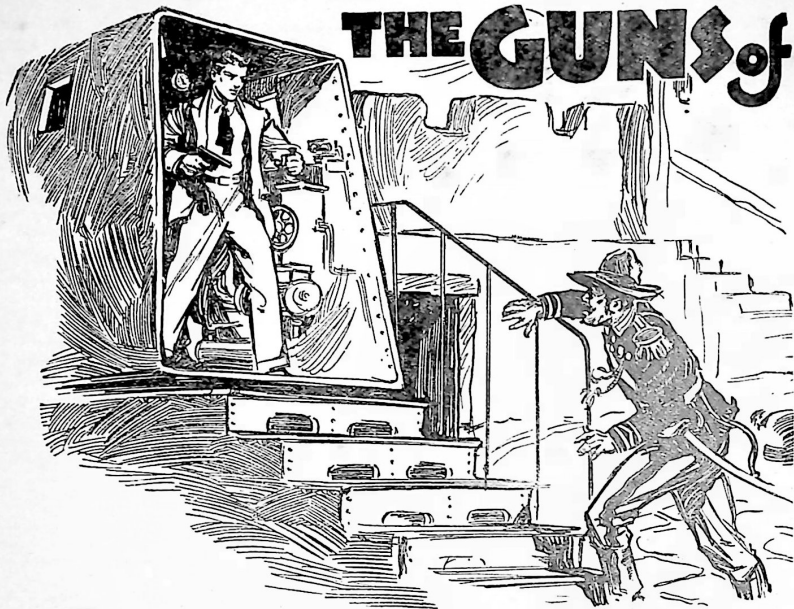


THE GUNS of



THE FIRST CHAPTER

The Eve of a Revolution !

THE lad who had been lying still as death against the skylight heard a dull murmur of cheering from the lighted room below, and then began to wriggle his way snake-like across the flat roof towards the white parapet. Gaining this he cautiously raised his head and shoulders and peered over.

A gleam of light, filtering through a green-shuttered window, fell upon a bayonet and the shadowy figure of a sentry standing motionless in the darkness below.

The lad bobbed down and drew in his breath a little quickly.

The meeting in the room below was breaking

up. In the courtyard on the opposite side of the building he heard a car started up, and a blaze of light fell upon dark green trees in the distance as headlights were switched on.

There was no escape that way, and it was dangerous to linger. He peered over the parapet again.

Only control of the guns of Gumpeco Fort can save San Dorontes from the hands of rebels ! Daring death, young Tim Rafferty sets out to save the city, and thereby experiences the biggest thrill of his life !

The sentry still stood there—a big man in shabby blue uniform and equipment, a sombrero on his head, and his rifle with the glinting bayonet held at the easy. From the garden round the white

and green bungalow rose the somewhat sickly perfume of the night-scented tropical flowers of Central America.

The lad raised a leg over the parapet, then the other, and his cool blue eyes judged the

GUMPECO

C. Malcolm Hincks



distance between himself and the sentry. There was little margin for error with that bayonet so unpleasantly close! He put his hands on the parapet, gave himself a push off, and leapt.

He landed heavily on the sentry's shoulders, and with a cry of alarm the man pitched forward on his face, his rifle clanking on to a path. The lad had leapt up from the sentry's shoulders and was bursting through some shrubs before the man could recover sufficiently to let out a yell.

"Halt!"

The lad plunged on, taking a zigzag course. He tripped over a root and pitched forward.

Crack!

A bullet whistled over his head, stripping leaves in its passage.

"Faith, it was a lucky fall!" murmured the lad, and went plunging on.

Another rifle rang out on the still night,

but the shot went yards away. Then the boy heard a harsh commanding voice speaking in Spanish, shouting out an order to stop firing.

He knew why the order was given; they didn't want to advertise that meeting.

Vaulting a low fence, the lad came out on a hillside road. Down below, beyond the sleeping town, could be seen the twinkling lights of ships in San Dorontes harbour—silvery lights against a black background. The clock of the stately cathedral on the Plaza Grande was striking twelve. He had been two hours on that roof!

