

Educated Evans

By
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*Free*editorial 

EDUCATED EVANS

I. — THE BROTHERHOOD

INSPECTOR PINE was something more than an Inspector of Police. He was what is known in certain circles as a Christian man. He was a lay preacher, a temperance orator, a social reformer. And if any man had worked hard to bring Educated Evans to a sense of his errors, that man was Inspector Pine. He had wrestled with the devil in Mr. Evans' spiritual make-up, he had prayed for Mr. Evans, and once, when things were going very badly, he had induced Mr. Evans to attend what was described as "a meeting of song and praise."

Educated Evans respected the sincerity of one whom he regarded as his natural enemy, but discovering, as he did, that a "meeting of praise and song" brought him no financial advancement, he declined any further invitations and devoted his energies and excursions to picking up information about a certain horse

that was running in a steeplechase at Kempton Park on Boxing Day.

Nevertheless, Inspector Pine did not despair. He believed in restoring a man's self-respect and in re-establishing his confidence; but here he might have saved himself a lot of trouble, for the self-respect of Educated Evans was enormous, and he was never so confident as when, after joining in a hymn, two lines of which ran:

The powers of darkness put to flight,

The day's dawn triumphs over night,

he accepted the omen and sent out to all his punters "Daydawn—inspired information—help yourself." For, amongst other occupations, Educated Evans was a tipster, and had a clientèle that included many publicans and the personnel of the Midland Railway Goods Yard.

One day in April, Educated Evans leant moodily over the broad parapet and examined the river with a vague interest. His melancholy face wore an expression of pain and disappointment, his under-lip was out-thrust in a pout, his round eyes stared with a certain urgent agony, as though he had given them the last chance of seeing what he wanted to see, and if they failed him now they would never again serve him.

So intent was he that one who, although a worker in another and, to Evans, a hateful sphere, bore many affectionate nicknames, was able to come alongside of him and share his contemplation without the sad man observing the fact.

Fussing little tugs, lethargic strings of barges, a police-boat slick and fast—all these came under the purview of Educated Evans, but apparently he saw nothing of what he wanted to see, and drew back with an impatient sigh.

Then it was that he saw his companion and realised that here, on the drab Embankment, was one whom he had imagined to be many miles away.

The new-comer was a tall man of thirty, broad-shouldered, power in every line of him. He was dressed in black, and a broad-rimmed felt hat was pulled over his eyes. He was chewing a straw, and even if Mr. Evans had failed to identify him by another means, he would have known "The Miller"—whose other name was William Arbuthnot Challoner —by this sign.

"Why, 'Miller,' I thought you was dead! And here was I speculatin' upon the one hundred and ninety million cubic yards of water that passes under that bridge every day, and meditatin' upon the remarkable changes that have happened since dear old Christopher Columbus sailed from that very pier, him and the Pilgrim Fathers that discovered America in Fifteen Seven Nine—"

"The Miller" listened and yet did not listen. The straw twirled between his strong teeth; his long, saturnine face was turned to the river; his thoughts were far away.

"A lovely scene," said Mr. Evans ecstatically, indicating the smoky skyline; "the same as dear old Turner used to paint, and Fluter—"

"Whistler," said his companion absently

"Whistler, of course—dear me, where's my education!" Mr. Evans rolled his head in self-impatience. "Whistler. What a artist. 'Miller'—if you'll excuse the familiarity. I'll call you Challoner if you're in any way offended. What—a—artist! There is a bit of painting of his in the National Gall'ry. And another one in the—the Praydo in Madrid. Art's a perfect weakness with me—always has been since a boy. Do you know Sergeant? Great American painter. One of the greatest artists in the world. An' do you know the celebrated French artist, Carrot?"

"Do you know," began "The Miller," speaking deliberately, and looking at the river all the time, "do you know where you were between 7.30 p.m. and 9.15 p.m. on the night of the eighth of this month?"

"I do," said Educated Evans promptly.

"Does anybody else know—anybody whose word would be accepted by a police magistrate gifted with imagination and a profound distrust of the criminal classes?"

"My friend, Mr. Harry Sefferal," began Evans, and "The Miller" laughed hollowly and with an appearance of pain.

"You have only to put your friend in the witness-box," he said, "you have only to let the magistrate see his sinister countenance to be instantly remitted to Dartmoor for the remainder of your life. Harry Sefferal could only save you from imprisonment if you happened to be charged with murder. Reading his evidence, the hangman would pack his bag without waiting for the verdict. Harry Sefferal!"

Mr. Evans shrugged.

"On the evening in question it so happened that I was playing a quiet game of solo in the company of a well-known and respected tradesman, Mr. Julius Levy—"

"You're a dead man!" groaned "Miller." "Julius Levy is the man who put the "u" into 'guilty.' Know Karbolt Manor?"

Mr. Evans considered.

"I can't say that I do," he said at last.

"Near Sevenoaks—the big house that Binny Lester burgled five years ago and got away with it."

Educated Evans nodded.

"Now that you mention the baronial 'all, 'Miller,' it flashes across my mind—like a dream, as it were, or a memory of happier days."

"Is there a ladder in your dream? A ladder put up to Lady Cadrington's bedroom window when the family was at dinner? Dream carefully, Evans."

Mr. Evans wrinkled a forehead usually smooth and unlined.

"No," he said; "I know the place, but I haven't been near there. I can take the most sacred oath—"

"Don't," begged "The Miller." "I would rather have your word of honour. It means more."

"On my word of honour as a gentleman," said Evans solemnly, "I have not been to, frequented, been in the vicinity of, or otherwise approached this here manor. And if I am not telling the truth may Heaven smite me to the earth this very minute!"

He struck an attitude, and "The Miller" waited, looking up at the skies.

"Heaven didn't hear you," he said, and took the arm of Evans. "Pine wants to see you."

Educated Evans shrugged his resignation.

"You are taking an innocent man," he said with dignity. "The Miller" bore the blow bravely.

"The Miller" was always "The Miller" to a certain class. He was taxed in the style and title of Detective-Sergeant W. Arbuthnot Challoner, Criminal Investigation Department. He was an authority upon ladder larceny, safe-blowing, murder, gangery, artfulness and horses. Round Camden Town, where many of his most ardent admirers had their dwelling-places, he was called "The Miller" because of this queer straw-nibbling practice of his.

He was respected; he was not liked, not even by Educated Evans, that large-minded and tolerant man. Evans was both liked and respected. In North London, as distinct from South London, erudition has a value. Men less favoured look up to those proficient in the gentle art of learning. Educated Evans was one of whom the most violent and the least amiable spoke with respect.

Apart from his erudition (he had written more speeches for the defence than any other amateur lawyer), he was undoubtedly in the confidence of owners, trainers, jockeys and head lads. He admitted it. He was the man who gave Braxted for the Steward's Cup and Eton Boy for the Royal Hunt Cup. There are men holding affluent positions in Camden Town who might trace their prosperity to the advice of Educated Evans. It was said, by the jealous and the evil-minded, that St. Pancras Workhouse has never been so full as it was after

that educated man had had a bad season.

"It was a matter for regret to me," said Evans as he shuffled along by his captor's side, "that the law, invented by Moses and Lord What's-his-name, should be employed to crush, so to speak, the weak. And on the eve, as it were, of the Newbury Spring Handicap, when I did hope to pack a parcel over Solway."

"The Miller" stopped and surveyed his prisoner with curiosity and disapproval.

"Solway," he said deliberately, "is not on the map. St. Albyn could give Solway two stone and lose him"

The lip of Educated Evans curled in a sneer

"Solway could fall dead and get up and then win," he said extravagantly. "St Albyn ain't a horse, he's a hair trunk. The man who backs St. Albyn—"

"I've backed St. Albyn," said "The Miller" coldly. "I've had it from the owner's cousin, who is Lord Herprest, that, barring accidents, St. Albyn is a stone certainty."

Educated Evans laughed; it was the laugh of a man who watches his enemy perish.

"And they hung poor old Crippen," he said.

There was this bond of sympathy between "The Miller" and his lawful prey—that they were passionate devotees of the sport of kings. When "The Miller" was not engaged in the pursuit of social pests (among whom he awarded Educated Evans very nearly top weight) he was as earnestly pursuing his studies into the vagarious running of the thoroughbred racehorse.

"What about Blue Chuck?" he asked. "There's been a sort of tip about for him."

Evans pulled at his long nose.

"That's one that might do it," he admitted. "Canfyn's told his pals that it won't be ready till Goodwood, but that feller would shop his own doctor. I wouldn't believe Canfyn if he was standin' on the scaffold and took an oath on Foxe's Book of Martyrs."

Passers-by, seeing them, the shabby man in the long and untidy coat and the tall man in black, would never have dreamt that they were overlooking a respected officer of Scotland Yard and his proper prey.

"What makes you think that St. Albyn hasn't a chance, Evans?" asked "The Miller" anxiously.

"Because he ain't trying," said Evans with emphasis. "I've got it straight from

the boy who does him. He's not having a go till Ascot, an' they think they can get him in the Hunt Cup with seven-five."

"The Miller" blew heavily. That very morning Teddie Isaacheim, a street bookmaker who possessed great wealth and singular immunity from police interference, had laid him fifty pounds to five and a half (ready) about this same St. Albyn. And five and a half pounds was a lot of money to lose.

"If you'd asked me I'd have told you," said Educated Evans gently. "If you'd come to me as man to man an' as a sportsman to a sportsman, instead of all this ridiculous an' childish nonsense about me actin' in a thievous and illegal manner, I'd have give you the strength of St. Albyn. And I'd have put you on to the winner of the one o'clock race to-morrow—saved specially... not a yard at Kempton.... not busy at Birmingham—havin' a look on at Manchester, but loose to-morrer!"

"What's that, Evans?"

"The Miller's" voice was mild, seductive, but Evans shook his head, and they marched on.

"Never," said the educated man with great bitterness, "never since old Cardinal Wolseley was pinched for giving lip to King Charles has a man been more disgustin'ly arrested than me. If I don't get ten thousand out of the police for false imprisonment... if I don't show up old Pine for this—"

"Is it Clarok Lass, old man?" asked "Miller," as they came in sight of the police station.

"No, it ain't Clarok Lass," said Evans savagely. "And if you think you're going to get my five pound special for a ha'porth of soft soap, you've got another guess coming. I'm finished with you, 'Miller,' I am. Didn't I give you King Solomon an' Flake at Ascot last year? Didn't I run all over the town to put you on to that good thing of Jordan's?"

"You've certainly done your best, Evans," agreed his captor soothingly, "and if I can put in a word for you—what did you say was going to win that one o'clock race?"

Educated Evans pressed his lips tightly, and a few seconds later "The Miller" was his business-like self.

"Here is Evans, sir; he says he knows nothing of the Sevenoaks job, and he can produce two witnesses to swear that he was in town at the time of the robbery. Maybe he can produce forty-two—"

Inspector Pine came in whilst Evans was being searched by the gaoler, and shook his head grievously.

"Oh, Evans, Evans! " he sighed. "And you promised me faithfully that you'd

never come again!"

Educated Evans sniffed.

"If you think I came here on my own, sir, you're wrong."

Again the white-haired inspector shook his head.

"There's good in every human heart," he said. "I will not lose hope in you, Evans. What is the charge?"

"No charge, sir, detention. We want him in connection with the Sevenoaks affair, but there are a few alibis to be tested," said "The Miller."

So they put Educated Evans into No. 7, which was his favourite cell, and Evans wondered what horse in the Newbury Cup was numbered 7 on the card.

That night certain heated words passed between the Honourable George Canfyn and the usually amiable attendants at the Hippoleum Theatre. George, who had dined, retaliated violently.

George Canfyn was a man of property and substance, an owner of racehorses and a gentleman by law. His father was Lord Llanwattock. His other name was Snook, and he made candles in a very large way. And in addition to candles he made margarine, money and political friends. They in turn made him a Baron of the United Kingdom. The law made him a gentleman. God was not even consulted.

George was the type of man who liked money for money's sake. Most people tell you that money means nothing to them, only the things you can buy with it. George liked money plain. He wanted all the money there was, and it hurt him to see the extraordinary amount that had failed to come his way. He lived cheaply, he ate meanly, and he changed his trainer every year.

If a horse of his failed to win when he had his packet down, he did everything except complain to the Stewards. He never had the same jockey more than three times, because he believed that jockeys cut up races and arranged the winner to suit their own pockets. He believed all trainers were incompetent, and all the jockeys who weren't riding his horse to be engaged in a conspiracy to "take care" of it.

When he won (as he did very often) he told his friends before the race that his horse just had a chance, and advised them not to bet heavily. George hated to see the price come down, because he invariably had his bets with the S.P. offices. And when it won, he appeared surprised, and told everybody how he nearly had a fiver on, but thinking the matter over in a quiet place, he decided that, with the income tax what it was, it was criminal to waste money. And some people believed him.

George was in a fairly happy state of mind when he went out to the

Hippoleum, for that morning he had come up from Wiltshire after witnessing the trial of Blue Chuck, his Newbury Cup horse. Blue Chuck had slammed the horses in the trial and had won on a tight rein by many lengths. And not a single writing person had tipped Blue Chuck. It was certain to start amongst the "100-6 others," and George was already practising the appearance of amazement which he would display when he faced his acquaintances.

In the cheerful contemplation of Wednesday Mr. Canfyn sallied forth, his complacency fortified by three old brandies, which had cost him nothing, a sample bottle having been sent to him by a misguided wine merchant. And then came the disaster.

Three policemen brought him into Hallam Street Station, and here the matter might have been satisfactorily arranged if the third of the three old brandies had not started to put in some fine work.

"I'll have your coats off your backs for this, you scoundrels!" he screamed, as they searched him scientifically. "I'm the Honourable George Canfyn, the son of Lord Llanwattock—"

"What's the charge?" asked the weary station-sergeant, who was not unused to such scenes of agitation.

"Drunk and disorderly and assault," said the policeman who had brought in this scion of nobility.

"I'm not drunk!" roared George.

"Don't take those things away from me, they're my private papers! And count that money—if there's a penny missing, have you kicked out of the police force—"

"Number 8," said the man on the desk, and they led George below.

"Oh, that a man should put an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains," murmured the inspector, standing in the open doorway of his room. "Drink is a terrible thing, sergeant!"

"Yes, sir," said the sergeant, and looked up at the clock. It was perilously near ten.

The inspector went back to his room with a sigh. The big table was covered with cards and addressed envelopes, and the inspector was an elderly man and very tired. He looked for a long time at the accumulation of work that had to be finished before the midnight post went out.

Inspector Pine was, amongst other things, Secretary of the Racecourse Elevation Brotherhood for the Suppression of Gambling. And the cards were to announce a special meeting of the Brotherhood to consider next year's programme. And, as yet, not one of the thousand cards had been stamped with

the announcement that, owing to a regrettable prior engagement, the Bishop of Chelsea would not be able to attend.

He was so contemplating the unfinished work when there was a tap at his door and "The Miller came in.

"A miracle has happened, sir," he said. "I've found three decent people who can swear that Evans was practically under their eyes when the larceny was committed. Mr. Isaacheim, the well-known and highly-respected commission agent—"

"A bookmaker," murmured Inspector Pine, reproachfully.

"Still, he's a taxpayer and a ratepayer," said "The Miller" loyally. "And though to me gambling is a form of criminal lunacy, we must take his word. And Mr. Corgan, of the 'Blue Hart'—"

"A publican," said old man Pine in distress.

"And a sinner. But he's a well-known town councillor. Can I tell the gaoler to let Evans go?"

Inspector Pine nodded, and his eyes returned to the unfinished work.

"You don't know anybody who could help me to put these cards into envelopes, I suppose, sergeant?"

It was an S.O.S.: an appeal directed to "The Miller" himself.

"No, sir," replied Miller promptly; and then, as a thought occurred to him: "Why don't you ask Evans? He's a man of education, and he'd be glad to stop for a few hours."

Educated Evans had spent a sleepless five hours in a large and sanitary cell, meditating alternately upon man's injustice to man and the depleted state of his exchequer. For his possessions consisted of twelve-and-sixpence put by for a railway ticket to Newbury, and the price of admission. For purposes of investment he had not so much as a tosser. It was the beginning of the season, and his clientèle had been dissipated by the mistaken efforts on his part to carry on business through the winter. It would take him to the Jubilee meeting before he could re-establish their confidence.

He heard the sound of an angry voice, and, peering through the ventilator of the cell, saw and recognised the Honourable George Canfyn being led to confinement. When the gaoler had gone:

"Excuse me, Mr. Canfyn," said Educated Evans, in a hoarse whisper, his mouth to the ventilator. He was all a-twitter with excitement.

"What do you want?" growled the voice of the Honourable George from the next cell.

"I'm Johnny Evans, sir, better known as Educated Evans, the well-known Turf Adviser. What about your horse, Blue Chuck, for to-morrow?"

"Go to hell!" boomed the voice of his fellow-prisoner.

"I can do you a bit of good," urged Evans. "I've got a stone pinch—"

"Go to blazes, you—"

In his annoyance he described Educated Evans libellously.

Educated Evans was meditating upon the strangeness of fate that had brought the son of a millionaire into No. 8, when the lock of his cell snapped back.

"You can go, Evans," said "The Miller" genially. "I've gone to no end of trouble to get you out—as I said I would. What's that horse in the one o'clock?"

"Clarok Lass," said Evans and "The Miller" swore softly.

"If I'd known that, I'd have left you to die," he said. "You said it wasn't Clarok Lass—here, come on, the inspector's got a job for you."

Wonderingly, Educated Evans followed the detective to the inspector's room, and in a few gentle words the nature of the job was explained.

"I will give you five shillings out of my own pocket, Evans," said Inspector Pine, "and at the same time I feel that I am perhaps an instrument to bring you to the light."

Educated Evans surveyed the table with a professional eye. He was not unused to the task of filling envelopes, for there was a time when he had a thousand clients on his books.

"Miller," glad to escape, left them as soon as he could find an excuse, and the inspector proceeded to enlighten his helper in the use of the stamp.

"When the stencil is worn out you can write another. Fix it over the inking pad so, and go ahead."

It was a curious stamp, one unlike any that Evans had ever used. It consisted of an oblong stencil paper, fixed in a stiff paper frame and a metal ink-holder. The inspector showed him how the stencil was written with a sharp-pointed stylus on a stiff board, how it had to be damped before and blotted after, and Evans, who had never stopped learning, watched.

"It will be something for you to reflect upon that every one of these dear people is an opponent to the pernicious sport of horse-racing. For once in your life, Evans, you are doing something to crush the hydra-headed monster of gambling."

"Where's that five shillings, sir?" said Evans, and the officer parted.

He was on the point of leaving Evans to his task when the station-sergeant

came in.

"Here's the money and papers of that drunk, sir," he said, and deposited a small package on the desk. "Perhaps you'd better put them in the safe. He's sent for his solicitor, so he'll probably be bailed out. But he made such a fuss about his being robbed that it might be better to keep them until he comes before the magistrate in a sober mind."

Mr. Pine nodded and opened the big safe that stood in one corner of the room as the sergeant went out. First he put the money, watch and chain and gold cigarette case in a drawer. Then he took up the little pocket-book and turned the leaves with professional deftness.

"Another gambler," he said sadly.

"Who's that, sir?"

"A man—a gentleman who is unfortunately with us to-night," said Inspector Pine, and paused. "What is a trial, Evans?"

"A trial, sir?"

"It is evidently something to do with horse-racing," said the inspector, and read, half to himself: " 'Blue Chuck 8-7; Golders Green 7-7; Makin 7-0. Won four lengths. Time 1.39.' That has to do with racing, Evans?"

Educated Evans nodded, not trusting himself to speak.

"You have your five shillings, Evans. I will leave you now. Give the letters to the sergeant; he will post them. Goodnight."

From time to time that night the sergeant glanced through the open door of the inspector's room, and apparently Educated Evans was a busy man. At midnight, just as the Hon. George Canfyn's solicitor arrived, he carried his work to the station-sergeant's desk, and after the sergeant had made a quick scrutiny of the private office to see that nothing was missing, Evans was allowed to depart.

At ten o'clock next morning Inspector Pine was shaving when his crony and fellow-labourer in the social field (Mr. Stott, the retired grocer) arrived in great haste. And there was on Mr. Stott's face a look of bewilderment and annoyance.

"Good-morning, Brother Stott," said the inspector. "I got all those cards out last night—at least, I hope I did."

Mr. Stott breathed heavily.

"I got my card, Brother Pine," he said, "and I'd like to know the meaning of it."

He thrust a piece of cardboard into the lathered face of the inspector. There

was nothing extraordinary in the card. It was an invitation to a meeting of the Brotherhood for Suppressing Gambling.

"Well?"

"Look on the other side," hissed Mr. Stott.

The inspector turned the card and read the stencilled inscription:

IF ANY BROTHER WANTS THE WINNER OF THE NEWBURY HANDICAP,

SEND T.M.O. FOR 20S. TO THE OLD RELIABLE EDUCATED EVANS,

92 BINGHAM MEWS. THIS IS THE BIGGEST PINCH OF THE YEAR!

DEFEAT IGNORED! ROLL UP, BROTHERS! HELP YOURSELF, AND MAKE T.M.O. PAYABLE TO E. EVANS.

"Of course, nobody will reply to the foolish and evil man," said the inspector, as he was giving instructions to "The Miller." "Every member of the Brotherhood will treat it with contempt; still, you had better see Evans."

When "The Miller" arrived at 92 Bingham Mews (it was the upper part of a stable) he found that melancholy man opening telegrams at the rate of twenty a minute.

"And more's coming," said Educated Evans. "There's no punter like a Brother."

"What's the name of the horse?" asked "The Miller" in a fever.

"Blue Chuck—help yourself," said Educated Evans. "And don't forget you owe me a pound."

"The Miller" hurried off to interview Mr. Isaacheim, the eminent and respectable Turf accountant.

II. — MR. HOMASTER'S DAUGHTER

MR. HOMASTER'S daughter was undoubtedly the belle of Camden Town, and when she retired from public life, there is less doubt that Mr. Homaster's trade suffered in consequence.

But as Mr. Homaster very rightly said that even the saloon bar was no place for a young lady, and although, as a result of her withdrawal, many clients who had with difficulty sustained themselves at saloon prices returned in a body to the public portion of the "Rose and Hart," where beer is the staple of

commerce, Mr. Homaster (he was Hochmeister until the war came along) bore his loss with philosophy, and his reputation, both as a gentleman and a father, stood higher than ever.

Miss Belle Homaster was the most beautiful woman that Educated Evans had ever seen. She was tall, with golden hair and blue eyes, and a fine figure. Across her black, tightly-fitting and well-occupied blouse she invariably wore the word "Baby" in diamonds, that being her pet name to her father and her closer relatives.

Evans used to go into the saloon bar every night for the happiness of seeing her smile, as she raised her delicately pencilled eyebrows at him. She never asked unnecessary questions. A lift of those arched brows, a gracious nod from Evans, the up-ending of a bottle, a gurgle of soda water, and Evans laid a half-crown on the counter and received the change with a genteel "Thanks."

Sometimes she said it was a very nice day for this time of year. Sometimes, when it wasn't a very nice day, she asked, with a note of gentle despair: "What else can you expect?"

It was generally understood that Evans was her favourite. Certainly he alone of all customers was the recipient of her confidences. It was to Evans that she confessed her partiality for asparagus, and it was Evans who heard from her own lips that she had once, as a small girl, travelled in the same 'bus as Crippen.

A friend of his, at his earnest request, spoke about him glowingly, told her of his education and his ability to settle bets on the most obtuse questions without reference to a book. The way thus prepared by his friendly barker, Evans seized the first opportunity of producing samples of his deep knowledge and learning.

"It's curious, miss, me and you standing here, with the world revolving on its own axle once in twenty-four hours, thereby causing day and night. Few of us realise, so to speak, the myst'ries of nature, such as the moon and the stars, which are other worlds like ours. They say there's life on Mars owing to the canals which have been observed by telescopic observation. Which brings us to the question: Is Mars inhabited?"

She listened, dazed.

"The evolution of humanity," Evans went on enjoyably, "was invented by Darwin, which brings us to the question of prehistoric days."

"What a lot you know!" said the young lady. "Would you like a little more soda? The weather's very seasonable, isn't it?"

"The seasons are created or caused by the revolutions of the world—" began Evans.

But she was called away to tend the needs of an uneducated man who needed a chaser.

Everybody knew Miss Homaster. Even "The Miller." When that light and ornament of the criminal investigation department desired an interview with any of his criminal acquaintances, he was certain of finding them hovering like obese moths about the flame of her charm and beauty.

At eight, or thereabouts, Sergeant William Arbuthnot Challoner would push open the swing doors of the saloon bar and glance carelessly round, nod to such of his old friends as he saw, raise his hat to Miss Homaster and retire.

The news of her engagement was announced two days before she left the bar for good. It was to the unhappy Evans that she made the revelation.

"I'm being married to a gentleman friend of mine," she said, what time Educated Evans clutched the edge of the counter for support. "I believe in marrying young and being true. A wife should be a friend to her husband and help him. She ought to be interested in his business. Don't you agree, Mr. Evans?"

"Yes, miss," said Evans with an effort. "For richer and poorer, in sickness and in woe, ashes to ashes."

"The Miller" learnt of the engagement from Educated Evans.

"I believe in marriage," he said. "It keeps the divorce court busy."

A heartless, cynical man, in whom the wells of human kindness had run dry.

There is a legend that once upon a time "The Miller" had a fortune in his hand, or within reach of that member. "The Miller" never discussed the matter, even with his intimates. Even Educated Evans, who counted himself something more than an ordinary acquaintance, with rare delicacy never referred to that tremendous lost opportunity.

Yet there it was: Fortune, with a row of houses under each arm, had kicked at the door, and "The Miller" had hesitated with his hand on the latch.

Rows of houses, a motor-car, Tatts every day of his life if he so desired, and his ambition moved to such a lofty end—and lost because "The Miller" refused to credit the evidence of his own ears or to accept the dictum of the ancients, *in vino veritas*.

