

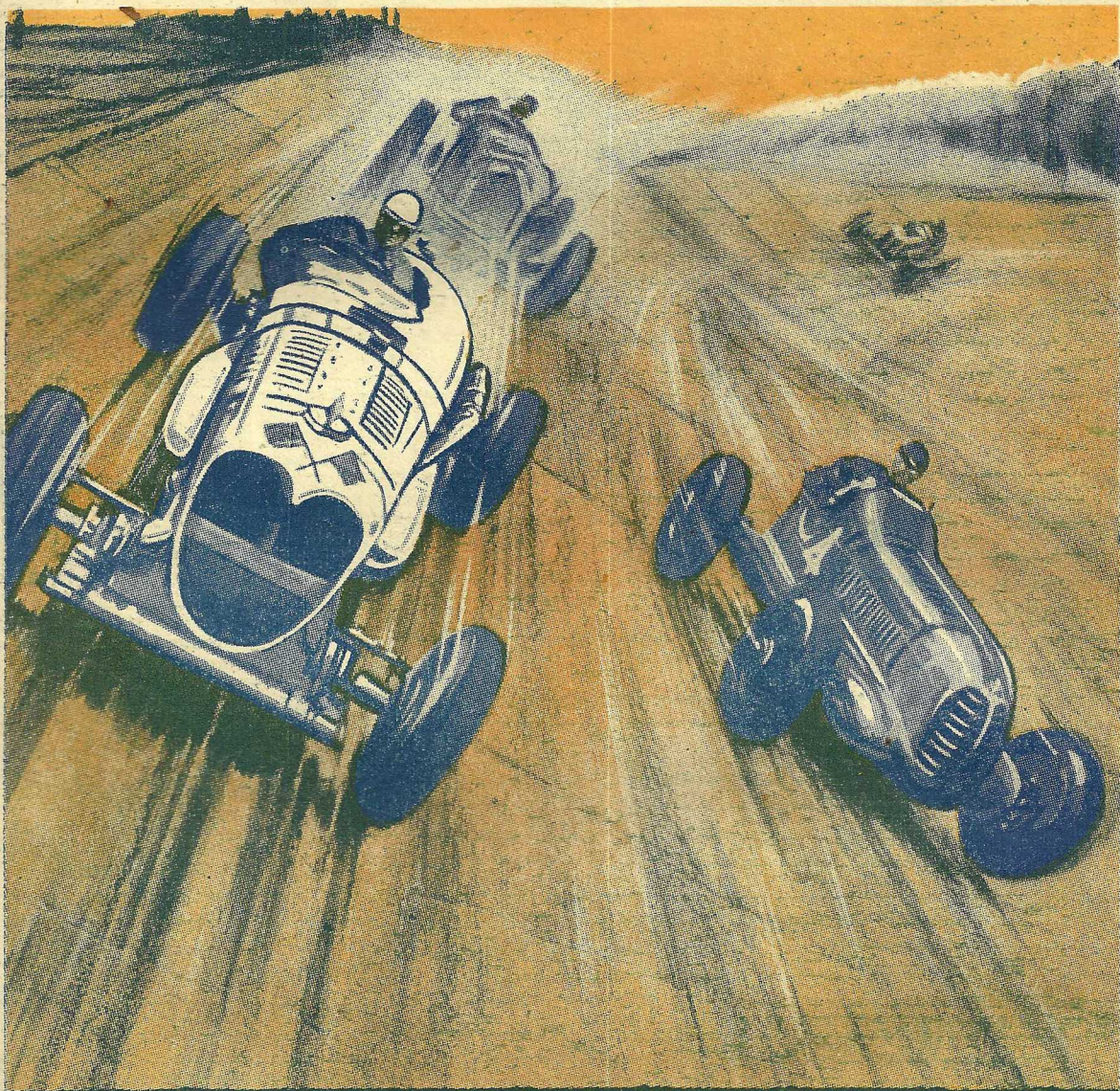
PHANTOM BOMBERS! GREAT WAR
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WHEN VICTORY IS NEAR!

Splendid Motor-Racing Article by

CAPTAIN G.E.T. EYSTON

*Two echoing revolver shots send THE SCHOOLBOY DETECTIVE,
with his life in his hands, on the trail of—*

The HOLD-UP MAN!

"Before I'm Spotted!"

"PIE!" exclaimed Len Lex, Harvey, and Banks, of the Oakshott Fifth, as Pie Porringe appeared suddenly in the doorway of the bicycle-house, where the Schoolboy Detective was doctoring a puncture.

Pie was panting for breath. Evidently he had been running. He paused in the doorway to cast a quick glance over his shoulder. Then he stepped in.

"You howling ass!" said Banks. "What are you doing here?"

"Eh? I want my bike, of course!" answered Pie.

"But you're in detention this afternoon!" howled Banks.

"I'm jolly well not!" said Pie.

"Oh!" said Len Lex. "If you're let off, good! You can come along to Trant with us."

"I've let myself off!" explained Pie. "But I'm jolly well not coming to Trant. I'm going down to Oakways. It's rather important—"

"Important enough to break detention for?" asked Harvey.

"Quite!"

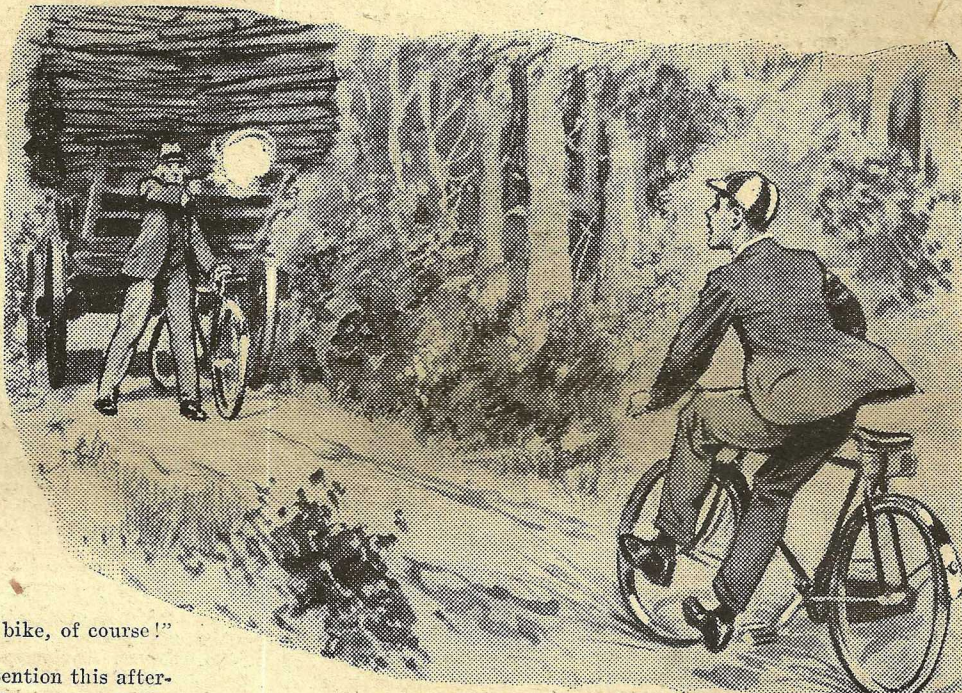
"You goat!" said Banks. "You're not going to break detention. It might mean a flogging."

