belied his calm. No team is proof against panic when it loses the ball close to its own goal line. Manhattan, for the time being, was frantic.

"If Good knows enough," the coach muttered, "to try a short forward pass while they're upset—"

The captain called a series of numbers.

"Smart boy!" Bancker smiled. "Trust him to see it."

One of the players sprang out of position crying, "Signal! Signal!"

"Roberts!" Bancker muttered in sharp recognition, and stood as though turned to stone.

Goodwin took a step backward to speak to the fullback. It seemed to the coach that they argued hotly. Again the captain bent behind the center. Again he called a string of numbers—and again Roberts interrupted the play.

"Signal!"

This time the argument was prolonged and the whole team went into a huddle. When the players scattered to their places instinct told Bancker that something had been changed. He saw Roberts step back into kicking position. Then he understood, and his face went black.

The ball came back, the lines heaved and spilled, Roberts' foot swung, and the ball arched into the air. End over end it spun, curving as it sped on its flight. For one breathless instant it seemed as though that tumbling oval, weighted with so much of hope and fear, would veer to the outside of the posts. But by a matter of inches it fell between the uprights and above the bar.

A shriek burst from the stands.

Bancker, staring at the ground as though in deep thought, walked along the side line. The cheers, unheeded, almost unheard, erased in volleys above his head.

"Boy!" cried one of the blanket-wrapped substitutes. "Look at Roberts strut."

"Can you blame him?" another asked enviously.

That unexpected blow had washed the fight out of Manhattan and, with only a few minutes left, it was Grandon's game. Bancker heard the whistle for the kick-off, but didn't even glance toward the field. Presently there came a sudden burst of cheering, spectators started pouring out of the stands, the substitutes began legging it for the gym. The coach knew that the game was over. Still lost in thought, he was caught in the crowd and engulfed.

THE squad was yelling and banging equipment around when he reached the locker room. Something in his face suddenly stilled them, as something in his face had checked Horsey Mott.

"Trim," he said, "I'd like a word with you."

He walked down to a little room off the locker room. Roberts, sauntering negligently, followed in his wake. One corner of his mouth twitched derisively as he passed Foxen and Goodwin. He disappeared into the little room, and Bancker carefully closed the door.

Roberts made a grimace. "Bad as that, Coach?"

"Bad as that," Bancker said gravely. He pulled out a chair, sat down at his desk, and balanced a paper cutter on the palm of one hand. "Why did you question Goodwin's generalship and insist upon kicking?"

"Because I knew I could make it."

"Any other reason?"

"That's enough, isn't it?"

"It might be, if it were true. Unfortunately there *was* another reason. Your halo was fading, and you wanted to give it a fresh coat of gilt. You missed a point after touchdown and flew into a rage. Then you couldn't get through the line. It began to look as though you weren't going to be the shining hero of this game, and that galled you. And so, when we suddenly found ourselves faced with a chance to win, you insisted on a shot for the goal posts. Good wanted to try for a touchdown. If his plan had been to kick, he would have run one play off toward the center of the field for better position. That would have been good football. But you wanted that difficult angle. All the more glory for you if you put it over. I know what was in Good's mind. He didn't want to upset his team with a bitter argument on the field. He let you have your way. That was a mistake. Had there been time to send in a substitute, you would never have made that kick."

"Really? And who would have taken me out?"

"I would. No player at Grandon can be bigger than the team."

Roberts cast a bored glance at a corner of the ceiling. "It happens," he observed, "that I am bigger than the team. The team couldn't score, but I put over a field goal."

"It might have been better," Bancker said slowly, "if you'd missed. You might have learned something from a failure of that kind. However, you made it. For Grandon? No—for Trim Roberts. A few more cheers for the Comet. If you had missed that kick our best chance would have been gone. Grandon would have been sunk, a victim to your appetite for a pat on the back."

"But I didn't miss," Roberts said mildly.

"I might have known you couldn't see it," Bancker sighed, and laid the paper cutter on the desk. "You're not happy unless you're getting the spotlight. You look for cheers. Your hand is always out for praise. You feel that the world ought to wrap up all its nice little prizes just for you. You can see nobody but yourself."

"I can see three games I've won for you," Roberts observed.

"Does that really mean so much?" Bancker asked slowly. "I've always believed that I'm here for something bigger than the mere turning out of winning teams. I'm here to make men. I don't expect you to see that. I doubt if you have in you the makings of a man, but I'm going to find out. One trouble with you, Trim, is that you think you're indispensable. You think the team can't get along without you. That's a bad state of mind. It becomes a habit. A few years from now you'll begin to think the world can't get along without you. Once you get that idea as a set conviction you're licked. You're almost licked now."

"Tell that to Carlton, or Bradley, or Manhattan," Roberts invited.

"I'm telling it to you. It's up to somebody to bring you down to earth, to shake the cobwebs out of your brain, to show you that, after all, you're just a human being and not a miracle. There's only one way to make you see it, Trim, and that's to drop you from the squad. And so—I'm dropping you."

ROBERTS took it with good humor. "How long do you think you're going to be able to keep me with the scrubs?"

"You don't understand," Bancker said. "I'm dropping you from football entirely."

Roberts stared at the man, suspecting some strange jest. Slowly it was forced in upon him that the coach was serious.

(*Continued from page 59*)

His cheeks flushed a little, but his eyes held their old light of mockery.