Mr. Sandy Leman was certainly *in vino* when "The Miller" pinched him for (1) drunk, (2) creating a disturbance, (3) conduct calculated to bring about a breach of the peace, (4) insulting behaviour. ("He was," to quote the expressive language of Educated Evans, "so soused that he tried to play a coffee stall under the impression it was a grand pianner.") As to the "veritas," was "The Miller" justified in believing that there was only one trier in the

Clumberfield Nursery, and that trier Curly Eyes? Mr. Sandy Leman proclaimed the fact to the world on the way to the station, insisted on seeing the divisional surgeon to tell him, and made pathetic inquiries for Mr. Lloyd George's telephone number in order to pass the good news along to one about whom (in moments of extreme intoxication) he was wont to shed bitter tears.

"The Miller" had the market to himself, so to speak, and after much hesitation had five shillings each way. And that, after having decided overnight to take a risk and have fifty to win! Curly Eyes won at 100-6. "The Miller" read the news, cast the paper to the earth and jumped on it. That is the story.

Along the platform of Paddington Station came Educated Evans at a slow and not unstately pace. His head was held proudly, his eyes half-closed, as though the sight of so many common racing people en route for Newbury was more than he dared see, and in his mouth a ragged cigar. Race glasses, massive and imposing, were suspended from one shoulder, an evening newspaper protruded from each of the pockets of his overcoat.

Educated Evans halted before the locked door of an empty first-class carriage and surveyed the approaching guard soberly.

"Member," he said simply.

"Member of Parliament or Member of Tattersall's?" asked the sardonic guard.

"Press," said Evans, even more gravely. "I'm the editor of The Times."

The guard made a gesture.

"Where's your ticket?" he asked, and with a sigh Educated Evans produced the brief.

"Third class—and yesterday's," said the guard bitterly. "Love a duck, some of you fellows never lose hope, do you?"

"I shall take your number, my friend," said Evans, stung to speech. "The Railway Act of 1874 specifically specifies that tickets issued under the Act are transferable and interchangeable—"

The guard passed on. Evans saw the door of a corridor car open and the guard's back turned. He stepped in, and, sinking into a corner seat, blotted out his identity with an evening newspaper.

"I always say, sir," said Evans, as the train began to move and it was safe to appear in public, "that to start cheap is to start well. Not that I'm not in a position to pay my way like a gentleman and a sportsman."

His solitary companion was also hidden behind an extended newspaper.

"It stands to reason," Mr. Evans went on, "that a man like myself, who is, so to speak, in the confidence of most of the Berkshire and Wiltshire stables, and have my own co-respondents at Lambourn, Manton, Stockbridge, and cetera,

it only stands to reason that, owning my own horses as I do—hum!"

"The Miller" regarded him coldly over the edge of his newspaper.

"Don't let me interrupt you, Evans," he said, politely. "Let me hear about these horses of yours, I beg! Tell-a-Tale, by Swank out of Gullibility, own brother to Jailbird, and a winner of races; Tipster, by Ananias out of Writer's Cramp, by What-Did-I-Give-Yer."

"Don't let us have any unpleasantness, Mr. Miller," said Evans, mildly. "I'm naturally an affable and talkative person, like the famous Cardinal Rishloo, who, bein' took to task by Napoleon for his garolisty, replied 'There's many a good tune played on an old fiddle.' "

"Not satisfied," continued "The Miller," "with defrauding the Great Western Railway by travelling first on a dud third-class ticket, you must endeavour, by misrepresentation of a degrading character, to obtain money by false pretences."

"The Miller" shook his head, and the straw between his teeth twirled ominously.

"What are you backing in the two-thirty?" asked Evans pleasantly. "I've got something that could lay down and go to sleep and then get up and win so far that the judge'd have to paint a new distance board. This thing can't be beat, Mr. Miller. If the jockey was to fall off this here horse would stop, pick him up, and win with him in his mouth! He's that intelligent. I've had it from the boy that does him."

"If he does him as well as you've done me," said "The Miller," "he ought to glitter! I'm doing nothing but your unbeatable gem in the Handicap. Isaacheim wouldn't lay me the money I wanted, so I thought I'd come down. Not that the horse will win."

The melancholy face of Educated Evans twisted in a sneer.

"It will win," he said with calm confidence. "If this horse was left at the post and started running the wrong way he could turn round and then win! I know what I'm talking about. I can't give you the strength of it without, in a manner of speakin', betrayin' a sacred confidence. But this horse will WIN! I've sent it out to three thousand clients—"

"That's a lie," said "The Miller," resuming his perusal of the Sporting Life.

"Well, three hundred—an' not far short."

Mr. Evans fingered the crisp notes in his pocket, and the crackle of them made music beside which the lute of Orpheus would have sounded as cheerful as a church bell on a foggy morning. He had certainly received inspired information. If Blue Chuck was not a certainty for the Newbury Handicap,

then there were no such things as certainties. He had seen the owner's description of the trial in the owner's pocket-book.

All that morning Mr. Evans had been engaged in despatching to his clients—for he was a tipster not without fame in Camden Town—the glorious and profitable news. For an hour he had carried the tidings of great joy to an old and tried clientèle. Some had been so well and truly tried that they publicly insulted him. Others to whom, leaning across the zinc-covered counter of the public bar, he had whispered the hectic intelligence, had drawn a pint, mechanically, and said "Is this another one of your so-and-so dreams?"

Educated Evans had time to catch the 12.38. Mr. Evans could have afforded a first-class ticket, but he held firmly to the faith that there were three states that it was the duty of every citizen to "best." First came the Government; then, in order of merit, came railway companies; thirdly, and at times even firstly, appeared the bookmaking class.

He had secured his ticket from a fellow sojourner at the Rose and Hart. Its owner valued it at two hog. Evans beat him down to eightpence.

"Making money out of Blue Chuck is easier than drawing the dole," said Evans, as I know. Mr. Miller, you understand these things. What would you put eighteen hundred pounds into if you was me?"

"Eh?" said the startled Miller. "You have got eighteen hundred pounds?"

"Not at the moment," admitted Evans modestly. "But that is the amount I'll have when I come back. It's a lot of money to carry about. House property is not what it was," he added, "nor War Loan, after what this Capital Levy is trying to do to us. Who is this feller Levy, Mr. Miller? It's Jewish; but I don't seem to remember the Christian name."

As the train was passing through Reading, Educated Evans delivered himself of a piece of philosophy.

"Bookmakers get fat on what I might term the indecision of the racin' public," he said. "The punter who follows the advice of his Turf adviser blindly and fearlessly is the feller who packs the parcel. But does he follow the advice of his Turf adviser blindly and fearlessly, Mr. Miller? No, he doesn't."

"And he's wise," said "The Miller," without looking up from his paper, "if you happen to be the Turf adviser."

"That may be or may not be," said Educated Evans firmly. "I'm merely telling you what I've learnt from years an' years of experience—and mind you, my recollection goes back to the old Croydon racecourse. It's hearin' things, it's bein' put off, it's bein' told this, that, and the other by nosy busybodies that enables Sir Douglas Stuart—ain't he? well, he ought to be—to spend his declining days on the Rivyera."

"The trouble with you, Evans," said "The Miller," folding his paper as the train slowed for Newbury, "is that you talk too much."

"The trouble with me," said Educated Evans, with dignity, "is that I think too much!"

He parted from the detective on the platform, and was making his way toward the entrance of the Silver Ring when he stopped dead. A lady was crossing the roadway to the pay gate, and the heart of Educated Evans leapt within him. He knew that black fox fur, that expensive velour hat, those high-buttoned boots. For a second the economist and the lover struggled one with the other, and the lover won. Educated Evans followed hot on her trail, wincing with pain as he paid 2s. 6d. and followed the lady to the paddock.

She turned at the sound of her name, and it must be said of Miss Homaster that her attitude toward Evans was not only extremely cordial but amazingly condescending.

"Why, Mr. Evans, whoever expected to see you?" she said. "What extraordinary weather it is for this time of the year!"

"It is indeed, Miss Homaster," said Evans. "Is your respected father with you?"

"No, I've come alone," said Miss Homaster, with a saucy toss of her head, "and I'm going to back all the winners."

Here was the chance that Educated Evans had been praying for, the opportunity which he never dreamt would come.

He had pictured himself rescuing her from burning houses, or diving into the seething waters of the canal and bringing her back to safety, perhaps breathing his last in her arms; but he had never imagined that the opportunity would arise of giving her "the goods."

"Miss Homaster," he said in a hoarse whisper, "I'm going to do you a bit of good. I've got the winner of the Handicap. It's Blue Chuck; he's a stone certainty. He could fall down and get up and then win."

"Really?" She was genuinely interested as he told her the strength of it.

He left her soon after (he knew his place) and strolled into the ring. He had been in Tattersall's once before, but the experience was not as thrilling as it might have been. An acquaintance saw him and came boisterously toward him.

"Hallo, Educated!" he said. "I've got something good for you, old cock; I've got the winner of the Handicap up me sleeve. Bing Boy! "

He looked round to see that he was not overheard, and in his interest he failed to see the cold sneer that was growing on the face of Mr. Evans.

"This horse," said his acquaintance, "has been tried good enough to win the

Derby even if it was run over hurdles! This horse could fall down—"

"And I should say he would fall down," said Evans, his exasperation getting the better of his politeness. "You couldn't make me back Bing Boy with bad money. You couldn't make me back it with bookmakers who had twilight sleep and forgot all that happened a few minutes before. Bing Boy!" he said, with withering contempt.

Nevertheless, Bing Boy was favourite, and the horse that Educated Evans had come to back was at any price. Evans was disconcerted, alarmed. He went into the paddock and saw the scowling owner of his great certainty. He did not look happy. Perhaps it was because he had spent the greater part of the previous evening in an uncomfortable police-station cell.

Evans went in search of the man who gave him Bing Boy to get a little further information.

And they were backing Smocker. He was a strong second favourite, and it was difficult to get 7 to 2 about him. A man Evans knew drew him aside to a place where he could not be overheard by the common crowd and told him all about Smocker.

"This horse," he said impressively, as he poked his finger in Evans' waistcoat to emphasise the seriousness of the communication, "has been tried twenty-one pounds better than Glasshouse. He won the trial on a tight rein, and if what I hear is true—and the man that told me is the boy that does him—Smocker could fall down—"

"There'll be a few falls in this race," said Educated Evans hollowly.

The first few events were cleared from the card, and betting started in earnest over the Handicap, and yet Educated Evans delayed his commission. To nearly three hundred clients he had wired, "Blue Chuck. Help yourself. Can't be beaten." And here was Blue Chuck sliding down the market like a pat of butter on the Cresta Run! Tens, a hundred to eight, a hundred to seven in places.

"Phew!" said Educated Evans.

The notes in his pocket were damp from handling. He made another frantic dive into the paddock in the hope of finding somebody who would give him the least word of encouragement about Blue Chuck.

Again he saw the owner of Blue Chuck, scowling like a fiend.

And then somebody spoke to him, and he turned quickly, hat in hand.

"Why, I've been looking everywhere for you, Mr. Evans," said Miss Homaster.

"I've got such a wonderful tip for you. Your horse—Blue Chuck, wasn't it?—isn't fancied in the least bit. The owner told a friend of mine that he didn't expect he'd finish in the first three."

The heart of Educated Evans sank, but it was not with sorrow for his deluded clients.

"Smocker will win." She lowered her voice. "It is a certainty. I've just been offered five to one, and I've backed it."

"Five to one?" said Educated Evans, his trading instincts aroused. "You can't get more than four to one."

"I can," said the girl in triumph. "I'll show you."

Proud to be seen in such delightful company, Educated Evans followed her, through the press of Tattersall's, down the rails, until near the end he saw a tall, florid young man—no less a person than Barney Gibbet!

"Mr. Gibbet, this is a friend of mine who wants to back Smocker. You'll give him five to one?"

Gibbet looked sorrowfully at Educated Evans.

"Five to one, Miss Homaster?" he said, shaking his head. "No, it's above the market price."

"But you promised me," she said reproachfully.

"Very well. How much do you want on it, sir?"

The lips of Educated Evans opened, but he could not pronounce the words. Presently they came.

"Three hundred," he said in broken tones.

"Ready?" asked Mr. Gibbet, with pardonable suspicion.

"Ready," said Educated Evans.

It proved, on examination, that he only had £240. He had conjured up the other £60, for he was ever an optimist. In the end he was laid £1,100 to £220.

"You won't mind if I give you a cheque for your winnings?" asked Mr. Gibbet. "I don't carry a large sum of money round with me; it's not quite safe amongst these disreputable characters you meet upon racecourses."

"I quite agree," said Educated Evans heartily, and went up to the stand to see the race.

It was a race that can easily be described, calling for none of those complicated and intricate calculations which form a feature of every race description. Blue Chuck jumped off in front, made the whole of the running, and won hard held by five lengths. Two horses of whose existence Educated Evans was profoundly ignorant were second and third. Smocker was pulled up half-way down the straight.

Educated Evans staggered down from the stand and into the paddock. His only

chance, and it seemed a feeble one, was that the twelve horses that finished in front of Smocker would be disqualified. But the flag went up, and a stentorian voice sang musically, "Weighed in!"

Educated Evans dragged his weary feet to the train.

"It doesn't leave for an hour yet," said an official.

"I can wait," said Educated Evans gently.

Just after the last race "The Miller" came along the platform looking immensely pleased with himself. He saw Evans and turned into the carriage.

"Had a good race, my boy?" he asked. "I did, and thank you for the tip."

"Not at all," murmured Evans in the tone of one greatly suffering.

"They tried to lumber me on to Smocker, but no bookmakers' horses for me!"

"Is he a bookmaker's horse?" asked Evans with a flicker of mild interest.

"Yes, he belongs to that fellow Gibbet—the man who's engaged to Miss Homaster.

Educated Evans tried to smile.

III. — THE COOP

SOMETIMES they referred to Mr. Yardley in the newspapers as "the Wizard of Stotford," sometimes his credit was diffused as the "Yardley Confederation"; occasionally he was spoken of as plain "Bert Yardley," but invariably his entries for any important handicaps were described as "The Stotford Mystery." For nobody quite knew what Mr. Yardley's intentions were until the day of the race. Usually after the race, for it is a distressing fact that the favourite from his stable was usually unplaced, and the winner (also from his stable) started amongst the "100 to 7 others."

After the event was all over and the "weighed in" had been called, people used to gather in the paddock in little groups and ask one another what this horse was doing at Nottingham, and where were the stewards, and why Mr. Yardley was not jolly well warned off. And they didn't say "jolly" either.

For it is an understood thing in racing that, if an outsider wins, its trainer ought to be warned off. Yet neither Bert Yardley, nor Colonel Rogersman, nor Mr. Lewis Feltham (the two principal owners for whom he trained) were so much as asked by the stewards to explain the running of their horses. Thus proving that the Turf needed reform, and that the stipendiary steward was an absolute necessity.

Mr. Bert Yardley was a youngish looking man of thirty-five, who spoke very little and did his betting by telegraph. He had a suite at the Midland Hotel, and was a member of a sedate and respectable club in Pall Mall. He read extensively, mostly such classics as *Races to Come*, and the umpteenth volume of the *Stud Book*, and he leavened his studies with such lighter reading as the training reports from the daily sporting newspapers—he liked a good laugh.

His worst enemy could not complain to him that he refused information to anybody.

"I think mine have some sort of chance, and I am backing them both. Tinpot? Well, of course, he may win; miracles happen, and I shouldn't be surprised if he made a good show. But I've had to ease him in his work, and when I galloped him on Monday he simply wouldn't have it—couldn't get him to take hold of his bit. Possibly he runs better when he's a little above himself, but he's a horse of moods. If he would only give his running, he'd trot in! Lampholder, on the other hand, is as game a horse as ever looked through a bridle. A battler! He'll be there or thereabouts."

What would you back on that perfectly candid, perfectly honest information, straight, as it were, from the horse's mouth?

Lampholder, of course; and Tinpot would win. Even stipendiary stewards couldn't make Lampholder win, not if they got behind and shoved him. And that, of course, is no part of a stipendiary steward's duties.

Mr. Bert Yardley was dressing for dinner one March evening, and, opening his case, he discovered that a gold dress watch had disappeared. He called his valet, who could offer no other information than that it had been there when they left Stotford for Sandown Park.

"Send for the police," said Mr. Yardley, and there came to him Detective-Sergeant Challoner.

Mr. Challoner listened, made a few notes, asked a few, a very few, questions of the valet, and closed his book.

"I think I know the person," he said, and to the valet: "A big nose—you're sure of the big nose?"

The valet was emphatic.

"Very good," said "The Miller," "I'll do my best, Mr. Yardley. I hope I shall be as successful as Amboy will be in the Lincoln Handicap."

Mr. Yardley smiled faintly.

"We'll talk about that later," he said.

"The Miller" made one or two inquiries, and that night pulled in "Nosey"

Boldin, whose hobby it was to pose as an inspector of telephones, and in this capacity had made many successful experiments. On the way to the station, "Nosey," so-called because of a certain abnormality in that organ, delivered himself with great force and venom.

"This comes of betting on horse races and follering Educated Evans' perishin' five-pound specials! Let this be a warning to you, 'Miller'!"

"Not so much lip," said "The Miller."

"He gave me one winner in ten shots, and that started at 11 to 10 on," ruminated "Nosey." "Men like that drive men to crime. There ought to be a law so's to make the fifth loser a felony! And after the eighth loser, he ought to 'ang! That'd stop 'em!"

"The Miller" saw his friend charged and lodged for the night, and went home to bed. And in the morning, when he left his lodgings to go to breakfast, the first person he saw was Educated Evans, and there was on that learned man's unhappy face a look of pain and anxiety.

"Good-morning, Mr. Challoner. Excuse me if I'm taking a liberty, but I understand that a client of mine is in trouble?"

"If you mean 'Nosey,' he is," agreed "The Miller." "And what is more, he attributes his shame and downfall to following your tips. I sympathise with him."

Educated Evans made an impatient clicking sound, raised his eyebrows and spread out his hand.

"Bolsho," he said simply.

"Eh?" "The Miller" frowned suspiciously. "You didn't give Bolsho?"

"Every guaranteed client received 'Bolsho: fear nothing,' " said Evans even more simply "following Mothegg (ten to one, beaten a neck, hard lines), Toffeetown (third, hundred to eight, very unlucky), Onesided (won, seven to two, what a beauty!), followin' Curds and Whey (won, eleven to ten—can't help the price). Is that fair?"

"The question is," said "The Miller" deliberately, "Did 'Nosey' subscribe to your guarantee wire, your £5 special, or your Overnight nap?"

"That," said Educated Evans diplomatically, "I can't tell till I've seen me books. The point is this: if 'Nosey ' wants bail, am I all right? I don't want any scandal, and you know 'Nosey.' He ought to have been on the advertisin' staff of Sheldrighes, or running insurance stunts in the Daily Flail."

The advertising propensities of "Nosey" were, indeed, well known to "The Miller." He had the knack of introducing some startling feature into the very simplest case, and attracting to himself the amount of newspaper space usually

given to scenes in the House and important murders.

It was "Nosey" who, by his startling statement that pickles was a greater incentive to crime than beer, initiated a press correspondence which lasted for months. It was "Nosey" who, when charged with hotel larceny (his favourite aberration), made the pronouncement that motor 'buses were a cause of insanity. Upon the peg of his frequent misfortunes it was his practice to hang a showing up for somebody.

The case of "Nosey" was dealt with summarily. Long before the prosecutor had completed his evidence he realised that his doom was sealed.

"Anything known about this man?" asked the magistrate.

A gaoler stepped briskly into the box and gave a brief sketch of "Nosey's" life, and "Nosey," who knew it all before, looked bored.

"Anything to say?" asked the magistrate.

"Nosey" cleared his throat.

"I can only say, your worship, that I've fell into thieving ways owing to falling in the hands of unscrupulous racing tipsters. I'm ruined by tips, and if the law was just, there's a certain party who ought to be standing here by my side."

Educated Evans, standing at the back of the court, squirmed.

"I've got a wife, as true a woman as ever drew the breath of life," "Nosey" went on. "I've got two dear little children, and I ask your worship to consider me temptation owing to horse-racing and betting and this here tipster."

"Six months' hard labour," said the magistrate, without looking up.

Outside the court Mr. Evans waited patiently for the appearance of "The Miller."

" 'Nosey' never had more than a shilling on a horse in his life," he said bitterly, "and he owes! Here's the bread being took out of my mouth by slander and misrepresentation; do you think they'll put it in the papers, Mr. Challoner?"

"Certain," said "The Miller," cheerfully, and Educated Evans groaned.

"That man's worse than Lucreature Burgia, the celebrated poisoner," he said, "that Shakespeare wrote a play about. He's a snake in the grass and viper in the bosom. And to think I gave him Penwiper for the Manchester November, and he never so much as asked me if I was thirsty Mr. Challoner."

Challoner, turning away, stooped.

"Was that Yardley. I mean the trainer?"

"The Miller" looked at him reproachfully.

"Maybe I'm getting old and my memory is becoming defective," he said, "but I

seem to remember that when you gave me Tellmark the other day, you said that you were a personal friend of Mr. Yardley's, and that the way he insisted on your coming down to spend week-ends was getting a public nuisance."

Educated Evans did not bat a lid.

"That was his brother," he said.

"He must have lied when he told me he had no brothers," said "The Miller."

"They've quarrelled," replied Educated Evans frankly. "In fact, they never mention one another's names. It's tragic when brothers quarrel, Mr. Challoner. I've done my best to reconcile 'em—but what's the use? He didn't say anything about Amboya, did he?"

"He said nothing that I can tell you," was the unsatisfactory reply, and left Mr. Evans to consider means and methods by which he might bring himself into closer contact with the Wizard of Stotford.

All that he feared in the matter of publicity was realised to the full. One evening paper said:

RUINED BY TIPSTERS

ONCE-PROSPEROUS MERCHANT GOES TO PRISON FOR THEFT.

And in the morning press one newspaper may be quoted as typical of the rest:

TIPSTER TO BLAME

PEST OF THE TURF WRECKS A HOME.

Detective-Sergeant Challoner called by appointment at the Midland Hotel, and Mr. Yardley saw him.

"No, thank you, sir." "The Miller" was firm. He never forgot that he was a public schoolboy (he rowed stroke in his school boat the year they beat Eton in the final), and he was in many ways unique.

Mr. Yardley put back the fiver he had taken from his pocket.

"I will put you a tenner on anything I fancy," he said. "Who is this tipster, by the way?—the man who was referred to by the prisoner."

"The Miller" smiled.

"Educated Evans," he said, and when he had finished describing him Mr. Yardley nodded.

He was staying overnight in London en route for Lincoln, and was inclined to be bored. He had read the Racing Calendar from the list of the year's races to the last description of the last selling hurdle race on the back page. He had digested the surprising qualities of stallions that stood at 48 guineas and 1 guinea groom, and he could have almost recited the forfeit list from Aaron to

Znosberg. And he was aching for diversion when the bell boy brought a card.

It was a large card, tastefully bordered with pink and green roses. Its edge was golden, and in the centre were the words:

Mr. Yardley read, lingering over the printer's errors.

"Show this gentleman up, page," he said.

Into his presence came Educated Evans, a solemn, purposeful man.

"I hope the intrusion will be amply excused by the important nature or character of my business," he said. This was the opening he had planned.

"Sit down, Mr. Evans," said Yardley, and Educated Evans put his hat under the chair and sat.

"I've been thinking matters over in the privacy of my den—" began Evans, after

a preliminary cough.

"You are a lion tamer as well?" asked the Wizard of Stotford, interested.

"By 'den' I mean 'study,' " said Evans gravely. "To come to the point without beating about the bush—to use a well-known expression—I've heard of a coop."

"A what?"

"A coop," said Evans.

"A chicken coop?" asked the puzzled Wizard.

"It's a French word, meaning ramp," said Evans.

"Oh, yes, I see. 'Coup'—it's pronounced 'coo,' Mr. Evans."

Educated Evans frowned.

"It's years since I was in Paris," he said; "and I suppose they've altered it. It used to be 'coop,' but these French people are always messing and mucking about with words."

"And who is working this coop?" asked the trainer politely, adopting the old French version.

"Higgson."

Educated Evans pronounced the word with great emphasis. Higgson was another mystery trainer. His horses also won when least expected. And after they won little knots of men gathered in the paddock and asked one another if the Stewards had eyes, and why wasn't Higgson warned off?

"You interest me," said the trainer of Amboy. "Do you mean that he is winning with St. Kats?"

Evans nodded more gravely still.

"I think it's me duty to tell you," he said. "My information"—he lowered his voice and glanced round to the door to be sure that it was shut—"comes from the boy who does this horse!"

"Dear me!" said Mr. Yardley.

"I've got correspondents everywhere," said Educated Evans mysteriously. "My man at Stockbridge sent me a letter this morning (I dare not show it to you) about a horse in that two-year-old race that will win with his ears pricked."

Mr. Yardley was looking at him through half-closed eyes.

"With his ears pricked?" he repeated, impressed. "Have they trained his ears too? Extraordinary! But why have you come to tell me about Mr. Higgson's horse?"

Educated Evans bent forward confidentially-

"Because you've done me many a turn, sir," he said "and I'd like to do you one. I've got the information. I could shut my mouth an' make millions. I've got nine thousand clients who'd pay me the odds to a pound—but what's money?"

"True," murmured Mr. Yardley, nodding. "Thank you, Mr. Evans. St. Kats, I think you said? Now, in return for your kindness, I'll give you a tip."

Educated Evans held his breath. His amazingly bold plan had succeeded.

"Change your printer," said Mr. Yardley, rising. "He can't spell. Good-night."

Evans went forth with his heart turned to stone and his soul seared with bitter animosity.

Mr. Yardley came down after him and watched the shabby figure as it turned the corner, and his heart was touched. In two minutes he had overtaken the educated man.

"You're a bluff and a fake," he said, good-humouredly, "but you can have a little, a very little, on Amboy."

Before Educated Evans could prostrate himself at the benefactor's feet Mr. Yardley was gone.

The next day was a busy one for Educated Evans. All day Miss Higgs, the famous typist of Great College Street, turned her Roneo, and every revolution of the cylinder threw forth, with a rustle and a click, the passionate appeal which Educated Evans addressed to all clients, old and new. He was not above borrowing the terminology of other advertisement writers.

You want the best winners—I've got them.

Bet in Evans' way! Eventually, why not now?

