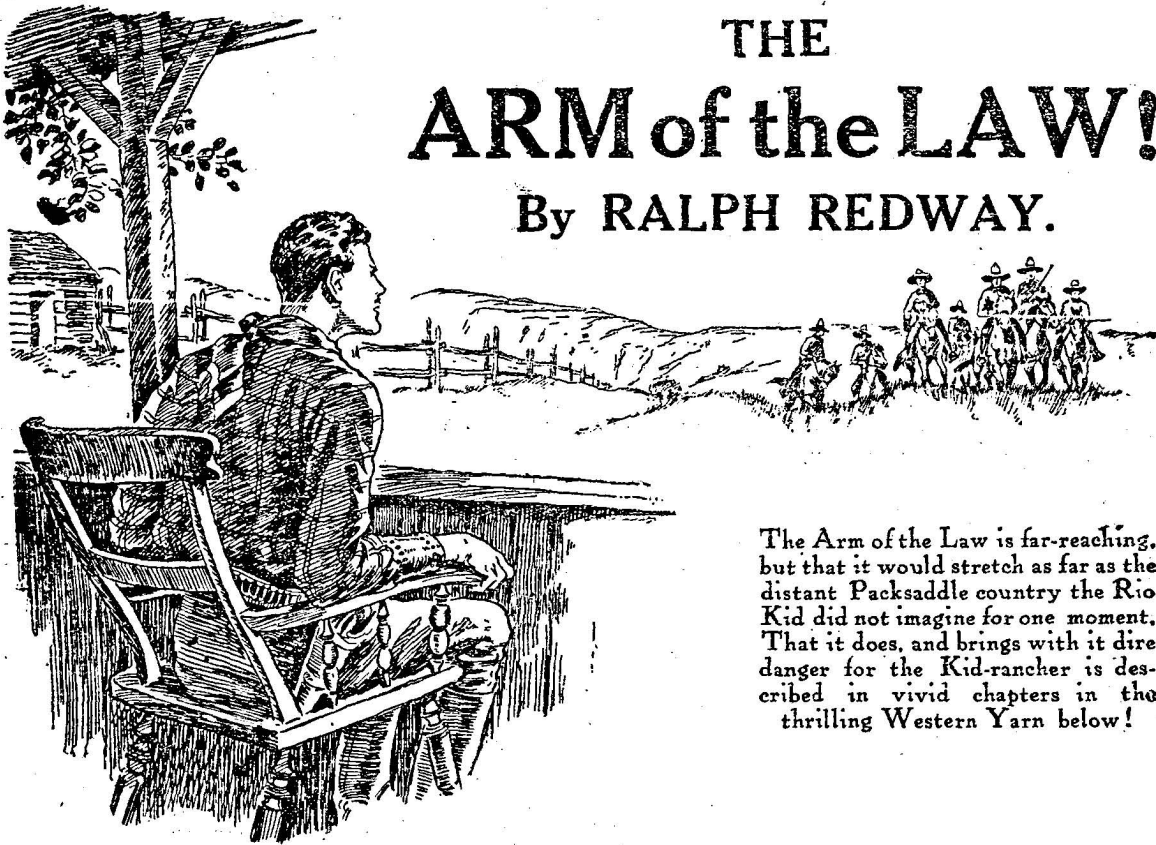


HE'S ONLY A BOY—YET THE RIO KID MANAGES A BIG TEXAS RANCH!

# THE ARM of the LAW!

By RALPH REDWAY.



## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Boss of the Lazy O!

"MORNIN', boss!"  
"Mornin'!" smiled the Rio Kid.

Nothing could have been more respectful than the greeting of Long Bill, the horse-wrangler of the Lazy O Ranch, as the Rio Kid came swinging cheerily towards the bunkhouse.

Half a dozen punchers on the benches outside the bunkhouse rose to their feet with a cheery "Mornin', boss!" The ranch cook looked out of the chuckhouse and grinned a cheery good-morning to the boy rancher.

The Kid could not help smiling.

He smiled from cheery good-humour, also from the reflection of how he had tamed the Lazy O bunch.

It was hardly more than a week since the Kid had bought the ranch. It was only a couple of days since he had made the final payment to Lawyer Lucas at Pecos Bend, and could call the Lazy O definitely his own. The buying of the Lazy O had made a deep hole in the pile the Kid had made, long ago, at the gold-mines of Arizona. But it was a good bargain; the Kid, who knew everything about land and cattle that a galoot could cram into his cabeza, knew that he had a big bargain in the Lazy O. Forty thousand dollars had bought it; and the Kid figured that if it wasn't worth twice the sum, under capable management, he had better quit ranching and go and chop logs. For so short a time had the Kid been master of the Lazy O, yet already the wild trails of the boy-outlaw of the Rio Grande seemed far away in the past, and the Kid was quite startled every now and then to reflect that Mister Fairfax, boss of the Lazy O, had been known so short a time ago as the Rio

Kid, hunted by the Texas Rangers and half the sheriffs in Texas.

The Kid had made the grade at the Lazy O. Every galoot in the cowtown of Packsaddle had opined that the Lazy O bunch would never take an order from "Mister Fairfax." He was the sixth or seventh guy who had bought that ranch; and every time previously Barney Baker, the foreman, had put paid to it. Former buyers had been scared off, bullied off, quirted off; and the law being rather a minus quantity in the Packsaddle country, they had been glad to throw the ranch on the market again.

That had not happened to the Kid. In Packsaddle they reckoned that Mister Fairfax had been booted off the ranch long since, or else shot up or lynched by the bunch. It was well known all along the Rio Pecos that Barney Baker and the bunch would never stand for having a new boss. And the Kid had tamed the bunch—the wildest bunch in Texas. If there was a man on the Lazy O who still nourished hostility, it was Coyote Jenson, who still carried an arm in a sling to remind him of the Kid's gunplay. And if he nourished hostility, he said nothing about it to the Kid or the bunch. For—a fact that would have made Packsaddle open its eyes wide—the Kid was popular with the whole bunch, as popular as any ranch boss could be with his outfit.