"You mean this, don't you? First Horsey, and then me. Quite a day's work, Coach." His voice became confidential, the voice of one quite sure of himself. "Do you think you can get away with it? Grandon's played three games and I've won them all. You're not forgetting that, are you? Do you think the campus will forget it? Or, with me out of the way, do you think it will be 'Gene Bancker's Boys' in the headlines again?"

The pulse in Bancker's neck throbbed. "You're getting out on thin ice, Trim."

"It strikes me," Roberts said, unworried, "that you're out on thin ice yourself. And what a splash there's going to be when you go through."

He came back to the locker room whistling, took his shower, and began to dress. Questioning eyes followed him—Foxen's, Goodwin's, Rowe's. He spread a sweater on the floor, cleaned out his locker, and began to roll his belongings into a ball. With the loaded sweater swinging at his side he moved toward the door.

"What's the big idea?" Rowe demanded.

"Old Leather-face has canned me," Roberts smiled.

Goodwin's head came up with a snap.

"But I'll be back," the fullback said lightly. "This time Bancker has called the wrong signal. What a story this will make for my friend Horsey Mott."

Something like a gasp ran through the squad. There was a knife in that last sentence, and they all saw its edge. After what had happened to-day, Horsey would be in a mood to cut loose with a poisonous pen. Goodwin went cold.

"Trim! You're too big for a thing like that. Bancker doesn't deserve such a deal."

"I don't deserve the deal he's given me."

"If you won't think of him, think of the team."

"I'm thinking of myself." Roberts said it frankly and unashamed.

"That's all you've ever thought of," Goodwin cried in sudden passion. "If you have any idea we're going to let you try to smear a man like 'Gene— Stop him, Foxen. The crazy fool—"

Foxen sprang for the door, only to have it close in his face. Roberts was gone.

(*To be concluded in the November number of* THE AMERICAN BOY.)

Winged War

(*Continued from page 45*)

prospect was equally hopeless. He saw Delroy's ship a half mile behind him and somewhat higher.

"The Duke has followed us," he thought absently.

He strove to think of a way out. Below, there was no clearing that was a possibility for landing. Should he land in the river and attempt to salvage the motor, at least, or jump to save his own life and let the ship crash? In any event, Blackie must jump.

He turned around to meet the level eyes of Williams. The dark-faced Texan's lips quirked in his customary quizzical smile. He was as cool as a May morning as he leaned forward and shouted:

"Jump for it. I'll land her and try to save something."

"Jump yourself!" Russ shouted back. "I'll try the river!"

Williams leaned forward and his dark eyes burned into his young companion's.

"Don't be a fool!" he snapped. "You're an American Army officer and all the rest of it. Jump, I tell you! If I decide I can't make it, I'll jump too, but if anybody tries to save her, it's going to be me."

THE ship was gliding down slowly and the roar of Delroy's motor was all that broke the silence except for the low whine of the wires. The prop was turning lazily in the air stream and the ship was floating down so peacefully that it seemed unthinkable that certain tragedy was but a few minutes away.

"I'm the pilot," Russ shouted.

"Who told you you were the pilot?" Williams snapped back, and suddenly his face was grim and cruel. "And don't forget I'm your boss. Jump, I tell you!"

As Russ looked into those long, level eyes, he knew that Williams meant exactly what he said. There were tears of baffled fury in his eyes as he unstrapped his belt and put his foot on the side of the cockpit. The air stream hit him like a blow but he steadied himself as he leaned over toward Williams and shouted:

"I was a fool, Blackie. Jump yourself, will you? I won't jump if you don't!"

Blackie's hand moved with the speed of a striking rattler. In a split second he had pulled the rip cord of the 'chute and Farrell found himself jerked into thin air. The next second, he was swinging downward like a huge pendulum.

As he watched Blackie glide down he forgot that the landing ahead, even for him, was a perilous one. He found himself praying incoherently that the mocking ex-outlaw would not be hurt.

Duke Delroy was circling around him now, waving to him for all the world as though it were a lark. Blackie was above him, gliding slowly toward the river.

Suddenly it seemed to Russ that he was dropping faster than usual. Ordinarily, the fact that one was dropping at all was almost indiscernible at that height, which was close to four thousand feet. His face and nose felt as though he were going too fast. He glanced upward at the big white silk umbrella. Then it seemed that his heart stopped beating.

Starting at the small air vent in the top of the 'chute were two small rips in the silk. For a second his anguished eyes watched them as they slowly lengthened in the force of the air stream. It was only a matter of moments before he would be dropping like a plummet below a torn and almost useless 'chute. There was not a thing he could do to save himself.

For a moment, a mad desire to loosen his harness and get it all over with quickly swept over him. Mercifully, he was half dazed with the awful suddenness of it all and seemed to be living through a fantastic nightmare.

SUDDENLY, a huge, black spot seemed to flash past his eyes. He looked forward stupidly. A ship was spinning toward the ground out of control and there was no passenger in it. Had Blackie jumped? Suddenly, three hundred feet below him, an expanse of white was outlined against the green of the jungle.

"Anyhow, that's another parachute," he thought dazedly. The sight of it seemed to snap him back into full possession of his faculties, and a miraculous mental clarity came to him. That black spot had been the jumper passing him before opening his 'chute—and it was Duke.

The blond pilot was swinging down below his 'chute, motioning madly to him.

In a second Russ comprehended what Delroy had done. He had seen the torn 'chute and jumped past him in a desperate endeavor to save him.

In an instant Russ was in action. Delroy was now but one hundred feet below him and perhaps fifteen feet to one side.

