

GRAND COMPLETE TEDDY LESTER STORY!

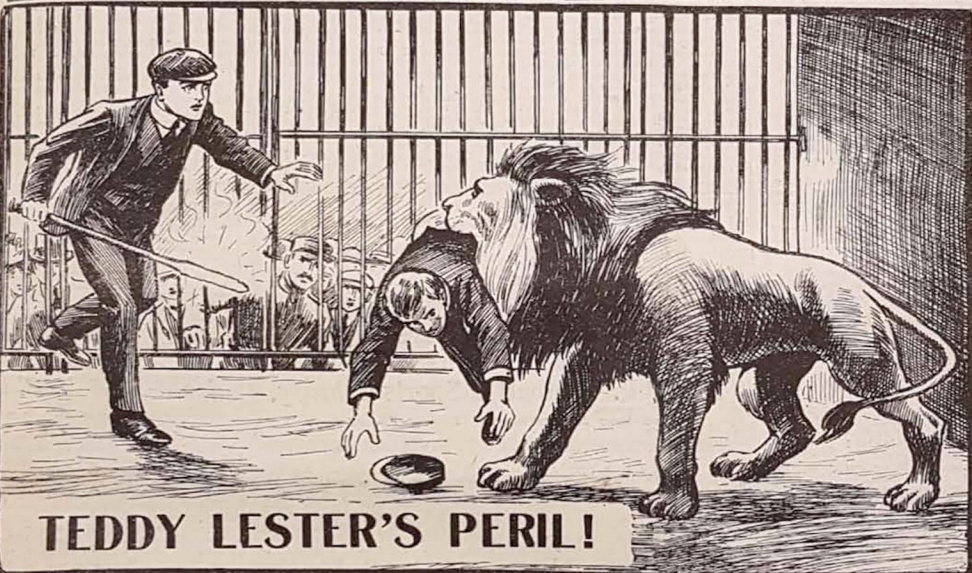
THE POPULAR NEW STORY BOOK

THE EMPIRE

COMPANION PAPER TO

THE FOOTBALL & SPORTS LIBRARY.

Vol. 1.
No. 26.



TEDDY LESTER'S PERIL!

A Stirring Complete Tale of Slapton School.

Our Readers are informed that the characters in the following story are purely imaginary; no reference or allusion is made to any living person. Actual names may be unintentionally mentioned, but the Editor wishes it to be distinctly understood that no adverse personal reference is intended.

CHAPTER I.

How Tom Sandys and Big Baldwin Fell Out.

THE playing-field of Slapton School was lined by a breathless and expectant crowd. The big match of the season was on. The Slapton School eleven were matched against the club of the neighbouring town of Oakford. Oakford had batted, and made 126. The Slapton boys had made 82 for six wickets. This was not very brilliant on so easy a wicket, but half an hour before things had been much worse. Then the score had stood at 29 for six; but a splendid stand had been made, and runs were coming at tremendous speed. Tom Sandys and Big Baldwin were in, and hitting furiously.

The Oakford players had looked upon the match as their for a dead certainty half an hour ago. Now they were bowling and fielding for their life. The Slapton boys howled and yelled with delight as 4 after 4 was added to the score-sheet. Big Baldwin was charged even more furiously than their usual cricket

hero, Tom Sandys. For while they expected Tom to make a stand and a score, it was quite a new thing for Baldwin to come out like this. "Well, this is Big Baldwin's lucky day!" cried Arthur Digby, Tom Sandys' particular chum, throwing up his cap as Baldwin made a happy stick past long-slip to the boundary. "Never saw him hit like this in my life!" "I hope they'll get a few more," said Teddy Lester, a smaller boy. "The others who have to go in yet ain't up to much. If the Oakford chaps get either of these out they can win the match comfortably enough yet."

"Good old Tom!" roared Digby, as Sandys got the bowling, and made a beautiful clean drive to the off all along the carpet. Two overs again, and the hundred went up to a perfect roar of Slapton cheers.