Cheerily the Kid nodded to his men as he lounged into the bunkhouse. He liked the Lazy O; he liked the bunch, rough and lawless as they were; he liked to remember that sheriffs did not care to ride Packsaddle trails; he liked to think that his wild days as an outlaw were over, and that from now on the Rio Kid was dead and buried, and that Mister Fairfax, the rancher, lived in his place. The Kid had never wanted to be an outlaw—never of his own

The Arm of the Law is far-reaching, but that it would stretch as far as the distant Packsaddle country the Rio Kid did not imagine for one moment. That it does, and brings with it dire danger for the Kid-rancher is described in vivid chapters in the thrilling Western Yarn below!

accord had he ridden a lawless trail; and now he reckoned that he had done with it. Raising cattle, buying and selling steers, cutting his alfalfa, and riding in the rodeo—such were the activities the Kid had marked out for the future. No man had recognised the Rio Kid since he had ridden into Packsaddle, though once or twice he fancied he had caught a curious gleam in the eyes of Barney Baker fixed on him intently. The Rio Kid was dead, and Rancher Fairfax was alive, and all was going fine.

"Say, feller!" said the Kid, as he stepped into the bunkhouse and stopped beside the bunk of the one-time foreman of the ranch.

Barney Baker, still bandaged, but getting well from his wound, sat in his bunk at breakfast brought him by Coyote Jenson. The Coyote gave Mister Fairfax a dark look from under his brows, but saluted him civilly and stood back as he addressed Barney Baker.

The foreman of the Lazy O—foreman in name, but boss in fact till the coming of the Rio Kid—looked up, his eyes glinting at Mister Fairfax.

"Mornin'!" said the Kid cheerily.

Barney grunted.

"I guess I've come to give you the office, feller," said the Kid. "You're mended enough to hit the trail, I reckon. There ain't room for two bosses on the Lazy O, and you want to hit the trail bright an' early. You get me?"

Barney Baker did not answer.

"I ain't got it agin you that you played a low-down game on me here," continued the Kid. "You aimed to keep the Lazy O in your own paws, Barney; you've man-handled every guy that bought it afore I humped in, and I guess you shot up one man, or some guy did it for you. You tried the same game on me and slipped up on it. I ain't got any grouch about that. I guess

this here ranch was worth a fight; and you put up a fight, and you come out at the little end of the horn. I bought this ranch fair and square, and you figured that you'd put me under the alfalfa to make it grow and keep the goods. I ain't grousing none. But you're fired, and you've been allowed to hang on here till you mended. Now it's time to quit."

Still Barney did not speak.

Under his thick brows his glinting eyes were on the handsome, sunburnt face of the boy rancher.

The same thought that had come into his mind at the first meeting in Packsaddle was in Barney's mind now.

Where had he seen Mister Fairfax before?

Somewhere, he was certain, he had seen that handsome, reckless face, those clear, blue eyes as cool as ice, that well-

cut mouth with its good-humoured, mooking smile—but where? The face, when he had seen it before, had been different somehow, but the same. Where had he seen this kid rancher who had ousted him from the Lazy O? Not in the Packsaddle country, he was sure of that; somewhere else in Texas, when he had been on one of his trips buying or selling steers. He knew the galoot; he was sure, as well as he knew the back of his own hand, and yet he could not place him.

The searching, penetrating look in Barney's deep-set eyes did not escape the Kid. His sense of danger, born of his wild life on the outlaw trails, reacted to that look of struggling recognition. The smile died off his lips. More guys knew the Rio Kid than the Kid could possibly know; and though he was certain he had never seen Barney till he rode into Packsaddle, it

was quite on the cards that Barney might have seen him. A grim look came over the Kid's face.

"You got a tongue in your cabeza?" he demanded sharply.

"I reckon!" growled Barney.

"I guess you want to use it, then!" snapped the Kid. "I'm telling you that it's time for you to quit."

"I guess I ain't fit to sit a bronc," said Barney Baker slowly. "But it's your say-so, boss; you got the cinch on me. I guess you got the bunch feeding out of your hand now." His eyes blazed for a second. "Tell them to ride me on a rail off'n this ranch that I've run for years, and I reckon they'll do it. I ain't got no kick coming. You've beat me, and you've got me by the short hairs."

The Kid's face softened a little. He could feel for a defeated man, even if that man had been defeated in a lawless, desperate attempt to cinch another man's property. Barney Baker had run the Lazy O so long that he had come to look on the ranch as his own. Lawless enough his actions had been; but the Kid, after all, had not always been a respecter of the law himself.

"I guess I ain't the galoot to go hard on a guy when he's down to bedrock," said the Kid. "You got to beat it, that's a cinch. You've feathered your nest pretty well, I reckon; selling cattle that never belonged to you, you've got a roll tucked away somewhere, Barney, and I ain't asking you to pony up. But all the time you've been lying here you've been trying to put it across me. I had to shoot up Kansas Jake that you put up to lay for me on the prairie. I guess every time you chew the rag with the Coyote here you're aiming to fix me. I guess I'm going to be my own foreman, and there's sure ain't room for two. But if you can't sit a bronc, like you allow, I'm giving you time." The Kid looked long and searchingly at the foreman of the Lazy O. "I reckon you could ride if you liked, and you're freezing on here because you figure that the game ain't up yet and you may get a chance of fixing me. It ain't good enough, Barney! You got to go. I give you three days, and if you ain't sitting a bronc by that time, I'll fix you up in the chuck-wagon and send you into Packsaddle."

"It's your say-so!" answered Barney sullenly.

"You've said it," agreed the Kid.