I've got the winner of the Lincoln!

What a beauty!

What a beauty!

What a beauty!

Confidentially! From the trainer! This is the
coop of the season. Help yourself! Defeat ignored!

To eight hundred and forty clients (the postage alone cost thirty-five shillings)
this moving appeal went forth.

On the afternoon of the race Educated Evans strolled with confidence to the
end of the Tottenham Court Road to wait for the Star. And when it came he
opened the paper with a quiet smile. He was still smiling, when he read:

Tenpenny, 1.

St. Kats, 2.

Ella Glass, 3.

All probables ran.

"Tenpenny?—never heard of it," he repeated, dazed, and produced his noon
edition. Tenpenny was starred as a doubtful runner.

It was trained by Yardley.

For a moment his emotions almost mastered him.

"That man ought to be warned off," he said, hollowly, and dragged his weary
feet back to the stable yard.

In the morning came a letter dated from Lincoln.

Dear Mr. Evans,—What do you think of my coop?—Yours, H. YARDLEY.

There was a P.S. which ran:

I put a fiver on for you. Your enterprise deserved it.

Evans opened the cheque tenderly and shook his head.

"After all," he said subsequently to the quietly jubilant "Miller," "clients can't
expect to win every time—a Turf adviser is entitled to his own coops."

Tenpenny started at 25 to 1.

IV. — THE SNOOT

SATURDAY night in High Street, Camden Town, and the lights were blazing

and the tram bells clanging dolefully. About each gas-lit stall a group of melancholy sceptics, for the late shopper is not ready to believe all that loud-voiced stall-holders claim for their wares.

At one corner a dense, hypnotised crowd of men listening to a diminutive spellbinder, wearing a crimson and purple racing jacket over a pair of voluminous tight-gartered breeches.

"... did I tell yer people that Benny Eyes was no good for the City an' Suburban 'Andicap? Did I tell yernot to back Sommerband for the Metropolitan? Did I tell yer on this very spot last week, an' I'm willing to pay a thousan' poun' to the Temperance 'Ospital if I didn't, that Proud Alec could fall down an' get up and then win the Great Surrey 'Andicap? Did I ..."

One of the audience edged himself free from the crowd with a sigh, and, so doing, edged himself into a quiet-looking, broad-shouldered man, who was chewing a straw and listening intently.

"Good-evening, Mr. Challoner," said Educated Evans.

"Evening, Evans," said "The Miller." "Picking up a few tips?"

A contemptuous yet pitying smile illuminated the face of the learned Evans.

"From him?" he said. "Do you buy detective stories such as is published in the common press in order to learn policery? No, Mr. Challoner—I was a-standing there as an impartial observer an' a student of the lower classes, their cupidity and credulity bringin' tears to my eyes. I won't knock Holley—I know the man; he takes my tips, and goes and sells 'em to the common people. I don't complain, so long as he don't use my name. But the next time he professes to be sellin' Educated Evans' £5 specials for fourpence I shall take action! "

"The Miller" half turned, and, after a second's hesitation, Educated Evans fell in at his side.

"You don't mind, Mr. Challoner?"

"Not a bit, Evans. If I meet anybody I know, I can tell them afterwards I was taking you to the station." Evans winced.

"Doesn't it do your heart good to see all these people out and about, and every one got his money honestly by working for it?"

Evans sniffed.

"You know your own business best," he said cryptically.

"Perhaps they're not all horny-handed sons of toil," admitted "The Miller," as a familiar face came into his line of vision.

"If my eyes aren't getting wonky, that was old Solly Risk I saw—how long has he been out?"

Educated Evans did not know.

"The habits of the criminal classes," he said, "are Greek to me, as Socrates said to Julius Caesar, the well-known Italian. They go in and they come out, and no man knoweth. Solly is as wide as that famous African river, the Amazon, discovered by Stanley in the year 1743. But you can be too wide, and snouts being what they are—"

"Snouts?" said "The Miller," elaborately puzzled. What is a 'snout'?"

"It's a phrase used by low people, an' I can well understand you've never heard it," said Evans politely.

"If, by that vulgar expression, you mean a man who keeps the police informed on criminal activities," said "The Miller," who knew much better than Evans the title and functions of a police informer, "let me tell you that Solly was arrested on clear evidence. That's a bad cold of yours, Evans?"

For Educated Evans had sniffed again.

"As a turf adviser and England's Premier sportin' authority," said Evans, "I've me time fully occupied without pryin' into other people's business. I've nothing to say against Ginger Vennett—"

"The Miller" stopped and regarded his companion oddly.

"Get it out of your mind that Ginger is a snout," he said. "He's a hard-working young man—more hard-working than his landlord."

"Or his landlady," suggested Evans, and this time his sniff was a terrific one.

"I know nothing about his landlady except that she's good looking, hard-working and too good for Lee," said "The Miller," and Educated Evans laughed hollowly.

"So was Cleopatra, whose famous needle we all admire," he said. "So was Lewd-creature Burgia, the celebrated wife of Henry VIII, who tried to poison him by pourin' boilin' lead in his earhole. So was B. Mary, who murdered the innercent little princes in the far-famed Tower of London in—"

"Don't let us rake up the past," pleaded "The Miller." "Have you seen anything of Lee lately? They tell me he's gone into the harness business again?"

It was a deadly insult he was offering to Educated Evans, and nobody knew this better than "The Miller." He was actually inviting Evans to turn Nose!

"I'm surprised at you, Mr. Challoner," said Evans, genuinely hurt, and "The Miller" laughed and went on.

Everybody liked "Modder " Lee—so called because in his cups he had a habit of describing the battle of Modder River (in which he took part), illustrating the line of attack by the simple method of dipping his finger in the nearest pot

of beer and tracing the course of the Modder on the counter. He was a good friend, a quiet, unassuming citizen, and more than a faithful husband and father to the pretty shrew he had married in a moment of mental aberration.

His one weakness was harness. The sight of a set of harness set his blood on fire and provoked him to unlawful doings. He had taken carts, and had walked away with horses and sold them at the repository under the very noses of their owners, but harness was his speciality.

"It's a hobby," he told his lodger, a tall, good-looking and fiery-headed young man, who did nothing for a living except back a few up and downers and run for a bookmaker. He used to represent a West End firm of commission agents until unprofitable papers appeared in the bunch, and they discovered he was getting quick results over the tape at the Italian Club.

He had been a client of Educated Evans; but, following a dispute as to whether he had or had not received a certain winner (odds to 5s.), Educated Evans had struck his name from the list. And this was a source of great distress to Ginger, for he reposed an unnatural faith in the prescience of the educated man.

"I know more about harness," said Modder Lee, with pride, "than any other man in the business. I can walk down High Street and price every set I meet, and I'll bet that I'm not five shillings out! "

One night the stable of Holloway's Provision Stores was broken into, and a double set of pony harness was missing. Two nights later came an urgent call from Lifton Mews. A set of carriage harness, the property of Lord Lifton himself, had vanished....

"The Miller" made a few independent inquiries, met (by appointment and in a dark little street) a Certain Man, and made a midnight call at 930 Little Stibbington Street.

"The Miller" did not call at Little Stibbington Street to inquire after Lee's health, nor was it a friendly call in the strictest sense of the word. Mrs. Lee was in bed, and answered the door in a skirt, a shawl, an apron, and a look of startled wonder. Later, in the language of the psalmist, she clothed herself with curses as with a garment—for she was, ostensibly, a true wife.

"If I never move from this doorstep, Mr. Miller, and I'm a Gawd-fearing woman that's been attendin' the Presbyterian Church in Stibbington Street off an' on for years, if I die this very minute, my old man hasn't been out of this house for three days with rheumatics antrypus. Without the word of a lie, he can't move from his bed, and you know, Mr. Miller, I've never told you a lie—'ave I? Answer me, yes or no?"

"Let me talk to Modder," said the patient "Miller."

"He's that ill he wouldn't know you, Mr. Miller," she urged, agitatedly (if the

neighbourhood, listening in to a woman, had not heard the agitation appropriate to the moment, she would have been condemned). "I haven't been able to get his boots on for days. He's delyrius, as Gawd's my judge! He don't know anybody, and, what's more, it's catching—measles or something—and you with a wife and family, too."

"I've caught measles before, but I've never caught a wife or family," said "The Miller " good-naturedly.

"He won't know you." The reluctant door opened a little wider. "Mind how you go—the pram's in the passage, and the young man lodger upstairs always leaves his bit of washing to dry...."

Wet and semi-dry shirts flapped in the detective's face as he made his way to the back room, illuminated by a small oil lamp.

Entering, he heard a deep groan. And there was Lee in bed, and on his face a wild and vacant look.

"He won't know you," said Mrs. Lee, performing her toilet with the corner of her apron. In support of her statement Modder opened his mouth and spoke faintly.

"Is that dear mother?" he quavered. "Or is it angels?"

"That's how he's been goin' on for days," said Mrs. Lee, with great satisfaction.

"I 'ear such lovely music," said the tremulous Modder. "It sounds like an 'arp!"

"The Welsh Harp," said "Miller." "Now come out of your trance, Lee, and step round with me to the station—the inspector wants a talk with you."

Mrs. Lee quivered.

"Are you goin' to take a dyin' man from his bed?" she asked bitterly. "Do you want to see yourself showed up in John Bull?"

"God forbid!" said "Miller," and with a dexterous twist of his hand pulled the bedclothes from the invalid. He was fully dressed, even to his boots, and packed between his trousered legs was a new set of harness of incalculable value.

"It's a cop," said Lee, and got up without assistance. "There's a snout somewhere in this neighbourhood," he said, without heat. If I ever find him, I'll tear his liver out. And his lights," he added, as he remembered those important organs.

It was his ninth offence, and Lee, as he knew, was booked for that country house in Devonshire near the River Dart and adjacent to the golf links of Tavistock.

Having vindicated her position as a true wife and faithful helpmate, Mrs.

Modder Lee returned to her honorary status of Respectable Woman. "The Miller" saw her coming out of a picture house with the red-haired lodger, and she tripped up to him coyly, a smile upon her undoubtedly attractive features. "The Miller" always said that if she had had the sense to keep her mouth shut she might have been mistaken for a French lady. He specified the kind of French lady, but the description cannot be given in a book that is read by young people.

"Oh, Mr. Challoner, I do owe you an apology for all the unkind things I said," she said, in her genteel voice; "but a wife must stick up for her husband, or where would the world be, in a manner of speaking?"

"That's all right, Mrs. Lee," smiled "The Miller," and glanced at her escort. I see Vennett is looking after you."

Mrs. Lee launched forth into a rhapsody of praise.

"He's been so good to me and the children," she said. "He's got a bit of money, and he doesn't mind spending it either—you've no idea how kind he's been to me, Mr. Challoner!"

"I can guess," said "The Miller."

"The Miller" was a philosopher. He accepted, in his professional capacity, a situation which sickened him to think about as a man. One morning he met Educated Evans at the corner of Bayham Street, and that learned man had on his face a look of peace and content which did not accord with his record as the World's Premier Turf Adviser. For Educated Evans had sent out three horses to his clients, of which two had finished fourth and fifth, and the third absolutely last, as "The Miller" knew.

"It's no good talking to me, Mr. Challoner," said Educated Evans firmly. "My information was that Rhineland could have run backwards and won. He was badly rode, according to the sportin' descriptions, and my own idea is that the jockey wasn't trying a yard."

"If Statesman doesn't win—" began "The Miller" threateningly, and Evans' face changed.

"You ain't backing Statesman, are you?" he asked.

"I've backed him," said "The Miller," and Educated Evans groaned.

"Then you've lost your money " he said with resignation.

"The Miller" frowned.

"I saw Ginger Vennett and he told me you'd given it to him as the best thing of the century that you had had this from the owner and that you told him to put every farthing he had in the world on it. What's the idea, Evans?"

"The idea is " said Mr. Evans speaking under the stress of great emotion, "that

I want to put that snout where he belongs—in the gutter!"

"The Miller" gasped.

"Do you mean to tell me that you twisted him?"

"I do," said Evans savagely. "He's got all his savings on Statesman, who hasn't done a gallop for a month. If you've been hoisted with his peter, to use a naval expression, I'm sorry, Mr. Challoner; but I've got one for you on Saturday that can't lose unless they put a rope across the course to trip him up."

"The Miller" hurried away to the nearest telephone and called up Mr. Isaacheim.

"It's Challoner speaking, Isaacheim," he said. "That bet you took about Statesman—I think you'd better call it off."

"All right, Mr. Challoner," said the obliging Isaacheim. "I don't think much of it myself: the horse hasn't done a gallop for a month, and Educated Evans told me

"I know what Educated Evans told you," said "The Miller"; "but it's certainly understood that that bet's off."

In the afternoon "The Miller" bought an evening newspaper and turned to the stop press, and the first thing he saw was that Statesman had won

When, in the evening, he discovered that the price was 25 to 1, he went in search of Educated Evans, and found that sad man on the verge of tears.

"I did my best. It's no good arguing the point with me, Mr. Challoner," he said. "I've had Ginger round here congratulating me, but telling me that he'd forgotten to have the bet, and that's about as much as I can stand. The only thing I can tell you is don't back Blazing Heavens in the two-thirty race tomorrow, because I've give it to Ginger, and I've asked him, as a man and a sportsman, not to tell anybody, and to put his shirt on it. Revenge," he went on, "is repugnant to my nature. But a snout's a snout, and if I don't settle Ginger, then I'm an uneducated man—which, of course, I'm not," he added modestly.

Obedient to his instructions, "The Miller " refrained from backing Blazing Heavens, and, under any circumstances, would not have invested a red cent on a horse that had 21 lb. the worse of the weights with Lazy Loo. And Blazing Heavens won. Its price was 100 to 6.

Ginger sent a boy with a ten-shilling note to Educated Evans, and asked for his special for the next day.

Educated Evans sat up far into the night examining and analysing the programme for the following day, and at last discovered a certain runner, that not only had 14 lb. the worse of the weights, but enjoyed this distinction, that

the training reporters of the sporting Press, who usually have something kind to say about every horse, dismissed him with a line : "Ours has no chance in the Tilbury Selling Handicap.

He saw also a paragraph in the following morning's newspaper that Star of Sachem—such was the elegant nomenclature of this equine hair trunk—was being walked to the meeting because his owner did not think that he was worth the railway fare.

Ginger came round to see Evans at his den; and Ginger was wearing a new gold chain and two classy, nearly-diamond rings, a new hat, and a tie of brilliant colours.

"Morning, Evans," he said briskly as he came in. "Thought I'd come and see you. Me and my young lady are going away to the seaside for our good old annual."

"Ha, ha! " said Evans politely.

"You've done me a bit of good, old boy." The snout laid a large, soft hand on Evans' shoulder. "But I want something better. Give me a stone certainty, and I'll put every bean I've got in the world on it, Evans, and you're on to a fiver. Is that fair?"

That's fair," said Educated Evans, his hopes rising.

"If we win, I'm buying a little public-house in Kensington," said Ginger. "My young lady's going to get a divorce from her husband for cruelty and desertion, and carrying on with the girl at the sweet shop; we'll put the two kids in a home, and there you are. So you see, Evans, it's a bit of a responsibility for you."

"It is," said Evans bravely; "and, speaking as one with a wide and vast experience, I appreciate same, and in the language of Lord Wellington at the battle of Waterloo, I shall only do my duty—Star of Sachem," he said slowly, deliberately, and with proper emphasis, "can't be beat in the Tilbury Handicap this afternoon.

"If that horse were poleaxed he could crawl faster than any of the others can run. I've had it from the boy that does him. They've tried him on the time test to be twenty-one pounds better than Ormonde. He's a little faster than The Tetrarch in the first five furlongs, and he stays. If you don't mind, I'll have the five pounds in advance, because I know a reliable bookmaker, and you mightn't get paid."

Mr. Vennett compromised with three pounds ten; and, miraculous as it may appear, Star of Sachem won by three lengths pulling up, and started at 20 to 1.

Educated Evans had his fiver on the third, which had been given to him by a man who knew the proprietor of a public-house where the owner called for his

midday lunch, which was invariably served in a tankard.

It was drawing near to the end of the week when Mrs. Lee called at the police station, and had the good fortune to meet "The Miller" as he was coming out. Her eyes were red, and she was quivering with natural indignation.

"That fellow, Ginger Vennett," she began without preliminary, "has run away with the girl at the sweet shop, and I want him pinched for taking my wedding ring for the purpose. Of all the dirty, lying, falsifying, perjurious hounds in the world, he's the worst! He's a snout, Miller,' and you know it! Didn't he tell me that he gave away Modder? And to think that I've been nourishing a viper, so to speak, in my bosom—if you'll excuse the language; but this is not the time to be mock-modest.

"To think of all I've done for that man, and how I've turned out of my own room for him, and given him the best of food to eat when he was broke, and my poor, dear husband on the moor worrying his heart out about his poor, dear wife and dear innocent children...."

When "The Miller" could get a few words in, those few words were of a nature which left Mrs. Lee in a condition bordering upon hysteria. Educated Evans was not in much better case when "The Miller called on him.

"They say he got twenty-two hundred pounds out of Isaacheim," said Educated Evans in a voice that trembled. "Twenty-two hundred—lovaduck! And I give it to him! And all I got was four pounds, and ten bob of that was snide! I had a wire from him from Margate to-day, and he wants to know what'll win the Brighton Cup.

"And I dare not send it, Mr. Challoner,"

he said earnestly; " I simply dare not send it for fear of the damned thing winning! There's one in the race that will die of heart disease if they go too fast, but if I send it to Ginger it'd walk home alone!"

"Try it," said "The Miller" urgently. "That woman says he's got such faith in you now that he'll do anything you tell him."

So Evans wrote a wire, which ran:

LITTLE SAMBO IN BRIGHTON CUP ABSOLUTELY UNBEATABLE. TAKE NO NOTICE OF THE MARKET. FEAR NOTHING; GO FOR A FORTUNE, AND DON'T FORGET YOUR OLD PAL, EDUCATED EVANS.

At three o'clock, when the runners came up with the result, "Miller" and Evans stood side by side at the corner of Tottenham Court Road—the extent of "The Miller's" jurisdiction. Two boys came at once, and Evans snatched at the nearest and opened the paper with feverish haste —Little Sambo was unplaced!

"Gotcher!" chortled Evans in triumph.

"The Miller" was looking at his newspaper. He was reading The Evening News, Evans had The Star.

"What do you mean—gotcher?" snarled "The Miller," and read: "All probables ran except Little Sambo!"

V. — MR. KIRZ BUYS A £5 SPECIAL

IN an inner waistcoat pocket, buttoned and rebuttoned, Mr. Jan Kirz, kept a five-pound note. Later he grew careless and carried it folded in the top right-hand pocket of that same waistcoat. He would have been wise to have burnt it, as some of the Scottish bookmakers burn their clients' money when the horses they back win at a long price. But he was mean, and the sight of a fiver blazing in the grate would have broken his heart.

Mr. Jan Kirz had, in his time, been American, Dutch, Swiss and Russian. His birthplace was unknown, but it is a fact that during the war he had lived for many months at Alexandra Palace whilst the authorities were disentangling the mystery of his origin. In the end he was released and ordered to report at the nearest police station at regular intervals.

About every other week during that period of strife, it was reported that he had been shot in the Tower. A fishmonger in the High Street, who, by reason of his sporting associations, hobnobbed with swells in the West End, had been shown (by a deputy assistant provost-marshal) a cartridge case with "Kirz" engraved on the outside. So that when Mr. Kirz came back to Camden Town, bearing no signs of having been executed, there was a great deal of disappointment.

Always a wealthy man, the owner of a fine house in Mornington Gardens, he grew in prosperity with the years, and was one of the most consistent, as well as one of the most unsatisfactory, of Educated Evans' clients.

For such was the perversity of fate that he only backed the losers that the learned man sent forth.

"Ah, my poor Effens," said Mr. Kirz sorrowfully, meeting the educated one—Evans had taken up a position at the corner of Mornington Gardens so that he couldn't be missed—"and to t'ink dat you gafe me Golly Eyes und I did not pack it! I t'ought of it fife minutes before der race und den I vergot! Ach! it is terriple hard luck. Und after packing two of your losers!"

Evans was not unnaturally annoyed, for he had an arrangement with Mr. Kirz whereby he drew the odds to a pound on every horse which his patron backed.

"I won't go so far as to say that it's capable negligence—to use a legal

expression—on your part, Mr. Kirz," he said, "but I've got a mouth. And my information costs money. I got this horse from the boy that does him, an' that costs me a pony. I've got me office to keep up an' advertising, and one thing and another—"

"My poor Effens!" sympathised Mr. Kirz—he was a stout man with close-cropped hair, and was subject to asthma—"dis is derrible! But der nex' time you git me one, dere is der odds to two bound!"

So Evans had to be content.

Mr. Kirz was by profession a printer and stationer. His premises were known as "The Old England Cheap Printing Company," and he did a considerable sporting business, though it was rare to find his imprint upon the printing he sent forth. Hamburg and Continental philanthropists, anxious to benefit the British public to an incredible extent, found in Mr. Kirz a willing assistant. He specialised in lottery announcements, snide sweepstakes, and other documents of an illicit nature.

Everybody in Camden Town knew this: the police knew it as well as anybody, and had paid surprise visits to the Old England Printing Works. But by the side of the two machines engaged in this practice was a square opening in the wall, for all the world like a service lift. And at the first hint of trouble, every printed sheet and the forme from which it was struck was cast into the hole and fell to the cellar. And in the cellar was a large furnace which was kept going, winter and summer, to maintain the hot-water supply.

And that is what the police did not know—in fact, nobody knew it except three compositors whose names ended in "ski " (Mr. Kirz printed a Russian newspaper) and three machinemen whose names, curiously enough, concluded with "heim." And so Mr. Kirz grew wealthy, for, in addition to these, he had a valuable side line.

One morning "The Miller" called on Mr. Kirz at his handsome and palatial residence in Mornington Gardens, and, being a plain man, he came to the point at once.

"Mr. Kirz, you are in touch with all the wrong 'uns in London; who is working all this 'phoney' money?"

He used the American term for "counterfeit " because Mr. Kirz had originally come from the United States.

"Phoney money is derrible." Mr. Kirz shook his head gravely. "Dat is one of der most derrible dings dat a mans can do. It striges at der root of gommercial gonfidence—"

"Don't let us discuss high finance," pleaded "The Miller." "Where does it come from? You ought to know; you do more snide printing than any two men, and

all the dirt of the town comes through your hands. The Danish Lottery prospectus was your last. Now come across, Kirz. Who is the gentleman who is turning out fivers numbered B/70 92533?"

"Gott knows," said Mr. Kirz. "I haf offen tought dat Education Evans did somet'ing of dat—he has a quiet place in Bayham Mews, hein? He goes to der racecourse where it is bossible to change—"

"Educated Evans is not that kind of man," said "The Miller" quietly; "it is one of the West End crowd. Is it Podulski? He named, one after another, certain of Mr. Kirz's acquaintances, and at each mention the stout gentleman shook his head.

"If I know, I tell," he said. "I would not soil my hands wit' such wickedness. Und as to der Copenhagen lottery, dat is not my business. I ask you to come and see my plant—any day, any night. It is a scandoulness dat I am evil spoken of."

"The Miller " had not hoped for any great success in this quarter, though he was certain that Kirz, who knew the foreign-speaking underworld, could have given him a hint. Most discreetly, he did not tell Educated Evans that suspicion had been attached to his fair name.

"The Miller" was not alone in his distress of mind. His unhappiness was shared by an Assistant-Commissioner of Police, several Superintendents, and the disorder even spread to the sacred precincts of Whitehall. There never were better forgeries than this batch of five-pound notes which had come into circulation, and had it not been for the fact that they all bore the same number detection would have been impossible.

The paper was perfect, the watermark, with its secret gradations, was copied exactly. The notes felt good and looked good, and had been unloaded, not only on the Continent, but in London itself. There was not a bookmaker who did not take two or three in the course of a week. They had been changed at banks, at railway stations, theatres, even at post offices, where five-pound notes are never tendered without involving the man who offers them in an atmosphere of suspicion.

In such moments of crisis, the Home Secretary sends for the Chief Commissioner of Police and says : "This is very serious," and hints that the responsibility rests with the Chief Commissioner. And that worthy passes the kick down until it reaches quite unimportant detective-constables.

The kick came to Sergeant Challoner with direct force, for the forgeries had appeared more frequently in Camden Town than elsewhere.

That evening he went in search of "The World's Premier Turf Adviser."

The western skies were streaked with eau de nil and the softest pink, and

Educated Evans lounged, with his arms folded on the stone parapet, his chin resting on his elbow, absorbing the glory of the sunset. The Thames or the Albert Embankments drew him as a magnet attracts steel filings. The vague unease which disturbs the soul of genius was soothed to a dreamy languor, the dark and sinister thoughts that assail men of imagination were dissipated by the serenity of the scene.

Day after day, when business was slack or fortune turned a broad back upon his wooings, and the inexplicable failure of his selections had warped and soured his gentle nature, this man of learning turned his steps instinctively to the solace of the steel-grey river and the dun-coloured horizons of London. And here he would stand and dream, and watch with eyes that were comforted, yet did not see the ceaseless traffic that passed to Thames River through the Pool.

When his professional duties allowed, Sergeant Challoner would detach himself from his proper sphere and enjoy a twofold pleasure. For here he could satisfy his aesthetic yearnings and enjoy the society of one who, by reason of his erudition and intimate acquaintance with thoroughbred horses, was respected from Holloway Road to Albany Street. Sometimes the knowledge that he could find Evans in a certain place at a given time was of the greatest value.

Glancing sideways, Educated Evans saw the broad-shouldered figure approaching, but did not move.

"Making up a poem, Evans?" said The Miller," leaning on the parapet by his side.

"No, Mr. Challoner; poetry was never in my line—do you believe in divine guidance, if you'll pardon the expression?"

"The Miller" was startled.

"Yes, I believe in divine guidance. Why?"

For three nights in succession," said Educated Evans dreamily, "there's been a tip in the sky. Look at it! Pink an' green stripes—Solly Joel's got two in the Jubilee, an' the question is, which? Last month, when I was standing on this very spot, I see a black cloud and a white cloud on top of it, an' Lord Derby won the Liverpool Cup. Another time there was nothing but yellor and pink, and up popped Lord Rosebery's horse at Warwick. If that ain't fate, what is?"