Russ grasped the shroud lines on the right-hand side. He was being carried by the breeze in that direction, away from Delroy. He pulled down that edge of the crippled 'chute, endeavoring to drop as straight as possible. It was hard to get his breath now and the 'chute was torn almost from rim to rim. Below him, Delroy was still swinging like a huge pendulum and Russ could see that he was voluntarily keeping himself in the swing. His outstretched arms could cover more territory that way. The lower 'chute was leaping up at him and a wave of utter despair surged over the red-headed pilot as he saw that he would pass Delroy twenty feet to the left.

He let go the shroud lines in a desperate endeavor to let the breeze carry him a bit more toward Duke. At the same second, Delroy pulled down the left side of his 'chute to try to keep from being carried any more to the right. He was swinging desperately.

In a second Russ would be even with him. He was. And Delroy had missed by three feet.

Russ was very close to him and momentarily his tortured eyes met the blazing ones of Delroy in mute farewell.

"O. K., big boy! I'll get you yet!"

It was like a wild war cry from Delroy's throat.

Russ, his head back, watched him. As Delroy gathered up his 'chute and dropped like a plummet, Russ gauged the drop with his eyes and suddenly hope arose again in his heart. Again, he slipped his 'chute to maneuver himself close to Delroy's line of flight.

Fifteen feet below him and not five feet to one side, Delroy's 'chute flipped open again and, a second later, Russ's right hand had a death grip on three of the shroud lines.

FOR a wild instant they were a tangled mass in the air, and then he found himself, weak with relief, in Delroy's arms.

"This's so much more chummy than jumping alone," the blond young flyer laughed. "How have you been?"

The laughing words were like a tonic to the half conscious Farrell and he found himself laughing into Delroy's face. He was shaky from the reaction but he was able to say:

"Pretty well. Here's the ground!"

It was but three hundred feet below. Russ' crippled 'chute helped to offset the double weight on Delroy's 'chute, and they did not hit the ground too hard.

Russ staggered to his feet weakly.

"Thanks, Duke," he said simply.

"Don't mention it," Delroy rejoined airily. "Lucky we didn't hit a tree. What happened up there before you jumped?"

Russ leaned weakly against a palm tree at the edge of the tiny ten-foot clearing.

"Motor went dead," he began. "Blackie——"

Suddenly the drone of a motor reached his ears and he gazed upward unbelievingly. It was Blackie, and the motor of the Bullet was hitting perfectly.

"Seems to be all right now," came Delroy's voice. "You were a little bit previous, I guess."

"Seems so," Russ said mechanically.

He was silent for a moment and Delroy, for some reason, was silent too, as Blackie swooped low over the clearing and waved to them. He circled again and a note fell into the monte, a short distance away. Delroy retrieved it and brought it back to Russ, who was sitting on the ground in a brown study. He had almost forgotten the fact that he had just escaped death by an eyelash, and he scarcely listened as Delroy said:

"There's a trail down near the river and he'll send a car out for us. Guess we've got to wait but we'll have transportation anyway. This jungle is no place for a walk. What's on your mind, Russ?"

"Nothing," Russ returned.

But there was. Of course, a motor could go dead and start again but it was highly improbable. A parachute could split, he supposed, but he had never heard of a new parachute's doing it—and these parachutes were brand new. Russ's mind got that far, stalled a moment, raced on.

If Blackie Williams were really an ally of the Hawk and if he did not want Russ Farrell or anyone else hunting for the aerial bandits and wanted to get rid of him, what would he do? He might pretend, when he found that he could not prevent the employment of the flyer, that he had been partially responsible for it; and he might figure out a way to get rid of him without any suspicion of murder. And if that was what he wanted, there was nothing to prevent his tampering with the 'chute, cutting off the gas from the rear cockpit to make the motor go dead, forcing his victim to jump—

It was no wonder that Russ was silent as he got to his feet

(*To be continued in the November number of* THE AMERICAN BOY.)

Model Aces, Get Ready for a Big Year!

Build New Models, Join the A. M. L. A., and Plan for Next Year's National Contest

ENROLL IN THE A. M. L. A.

Within a year, the Airplane Model League of America, headed by Commander Byrd, William B. Stout, and a dozen other leading airmen, enrolled 200,000 members. Here are the services that it extended to these members—services it will extend to you during the coming year. It will—

Help you in organizing airplane model clubs. Issue club charters. Give you expert advice in your airplane model building problems. (You may write to the A. M. L. A., enclosing a two-cent stamp, and get assistance on any phase of your model plane work.)

Send you a manual for five cents, that tells you with text and diagrams all the steps in model airplane construction. Give you free membership cards and buttons. Tell you how to hold contests and flying circuses. Send you, for use in schools or clubs, a two-reel motion picture on model plane construction, at low rental.

Issue honor certificates for meritorious model plane building. (If you win four honor certificates for the four best-known types of planes you'll receive an autographed picture of Clarence Chamberlin. For full information concerning honor certificates, write the League, enclosing a two-cent stamp.)

Supply you with kits and materials, at cost, for building the types of planes described in THE AMERICAN BOY.

Make you eligible to compete in any national contest officially sanctioned by the National Aeronautic Association.

JOIN THE LEAGUE NOW AND PREPARE TO USE THESE PRIVILEGES.

Byrd

OLD model airplane records have been shattered into bits. The ships of a year ago are "washouts" to-day.

Model airplane builders of 1928 are building ships of balsa and bamboo that last year's model builders never dreamed of. Six minute indoor planes! Looping and stunting R. O. G.'s. Outdoor ships of inconceivable lightness and strength!