And he walked out of the bunk-house, and went to the corral for the pinto horse he was accustomed to ride with the Lazy O. Happy and contented as the Kid now was, there was one lurking regret—Side-Kicker was no longer with him. The grey mustang with the black patch was well-known as the Rio Kid's steed, too well-known for the Kid to ride him into Packsaddle, when he was taking a new name and throwing the past behind him. But the Kid's heart yearned for the faithful mustang that had carried him through many a wild fight, and over many a dangerous trail, and he figured that before long he would take a chance, and bring Side-Kicker to the ranch.

Barney Baker, when the Kid left the bunk-house, did not resume his breakfast. He leaned back in the bunk, his haggard eyes fixed on the doorway by which the Kid had gone, and the sunny plains beyond. His eyes were glinting, and there was a wrinkle of deep thought in his brow. The Coyote came closer to him.

"That cinches it, Barney," he said. "You got to beat it! That Kid Fairfax means cold business."

"Sure!" growled Barney.

"There's nothing to it," said Coyote

## All About This Guy Fawkes Business!

New light shed upon the Gunpowder Plot, and upon Guy Fawkes, who has endeared himself to the hearts of all boys and girls.

**P**LEASE to remember the Fifth of November . . . Yes, we all know that old tag. But who the dooce is this Guy Fawkes chap?

Not one fellow in ten thousand has ever seen a picture of the one and only Guy Fawkes, and so most of us see nothing incongruous in the fact that of all the umpteen guy-dummies that are hawked about and set fire to on this day devoted to Guy scarcely two are in any way similar!

"Oh, I know who he was, right enough!" I can hear someone say. "Tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament—somewhere back in the history book."

But *did* he? Latter-day investigators have been throwing much doubt on the old history book yarn which says that this Yorkshireman was closely wrapped up in a conspiracy which had for its object the blowing sky-high of king and parliament in the reign of King James the First.

They even say that the official account of the plot, its discovery and frustration, as issued by the government of that day, was "all my eye"—a deliberate fake to serve dishonest ends. Certainly some of the details as they have trickled down to us through the history books seem a bit shaky.

For instance, the official account says that Guy Fawkes and his fellow villains had stacks of gunpowder stored in a cellar underneath the House of Lords, ready "to touch" off at the moment that the greatest damage could be done.

Well, there positively was no cellar in Guy Fawkes' time beneath the House of Lords. And as gunpowder was a monopoly of the government and simply not obtainable in the ordinary way, it looks as though this gunpowder plot must have been gunpowderless, doesn't it?

However, Guy Fawkes was collared—not with a lighted torch in his hand and about to fire a train to the barrels of gunpowder, but well away from the scene of the alleged intended crime.

The Parliament Buildings had been searched, on account of an anonymous letter which had been sent to a Lord Montague warning him not to attend

the opening of Parliament because of what might happen.

Gunpowder was alleged to have been found. So they had to find conspirators. Court and political intrigue pounced on Guy Fawkes and certain of his companions.

Guy was tortured—and they afterwards produced a document supposed to be signed by Guy himself amounting practically to a confession. Tremendous suspicion, to put it mildly, attaches to that document—and you mustn't forget that Guy Fawkes had been tortured.

In due course he went to the scaffold—thirty-six years old, and so we got our Fifth of November merriments!

He went to school at York as a youngster, inherited property when his father died, and later went out to Spain and joined the Spanish army. He took part in several battles, and then returned to England and his doom.

And now for many weeks past hundreds of pairs of hands have been busy making crackers of all sorts and sizes, squibs that give a gentle splutter and giants of their kind that nearly split your ear-drums with their hissing, rockets that shoot screaming into space, Roman candles and catherine wheels—the making and selling of all of which comprise industries that keep several big firms going the year round.

It isn't a simple operation, making even the simplest of fireworks. Some must pass through perhaps a score of different hands, each of the separate components needing to be filled into the "shell" in due and settled rotation.

Mighty displays of fireworks, such as those given at the Crystal Palace, are marvels of organisation and mechanical ingenuity. "Set pieces," as they are called, may represent, in fireworks, an enormous human face, a battleship in action—nothing seems impossible for those who stage huge Fifth of November displays to depict in crackers.

These wonderful firework scenes are "done" on an immense upright framework to which the varied "bangers" are attached, and there may be fifteen or more assistants stationed behind that framework each waiting for their separate cue to touch off the particular fireworks for which they are made responsible.

Jensen. "The bunch are feeding from his hand, and you ain't a chance of setting them agin him now. He's boss, and I guess he's staying boss. I reckon I'm the only guy here that would care to pull a gun on him, and I ain't pulling any gun on the galoot that shot up Lariat and Kansas Jake! It ain't healthy. There's nothing to it, Barney, and you may as well chew on that, and beat it!"

"I seen that guy afore, somewheres, afore he hit the Packsaddle country," said Barney slowly. "I don't rightly place him, I guess he's changed some, but I seen him afore. Say, Coyote, who 's this here Mister Fairfax? What was his lay-out afore he hit Packsaddle? He rides like a Comanche, and handles his Colt like a gunman. He claims to be a rancher, and hands out forty thousand dollars for the Lazy O, but he don't talk none about where he comes from, or what folks knew him."

"I guess there's plenty in Packsaddle you can say the same of, or near it," grinned the Coyote. "You want to believe that Mister Fairfax is a guy with a bad record?"

"I sure been figuring on it!"

"It won't hurt him any in the Packsaddle country. There's sure a lot of citizens in Packsaddle that wouldn't like to meet the sheriffs in other counties. There's nothing to it, Barney."

The Coyote lounged away, leaving Barney Baker in deep, bitter thought. His black brow grew blacker, as he caught a glimpse, through the open sunny doorway, of the Kid riding the pinto down to the prairie. The Kid rode as if horse and rider were one, with ease and grace, and in his look as he rode, in the easy action with which he lifted the pinto over the gate, there was something familiar to Barney's eyes—familiar but elusive. He had seen Mister Fairfax before, and when he had seen him, Mister Fairfax had been riding, he was sure of that now. But where, and when, and what was there to it, even if it was so?