"I'm chancing that!" said Pie.

"Are you?" said Banks grimly. He stepped between Pie and the doorway—and Harvey stepped between Pie and the bicycle-stand. Len Lex laid down a tube of solution and stood ready to back up either of them that might require his aid.

Breaking detention was a serious matter—much too serious for Pie's loyal chums to let him get away with it, if they could help it. They had been feeling very sorry for poor old Pie, stuck in detention that glorious afternoon, unable to join them in a bike spin over the Sussex downs, with ginger-pop and cake at the Rotunda, in Trant. But they were not letting him ask for trouble to this extent. Pie, as a hunter of trouble, had few equals, but Study No. 8 were always prepared to save him from himself if they could.

"I say, don't you chaps play the goat!" said Porringe. "I've dodged



Len threw himself off his machine as the hold-up man drew a revolver. Bullets came whizzing towards the Schoolboy Detective!

away all right, but I'm due in detention now, and I may be missed any minute. I've got to get out quick."

"You've got to get in quick!" said Len, shaking his head. "What the thump do you want to go down to Oakways for? You can run down to the village after you're let out, anyhow."

"That would be too late!" explained Pie. "I'm meeting the four o'clock train from Greenwood."

"You're not!" said Banks—and Harvey gave him a shove on the chest as he made a stride towards his bike.

"Look here," roared Pie, "if you want me to knock your silly head off, Harvey, you silly ass—"

"Fathead!" said Harvey.

"I want that bike!" roared Pie.

"Go on wanting!"

Pie came on again. He was in a hurry. A fellow dodging out of detention, in momentary danger of a master's eye, could not afford to

waste time. He jumped at Harvey, to grasp him and spin him out of the way. At the same moment, Len and Banks closed in on him from behind and pinned his arms.

"Leggo!" yelled Pie. "Lex, you fathead, leggo! I'll punch your head, Banker! I tell you I'm going to—Whoop!"

They slammed him against the wall of the bicycle-house. Then all three stood in front of him, while Pie leaned on the wall and spluttered.

"Not to-day, old man!" said Len soothingly. "Any other day—"

"You silly ass! Any other day won't do, when Young's coming to-day, you dummy!" panted Pie.

"Young?" repeated Len. "The new games master?"

"Yes, you fathead! I heard Surtees tell Oliphant that he was coming by the four o'clock train, so I'm going to meet him—see?"

"Blessed if I see!" said Harvey blankly. "You don't know the man, do you?"

"I'm going to!" said Pie. "Old Bully knows him—he recommended him here—but so far as I know, he knows nobody else at Oakshott. I dare say old Bully would go to meet him, only he's with the Sixth at cricket practice. Well, I'm going! Stands to reason that a chap coming into a strange place will feel rather pleased at a fellow taking the trouble

By
**CHARLES
HAMILTON**

The Hold-Up Man!

to hike along and meet him at the station—what?”

Pie's friends gazed at him.

“What I mean is,” said Pie, “it's rather a stroke of luck, old Bully going away for a month.”

“What?” ejaculated the three. Mr. Bullivant, games master of Oakshott, was easily the most popular master in the school. Everybody at Oakshott was sorry that he was going away—except, apparently, Porrhinge.

“I mean to say, I like old Bully, of course, but he's no end of an ass,” said Pie. “He's got no judgment. I think I shall have a better chance with the new man. Old Bully really knows no more about a man's form at cricket than you do, Harvey.”

“Eh?” Harvey, as captain of the Fifth Form eleven, fancied that he knew something about cricket. He knew too much, at all events, ever to play Pie in the Form eleven!

“The new man may have more sense,” went on Pie. “He mightn't notice me specially among a crowd of fellows, but if I meet him at the station when he blows along, and give him a little special attention, and all that—See? He will have his eye on me! He will know me! Sort of getting in on the ground floor, if you know what I mean!”

Pie's friends gazed at him, uncertain whether to laugh or to weep. Pie was not aware that his cricket was enough to make a games master tired of life, but everybody else in the Oakshott Fifth knew it. And for this great scheme, Pie was going to break detention—and risk a flogging!

“Now stop wasting time,” added Pie. “I shall have to wait about a bit, if I start now—but I've got to get clear before I'm spotted.” And he made a stride at his bike again.

Three pairs of hands fastened on him like three steel vices. Len and Banks took his arms, Harvey appropriated his collar. They jerked him away from the bicycle-stand to the doorway.

“Will you leggo?” yelled Pie, struggling manfully.

“It's no good talking to you!” said Len. “Don't you worry about Mr. Young noticing your cricket. He'll notice it fast enough. Your game could never pass unnoticed, old chap—it's the sort of thing that leaps to the eye. Just now you're going into detention. Come on!”

“I'm going out!” roared Pie.

“Wrong preposition—you're going in!”

Red with wrath, gasping for breath, considerably untidy and dishevelled, Porrhinge of the Fifth arrived at the door of the Form-room—a little late, but better late than never!

A gentleman in horn-rimmed glasses was standing there. It was Mr. Chalmers, Pie's Form-master, and at the sight of him, Pie's friends released the exasperated, indignant Pie. Under the eyes of his beak, even the goat of the Fifth could hardly think of bolting.

“You are late, Porrhinge!” said the master. “Five minutes late,

Porrhinge! Go into the Form-room, and lose no more time, Porrhinge.”

Pie gave his friends a withering, devastating look, and went into the Form-room. His friends walked away, happy to have saved him from bad trouble. Ten minutes later they were in the saddle, spinning away on their jiggers—sorry for poor old Pie, but glad that they had, at all events, done their best for him.

Two Sudden Reports!

“WALK it?” asked Banks. “It's rather a pull up to Trant!”

“If that old johnny can do it, we can!” said Harvey. “I'm jolly well not getting down if he doesn't.”

Len nodded assent to that. Still in the saddle, therefore, the chums slogged up Trant Hill. The “old johnny” to whom Harvey alluded was a little ahead of them; and venerable as he looked, he seemed to be taking the hill in his stride. Oakshott men, especially hefty men in the Fifth Form, were not going to push their bikes up that hill afoot, when an old gentleman whose silver hair glimmered in the sunshine was riding it. Really, they couldn't, and wouldn't!