"The Miller" was more than startled—he was staggered.

"I can't think of anything more unlikely," he protested, "than that Providence arranges the sunset for the benefit of your dirty-necked punters."

Evans shook his head.

"You never know," he said. "There's things undreamt of in your theosophy, as Horatio Bottomley said—I wonder how the old boy's gettin' on? What a lad! Don't it make you feel solemn, 'Miller,' watchin' the river goin' down, so to speak, to the sea? Flowin' straight away to Russia an' Arabia, an' other foreign places until it forms the famous Gulf Stream that causes the seasons, summer an' winter. Carryin' the ships that go here and there—"

"Have you been drinking " asked "The Miller" suspiciously.

"If I met a glass of beer in the street I shouldn't reckonise it," said Educated Evans, it's so long since I saw one. No, I'm dealin' with hypo-thesis an' conjectures. What won the three-thirty, Mr. Challoner?"

"Coleborn," replied "The Miller," and Evans heaved a deep and happy sigh. That's the second I've given this week," he said almost cheerfully. "I simply didn't dare to wait for the paper. Any price?"

"Five to two," said "The Miller." " I backed it."

A look of peace and calm lay upon the melancholy face of Educated Evans.

"What a beauty! " he murmured. "There'll be sore hearts in the synagogue to-morrer! Five to two. An' sent out on my five pound Job Wire to a hundred and forty-three clients!"

"How many?"

"Forty-three—an' all payers! I'm certain of ten, anyway. Nine, not counting Kirz, an' if he twists me again he's off my list for good!"

"Do you know anything about Kirz?" asked "The Miller," regarding a passing tug with such a fixity of stare that nobody would have guessed that he had any interest in the answer. "What is he?"

Evans sniffed.

"It depends whether he acts honourable," he said cautiously, "as to whether he's an educated American gentleman or a dirty 'Un—if you'll forgive the vulgarity."

"Does a bit of funny printing on the quiet, doesn't he?" asked "The Miller," still absorbed in the tug.

"I don't know anybody's business but me own," said Educated Evans, with emphasis. "As Looy the Fifteenth said to the Black Prince, so called because, bein' a lord, he swore he wouldn't wash his neck till Gibraltar was taken, 'Honny swar,' he says, 'key mally pence'—meanin' that if you don't stick your nose where it's not wanted, you won't get it punched. After which, accordin' to statements in the Press, he never smiled again. That's history."

"Sounds like Comic Cuts to me," said "The Miller." "And it doesn't answer my question. What do you think about him?"

"I'll tell you to-night," said Educated Evans significantly.

In the evening he took his best tie out of the boot-box (wherein were stored his most precious possessions, such as a cigarette end that the Prince of Wales had thrown away and a racing plate worn by the mighty Bart Snowball, Prince of Platers), and hied him to Mornington Gardens. Mr. Kirz was not at home. Nobody knew when he would be home. Nobody knew where he was. Slam! The door closed in his face.

"Common slavery!" said Educated Evans, and proceeded to search the town.

Mr. Kirz was not at the Arts and Graces Club, and he wasn't in the resplendent private saloon of the White Hart, nor yet in the Blue Boar lounge. The dogged searcher turned westward, and by great good fortune overtook Mr. Kirz as he was coming out of the Empire. Mr. Kirz was wearing the garments of festivity. His shirt-front was white and glossy, and on his head was a shining silk hat.

"Ah! My poor Effens!" he began.

"Not so much of that 'poor Evans,' " snarled that exasperated man. "You 'phoned the bet when I was with you, an' unless Isaacheim's dead, you're on!"

Mr. Kirz was embarrassed; there were with him two other gentlemen, and in the background hovered a lady in crimson chiffon velvet, who flashed and sparkled to such an extent that it appeared that she had been rolling down a diamond heap and most of them had stuck.

"To-morrow, to-morrow, my Effens," said Mr. Kirz in a whisper. "I cannot dalk pusiness now."

"You owe me five pound," said Evans loudly. "You've kept me messing and mucking about for weeks, an' you're off my list! Pay me what you owe me, you perishin' 'Un, or I won't leave you!"

"My dear goot man —" began Mr. Kirz, holding up his hands in horror at this unsought publicity.

"An' don't start 'camaradin' ' me, because it's no good. You're worse than Shylock Holmes, you are. Pay—me—what—chew—owe—me!"

Mr. Kirz, his face purple, his hands trembling, searched his pocket.

"Dake it!" he hissed. "An' neffer led me see your ugly face again! As for your dips, dey are rodden!"

Evans retorted long after his client was out of hearing, and would have continued retorting if it had not been for the arrival of a policeman.

"Hop it," said the man in blue.

Evans hopped it.

He was a happy man, and strode with a free step, his head held high, when he came back to his own land. So proud and haughty was he that he would have passed "The Miller" without noticing him.

"Come to earth—you!" said "The Miller." "What's the matter?"

Evans turned back.

"I've got my dues out of that low alien," he said.

"And what were your dues, Evans?"

"Five of the best." Evans produced a crumpled note. "It's gettin' a bit thick when you've got to go down on your knees to ask for your own! " he said. "An' to think that the likes of me fought for the likes of him!"

"I don't remember seeing you on the Somme," said "The Miller" (who was there), "or hobnobbing with you at Toc H."

"I was a special constable," said Evans with dignity, and the reply brought a little needed laughter into "The Miller's" life.

"Let me see that fiver," he asked suddenly, and after a second's hesitation Evan passed it to him.

"There's no other policeman in the world that I'd trust with money," he said offensively.

"The Miller" looked at the note and whistled.

"Dud! " he said, and a cold shiver ran down the spine of Educated Evans.

"You don't mean it?" he quavered.

"I do mean it—look at the number, B/70 92533—it's the number of all the dud notes on the market. Let me keep this—"

"Let you keep it!" snorted Evans. "Am I sufferin' from lack of education and self-respect? I'm going to see this hero Kirz, an' I'm going to tear his pleadin' heart from his pleadin' body!"

"Language, language! " murmured "The Miller."

"I'm goin' to get reparations from Germany," said Evans more calmly, "even if I have to search his pockets, the same as the celebrated Lloyd George said. I'm goin'—"

"You're going to do nothing. Give me that note. You shall have it back."

"I don't want it back," wailed Evans. "I want money! "

It took a great deal of persuasion to induce him to part. He went home eventually, his outlook warped and blackened by the misfortune which had come to him.

Educated Evans lived in two rooms over a stable. The apartment was approached by a flight of stairs from the mews below, and the railed landing produced a slight balcony effect and added a touch of the romantic, which was very pleasing to Evans in his more sentimental moods.

He went in, slammed the door, and went to bed without troubling to light the gas. There was no need, for he invariably hung his clothes on the floor. He had fallen into a troubled sleep and dreamt.

It was about an august personage whom it would be improper to mention. He dreamt that he had been sent for to Buckingham Palace, and had travelled there in a coach of state, throwing his cards out of the window to the cheering throng. At the Palace he had been arrayed in a long robe of pink and green stripes by a bearded gentleman, who had shaken him by the hand and insisted upon Evans calling him Solly, and then he had been ushered into a crimson and purple chamber with a black ceiling and gold-braided carpet, and the august person had bid him kneel. Evans sank gracefully to one knee, and the august person had said:

"Arise, Sir Educated Evans, England's Premier Turf Adviser and Sporting Authority! And don't forget that Daydawn is a pinch for the Friary Nursery."

There was a thunder of applause. All the little princes were knocking their heels against the sideboard. So insistent was the noise that Sir Educated awoke and asked mediævally:

"Who knocks?"

"Open the toor, Mr. Effens. It is Mr. Kirz—it is of der gr-reatest importance."

Evans rose and put on his trousers and shoes and lit the gas.

"Come in," he said, wide awake. "I suppose you've come to act honourable about that dud fiver?"

"Inteet I haf!" replied Mr. Kirz. He was pale and damp, and in his shaking hand he already held a five-pound note.

Evans took it.

"It was a gread mistake," said Mr. Kirz, holding out his hand expectantly.

"I knew I had dat bad one. And when I missed him I say, 'Oh, my Gott! I give it to Edugated Effens!' Where is it?"

Evans shook his head.

"The police have got it," he said.

Mr. Kirz went yellow and staggered against the wall.

"Mind that washandstand," warned Evans, "it's new. Yes, my friend 'The Miller's' got it—Mr. Challoner, that is to say, and a nicer man never drew the

breath of life."

For "The Miller" was standing in the open doorway, and, following the direction of Evans' gaze, Mr. Kirz turned.

"I want you, Kirz," said "The Miller." "Will you step round to the station and have a talk with our inspector?"

"I dit not know dat note was forged," said Mr. Kirz, quivering.

"It wasn't," said "The Miller" tersely. "It was a good one—the one you've been making plates from—I found the plant in your cellar at Mornington Gardens."

One of the principal witnesses for the Crown stepped into the witness-box and kissed the Book affectionately.

"What is your name and profession?" asked the clerk.

"My name's Educated Evans, and I'm commonly known as England's Premier Turf Adviser and the Wizard of North-West Three. I gave Braxted, Eton Boy (what a beauty!), Irish Elegance, Music Hall, Granelly and Sangrail...."

"You nearly got yourself hung," said "The Miller" after the proceedings were adjourned." And, by the way, I'd better give you another fiver for this one we've got—we shall want it as an exhibit. Kirz didn't give you another one, did he?"

"If he did," said the diplomatic Evans, "he owed me another—and more!"

VI. — MICKY THE SHOPPER

EDUCATED EVANS was sitting in Regent's Park one morning, watching the ducks and waiting for inspiration. It was a day in late May, and the hawthorn bushes were frothy with blossoms, pink and white. There was sunshine on the yellow paths and a tang in the air, for the summer was late in coming, and the world was young and fresh, and smelt clean. And the entries for the Royal Hunt Cup were public knowledge.

Educated Evans was pondering the inexplicable workings of fate that had brought to favouritism for the Derby a horse that he was reserving for his £5 outsider, when he heard the steady pacing of feet, and, looking up, saw a broad-shouldered man with a straw between his teeth.

"Good-morning, Mr. Challoner," he said politely, and Detective-Sergeant Challoner sat down by his side.

"I was wondering whether Amboya can give St. Morden ten pound," said Educated Evans.

"I thought you were turning over some crime," said "The Miller." "Amboya is a dog-horse anyway, and if you think you can forestall Yardley, you are booked for a jar."

Educated Evans pursed his lips thoughtfully.

"Mysteries are repugnant to me," he said, "though I've nothing to say against Yardley. The question is: IS this Amboya's journey? There's a lot of betting on the event—the foolish public dashes in without advice from experts, and prognosticators, with the result that Amboya is six to one. But will he or she win? I've got news about a Thing that will come home alone if he runs up to his trial—come—home alone."

"In a false start?" suggested "The Miller."

"In a true start," corrected Evans gravely. "This Thing could get left twenty lengths and stop to bite the starter and then win. It's the pinch of the century. Some of the widest men who go racing have been backin' this Thing for weeks—before the weights come—before the entries was published."

"I'll buy it," said the interested "Miller."

"That's the only way anybody will get it," stated Evans determinedly. "It's cost me many a sleepless night. I've been toutin' the stable an' watching this Thing at exercise, and the way he goes—with his head on his chest!"

"Forgive my ignorance," said "The Miller," "but wouldn't he go as well if his head was at the end of his neck?"

"I'm speakin' metaphor or figure of speech," said Evans, lighting his cigar. It had the appearance of having been picked up after being severely trodden on. "It's Catskin."

"The Miller" made a scoffing noise.

"You've been listening to the newspaper boys," he said scathingly. "Catskin has been a street corner tip for weeks. And it doesn't run."

Educated Evans raised his eyebrows.

"Indeed!" he asked politely. "And who might have told you that?"

"The owner," said "The Miller." "I'll admit that he shouldn't know as much about it as you, but possibly he's had information about Catskin from the boy who does him. And he's under the impression that Catskin has picked up a nail at exercise and is lame."

"He's wrong," said Evans, with great calmness. "That horse will run and win. He's the kind of horse that a nail or two wouldn't worry."

"The trainer told Mr. Oliver," said "The Miller," "that Catskin wouldn't run again this year; and the boy that does him says so, too," he added ingeniously.

This was indeed convincing. The owner might not know, the trainer could be honestly mistaken; but the boy who did Catskin was evidence beyond question.

"That Mulcay is hot!" said Evans, harking back to the trainer. And here he spoke so incontrovertible a truth that The Miller " could not contradict him.

Micky Mulcay came from Ireland, a country which has given us so many fine, sporting, open-hearted and honest trainers.

By this description Micky would not have been known to his intimate friends. If he had trained for the "clever division," or for dubious owners, he would not have lasted on the Turf for ten minutes. But he had the intelligence to accept in his little stable of Parlhampton only the horses of men of the greatest integrity, men whose names were synonymous with honour and straight dealing.

They made an excellent frieze about the wall of the Steward's room when he was called to explain the running of Cabbage Rose one hectic day at Kempton.

The Stewards accepted his explanation—"They ought to have given him somethin' from the poor box," said Educated Evans sardonically—and thereafter none questioned his doings. Micky was a philosopher, who realised that life was short and money hard to come by. Over his desk was hung the motto, "Make hay while the sun shines." And he made it—even when it was raining.

Owners who do not bet heavily like to see their horses win whenever they can. Micky liked to see them win when his wife, his brothers-in-law and a couple of trusted friends had slipped in as many wires to S.P. merchants as the Post Office could deal with. No wise man ever backed a horse from Micky's stable if Micky, his wife, his brothers-in-law and his trusty friends were on the course, however sanguine he was.

Micky was the man who invented the phrase : "Horses are not machines." It was Educated Evans who furnished the historic reply : "It's a good job for all concerned that they're not talking machines.

"That Mulcay is that hot," said Evans again, "he'd keep a room warm. Catskin could doddle it! But is Micky's money down?"

"The Miller" shook his head.

"I saw Lord Claverley at the Midland—I went down on duty, though why I give you intimate information I don't know," he said. "And Micky wouldn't shop his lordship."

The lips of Educated Evans curled in a sneer.

"Micky would shop his own young lady Sunday-school teacher," he said. "Every time he passes the Zoo the snakes stand up and touch their hats to him.

That feller's so underhanded that he can steal with his toes. There's only one man he wouldn't shop, an' that's Micky Mulcay, bless him!"

Educated Evans did not say "bless him."

"I don't like your expressions of hate," said "The Miller," rising to go. "Anyway, Evans, you can count out Catskin."

"If the boy that does him says so, I suppose it's right," said Evans, and, left alone to his own reflections, gave his mind up to the problem of the Derby Stakes.

A few days after the Derby was won, Catskin ran at a Midland meeting and was beaten by a moderate horse. He started at 6 to 4 on. His Hunt Cup price had been 100-6. It drifted to 25-1.

Evans observed the change with no great interest, until one afternoon, when he was strolling down Regent Street in order to be near the Piccadilly Tube when a Lingfield result came up, he saw Mr. Micky Mulcay and his brother-in-law. They were walking at a slow pace past the Piccadilly Hotel, and Evans, who never lost an opportunity of acquiring information, crossed the road and came very slowly past them, his eyes fixed on the ground, his mind apparently occupied with weighty matters.

And as he passed, he heard Micky say in his inimitable brogue

"Sure; try Hereford, but be certain, Dennis, that the post office is open on Wednesday. Some of these country offices—"

That is all Evans heard, and his heart beat thumpingly. Hereford.... post office... Wednesday!

Instinctively he filled in the gaps. They were backing Catskin S.P.! His soul grew jubilant at the thought of all that this knowledge meant to him.

And then Evans was seized with a sudden resolve to do something he had never done before in his life. That evening he left for Steynebridge, five miles from which historic market town was situated the training quarters of Mr. Mick Mulcay.

It is sad to relate that Educated Evans had never before seen a training ground, if we except Newmarket and Epsom. And the ways of stables were as much of a mystery to him as the breakfast tastes of Tut-ankh-Amen. Fortunately, he secured a bed at the inn which was nearest the stable more fortunately still, Catskin was the one horse in all the wide world that Educated Evans could have recognised without colours and number-cloth.

It was a bay with three white legs. But for this fact Evans might never have made the journey.

He was up at daybreak, and tramped across the downs to where, if local report

be accurate, Mr. Mulcay exercised his string. And sure enough, soon after five, there appeared in the distance a long train of sheeted horses, moving at a hand canter.

When they had gone past him there came, at a terrific pace, three horses, the first of whom was undoubtedly Catskin. The little boy who rode the horse was trying to pull him up, and after he had passed Evans by a hundred yards he succeeded, and turning back to meet Mr. Mulcay himself, very red in the face, and galloping at full speed on his hack.

"What the hell do you mean by galloping the horse when I told you to canter?" he demanded furiously, and his ready whip fell on the small boy's shoulder.

Evans watched, interested, for the boy was the stable apprentice, Lakes, who usually rode Mr. Mulcay's horses when they were not trying as hard as they ought. He was still interested when Mulcay turned round and came trotting towards him.

"Who are ye?" he said violently. "And what are ye doing here? Get off my ground."

"If you'll allow me to argue the matter with you," said Educated Evans with dignity. "I—"

Smack.

The whip fell on Educated Evans' shoulders, and for a moment he was paralysed with wrath and astonishment. And then, with a roar, he leapt at his attacker. Mr. Mulcay might be a very dishonest man, but he was an excellent horseman, and the whip fell again, this time on a more tender portion of Mr. Evans' anatomy.

"I'll get you warned off for this!" snorted Evans. "I'll learn you, you—"

It would be unwise to record faithfully all that Educated Evans said on the spur of the moment and in the heat of his annoyance.

"I don't allow anybody to come touting my horses," said Mr. Mulcay with that sublime air of majesty which sits so easily upon an Irish trainer, and is even more appropriate in an Australian. "You get off and stay off!"

Evans very wisely obeyed. All the way back to town he was engaged in the humiliation of Micky Mulcay. In his imagination he saw the tyrant begging his bread on the street, and passed him by without so much as a tip for the next day's seller. But he carried with him another memory than his own embarrassment. He remembered the malignity on the face of Master Lakes, and the wild fury of that small boy struck a sympathetic chord in Educated Evans' nature.

He took the earliest opportunity of seeking out "The Miller."

"That horse is going to win, Mr. Challoner," he said, "and it's up to me to spoil the blighter's market! When he saw me he nearly dropped dead! I'm sorry he didn't. He's got that horse all ready, and he's going to shop his pals for the Royal Hunt Cup as sure as my name is Educated Evans, the World's Premier Turf Adviser!"

"You should have kept away from Steynebridge," said "The Miller" wisely. "None of these trainers like to have their horses touted."

"I'll tout him all right," hissed Educated Evans, and when he was really annoyed, which was seldom, he was very annoyed. He would spend money—what was a pound here or there?—to bring his enemy to his knees.

He had, not so much a friend as a dependent, a man who had seen better days, an elderly, crimson-faced man, who was known as "Old Joe." As he had not been convicted, it never transpired what his other name might be. He smoked shag in a short clay pipe, helped potmen and lived on beer. Nobody had ever seen him eat anything else.

An Old Joe is attached to almost every public-house in Great Britain. They are the pensioners of the publican, a mysterious body of red-faced, greasy-collared guardian angels, who stand with their backs to the wall and brood on the days when carmen drove horses and horse feed was part of the refreshment that every pub supplied.

Educated Evans sent for "Joe, and he came uneasily from his self-imposed task of supporting the walls of the "White Hart."

"Me go down to Hereford " he gasped, shocked. "Why, I've never been out of London in my life, Mr. Evans."

"You'll go out now," said Evans firmly, and you'll do what I tell you."

He explained.

"Send me a wire to the paddock at Ascot the moment you see the number of telegrams put in by that perisher's brother-in-law. They won't be handed in till a quarter of an hour before the race. If you're in the post office then, you can't miss spottin' 'em. All I want you to do is to wire me the number of telegrams this here Mulcay's brother-in-law sends away."

Old Joe took a great deal of convincing, but, on learning that there were several public-houses in Hereford, and that West-country beer was of surprisingly good quality, he left. The journey was going to cost Educated Evans £4, but what was money?

The principal patron of Mulcay's stable was Lord Claverley. He was a man who plunged very occasionally and he plunged only on the advice of his trainer. If there was one thing of which Lord Claverley was certain before the Royal Hunt Cup, it was that Catskin would not win. He not only told his

friends, he told his servants, he told his chauffeur; he whispered the words in the ears of illustrious princes and potentates. Catskin gradually drifted out in the preliminary market until it was either 40 to 1 or 33 to 1, according to the temperament and honesty of the layer.

Educated Evans very seldom went to Ascot. When he did, he invariably gave the paddock a miss; but on this occasion he decided that the circumstances warranted an extra outlay, and, with a groan, he paid the terrific sum demanded by the Ascot executive, and gained for himself a small chocolate shield, which, pinned to the lapel of his coat, admitted him either to Tattersall's or the paddock.

"The Miller," in a top hat and smart morning coat, saw the unhappy figure leaning against the rails, and approached him.

"You're not in the Royal Enclosure this year, Evans?" he said.

"No, Mr. Challoner," said Evans, without annoyance. "My invitation didn't come. I wouldn't have known you," he added with respectful admiration. "You look like a gentleman."

"If I didn't think that insult was wholly unintentional," said "The Miller," good-humouredly, "I should be offended. Well, have you backed your Catskin?"

"For every penny in the wide, wide world," said Evans, emphatically. "I've sent it out to three thousand two hundred and forty clients, and I've been sittin' up two nights doing it. This Catskin is not only a pinch, it's a squinch! It's the greatest certainty there's been since that hurdle race at Hurst Park—three runners and one trying. You know the one I mean."

"The Miller" shook his head.

"None of the stable are backing him," he said.

"The stable!" sneered Educated Evans. "I could tell you something that'd make your hair stand up. I could make your eyeballs roll! Mr. Miller, I'm going to see Lord Claverley."

"The Miller" stared at him.

"You'll get yourself pinched," he warned; but this threat had no effect upon Evans.

He knew Lord Claverley by sight, having seen his portrait in the illustrated newspapers, and when the saddling bell was ringing for the Hunt Cup, he saw his lordship walking alone, and seized the opportunity.

"I beg your pardon, m'lord," he said, touching his hat. "You've probably heard of me. I'm Educated Evans, the World's Prime Minister of Tippetery."

Lord Claverley looked at him, and his eyes twinkled.

"Oh, you are, are you?" he said. "I'm afraid I can give you no tips, my man."

"I don't want any, me lord." Evan's voice was solemn and convincing. "I want to give you one. Back Catskin!"

For a moment Lord Claverley looked at him as though he were undecided as to whether he should call a policeman and have him thrown on or across the spikes to the course, or whether he should be greatly amused.

"You're wrong, my friend," he said, quietly. "Catskin isn't fancied. That's all I can tell you."

He was turning away, when Evans urgently caught his arm.

"Me lord," he said agitatedly, "don't you take any notice of what they say about Catskin; it'll win Mulcay would double-cross the ghost of his grandmother! I tell you it'll win, and it will win!"

Even Lord Claverley was impressed.

"You're altogether wrong, Mr.—er—Evans," he said. "But I'm afraid I can't discuss the matter with you."

Evans wormed a way through the elegantly dressed ladies at the rails to watch the field parade. Amboya was a hot favourite; Catskin, with the stable apprentice, Lakes, in the saddle, was at any price. The mere presence of an apprentice up, instead of the fashionable jockey who usually rode for the stable, was sufficient to put off 999 out of every thousand punters. But Evans was not put off. That stalwart man invested his last farthing at the longest price he could wring from the perspiring magnates of Tattersall's.

It was from the reserved lawn that he saw the race, and no very detailed description is necessary. Catskin was the first to appear above the crest of the hill; he stayed in front throughout, and he won in a hack canter by six lengths. Amboya was second.

Educated Evans trod on air as he rushed back to the paddock to see the winner led in. Three faces he saw. Mulcay's was green; he walked like a man in a dream. Lord Claverley's face was like thunder. Only on the cherubic countenance of the jockey was there a look of happiness amounting almost to ecstasy.

It was not a popular victory. That it was one of Mulcay's famous "shops" no man on the course doubted. Lord Claverley did not speak to Mulcay, but a look passed between them which made the trainer squirm. And then his lordship caught sight of Evans.

"You're the man I want," he said, and led the shabby figure away from the crowd. "Now tell me all you know about this. Why were you so certain this horse would win?" he asked.

He had to listen, with such patience as he could command, whilst Educated Evans recited his own virtues and the record of his past successes, and then he heard all that that tipster had to tell.

"You say he's backed this horse 'away'—from Hereford? Are you sure?"

"I can tell you in half an hour, me lord," said Evans importantly. "My agent at Hereford—I've got agents all over the shop and touts in every stable—"

"Well, what about him?" asked Lord Claverley impatiently, for he was a very angry man.

Half an hour later a bewildered Evans placed in the hands of his lordship a telegram he had received, and it ran:

THREE HUNDRED TELEGRAMS HANDED IN, ALL BACKING AMBOYA....

"Of course, it may be as you say, Mr. Challoner," said Educated Evans philosophically, "and it's very possible that Lakes did shop the stable by winning when he oughtn't to have been trying. I won't say it was from Lakes that I had my information if I did, you wouldn't believe me."

"I wouldn't," said "The Miller," "because you'd be lying."

"It's very likely," admitted Educated Evans. "Perhaps Lakes was gettin' even with him, the same as I was. And to think that that perishing horse-sweater was backing another one all the time! That's dishonesty if you like. Downright thievery, I call it! But fifty to one!

What a beauty! And all out of my own deductions. From information seen with my own eyes."

"Micky Mulcay has lost a lot of money," said "The Miller," who also had sources of information, a little more reliable, however, than those which were tapped by his companion.

"I wish he's lost it all," said Educated Evans viciously. "All except eighteenpence—you can get a couple of yards of good rope for eighteenpence anywhere."