Somehow, it seemed to the bitter, brooding mind of the foreman, that if he could 'place' Mister Fairfax, if only he could recall when and where he had seen him before, it might mean something to him, might give him the chance for which he longed, of getting the upper hand of the new boss of the Lazy O. No doubt the wish was father to the thought, but the thought would not leave Barney's mind, and he brooded and brooded, the handsome, sunburnt face dancing elusively in half-recalled memory.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.  
Danger!

THE Kid's heart missed a beat. In the golden afternoon, the new boss of the Lazy O was lounging in a rocker on the porch, his feet on a rail.

The Kid had spent most of the day in the saddle; never tiring, so far, of visiting the outer-lying ranges of the

for a bunch of his own punchers. But as they drew nearer to the ranch, the Kid sat bolt upright in his rocker, and stared at them, his keen eyes narrowing to pin-points under his knitted brows.

The approaching riders were not cowmen. At a distance, the Kid's eyes picked them out as Texas Rangers. And his eyes fixed on a man who rode a little ahead of the bunch, a man of



NEWS FOR THE TEXAS RANGER! The wounded foreman sat up in his bunk and faced across at the stern-looking ranger. "You seen Mister Fairfax?" he asked. "No!" "Well, you want to see him, if you can. I know he's a man you're after—he's only took sick the moment you guys were seen comin'." (See Chapter 4.)

Lazy O, inspecting lonely stockmen's huts, calculating water supplies and cattle feed. The bunch had learned that "Mister Fairfax" knew the ranch business from A to Z, and respected him the more for it. And the Kid showed an intelligent consideration for the comfort of his outfit, and had made many little changes for the better, remembering his own days as a puncher.

Bitter as it was to Barney Baker, the Kid was growing more and more popular with the Lazy O bunch, the bunch that had sworn that they never would submit to a new boss. They submitted now, and seemed to like it. If Mister Fairfax was a 'kid' in years, he was a man in everything else, and the bunch knew it.

Life seemed good to the Kid now. Sitting in the rocker on the porch, he surveyed wide grasslands that were all his own, moving herds of cattle of which every head among the hundreds belonged to him.

This, the Kid figured, was a heap better than lonely trails on the llano, hidden camps in the chaparral. Better than hunting cover in the Huecas, or dodging the Texas Rangers among the rocks of the Mal Pais.

From the blue distance a bunch of riders came in sight, and for some time the Kid watched them idly, taking them

small stature, almost hidden under a Stetson hat.

"Gee!" murmured the Kid. For a second his heart missed a beat, and he was very still.

Texas Rangers—who seldom rode Packsaddle trails. Why had that bunch ridden into Packsaddle country, and who was the little man on the black broncho at their head? The Kid could not see his face, but he had no doubt of him. It was Jim Hall—"Mule-Kick". Hall—captain of the Rangers, the man who had hunted the Rio Kid in the Mal Pais.

The Kid did not move.

But the cheery smile faded from his face; the wide green grasslands glowing in the Texas sunshine, grew dull to his eyes.

No man in the Packsaddle country knew the Kid. A vague thought had crossed his mind that Barney Baker had some suspicion of him, but that was all. He was in a new country, where his name was known, as it was known in all Texas, but where no man knew him by sight. The little moustache he now wore, and the darkening of his eyebrows with an Indian pigment, had made a change in him, enough to defy a chance recognition. But it would not defy the keen, bitter eyes of "Mule-Kick".



"Kick" Hall, if once they rested on Mister Fairfax.

"Gee!" repeated the Kid.

His face hardened.

Outlawry he had thrown behind him. He asked nothing better than to live the life of a rancher, raising cattle on his own land, buying and selling honestly and fairly. But always the thought had been at the back of his mind, that the past was not so easily dropped; that sooner or later it would rise against him and hit him hard. Now it was rising up in the shape of that ugly, wiry, resolute man-hunter on the black broncho. They were heading for the ranch, six stalwart Rangers, headed by the man who had sworn to take the Rio Kid alive or dead.

It was cruel luck on the Kid. His hand went to his gun, and his face was grim. Like enough, the bunch would stand for him if it came to a rookus. There were men in that rough bunch who had had trouble with the law, like many of the men in Packsaddle, men whose reasons for being there at all were somewhat like the Kid's own. If these guys were coming for him, it was going to be gun-play, and the Kid did not figure that he was going to get the worst of it.

But it was going to be the end of his ranching. With or without the help of the Lazy O bunch, he might beat that crowd, or escape from them, but the word would go forth on all sides that Mister Fairfax was the Rio Kid, the outlaw of Texas, and that was the finish. The Kid's glance dwelt blackly on the approaching riders.

But he reflected further. "Mule-Kick" Hall was riding Packsaddle trails, doubtless in search of the Rio Kid, and he could not know that the Kid was at the Lazy O.

He could not guess that Mister Fairfax was the boy outlaw, even if he had heard of Mister Fairfax at all—which was doubtful.

If he saw Mister Fairfax his keen eyes would penetrate at once the slight disguise, the Kid knew that. But if he did not see Mister Fairfax he would ride on his way, never knowing how near he had been to the Rio Kid. The Kid smiled at that thought.

He rose from the rocker and disappeared into the ranch-house.

It was wiser to keep out of sight of the rangers while he considered the matter.