A change of bowlers was tried, and the score moved forward more slowly; but it soon stood at 110, and the two batsmen still seemed to have taken a foothold of the wicket. Big Baldwin let out with all his might at a half-volley, and drove it for 5. Then it was seen that he was shaking his bat, as if there was something wrong with the handle. Next he shouted for another bat, waving the disabled tool in the air. "Spring the handle!" said the on-lookers, as a boy ran out with a fresh bat. It was the end of an over, and Baldwin came half-way to meet

his chum Dowsie, who was bringing the fresh bat. "Go it, old man!" said Dowsie. "You're astonishing the natives to-day!" "I feel fit. I can tell you!" bragged Baldwin. "This bowling's just toffee to me! I could win this match off my own bat as easy as winking!" "I wish that cocky Sandys was out; you'd do it then," said Dowsie. When the latter returned to his companions he began to boast of his friend's powers.

"Baldwin feels pretty fit, I can tell you," he remarked. "He just said to me he can do what he likes with this bowling."

"That's lucky," drily returned Arthur Digby, who stood close at hand, "because Tom's a certain stickler now he's set like this, and the match is safe." Several boys laughed, for Baldwin's bragging ways were well known. Then all eyes were fixed on the batsman as the bowling began again. One hundred and twenty up! Then Tom made a cut for 2. Only 5 to win, and the two victorious batsmen firmly set. It was all over bar shouting. The Oakford supporters were glum and dumb; the Slapton boys could scarcely breathe. The excitement was tremendous. One or two rousing hits, and the game would be snatched gloriously out of the fire. Tom Sandys had the bowling, and

received a ball of fine length, pitched on the leg stump and breaking a little. It caught the edge of his bat and went to leg. It was for Baldwin to call, and he shouted "Come on!" Tom darted from his crease, but everyone saw that Baldwin only made a feint of starting. "We can't do it!" cried the latter.

"Go back—go back!" Tom saw that Baldwin did not mean to come, and he turned and mood for the white mark he had left. He lost by inches! The man at short-leg had fielded and returned in a flash. The wicket-keeper gathered the ball smartly, and the bats were whipped off as Tom pushed his bat home.

"How's that!" roared Oakford as one man. "Out!" said the umpire. And Tom walked towards the pavilion.

A loud groan of sorrow and despair rose from every Slapton throat, and mingled with the lamented cries of anger.

"Oh, too bad—too bad!" called out several. "That's a bit too thick! Baldwin never meant to start. He's run Tom out on purpose!" "Pooh, pooh!" said Dowsie. "The match is safe enough. Baldwin will be sure to hit off the few runs we want in a couple of knocks."

called on purpose to send Tom back and get him out. Your man wants to peep as the winner of the big match.

Dowsie was about to make an angry reply, when all talk was drowned in a chorus of outcries and warning to the boy now going to the wicket.

"Play a straight bat, Shepherd!" "Don't lose your head!" "You've only to keep your end up a bit, and it will be all right!"

Shepherd looked profoundly unhappy as he nodded gloomily to all this well-meant advice. It was very fine for fellows to sit at ease on the grass and tell him what to do. He was a capital field and a fair bowler, but he knew quite well that as regards batting he was among the tail.

"I wish Shepherd wasn't going in to the bowling," said Dowsie. "If old Baldwin only had it, the runs would be polished off in no time."

"It's all very fine for you to talk like that," said Arthur. "This clever game of Baldwin trying to shine all by himself may lose us the match yet."

Every ball was now watched with the keenest anxiety. Shepherd stopped one well, fumbled one, and missed one. The next ball just shaved the wicket, and Slapton groaned aloud in relief.

Baldwin now had the ball, and there was a roar of belief as he cut the first ball clean and hard for 5. Only 2 to win! Surely three wickets to fall, and Baldwin still in, must be worth 2 runs!

Slapton breathed again. But Shepherd was now engaged in two minds. He jumped out to hit, then tried to play the ball. In the end he spooned it up, and third man darted in and brought off a wicket.

Now Leigh went in, very nervous and shaky, with a face as white as his hands.

He, too, was given heaps of earnest advice, but all to no purpose. Too frightened to hit out, he blocked several balls, and kept his wicket up, but no more. Baldwin made a desperate effort to keep the bowling. He bucked up now with the heartiest goodwill. But the Oakford players were fielding for all they were worth. Not a single run was given away, not a single run could be matched.