The three had been round by Greenwood Down, and from Greenwood there was a long, long hill up to Trant, where they were going to stop at the Rotunda for ginger-beer and cake. Fellows often started up that hill with a swing, but petered out after a time, and decided after all to walk the rest. Len Lex and Co. were about half-way when Banks proposed getting down and walking—and Harvey refused. They rode on.

Len's eyes dwelt rather curiously on the silver-haired cyclist. Under a shady Homburg hat, thick, almost bushy, silvery hair gleamed. When he had a glimpse of the man's face, he saw white brows and a grizzled moustache and beard. The old fellow looked sixty, if he was a day—a hale and hearty sixty! He might have been expected to take his cycling very easily at that time of life—and certainly to be readier to dismount on a hill than any Oakshott Fifth Former. Instead of which, he pegged on, driving his pedals with ease, and apparently hardly noticing that he was on a hill at all.

Len & Co. noticed it! Banks was puffing and blowing. Harvey, breathing hard, and with a face growing redder and redder, began to wish that he had agreed to Banker's suggestion. Len, who was hard as nails, was feeling the strain. All three of them wished that the old johnny would get down and walk—and thus give them an excuse for doing so. But he pedalled on.

He was going at a leisurely pace, but did not dismount. And the Oakshott fellows weren't going to, unless he did!

“Oh crumbs!” murmured Banks, at last.

“That old chap,” said Harvey, “must be made of iron! Hardly a man ever rides a push-bike up this dashed hill!”

“Can't be so old as he looks!” gasped Banks.

“Well, he looks about a hundred! Bother him!”

“Let's—” began Len.

“Rot!” snorted Harvey. “If that ancient crock can do this hill, we can do it. I won't get down if he doesn't—unless I fall off.”

They were feeling now that the honour of Oakshott was at stake! No cyclist likes to be beaten on the road. To give in on that hill, while that venerable old bean jogged on as if he never noticed the hill at all, was a thing they couldn't, and wouldn't, do. But as they drew nearer to Trant it grew harder and harder to keep going. Banks' bike wobbled, and nearly barged into Harvey's. But he collected all his forces, and ground grimly on.

The pleasant old High Street of Trant had never seemed so pleasant as it did when it dawned, at last, on the eyes of the determined but weary three. In the early afternoon, the street in the little Sussex country town shimmered in sunshine, the place looking half-asleep, as it generally did. Only on market days did Trant wake up and look lively, and it was not market day. Three or four people were seated at the little tables under the spreading oak outside the Rotunda tea-house. At the corner, where the Sussex and Southern Bank stood, a stolid policeman was slowly and solemnly brushing a gnat off his nose. Other signs of life were few.

Ahead of the Oakshott fellows, the old johnny pedalled into the High Street, obviously not in the least fagged by his ride. Fagged to the limit, the Oakshott trio trundled on, till they reached the Rotunda, and there, in immense relief, they got down.

“That old ass is keeping on!” remarked Harvey. “Anyhow, we were going to stop here. The old chump hasn't beaten us.”

“No—he's stopping, too!” said Len. “He's gone on to the bank.”

The corner where the bank stood was about fifty yards on past the Rotunda. Outside the building the old johnny stopped and got off his bike. His easy movements showed that he was not fatigued, which was really surprising, in view of his age, when the Oakshott fellows were tired to the bone.

Having alighted, the silver-haired gentleman swung his bike round, before he lodged the pedal on the kerb, evidently to place it ready for returning the way he had come when he had got through his business at the bank. It was a large machine, but he twirled it round as if it had been a feather. Uncommon strength was packed somewhere within that venerable exterior. Leaving it parked on the edge of the pavement, the old johnny walked across to the bank, mounted the granite steps, pushed open the swing doors, and disappeared within.

“Well!” said Harvey. “I hope I shall be as hefty as that when I get to a hundred! For goodness' sake let's sit down, before my legs drop off!”

They bunched their machines against the trunk of the oak, and dropped into chairs at one of the little tables. A waiter brought ginger-beer and cake. Never had the foaming ginger-pop been so welcome. Len was raising his glass when from up the street came a sudden sharp report. It was followed immediately by another.

"What the thump—" ejaculated Len. He jammed down his glass and stared round. It sounded like a motor back-firing—but there was no car to be seen in the High Street of Trant.

The next moment he knew what it was, and he bounded to his feet, his eyes ablaze with sudden excitement.

The swing doors of the bank burst open, and the silver-haired old johnny came running down the steps. At the same moment the stolid looking policeman at the corner—his stolidity suddenly vanished!—came running towards the bank. The old johnny shouted to him:

"Quick! Help! A hold-up!"

The constable passed him with a rush, and disappeared into the bank. The old johnny crossed the pavement with equal quickness, threw himself on his bike, and shot away. In a moment, he was passing the three startled Fifth Formers of Oakshott, standing astonished under the oak at the Rotunda.

"A—a hold-up!" stammered Harvey. "Bank-raider!" gasped Banks.

Len Lex, swifter on the uptake, made a leap into the road—but, swift as he was, he was not in time. The old johnny shot past, and peddled on madly out of Trant. From the bank, a bare-headed man came rushing and shouting:

"Stop him! Stop him! Bank raid! Stop him! That man—that man!" The bank clerk, spluttering with excitement, pointed after the old johnny, vanishing out of the High Street into the country road beyond. "He's shot a man—stop him!"

Len Lex wrenched his bike away from the oak, threw a leg over it as he rushed it into the road, and shot away after the man with the silver hair—leaving his comrades staring and gasping. Utterly unexpectedly, professional business had turned up for the Schoolboy Detective. He shot away like an arrow, and Harvey and Banks were left to stare and gasp.

Just Like Pie!

"**B**LOW!" said Pie, as, having opened the Form-room door an inch or two, and peered into the passage, he spotted his Form-master at a little distance, in conversation with Mr. Surtees, the master of the Fourth. He closed the door softly.

He went back to his desk, glared at the detention task thereon, and again said "Blow!" But he did not sit down at the desk. He crossed to the window, and looked out into the sunshiny quad.

Porringer was a sticker. He was, no doubt, every known kind of an ass, but his sticking powers had never been denied. When his mind

was made up, it was made up, and that was that. He had told his friends that he was going down to Oakways Station, to meet Mr. Egerton Young, the new games master, and he was going. The only question was, how?

He had allowed an hour to pass. By that time he considered the coast ought to have been clear. Instead of which, two beaks were wagging their chins in the corridor—and even Pie could not walk out of detention under his Form-master's nose. Still, if his beak was in the corridor, he was not in the quad—and from the Form-room window, Pie surveyed the quad with a calculating eye. Dropping from the window was easy—but a fellow had to get clear.