VII. — THE DREAMER

IT is a popular delusion that certain clubs in London have a monopoly of Turf transactions. "There will be a 'call over' at the Omph Club," says a sporting paper; "To-night the Cambridgeshire card will be called over at the Zimp Club," says another. There is no mention of the Cheese Club in Camden Town, and you might imagine from the character of its membership that if there was

any betting there it was so insignificant as to be negligible.

Yet this is hardly the case, for the Cheese was quite an important factor in the sporting world. There were certain big layers in the north whose agents never went south of the Euston Road; other layers of fame who made the Cheese their headquarters and kept their agents at the more pretentious clubs.

For the Cheese had come to be a vital clearing house, and even those great bookmakers, Notting and Elgin, did not disdain the Cheese when they had something particularly hot to lay off. You could get a "monkey" on a horse up to the "off " at the Cheese, and on big race days find men in the club who would take 4,000 to 500 in one bet.

And yet the membership was as mixed as any club in the world. Educated Evans was a member; Billy Labock, who laid £20,000 to £20 the back-end double, was a member: the Hon. Claud Messinger was a member—as hot a member as ever drew the breath of life.

"It seems to me," said Educated Evans despondently, "that such an article as domestic happiness and felicitous connubiality belongs to the Greek Calendar—in other words, non est, if you understand the language, Mr. Challoner? And yet Camden Town is full of happy couples."

Detective-Sergeant Challoner nibbled his straw thoughtfully.

"To be happily married, I admit," continued the educated man, "you've not only got to be as broad-minded as a parson at a raffle, but you've also got to have the patience of Job—an' talking of Jobs, they're workin' one at Gatwick this afternoon—the boy that does the horse says he could fall down an' get up an' then win."

"Not Toofick?" "The Miller" was instantly alert.

"It is Toofick—he's the biggest certainty we've had in racin' since Tishy was beat. Help yourself, an' don't forget that I've got a mouth."

"You were using it to discuss matrimony—who are you thinking about?"

Educated Evans fished the stump of a cigar from his overcoat pocket and lit a match on the leg of his ill-fitting pants.

"Women may have the vote, but they'll never do that," he said. "It's a gift."

"If you know anybody in Camden Town who is happily married," said "The Miller" deliberately, "I should like to know his or her name."

"I could name hundreds," said Evans, and his melancholy face grew more dismal at the thought, "thousands even. I'm not talking about lovey-dovey happiness. When I see a couple goin' on as if they're not married, they usually ain't. I'm talking from the depths of my experience and education about people that the poets write about. Two minds with but a single horse, two hearts that

bet as one—Tennyson or Kiplin', I'm not sure which. I haven't much time for poetry, what with interviewin' owners an' jockeys—"

"Let us keep to facts," interrupted "The Miller." "Who is happily married amongst your extensive circle of victims, past and present?"

Educated Evans uttered a note of impatience.

"Would you say Mr. Joe Bean is happily married?" he challenged.

"The Miller" considered.

"His wife never strikes me as being hilariously pleased with life," he said.

"I don't know whether she drinks or whether she doesn't," said Educated Evans, "and it's not my business whether she gets hilarious—which every educated man knows means 'soused.' But she's happy. She told me the other day, when Joe was ill, that if he popped off she'd never lift her head again."

"Because she'd forgotten to pay Joe's insurance money," said the practical "Miller," chewing thoughtfully at the straw in his mouth. "She told me that! Said she'd never forgive herself, and that she hadn't been so careless since her first. Who else?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Hallam Corbin." Educated Evans pronounced the name with self-conscious emphasis. "You wouldn't know 'em, Mr. Challoner; they're out of our class—got a house in Ampthill Square. I know 'em because they're reliable clients of mine. Keep their own servant an' thinkin' of buying a motor-car. Class."

"The Miller" looked at his companion with a speculative eye.

"I know them too," he said shortly.

"Happily married, are they? Well, well."

Mr. and Mrs. Hallam Corbin had swum into the ken of Educated Evans as a result of a publicity campaign undertaken by him. This consisted of a four-line foot-of-column announcement in all the leading sporting dailies:

WELL-KNOWN Commissioner, in touch with leading stables, would like to hear from a few reliable sportsmen of unimpeachable integrity. Only educated people need apply.

In consequence he had heard from very unexpected persons, amongst whom was Mr. Hallam Corbin. Miraculously enough, the horse which that well-known commissioner, Educated Evans, despatched to such reliable sportsmen of unimpeachable integrity won in a trot at 6 to 1, and as the odds were promised to 10s. by some two hundred "unimpeachables," he made a profit of £60. He ought to have made £600, but punters aren't honest—not even as honest as tipsters.

Amongst those who acted honourable (Mr. Evans' own expression) were the Hallam Corbins. They sent him a fiver, which was more than his due, and asked him to lunch at 375 Ampthill Square, which was a distinction to Evans beyond his wildest dreams. For Ampthill Square is more than respectable—it is class. People who live in Ampthill Square are Rich, have Areas, and have as much as two quarts of milk by the first delivery. Some—indeed many—have motor-cars, wear evening dress, even when they are in their own houses and are not expecting visitors.

Educated Evans had known Ampthill Square from his childhood. He had walked through it on summer Sunday evenings with and without a young lady—little did he think that he'd ever be asked in by the front door—and to dinner! Even though the dinner was called lunch.

Mr. Corbin was of stout build and had livid pouches under his eyes. Mrs. Hallam Corbin was stoutish and girlish. She was the sort of lady who was all good spirits and go. You would never imagine she was more than fifty-four; at the same time—and here Mrs. Corbin would have been profoundly annoyed had she known—you would not have thought she was any less.

Educated Evans dressed himself with unusual care. For this occasion he removed the sheaf of newspapers which permanently occupied his overcoat pocket; he wore his pink and grey tie, and a stand-up collar which cut his throat every time he turned his head.

A trim and good-looking maid opened the door to him, and he was ushered into a drawing-room of surprising splendour. A mirror which must have been worth several pounds, a carpet of surpassing luxury, gilt arm-chairs and settees, large and valuable palms standing on pedestals that could not have been bought out of a five-pun note, rich velvet curtains, and on the mantelpiece a confusing gold clock, the hands of which pointed to half-past six (morning or evening, Evans did not know), and surmounted by two ladies, who had evidently just come straight from the bath and had mislaid their camisoles, reclining back to back. All these things Educated Evans took in with a glance.

Then Mr. Corbin came in, both hands outstretched.

"My dear Evans," he said, "I'm glad you have come. My dear wife will be glad."

"It's very kind of you," said Evans, coughing, self-conscious of the pink and grey tie on which the dazed eyes of Mr. Corbin were resting. "I must say I'm not much of a society man, though naturally, mixin', as I do, with high-class trainers an' jockeys an' owners an' what not, I've seen a bit of life. I always say," said the learned man, "that class is all right in its way, but give me education an' understandin'. A lot of people that go about wearin' high collars

and top hats haven't got the slightest idea about physical geography, etymology, syntax, or prosody, whilst if you get 'em on the subject of history their mind's a blank, if you'll pardon the expression."

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Corbin, who evidently took no interest in the precious gift of education. "Here is my dear wife."

His "dear wife " floated in at that moment and fell upon Educated Evans to an alarming extent.

Contrary to the statements that had been made about the fabulous wealth of the Corbins, the lunch was not served on gold plates, nor were there twelve courses. Mr. Corbin ate a chop; Mrs. Corbin toyed with a cutlet; Evans, who did not feel that it was polite to eat in public, nibbled an occasional pea.

When lunch was over the mystery of the invitation was solved.

"We've been discussing you," said Mr. Corbin soberly, as he pushed back his plate and handed his cigar-case to Evans. As you probably know, Mr. Evans, my dear wife is clairvoyant."

Evans nodded politely.

"Though I'm not a family man," he said, "I'm glad. I think everybody ought to have one or two children—"

"By 'clairvoyant,' " explained Mr. Corbin hastily, "I mean she is gifted with second sight—she has visions of the unseen world."

"Goodness gracious!" said Evans, impressed.

"She has the power," said Mr. Hallam Corbin gravely, "of projecting her spirit to the infinite and of roaming at will upon the planes of ethereal nothingness

"Good Gawd! " said Evans, and shifted his chair a little farther away from this alarming lady.

She is in daily communication with Napoleon, Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great—you have heard of these famous people?"

A faint smile lighted the gloom of Educated Evans.

"History is my weakness," he admitted. "Give me a history book an' I'll read for

hours. Solly Joel had a horse called Napoleon, but naturally I'm too educated to make any mistake about your meaning. You're referrin' to the celebrated French King that said 'Up, guards, and at 'em!' in the days of the far-famed French revolution

"Exactly," replied Mr. Corbin, a little dazed. "Exactly. Now, my love "—he turned to his wife—"perhaps you will tell our friend?"

He excused himself and went out of the room. Mrs. Hallam Corbin's smile was sweet, her manner most gracious.

"I'm sure you'll think we're very mercenary, dear Mr. Evans," she said, and before Educated Evans could decide in his mind what was the correct thing to say, she went on, "but my dear husband thinks that he ought to make money out of my dreams."

"Your dreams, ma'am?"

She nodded.

"I dream winners," she said simply. Twice, often three times a week, I dream winners. I see numbers hoisted in the frame : I see colours flash majestically past the post I hear voices saying 'So-and-so has won.' "

"Dear, dear! said Evans, wondering why, in these circumstances, Mr. Corbin subscribed to his five-pound special. As though she read his thoughts, she continued:

"I suppose you are asking yourself why we seek your clever advice? Mr. Evans, it is because we could not believe our good fortune, and we simply had to have our dreams confirmed by the cleverest Turf adviser of the day!"

Evans coughed.

At this point Mr. Corbin returned to take up the narrative, and became severely practical and friendly.

"Now, Evans, my boy, what is the best way of exploiting my dear wife's gift? She had an extraordinary dream last night—saw a horse win at Gatwick. A horse called Too Thick. We've searched the programme, but no such horse is entered."

"Toofick!" said Educated Evans, trembling with excitement. "And he's a certainty! That horse could fall down and get up and then win!"

"Indeed!" said Mr. Corbin. "How stupid of me! And she dreamt that Lazy Loo was second and Mugpoint was third. That is the amazing thing about her dreams. Now the point is, Mr. Evans, my dear wife doesn't wish to go into the tipping business at all. In a woman it would be unseemly."

"Exactly," said Evans. "I quite understand'."

In truth he understood nothing.

"What I have been considering is whether one could not back the horses that my dear wife dreams about—back for large and—er—generous sums. The question is, where?"

"The Cheese," said Evans promptly.

Mr. Corbin knit his brows, puzzled.

"The Cheese—you don't mean the Cheshire Cheese?" he asked.

"Never heard of the Cheese?" demanded Evans, almost shocked. "Why, you can see it from your back winder! "

Whereupon Mr. Corbin insisted upon taking him to a classy room at the back of the house, and here, through a gap between two other houses, the decorously red-curtained "library" of the Cheese was plainly visible. It was called "the Library" because it contained four tape machines, a bulletin board and a nearly complete set of Ruff's Guide to the Turf.

"Well, well!" said the astonished Hallam Corbin. "I had no idea that that was a betting club. Well, well! Is your eyesight good, Mr. Evans?"

For a moment Evans was taken aback.

"My eyes," he said emphatically, "could see two jockeys winkin' at one another at the seven-furlong post, I'm that keen-sighted."

"Splendid," murmured the other, and led the way back to the dining-room. Mrs. Hallam Corbin had disappeared.

"My wife always lies down after lunch. It is then that her best dreams occur. Which is very awkward, Mr. Evans, because she seldom dreams a winner until within a few minutes of the race. It must be the transmission of thought—a psychic phenomenon which has puzzled the greatest experts of the day. Now if I only had a friend at the—what did you call the club?"

"The Cheese," said Evans.

"If I only had a friend there to whom I could signal the horse of her dream Why, we could make a fortune "

Evans thought.

"It could be done," he said; "but how?"

"Let me consider," said Mr. Corbin; and Evans remained silent whilst the mighty brain of Mr. Hallam Corbin revolved. "I have it," he said at last. "I will have a number of large cards painted in numbers. I will give you every morning a programme, and against each horse I will place a number. If we can see the club, the club can see us—though, of course, my dear Mr. Evans, nobody but you must know the secret of my dear wife's clairvoyance. When you have seen the number you will back the horse and you shall have ten per cent. of the winnings."

Educated Evans left Ampthill Square with a thick roll of twenty pound notes and a feeling that he also was walking on those ethereal planes which were as familiar to Mrs. Corbin as High Street, Camden Town.

His first act was to get a newspaper, and, reading the result of the "job" race, he gasped. Too Thick won, Lazy Loo was second, Mugpoint third! Exactly as

the smiling lady had dreamt! And she couldn't have known, because she had been with him all the time.

Even bookmakers who knew Educated Evans and respected him as a source of profit, hesitated to lay him £200 to £80 Lamma a couple of days later until Evans produced the money. The bet was hardly laid before the tape clicked the "off." And Lamma won. The next day he had £300 to £90 Kinky. It won.

On the following Tuesday, after making a few insignificant losses ("You'd better not back winners every day," said the practical Mr. Corbin, "or they won't lay you."), he took £200 to £50 Kellerman in a seller at Hurst, and there was time for the layer to 'phone away part of his bet before the "off " was signalled.

"They tell me you're backing them for yourself, Evans," said "The Miller," meeting him that afternoon after racing, "and that you're making a lot of money."

"Not a lot," said Evans complacently. Just enough to keep the celebrated wolf from the fold. Money means nothing to me," he said. I never forgot the famous King Morpheous. Everything he laid his mitts on turned into gold and silver, owin' to which he got filled teeth, and everybody thought he was American."

Detective-Sergeant Challoner pulled meditatively at his pipe.

"Where are you getting your information, Evans?" he asked softly. "From the angels?"

"From the boy that does 'em," said Evans soberly.

He had an interview with Mr. Hallam Corbin that evening to pay over some money, and Mr. Corbin's manner was short, and not especially sweet. Nor was his manner towards Mrs. Corbin exactly in accordance with Evans' idea of domestic serenity.

"I told you to put fifty pounds on the horse Mrs. Corbin dreamt," he said, "and you say you only put a pound on. And I've got information that you took two hundred to fifty from Bill Oxford—don't you start twisting me, Evans! "

"Twist you?" said the outraged Evans. "However can you think of such a thing! Why, if I went misbehavin' towards Mrs. Corbin's dreams I should expect to be struck by one of them Clara's Voyages—"

"It's like this, Mr. Evans," began Mrs. Corbin sharply; "our expenses are very heavy—"

"You shut up!" snarled her husband; and it began to dawn on Educated Evans that they were not as happily married as they might be.

"Don't do that again, Evans," said Mr. Corbin, paying over the ten pounds which represented the agent's commission.

The next day when Evans offered to take £150 to £30 Hazam Pasha in the three o'clock race, his bet was refused.

"I don't know how you beat the tape, Evans," said the principal layer not unkindly, "but you do. And I can't afford to lay you."

Evans left the club soon after and found "The Miller" waiting on the doorstep.

"What is Number Six on your list?" asked "The Miller."

Evans professed astonishment.

"Now take the advice of an old soldier," said "The Miller." "Leave the Corbins to stew in their own juice. I've been watching the back of their house, and I saw the number put up at the window—six. And you saw it too. It isn't the tape, because they beat the tape."

He shaded his eyes and looked up at the roof, and saw what he had not seen before—a strand of wire between two chimney-pots. Behind the Corbins' house (which they rented furnished) was a mews, and in Mr. Corbin's coach-house stood a large and antiquated motor-car, the blinds of which were invariably drawn when it passed through the gates of any racecourse that was honoured by its presence. And on the top was something that looked like a wire hanger.

Sergeant Challoner inspected the car that night with the aid of a key that opened the garage. The interior was still warm from the heat which valve lamps create. The seat had been removed and certain instruments and batteries completely filled the interior.

Mr. Corbin had finished dinner when "The Miller" called.

"I'm summoning you for being in possession of a wireless transmission set without a licence from the G.P.O.," said "The Miller." "I could pinch you for conspiracy to defraud, but I won't. You and your gang have been sending wireless results from the course, and you've made a fortune."

Mr. Corbin glared at the officer.

"I'd have made a fortune if that rat-faced-tipster hadn't twisted me! " he snapped.

"There's no honesty in this world," sighed Evans when he heard the news, "Fancy him a-making me a party to a low-down swindle! It's disgusting!"

"You can ease your conscience by sending your ill-gotten gains to the Temperance Hospital," suggested "The Miller."

"I wouldn't be such a hypocrite," said Educated Evans.

VIII. — THE GIFT HORSE

MEN may acquire fame in a night, but reputation is a thing of slower growth. Mr. Evans did not earn the coveted prefix of "Educated" in a day, or a week, or yet a year. The sum of his learning totalled through the years, and behind his title lay a whole mine of information delved by him and distributed gratis to the world.

Once there had appeared on the stage of a London music-hall a human encyclopaedia who answered instantly and accurately any question that was flung at him by members of the audience. Thus, if you had any doubt as to the exact date of the Great Fire of London or the name of the horse that won the Derby in 1875, you secured admission to the music-hall at which this oracle appeared and squeaked or roared your question, to have whatever doubts you might possess immediately dissipated.

Educated Evans had never appeared in the glare of the footlights, but standing in a graceful attitude at the bar of the White Hart, his legs crossed easily, one elbow resting on the zinc-covered counter, he had from time to time settled bets, delivered historical orations and corrected misapprehensions.

Furthermore, he had framed letters to obdurate creditors, indited warning epistles to offensive neighbours (not his neighbours but the neighbours of those who had sought his services) and had prepared defences to be read from the dock. These latter invariably began: "My lord and gentlemen of the jury, I stand before you a poor and hard-working man who has been led astray by evil companions."

These defences often brought tears to Evans' eyes as he wrote them, a sob to the throat of the unfortunate prisoner who read them, though the effect upon judge and jury was, alas! of a negligible character.

It was the day after such a defence had been read in the dock of the Old Bailey by one "Simmy" Joiner that Evans, wandering disconsolately along the Hampstead Road, his mind entirely occupied by the contemplation of his affluence, came face to face with Inspector Pine.

"Good-morning, Evans," said the old inspector gently, and Mr. Evans woke from his reverie with a start.

"Good-morning, sir," he said rapidly. "I was just thinking whether I would come down to the Brotherhood meeting to-night. I'm beginnin' to feel the need, if I might use that expression, of a little religion."

Inspector Pine shook his head sadly. He was, as has already been explained, a Christian man, and took a leading part in certain social movements assigned to bring spirituality into the lives and souls of small punters.

"I fear we shall not see you, Evans," he said "to-morrow is our gift meeting."

The predatory instincts of Evans were awakened.

"I'll come, sir," he said respectfully, "though it won't be for the gift. I'm willin' to take anything you give me, because it's in a good cause—"

"You are mistaken, Evans," said the inspector gently. "At to-morrow's meeting we will receive gifts. Money or articles that can be sold for the good of our great racecourse mission. We will accept even a portion of your ill-gotten gains."

The light of interest died out of the learned man's eyes.

"I'll have a look round, sir," he said; "bein' hard up, I can't subscribe as I'd like to."

The inspector frowned.

"A liar is worse than a thief! " he said sternly. " I happen to know that you have made a great deal of money from your disgusting tipping business! "

Educated Evans hastened to explain.

"It's like this, Mr. Pine—" he began, but the old man interrupted him.

"Evans," he said sombrely, "there are two things that will bring a man to ruin—bad company and horses! The time will come, Evans, when you'll hate the sight of a horse."

" Personally, I prefer motor-cars, Mr. Pine," said Evans, anxious to propitiate.

"The sight of a horse will drive you to despair. You'll shudder when you see one. To-day you wallow in your ill-gotten gains, but the pinch will come!"

"It's come, Mr. Pine," said Educated Evans eagerly; "Light Bella for the two o'clock race to-morrow—help yourself! It's been kept for this—not a yard at Birmingham! Get your winter's keep, Mr. Pine!"

But he spoke to the winds. Inspector Pine had stalked majestically on his way.

Sergeant Challoner, C.I.D., heard from his superior's own lips and with every evidence of sympathy the story of Evans' obduracy.

"Disgusting, sir," he agreed, shaking his head. "What did you say was the name of the horse that was winning to-morrow?"

"I didn't trouble to remember," said the inspector suspiciously. "Why do you ask, sergeant?"

"Curiosity, sir," said the sergeant.

Mr. Pine scratched his chin reflectively.

"What a splendid thing it would be," he mused, "if one could fight this gambling curse with money wrung from the very people who encourage and

thrive upon it, eh, sergeant?"

"The Miller" thought so too.

"What a—er—tour de force—I'm not quite sure whether or not that is the phrase—it would be if one could act upon the information of this rascal and—er—"

"Exactly, sir." "The Miller's" face was blank. It was exceedingly difficult not to laugh.

Just as soon as he could get away he went in search of Educated Evans, and ran him to earth on the doorstep of the "White Hart's " saloon bar.

"Not only have you demoralised the proletariat of Camden Town," complained "The Miller," "but you have corrupted the police service—the inspector wants your next £5 special."

Educated Evans beamed.

"But I think it is only fair to warn you that if your snip doesn't come off he'll get you ten years," said "The Miller," and Mr. Evans was not unnaturally annoyed.

"That's against the lore," he said testily; "it is laid down in Magnum Charta that you cannot lose if you can't win. There's historical instances, such as Oliver Cromwell—"

"Never mind about Oliver Cromwell," said "The Miller"; "what is this snip of yours for to-morrow?"

"Light Bella," answered Evans promptly: "this is the squinch of the season. Don't back it till the last minute, or you'll spoil the price. This is the biggest racin' certainty since Eager beat Royal Flash. This horse could fall on his back an' wag himself home with his tail! He's been tried twenty-one pound better than Captain Cuttle—help yourself!"

"Is it a he or a she?" asked the puzzled "Miller."

"I'm indifferent," said Evans.

Racing was at Hurst Park on the following day, and Educated Evans was a passenger by a comparatively early train. He invariably travelled first class, for Mr. Evans was partial to "toney" society. And, anyway, nobody worries about examining tickets on busy race-days, though of late the inspectors have shown a marked aversion to allowing passengers through the barriers on the strength of an ante-dated platform ticket.

The carriage filled up quickly, and Evans, esconced in a corner seat (as usual) with an early evening paper widely opened to hide him from the view of passing officials, found himself in goodly company. There was Lecti, the jockey, and Gorf, the trainer, and a couple of men whom he took to be

Stewards of the Jockey Club; they spoke so definitely and so authoritatively. (They were, in fact, racing journalists, but Evans could not be expected to know this.)

Seated opposite Evans was a stout, military-looking gentleman, who fixed the tipster with a cold and unfriendly stare.

"Nice morning, sir," said Evans briskly. He had a happy knack of making people feel at home.

"Is it?" said the other icily.

"Very interesting race that two o'clock selling," said Evans, "and to anybody without information an inscrutable problem. 'Appily, I know the boy that does a certain candidate—"

"If you talk to me I shall hand you over to the police! " said the cold, military-looking man in his chilliest military manner.

Educated Evans shrugged his shoulders. Even education is no protection against vulgar abuse.

The day was in many ways a memorable one. He had brought with him forty-eight pun ten, and it was his intention to take five hundred to forty about Light Bella. Two sets of circumstances prevented his carrying his plan into execution. The first was the fact that Light Bella opened at 7 to 4 the second was his tardy arrival in Tattersall's owing to a heavy shower of rain that drove him into cover. Light Bella was 5 to 4 when he plunged into the human whirlpool that surrounded the only bookmaker who was willing to lay that price, and he had taken 50 to 40 when the bell signalled the start.

He climbed to the stand and had the mortification of seeing Light Bella beaten a head for third place.

"Not a yard!" hissed Evans, and all within range of his voice agreed with him—except a few who had backed the winner.

There was one miserable satisfaction, and that, in his own inimitable language, was that he had not "blued the parcel."

He strolled, oblivious to the falling rain, towards the paddock and came to the sale ring just as the steaming winner was knocked down to its owner.

"I will now sell Fairy Feet, by Gnome, out of Pedometer," said the big auctioneer in the rostrum, and Evans recognised the voice. It was the military-looking gentleman who had treated him with such discourtesy. Evans edged into the crowd with a sneer upon his expressive face.

"Who'll start me at a hundred?" demanded the auctioneer. " Fifty? Well, ten—?"

"Ten," said a voice, and the bidding for the weedy-looking animal that had

entered the ring rose slowly to 25 guineas.

"Twenty-five?" said the auctioneer, looking straight at Evans; and then to the surprise of that learned man he nodded.

Evans, who was nothing if he was not a gentleman, nodded back.

"Thirty," said the auctioneer. Somebody bid thirty-five, and the man in the rostrum nodded to Evans.

"I saw you the first time," said Evans, and nodded back.

"Forty," said the auctioneer, and a few seconds later the hammer fell. "What's your name, sir?"

Evans nearly dropped. The auctioneer was speaking to him.

"Educated Evans," he answered, and heard like a man in a dream.

"Sold to Mr. Ted K. Evans."

Evans often debated to himself at a later date what he should have done. He might have run away. He might have disclaimed any responsibility; he might have done so many of the things that were afterwards suggested to him.

Instead, numbly, like a man under the influence of an anæsthetic, he paid £42.

And the worst was to come. He had scarcely paid when his elbow was nudged by a small boy. Attached to the small boy by a leading rein was Fairy Feet.

"Who's your trainer, sir?"

Evan's jaw dropped. Only for an instant did he lose his self-possession, and then he took the rein.

"Don't ask questions," he said, and led the leggy animal away.

The paddock was emptying, for the rain was pelting down.

Evans looked round wildly and then moved towards the gate.

"Excuse me, sir," said the new owner

to the gateman, "do you happen to know where I can leave this horse?"

The staggered gateman shook his head.

"Where do you train?" he asked.

Camden Town," said Evans vaguely.

"Why don't you take him home?" suggested the gatekeeper; and it seemed a very good idea.

The glow of ownership descended upon Evans as he trudged up the muddy road toward Hampton Court Station. It wasn't such a bad idea after all. In his mind's eye he cast new advertisements.

EDUCATED EVANS!

Racehorse Owner and the World's Premier

Sporting Prophet.