Just how far model aviation has progressed since last fall was astonishingly demonstrated at the First National A. M. L. A. Contest held in Detroit last June, when Aram Abgarian, Detroit high school boy, sent up his indoor ship for five minutes and 53 seconds—more than twice as long as the world's record of a few months before.

Those outdoor ships that flew out of sight of the judges; those scale models of marvelously accurate and neat workmanship; the scores of innovations on indoor and outdoor flying models—every phase of the contest testified to the strides that model aviation has taken.

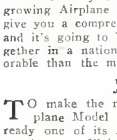
During the coming year, THE AMERICAN BOY Magazine, in a new and greater program, is going to bring you into step with this progress and lead you into new worlds of model air sport.

It's going to tell you how to build those record-smashing planes that the last contest brought forth; it's going to give you the key to experiments you yourself can conduct; it's going to introduce you to new scale models—some of them replicas of famous foreign planes; it's going to make available to you in greater degree the services of the growing Airplane Model League of America; it's going to give you a comprehensive course in elementary aeronautics; and it's going to bring the champions of the continent together in a national contest that will be even more memorable than the meet of last June.

Join the A. M. L. A.

TO make the most of the program, enroll in the Airplane Model League of America. Whether you're already one of its 200,000 members or whether you're just starting out, fill in the coupon on this page and send it to League headquarters, American Boy Building, Second and Lafayette, Detroit.

Membership in the A. M. L. A. costs just a 2-cent stamp.



Chamberlin

The League is headed by Commander Richard E. Byrd, honorary president; William B. Stout, designer of the Ford Trimotor, all-metal monoplane, president; Clarence D. Chamberlin, New York-to-Germany flyer; Major Thomas G. Lanphier, ex-commander of the First Pursuit Squadron; Eddie Rickenbacker, famous American ace, and other great leaders in aviation, vice-presidents.

Your membership will entitle you to invaluable services. You'll get a free membership card and button. Your technical questions on model plane building—accompanied by a two-cent stamp—will be answered by Merrill Hamburg, secretary of the League and foremost model plane expert. You'll be able to buy, at cost, materials for building airplane models—hard-to-get materials such as balsa, the South American wood that's one-half lighter than cork; bamboo, ambroid cement, special flat rubber for motors, and finely fashioned metal parts.

The League will make available at low cost a two-reel motion picture covering every step in the construction of a model airplane. It will award honor certificates to boys who build models that exceed certain minimum flights. It will tell you how to organize clubs and conduct club activities. It will issue club charters. Experts will tell you how to hold contests and indoor flying circuses.

Send in the coupon to-day and join in the march toward a knowledge of aviation! William B. Stout, League president, says that through building and flying models you learn the laws that even the great three-motored planes must obey—and you learn them better than you could out of books.

Hamburg

Build These New Models

THE November magazine starts you on your program. In that issue you'll get the first set of drawings and instructions that will turn your den into a workshop and your parlor into an airport.

Later, you'll learn to build the improved Baby R. O. G. (Rise Off Ground). During the past year, model fans have constructed R. O. G.'s that will fly for 90 seconds—nearly twice as long as any previous record!

After that, the new indoor endurance plane designed by Ernest McCoy, Detroit model plane builder. This ship, a tractor with cambered (curved) wing and elevator, is capable of flying six minutes. It will climb gradually to a 90-foot ceiling, circle until the motor is completely unwound, and then glide lazily to the floor with a "dead" stick.

Then there'll be indoor commercial models—planes with enclosed fuselages that bear a close resemblance to man-carrying planes and will fly; scale models of famous American and European ships—models that do not fly but teach you the design of man-carrying aircraft; improvements in the outdoor twin pusher, the record-breaking contest ship that seems to have an incurable desire to fly out of sight.

If you're new to model plane building, you may buy from the League for five cents a manual that describes the technique of construction—that tells you how to cover wing and tail with Japanese tissue, how to bend bamboo, how to dope and waterproof surfaces, and how to shape metal parts.

In the spring, the League and associated newspapers and organizations will conduct local contests in every part of the United States. More than likely, you'll be able to enter one of these contests.

And then the National Meet! The meet conducted by THE AMERICAN BOY and sanctioned by the National Aeronautic Association!

Last year, 259 boys from hundreds of cities—from Maine all the way to Honolulu—competed for national honors at Detroit. They competed for six national trophies including the two official trophies of the National Aeronautic Association, for 198 medals, for trips to Europe and summer camps, for free tuition at aviation correspondence schools, for certificates of merit. They banqueted with Edsel Ford and met personally such airmen as William P. MacCracken, assistant secretary of commerce for aviation; Eddie Rickenbacker, Eddie Stinson, Lieutenant Jack Harding, around-the-world flyer; William S. Brock, Detroit-to-Tokio flyer; Edward J. Hill and Arthur G. Schlosser, 1927 winners of the James Gordon Bennett International Balloon Races, and scores of others! They visited the famous Selfridge Field, home of the First Pursuit Squadron, and met Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Danforth, commandant. They inspected and climbed through the Fokker ship, "Josephine Ford," in which Commander Byrd flew over the North Pole. They saw the take-off of the Bennett race and inspected the planes of the National Reliability Tour—nearly every type of ship built in this country to-day!

Photo by Lee Kruppick, Twin Daily World.

Hoover and MacCracken are strong for model aviation.