Luckily, not a man of the Sixth was to be seen—and not a master! It was a golden opportunity for a fellow bent on playing the goat!

Pie dropped from the window, and, adopting a casual air, strolled away, heading for the bike-shed. There he came to a halt. At the door of the bike-shed, Campion, head boy, stood talking to Oliphant of the Sixth, captain of Oakshott.

"Hallo, aren't you in detention, Porringer?" asked Campion. Pie's face was a sufficient answer. Campion frowned. He was more inclined to laugh, but he had his duty to do. He pointed to the House. "Go back at once, you young ass! If I spot you again, I shall have to report you. Cut!"

Pie trailed away, with inexpressible feelings. He disappeared from Campion's sight, and a few minutes later dropped over a wall, and was outside Oakshott School.

He had to walk, but he had plenty of time in which to get to Oakways and arrive at the village station before four o'clock. It was a quarter to four when he walked into the railway station and went on the platform, to wait for the train from Greenwood.

Other fellows in Pie's position might have been wondering whether the outcome of this adventure was going to be a Head's flogging or a stiff imposition. Pie was not! He was wondering what Mr. Young was going to be like, and whether he was a sensible chap, and a better judge of a fellow's form at games than old Bully, or Oliphant, or Harvey.

Pie was not, of course, the fellow to "grease" up to a beak; but he saw no reason why he should not make, if he could, an agreeable impression on Mr. Young, who was going to be in charge of the games while Mr. Bullivant was away. He knew little of Egerton Young so far—only that he was a young man who took temporary posts at schools when a regular member of the staff was away. He hoped that Mr. Young would have more perception than old Bully.

When the four o'clock train came in from Greenwood, nobody who alighted from it could possibly have been taken for a games master. Mr. Young had not, after all, come by that train.

This was unexpected—and it was irritating. Fuming, Pie waited

patiently for the next two trains to arrive, but Mr. Young was on neither of them. It was then half-past five, and Pie decided that the new sports master must have changed his mind and taken a car or something.

It was for this that he had broken out of detention! He might as well have stayed in it—it would have been up at five! Now, of course, he had been missed, and his beak would be looking for him. And it was all for nothing—Young hadn't come.

Fed up and furious, Porringer walked back to Oakshott, feeling a strong desire not to make himself agreeable to Mr. Young, but to boot that unoffending young man all over Sussex!

"The ass! The fathead! The chump!" said Pie, over and over again, as he trailed wearily back to the school.

He walked in with a glum brow. Almost the first person he met was Mr. Chalmers, his Form-master. A commanding hand rose, and the horn-rimmed spectacles fixed on him grimly. The Fifth Form master, clearly, was not pleased!

"Porringer!"

"Yes, sir!" said Pie dispiritedly. He could have faced this with equanimity if he had carried out his plans. It was hard to have to face it for nothing—very hard!

"I was surprised, Porringer—very much astonished—to find that you had left the Form-room. This will not do, Porringer! I make allowances for you, as the stupidest boy in my Form—"

"Eh?"

"If this should occur again, I shall report you to Dr. Osborne. On the present occasion, Porringer, you will write out a Georgic from Virgil."

"Oh crumbs!" said Pie, and he trudged on dispiritedly to the House, the horn-rimmed glasses gleaming severe disapproval after him.

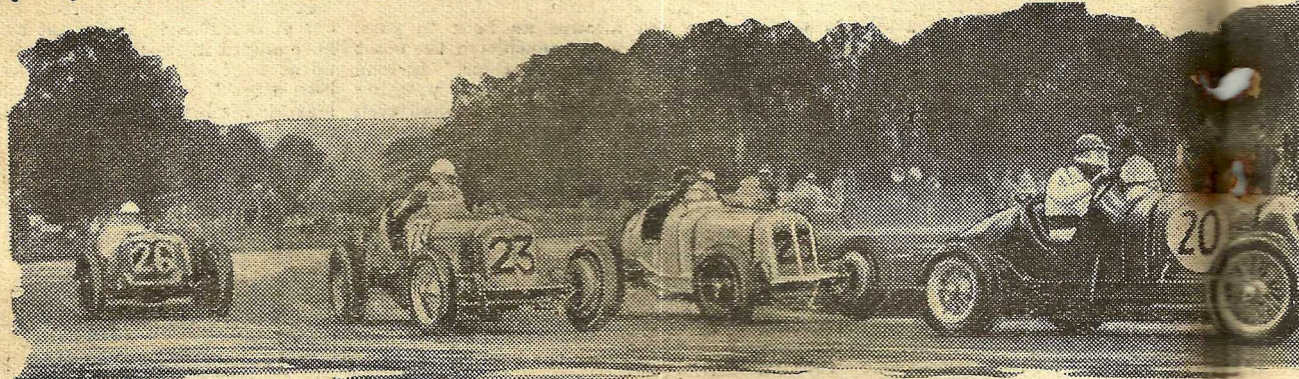
Under Fire!

LEN LEX rode out of Trant like the wind. Behind him the old High Street was in a buzz deepening to a roar. Exciting events were few and far between in the quiet country town. A bank hold-up was a new thing in its sleepy history—new and wildly strange and thrilling. But if the townsfolk were excited and thrilled, they were not quick on the uptake. The bank-robber whizzed away on his bicycle, and only Len Lex went after him—other pursuit there was, for the moment, none—though no doubt there would be a car on the road before long.

Len had been tired, after that drag up Trant Hill. He forgot it now, for the silver-haired man, going back the way he had come, was shooting down the hill, and Len shot after him, the wind lashing his face and stinging his ears as he went like a bullet. Up that hill the Oakshott fellows had come painfully—down it Len went at a pace that blended the roadside trees and hedges into a continuous film.

(Continued on page 16)

WHEN VICTORY IS



They're off! The scene at Red Gate Corner, Donington, at the start of a Nuffield Trophy Race.

THERE is a time when the thrill of motor-racing becomes absolute thralldom, when the excitement becomes so intense that imagination takes complete charge and the dread of breakdown or disaster becomes paramount. It comes when the race is drawing to its close and you are so well in the vanguard as to be able to anticipate victory.

There is no reason why the car should not go on as before. It has already done sufficient to prove that it is superior to the strain imposed on it, and yet—you feel that the car cannot go on for ever. There is a breaking-point, but Heaven send that it does not occur before the finish!

You listen intently for every variation of sound from the normal beat of the engine or for any abnormal noise in the chassis. The instruments on the dashboard are the tell-tales of destiny. You watch them as though life depended on what they record. The slightest change in oil pressure or water temperature might mean the beginning of disaster. The revolution counter must fly round on the gear changes in its usual fashion. Any departure from the normal means that something is amiss.

And what of the brakes? So often have they been called into action. Will they last out? The amount of movement on the pedal must be watched, for if there is excess it means that the brakes are fading out. A car is no faster than its brakes will allow, so that such a fade out might mean defeat, or worse—a pile up.