Hall and his bunch, he reckoned, were hunting for the elusive outlaw, but never dreaming that the "fire-bug" had turned into a rancher. Most likely they were coming to the ranch to ask questions, and to camp for the night, merely taking in the Lazy O on their way. The Kid knew Hall's character; if he fancied that the outlaw had hit Packsaddle he would question every rancher and cowman in the country that he came across, in the hope of picking up news. He would expect to hear of shootings, of hold-ups; but he certainly never would expect to hear of the Rio Kid ranching a big ranch. So long as Hall did not see him—

Playing sick was the Kid's first thought. The rangers were not likely to camp there for more than one night—Hall never let the grass grow under his feet. If the rancher was confined to his bed Hall would not expect to see him, and the name of Fairfax would tell him nothing. The rangers would be given the hospitality of the ranch, and they would ride on their way the next morning. "Playing sick" was not an idea that appealed to the Kid, but there was much at stake. He did not want gun-play at the Lazy O.

From the window of the ranch-house living-room the Kid looked out at the bunch of horsemen, who were now near at hand. He had observed that there was a led horse in the party; and now they were near the Kid saw with startled eyes that the led horse was a grey mustang with a black patch.

"Side-Kicker!"

It was his own famous mustang, the fastest cayuse in Texas, that was led along with the rangers.

"Gee-whizz!" muttered the Kid.

He had left Side-Kicker in charge of a Mexican half-breed way down the Pecos when he first started on his new stunt. The half-breed was paid royally for taking care of Side-Kicker, and the Kid had had no doubt that the mustang would be safe till he reckoned it wise to send for him. And the cayuse had fallen into Hall's hands!

It spelled danger, the Kid knew; yet his face brightened and his eyes gleamed at the sight of his faithful steed.

Hall, hunting for the Kid, had picked up the Kid's horse, and brought it along with his crowd. Why, the Kid could not guess. But there was Side-Kicker—and it gladdened the Kid's heart to see him again.

But it spelled danger; for once the grey mustang came within sight of his old master, the recognition would be instant, and it would betray the Kid. And with that thought came knowledge of Hall's object in toting along the grey mustang. He was using the cayuse as a guide to the outlaw.

"Dog-gone him!" muttered the Kid.

Again his hands dropped to his guns. He was powerfully tempted to resort to gun-play, if only to regain possession of his horse.

But wiser thoughts prevailed. He crossed the broad passage that ran through the ranch-house and entered his bed-room. There he shouted for Diego, the Mexican chore-man of the ranch.

"Si, senior!"

Diego came instantly. Diego had been insolent when first the Kid took possession of the Lazy O, and had handled a knife. But Diego, like the bunch, was feeding from the Kid's hand now.

The Kid had thrown himself on his bed.

"Say, feller, I guess them frijoles are sure giving me a pain," he drawled. "I guess I'm going sick."

"Oh, senior!" exclaimed Diego.

"I sure reckon I'm turning in, and I guess I don't want to be woke up any," said the Kid. "You put the bunch wise that I'm off my feed, and there ain't any guy to disturb me, not on no account whatever. You get me, Diego?"

"Si, senior."

"I'll call you if I want anything, but I guess a long sleep will pull me round," said the Kid. "Keep that door shut."

"Si, senior."

Diego retired, closing the door; and the Kid stepped to it and fastened the wooden button that served as a lock. Then he sat on the bed and waited.

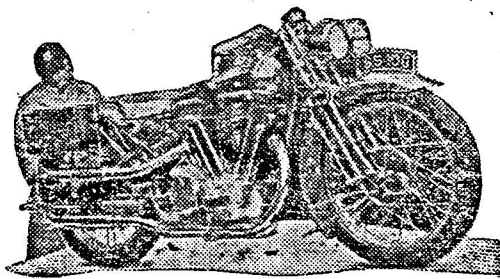
Ten minutes later there was a trampling of horses' hoofs in front of the porch. Mule-Kick Hall had arrived.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Doggo!

MULE-KICK HALL dismounted from his broncho, his deeply-bronzed face dark and sour under the shadow of his Stetson. Diego came to the door to look at the new arrivals, and Hall fixed his keen eyes on the Mexican.

(Continued at bottom of opposite page.)



## SOME BIKE!

Something like a motor-cycle, isn't it? It's the famous Brough S.S.100. If you are interested in motor-cycles you will revel in the 1930 HOBBY ANNUAL, from which the above illustration is taken. Motor-cycling, wood-work, railways, model-making, fretwork, aeroplanes, wireless, these are just a few subjects chosen at random from this better book for boys. You must have it—you'll treasure it for years.

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THE OLD VETERAN PLAYER TELLS SOME MORE—

# FOOTBALL MEMORIES!



FOOTBALL 40 YEARS AGO

The Cup—the famous and much-coveted trophy of the Football Association—comes under discussion this week by the Old Veteran. Battles of past "Finals" are lived through again, and vivid pen pictures are painted of tussles that will live for ever in the history of the Grand Old Game!

**"THE CUP!** Ay, lad, you're right—it's a wonderful thing—the Cup!"

Having set the ball rolling, I snuggled deeper into my huge armchair, and stretched my toes a bit nearer the roaring fire in Old Tiny's cosy study.

I had been having another shot at discovering my new friend's name, for I was sure it was a very famous one once, but, as usual, he gently dried up. He had had enough publicity in his time, he said, and didn't want any more. So I had to give up and, prompted by the two Cup medals dangling on his watch-chain, led the conversation round to the famous F. A. Cup.

And the great old veteran, carefully finishing his pipe, shook his head as he mused on Cup days of the past.

"Have I seen 'em all? Nearly all, son, right from the start almost. It was a bit primitive when it first started in 1871. There was all sorts of trouble always cropping up and I mind more than one Cup-tie that finished in a rare old fight.

**"I**T was the Old Boys of schools and colleges who started the game—there weren't any pro's. But when the professional teams really got going after 1885, the amateurs gradually faded out. Old Etonians were the last I remember in the final when Blackburn Olympic beat them in '82—they were the last of the amateurs' sides to get that far. Still, perhaps the Corinthians will do it one of these years.

"There was one rare good amateur side in the old days—the Wanderers, and they won the Cup three times in succession. All the Finals were played at the Oval then and the Wanderers won the Cup for the first three years it was played for. Since then, only Blackburn Rovers have won it three times running.