Crash! A fast Yorker had got into the timberland, and Leigh's wicket was spread. He walked slowly back to the pavilion, and Slapton trembled with excitement as their last man went out in search of the all-important 2.

If old Billy could get hold of one it will be all right yet," murmured Tom Sandys, who had taken off his pads and joined his chum.

"What say, Tom?" said little Lester, "what a frightful cad and sneak that Big Baldwin is! He ran you out on purpose! I'm sure of it!" "Oh, I don't know!" said Tom. "That's an awkward thing to say, Teddy. I couldn't exactly see for myself. Of course, he wasn't keen on losing his wicket."

"You're talking like a sportsman, old chap," said Digby quietly, "but for all that I believe Teddy is right."

"Well, we'll hope Billy will get hold of one, and clout it for 6," said Tom. "As long as the match is going on, I don't know."

Continued on the next page.

TEDDY LESTER WILL APPEAR AGAIN NEXT WEEK! TELL YOUR CHUMS!

Our Readers are informed that the characters in the following story are purely imaginary, and no reference or allusion is made to any living person. Actual names may be unobtrusively mentioned, but the Editor wishes it to be distinctly understood that no adverse personal reflection is intended.

FRANK MONK'S LIBEL



A Splendid Complete Tale of GORDON GAY & CO., By PROSPER HOWARD.

CHAPTER I.
A Little Mistake.
HERE you are, Monk!"
"Give us one!"
"Let's have a copy—quick!"
A crowd of juniors surrounded Frank Monk, captain of the Fourth Form at Rykloone Grammar School, and clamoured eagerly for copies of the little printer's journal from the bundle which he held in his arms.
The little paper was the "Grammar School Junior Gazette," which had just arrived from the printer's and which was eagerly looked for by the members of the junior Forms at the Grammar School. It was their own organ, and Frank Monk, their junior captain, was its editor, so that its pages were devoured with intense interest and not a little criticism.
"Here hold on, you chaps! Don't shove! No hurry, you know!" said Monk good-humouredly, as he handed out the copies. "I know how anxious you are to read the editorial, though, of course."
There was a roar from the surging crowd.
"Rats to you, Monk!"
"Blow the editorial!"
"It's my article I want to read!"
"And my poem!"
"And my essay!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Frank Monk doled out the "Gazette," laughing until the clamours were silenced. Then, gathering up the few copies that remained, he strolled away to his study, followed by his study-mates, Lane and Carboy, and also by Gordon Gay & Co.

"And I promised old Jenkins something good in the way of an ad," groaned the luckless editor. "No let us have some things cheap for the end-of-term football supper, and I wanted to do him a good turn."
"He'll be fearfully mad about this!" muttered Lane. "There'll be an awful shindy!"
"How on earth did it happen?" asked Gordon Gay.
"Why, it should have read 'If you want to be done well, buy your tack at Mayor Jenkins's, Wayland'!"
"That's all right," said a printer most badly dropped out of the 'well' by mistake. "It's a libel, that's what it is."
There was a gloomy silence in the study until it was disturbed by a sudden yell of laughter from Gordon Gay.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"What are you cackling at, ass?" roared Frank Monk.
But the schoolboy actor yowled and roared. He had evidently been struck with some extremely humorous idea, but he did not explain what it was.
He only roared.
"Ha, ha, ha!"