Owner of Fairy Feet, Winner of the Steward's Cup.

He stopped dead in the middle of the road, and, turning, surveyed his purchase. There was a look of infinite sadness in the eyes of Fairy Feet. It almost seemed as if the intelligent animal realised the amazing absurdity of Evans supposing that it could win anything.

"Come on," said Evans, and the docile creature followed him to the railway station. There was no need for the lead rein. Fairy Feet would have followed Evans anywhere except to a racecourse, for Fairy Feet hated racecourses and was as firm an opponent to the practice of horse-racing as Inspector Pine.

"I want to get this horse to Camden Town," said Evans. The station-master looked dubious.

"We haven't a spare horse box, but we'll get one down to-morrow," he said. "Why don't you walk him home?"

The idea had occurred to Evans, and, as if to encourage him, the rain had ceased to fall. He was passing over Kingston Bridge when the rain began again. He was footsore, weary, sick at heart. Searching the examples of human suffering which his education presented, he could recall no more horrible experience.

At eight o'clock that night a bent and weary figure shuffled into Bayham Mews, followed in a sprightly fashion by a light-hearted thoroughbred racehorse.

Fortunately, young Harry Tilder, who does the horses of Jones and Bonner, the cash butchers, was on duty, and Evans fell upon his neck.

"Got a racehorse, Harry," he gasped. "Paid a thousan' pounds for him! Can you put him up an' give him a bit of meat or something till the morning?"

Young Harry looked at Fairy Feet in the waning light, then he looked at Evans.

"Can't do it, Mr. Evans," he said. "I don't want to be mixed up in this."

"But he's mine!" wailed Evans. "I bought him for a thou—for forty guineas."

"You said a thousand just now," said Young Harry. "It can't be done. Take him round to Bellamy's."

But Mr. Bellamy, the horse-dealer, would have none of it.

"I've kept honest all my life," he said, "and I'm not going to change my plans. I don't want to say anything against you, Evans, but I know that you've been in trouble before."

Inspector Pine had often attempted to persuade "The Miller" to attend the meetings of the Brotherhood, but hitherto his efforts had failed. Sergeant Challoner had a sense of humour, and a sense of humour is an effective bar to hypocrisy. But he had evaded his obligations so often that he decided on this occasion to keep a promise—often made and as often broken.

The Brotherhood held their meeting in a little tin hall in a turning off Great College Street. Here were planned the programmes for the various great race meetings. Here, pale and long-haired young men laboriously painted banners with holy words and bore them forth amidst the unnoticing throng, and very proud were the bearers of banners that they were not as other men.

Inspector Pine was in the chair, and, after the meeting had been solemnly opened, he presented the accounts of the year.

"There is, my dear friends," he said, "a heavy deficit. Perhaps some friends who are outside our fold will come to contribute their mite"—he looked down at "The Miller," and that uncomfortable man went red and felt in his pocket—"but in the main we must depend upon our own efforts. It may not be gold or silver nor precious stones that our brethren will care to offer. But whatever you contribute will be welcome."

The gifts in cash were few; in kind, many. A red-faced brother brought to the platform a steel fender amidst loud applause. Another member of the Brotherhood carried up a sack of potatoes. One fell at "The Miller's " feet, and he picked it up. It was not of the finest quality.

Yet another member of the audience brought a pot of jam—almost every one brought something.

"The Miller," remembering a spasmodic gramophone that he had and which only went when it felt so inclined, regretted that he had not brought it with him. At last the final gift had been brought up, and Inspector Pine rose and beamed upon the congregation.

"I am glad to say" he began, when the door at the end of the hall was flung open violently and a man staggered in.

He was drenched from head to foot, and one lock of hair fell saucily over his long nose. Behind him, wet and shining and surveying the hall and its occupants with interested and intelligent eyes, was a lank quadruped.

"Ladies and gents," said the bedraggled stranger, "I'm well known to most of you, bein' Educated Evans, the famous and celebrated Turf adviser, an' I've brought a little gift."

A profound silence met this remarkable announcement.

"There's them that say you can get tired of horses," said Educated Evans pushing back his lock, "and they're right This here horse is the celebrated and

far-famed Fairy Feet, sired by the Tetrarch and dam'd by everybody that's ever had anything to do with him—he's yours!"

So saying, he dropped the leading rein and slipped from the room, slamming the door behind him.

Fairy Feet looked round, and then with a neigh of anguish as she realised the base desertion, lifted her hind legs and kicked the frail door into splinters.

Running out into the street "The Miller" saw Educated Evans flying down the street with a dark horse hot in pursuit. Probably Fairy Feet had never run quite so fast as she did that night.

IX. — STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

IT is generally believed in Somers Town that a policeman would "shop" his own aunt for the sake of getting his name before the magistrate, but this is not the case. A policeman, being intensely human, has what the Portuguese call a "repugnancio" to certain jobs.

Sergeant Challoner, C.I.D., was called into the office of his superior and entrusted with a piece of work which revolted his soul—namely the raiding of Issy Bodd's flourishing ready-money starting-price business, which he carried on at his house off Ossulton Street.

Complaints had been made by a virtuous neighbour.

"Tibby Cole," said "The Miller." "He's annoyed because Issy caught him trying to work a ramp on him, and one of Issy's minders gave him a thick ear."

"My dear Sergeant!" said the shocked Inspector Pine. "There is really no reason why you should employ the language of Somers Town."

"The Miller" went forth to his work in no great heart. He was too good a servant of the law to send a warning, and he came upon the defenceless Issy at a most compromising moment.

"I'm very sorry, Bodd," he said, as he effected the arrest. "I'll take all the slips you've got—you can get bail, I suppose "

"You couldn't have come on a better day," said the philosophical Mr. Bodd. "All Camden Town's gone mad over Sanaband, and as I never lay off a penny, it looked as if I was going through it."

Sanaband, as all the world knows, started a hot favourite for the Northumberland Plate and finished last but one, and everybody said: "Where are the Stewards?"

Thousands of people who had had sums varying from a shilling to a hundred

pounds on the favourite, gnashed their teeth and tore their hair, and said things about Mr. Yardley, the owner and trainer of Sanaband, which were both libellous and uncharitable.

Bill Yardley himself saw the finish with a whimsical smile, and, going down to meet the disgraced animal, patted his neck and called him gentle names, and people who saw this exhibition of humanity nodded significantly.

"Not a yard," they said, and wondered why he was not warned off.

Yardley in truth had backed Sanaband to win a fortune, but he had spent his life amongst horses and backing them. He knew that if Sanaband had been human, that intelligent animal would have said:

"I'm extremely sorry, Mr. Yardley, but I've not been feeling up to the mark this past day or two—you probably noticed that I did not eat up as well as usual this morning. I've a bit of a headache and a little pain in my tummy, but I shall be all right in a day or two."

And knowing this, Yardley neither kicked the horse in the stomach nor did he tell his friends that Sanaband was an incorrigible rogue. He casually mentioned that he had fifteen hundred pounds on the horse, and nobody believed him. Nobody ever believes trainers.

"What's the matter with you, you old devil?" asked Mr. Yardley, as he rubbed the horse's nose, and that was the beginning and end of his recriminations.

In far-off Camden Town the news of Sanaband's downfall brought sorrow and wrath to the heart of the World's Premier Turf Adviser and prophet, and the situation was in no sense eased by the gentle irony of Detective-Sergeant Challoner, whose other name was "The Miller."

"I do not expect miracles," said "The Miller," "and I admit that it was an act of lunacy on my part to imagine that you could give two winners in a month."

"Rub it in, Mr. Challoner," said Educated Evans bitterly. "How was I to know that the trainer was thievin'? Am I like the celebrated Mejusa, got eyes all over my head?"

"Medusa is the lady you are groping after," said "The Miller," "and she had snakes."

"Ain't snakes got eyes?" demanded Educated Evans. "No, Mr. Challoner, I got this information about Sanaband from the boy that does him. This horse was tried to give two stone an' ten lengths to Elbow Grease. My information was, that he could fall down—"

"And get up, and win," finished the patient Mr. Challoner. "Well, he didn't fall down! The only thing that fell down was your reputation as a tipster."

Educated Evans closed his eyes with an expression of pain.

"Turf Adviser," he murmured.

The whole subject was painful to Evans. Just as he had re-established confidence in the minds and hearts of his clientèle, at the very moment when the sceptics of the Midland Goods Yard at Somers Town were again on friendly terms with him, this set-back had come. And it had come at a moment when the finances of Educated Evans were not at their best.

"It's a long worm that's got no turning," said Educated Evans despondently, "an' there's no doubt whatever that my amazing and remarkable run of electrifyin' successes is for the moment eclipsed."

"The Miller" sniffed.

"They never electrified me," he said.

"Two winners in ten shots—"

"And five seconds that would have won if they'd had jockeys up," reproached Evans. "No, Mr. Challoner, my education has taught me not to start kicking against the bricks, as the saying goes. I'm due now for a long batch of losers. If Sanaband had won—but it didn't. And I ought to have known it. That there thieving Yardley's keepin' the horse for Gatwick."

The sneers that come the way of an unsuccessful Turf adviser are many. There is an ingratitude about the racing public which both sickened and annoyed him. Men who had fawned on him now addressed him with bitterness. Hackett, the greengrocer, who only a short week ago had acclaimed him great amongst the prophets, reviled him as he passed.

"You put me off the winner," he said, sourly. "I'd have backed Oil Cake—made up my mind to back it, and you lumbered me on to a rotten five to four chance that finished down the course! It's people like you that ruin racing. The Stewards ought to warn you off."

"I'm sorry to hear you say that, Mr. Hackett," said Educated Evans mildly. "I've got a beauty for you on Saturday—"

Mr. Hackett's cynical laughter followed him.

A few yards farther on he met Bill Gold, an occasional client and a 'bus conductor.

"I wouldn't mind, Evans," he said, sadly, "only I've got a wife and eight children, and this was my biggest bet of the year. How I'm going to pay the rent this week Gawd knows! You ought to be more careful, you really ought!"

It was a curious circumstance, frequently observed by Educated Evans, that his clients invariably had their maximum wager on his failures, and either forgot to back his winners or had ventured the merest trifle on them. In this they unconsciously imitated their betters, for it is one of the phenomena of

racing that few ever confess to their winnings, but wail their losses to the high heavens.

Misfortune, however, has its compensations, and as he was passing through Stebbington Street he met a fellow sufferer.

"Good-morning, Mr. Bodd," said Evans respectfully—he was invariably respectful to the bookmaking class. "I suppose you had a good race yesterday—that Sanabad wasn't trying."

Mr. Issy Bodd curled up his lip.

"Oh, yes, I had a good day," he said sardonically. "Three hours at the station before my bail come, and a fine of fifty and costs—and six hundred slips destroyed and every one of 'em backing Sanaband.

I've had a crowd round the house all the morning getting their money back on the grounds that if you can't win you can't lose. The public knows too much about the rules to suit me. It's this popular education, Evans, and novel reading that does it. If I hadn't paid out, I'd have lost my trade, though how I'm going on now, heaven only knows."

He looked at Evans with a speculative eye, listening in silence as the educated man recited his own tale of woe.

"That's right," he said, as Educated Evans paused to take breath. "You've struck a streak of bad luck. I don't suppose you'll give another winner for years, and I don't suppose I'll have another winning week for months."

They stared at one another, two men weighted with the misery of the world.

"It would be different if I was in funds," said Evans. "If I could afford to send out a classy circular to all clients, old an' new, I'd get 'em back. It's printing and advertising that does it, Mr. Bodd. My educated way of writing gets 'em eating out of my hand, to use a Shakespearean expression. I'm what you might term the Napoleon Bonaparte of Turf Advisers. It's brains that does it. I'm sort of second-sighted, always have been. I had to wear spectacles for it when I was a boy."

Mr. Bodd bit his lip thoughtfully. He was a business man and a quick thinker.

"A few pounds one way or the other doesn't make any difference to me," he said slowly. "You've got to put it down before you pick it up. What about a share in my book, Evans?"

Educated Evans could scarcely believe his ears.

"Not a big share—say three shillings in the pound," said Bodd, still speaking deliberately. "Your luck's out, you won't be giving winners for a long time—I've studied luck and I know. Most of your Somers Town mugs bet with me. That last big winner you sent out gave me a jolt. And it doesn't matter much

whether you give winners or losers—you can't hurt yourself. A little punter is born every minute. And I'd put up the money for all the advertising."

The sinister meaning of Mr. Issy Bodd was clear, and Educated Evans felt himself go pale.

"Get out a real classy circular," Issy went on, "with pictures. There's nothing like pictures to pull in the punter. Get a picture of a horse talking. It's an idea I had a long time ago. Have the words 'Straight from the Horse's Mouth!' Silly? Don't you believe it! Half the people who back horses haven't seen one—especially since motor-cars came in. Me and Harry Jolbing have got most of the street business in Camden Town, and Harry's had a bad time, too."

"Do you mean that I'm to send out losers?" asked Evans, in a hollow voice.

"One or two," said the other calmly. "Anyway, you'll send losers. It's worth money to you. If you do the thing well, and with your education you ought—we ought to get a big win."

Evans shook his head.

"I tried to give losers to a fellow once," he said, "and they all won."

"You couldn't give a winner if you tried," said Mr. Bodd decidedly. "I know what luck is."

That evening Educated Evans sat in his library, preparing the circular. He was the tenant of one room over a garage. When he slept, it was a bedroom; when he ate, it was a dining-hall; but when he wrote, it was library and study.

And thus he wrote:

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

That sounds ridiculous to anybody who doesn't
know

EDUCATED EVANS

(The World's Premier Turf Prophet).

But with Educated Evans that phrase has a meaning of the highest importance and intelligence!

It means that he's got the goods!

It means that he's in touch with secret information!

It means that his touts and army of investigators
have unravelled a great Turf Mystery!

What a beauty!

What a beauty!

What a beauty!

THE BIGGEST JOB OF THE YEAR!

Get back all your losses! Double your winnings!

Put down your maximum!

There was more in similar strain.

Mr. Issy Bodd helped. He got a friend of his to draw a horse's head. It was a noble head. The mouth of the fiery steed was opened, and from its interior came the words:

"I shall win at 10 to 1!"

The misgivings of Educated Evans were allayed at the sight of this masterpiece.

To some two thousand five hundred people this circular was despatched. Most of the names were supplied by Messrs. Bodd and Jolbing, and the words "Put down your maximum" were heavily underlined.

Despite the exceptionally low price at which the peerless information was offered, the response was not encouraging.

"It doesn't matter," said Mr. Bodd. You can send them the horse, whether they pay or not."

The race chosen was the Stockwell Selling Plate at Sandown, and the selection of the horse occupied the greater part of the day before the race. A committee of three, consisting of Educated Evans, Mr. Bodd, and Mr. Jolbing, a prosperous young man who wore diamond rings everywhere except on his thumbs.

"Polecat?" suggested Evans. "That horse couldn't win a race if all the others died."

Mr. Bodd shook his head.

"He was a job at Pontefract last month," he said. "I wouldn't be surprised if he popped up. What about Coal Tar?"

"Not him!" said Mr. Jolbing firmly. "He's just the kind of horse that might do it. He's being kept for something. What about Daffodil? He finished last at Windsor."

Educated Evans dissented.

"He got left," he said. "Daffodil's in a clever stable, and Mahon rides, and they like winning at Sandown."

"What about Harebell?" suggested Mr. Jolbing. "She's never finished in the first three."

"She's been leading Mopo in his work, and Mopo won at Newcastle," said Mr. Bodd. "That horse could win if they'd let her. No, I think the best one for you, Evans, is Grizzle. He's been coughing."

Evans smiled cynically.

"The boy that does him told me that Grizzle is fit and fancied. In fact, Grizzle is the very horse I should have tipped for the race."

The entry was not a large one, and there remained only five possibles, and two of those were certain to start first or second favourites.

"What about Beady Eye?" asked Mr. Bodd.

"It doesn't run," said Evans, "and there's no sense in sending a non-runner."

"Gardener?" suggested Mr. Jolbing, laying a glittering finger on the entry. "That's your horse, Evans."

But both Educated Evans and Mr. Bodd protested simultaneously.

"Gardener belongs to Yardley, and you know what he is," said Evans reproachfully. "I wouldn't be surprised to see Gardener win. The only horse that I can give is Henroost. He couldn't win! "

Here they were in complete agreement, and the committee broke up, leaving Evans

to do the dirty.

That evening, with all the envelopes stamped and addressed and ready for despatch, Educated Evans strolled out for a little fresh air and exercise. At the corner of Bayham Street he met Mr. Hackett, the eminent greengrocer. Mr. Hackett was in wine, for it was early-closing day and he had spent the afternoon playing an unprofitable game of nap at his club.

"Oh! there you are, you perishing robber!" he sneered, planting himself in Evan's path. "You ruiner of businesses! Educated! Why, you haven't got the education of a rabbit!"

Had his insults taken any other form, Educated Evans might have passed him by in contempt. But this slur upon his erudition roused all that was most violent in his usually amiable character.

"You're a nice one to talk about education!" he sneered, in return. "I could talk you blind on any subject—history, geography, or mathematical arithmetic!"

"A man who sells lies—" began Mr. Hackett insolently.

"It's better than selling caterpillars disguised as cabbages and rotten apples," said Evans heatedly. "It's better than selling short-weight potatoes to the poor and suffering—"

And then, before he could realise what was happening, Mr. Hackett, all his

professional sentiments outraged, hit him violently on the nose.

In three minutes the most interesting fight that had been seen in Camden Town for many years was in progress. And then a strong hand gripped Evans by the collar, and through his damaged optic he saw the silver buttons of London's constabulary.

"The Miller" was in the station when Evans and Mr. Hackett were charged with disorderly conduct, to which, in Mr. Hackett's case, was added the stigma of intoxication; and, in his friendly way, the detective went forth in search of bail. It was impossible, however, to discover the necessary guarantee for Evan's good behaviour. He could neither approach Jolbing nor Bodd; and when "The Miller" returned with the information Evans was frantic.

"I've got some work to do to-night, Mr. Challoner," he wailed. "Three thousand tips to send out! "

"The Miller" hesitated. He was going off duty, and he had a genuine affection for the little tipster.

"What are you sending out, Evans?"

"Henroost, for that seller to-morrow. It ought to go before eleven o'clock," moaned Evans. "Couldn't you find anybody? Couldn't you stand bail for me, Mr. Challoner? I'd never let you down."

"The Miller" shook his head.

"An official is not allowed to go bail," he said. "But I'll see what I can do for you, Evans. I suppose they've not taken the key of your expensive flat from you?"

"The key's under the mat, just outside the door," said Evans eagerly. "Henroost—don't forget, Mr. Challoner. If you get somebody to do it for me, I'll never be grateful enough."

At half-past eleven the following morning Educated Evans addressed a special plea from the dock with such good effect that the magistrate instantly discharged him. He did not see "The Miller" who was engaged in investigating a petty larceny; but, hurrying home, he was overjoyed to discover that the table, which he had left littered with envelopes, was now tidy.

He had spent a very restless night, for the occupant of the adjoining cell was an elderly Italian with a passion for opera, who had sung the score of La Boheme from the opening chorus to finale throughout the night.

Educated Evans lay down on his bed and was asleep instantly. The sun was setting when he rose, and after a hasty toilet, realising his responsibility, he went out to discover the result of the great race.

A glance at the result column in the Star filled him with satisfaction and pride,

though he had at the back of his mind an uneasy feeling of disloyalty to his clientèle. The race had been won by Coal Tar, which had started at ten to one, and Henroost was unplaced. Thus fortified, he strolled forth to meet Mr. Bodd, and came upon him in Great College Street and the face of Mr. Bodd was darkened with passion.

"You dirty little twister!" he hissed. "Didn't you say you'd send out Hen-roost? You cheap little blighter! Didn't I put up the money for your something so-and-so circulars? Didn't I pay for the unprintable stamps that you put upon the unmentionable envelopes that I bought with my own money?"

"Here, what's the idea?" began Evans.

"What's the idea!" roared Mr. Bodd, growing purple in the face. "You sent them out Coal Tar! It won at ten to one, and every one of your so-and-so clients had his so-and-so maximum—don't let Jolbing see you, he'll murder you!"

Dazed and confounded, Evans bent his steps to the police station, and met "The Miller" as he descended the steps.

"Excuse me, Mr. Challoner," he faltered. "Didn't you send Henroost?"

"The Miller" shook his head.

"No, I sent Coal Tar. Just after I left the station I met one of our inspectors from Scotland Yard, who had had the tip from the owner. Evans, your luck's turned!"

"As a tipster—yes," said Evans, and weeks passed before "The Miller" quite understood what he meant.

X. — THE GOODS

IT is an axiom that the best-laid plan of mice and man frequently falls to the earth with a dull sickening thud. So far as man is concerned, the truism holds, though as to the disappointments and setbacks of mice we lack exact information.

Mr. Charles Wagon was not a great trainer in the sense that he filled the eye of the racing public. He was master of a small stable in Wiltshire, and had, as his principal patron, a Kentish Town publican (who was also a sinner).

He won few races, but when he did win, the horse was the goods. It had twenty-one pounds in hand and nitroglycerine in its stomach, for nitro is a great stimulant of sluggish racehorses, and under its influence a high-spirited thoroughbred does almost everything except explode.

Mr. Wagon came up to town to lunch with his principal patron, and they sat together in the gilded hall of an Oxford Street restaurant, and the patron, a gentleman who had not seen his feet for years, except in photographs, was inclined to be fulsome.

"I'll say this of you, Wagon, that you're a perfect wonder! Your stable costs me twelve hundred pun' a year, but it's worth it. Now, what about this Little Buttercup?"

"He's as fit as hands can make him, and you can put your money down fearlessly," said Mr. Wagon.

He was justified in his optimism. Little Buttercup had run six times and had never finished nearer than fourth, because Mr. Wagon was taking no risks. When a horse of his won, there were no "ifs " or "buts " about it. There was never an uneasy moment when it looked as though something was coming up on the inside to beat it. He preferred wet days or hot days, when a perspiring flank did not show or was excusable, and, above all, he preferred a six-furlong seller.

"Nobody knows anything about it," he said. "My head lad's safe, and I've got such a fat-headed lot of boys that if they saw a winner they wouldn't know it."

The patron fingered his empurpled cheek. The thing is," he said, "that this horse mustn't be amongst the arrivals or the probables. If my pals see that he's arrived they'll want to know all about it. If he's not in the list I can always say I didn't know it was running—see what I mean?"

Mr. Wagon nodded.

"I'll borrow a motor-box and send it over in the morning," he said. "Don't worry about that."

"And there mustn't be a penny for him on the course," said the publican (and sinner). "I can get everything on away. He'll win all right?"

Again Mr. Wagon nodded.

"Don't fret yourself about that," he said "give him a livener just before the race, and he'll dance home."

"There's another thing," said the publican (whose name was, most inappropriately, Holyman), "keep them tipsters and touts off your ground. There's a fellow called Educated Evans round our way who's always nosing round for tips. It's people like that who ruin horse racing. The Jockey Club ought to do something."

"Trust me," said Mr. Wagon.

In the next few days the training establishment which housed that equine giant, Little Buttercup, was the home of mystery. Little Buttercup was ridden

by his trainer, and the horse was galloped at unlikely hours.

Mr. Holyman need not have feared Educated Evans. That worthy man was beyond asking for tips. His luck was out, and it was all the more annoying, even maddening, that, passing the fish shop of Jiggs and Hackett, he had been moved to enter and to offer the sceptical Mr. Jiggs certain advice which had materialised. Evans had sent a loser to his dwindling list of clients, and by word of mouth had given a winner to a notorious twister—and this at a moment when he was reduced to choosing horses by the process of adding up all the motor-car numbers he saw and selecting a horse that came to that particular number in the published list.

"7341," muttered Evans, as a 'bus whizzed past. Seven and three's eleven, and four's fifteen, and one is sixteen. Sixteen is one and six, and one and six is seven."

Then he would look down a handicap and choose the most likely seven.

He despised himself, but something had to be done. The fickle goddess of fortune must be lured into the right way. Men whose luck is dead out do things that they would not care to confess even to their intimates. Educated Evans spent whole days adding up the numbers of cabs and cars and buses, and on a certain morning was obsessed by the numeral 9.

Nine was the very last number he saw at night—the first that greeted his eyes when he came out to breakfast one sunny morning. Indeed, it was the 19th of May, and Educated Evans, realising this remarkable coincidence, chose the ninth horse in the Braxted Selling Welter at Brimingham.

That morning Detective-Sergeant Challoner, C.I.D., strolled into Mr. Stubbins' coffee-shop off Ossulton Street, and a dozen people nodded politely as he sat down and ordered a cup of tea and a teacake.

"Good-morning," said "The Miller," genially, to his vis-à-vis. "Nice morning, Mr. Clew."

"Very nice, Mr. Challoner," said his vis-à-vis. "It's a treat to be alive."

"It is indeed," agreed "The Miller." "I saw you last night in the High Street, didn't I?"

"Very likely," said Mr. Clew, who was a large man in the greengrocery. "I usually go out with the missus for a breather."

"Thought I saw Young Harry with you?" suggested the detective, as he sipped his tea. "How is he getting on?"

"I haven't seen him for months," replied Mr. Clew emphatically.

"Where is he living now?" asked "The Miller," in a careless, conversational tone. Now everybody, or nearly everybody, in the shop knew that Young Harry

was "in trouble." He had also been in the coffee shop half an hour before the detective's arrival, but, yielding to the earnest advice of friends, had gone elsewhere.

"Don't know what he's doing now," said Mr. Clew. "Living in the south of London, I understand. He's got a job."

"I want to get him another," said "The Miller" truthfully, for Young Harry had broken and entered enclosed premises, to wit the stables of Grudger Bros., the eminent bakers, and had feloniously removed therefrom six horse blankets, a set of harness, two motor lamps, an inner tube, and a tin of petrol, the property of the aforesaid Grudger Bros. And he was wanted. And, what was more important, would be caught, for Young Harry was

like hundreds of other Young Harrys, he "hid" himself by going to stay with his brother-in-law, whose address the police knew.

The little thief is the best friend of the police. He catches himself.