ALL of us have had that dread experience of failure on the very verge of success. That is why the last few miles seem so long. I remember an occasion at Brooklands when I was leading comfortably in a 100 miles race for a gold trophy. The cup was mine—or nearly. Then, very near the end, up went the oil temperature and, in a flash, victory was gone. Instead of winning, I became one of the discards of fortune, a mere non-entity, a non-finisher. A big end had melted.

Twice in the British Racing Drivers' Club's 500 miles race I have led by handsome margins at the three-quarter distance and yet have been forced into retirement. On one occasion the side shaft of the back axle twisted off and the rear wheel parted company with the car. On the other a piston broke and, in a trice, I was out.

We who have experienced these set-backs naturally dread them. Imagine the last lap of a big race when you are leading. Thoughts flash through your mind; the seconds become minutes, and the distance is lengthened by apprehension for which there is no real reason.

Perhaps the fuel will run out or a tyre may burst. Behind you somebody is maintaining a relentless

chase. He will not fail. Nothing will go wrong with his car. You must not lose a second, and yet the slightest petrol leak in the system, the most trivial fault, means that your pursuer will catch you. Almost you can see him, grinning demoniacally, as he goes by to pip you on the post.

At times, some little thing has happened which tells you that your car has only a definite period of life, and that it cannot go on much longer. The oil is dangerously low, one of the valves has stretched a little, or there is an ominous chassis squeak. Can you finish before the trouble develops?

You must drive on for all you are worth and chance it. There is no time for a pit stop.

At last the never-ending lap is finishing. You round the last bend and there ahead of you is the black-and-white chequered flag. You know that you have won. The oppressive tension is at an end, and the blood goes coursing through your veins. You could win if the engine packed up; momentive energy would take you past the post. You give a defiant little stab to the throttle pedal and then—VICTORY!

MOTOR races are won and lost before the driver gets into his car. The public sees only the last chapter of the book. It knows nothing of what has gone before—the preparation of the cars, the organisation—and even while it watches the speedmen match their courage and skill against each other, it sees little and knows less of the work which is going on in the pits.

The driver must keep in touch with his control pit. While he is racing round the course his "seconds" are working out positions, comparing figures, balancing discretion with speed, organising for victory. Signals are posted as a result of their deliberations, and the wise driver will observe these signals, because only by so doing can he race according to plan. Without the pit attendants, the driver could not know his relative position in the race, and he must know everything that can help him.

When a car halts and loses its position, only the best system of signals can tell the driver how much he has to do to regain the loss. I do not think there is any long-distance race on long or short circuit where any relaxation can be permitted in the signalling system, and it is therefore necessary always to have this as complete as possible.

In record attempts signals denoting the lap speed, distance covered, and records obtained are of the utmost importance. For races it is general to denote the position in the race, have an indicator to order fast or slow in the degree required, give the number of laps accomplished, and a special sign for denoting when it is time to pull into the pits for refuelling.

Sets of numbers, yellow figure ground, are the best to indicate. They can be hung on a stand. And an arrow in various degrees indicates the degree of speed required to

Just think of the thrill in seeing of a big international event at the signal board indicating that driving is now holding even though age that your greatest rival, who has fallen out, thus making it

Very often it pays to start at a long race and allow oneself to favourable position. It is the su

Our Cover Picture

● Brooklands fastest
● the Broadcast Trophy
● on our Cover this
● Cobb in his big Na
● leading Hamilton's
● by about four seconds
● Hanson's little M
● romped home to
● an average speed of
● One lap was covered
● 140 m.p.h. Re-pro

a certain measure of success, but it is difficult to catch the leader in the time available at the end if they are. However, the satisfaction of seeing from, say, the middle of the field the race as denoted by your sign to be experienced to be believe

Generally the signals are given in the pits, but sometimes they are given up as the car tears past. Even you and the interpretation of them, the speeds to-day are so high that they cannot properly convey the information which is so necessary

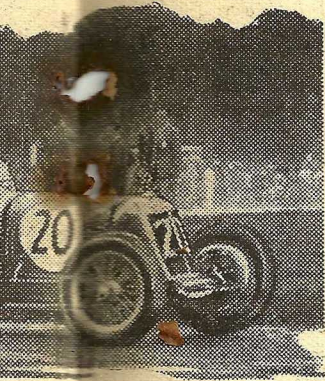
Therefore, it should be a rule to easily distinguishable by the driver at the end it is sometimes feasible to have a signalling station, away from the track, so that, if possible, it is employed if telephones break down

I remember a case where the

"THRILLS I REMEMBER!" HIGH SPOTS IN HIS SPEED CAREER ON LAND

IS NEAR!

-By-
CAPT. G. E. T. EYSTON



... Race.
...bers, yellow figures on a black back-
... best to indicate position and laps
... can be hung on a large blackboard or
... an arrow in various positions will give
... speed required to the driver.

... of the third in seeing during the course
... national event a number stuck up on
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... thus making it much easier for you.
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Over Picture
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nds fastest race ever—
adcast Trophy—is shown
Cover this week. John
his big Napier Railton,
Hamilton's Alfa-Romeo
t four seconds, dived past
s little Maserati and
home to victory with
age speed of 136 m.p.h.
was covered at nearly
m.p.h. Reproduced by courtesy of
"The Motor."

...ure of success, but it may be that it
... catch the leaders during the limited
... at the end if these have put on a spurt.
... satisfaction of seeing a rise in position
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... to-day are so high that often as not
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... should be a rule that all signals are
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... on, away from the pit area, but not
... e, if possible, visual signalling can be
... ephones break down.
... a case where the windows of a house

were used as a signalling device. The house was just beside a "slow" corner where the cars in any case had to ease up considerably. This made it not difficult for the driver to observe the precise position of the panes of a certain prominent window in this house. The positioning of these panes meant something which was of the utmost importance to him, and this was kept a secret; but it was an easy way for the team manager to indicate exactly what he required.

The management of a team of racing cars engaged in a big race is a specialised task and calls for expert knowledge. A successful *équipe* is the result of the combined efforts of the "chief," his drivers, and his mechanics, and the chief must be backed up to the hilt by the factory or organisation responsible for building and servicing the cars. So far as "active service" is concerned, that is to say during the progress of a race, team work generally is good; but there are examples, in almost any big event, where lack of thorough preparation has ruined the chances of a team of cars.

MONTHS of preparation are necessary for race winning. Not only must the cars be in tip-top condition, but they must be as well adapted as possible to the course on which they will be required to run. It is rank bad management to send a car to race with gear ratios which are unsuitable or with other faults of equal importance which, with a slight modification, are remediable.