Building upon its experience in conducting this first contest, THE AMERICAN BOY is planning for you an even greater three days in 1929! Plan, now, to follow the magazine's program throughout the year and to come to the National Meet next summer. Even if you do not win a local contest, you may attend the national providing you find an organization to pay your expenses or are able to afford them yourself.

Later issues of THE AMERICAN BOY will carry a full announcement of the national meet and will introduce you to new models. If you're impatient to start building now, here are the plans of ships that are available—just send a two-cent stamp to League headquarters and tell which plans you wish:

Stout

Baby R. O. G. A plane with a 12-inch wing that will stay in the air from 30 to 60 seconds.

Indoor pusher. A ship with the propeller behind the wing, after the fashion of certain present-day naval planes.

Indoor tractor. The flat-wing type of endurance ship that—up to a few months ago—held the world's indoor endurance record.

Outdoor twin pusher. The two-propeller ship that holds the present world's outdoor endurance record.

Indoor commercial. A plane with a triangular fuselage that flies with the grace and steadiness of a trimotored monoplane.

Hydroplane. Two-propellered pusher, equipped with pontoons, that holds the world's record for length of flight after taking off from water—2 minutes 52 seconds.

Scale models of the Curtiss Army "Hawk," "Spirit of St. Louis," and Ford Trimotor. These are exact non-flying 24-inch replicas of the large ships.

Baby R. O. W. (Rise Off Water). A tiny 12-inch-wing plane equipped with pontoons.

A two-cent stamp will bring you the plans for any of the foregoing ships, and the plans will tell you just how you may obtain materials at cost for building them.

Get started on the most fascinating twelve months of your career. Your first step is to join the A. M. L. A. by sending in with a two-cent stamp the coupon on this page. Do that to-day.

Airplane Model League of America,
American Boy Building,
Lafayette and Second,
Detroit, Michigan.

....., 19....

I wish to enroll in the Airplane Model League of America and thereby to become eligible for the services it extends. I enclose a two-cent stamp for which please send back my membership card and button.

I am renewing my membership.....

I am enrolling as a new member.....
(Put a cross in the proper line above.)

.....
Your name written clearly.

Age..... Year in school.....

Home Address .....
Street and number

City..... State.....

They Gave the World Wings (*Continued from page 24*)

but it'll help you to understand."

On September 30, the machine covered more than twelve miles — it came down, as it had four days earlier, when it ran out of gas. A larger gas tank was installed, and the October 3 flight was fifteen miles. This attempt was ended by overheating the transmission bearings, to which no oil cups had been fitted. The next day Orville, after liberally greasing the bearings, kept the plane in the air for twenty-one miles; again lack of lubrication brought it down.

So that night the brothers and their helpers worked late. Oil cups were fitted to every bearing on the machine, and Wilbur and Orville hoped for a flight of at least an hour the next day.

"Orville flew twenty-one miles yesterday," Wilbur said. "I am going to beat that to-day."

That day, October 5, a farmer working with a hired hand in a corn field near Huffman's Prairie noticed—as he had been accustomed to notice recently—that "the boys were at it again." It wasn't much of a novelty to him any more. But after the big white form had run and kept on running, sailing back and forth, he began to show surprise.

"I just kept on shockin' corn," he told a friend, "and pretty soon I got all the way down to the fence. Well, I want to tell you, the durned thing was still goin'. I thought it'd never stop!"

Wilbur almost thought the same thing. The flight went beautifully, and he had covered twenty-four miles, a new record —when the motor sputtered and expired. The plane landed, and Orville came hurrying up.

"What's wrong?"

Wilbur stood up to look at the gas tank. He measured its contents.

"It's dry," he replied ruefully. "We forgot to refill before we started!"

But the plane had flown for nearly forty minutes, at thirty-eight miles an hour. It had turned and circled and soared and swooped, all without damage. The brothers were jubilant.

Nevertheless, that was the final flight of the year. The crowd at Huffman's Prairie was so large that the brothers feared for spectators' safety and the protection of their own rights. They were determined not divulge any of the secrets of their work until they had completed negotiations with Washington. They always invited observation of their flights, but they objected to too close inspection or to photography of their machine.

So they put the airplane into its shed and announced that experiments for the year were at an end.

Nothing had been heard from Washington, although more than enough time had elapsed. They wrote again.

"All our experiments have been conducted entirely at our own expense," Orville wrote about this time. "In the beginning we had no thought of recovering what we were expending, which was not great, and was limited to what we could afford in recreation. Later, when a successful flight had been made with the motor, we gave up the business in which we were engaged, to devote our entire time and capital to the development of a machine for practical purposes. As soon as our condition is such that constant attention to business is not required, we expect to prepare for publication the results of our laboratory experiments, which alone made an early solution of the flying problem possible."

That government contract was to furnish them the leisure they wanted. It was to put the seal of approval on their work, moreover. They became more and more eager for it.

Eventually an answer to their second letter arrived.

"We cannot consider your suggestion that we buy your inventions or that we send a commission to investigate them," it said. "We have neither time nor money to waste on a couple of Ohio cranks. We are not interested!"

(*To be concluded in the November issue of* THE AMERICAN BOY.)

Stamps in the Day's News

By Kent B. Stiles


Congo, 5c greenish black. Portrait of Sir Henry M. Stanley.

UNCLE SAM'S newest commemorative stamps recall the discovery of the Hawaiian Islands by Captain James Cook, English navigator, a century and a half ago. They are our current 2c red, with the picture of Washington, and 5c blue, with the head of Roosevelt, appropriately overprinted for the celebration at Hawaii in August.