"The Miller" did not come to the coffee shop for information. He came for Young

Harry. He knew very well that every friend of Young Harry would be suffering from myopia and loss of memory, and that if he had stood before them that morning they would not have seen him, and if he had told them just where he would be at a certain time they would have forgotten the fact.

"The Miller" was sipping his second cup of tea when Educated Evans drifted in. and on his sour face was a mask of gloom.

"Young Harry—no, Mr. Challoner, I haven't seen him since the day the young princess married the highly-respected Viscount Lazzles."

(Educated Evans had a few minutes before passed Young Harry at the corner of Stebbington Street.)

He took the place vacated by Mr. Clew and ordered one hard-boiled egg and a cup of coffee.

"How is the trade, Evans?" asked "The Miller."

Educated Evans raised his eyes from the business of egg chipping.

"It would be good if people acted honourable," he said bitterly: "but acting honourable is a lost art. When the celebrated owner of Franklin an' Vilna and other four-legged quadrupeds—which is a foreign expression, meaning horse—dug up Come-and-Have-One, the highly renowned Egyptian, he was delving, so to speak, into the past, as it were, when sportsmen was sportsmen and acted honourable, paying the odds to five shillings or ten shillings, accordin' to the class of information."

"I doubt if the tipsters flourished in the days of the Pharaohs," said "The

Miller," biting off the end of a cigar.

"I bet they did," said Evans confidently. "There's always been fellows that told what was going to happen. What about Moses? Him that his mother found in the bulrushes and kidded it belonged to her aunt? What about Aaron, who went and predicted that his sons should cover Tattersall's like the grass on the field? What about—"

"Who amongst your ragged-seated clientèle hasn't been acting honourably?" asked "The Miller."

"Jiggs, the fishmonger, for one. I went specially in to see him yesterday, just as he was takin' the appendix out of a sturgeon, and I said: 'Mr. Jiggs, you've got to have your maximum on Flying Sam,' I said. 'This horse has been tried to beat Harritown at ten pounds.' "

"And did he stick his knife into you? asked "The Miller."

Evans shrugged his shoulders rapidly.

"Flying Sam won at 'eights,' " he said simply. "Information v. Guesswork. Knowledge v. Picking 'em out with a pin. And what did I get for it? A cod's head—it cost me eightpence to disinfect my room afterwards. It shatters your confidence. And I've got a Fortune in my pocket! I've got a horse for a race tomorrow that can only lose if the race is abandoned. This horse is 'The Goods.' I've been waiting for him all the season. They tried him last Saturday after all the touts had gone home, and they brought Golden Myth from Newmarket, and the horse slammed him. Won his trial with his head on his chest, pulling up."

"Not Golden Myth," murmured The Miller," gently. "He's at stud."

"They brought him out of stud," said Evans. "It was either Golden Myth or some other horse. The boy that does him is the nephew of my landlord's cook, so I ought to know."

"What is it?" asked "The Miller," his curiosity fired.

"Little Buttercup," said Evans, in a confidential whisper—"The Goods! And don't forget I've got a mouth, Mr. Challoner."

He strolled along toward Euston Road with "The Miller," and it was at the juncture of that thoroughfare that the detective said :

"Evans, I'll introduce you to the king pippin of your illicit profession—Mr. Marky!"

The man he addressed was walking briskly toward King's Cross Station. He was a tall man, expensively attired, and at the mention of his name Evans gasped.

"Not the Marky, Mr. Challoner?" he said, in an awe-stricken whisper, and

found himself shaking hands like a man in a dream.

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Evans," said the new-comer. "In the same line of business as me, are you? Well, I hope you have better luck than I've had lately."

In the presence of such majesty Evans was dumb. For Wally Marky was the greatest of all the sporting prophets. He was the man whose advertisements covered whole pages of the sporting press—Wally Marky, the Seer of Sittingbourne—Wally Marky, England's Supreme Turf Adviser—Wally Marky, who never charged less than the odds to two pounds, though he didn't always get as much.

"Evans has got a beauty to-day," said "The Miller." "The Goods! Had it from the owner, didn't you, Evans?"

Evans nodded, and wished he was a million miles away. To deceive his clientèle was one thing; to ring a wrong 'un on the great Marky, with his thousands and tens of thousands of paying clients, was another. At the thought of the awful responsibility the tongue of Educated Evans clave to the roof of his mouth.

"What is it?" asked the interested Marky.

"Little Buttercup," said Evans hollowly. "Trained by Wagon, who dopes his horses. I've been on the look-out for that one. It hadn't arrived this morning. I wonder—"

Mr. Marky frowned.

"You've had it from a good source? I've a good mind to try my luck with it—excuse me."

He turned away to the nearest telephone booth, and Evans began to breathe freely. In five minutes his shattered confidence had returned.

Educated Evans became more and more enamoured of the child of his fancy. Until that morning he had hardly known of the existence of Little Buttercup, and had certainly never heard of Mr. Greenly, under which name the bashful publican raced. Even "The Miller," who was not usually impressed, went away with a sense of opportunity.

It was the last despairing effort of Educated Evans. He hurried from shop to shop; he flitted through the Midland Goods Yard until he was summarily ejected by a policeman; he called on every client, possible and impossible: and the burden of his tale was the passing swiftness and the inevitable victory of Little Buttercup. And, in course of time, he came to the Flamborough Head, that magnificent palace of glass and mirrors, whereof the reigning monarch was the apoplectic Mr. Holyman.

Mr. Holyman was in the bar, counting out little stacks of change for his barmaids to use; for he was one of those men who trusted neither his right hand nor his left.

"Good-morning, Mr. Holyman."

Mr. Holyman turned his bovine glance upon Evans.

"Morning, Evans," he said, almost cheerfully. "I haven't seen you around here for a week. You'll have something with me?" he asked.

"You'll have something with me, Mr. Holyman," said Evans, with quiet triumph. "I've got a horse for you."

Mr. Holyman shook his head.

"No, you haven't got any horses for me, Evans," he said good-naturedly. "Tips are out of my line, as you well know."

"This isn't a tip," said Evans, lowering his voice to an agitated quaver, "this is a gift from heaven! It is a thing I have been waiting for all the year! This horse has been tried to give twenty-eight pounds to Town Guard, and the money's down."

"What's the race?" asked Mr. Holyman, his interest mildly aroused.

"The Braxted Selling Plate, at Birmingham." Evans looked up at the clock. "You've got ten minutes to get on and share the good fortune that I've brought to the mansion and the hut, to the highest and the lowest.

"I'll tell you something else, Mr. Holyman," he said. "It's never happened to me before. Who do you think I met this morning?" Here Evans was telling nothing but the truth. "Marky!"

He stepped back to observe the effect of his words. The name of Marky is known throughout the sporting world.

"I met Marky—introduced to him," said Evans, with the satisfaction that the average man might display were he relating a chance meeting with the Prince of Wales. "He shook hands with me, quite affable and gentlemanly. His luck's out, too. Us tipsters are having a bad time. So I gave him Little Buttercup—"

"What!"

Mr. Holyman's face turned a dark, rather vivid, shade of blue.

"You gave him what?" he howled.

"Little Buttercup. It's a pinch. The owner's a friend of mine—"

Mr. Holyman glared helplessly round, and the first thing he saw was a pewter pot. It missed the head of Educated Evans by inches.

There were only two runners for the Braxted Selling plate. Mr. Wagon's jockey

had weighed out before the appalling fact became known that Little Buttercup was Marky's Fear-Nothing £5 Special. And Little Buttercup won by the length of a street. It took two mounted policemen and a stable lad to get him back to the paddock, and then they had to bring a knacker's cart to frighten him. The price was 8 to 1 on.

"What a beauty!" sneered "The Miller" when he met Evans the next morning, and Educated Evans shrugged his shoulders more rapidly than ever.

XI. — THE PERFECT LADY

"IF," said Inspector Pine, emphasising his argument in his best platform manner by hammering his palm with his clenched fist, "if horse-racing isn't—er—pernicious and brutalising, if it isn't low, sergeant, how is it that it attracts the criminal and the law-breaker?"

It was a favourite argument of his. This he had expounded on a dozen platforms.

"If racing isn't the sport of rascals,"—his grey head wagged in an ecstasy of righteousness—"why don't you see God-fearing men and women on the racecourse?"

Sergeant Challoner, C.I.D., had heard all this before, but had not troubled to supply the obvious answer.

"The trouble with a good many people, sir, is that they think that if they do not like a thing, or if some form of amusement or recreation doesn't appeal to them, it must be bad. There are people I know who would shut up all the fried-fish shops because they don't like fried fish. I can give you a hundred names of God-fearing people who follow racing."

He reeled off a dozen, and there were an illustrious few even the inspector could not deny.

"It isn't because it's racing, it's because racing has many followers that the thieves follow it. If a million people follow the game, it is certain, by the laws of average, a few thousand of them will be thieves—just as it is certain that sixteen thousand will have appendicitis and thirty-five thousand bronchitis. The few thousands look a lot because they are the only fellows you and I hear about."

The inspector shook his head.

"I'm not convinced," he said. "Look at that rascal Educated Evans."

"Evans is honest. He hasn't always been lucky, and he got two months for a

larceny that he knew nothing about. I am certain that if he could afford to pay for the proceedings, he could get the conviction quashed."

"I am not convinced," declared the inspector.

"Because you don't want to be," said "The Miller"—but said it to himself.

It was perfectly true that Evans knew thieves, and that association with lawless men was an everyday experience. He knew them because he lived poorly in a poor neighbourhood, and the majority of thieves are poor men. They do not thief because they are poor—they are poor because they thief.

Racing appealed to most of them because it held the illusion of easy money.

Hundreds of dishonest women go to church for the same reason. A dismal face and a whining tongue produce coal tickets and blankets and small gifts of cash. If the annual conference of the Royal Society were the occasion of distributing largesse the hall would be thronged by cadgers displaying the same interest in Einstein's Theory of Relativity as old Mrs. Jones takes in the Lent services and the vicar's Sunday Afternoon Talks to Mothers.

Why, even at Rosie Ropes' wedding there were beaming ladies who had no interest in matrimony whatever, but had come because at the cost of half an hour's sitting in an uncomfortable pew they were assured a good dinner and an afternoon's amusement, with wine and fruit thrown in. And maybe a gramophone.

It was not often that Educated Evans went to parties, for society and social functions of all kinds he did not hold with. But the marriage of Mr. Charles Ropes' daughter Rosie to young Arthur Walters was an event of such importance that he could not very well refuse the invitation, extended from both sides, to pop in for a glass of sherry wine and a bit of cake.

Not that Evans was a winebibber. He did not hold with such effeminate drinks, his favourite potion being a foaming beaker of bitter. The nuptials of the Ropes and Walters family were something more than an ordinary union. To Educated Evans it was the wedding of a Five-Pound Special to an occasional Job Wire, for both parties represented consistent supporters of his.

The Ropes' house, where the do was to be, was in Bayham Street, Mr. Ropes being in the Government and entitled to wear brass buttons every day of the week, and the wedding breakfast (which to the mind of Evans was more like lunch) was as classy an affair as he had ever seen.

To Educated Evans fell the task of proposing the bride and bridegroom, which he did in sporting terms, as was appropriate to his renowned position.

"May they run neck-and-neck from the gate of youth and dead-heat on the post of felicity!"

Several other people proposed the bride and bridegroom, and most of them hoped that their troubles would be little ones.

After the bride and bridegroom had departed by car for Westcliff-on-Sea, the harmony ran smoothly until, under the influence of port wine and an unaccustomed cigar, young Tom Ropes started snacking about education and horse-racing.

"It's my own fault," said Educated Evans when he was relating the events to "The Miller" the following day. "You can't touch pitch without being reviled, as Shakespeare says. It was the Flora Cabago that got into his head—boys ought to stick to Gold Flakes. If it hadn't been for her I'd have chastised him."

"Her?" repeated the puzzled "Miller." "Which 'her'?"

"Miss Daisy Mawker," said Educated Evans awkwardly. "A friend of mine, and as nice a young woman as you've ever dropped your eyes on."

"Pretty?" asked the interested "Miller."

"As lovely as a picture," said Evans enthusiastically, "and educated! We had a long talk about history and geography. What she don't know about foreign parts ain't worth knowing. She's got two lady friends, Miss Flora and Miss Fauna, that's been everywhere; she mentioned 'em all the time—"

"Flora and Fauna are terms meaning flowers and animals," corrected "The Miller" gently.

"She's very fond of flowers," said Evans, "and she keeps rabbits, so practically it's the same thing. She's got the heart of a lion, and she's heard about me. The first thing she says to me was Are you the Mr. Evans?"

"And you admitted it?"

"There was nothing else to do," said Evans modestly. "She ups and asks me if I was the celebrated Turf adviser that everybody was talking about—what could I do? Like the far-famed Sir What's-his-Name Washington, when asked if he let the cakes burn, I couldn't tell a lie."

"The Miller " nodded.

"There must be times when even you get like that. I suggest that you were under the influence of drink."

Educated Evans cast upon him the look of a wounded fawn.

"The wine was good—they got it from a grocer's in Hampstead Road that's selling off—but wine means nothing to me. I could drink a bucket without telling the story of my life. What wasn't wine was lemonade—which she drank, being a lady. And when young Tom started snacking and sneering she got up and said, If you lay a hand upon my gentleman friend I'll push your face off.' "

"She wasn't a titled lady by any chance?" asked the sardonic "Miller." "There's a touch of Mayfair about that observation. You'll miss not seeing her again."

"I'm seeing her to-night," said Educated Evans with a secret smile. "We're going to the pictures to see Mary Pickford—she's often been mistaken for Mary Pickford herself."

"I hate you when you're coy," said The Miller." "Evans, this is going to interfere with business. I never knew that you were a lady's man, either."

"I've had me lapses," admitted Evans, and smiled reminiscently.

"The Miller" rubbed his chin thoughtfully, and his grave eyes surveyed the World's Premier Turf Prophet thoughtfully.

"I'm sorry I missed that wedding," he said. "Young Tom well dressed?"

"Like a gentleman," said Evans reluctantly. "I didn't know him—long-tailed coat, classy straw hat, patent leather boots, beautiful gold ch—"

He stopped suddenly.

"Yes," suggested "The Miller." "Beautiful gold chain, you were going to say. Any rings?"

"I didn't notice," said Evans hastily.

"Now I think of it I don't think he had a chain on at all."

Mr. Ropes, senior, was employed in a Government office. His son had also been in Government service—twice. "The Miller" had got him the job. Ropes, senior, was wont to confess that children are a trouble, and he had excellent reason, for young Tom was by nature and instinct a "tea-leaf," which, in the argot of his kind, meant that he got his living by finding things that had not been lost. His downfall was ascribed by his lenient parent to "bad company." In truth, there was no company that Tom did not make a little worse by his presence.

"Besides," said Evans, "Tom's going straight now—he's got a job."

"The Miller" smiled.

"They always have jobs, Evans. But Miss Daisy Mawker—where did she spring from? Is she a friend of the bride's or the bridegroom's or the best man's?"

"She's a friend of mine," said Educated Evans stoutly. "She may be acquainted with young Tom; I'm not saying that she isn't. But if she knew the kind of feller young Tom was she would, in a manner of speaking, recoil with horror!"

There was a very good reason why the straw-chewing "Miller" should be interested in the adornment of young Tom Ropes. There had been a burglary at

Finsbury. A jeweller's shop had been entered and trinkets to the value of a few pounds had been abstracted. It was fairly well known that it was the work of a gang that young Tom ran with. The haul, however, had been disappointing, most of the jeweller's stock being in the safe.

The question of this simple burglary did not exercise the knowledgeable authorities so much as the information which had come to them that there had been a joining of forces between young Tom's crowd and "Gaffer" Smith's confederation. "Gaffer" was notoriously versatile, and there was nothing, from pitch and toss to manslaughter, outside the range of his operations.

Educated Evans met his Daisy that afternoon in Regent's Park, a favourite rendezvous of his. For the occasion Educated Evans had dressed himself with unusual care, even going to the extent of paying threepence that his scanty locks might be dressed to the greatest advantage.

Miss Daisy Mawker was pretty in a bold way. She was a straight-backed, athletic girl, with a rosy face and a pair of hard blue eyes; and if her ankles were a little thicker than they should have been, and her hands slightly on the coarse side, she was to Evans' enraptured eye what Venus might have been with a little bit of luck.

She refused Evans' gallant offer to row her about the lake for an hour, and he was relieved.

"Never did like the water," said Miss Daisy Mawker. Every time I go to Paris I get seasick."

"You're a bit of a traveller, Miss Daisy," said Evans respectfully. "I must say I like travelling myself. I've often been to Brighton just for the day. Travelling broadens your mind," he went on, "it's education and enlightenment. Look at Christopher Columbus. Where would he have been if he hadn't travelled? And where would America have been? Even the Americans wouldn't have heard about America if it hadn't been for him."

She nodded her head graciously.

"I suppose you're single, Mr. Evans?" she said, and Evans protested his bachelorhood with great heat.

"I only asked because so many fellows pretend they're single when they're not," she said demurely, tracing figures on the gravel with the end of her umbrella. "And when you find them out they say their wife's in a lunatic asylum, so they're as good as single. What a wonderful life you must live, Mr. Evans, going round to all these racecourses and seeing horse races. It must be beautiful! And then, I suppose, the jockeys tell you what is going to win and you send it round to all your friends."

Evans coughed.

"Not exactly. The jockeys very seldom know what's going to win," he said. "I used to rely on jockeys once, but after I had been let down—never again! They mean well, mind you," he said. "Look at Donoghue. He told me the other day—well, perhaps it's not gentlemanly to repeat his words. No, I never take any notice of jockeys. And as for trainers"—he shrugged his shoulders many times—you can't believe trainers. They're like the celebrated Ananias who turned round to have another look and was turned into a salt-cellar."

"What a lot you know!" she sighed.

"Do you ever get excited when the horses are racing? I should simply be thrilled to death."

"Haven't you ever seen a race?" asked Educated Evans. "Not," he said, disparagingly, that it's much to see. I simply don't take any notice of 'em. My man comes and tells me how much I've won or how much I've lost—a thousand one way or the other doesn't make any difference to me. When I'm going well," he added hastily. "Of course, I'm not always going well."

It occurred to him at that moment that he might be conveying a wrong impression if he gave her to understand that he was exceedingly well off.

"I wonder you have time for racing at all, Mr. Evans," she sighed. She had a habit of sighing. "What with picking up the bits of knowledge that you've got, and your education, and your clients"—she was still tracing designs on the gravel. And then: "I should so like to see a real horse race, though, of course, I shouldn't like to go alone. I should be so frightened. What I want to do is to go to a race meeting with somebody who is experienced, somebody who knows everything about it."

Educated Evans realised she was referring to him.

"I should be glad to take you, Miss Daisy," he said eagerly. "The expense is, comparatively speaking, nothing at all. I don't suppose you'd mind going in the Silver ring?"

"What's that?" she asked in surprise. "Is it a ring made of silver?"

Evans explained that the Silver Ring was the real aristocracy of the Turf. In the Silver Ring men bet more fearlessly, and prices were higher than in any other ring. Tattersall's, so far from being a desirable place, was an enclosure in which the price pincher flourished. She hesitated.

"I think I would rather go into Tattersall's, if that's the name," she said. "But, of course, dear Mr. Evans, I wouldn't think of allowing you to pay my expenses. I'm a very independent girl."

Evans murmured his half-hearted protest.

"I am, indeed! And I heard Tom say he was going down to Sandown on

Eclipse Day. What is Eclipse Day?"

Evans explained again.

"Friend of yours, Miss Daisy?"

"Who—Tom? Well, he's not exactly a friend, he's an acquaintance. He's not the kind of man I would have any dealings or associations with," she said.

"That's exactly what I said to Mr. Challoner," said Educated Evans triumphantly, and the smile faded from the girl's face.

"Mr. Challoner?" she said, a little sharply. "Do you mean that detective? Surely you don't have anything to do with him? You're the last person in the world I should think was a snout—nose, I mean, Aren't I being unladylike?"

"In a way he's a friend of mine," said Evans, a little taken aback. "He has my selections, so, in a manner of speaking, he's a client."

Her face cleared.

"Oh, if that's all," she said. "I know these birds do bet on the sly, and then they go round pinching the poor little street bookmakers, don't they? I've read about that in the newspapers," she added quickly.

It was arranged before they parted that they should meet on the following Wednesday at Waterloo Station under the clock; and Evans, having despatched innumerable messages, both by hand and telegram, dealing with the outstanding possibilities of Glue Pot winning the mile seller, hurried forth to meet his lady.

The sight of her took his breath away. Never a more ladylike person had he seen in her simple blue costume and little black hat. Nothing flash, nothing ikey, just plain and ladylike. He was proud to be seen with her.

They travelled to Esher first class. For once in his life Educated Evans travelled on a first-class ticket. And all the way down he spoke on a subject agreeable to himself, namely—Educated Evans.

They were walking across the park when he broached the subject which was in his mind.

"If I was you, Miss Daisy, I don't think I should have any truck with young Tom Ropes," he said, but she raised her eyebrows.

"Why ever not?" she asked. "Isn't that him in front?"

"Yes, with some of his leery pals," said Educated Evans, "so don't walk fast."

"But why shouldn't I, Mr. Evans?" asked Daisy. "You are making me so terribly frightened. Isn't he honest?"

"He never robbed me of anything," said Evans diplomatically.

"I should hate to think he wasn't honest," said Daisy Mawker, shaking her head. "I can't abide people who aren't perfectly straightforward, can you, Mr. Evans? What I mean to say is that if they're on the hook they're so unreliable. You never know where they are, do you? There's a friend of mine, she's got a fiancé, and she never knows his address. Sometimes he's at Wormwood Scrubs, sometimes he's at Wandsworth—it's just wasting stamps to write to him."

"Yes, yes," said Evans, a little dazed. He had no fault to find with her ladylike behaviour throughout the day. She stood on the top of the stone steps of the stand, and Evans went down to do her betting for her, and every time she won he brought the money back, and every time she lost she said:

"You must remind me to pay you that five shillings on our way home, Mr. Evans."

The crowd was a tremendous one, as it always is on Eclipse Day, and just before the last race the sensible girl suggested that they should make a move to the station. When they reached the other side of the course, however, she changed her mind and insisted on seeing the last race. And then, and only then, did they make their way to the railway arch under which the passengers must pass en route to the station platform.

"Don't let's go any farther. I saw some friends of mine," she said. "We'll wait here until they come."

"You won't get a seat in the train," he warned her.

"Oh, yes, I shall," she said, with a saucy toss of her head. "You wait here beside

me. Now don't you leave me, Mr. Evans."

"Do you think I would?" breathed Educated Evans tenderly, and he thrilled as she caught his hand and squeezed his little finger.

The stream of home-goers that crossed the park was now multiplied in size, and presently Evans saw young Tom Ropes, though apparently that youthful brigand did not see Evans, for he showed no sign of recognition.

The press was now tremendous, and he and the girl had to flatten themselves against the wall, and it was with difficulty that the crowd squeezed past. Every now and again some one would bump against Evans. Twice it was young Tom Ropes, who also seemed to be waiting for a friend.

And then of a sudden there was a stir in the crowd. Somebody struck out, and Evans looked with open mouth at the strange spectacle of young Tom Ropes in the hands of "The Miller." Where "The Miller" had come from, unless he had dropped through a crack in the arch, Evans could not guess.

In an instant the archway was alive with plain-clothes police. "Let us get out of this," said Miss Mawker hurriedly.

She had not taken two steps when somebody gripped her arm. Evans was on the point of asserting himself when, looking up, he recognised "The Miller."

"Want you, Daisy," said "The Miller" pleasantly. "We've got the rest of the gang, I think."

"Look here, Mr, Challoner," began Educated Evans, struggling to follow the sergeant and his captive.

In a quiet and secluded station on the other side of the line six bedraggled men were in the process of being ushered into a waiting police van when Evans, following "The Miller" and Miss Daisy Mawker, came upon the scene.

"We've got the men, and we haven't got the loot," said an officer who was evidently in charge, and added, "Hullo, Daisy, had a good day?"

Daisy made a reply which shocked Educated Evans beyond words.

"I suppose this somethinged 'can' was snouting for you?" she said. "Well, he's in it with the rest of us."

"I know all about that," said "The Miller." "Turn out your overcoat pockets, Evans!"

"Me?" said the horrified Evans.

"You," said "The Miller." "I'll give you a clean bill because I know just how they brought you into it."

In Evans' pockets were eight watches, seven note-cases, five purses, two scarf-pins, and a lady's diamond brooch. Evans could only watch like a man in a dream as the property came to light.

"You were the carrier," said "The Miller" on the way back to town. "They always get a mug for that job. She planted you against the railway arch so that the gang should have some one to take the plunder as they found it. By the way, she's young Tom's sweetheart."

"She ain't mine," said Educated Evans savagely. "I'm done with wimmin!"

XII. — THE PROUD HORSE

EDUCATED EVANS left the Italian Club, having lost £4 18s. at a game which was known locally as "Prop and Cop." He had propped so misguidedly, and copped with such bad lack of brilliance, that the wonder was—as "The Miller," to whom he confided his woes, told him—that he had any trousers

left.

Yet Educated Evans was not an unhappy man; for that day had seen the success of his £5 Special. And on the previous Sunday "Tattenham" had said nasty things about a trainer who was reputedly an enemy to all touts and tipsters, and had expressed his views on the same in the public Press.

Sergeant Challoner walked with Evans to the end of the mews wherein the educated man had his habitation. As they stood talking, the keen-eyed "Miller" saw a light shining at one of the windows above a stable.

"The Turners are up late," he said.

"The kid's ill," said Educated Evans shortly, and, taking leave of the detective, he made his way rapidly along the uneven roadway. He did not go direct to his own room, but, climbing the opposite stairs, came to a pause on a landing very similar to his own, and knocked at the door which led to the lighted room. He knocked gently, but the door was instantly opened by a haggard-looking woman.

"How is he?" asked Educated Evans, quietly; and she made way for him to enter.

The room was a little better furnished than Evans' room, but it was less airy. On a stuffy bed lay a small boy, very wan and hollow-eyed. The perspiration glistened on his white forehead, but he grinned at the sight of Evans.

"Hullo, Mr. Evans!" he piped.