At any race you will see the frantic endeavours of a stable to make last-minute adjustments. When you see that, you see inefficiency, for the cars should have been got ready weeks in advance of the actual event. Believe me, and I know, many important races have been thrown away by incompetence in general management.

As in every other form of sport, it is first necessary to have the most efficient men, but it is equally necessary that the members of the team should be good companions and in close agreement with one another. It is the team spirit which creates so much interest and pleasure and adds so much zest to a race. If one member fails to do his best, the structure crumples. In motor-racing, with the complicated mechanism and control of equally complex spares and equipment, the task of running a successful team of three or more cars is a real business in itself and requires great experience.

The personal side is equally intriguing, and, perhaps, the greater the driver the more difficult it is to control him. If, however, these aces of road or track are accustomed to work together, they will settle among themselves what is to be done to achieve success, and establish the sympathy and understanding which is the essence of the team spirit.

MANY teams draw out of a hat to settle which member is to try to get a win, while the others follow up. But perhaps the best method is to allow cars in the team to take up their "natural" positions in the race without straining, while indicating the dangerous rivals for each to look after. In a little while matters will have sifted themselves out and signals can be used to get the best out of the combination.

Often the greatest restraint has to be exercised by the drivers, who each has given of his best, when it comes to the final preparation of the cars, as only in the best organised teams is it possible to give the most complete final touches to each car. This may make all the difference when it comes to some obscure trouble. It is amazing how many small things have to be looked after, and it requires years of experience to know where to look for possible trouble.

Then there is the case of one who has an accident just prior to the race. All hands have to be turned on

The last lap of a big race. You are leading, but close behind someone is putting up a relentless chase. An ominous squeak . . . your engine is failing . . . may go dead within inches of victory!

to rebuild his car. It must, of course, be done at the expense of other work perhaps equally urgent. Drivers and mechanics all turn to and work incessantly to make good the damage, and then there comes double work to make up for lost time.

Or perhaps all the best spares for the race have been robbed to equip cars which have crashed. This is the sort of thing that proves the value of *esprit de corps* and brings out the characters of the men.

In all great teams every car is finally prepared in a methodical and businesslike manner. Whatever alteration or addition is made is applied by the same personnel to each car in turn. If one of the drivers has some particular idea or gadget which he wants to fit, the wisdom of this is thrashed out at a conference, and if it is thought desirable by the team manager, the alteration or improvement is fitted to all cars or to those of the drivers who would wish for it.

In a team where resources are limited, it may not be possible to have personnel available to attend to all the small details, and it is therefore left to the individual drivers to settle these with their own little staff of mechanics. It is interesting and often amusing to see each thinking out problems for himself and passing on schemes one to another or not, as the case may be! If one bright boy hits on something good, you may be sure the rest will follow if they can.

DISCIPLINE is, of course, very strict, particularly when it comes to trying out the cars before the race. It is useless to go on a test run without all the tools and apparatus necessary, and the car must be, as far as possible, in first-class order and safe for the driver before it can be allowed out. It is no good undertaking tests unless the best mechanics for the job are available, and it is no use taking the car out for tuning-up purposes unless the road is perfectly safe for something approaching the required speed.

Another point of discipline is punctuality. It is exasperating to find that mechanics are not available when the cars are due out. And a driver who has to be fetched by taxi because he is late is demoralising to the whole team. It is the team manager's job to control all these things with firmness and extreme tact.

Physical training is not part of the present-day preparation, principally because few team managers understand fully how necessary this is. All good drivers who have been at the game for a long time are extremely temperate, but hardly any get the physical exercise which must help them in the long run to stand the strain of a hard race without any after-effects. I advocate attention to physical training, and the tuning up of muscles to stand the racket of a gruelling race. Nothing very elaborate is needed. A walk before breakfast, Swedish exercises, and the use of a "developer" are easy ways of training, and with an occasional row or similar hard physical exertion and plenty of walking are all that is required.

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LAND AND WATER, Told by Capt. EYSTON in Next Week's "MODERN BOY"!

The Hold-Up Man!

(Continued from page 13)

If he was not gaining on the man who fled, he was not losing—and he was hardly twenty yards behind. His eyes were on him—on the deceptive gleam of the silver hair in the sunshine. He could have grinned at it, if he had had leisure for grinning. He knew now, of course, that the silver hair, the white moustache, and brows and beard, were a cunning disguise. He knew why the old johnny had negotiated that hill with such ease—it was because, under that venerable exterior, he was a young, strong, active, and particularly muscular and vigorous man!

Only too well, Len Lex knew that now. Banks had remarked, at the time, that perhaps the man was not so old as he looked—and he wasn't, by thirty or forty years! That old johnny was, quite probably, hardly ten years older than Len—fifteen years, at the most!

They had covered a mile at break-neck speed when the old johnny glanced over his shoulder. Len saw the glancing eyes grow fixed under the bushy white brows. The man, seeing him, knew that he was followed.

He might have supposed that a schoolboy was riding recklessly down the hill, unconnected with him or what had happened in Trant. But perhaps he had noticed Len before—seen him, perhaps, with his friends, outside the Rotunda—and guessed that he had jumped on his bike to pursue. Anyhow, the sudden fixity of his backward stare told of suspicion and enmity. And Len, remembering that the desperate man had fired two shots in the bank, set his teeth.

From what the bank clerk had shouted, he knew that a man had been shot—perhaps two. In any case, the hold-up man, riding for liberty, if not for life, was ready to use a deadly weapon for his safety. Spinning down the hill at dizzy speed, there was not much danger in shooting—but Len knew of what the villain was capable, and he set his teeth as he spun on.

He knew that the bank-robber could not intend to keep to the highway. Cars would soon be roaring in pursuit—the telephone was already at work, and the roads would soon be watched and barred to the fugitive. On a push-bike he had no chance whatever of ultimate escape. His game was to get clear of the town in that desperate rush, dodge into cover, strip off his disguise, and conceal or abandon the bicycle.

The Schoolboy Detective knew that that must be his game. And but for Len, he would have carried on unchecked, unwatched—and in a totally different guise, appeared on the road again, met his pursuers face to face unsuspected—perhaps even joined in the hunt for himself! For whatever he looked like, when his disguise was removed, it was a certainty that he looked, in his natural state, nothing whatever like a silver-haired grandfather!

But with Detective - Inspector Nixon's nephew close behind, the

man's game was not so easy to play. True, Len was merely some schoolboy or other, in his eyes—that and nothing more. Even his friends at Oakshott did not know that Len Lex was a detective as well as a schoolboy. But the man knew that this schoolboy was pursuing him—that he would see, that he would tell what he had seen!

Two miles flashed by almost at the speed of an express train. Cars had been passed—but Len was going too fast for a shout to them. At a point where a narrow lane opened into Trant Woods, the old johnny turned to the left so sharply that his machine rocked and almost tumbled. In a flash he was gone, swallowed by wide-spreading branches.