The lad raced on, but as he approached the outskirts of the town he slowed down to a quick walk. A car was coming up behind him, so he slipped into the garden in front of a small bungalow and, crouching by a bush, waited for it to pass. Powerful headlights lit up the garden for a moment, then it was in darkness again, and the lad was following the car down the hill.

Some distance farther on he turned off into a road, lit by street lights, of gaily-coloured bungalows. He kept to the shadows and glanced over his shoulder before he turned in at a white gateway. He went round to the back and whistled softly.

Almost instantly a door was opened.

"I thought they'd got you, Tim!" said a deep, agitated voice. "I'd never have forgiven myself for having let you go!"

"Faith, I'd never have forgiven you if you hadn't, uncle," was the cool reply. "Is there anything to eat?"

A burly figure moved along the passage, and Tim Rafferty followed his uncle into a room plainly furnished and carpeted with coconut matting. Some cold meat, a salad, and some fruit stood on a cane table. Ignoring the eager curiosity in his uncle's eyes, Tim flopped into a chair and began to eat ravenously, pouring himself out a glass of the light native wine of Bonduras, the small Central American republic of which San Dorontes was the capital and sea port.

"Your information was right this time, uncle," said Tim, his mouth half full. "It's odds on Manoel being president at sunrise in the morning."

"If that's right, Tim, it will break us! Manoel hates the British. He'll not renew our concession, and without the concession it will mean winding up the company. Tell me quickly—what did you hear?"

"Everything. I shinned up on to the roof just before ten, and before they'd put sentries round. The skylight was partly open for ventilation, and I knew enough Spanish to catch the drift of all that was said. It's to be a peaceful revolution—there's treachery, of course. The post office and central telephone exchange were being handed over to Manoel's men at midnight, and no message will now be allowed through. San Dorontes is cut off from the world. In the early morning troops will march on the president's palace; the blue flag of Manoel will be run up at sunrise, and that will be a signal for the gunboat in the harbour, and Gumpeco Fort to run up the blue flag, too. They reckon that even President Jose's most loyal troops will jib with the guns of Gumpeco trained upon the city!"

The face of Tim's uncle, Donald Stewart, was now a little haggard. He had been manager for the British company in San Dorontes for ten years, and could soon look forward to comfortable retirement; but the news his young nephew brought him spelled ruin. There had been rumours of revolution before. Manoel Mexatas had been scheming for years, but twice his plans had been nipped in the bud. This time, however, things had been managed differently. It was only that afternoon Mr. Stewart had heard a whisper of the coming revolution, with the result that the wild young son of the Irishman who had married his sister had volunteered to find out something more definite from Manoel's big bungalow on the hill above San Dorontes. The news he had learned seemed rather serious for his uncle.

"You took a ghastly risk, my boy, and three hours ago your information would have been worth a fortune, but it's too late now; we can do nothing!"

The lad—he was little more, despite the fact that he stood nearly six feet, with broad shoulders, deep chest, and the tapering form of the athlete—took an apple from the

plate and began to quite coolly peel it with a silver knife. His lean face was tanned, his fair hair tumbled and damp with perspiration, and there was a thoughtful expression in the cool, audacious blue eyes. The white drill suit he wore was soiled from his crawl on the roof and plunge through the shrubs.

"I thought we could do something," he said slowly, "if I could get into Fort Gumpeco."

His uncle, who had sunk dejectedly into a chair, looked up with a start.

"Tim, you're mad! You took a ghastly risk in going to the bungalow on the hill to-night, but that would be child's play compared with even walking along the road towards Gumpeco."

"Faith, I like taking risks; but I'd not be after walking along the road to Gumpeco. I'd be taking the mule track. Captain Cassilis is a friend of yours—he showed us over the fort only a few weeks ago. He's loyal to the president, and was sick at not being given the command. If I could get a word with him we might beat that blue-faced monkey Manoel yet!"

His uncle gazed at him blankly.

"How?"

"The guns of Gumpeco are the key to the situation; they could smash San Dorontes to pieces. They've modern artillery there, and the gunboat is a mere pop-gun compared with it. A blue flag won't float for long above the palace or the gunboat if a red and orange flag floats over Fort Gumpeco!"