**"D**OES clever football pay in the Cup? Well, that's a mighty funny question. I've seen some brilliant sides win—Preston, for instance, in '89 won the Cup without having a goal scored against 'em, and the League without losing a match!—but I've seen clever teams knocked silly by a little club that in the ordinary way wouldn't last ten minutes!

"Some time back—about twenty-five years it was—Newcastle had some wonderful teams. You couldn't hold 'em in

League games from '90 to 1911. Well, during that time they got into the Final about four or five times. And how many times d'ye think they won the Cup? Once!

"Aston beat 'em. Everton beat 'em, but the biggest crash of all was when little Wolverhampton Wanderers smashed 'em 3—1 at the Crystal Palace in 1908. That was a game. Newcastle all clever and dainty football—and Wolverhampton out for goals. The Wolves had a person playing

in their half-backs, the Rev. K. R. G. Hunt. He played for England, too, and what a terror. The Newcastle forwards fairly crumpled up before his charging and tackling.

"No, lad, clever football and combination are all right for a full season in the League—in fact, you've got to have 'em. But in the Cup, it's goals that count and the side that goes rip-snortin' for the uprights generally takes the silver pot home.

**"A**ND Cup-tie day has changed, too! Now it's Wembley and tickets, and everyone files in nice and quiet-like. Except in 1923? Ah, ye had me there. That was a mess-up and no mistake.

"Still, things are smooth nowadays. You book your seat for Wembley at the start of the season and that's that. Your own club may never get past the first round, but you still go to see the Final—even if you've never seen either of the two clubs before and won't want to again.

"But not in the old days. Then, you held your breath while your club fought round after round and you saved your money, and when at last the great day came, you got up early, or else the night before, caught the train to London, walked all the way down to Sydenham, fought and clambered your way into the Palace and cheered your lungs out till you couldn't speak for excitement. Then, if you were lucky, you went back on the train with the team—and the Cup!

**"W**HAT a day it was. More like a Derby! There were picnic parties, chaffing, music, and always a dance on the grass at the Palace. Yes, and if the other side's supporters got funny, you just waded in and snatched 'em baldheaded—if you could.

"I remember the day I earned this second medal—no, I'm not telling ye the year!—the trees round the Crystal Palace were solid with spectators—it's a wonder they didn't snap in half!"

"Funny the Cup doesn't come South, much, Tiny!" Is said "It is that, lad! Let's see—the Spurs won it in 1901, didn't they, and then again after the War in 1921. They're the only ones, although Chelsea, West Ham, the Arsenal, and Portsmouth have each had a good try."

## "The Arm of the Law!"

(Continued from previous page.)

"Boss at home?" he jerked out.

"Si, senior."

"Captain Hall of the Texas Rangers wants to see him. Tell him so?"

"The senior is sick," said Diego dubiously. "Mister Fairfax he go to his bed, senior."

"I guess that cuts no ice. Take him a message that a bunch of Texas Rangers ask leave to camp here for the night."

"Si, senior."

Diego went back along the passage to the Kid's room and tapped. The door did not open to his touch, and he tapped again and called.

"Say, you gink, didn't I put you wise that I wasn't to be disturbed any?" came the Kid's voice from within.

"Si, senior. But—"

"Shoot!" grunted the Kid. Diego repeated Hall's message through the door.

The Kid listened, with a smile, as he sat on the bed figuring what Mule-Kick Hall would have thought had he guessed who was receiving his message.

"That's O.K.," answered the Kid. "You fix them up comfortable, Diego, and give them the run of the shebang. They're to have everything they want. And you tell Mister Hall that I'm plumb sorry I can't see him, but I reckon I got to keep to this here bed."

"Si, senior."

From the seclusion of his room, with the door secured, the Kid listened to the sounds of the ranch-house. Horses were tied up at the rail outside, and the rangers were in the spacious living-room, where Diego, obedient to his master's orders, provided for their wants. Heavy footsteps in the passage, the murmur of deep voices, came to the Kid.

From what he could hear, there was no suspicion among these unwelcome guests at the ranch. Mister Fairfax happened to be sick, and keeping his room; but the hospitality of the ranch was offered to the rangers, and they made themselves at home. There was nothing in that to excite suspicion even in Hall's keen, suspicious mind; probably he did not care a Continental red cent whether he saw the boss of the ranch or not. All he wanted was hos-

pitality for the night, before he resumed his long trail in the morning.

Much of the talk of the rangers as they fed in the living-room reached the ears of the Kid, and he soon found that the Rio Kid was the chief topic. The sight of Side-Kicker, led along with them, had told him that they were on his trail, and what he heard of their talk left no doubt on the matter. But he gathered, too, that Mule-Kick Hall was taking a chance in riding the Pack-saddle country; he had no definite clue to guide him. It was chiefly because Packsaddle was a section where sheriffs did not care to ride that Hall was combing it for the outlaw.

In the sunset the rangers mostly gathered on the porch to smoke, and many of the Lazy O men came to talk with them there, and the deep voices reached the Kid through his shuttered window.

Confinement in his room was irksome enough to the Kid, but his life on the trails had taught him the patience of an Indian. Many a time had the boy, outlaw-lain doggo in a patch of mesquite, or hidden in the rocks of an

arroyo, while the footsaps of his enemies passed and repassed in his hearing. It was the old life over again for the Kid, and his cool patience did not fail him. On the morrow the rangers would be gone.

"Say, that's some cayuse!" It was the voice of Long Bill, the horse-wrangler, and the Kid guessed that he was looking at Side-Kicker, the handsome mustang that was always certain to draw the glances of any galoot who knew anything about horses.

"He sure is!" answered one of the rangers. "I guess that cayuse is lightning when he's going. Search me!"

"You selling that hoss?" asked Long Bill. "I'm telling you our boss is some guy on a cayuse. I reckon he'd want that mustang if he seed him."