About a second later Len Lex rocked round the corner into the lane.

If he had doubted the man's game before, he knew it now. He was hunting cover—and he needed only minutes! Len was not going to give him seconds, if he could help it. He glimpsed the Homburg hat, with the deceptive silver hair bushed under it, ahead of him under the shady branches. The woodland lane was narrow and winding; in a moment or two the high road was lost to sight behind—and pursuit, if it came from Trant, would go sweeping past. The bank-raider had planned well—not reckoning, naturally, on the chance that the nephew of a Scotland Yard inspector might happen to be on the scene!

Again the man looked back. In the shadow of thick branches his eyes, under the white brows, gleamed and glittered like those of a hunted animal. But he did not pause.

From the lane a cart-track wound away into the woods to the right. Len knew that track; it wound away for many miles, and led at long last into the Greenwood Road, near Oakways village, far away past the school. It was narrow, rough, bumpy. The old johnny rocked and jolted on to it, and behind him, still going strong, Len Lex rocked and jolted in his turn. His legs were feeling the strain now—he had no chance in a race with the man who looked like a grandfather, but was obviously young and strong and tireless.

A woodcutter appeared in sight ahead—staring; amazed, no doubt, to see a silver-haired old johnny going at such speed.

"Stop thief!" Len yelled.

But the bank-raider was past the man in a flash; Len passed him in another, leaving him blinking. But a few moments later the Schoolboy Detective grinned with glee as he jammed on his brakes. Blocking the narrow track ahead was the woodcutter's cart, the wheels brushing the thickets on either side. The hold-up man braked savagely, but barely escaped crashing into the rear of the cart. He jumped off, panting, and turned, his lips drawn back in a snarl.

Keen, flashing brown eyes, with a desperate glitter in them, fixed fiercely on the Schoolboy Detective,

A hand dived into a pocket—and Len, knowing what was coming, threw himself off his machine as the automatic roared, and the bullet whizzed past.

Bark, bark, came again, as Len rolled into the brambles beside the cart-track. Whether the man was firing to hit, or merely to scare him, Len could not tell, but clearly the hold-up man cared little what damage he did. But Len Lex was in the thickets beside the track in the twinkling of an eye, and the bullets hummed harmlessly by.

The woodcutter was coming up the track at a run, shouting to some other man somewhere in the wood. But at sight of the blazing eyes and lifted weapon, the woodcutter popped behind a tree with great celerity.

Len put his head out from a bunch of hawthorns and peered up the track. The hold-up man was jamming the pistol back into his pocket and staring at the cart that blocked the way. To push the bicycle past it was impossible—to drag the machine round through the trees and tangled thickets almost impossible.

Len could guess that the hold-up man had intended to ride farther, perhaps nearly as far as Oakways, before abandoning the machine. Now he suddenly made up his mind, and leaving the bicycle lying by the cart, plunged into the wood and vanished.

The next second Len was running up the track, and he reached the cart and the abandoned bicycle. A sound of brushing and rustling was dying away in the distance. He made a few steps into the wood—and stopped—the rustle died into silence. It was futile to follow farther; the chances a thousand to one against sighting the old johnny again.

Len gritted his teeth. Somewhere deep in the dusky wood, the scoundrel would be stripping off that venerable disguise, to appear later in the public eyes as—what? Certainly as a young man, strong and vigorous; but that, and the fact that his eyes were keen as a hawk's, and dark brown in colour, was all that Detective-Inspector Nixon's nephew would be able to report!

But that was something—it was much! And the sooner the police knew what he had to tell the better. Len ran back to his bicycle.

He called a hurried word to the woodcutter in passing; mounted his machine, and rode back the way he had come as fast as his tired legs could drive the pedals.

Breathless, he came out on the high road—and held up his hand to a car that was speeding down the hill from Trant, a police-inspector and a constable in it. They were after the hold-up man, and Len put them on the right track.

"THAT," said Harvey, "must be the new man!"

The three Fifth Formers were coming away from the biked, when Harvey gave a nod towards two men walking and talking in the quad.

(Continued on page 26)

King Alaric's Sword

carriage, throwing open the military greatcoat of a Vetelian soldier which he had assumed in his escape, to show the civilian clothes beneath. There was now no need of concealment—or so he thought!

"Excellency," he said, knowing that Bruno Telgar understood English, "I am an emissary from the British Government, come to warn you of the activities of this Von Eimar. This is my son Roy—this is Ronald Westdale, chief officer of my yacht the Shadow—this man is McTavish, who can explain to you the plotting of Von Eimar. He was once a prisoner in the Black Chateau, but I have no doubt your Excellency will pardon him. I congratulate you, Bruno Telgar, on your capture of Von Eimar!"

Bruno Telgar regarded Morgan Drake suspiciously.

"This is a very pretty story," he said, with sarcasm. "But how am I to believe it? That you are British I can well believe. But have you proofs that you come from your Government? I see you disguised in the uniforms of my Vetelian Army; one of your men, you tell me, was a prisoner in the Black Chateau; another"—he pointed to Bizerki, their Vetelian interpreter—"I recognise as one of the chiefs of the revolutionary movement against me. How am I to know that you are not spies, like Von Eimar?"

"Excellency!" Morgan Drake's tone showed as much angry remonstrance as was possible in an emissary from the British Government to the head of a friendly State. As he spoke he realised his danger, and that of his companions. It was an open secret that Bruno Telgar, though outwardly maintaining correct relations, was a bitter enemy towards Great Britain. If he chose to regard them as spies, he could have them shot at once; and dressed as they were in Vetelian uniforms, he had a plausible excuse.

"The explanation," said Morgan Drake, "is simple, Excellency. Last night I presented myself at your palace, with letters of introduction from the British Ambassador and from the Foreign Secretary in Downing Street. As you may imagine, I

was surprised to find Von Eimar—or Captain X as he called himself—in your room, and masquerading as your new Chief of Police. At his orders we were arrested, deprived of our credentials, and thrown into the Eastern Tower.

"Naturally, we considered ourselves justified in the chance offered to us by this man Bizerki and his adherents to make our escape. We found ourselves at length on Von Eimar's train, and made use of our borrowed uniforms to seize him, uncoupling the carriage from the rest of the train. The rest you know."

"The rest I know, but your story I do not believe!" declared Bruno Telgar roughly. "You are under arrest—as British spies!"

"Excellency!" Morgan Drake blazed out in angry protest as the soldiers closed in around them. "It is only necessary to communicate with the British Ambassador—he will vouch for us—"

"No doubt, if you are spies in the pay of your Government," interrupted the dictator curtly, and Von Eimar, who had been an interested listener, burst into laughter.