Perhaps you fellows have sometimes wondered what is the procedure followed by the post office department in notifying the postmasters throughout the country that new stamps are soon to appear. The job is done with small circulars sent out by the third assistant postmaster general. The circular quoted below, distributed on July 13, gives you the idea and at the same time serves to describe the new Hawaiian commemoratives:


Spanish offices in Morocco 20c black, special delivery.

"Postmasters and employees of the Postal Service are notified that the department is preparing a special issue of surcharged postage stamps for placing on sale in all Hawaiian post offices in connection with the sesquicentennial celebration to be held August 15 to 20.

"The issue will be limited to 2-cent and 5-cent stamps of the current series, to be surcharged 'Hawaii' across the upper half of the stamp, with the dates '1778-1928' below. The surcharge will be in black ink.

"The surcharged stamps will first be placed on sale August 13, 1928, at the post office in Honolulu, Hawaii. The stamps will be placed on sale at the other Hawaiian post offices as soon thereafter as supplies of the surcharged stamps are received.

"For the benefit of collectors and dealers there will be placed on sale at the philatelic agency, Washington, D. C., on the same date, a limited quantity of these stamps.

"The surcharged stamps will not be placed on sale in post offices within the United States proper and postmasters shall not submit requisitions to the department for stocks thereof.

"The total quantity of surcharged stamps except those placed on sale at the philatelic agency will be sent to the postmaster, Honolulu, who will make distribution to district and accounting post offices in accordance with the department's instructions.

"Although the sale of the special issue of surcharged stamps will be restricted to post offices in Hawaii and the philatelic agency, the stamps will be valid for the prepayment of postage at all post offices now using ordinary United States stamps.

"R. S. Regar,
Third Assistant Postmaster General."

From the foregoing you'll note that collectors may buy these Hawaiian commemoratives, as long as a stock continues available, by addressing the Philatelic Agency, Division of Stamps, Post Office Department, Washington, D. C. Don't send unused postage stamps—send either cash or a money order! The total supply is limited—probably too small to meet the demands of philatelists.

Congo, too, has turned back history's pages and has issued special stamps to commemorate an event of a half-century ago—the formation of this Belgian colony in Africa, in 1878.

Sir Henry M. Stanley, the journalist-explorer who discovered the lost Livingstone and who continued his expedition "in darkest Africa" under commission from the New York *Herald* and the London *Daily Telegraph*, and thereby prepared the way for colonizing Congo on behalf of Belgium, is honored with the new series. His portrait, with the final name inscribed, is the uniform design on all values—5 centimes greenish-black, 10c purple, 20c red-orange, 35c deep green, 40c red-brown, 60c olive-brown, 1 franc carmine, 1fr 60c slate, 1fr 75c dark blue, 2fr sepia, 2fr 75c mauve, 3fr 50c claret, 5fr deep blue-green, 10fr ultramarine, and 20fr mauve.

Engraved, and in sheets of 100, these stamps have the curious distinction of having been printed in Belgium from Dutch ink by American machinery on Swedish white wove paper for a colony in Africa! They were issued on the occasion of the recent visit of King Albert and Queen Elizabeth.

Notre Dame d'Orval

ANOTHER recent Belgian series consists of semi-postal adhesives through the sale of which Belgium will finance in part the restoration of the ancient Abbey of Notre Dame d'Orval. Such designs are used as a white-mantled monk sculpturing a pillar; the legend of Duchess Mathilda; the rose window of Orval, with a monk plowing; and the abbey as it is purposed to restore it. These stamps, to be valid for postage for a year and a half, are in values of 5, 25, 35 and 60 centimes, 1 franc 75c, and 1, 2, 3, 5 and 10 francs, each selling in excess of face.

Turkey has issued two semi-postal sets—one for the benefit of the local Red Cross organization and the other to aid the national fund for orphans. The design on the Red Cross series shows a map of the country surcharged with a crimson crescent, and the seven values range from ½ piastre to 50pi. Two infants and a white crescent feature the design of the orphan adhesives, the denominations being 1, 2 and 5pi.

Western Australia will celebrate its centenary next year, and a 1½ pence commemorative stamp will appear. The design is expected to include a black swan, which appeared on nearly all of Western Australia's adhesives from 1854 to 1912. In the latter year Western Australia discontinued its own stamps and has since used those of the Australian Commonwealth.

This year Egypt recalls the centenary of the founding of its School of Medicine, and as part of the celebration the International Medical Congress takes place in Cairo. To commemorate both events, three special stamps are being issued, the designs including a portrait of the founder of the school; a symbol of Amenhotep, first of the country's ancient "medicine men," and a picture of the Hospital of Kasr el Ani.

Look for A. M. L. A. Chat in November

Scores of interesting letters from members of the Airplane Model League of America are dropping in every month. Letters telling of fascinating flying experiences, of new designs and improvements in models.

We didn't have room to publish any of these letters this month because we wanted to tell you about our 1928-29 airplane model program. (See Page 62.)

But in next month's airplane model article there'll be a section devoted to chat of—and by—A. M. L. A. members. Read it, and mail your own contributions to the

AIRPLANE MODEL EDITOR.

FUNNYBONE TICKLERS

Rule of Thumb

In Montana a railway bridge had been destroyed by fire and it was necessary to replace it. The bridge engineer and his staff were ordered in haste to the place. Two days later came the superintendent of the division.