The Kid smiled as he heard that. Long Bill's remark was nearer the truth than he reckoned.

"The hoss ain't for sale!" It was the gruff voice of Jim Hall. "He don't belong to this bunch."

"Say, you guys totin' around a critter that don't belong to you?" exclaimed Long Bill in astonishment.

"We're sure looking for his master!" said one of the rangers, with a chuckle. "You'd never guess his master's name in a month of Sundays, if you ain't seen that cayuse afore."

"Say, you've got me guessing! Who's the hombre?"

"The Rio Kid!"

There was a buzz of astonishment from the Lazy O punchers. The name was repeated on every tongue.

"The Rio Kid!"

"Sure!" came Mule-Kick Hall's gruff voice again. "We're totin' round that cayuse till we find his master."

"You-uns figure that the Rio Kid has hit Packsaddle?" exclaimed Shorty.

"We figure that he might," answered Hall. "Nobody's seen him since he got away from the Mal Pais. That's a good while ago. He's on some new game, or he wouldn't have parted with his hoss."

"I reckon the Rio Kid's gone up," said Shorty. "I've never seen the hombre, but I've heard a whole heap about him. He wouldn't part with that cayuse while he could pull a gun. He's sure gone over the range, I reckon."

"He sure ain't!" growled Hall.

"How'd you get the cayuse, then?" asked Long Bill.

"We got it from a half-breed down the Rio Pecos. It was left with him for feed," answered Hall. "He never knowed that it belonged to the Rio Kid—I guess he never asked questions so long as he was paid. I guess I knowed that cayuse the minute I set eyes on it, and I sure roped it in. The Kid's been sending money to the half-breed for caring for it; and that shows that he ain't gone up."

"Sho!" said Long Bill.

"He's on some game where he don't want a hoss, and he left the critter safe, as he figured," said Hall. "We got the critter, and we're going to get the Kid. There's a thousand dollars reward for the guy that can help us cinch that fire-bug; and you-uns want to figure whether you've seen or heard anything of him in the Packsaddle country."

"Not any," said Long Bill. "But I reckon you'll see or hear suthin' of him if you tote that cayuse around. Soon as the Kid gets wise to it that you've got his cayuse he'll sure make a break to get him back."

"That's what I figure!" answered Hall coolly.

Long Bill approached nearer to the

grey mustang, his admiring eyes on the handsome animal. Every puncher there was looking at Side-Kicker, interested less, now, in his points as a cayuse, than in the fact that he was the celebrated mount of the Rio Kid, the outlaw of whom every man had heard and talked, many a time, in the bunkhouse or in the range camps. Young as he was, the Rio Kid was almost a legendary figure on the banks of the Pecos and the Rio Grande del Norte.

"He's sure some cayuse!" said Long Bill. "I guess the boss would like to see that mustang. He's some rider, is Mister Fairfax; I guess you-all would have seen a sight for sore eyes if you'd seen Mister Fairfax backin' Apache, the maddest broncho in Packsaddle. You sure would."

"Your boss been sick long?" asked Hall carelessly. "What's the trouble?"

"Search me!" answered the horse-wrangler. "I never heard he was sick till the dago humped along and let on that he was; and I guess that wasn't ten minutes before you-all hit this ranch. Suthin' sudden, I reckon."

"Hittin' the cornjuice too hard, mebbe," said one of the rangers, with a laugh.

"I should smile," answered the wrangler. "Mister Fairfax don't worry the firewater any. Say, dago," he shouted to the chore-man, "what's the rookus with Mister Fairfax?"

Diego shrugged his shoulders.

"The senor he say it is the frijoles," he answered. "He have one pain. Me, I zink I cook them frijoles O.K., sar."

"The dago's cooking did it!" grinned Shorty. "I sure been knocked out by a ranch cook's chuck in my time."

And there was a laugh, and the talk turned to Side-Kicker again, and the Rio Kid. It died away at last, and under the clear-shining stars of Texas, sleep descended on the Lazy O ranch. But in the room where Mister Fairfax remained the Rio Kid did not sleep.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Cinched!

"SPILL it!" said Jim Hall curtly.

He stood beside Barney Baker's bunk, looking down on the bandaged man with a glance of disfavour. The hard face, bitten with hatred and the longing for revenge, did not impress him favourably; moreover, Jim Hall had not ridden Packsaddle trails without hearing something of the Lazy O and its foreman, and the way that boss after boss had been boosted off the ranch.

But he had come to hear what Barney had to say, and he was prepared to listen. It was all Texas to a Mexican dollar, he figured, that he was only going to hear hot air; but it was Mule-Kick's way to give every guy a hearing, sifting what grain of useful information there might be from a wagonload of chaff.

His men were sleeping, when Coyote Jenson brought him the message from Barney. Hall had followed the Coyote to the bunkhouse at once. In many of the bunks punchers were asleep, and a dim lamp burned, glimmering on the bearded, bitter face of Barney Baker.

The foreman glanced uneasily round. The wild bunch of the Lazy O, who once had backed his play through thick and thin, were no longer at his beck and call. They would never back him again against Mister Fairfax; and he doubted whether they would stand neutral if they found him yorcking

against the new boss, so great a change had there been in the Lazy O outfit since the Kid had taken control. And when the foreman spoke it was in a low voice:

"You seen Mister Fairfax?"

"Nope."

"And why ain't you?"

"He's took sick, I reckon."

Barney grinned savagely.

"Yes! He's took sick jest afore you struck the ranch—arter your bunch was in sight of the house, I reckon, from what the Coyote allows. I guess he sure spotted you riding in, afore he took sick."

Hall surveyed him with cold curiosity. "You figure he don't want to see me?"

"I figure he don't want to see any Texas Ranger," said Barney, between his teeth. "I figure he's in Packsaddle because sheriffs and rangers don't find this country healthy to ride in. I'm telling you he ain't no more sick than you are, Jim Hall; and he's playing possum to keep outer your sight."

