

called Larry. Apart from that there were only natives."

"Mamoud was there?"

"Yes, but he has been with me for twelve years, and would give his life for me.

"Sir Andrew and I have quarrelled over certain book rights connected with the expedition, and I've not been in touch with him for some time.

"Burton is away somewhere on a big-game hunting trip, I believe, and Warren Demster is still in London."

Paul Terhune tapped his knee with his finger-tips. He was doubtful what to say. The whole thing sounded so fantastic. He was inclined to suggest that Hargreaves should see a nerve specialist instead of a detective.

Hargreaves gave a sudden screech and leapt backwards so violently that he sent his chair crashing to the floor.

"Look!" he screamed. "Look in that drawer—where I keep my papers—"

Paul Terhune went round the desk and looked into the open drawer where Hargreaves had been fingering some manuscripts a few moments earlier.

What he saw made his eyes narrow. It was something black and sinister, trying to crawl out of the near side of the drawer. It was a black species of scorpion, whose sting is fatal, ninety-nine times out of a hundred.

The foul creature was almost over the edge of the drawer, when Terhune snatched up a heavy ruler from the desk, and brought it down upon the scorpion, which was smashed to pulp.

Hargreaves gave a choking gasp of relief, and sank back on a nearby settee.

"It was put in that drawer by someone so that I might get stung when taking out papers. It's another attempt to kill me, Terhune. It means they've followed me even here. They know where I am," he moaned.

Paul Terhune rubbed his chin reflectively. The scorpion had been placed in the room by a human being.

It could not have crawled in from the garden. The windows looked as if they were always shuttered. There were no ventilators large enough to have admitted such an insect.

"I suggest we search the room in case there are others," he said, and Hargreaves yelped

at the thought, drawing his legs on to the settee beside him.

Mamoud and the detective set to work. There were many articles of furniture in the room, and the search took some time.

They had almost finished when Mamoud happened to turn upside down a vase which stood on the mantelshelf.

A black, wriggling object dropped to the floor, and the Egyptian shouted aloud as he stamped on it with all his might. It was a second scorpion—undoubtedly the mate of the first!

They intensified their search after that, but without further

Thinking it well to humour the man, Paul Terhune drove him in the growing daylight by a roundabout route to the tiny hotel standing on a hilltop.

They reached the Golden Trout Hotel without trouble, and after waking Sam Wheeler and explaining a little of the situation, the detective managed to get the terrified Hargreaves into a room which Sam had immediately prepared for him.

Terhune had hoped to leave at once and return to the house for Mamoud, but Hargreaves insisted upon him staying to breakfast, and begged him again to promise to undertake no

arrived at the house, and readily answered all the questions the detective asked him on the way to the inn. He was a very intelligent man in every way, and insisted that everything his master had said was true.

Fearing another long delay with Hargreaves, the detective did not attempt to enter the inn, but returned to London.

A bath, a change of clothes, and a shave at his flat, did something to freshen him after his night without sleep, and it was just after ten o'clock when he drove round to Portland Place, where the directory had told him Sir Andrew lived.

He was surprised to recognise a car outside the door. It was a police car usually used by his Scotland Yard friend, Detective-Sergeant Woods, a man with whom he had worked on several cases.

Not only was the car outside Sir Andrew's house, but a policeman was on guard at the door. He refused to let Paul Terhune ring the bell.

"Sorry, sir, it's useless your calling. Sir Andrew Fothergill can see nobody today," he said.

"Is Detective - Sergeant Woods with him?" asked Terhune.

"Yes, sir," agreed the constable, evidently surprised at such an accurate guess. "In a way, he's with him, sir."

"Then send in word that I wish to see Sir Andrew on private business. Tell Woods my name, and I'm sure he'll allow me ten minutes with him."

He handed over his card, and the constable's jaw sagged as he read it. Then he tilted his helmet back and looked round cautiously before whispering—

"Sir Andrew Fothergill was found strangled in his bed this morning!"

The First Victim

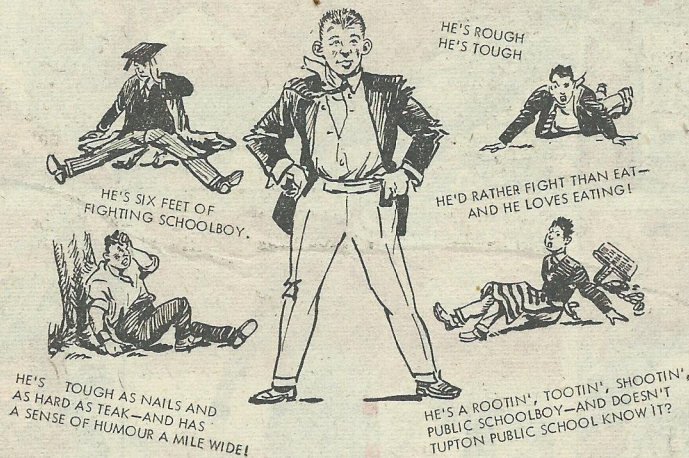
INSIDE the house Paul Terhune found Woods, another constable, an official photographer, and a fingerprint expert.

Detective - Sergeant Woods, a burly, square-jawed man with heavy brows, looked up in amazement when Terhune was announced.

"How on earth did you get on to this?" he demanded. "Do you smell out murders?"

(Continued on page 24.)

LOOK WHO'S COMING!



He's the wild boy from the backwoods of the Wild West—the rough diamond who hit the poshest public school in England like a hurricane. For thrills and laughs you must make an appointment **NEXT WEEK** with—

THE COLORADO KID

results. It appeared there were no more of these horrible creatures.

By this time it was daylight, and Hargreaves swore he would not stay in the house another hour. He begged Terhune to suggest a place where he might be safe.

"About a dozen miles from here, in the heart of the country, there is a little hotel where I sometimes stay when I want a rest," Terhune said.

"You'll be hidden from anyone there. I'll drive you there myself. Old Sam Wheeler, the host, will look after you in every way, and you can have Mamoud with you."

After a while Hargreaves agreed to do this, and insisted upon going at once. Mamoud could stay behind to pack their things and follow later, he said.

other case until the threat of the priests of Mempho was removed.

The argument and the meal took a couple of hours. At the end of that time Paul Terhune had agreed to make preliminary inquiries.

Hargreaves seemed satisfied with that, and when last Paul Terhune saw him, he was barricading himself in his room.

The drive across country through the crisp morning air was a pleasant one.

The man he meant to interview was Sir Andrew Fothergill, the head of the expedition which had aroused the wrath of the priests of Mempho.

But first he had to pick up Mahmoud from Hargreave's house.

Mamoud had collected some baggage when Paul Terhune