Alighting from his private car, he encountered an old master bridge-builder.

"Bill," said the superintendent—and the words quivered with energy—"I want this job rushed. Every hour's delay costs the company money. Have you got the engineer's plans for the new bridge?"

"I don't know," said the bridge-builder, "whether the engineer has the picture drawed yet or not, but the bridge is up and the trains is passin' over it."

No Words to Waste

Two farmers met on the road and pulled up.

"Si, I've got a mule with distemper. What'd ye give that one of yours when he had it?"

"Turpentine. Giddap."

A week later they met again.

"Say, Si, I gave my mule turpentine and it killed him."

"Killed mine, too. Giddap."

Faithful to Old Friends

Mrs. Smythe: "I'm soliciting for a charity organization. What do you do with your cast-off clothing?"

Mr. Smith: "I hang them up carefully and go to bed. Then in the morning I put them on again."

More Suitable

Fond Mother: "My daughter's voice is really quite charming, but somehow it never seems to blend well with the piano accompaniment."

Bored Young Man: "Why not try the bagpipes?"

Fate's Favoritism

Lady: "Why are you crying?"

Boy: "My aunt has fallen down the stairs."

Lady: "But she will soon get better."

Boy: "I know, but my little sister saw her fall and I didn't."

Magic Moment

"How are you?"

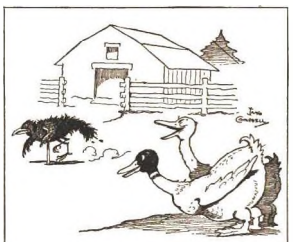
"Very ill—I have just been to the doctor because my memory is going."

"Um—by the way—could you lend me a fiver?"

That Settled It

Aviator: "The engine's stalled and a wing's off."

Passenger (on first flight and nervous): "Thank goodness! Now we can go down."



"That old crow got shot full of bird shot!"

"Yeh—a case of caws and effect."

Time to Get a New Boss

"How do you like your new boss?"

"Rotten. We don't pull together at all. When I'm late he's early and when I'm early he's late."

Inventor's Triumph

I eat my peas with honey,
I have done it all my life;
They do taste kind of funny,
But it keeps them on the knife.

Well, Well, So They Are!

Taxicabs are like ball games, they are often called on account of the rain.

Use a Bathtub

Never break your bread or roll in your soup.—*Etiquette hint in an English paper.*

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Cover drawing by *Walter Beach Humphrey.*

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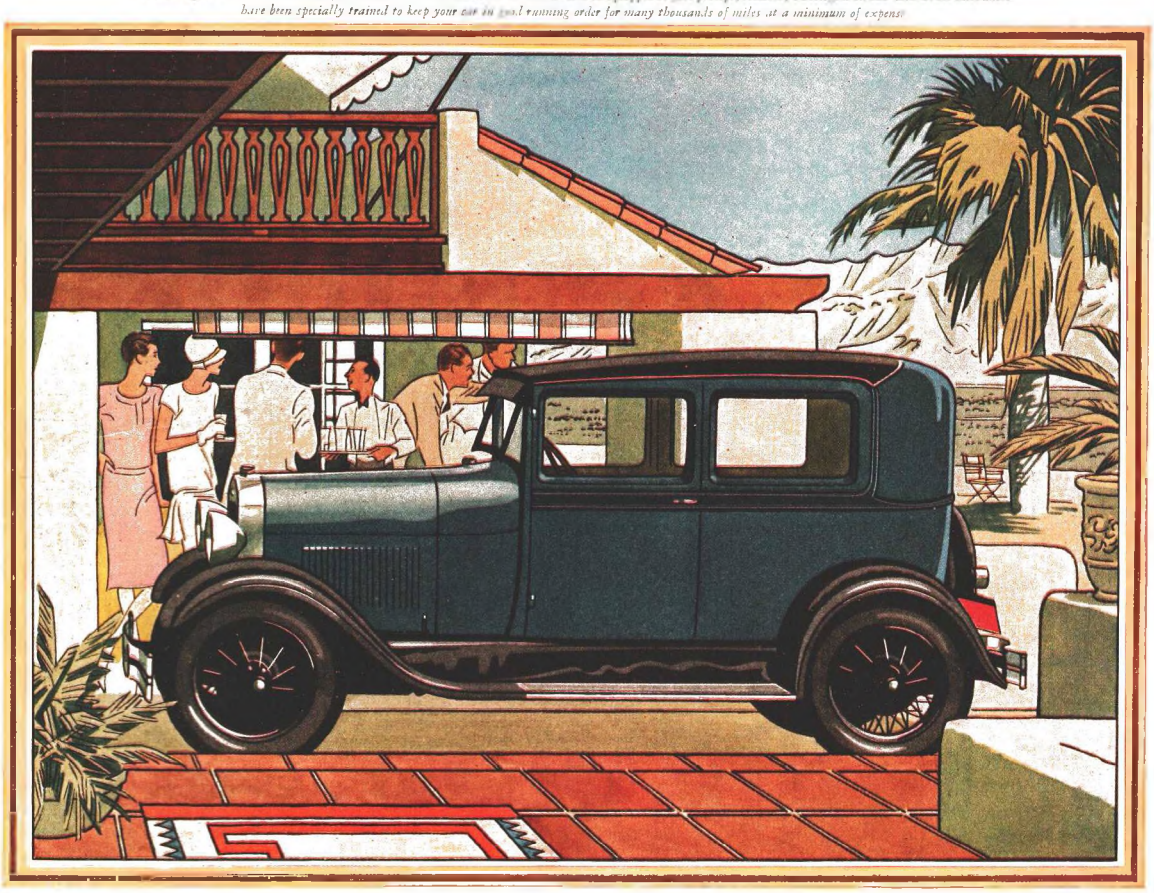

Pleasant and swift is the longest trip when you travel in the new Ford

When you see the new Ford you are impressed instantly by its low, trim, graceful lines and the beauty of its two-tone color harmonies.