"Why?"

"I'll tell the world," said Barney huskily. "I'll tell all Texas, sir, that guy ain't what he makes out to be. I seen him afore—and I can't place him. No man knows who he is or where he comes from. He's a gunman—he's lightning on the draw, he backs a hoss like a Comanche Indian, he's jest a kid in years, but an all-fired fire-bug every inch of him—and I guess I ought to be able to place a guy like that—and I can't! But—I seen him afore he hit Packsaddle, and he wasn't no rancher then."

Hall's eyes glittered strangely.

The description Barney had given of the boy rancher of the Lazy O, wanted little amplifying to fit the outlaw of whom Mule-Kick was in search. But—the thing was so impossible that his thoughts did not follow it up.

"You got a grouch agin the guy, because he's spoiled your game here, and a dog-goned gum-game it was, too," said Hall coldly. "From what I've heard since I hit this country, you've played shennannigan at this ranch for years, Barney Baker, and this guy, Fairfax is the first man to put paid to you. That's your worry, I guess. What else you got agin him?"

"I'll tell all Texas," hissed Barney. "I know he's hiding suthin—I feel it in my bones. I tell you, I know it. I reckoned it was so, and when I was told he'd took sick as soon as Texas Rangers was in sight, I knowed it for a dead cinch. I tell you that guy ain't sick—that guy's playing possum, and if you got eyes on him, I reckon you'd size him up as some fire-bug you want."

Hall stood silent. The thought of the Kid came back into his mind. But surely it was impossible—the boy outlaw, ranching the Lazy O! The ranger captain smiled at the idea. And yet—and yet—a boy in years, a finished gunman, an unequalled rider—and he had hit Packsaddle only a few weeks after the Rio Kid had vanished from all knowledge. Impossible as it seemed, the thing fitted together.

Was it possible; had he hit, by sheer chance, guided by this rascal's revengeful hatred, on the trail he had long lost? Jim Hall felt his tough heart beating faster.

That Mister Fairfax might be the outlaw of the Rio Grande, had not crossed Barney Baker's mind, that was clear. Only his hatred and suspicion fastened on the belief that Mister Fairfax was a man with a past, a man with

(Continued on page 28.)

**THE ARM OF THE LAW!**

(Continued from page 18.)

A secret, a man hiding from the law, like many another in Packsaddle. But Jim Hall's thoughts went further than that.

"You want to get a look-see at that guy," hissed Barney. "He's playing possum—he ain't no more sick than you are! I'll tell the world, he's a man you want, if you seed him."

Hall's lip curled. Hatred inspired every syllable uttered by the ranch foreman; it was rather hope than belief that moved him. He would not lose the least chance of making trouble for the man who had defeated him. Yet Hall was not wholly unimpressed.

"I guess I'll see the guy before I quit!" said Hall abruptly. "Leave it at that!"

And he left the bunk-house, leaving Barney Baker to mingled hope and doubt.

Slowly the captain of the rangers walked back to the ranch-house.

His brows were knitted in deep thought. Was it possible, he asked himself, and he shook his head. Likely enough, Mister Fairfax was a man who had ridden away from trouble, as the foreman suspected; Packsaddle swarmed with such galeots.

One chance in a thousand, perhaps—but Hall was not the man to let the thousandth chance pass him by. He entered the ranch-house, a glint in the eyes under his knitted brows.

His men were sleeping; Diego's snore could be heard from somewhere in the darkness. The oil-lamp still burned in the living-room; the wide passage was shadowy, and Hall stopped there, outside the door of the rancher's bedroom, and listened.

No sound from within, the hour was nearly midnight, and the rancher, sick or well, was doubtless sleeping soundly. Or was he planning escape in the cover of darkness—if by the thousandth chance he was Jim Hall's game? The ranger stood some minutes in thought.

Then he lifted his hand to the door. One glance at the sleeping man, by the light of a match, would resolve all doubts.

The door did not open, it was fastened within.

For a moment Hall was grimly suspicious, but he remembered that Mister Fairfax had trouble with men in his own bunch, treacherous foes to watch out for, it was likely enough he would bar his door at night. There was nothing to that.

The ranger stood silent for some minutes longer. Then he moved and left the ranch-house, and stepped round to the shuttered window of the rancher's room. Wooden shutters covered the window, perforated for air, fastened within by a wooden button. Quietly, grimly, Hall worked with a long bowie-knife for a few minutes, and the shutter opened.

He stared into the quiet interior of the rancher's room. All was dark within save for a glimmer of starlight at the window.

Mule-Kick Hall stepped in over the low sill. He cared little if the rancher awakened—if the man was merely a rancher, a word of explanation would be enough, and whether he liked it or not, the grim-faced ranger cared nothing. But if he was the man Hall wanted—

Dimly he made out the shape of a bed in the further corner. He stepped quietly towards it, reached it, and saw, at a glance, even in the gloom, that it was unoccupied. Mister Fairfax was not there!

The next moment Mule-Kick Hall knew where Mister Fairfax was. A grip of iron was laid on his arm. The muzzle of a Colt was pressed against his heart. And a voice—a voice he knew—whispered.

"Keep your cap shut, you dog-goned man-hunting gink, and put 'up your paws! Jest one yap to your men, dog-gone you, and you'll get yours so sudden, you won't know what hit you. Dog-gone your pesky hide, you ain't got me yet, Jim Hall—but I sure got you."

Mule-Kick Hall stood silent; still, as if turned to stone. He had found the Rio Kid—and the Rio Kid had found him!

THE END.

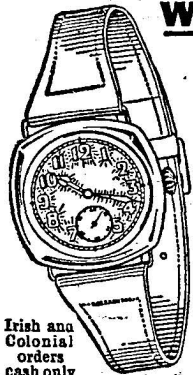
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