chair forward, at the same time slumber the study door, much to the disappointment of the interested pageboy.
"Thank you—no. I prefer to stand while you attend to business," snarled the little gentleman. "I am Mr. Septimus Bloggins—Septimus Bloggins of Wayland."
"So—so—so—so—so—so," remarked Frank Monk.
Mr. Bloggins glared and coughed. "Ahem! Am I to take it, Master Monk, that you act an editor of this publication?" And Mr. Bloggins whisked a copy of the "Gazette" from his bag and tapped it peremptorily.
"Yes," admitted Monk. "I'm the editor."
"Well, Master Monk, perhaps you will not be surprised to hear that I have called on behalf of Mr. Jenkins, Mayor of Wayland—I mean Mayor of Wayland, to know what on earth the meaning of this is, sir!" And Mr. Bloggins fairly ceased to be as he tapped the offending headline of the "Gazette."
"It was a slip of the tongue, Mr. Monk & Co. looked extremely blue. The worst had happened."
"—I—I—I—" began Monk, stammering in his agitation of mind.
"It's libel, sir, that's what it is—rank libel!" shouted Mr. Bloggins, bounding with excitement. "There'll be heavy damages for this, my young friend—heavy damages!"
"Monk & Co. turned pale. Heavy damages. It was awful to think of!"
"—But—but—" stammered poor Monk.
"—But, but!" repeated Mr. Bloggins sharply. "You are not a goat, my young friend, so no more butting, if you please. Let us be businesslike. Shall we say five thousand?"
"—But—but—" stammered poor Monk.
"—But, but!" repeated Mr. Bloggins sharply. "You are not a goat, my young friend, so no more butting, if you please. Let us be businesslike. Shall we say five thousand?"
"—But—but—" stammered poor Monk.
"—But, but!" repeated Mr. Bloggins sharply. "You are not a goat, my young friend, so no more butting, if you please. Let us be businesslike. Shall we say five thousand?"

"course!" exclaimed Monk desperately. "It's—it's all rot, you know, Mr. Bloggins."
"Rot, is it?" retorted Mr. Bloggins. "Rot, is it? Well, see, my young friend! When you're breaking stones on Dartmoor with a convict gang, perhaps you'll have more respect for the law of libel! Rot, rot!"
And the little gentleman glared at Monk with extraordinary fierceness, and opening his black bag, drew out a huge bundle of papers tied round with pink ribbon.
"Frank Monk gave a groan.
"Well, anyway, I can't pay! I'll have to go to prison, that's all!" he said desperately.
The little legal gentleman looked somewhat mollified.
"Well, well, well! As it was an accident, we'll see if we can modify our terms somewhat. Shall we say one thousand?"
"One thousand or five, it's just the same to me," said Monk recklessly.
"As a matter of fact, I've only got thirty bob in the world, and that's only because I've just had a tip from my uncle."
Carboy and Lane held their breath as their chief delivered this reckless ultimatum. They expected to see Mr. Bloggins have a fit, or stamp out of the study breaking bread at the mention of so small a sum as thirty shillings, after he had been talking in thousands. But Mr. Bloggins did nothing of the sort. He appeared to muse a moment before he spoke again.
"I'm!" he remarked thoughtfully. "Thirty bob isn't much of a coup. Still, it's better than nothing. Thirty bob is thirty bob."
The three juniors looked at each other and gasped. For a moment they thought they were dreaming. But no. There stood Mr. Septimus Bloggins, as large as life, his whiskers' face puckered into a thoughtful frown.
Lane plucked up courage,

have settled the matter satisfactorily. Perhaps you will be good enough to enclose an apology for the error in an order to prevent any unpleasantness."
"Certainly, Mr. Bloggins! And thank you so much!"
"And Mr. Bloggins' young gentlemen?"
"No. Good-bye, young gentlemen!" he said, and he turned to go to his study, shutting the door behind him. In the passage he belatedly, somewhat peculiarly, recalled the whole minute he stood outside the door of the study he had just left, doubled up in the agony of a fit of rage. Then, as if suddenly recalling himself, he gave a pull at his beard, which came off in his hand, pulled off his dark spectacles, and made a bolt for Study No. 1X, a little way down the Fourth Form passage.
"Was it only a coincidence that No. 1X was the study of the apartment occupied by Gordon Gay, the schoolboy actor, and his chums?"

"Rats to you, Monk!"
"Blow the editorial!"
"It's my article I want to read!"
"And my poem!"
"And my essay!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Frank Monk doled out the "Gazette," laughing until the clamours were silenced. Then, gathering up the few copies that remained, he strolled away to his study, followed by his study-mates, Lane and Carboy, and also by Gordon Gay & Co.