The blue eyes were lit with excitement now. Tim Rafferty dropped the core of the apple into his plate and finished his glass of wine.

"But Cassilis is not in command of the fort."

"The man in command of the fort, and the man who rules Bonduras, is the man who can fire the guns of Gumpeco at sunrise!" said Tim Rafferty, jumping to his feet. "Let me have your revolver, uncle. I've a feeling that I've got a sporting chance, and faith, I'm going to take it!"

Mr. Stewart walked over to a desk, unlocked a drawer, and produced a small automatic.

"I think you're mad, Tim, and for heaven's



Judging the distance between himself and the rebels' sentry, Tim leapt down from the parapet, to land heavily on the unsuspecting man's shoulders!

sake don't use this unless it's to save your life. If your parents were alive I wouldn't dare to let you go; but you know the risk you're taking, and if you can get to Pedro Cassilis—another young daredevil like yourself—the situation might yet be saved. Hang it, boy, you've no brains in the office, but I admire your pluck!"

Tim Rafferty grinned cheerfully.

"If I bring this off will you let me go from the office?"

"If you bring this off, if you save the president, there'll be no need for you to worry about any office," was the hoarse, excited reply of his uncle.

THE SECOND CHAPTER

Daring Death!

THE city slept, but there were shadowy prowlers in and around San Dorontes that night—men on strange business, and men who waited for a signal at sunrise. High up on the rugged hill behind the city, invisible but ever-menacing in the darkness, was Fort Gumpeco.

Tim Rafferty, as he stole along in the shadows, was wearing a dark cloak over his white drill suit, and a sombrero on his fair head. He had started on the risky climb to the fort. Soon the road he was traversing gave place to a cart track. Later Tim knew this would in turn bring him to the long-disused mule track leading to the fort.

He was well on the alert as he moved quietly along, for he had narrowly escaped three furtive, armed figures patrolling the road he had just left. San Dorontes was cut off from the world, and there were men whose job it was to see that no one left the city that night.

Then suddenly, from a bush two yards ahead of Tim, appeared a cloaked figure, who spoke sharply in Spanish, and the lad was looking down the muzzle of a revolver.

A second's delay and the man would summon help, and his chance be gone; a movement towards the pocket where the automatic lay heavy against his side, and he would get a bullet, but—

Desperately he acted in a way the cloaked man did not expect. He doubled his right

fist and drove it with all his force right between the man's eyes, and, swift as lightning, brought his left up in a swinging hook under an unshaven jaw.

Clop!

The man, reeling from the first blow, went headlong backwards as he received the second, before he went to the ground heavily, out to the wide.

Tim stooped and picked up the man's revolver, slipped it into his own pocket, and went hurrying on, but proceeding with more caution. The man he had knocked out was probably a guard, but he might not be able to do the same to the next one he met.

Villas and bungalows had been left behind now. The track became rougher and narrower, until it ultimately tapered down into a stony path through long, coarse grass, rapidly steepening as it approached the fort a mile away at the top of the hill, with the last five hundred yards a precipitous climb up the face of the rock on which the fort had been built.

Tim went down on his hands and knees as he left the shelter of the stunted bushes, and crawled along between the tall grass. His eyes were used to the darkness now, but he knew that the eyes of the guards would be as sharp as his, and that round San Dorontes that night a man was likely to shoot first and apologise afterwards, if circumstances should demand an apology! He knew full well that he was daring death to reach Fort Gumpeco.

His hands and knees ached and his progress was slow, but it was a long time before he felt it wise to get to his feet and hurry on. In the old days the track had been used by mules, being so much shorter than the journey by road, but nowadays it was forsaken.

It was growing a little lighter when Tim gained the last bad stretch. He had to go down on all fours again, partly because of the stiffness of the climb, but principally because the nearness of the fort, with alert sentries, made it highly advisable. As he crawled round a jagged rock he found himself facing a bayonet!

Tim's heart seemed to cease to beat. The bayonet was within a foot of his throat, and instinctively he threw up his hands, and

knelt motionless on that rough track, almost under the shadow of Fort Gumpeco.