As you watch it in traffic, on hills, and on the open road you can note how quickly it accelerates and get some idea, too, of the speed and power of its 40-horse-power engine.

But only by driving the new Ford yourself can you fully appreciate the easy-riding comfort which is such an outstanding feature of this great new car.

One reason, of course, is the fact that the new Ford is equipped with four Houdaille hydraulic shock absorbers—two front and two rear. Yet even these shock absorbers of themselves do not account for the complete riding comfort of the new Ford.

Equally important is the low center of gravity and the low ratio of unsprung weight to sprung weight, due principally to the design and construction of the new transverse springs.

The riding quality of any car, as you may know, depends to a great extent upon the ratio of the weight carried above the flexible ends of the springs (the sprung weight) to the weight carried below the flexible ends of the springs (the unsprung weight).

Unsprung weight is, in effect, a hammer with which every unevenness encountered by the wheels deals a blow against the sprung weight of the car. The flexible ends of the springs must absorb these blows if the car is to ride comfortably.

It follows that the lower the proportion of unsprung weight, the less violent will be the hammer blows delivered against the frame, body and motor of the car.

Here you can see the advantage of the transverse type of spring used in the new Ford. In this design, the springs rest on their flexible ends with the heavy center part uppermost. Through this construction, the weight of the springs becomes part of the sprung weight instead of the unsprung weight and the force of road shocks is thereby reduced.

Ford

Ford Motor Company
Detroit, Michigan

Furthermore, all road shocks are imparted at the outer flexible end of the spring instead of the middle. The most sensitive part of the spring receives the shock first, diminishing the effects of sharp impacts before they reach the sprung weight of the car.

Rebound of the springs to such impacts is controlled by the Houdaille hydraulic shock absorbers, specially designed for the new Ford.

These shock absorbers give the spring a free range of action when the car is being driven over smooth highways. Yet there is instant shock-absorbing effect as soon as the car encounters any bump or rut in the road.

These shock absorbers operate on the principle of hydraulic resistance and require little attention . . . merely filling the reservoir with commercial glycerine at intervals of 5000 to 10,000 miles. The usual 500-mile lubrication will keep the shock absorber connecting links working smoothly and silently.

Who have bought the 80 Million Ingersolls?

YANKEE $1.50
New improved model of the world's most famous and popular watch. Always dependable and sturdy. Millions in use. Yankee Radiolite, only 75c more, tells time in the dark, $2.25.

JUNIOR $3.25
Tens of thousands of boys will want this watch for school and play use. Small (12-size) and handsome. Mat finish metal dial with double sunk effect. Junior Radiolite, $4.00.

WATERBURY $5
Jeweled movement . . . engraved design . . . chromium finish. Chromium is diamond-like in hardness, platinum-like in looks. Smart 12-size. The best watch $5.00 can buy. With radium dial, $6.00.

ALDEN $12.50
7 jewels . . . 6/0 size . . . radium dial. Chromium-finish case that won't corrode and mark your wrist. A small, fine, American-made wrist watch at an unusually moderate price.

ECLIPSE $2.50
Smaller and thinner than the Yankee. Mat finish metal dial has attractive double sunk effect, giving an appearance found in much more expensive watches. Eclipse Radiolite, $3.25

MIDGET $3.25
A small watch for younger boys. Ask your dad for one—it's an excellent timepiece and handsome. Mat finish metal dial with double sunk effect. Midget Radiolite, $3.75.

WRIST $3.50
A sturdy, dependable wrist watch at a low price. Now with chromium finish back that won't corrode and mark your wrist. Mat finish metal dial with double sunk effect. Wrist Radiolite, $4.00.

ALDEN $17.50
7 jewels . . . 6/0 size . . . radium dial. Rolled gold-plate case . . . "green" or "white." Two case styles: "rectangular," as illustrated, and "cushion." Packed in a handsome silk-lined box.

Football players and farmers . . . aviators and engineers . . . motorists and millworkers . . . inventors and explorers . . . scientists and surveyors . . . these are some of the people who have bought the 80 million Ingersolls.

Why did they buy them? Because Ingersoll Watches have certain qualities that appeal to people of active lives. They don't have to be coddled. They keep dependable time. They look good. And they come in a complete line—a watch for every taste, for every purse and purpose.

That's why *real men* buy Ingersolls. And that's why *real boys* buy Ingersolls. A boy gives a watch the same hard use that it gets at the hands of an adventurous man. Climbing rocks and trees, "wrastlin'," camping, playing games, skating, sleighriding—if you do any of these things you ought to have an Ingersoll, because it stands the gaff.

Your Ingersoll gives you the key to punctuality. And punctuality will be of untold value to you later on in life.

Another thing—owning an Ingersoll marks a judge of value. It shows that you know how to stretch a dollar just as far as it will go. And that's a quality essential to your business success.

For your convenience we have illustrated the up-to-date Ingersoll line at the left. Pick the watch you want, and ask your Ingersoll dealer for it. If not at your dealer's, sent postpaid.

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