CHAPTER 2.
Mr. Septimus Bloggins, Solicitor.
RICKET practice was over at the Grammar School for the afternoon, and Frank Monk & Co. were in their study, having just finished tea, when there was a knock at the door.
"Come in!" called out Frank Monk.
The school pageboy, evidently in a state of high excitement, opened the door and popped his tousled head in.
"Hesse, Master Monk, there's a gentleman downstairs, too wants to see you imminet. Ere's 'is card, sir."
Frank Monk & Co. stared at each other in high surprise, not unmixed with consternation.
"Let's have a look!" said Monk, after a pause, taking the card.
"Many ha's!" cried the card-bearer. "Mr. Septimus Bloggins, solicitor, Wayland."
"Hew!"
"My aunt!"
Carboy and Lane gasped simultaneously. The same thought occurred to them at once, as it had to Monk.

"I—I—I—" began Monk, stammering in his agitation of mind.
"It's libel, sir, that's what it is—rank libel!" shouted Mr. Bloggins, bounding with excitement. "There'll be heavy damages for this, my young friend—heavy damages!"
"Monk & Co. turned pale. Heavy damages. It was awful to think of!"
"—But—but—" stammered poor Monk.
"—But, but!" repeated Mr. Bloggins sharply. "You are not a goat, my young friend, so no more butting, if you please. Let us be businesslike. Shall we say five thousand?"
"—But—but—" stammered poor Monk.
"—But, but!" repeated Mr. Bloggins sharply. "You are not a goat, my young friend, so no more butting, if you please. Let us be businesslike. Shall we say five thousand?"
"—But—but—" stammered poor Monk.
"—But, but!" repeated Mr. Bloggins sharply. "You are not a goat, my young friend, so no more butting, if you please. Let us be businesslike. Shall we say five thousand?"

Carboy and Lane held their breath as their chief delivered this reckless ultimatum. They expected to see Mr. Bloggins have a fit, or stamp out of the study breaking bread at the mention of so small a sum as thirty shillings, after he had been talking in thousands. But Mr. Bloggins did nothing of the sort. He appeared to muse a moment before he spoke again.
"I'm!" he remarked thoughtfully. "Thirty bob isn't much of a coup. Still, it's better than nothing. Thirty bob is thirty bob."
The three juniors looked at each other and gasped. For a moment they thought they were dreaming. But no. There stood Mr. Septimus Bloggins, as large as life, his whiskers' face puckered into a thoughtful frown.
Lane plucked up courage,

Having ordered the freed servants, persons of course it was Gordon Gay and his chums, Jack and Harry Wootton and Horace Tadpole, whom he had invited to the party for the following day. Although the rivalry between the two companies was keen, they were really the best of friends.
As they were seated round the festive board, which was set out with a really good spread, Frank Monk proceeded to tell the story of his late escapade of how he came to be holding the lead. As he related the amazing tale of the eccentric Mr. Bloggins' visit to the Grammar School, and the great amusement, but, curiously enough, not a sign of incredulity.
"The most curious part of the whole business," said Gordon Gay in conclusion, "is that that old middle-aged Jenkins sent the thirty-five bob back by the man who delivered the grub this afternoon, saying that it had already been paid for. It's a mistake, of course."
"Not at all!" said Gordon Gay calmly, with his mouth full of lavender. "We had a whip-round in our study and paid for it. We didn't want to let you in for thirty-five bob, you see, Monk. I only wanted your coat. And I did that properly, old chap. Didn't I?"
"What?" roared Monk & Co. with one voice.
But Gordon Gay remained calm. His party were four to three, if it came to a row, anyway.
"I was Mr. Bloggins, solicitor, Wayland," he said, "and my young friends," he went on. "Old Jenkins knows nothing about it. It is quite satisfied. So that's all right, isn't it?"
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared his chums.
But Monk & Co. were silent. Their feelings were too deep for words.



There was a knock at the door, and a thin old gentleman, with side whiskers and dark spectacles, bounced into the room.

Frank Monk doled out the "Gazette," laughing until the clamours were silenced. Then, gathering up the few copies that remained, he strolled away to his study, followed by his study-mates, Lane and Carboy, and also by Gordon Gay & Co.