The bayonet never moved; no challenge came from the still man behind it.

The icy grip left his heart. He peered closer, and as he did so, he dropped his right hand and grabbed from his pocket the automatic his uncle had lent him. No movement came from the sentry, and a somewhat sheepish grin spread over Tim's bronzed, audacious face. He had received a false shock, for the attitude of the man behind the bayonet ought to have told him that he had little or nothing to fear.

The sentry must have been posted on the mule track, and fallen asleep at his post. He lay huddled over his rifle, flat on his stomach, one arm doubled under him, the other flung out stiffly. As Tim crawled forward, levelling the automatic at the man's head, it struck him that there was something strange in the stiffness of that left arm which lay across his path; and then he caught in his breath with a faint exclamation of horror.

He was pointing his revolver at the head of a dead man!

He had been shot in the back some time ago, for Tim had heard no shot, and the body was cold and stiffening. With a little shudder Tim climbed on.

The discovery was disturbing. The man

Suddenly from a bush a few yards ahead appeared a cloaked figure which spoke sharply in Spanish, and Tim found himself looking at the muzzle of a gun!



had been shot from behind. If anyone else had been trying to gain admittance to Fort Gumpeco that night he would certainly not have shot a sentry in the back. Had he dared to shoot at all it would have been facing the man who had challenged.

The dead man must have been leaving the fort, and shot from that direction. Why?

Tim had enough problems of his own, but the problem puzzled him. It hardly tended to give him heart in the big risk before him. If he could gain the main entrance to the fort and get into the presence of Captain Pedro Cassilis, he would at least have a sporting chance of success, for the young officer was a friend of his uncle's, and had become quite friendly with Tim since the lad's arrival at his uncle's office six months ago.

The night was slowly turning to a smoky-grey now, as Tim wriggled on snake-like along the ground. He saw the silhouetted form of a sentry, and remained motionless, barely daring to breathe; then on again, crawling

over rough ground, among stunted, brambly bushes, until his sombrero got caught in a branch.

Bang!

No challenge—just the crack of a rifle! The bullet whistled over his legs and pierced the sombrero on the bush.

A sharp command rang out within the fort. He heard heavy boots running along the wall as he made a wild dash for the shelter of it, just as two more rifles rang out.

Tim pressed against the wall as he moved slowly along.

"Halt! Who goes there?"

He had come upon the main gate before he had expected it, and a man in a blue uniform was holding a bayoneted rifle in close proximity to his stomach.

"A friend!" replied Tim quickly. "A friend to see Captain Cassilis."

He spoke in good Spanish, and the mention of the name of the second in command at Fort Gumpeco had its effect upon the sentry.

"From whom do you come?"

"From his friend, Mr. Stewart. I am British!"

"You must come with me, *senor*," said the sentry. "Put up your hands and walk in front of me. If you put down your hands, I shoot."

He pointed to the main gate a few yards away, where a little group of soldiers stood, and a non-commissioned officer strode forward and demanded to know who he was and what he was doing there.

Tim told the same story he had told the sentry, and he was marched in through the main gate, under an archway, and into a courtyard. A young officer came hurrying up, and looked a little bewildered.

"How did you get here?" he demanded.

"I came by the old mule track. I did not want to be held up by sentries on the road route. There's a dead soldier lying two or three hundred yards down the track."

"A shot deserter," said the officer shortly, and turned to a man beside him. "Inform Captain Cassilis of this man's visit. I will tell Colonel Almonde."

Tim was left standing in the courtyard with an armed man on either side of him, and he

was tingling with excitement. Everything depended upon his getting a word with Cassilis before the commander of the fort appeared on the scene.

Dawn was breaking now, and he looked quickly round him. The fort was an old-fashioned one. On three sides of the square were the officers' and men's quarters, storerooms and kitchen, and on the fourth side, the only one approachable, and which dominated the city and harbour of San Dorontes, were the gun emplacements.

It seemed only the other day that Captain Pedro Cassilis had been showing him with pride those two modern nine-inch guns, electrically controlled and fired from a conning-tower on a steel platform above. Then everything had seemed peaceful; but now there was an air of activity, of tension. He saw that the two big guns had their muzzles through the thick wall, and he thought of that fascinating instrument board in the conning-tower—the two little brass wheels which raised or deflected those wicked-looking muzzles, and the switch lever which could fire one or other gun, or the two together.