"Hullo, Ernie!" said Evans, sitting down on a chair by the side of the bed.

"Been to the races, Mr. Evans?"

"No, I can't say that I have," admitted Evans.

"And I'll bet your horse didn't win," said the child, speaking with difficulty, and fixing his solemn eyes upon the bare-headed tipster.

"If you bet that you'd bet wrong, Ernie. It did win! I thought you was better or I'd have come home earlier."

Ernie was an old pal of Educated Evans. They were in the habit of holding speech together across the intervening space which separated one balcony from the other. Mrs. Turner was a widow; her husband had been killed in an accident when working for the firm that owned the stables above which she lived. They had given her a small pension, and, more important at that time, had given her the two rooms rent free for life.

The woman herself did not come into the purview of Educated Evans, for she was not interested in the thoroughbred racehorse, nor very greatly interested in Mr. Evans. But Ernie and he went walking together, surveyed the spring glories of the park, and sailed boats upon the lake.

He went to the door with the woman.

"What did the doctor say?" he asked in a low voice.

"He says he ought to go away into the country, and it's his only chance," said the woman, with a catch in her breath. "He'll die if he stays here. The doctor's tried to get him into a convalescent home, but there's no vacancies; and I can't afford to keep him away for any time."

"Mr. Evans!"

He turned to the bed.

The child had struggled up on to his elbow and was watching him with his odd, pitiful face.

"What about that prahd 'orse?"

"That what?" said Evans, puzzled.

"You told me you'd let me see a prahd 'orse."

"Oh, a proud horse," said Evans correctly, and remembered his promise.

"What do you mean by a proud horse, Ernie?" he asked.

"You know, Mr. Evans—the 'orses that 'old their 'eads up in the air, they're so prahd. There used to be two down 'ere—the undertaker's 'orses; but he took 'em away. I'd like to see a prahd 'orse. I could sit all day and look at a prahd 'orse," said the child, with queer earnestness.

"Ain't there any proud horses in the mews?" asked Evans. "What about Haggitt's?"

The child's pale lip lifted contemptuously.

"'E isn't a prahd 'orse," he said scornfully. "Why, 'e 'olds 'is 'ead down like a cow. I'd like to see a prahd 'orse, Mr. Evans—them that champs their feet on the ground."

Evans scratched his nose.

"Now you come to mention it, Ernie, I'll confess I haven't seen a proud horse for years. I think the motor-cars must have knocked all the pride out of 'em."

"There are lots. The undertaker's 'orses was prahd," said the small boy.

Evans crossed over to his room, feeling uneasy in his mind. Financially, things were not going too well with him, or he would have offered, without hesitation, to send the child away into the country.

His was the kind of nature that goes out to children, and it hurt him to even think of that queer little morsel of humanity in the stuffy bed in that hot and airless room. Once he got out in the night and looked out of the window. The light was still burning. When he did go to sleep it was to dream of proud

horses, black as night, with high, arched necks and frothing mouths and hoofs that pawed incessantly. And in his dream they were pulling a shabby little coach. And under the driving seat was a little white coffin.

He woke up sweating and pushed open the window. The dawn was in the sky and the air smelt sweet and good. The windows opposite were closed, hermetically sealed; the door was jammed tight and locked.

Evans lit the gas and sat down to study the day's programme published in the overnight paper, but he could not keep his mind to the possibilities of profit. Every entry was a proud horse with an arched neck that "champed " the ground.

At the particular moment when the kindly heart of Educated Evans was lacerated by the thought of suffering childhood, a proud horse was being pulled up on the Wiltshire Downs. His name was Veriti. He had cost, as a yearling at the Doncaster sales, 13,500 guineas, and he was, so Mr. Yardley, the eminent trainer, told the owner in dispassionate tones, worth exactly 13,500 marks at the present rate of exchange.

"He looks good enough," said Lord Teller, a shivering man who had been dragged out of bed to witness the wholly unsatisfactory trial in the cold hours of the morning.

"Unfortunately, my lord," said Mr. Yardley politely, "the London Cup is not a beauty show. If it was, I think Veriti would get very nearly first prize."

Being the great Yardley he could talk to one of the newest of the peerage frankly and in plain words.

"He can do it if he would do it," he said bitterly, watching the beautiful Veriti as he stepped daintily round and round the waiting circle; "and it isn't lack of courage. It's just wilfulness—super-intelligence, perhaps."

"What will you do? said his lordship. " I shall run him," said Yardley. "He will start a hot favourite, and when he finishes down the course knowledgeable people will look at one another meaningly, and the hoi polloi will talk about another one of Yardley's mysteries, and yet another nail will be driven into my reputation."

He walked over to the horse, smoothed its arched neck and patted it.

"You're a dirty dog, Jim," he said.

(His lordship learnt for the first time that the name under which a horse is registered is not the name by which it is known in a stable.)

"You're a mouldy old thief! What's the matter with you?"

Veriti did not wink, but Yardley, who understood the very souls of horses, thought he saw a look of amusement in his eyes.

" You'll have one chance, my lad, and that's at Alexandra Park. A cab-horse can win at Alexandra Park. And if you don't behave yourself on Saturday, you'll go to the stud at nine guineas, and you know what that means!"

Veriti did not raise his eyebrows, but he raised his ears as though he understood. And really the question of his fee was less important to Veriti than his popularity. For the moment he was exceedingly unpopular, but that did not worry him.

Mr. Yardley was a painstaking and thorough trainer, and it was all to his advantage that veiled Press comments and innuendoes passed him by without making the slightest impression. He was that gentleman whose practice it was to run two horses in a race and win with the outsider. It was the popular idea that these results were cleverly planned. To such a suggestion Mr. Yardley merely offered a cryptic smile and the remark that horses were not machines.

He brought Veriti out two mornings after, and gave him a gallop with the two best horses in his stable. And he was not overwhelmingly surprised when Veriti won the gallop pulling up, because he was, as Mr. Lyndall would say, "a horse of moods."

"I suppose that means that you'll finish down that infernal course on Saturday," mused Mr. Yardley, looking into Veriti's eyes—and it may have been a coincidence, but Veriti nodded.

Educated Evans had made up his mind to have a great day on the Saturday, for his punters were, in the main, people who speculated their maximum on that day. He had planned a grand circularising of every name on his books with the winner of the London Cup. That he should have chosen Veriti is not remarkable, for Veriti had run second in the Chesterfield Plate at Goodwood. But somehow the zip had gone out of Evans' life that week. Morning and night, and sometimes in the middle of the day, he was to be found in the widow's room, sitting by the child, who seemed to fade before his very eyes.

Evans saw the doctor, a busy man with very little time to fuss.

"The child would be saved if you could get him away to the country and keep him there," he said to Evans, when the educated man met him at the bottom of the stairs. "I am giving this advice, well knowing that this poor woman cannot afford to send the child away. I've done my utmost to find a free convalescent home for him, but without success."

"What would it cost, doctor?"

"Three or four pounds a week," said the doctor brusquely, and Evans' heart sank, for he was very near the end of his own resources, and his livelihood was a precarious one.

"Do you know what I think, Mr. Evans?" said the mother, coming outside the

door on to the landing and talking in a hushed voice. " I think that boy's life would be saved if he could see that kind of horse he's always talking about. It's funny how things run in your mind when you're ill. That's all Ernie wants."

Evans went into the room. The child was lying with his wasted hands beneath his cheeks, his eyes fixed on vacancy.

"Hullo, Ernie, old boy! "

Evans patted his shoulder gently. The dark eyes turned up to meet the tipster's face.

"What about that prahd 'orse?" he said weakly.

"I'm going to see what I can do about it," said Evans. "I'll be bringing one down the mews, and then I'll carry you to the window, and you can see it for yourself. Mrs. Turner, don't you think you might have your windows open a bit?"

She was shocked at the suggestion.

"That's what the doctor's always saying," she complained. "That means that Ernie will lie in a draught and catch a cold."

To Evans's discerning eye the boy was slowly sinking; and he spent the Friday afternoon, when he should have been attending to his business, in a vain search of the neighbouring mews for any horse that bore the slightest resemblance to Ernie's description. Not even the funeral horses were available, for it was a bad summer and the horses were working overtime. Evans could not help thinking—

He had to go to Alexandra Park; there was nothing else to do. The child was getting on his mind; and everlastingly that thin, whining voice intoning, "Want to see a prahd 'orse," rang in Evans' ears.

He himself saw one. In a half-hearted way he had sent Veriti to some fifty clients, and he saw Veriti finish a bad ninth.

And then a great idea was born in his mind, and he hurried out of the cheap ring along the road and into the paddock. That he got into the paddock at all without the necessary ticket was a tribute to his courage and resourcefulness.

He arrived as Veriti was being sheeted under the disapproving eye of the great Yardley; and surely Veriti was a picture of a horse. Unfortunately, they will not pay out on pictures, as Mr. Yardley had truly said.

"Excuse me, sir."

Yardley turned and saw a face which for the moment eluded him.

" I know you. Who are you?" he asked, not being in the mood for polite conversation.

"You remember me, sir, I'm Educated Evans."

For a moment Yardley glared, and then a twinkle came into his eyes.

"Oh, you are! I remember you, you rascal. What do you want? I've no tips for you, and I'm broke."

"I don't want any money, sir," said Evans huskily, and oppressed by the fearful liberty he was taking. "But is there any chance of this horse coming to Bayham Mews?" he blurted.

"To where?" asked the startled Yardley.

"To Bayham Mews, sir—Camden Town."

"There's a chance of his going into a cab, if that's what you mean. There's also a chance of him going into the cats'-meat shop," said Yardley. "What do you mean, my friend?"

Brokenly, incoherently, Educated Evans told his story, gulping out the plaint of little Ernie.

"A proud horse? What is a proud horse? Oh, I think I know what you mean," said Yardley slowly, and turned his eyes upon Veriti. "He's proud enough, though God knows why," he said, and chuckled in spite of himself. "Yes, I think he'd fill the bill. But you really don't imagine I should send his lordship's horse to amuse a small slum child, do you?"

"No, sir," said Evans miserably.

"Then you're a damned fool," said Yardley. "What is your address?"

Educated Evans, scarcely believing his ears, gave ample directions. At a quarter past six that evening, when he was sitting with Ernie, not daring to believe that the trainer would carry out his promise, there came a clatter of hoofs in the yard, and Evans dashed to the window.

Coming back without a word, he lifted the child in his arms, and, in spite of Mrs. Turner's protests, carried him on to the landing. And there Ernie saw the proudest horse he had ever seen—a horse so proud that it refused to run with other horses, but invariably and sedately trailed in the rear.

"O-oh!" said Ernie, and his round eyes grew rounder.

Veriti never looked better. He had been stripped of his sheet, and his coat glistened in the afternoon sun.

"O-oh!" said Ernie. "Ain't 'e prahd?"

And proud he was, with his head held high and his delicate feet picking a way across the cobbled stones.

For a moment the horse held the eye of Educated Evans then, looking past him, he saw Yardley. The great trainer came slowly towards him and mounted

the stairs.

"Is this the child?" he said.

"Yes, sir," said Educated Evans.

"Looks as if a little fresh air would do him a world of good," said Yardley.

"What do you think of my proud horse, laddie?"

"He is prahd! " said Ernie.

"I should say he was," said the grim Yardley. "Nothing infectious about this child, is there?"

"No, sir," said the woman, to whom he spoke.

"I'll send my car for him the first thing in the morning. The wife of my head lad will look after him, if he's well enough to travel."

And so Ernie Turner went down into Wiltshire, and there was an amazing sequel. As though conscious of the compliment that had been paid to him, Veriti won the next time out, and won pulling up. He started at 100 to 7. The favourite, which finished down the course and started at 6 to 4, was also one of Yardley's. And in the paddock after the race, wherever men congregated, it was agreed unanimously that Yardley ought to be warned off.

XIII. — THROUGH THE CARD

"I HAVE often wondered," said "The Miller" reflectively, "why a man of your education and ability doesn't find another way of earning a living, Evans. I admit that it is better than thieving, and more desirable than a good many other methods of earning a livelihood that are followed by mutual friends. But it's a little precarious, isn't it, or do you make so much money that you expect to retire?"

Educated Evans scratched his chin and looked up at his visitor. Detective-Inspector Challoner, C.I.D., was a frequent caller at the little room over the stable which was Evans' dwelling-place, and he had come that morning at a very unpropitious and depressing moment, for Evans had set out twelve consecutive losers, and it almost seemed as if he would never touch a winner again.

So depressed was he that he was engaged in his favourite course of study, which was the sixth volume of Chambers's Encyclopaedia, which began at the Humber and finished at Malta.

On these and on all matters in between, except perhaps such subjects as the habits of the Lecythidacæ, which was a little above him, he was an authority.

He knew all about Robert Lee and Pope Joan, Japan, and Iron, and International Law, and Ink and Indiarubber, and Incantations, the Lick Observatory and the Liturgy, because these were dealt with in the volume. And he had no other volume.

He was half-way through a learned article on "The Use of Lights in Public Worship" when "The Miller's " big frame loomed up in the doorway.

"I owe three weeks' rent," said Educated Evans despondently. "The washerwoman's got me shirts, and won't let me have 'em back until I pay her up all the back. I owe twenty-three and twopence for gas, and I've got four and sixpence that I borrowed from Li Jacobs. That's the money I've saved! "

"What do you do with all your money?" asked "The Miller" in quiet wonder. "You must make a lot sometimes, Evans."

"Some people," said Educated Evans, " like the celebrated Henry the Eighth, who married twenty-five wives, do in their stuff on horses and women. You have to be a king to do it in that way. I've done all mine in on horses without the assistance of any young lady."

He got up and went to the mantel-piece and filled a clay pipe, and the fact that he was reserving the end of a cigar that lay by its side was sufficient evidence that his position was a parlous one.

"I've done with horses from now onwards," said Educated Evans. "It's phantom gold," he said recklessly. "Find me a job: I'll take it."

"Higgs wants a man," suggested "The Miller."

"Higgs!" said the scornful Evans. " Do you think I'd work for a man like that? He's a twister. A ten-pun' note wouldn't pay what that man owes me for information supplied at great cost—you've no idea of my expenses, what with travellin', giving money to stable boys and head lads

"You're amongst friends," said " The Miller" soothingly. "Don't let's tell the tale. What about Mr. Walters? He'd give you a job."

Evans shrugged his shoulders.

"Am I the kind of man who'd work for a fellow like Walters?" he asked haughtily. A man, so to speak, who makes a mock of education? No, Mr. Challoner, I'll see what Saturday brings in. And if Roving Betty doesn't win the Duke of York Stakes, then I'll have to look around. I'm not grouching—he was very serious now—"but somehow I've never been able to touch big money, Mr. Challoner. Facts been against me."

"You mean Fate," said "The Miller."

"I'm talking about bookmakers more particularly," said Educated Evans. "I've never been able to bring off a coup. Not a real coup. Of course, I've bragged a

lot in printin'—I wish I had the money that I've spent with Dickens the printer but between friends, if I may presume, I've never touched the money that I've always dreamt about. I'm a bit of a dreamer, Mr. Challoner."

"So I've noticed," said the other, not unkindly.

"I can sit here," said Evans, tapping the book in front of him, "and dream as only educated people can dream. I've ridden Derby winners, I've owned the biggest sprinter of the age, I've taken a hundred thousand pounds a day out of the ring—in my dreams. And, mind you, I wouldn't be without 'em for anything. Of course, I never shall take a hundred

thousand out of the ring, and I'll never get that cottage and field."

The interested "Miller " sat down.

"Let us hear about your cottage and field, Evans. That's a new one on me."

"I've got an idea of a beautiful little cottage in the country. I saw one advertised for sale the other day on the back page of The Times. Two thousand pounds! Me doing the kitchen gardening and making a bit by selling flowers and teas for cyclists—if they drank beer they'd fall off—and a horse in the field. Get an old selling plater and breed from her. That's my idea of happiness."

"The Miller" puffed slowly at his long cigar.

"And it's not a bad idea either," he said.

"But if you had the money you'd do it in, Evans."

" Not me! " said Evans decisively. If I ever touch for a bit—and God knows I never shall—I'd give up buying The Sportsman and take in The Christian Herald—it's more exciting, anyway. I took a 'bus down to Bromley the other day for a bit of fresh air, and it's a nice ride. There's a place with about two acres—a little cottage, an old well, just like in the pictures. Why, I'd be a king there "

" What would it cost?"

"Eight hundred and fifty pounds. I saw the owner. Kiddled him I might be buying it one of these days," said Evans dismally. "Me buy a house! Why, I couldn't buy a rabbit-hutch!"

Friday afternoon saw Evans, with his dwindling stock of envelopes, folding what he knew was his last appeal to an incredulous public. Most of the circulars were delivered locally. Saturday brought him a solitary five-shilling postal order. Evans went without breakfast that morning and carried his overcoat to a repository near at hand, and received in exchange 4s. and a ticket.

He stood on the kerb, his hands in his pockets, the picture of dejection, staring

blankly at the White Hart, the landlord of which had once welcomed him as a friend, and the shadow of ruin was upon him.

Evans was not a great drinker. His magnificence in his cups had led to so many awkward and embarrassing moments that he had abandoned the practice with no great regret, for drinking to Evans was one of the most expensive forms of recreation.

In his pocket he had 11s., and if he carried out the mad idea which possessed him that morning and went to Kempton Park he might starve on the morrow.

So brooding, "The Miller" passed him on his motor-bicycle, and, seeing the melancholy figure, stopped his machine and got off.

"How did they come in, Evans?"

"They came in one by one," said Evans bitterly. "The first has arrived; the second may come at any time between now and Christmas. I've got a dollar, and it cost me more than that for envelopes."

"Can I lend you a pound?" asked "The Miller," but Evans shook his head.

"You'll never get it back," he said miserably.

"Take it," said "The Miller," and, thrusting the note into his hands, moved off.

"Don't forget Bactive Lad," called Evans after him, the ruling passion strong in death. He stood with the note in his hand, and then a sudden resolve came to him, and he crossed the road and walked into the saloon bar. The proprietor was not visible, but the chief officer eyed him suspiciously. It seemed that the news of Evans' poverty had spread throughout the land.

"A double Scotch and soda," said Evans firmly.

He had never drunk whisky before in the morning, but he felt that he must do something or die of sheer inanition. He threw the pound note on the counter and tossed down the drink at a gulp.

"I'll have another," he said, and when he had had the other and had leant against the bar, frowning thoughtfully for fully five minutes without saying a word, he came to a sudden decision.

"Going to Kempton, Evans?" asked the senior barman.

Educated Evans turned his stony eyes upon his interrogator.

" 'Mister Evans,' if you don't mind," he said haughtily. " 'The Honourable Mr. Evans,' my good feller."

"I'm sorry," said the barman, aghast.

"You took a liberty," said Evans, "that no common man should take with an educated gentleman."

He brushed some invisible dust from his sleeve, and with a shrug of his shoulders walked out.

Providentially a taxicab was passing, and Evans hailed it.

"Waterloo, my man," he said, "Get there in ten minutes and I'll give you a fiver."

Happily the cabman recognised him.

"What's the hurry, Evans? There are plenty of trains."

"I have a special train," said Evans gravely, and fell into the taxicab. He intended to step in, but he fell in, for his foot slipped on the running-board.

Mr. Evans alighted at Waterloo with greater éclat. He stepped out of his cab on to the foot of Henry B. Norman, an American millionaire and an excellent sportsman.

"Say, haven't you any feet of your own to walk on?" said the plutocrat.

"Pardon," said Evans in his stateliest manner, and threw five shillings at the taxi-driver. "As a gentleman I apologise. As a gentleman you accept. God bless you!" And he seized the hand of the astonished millionaire and wrung it. "Come and have a drink," said Evans.

Mr. Norman's eyes narrowed.

"I guess you've had almost as much as you can take, my friend," he said. "You're all lit up like the Hotel Dooda! "

"Come and have a drink," insisted Evans, closing his eyes. He always closed his eyes in these circumstances; it lent him a certain dignity which was impressive.

Now, Mr. Norman was waiting for a friend who had not turned up. He was going to Kempton Park because, as the owner of an American stud, he was keenly interested in English racing. But that morning, when he had left his valet's hands, he had not the slightest idea that at eleven-thirty he would be standing in the public bar drinking whisky with a disreputable gentleman who hinted mysteriously at his noble birth.

"It's not generally known," said Evans, leaning affectionately on the counter, "that my father was the fourteenth Earl of Pogmore. I'm not sure if it's Pogmore or Frogmore, but what does it matter?"

"Precisely."

"You're an American. I knew in ten minutes," said Educated Evans, nodding his head wisely. " That's wunner things I learnt at Eton."

"At Eton?" said the staggered American.

"I was brought up at Eton and Harrow," said Evans, "but it's not generally

known."

"Who the dickens are you, then?" asked the American, thinking that he had by chance happened upon a member of the shabby nobility.

"Lord Evans, of Bayham House—of Bayham Castle, I mean," said Evans.

"Going to Kempton?"

"I'll go through the card. There isn't a horse running to-day, my dear American fellow, that I don't know everything about. Owners, trainers, jockeys—" he wagged his head expressively—"I get everything! "

It was at that moment that the millionaire's friend found him.

"Good-bye, Mr. Evans, or Lord Evans, as the case may be," said Norman good-humouredly.

He shook hands with his host, and was half-way to the door when he stopped.

"I'll give this poor soak the surprise of his life," he said, and taking out five clean, crisp notes from his pocket-book. "A present from the United States," he said, and slipped them into Evans' hand.

Things were going remarkably well with Evans.

He arrived at Kempton by a very ordinary train. "The Miller," who had cycled down, watched him, open-mouthed, as he strolled into Tattersall's, slamming down a five-pound note.

"Here, what's wrong with you, Evans?" "The Miller" tackled him as he entered Tattersall's ring.

"Ha, Miller,' I owe you a pound, I think? Take it, my good fellow."

He waved the note in the air, and "The Miller," anxious to avoid a scene, took it.

" 'Miller,' old boy "—he gripped the detective's arm—"I've got summun to tell you. I'm not what you think I am, dear old boy." He forced back the tears that had come into his eyes with an effort, blew his nose, and repeated: "I am not what you think I am."

"You're soused," said "The Miller," reproachfully.

" No, no, old boy, I'm not soused. I'm an unfortunate man, dear 'Miller.' "

His attentions were becoming more than embarrassing, for he had his arm affectionately round "The Miller's" shoulder—as far as it would reach."

"Dear old boy, I'm the nat'ral son of the Earl of Evans! Now you know!"

He stepped back dramatically, and came into collision with a bookmaker who was taking a light al fresco lunch.

"I'm not that either," said Evans, in reply to the bookmaker's observation. "I'm

—"

He looked round for "The Miller," but the latter had seized the opportunity and vanished.

The horses were at the post when Evans, sitting on the steps of the stand, his head between his hands, suddenly woke with a start. Fumbling with his card, and walking to the nearest bookmaker, he demanded so loudly that it could be heard almost all over the ring:

"What price Midget's Pride?"

"Eight to one to you," said the bookmaker.

Evans dropped a roll of money in his hand, and with some difficulty the bookmaker counted it.

"Twenty-three pounds seventeen and sixpence. Do you want it to this?" he asked, incredulously.

"To that," said the grave Evans

"Take back the silver. I'm not betting that way." He thrust the coins into Evans' hand. "A hundred and ninety-four to twenty-three Midget's Pride. You needn't take a ticket. I'll know that dial anywhere."

Midget's Pride won cleverly. Evans was unaware of the fact until the bookmaker hailed him.

"Hi, you! Come and get this money you've robbed me of!"

Evans thrust the notes into his pocket and went into the bar. When he emerged he was another man. His eyes were bright, his head was high. He had lost his hat.

The second race was a two-year-old seller. A horse started a hot favourite at 13 to 8. Evans took 6 to 4 to all the money he could find in his pocket.

Just before the last race "The Miller" was standing by the rails discussing with a brother professional the appearance of several well-known faces in the ring when he saw Educated Evans strutting along the alley-way that led from the paddock.

"Good-morning, 'Miller.' Good-morning, my man," he said, with a lordly wave of his hand.

"Been through the card?"

"Right through the card. Look at this." He put both hands in his pockets and drew forth notes in such profusion that dozens fell to the ground. "Let 'em be," said Evans loftily. "Leave 'em there for the common people. I've just seen the Stewards about that dead-heat in the last race. Disgustin'!"

"There wasn't a dead-heat in the last race, you damned fool! " growled "The

Miller." "The winner was a clear length in front of everything else."

"It looked like a dead-heat to me," said Evans. "I distinctly saw two horses."

As the field was going to the post Evans staggered to the leading bookmaker of Tattersall's.

"Good-morning, Mr. Slumber," he said.

(In other times and circumstances he would have trembled to approach the great man.)

"What price Standoff?"

The great Harry Slumber surveyed his customer with a calm and critical eye.

"Seven to one."

"Lay me fifty-nine thousand to seven thousand and the money is yours," said Evans gravely.

It was then that "The Miller" thought he ought to interfere.

Evans woke the next morning with a feeling that by some tragic accident his head had been caught between steam rollers and slightly flattened. When his hand went up, however, he found no difference in the shape. He was aching in every limb, and, staring round, he found he was in a room of familiar appearance.

There was a steel door and a grating, a bell-push, a hard, leather-covered pillow and a blanket. The bed itself was a wooden bench. A large jug of water slaked his burning thirst, and then, just as he was going to ring the bell and ask for information, a lock snapped and the door of the cell opened. "The Miller" looked at him and shook his head.

"What a nice man you are, Evans " he said bitterly. "After I'd taken the trouble to bring you home and put you to bed!"

"What did I do?" asked Evans.

"What did you do?" said "The Miller." "You came and kissed Inspector Pine, that's what you did! I thought he'd have killed you."

Evans groaned.

"I've had such a wonderful dream. I dreamt I had been to Kempton and won thousands."

"Three thousand two hundred pounds," said The Miller," calmly, "and you're a lucky man to have it."

Evans jumped up as if he had been shot.

"Did I go through the card?" he asked hollowly.

"You went through the card, and the boys would have gone through you if I

hadn't been there," said "The Miller." "Evans, you're a disgusting fellow. And here comes Inspector Pine," he said, "to ask if your intentions were serious."

THE END



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