Frank Monk doled out the "Gazette," laughing until the clamours were silenced. Then, gathering up the few copies that remained, he strolled away to his study, followed by his study-mates, Lane and Carboy, and also by Gordon Gay & Co.

the most serious damage which this malicious libel has wrought. He has become so thin with worry in this one day, sir, that he won't be able to wear his mayoral robes again! They would smother him, sir; they are so much too big! And as for his speech, it's ruined—literally ruined!"
"And Mr. Bloggins appeared on the point of exploding with indignation at the miserable mental picture he had conjured up of the afflicted Mr. Jenkins.
The juniors could hardly believe their ears. The last time they had seen his Worship of Wayland he was as round as a barrel. He must indeed have had a fearful shock to reduce him to the parlous state so emphatically described by Mr. Bloggins. But five thousand pounds!
"—But—but it was all a mistake, sir," burst out Monk desperately. "My intention was to give Mr. Jenkins an advertisement. What I put was 'If you want to be done well, buy your tack at Mayor Jenkins's.' It must be a fearful mistake of the printer's!"
Mr. Bloggins purred his lips and shook his head.
"—We can't accept that, Mr. Monk. The editor of a paper takes full responsibility for everything that appears in his journal."
"—But—but I can't pay anything like five thousand pounds, of

"I—I—I've got half-a-crown, if that'd be any good, sir," he ventured.
"I've got half-a-crown, too," added Carboy.
"I'm! Thirty-five bob altogether! It's not much, but—"
Lane looked at Mr. Bloggins and suddenly broke out.
"Look here, Monk, suppose Mr. Bloggins were to see your pater, the Head? Perhaps he'd—"
"No, no, no!" said Frank Monk promptly.
"Yes, rats to that—I—I mean that, I think I can arrange it without making an interview with Mr. Bloggins necessary," said Mr. Bloggins hastily. "What I propose by way of settlement is this: You, Master Monk, write out an order on Mr. Jenkins's emporium to provide a feed—that is, grub—I mean a meal for seven persons at five shillings a head, enclosing the order in thirty shillings in payment thereof. The provisions will be delivered in time for tea to-morrow. In consideration of your order, and of the fact that the libel complained of arose out of a mistake, I can promise on Mr. Jenkins's behalf that he will not sue proceedings."
"My hat!" exclaimed Frank Monk, with a gasp of relief.
"—That's tipping! I'll do it imminetly. Thanks awfully, Mr. Bloggins!"
"—Not at all," said the little legal gentleman stidily. "I am glad to

with one voice.
But Gordon Gay remained calm. His party were four to three, if it came to a row, anyway.
"I was Mr. Bloggins, solicitor, Wayland," he said, "and my young friends," he went on. "Old Jenkins knows nothing about it. It is quite satisfied. So that's all right, isn't it?"
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared his chums.
But Monk & Co. were silent. Their feelings were too deep for words.

THE END.

A PROFITABLE HOBBY.
Wood-carving may become a really profitable hobby if a lad has any talents in that direction. You will only require about a dozen tools to start with. The most useful for ordinary work are flat gouges. Instead of being quite flat, however, like ordinary chisels, they are slightly rounded. The following sizes are recommended to start with: 1, 1-1/2, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100. The remainder can be made up with different kinds of chisels, including a corner chisel, which comes next to the gouge in point of usefulness. Take particular notice of the new wood, preferably boxwood, made perfectly smooth.
The best wood for carving is foreign Spanish chestnut and mahogany are also very good but the most popular wood for this purpose is American walnut, which is fairly hard, and cuts clean.

PECULIAR.
Tom: "Queer, isn't it?"
Dick: "What's queer?"
Tom: "The night fall."
Dick: "Yes."
Tom: "But it doesn't break."
Dick: "No."
Tom: "And the day breaks."
Dick: "That's so."
Tom: "But it doesn't fall."
And he was gone.

NOT WHAT HE MEANT.
"John, did you run round and ask how old Mrs. Jones was this morning, as I asked you?"
"Yes, and she said it was like your impudence, but she 'ad no objection to letting you know that the objection was seventy-eight."