The guns had been unloaded then, and Cassilis had showed him how the mechanism worked. The Bondurian army was not famous for its gunners, but from that tower one trained officer could, unaided, control those two big guns, and Cassilis had learnt his gunnery with the Royal Artillery in England.

The guards beside Tim suddenly stiffened to attention, for the young officer was returning, and by his side walked a swarthy man in blue silk pyjamas and slippers, feet, his black hair tumbled, and rubbing sleepy eyes. On his upper lip was a small black moustache, and his fascinating smile revealed perfect white teeth.

"Hullo, Rafferty!" he said in excellent English, with only the slightest accent. "You've a nerve to come here! I'm practically under arrest. I felt certain that there was something up, and I sent a man to tell the president that the big guns were loaded, and that it meant mischief. They shot the man before he could get clear, and I'm under open arrest for a breach of discipline. This means revolution, I know. That Almonde must

be backing that blue-faced monkey Manoel. What news have you brought?"

"Can these men speak English?"

"No."

"Then you can stop the revolution!" cried Tim. "Your commander is a traitor, so is the captain of the gunboat in the harbour. Manoel's no stomach for a fight. He's got a few disgruntled officers and the rag-tag and bobtail civil guard, who would sell their souls for sixpence. Manoel's relying on those guns. Faith, man, get to that tower and you'll be ruler of Bonduras!"

Cassilis stared at him blankly; but before Tim could explain, there was a clatter in the courtyard, and in the grey morning light a short, thick-set man in a blue uniform with much gold lace upon it, came striding across the courtyard. He was buckling on his sword as he walked—a sallow-faced man with a heavy black moustache and small, pointed black beard.

"Arrest those men!" he snapped in Spanish.

Cassilis, still a little dazed, was unprepared for the move, and two soldiers stepped up to him and seized his arms. The third soldier, who had been standing beside Tim, his bayoneted rifle held at the ready, evidently considered that the young man was, to all intents and purposes, already under arrest, and made no move.

But Tim made a move. Success or failure, probably life or death, depended upon what he did in the next few moments. It was only swift action and the element of surprise that could save him now. He could not rely upon Pedro Cassilis.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

Control of the Guns!

IN a flash the long black cloak he wore was off Tim's shoulders and thrown upon the soldier beside him, and he was sprinting for the steps leading to the control-tower above the two big guns.

"Stop him!"

He had gained the foot of the steps before the astounded commander rapped out the order to his dazed men.

Bang! A bullet whistled past Tim's ear.

He leapt up the steel steps, and as he gained the tower, a rifle cracked out again.

Phut! A bullet flattened itself against the thick wall of the fort.

Tim hastily gripped the lever which controlled the firing of the two big guns of Gumpeco, thankful that he knew the right one.

"Put down your rifles or I'll blow your town to blazes!" he shouted in Spanish. Colonel Almonde, his face ashen, shouted a hoarse command as he moved nearer to the steps.

Tim Rafferty knew that at any moment his bluff might be called by a rush up those steps, or a bullet put through his head; but, despite his peril, he was perfectly cool.

He stood in a compartment of steel something like a locomotive cab, shielded at the front and sides and roofed over, but open at the back to the steps and courtyard. At the foot of the steps stood the officer commanding the fort, his face livid. Beyond him was the young Spanish officer in blue silk pyjamas, with a sentry on either side of him, and behind them the members of the small garrison who were standing open-mouthed gazing up at Tim, waiting to see what happened.

Putting his left hand on the switch lever, Tim whipped out his uncle's automatic as Colonel Almonde put a foot on the first step.

"Stand back and keep your men back or I fire these guns!"

The colonel took his foot off the step. He was not a quick thinker, and he wanted to gain time, to try to reason with this lunatic who had taken them by surprise.

"I want to talk to you, boy—I will show mercy. Come down here and I will——"

"I've told you what I shall do if a rifle is raised against me, and if I was shot I should fire the guns in falling."