"It's no use, Morgan Drake," he said derisively. "You are in the same position as myself. We've both played our game and lost—perhaps!"

"You have nothing to laugh at, Von Eimar," struck in Bruno Telgar, turning his back on Morgan Drake and the others as they were disarmed and jostled aside by the soldiers. "I'll stop your intrigues, here and now. A dozen bullets from a firing-squad, and your body will be thrown over the cliff to feed the crows!" He barked out an order to his attendant officers.

Morgan Drake, Roy, Westdale, and McTavish, menaced by the rifles of their guards, watched as a dozen men fell in with loaded rifles. They knew that Von Eimar was going to a fate that he deserved a hundred times over. Yet, scoundrel as he was, it was impossible not to have some regard for the master-spy's cool audacity and intelligence. Hassan, his devoted Arab, fought and raved against the ring of guards, finally throwing himself to his knees and sobbing unashamedly.

Von Eimar seemed to be the least affected of any. He sauntered carelessly to the brink of the precipice,

smoking a cigar. And after polishing his monocle with a handkerchief, he screwed it into his eye. With a contemptuous gesture he waved aside the officer who approached him with a scarf.

He glanced at Bruno Telgar, and never was his smile more provoking. "Good-bye, Bruno Telgar—the biggest fool that ever ruled a state!" he said lightly, then faced the waiting squad squarely. "And King Alaric's treasure—" he added, then broke off.

"Wait—wait!" cried Bruno Telgar, as the officer in charge raised his sword as a signal to fire. "What do you mean by that, Von Eimar? Have you discovered the secret?"

"Exactly! A secret worth a hundred million pounds! And, Bruno, it will be a secret again in another minute."

Bruno Telgar gave the master-spy a searching glance.

"You will barter the secret for your life—is that it?" he said. "Well, tell me! Let me get my hands on the treasure and you will be reprieved!"

"To lifelong imprisonment in the Black Chateau?" sneered Von Eimar. "It's not worth it, Bruno. I'd rather be shot. But I'll repeat the bargain I offered you a few months ago—my life, liberty, and three-fourths of the treasure as my share!"

Bruno Telgar suppressed an angry exclamation.

"Don't play the fool, Von Eimar! Your life is in my hands. For the last time—"

"For the last time, Bruno, you know my terms," retorted Von Eimar coolly. "Take them or leave them. If you don't agree, it means that Vetelia will go bankrupt, and that you'll be overthrown by revolution in a few months. Bah! You waste my time. You are not worth saving, Bruno Telgar!"

Von Eimar faced again the row of rifle muzzles, and said:

"When I give the word of command—fire!"

Next week's instalment brings this exciting story to a smashing end, with the thrills and surprises maintained right to the very last word! Whatever you do, don't miss reading it!

The Hold-Up Man!

(Continued from page 16)

One was big, burly Bullivant, the games master, the other a younger man, slimmer than old Bully, but with a sturdy and muscular look. They were at a distance, walking towards the cricket ground, and the Fifth Formers had only a back view of them. But they had no doubt that the young man with Bullivant was the new games master, whom old Bully was showing about the school.

Old Bully was leaving Oakshott that evening, and Study No. 8 were rather interested in Mr. Egerton Young, who was to carry on in his place for the next few weeks. But all they could see of him at the moment was that he looked athletic,

as they went on to the House. He reminded them, however, of Pie, whose scheme of meeting him at Oakways Station they had—as they supposed, at least—nipped so effectually in the bud.

They found Pie in the study. He was seated at the table, with a pen in his hand, and a volume of Virgil propped up against the inkstand. He looked round at them with a lack-lustre eye! Porrhage of the Fifth, generally as merry and bright as any man at Oakshott, looked as if he was exploring the deepest depths of the abysses of dolefulness.

"What the thump," said Len, "is this game?"

Pie, apparently incapable of speech, pointed to Virgil with his pen. His face expressed sorrowful

sadness, mingled with a bitter hatred of P. Virgilius Maro.

"You've got an impot?" howled Banks.

Pie nodded.

"You priceless goat!" said Harvey. "Did you break out of detention after—after we took the trouble to round you up and run you in?"

Another dismal nod.

"Oh, you fathead!" said Len. "Still, I suppose you expected an impot, at least, if you played the giddy ox to that extent."

Pie found his voice.

"I wouldn't grouse about that," he said drearily, "if it had come off! But it didn't! I got out of detention and went down to Oakways, and

(Continued opposite)

Young never came by the four o'clock train, so I waited for the next, and the next, and he never came!"

"He must have," said Banks. "We've just passed the bloke in the quad."

"He came some other way, then," sighed Pie. "I saw three trains in and out, and he never turned up at Oakways. I've put in the afternoon rotting about a putrid railway station and got an impot for my pains! What do you fellows think of that for luck?"

Pie's friends gazed at him. Then they roared. They really did not

mean to be unsympathetic. But they could not help it. For a fellow to break detention, with no result but hanging about a railway station for an hour and a half for nothing, was frightfully sad, but it had its comic side—and it was just like Pie—Pie all over! They yelled.

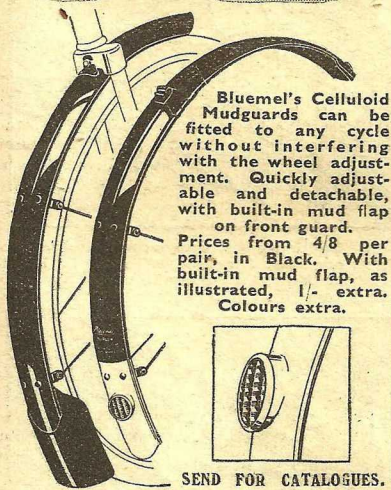
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Why, you silly asses!" exclaimed Pie indignantly. "Think it's funny?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the three. "Funny isn't the word for it. It's a positive scream! Ho, ho, ho! You'll be the death of us, Pie!"

Pie glared at them in speechless indignation. Then he jumped up, grasped Virgil from the inkstand, and, brandishing that great poet in the air, rushed at his hilarious friends and drove them from the study, still yelling like hyenas!

The Goat of the Fifth sets all Oakshott roaring with laughter next week, in THE MYSTERY MASTER! But suddenly Len Lea stops laughing. All unwittingly Pie has set him off on a new and exciting trail!

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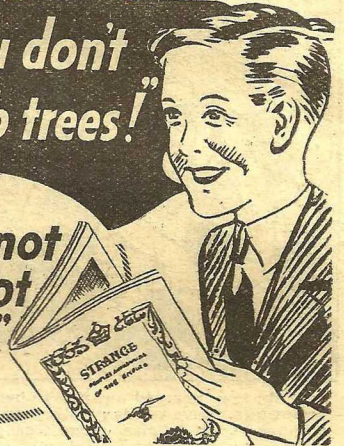
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