That was a probability that had not been overlooked by the worried commander.

"You would not kill hundreds of innocent people!"

"I don't want to. I shan't unless you kill or attempt to kill me; but I'm not worrying much about it. I shouldn't be alive to have any worry. You would have the worrying to do until the population of San Dorontes either shot or hanged you. I expect it would

be lynching, colonel; they're rather an excitable crowd!"

A yellowish hand stroked the bull neck above the gold-braided collar of the blue tunic.

The rising sun suffused the clear sky over the hills. The day of the revolution was dawning, but unless Colonel Almonde acted quickly there was a possibility of the revolution being quashed before it had started.

Then suddenly there was a stir in the courtyard; the smashing of flesh against flesh and bone against bone. Tim saw a soldier holding both hands to his face, another lying on his back, and Captain Cassilis was dashing across the courtyard to the steps of the control-tower.

"It's all right, Rafferty," cried the captain calmly, as he pushed by Colonel Almonde. "Good work on your part. Keep Almonde covered." He sprang up the steps and began turning one of the brass wheels; a wicked-looking gun took a higher elevation, and swung round a little. "Almonde had it trained on the cavalry barracks of the palace—the loyal soldiers of President Jose."

Pedro Cassilis studied the sights, and then still keeping his hand on the lever, he turned to the young officer and pointed to the colonel.

"Arrest that traitor!"

Almonde's hand moved towards the sword at his side.

"Drop that!"

Tim Rafferty's voice was sharp and commanding. The Bondurian colonel looked up into narrowed, cold blue eyes, and his hand fell to his side. The nervous young officer stepped up to him.

"In the name of the president I take command here!" cried Captain Cassilis. "You will obey my orders! Tie the traitor to that gun until I've time to deal with him."

The young officer had the order carried out. Whatever feelings the troops might have had in the matter they were quite willing to bind their colonel to one of the old guns that were still in the courtyard.

As the sun rose, and the waters of San Dorontes harbour gleamed blue beyond the white and green of the city, a young man in

blue pyjamas and a boy in stained white drill commanded the guns of Gumpeco.

"Where's the flag?" demanded Cassilis.

A soldier stepped forward with a blue flag.

"The colonel told me this flag, captain," he said, a little uncomfortably.

"I tell you the president's flag; go and get it."

The man saluted and moved quickly away. The staff above the big white palace far below remained bare, but out in the harbour a blue flag rose slowly to the mast of the gunboat, and broke out in the slight breeze.

Not knowing who was in command at the fort, the captain of the gunboat had had the rebels' flag hoisted as arranged. Captain Cassilis smiled to himself as he put his hand on the lever that fired the first gun. He would give the captain a broad hint to have it hauled down. Then——

Boooooom!

The roar was so terrific, so unexpected, that Tim put his hands to his ears. He saw number one gun shoot back, quivering like a thing of life; heard a screaming whistle and an explosion, and just beyond the gunboat a great mass of water rose in the air. The tubby warship rocked, and small craft danced wildly on the disturbed water. Then the blue flag fluttered to the deck as an agitated artilleryman ran up the red and yellow flag above Fort Gumpeco.

Tim grinned.

"That's the sort of language they understand!" he said.

Pedro Cassilis was training the other gun on the palace.

"Young Rafferty," he said, smiling, his white teeth gleaming under his little black moustache, "we proclaim ourselves Presidents of Bonduras until a flag goes up over the palace. You were right; it's the man who can fire the guns of Gumpeco who dominates the situation. It will never happen again; the politicians will see to that. But for the moment, boy, we're more powerful than kings, and we've beaten that traitor Manoel."

With the red and yellow flag flying over Fort Gumpeco, and that extremely strong hint from the fort to the gunboat to haul



Stop him!" Tim had reached the foot of the steps before the command rang out. Bang! A bullet whistled past the boy's ear.

down Manoel's flag, the conspirators' scheme was ruined. The shot had roused the city.

Cassilis handed Tim a pair of binoculars, and looking through them, Tim could see people scurrying about the Plaza Grande, and a body of horsemen riding out from the quadrangle of the president's palace; but the flag-staff of the palace and the mast of the gunboat remained bare.

"Why not give them another hint to run up the right flag?" said Tim calmly.

"Good idea!" agreed the captain, and raised the elevation of the other gun.

Boooooom!

This time the shell exploded dangerously near to the gunboat. Through the drifting smoke which floated in front of the fort, Tim, still looking through the powerful glasses, saw a commotion on the deck of the antique battleship, and the red and yellow flag was run up to the masthead. At the same moment the flag of President Jose broke from the mast on the flat roof of the white palace.

The guns of Gumpeco had won!

Half-an-hour later Captain Cassilis, in blue and gold uniform, a cigarette between his lips, joined Tim in the control-tower.

"I had some delay in getting through to the president. Apparently Manoel had a big pull in that department, and more or less backed on it. The telephone operator said he had orders to put no messages through. I told him that if my connection was not put through at once I would blow the exchange to blazes, and I've never had a quicker connection to the palace.

"Don Jose was only half awake, and had no idea how close he had been to being deposed; but I told him that it was through you that he was still President of Bonduras, and he was duly grateful. There's been a little rioting in the streets, but no real damage done, and all is quiet now. They're sending some loyal troops up to arrest Almonde, and I hope they get Manoel."

Tim grinned.

"I suppose in a revolution they can't think of everything, captain, but, faith, Manoel was a mug to back on bossing the telephones instead of the electricity department."

The cigarette fell from the captain's suddenly-opened mouth.

"By Jove, yes! If they'd cut off the current from the cable which runs up here the big guns would have been out of action. But they weren't to know who was in command up here."

Tim was watching a body of horsemen in white uniforms and red-plumed silvery helmets riding up the winding road to the fort.

"I suppose not; but when I grabbed that lever it suddenly flashed on me that the current might have been cut off, and for a second I expected Almonde to shoot. When I saw he was windy I felt all right, for whether the current was on or off didn't matter two hoots so long as he thought it was on; but I'm glad he didn't call my bluff."

They went down into the courtyard, where the guard was turned out, and the gates opened. Bayonets flashed in the sunshine as the guard presented arms, and a grizzled, scarred officer of the President's Horse-guards came up to Tim and Captain Cassilis and shook hands with them.

"The president is greatly impressed by your pluck and daring, Senor Rafferty. Manoel has been arrested and is to be deported. We shall want an account of what you heard and saw from the roof of his bungalow, and a suitable reward for your services is to be paid you."

"And he deserves it!" said Captain Pedro Cassilis.

The officer of the guard looked at Tim.

"I can't think, now, why you should have risked your life in a purely political matter which was no concern of yours."

Tim Rafferty grinned cheerfully.

"But it concerned my uncle very much, and, faith, the adventure was worth the risk and the chance of getting free of office work!"

THE END

CLASSICS-MODERNS CRICKET



By the Rookwood Rhymester

WE'VE done with footer boots and balls;
The football season's finished;
But "Moderns versus Classics"
Continues undiminished.

For now upon the cricket pitch
In flannels they are present;
Still friends but deadly rivals; which,
Upon the whole, is pleasant.

Silver at the wicket now
A forceful bat is wielding,
While Modern fellows show us how
Extremely well they're fielding.
As Lovell makes a splendid hit
Off Lacey's tricky bowling,
We see old Doddy jump at it—
Upon the ground he's rolling.

He's clutched the ball and held it tight,
And to his feet has jumped,
While Lovell scrambles back in fright;
But just too late, he's stumped!
A pretty piece of fielding that;
The crowd with glee is roaring
As Mornington comes out to bat
And carries on the scoring.

The Classics are all out at tea;
They've totalled ninety-seven.
The Moderns rub their hands with glee
And cheer their bold eleven.
It's quite a decent total; still,
The Moderns look like winning;
But Tommy Cook gets out for nil—
A rather bad beginning.

It's five to six! Ten runs to win!
One wicket yet to fall!
Dodd and Wadsley still are in
As Conroy takes the ball.
A boundary! Another four!
By Jove, exciting cricket!
Another hit! The Moderns roar!
They've won it by a wicket.