

# Two Blooming

The Adventures of  
Two Criminals.

# Bay Trees.

BY  
DOUGLAS WINTON.

"I have seen the wicked as he spread  
himself like a green bay-tree."—Psal.  
xxvii. v. 35.

CHAPTER I.  
A Modern Berserk

"I'm with you anywhere and in anything, Piggy. I'm a criminal already, and I've nothing to lose. But you—"

"Dry up! Then that is settled; we are both outcasts, and we agree to go into partnership in the business. No time like the present. Question is, where?"

"The first speaker was Jack Demerse his companion Peter—more generally designated Piggy—Porson. To the proper understanding of the above fragment of conversation, a slight retrospective digression is necessary. Peter Porson, now in his twenty-sixth year, was the son of a wealthy tradesman, who, afflicted, as is often the case, with social ambition, had sent him to Eton, where, to put it more strongly, he was not a success. Even from the point of view of the semi-annual examinations he was a failure. This would not have been the case had Eton been a school with a real up-to-date modern side; but Eton, as all the world knows, holds fast to the classical traditions of a hundred years ago, and there was only one thing that young Porson hated more than Latin, and that was Greek. However, that was the least of it. He hated classics and refused to work at them, he nevertheless always managed to hold his place in study; for he was the kind of boy who gets more insight into a page of grammar by reading it over than many another does by having it laboriously explained to him by a tutor. No; what vexed his unpopularity, and gave him the name of Piggy before he had been three months at the school, was his unsociability. He was morose—or, if morose is not exactly the word, let us say self-centred—and quite unclubbable. Cricket he frankly hated, and boating he cared for little more. He liked to mess about in the stinks room (chemical laboratory), and he was sometimes to be seen in the carpenter's workshop; but his ideal happy afternoon was to lie somewhere—out of bounds, to be free from interruption—snore—for Piggy was well supplied with funds, and deprived himself of no indulgence, more especially if such was prohibited—and read. No wonder he was unpopular, and no wonder he was kicked, often boys of this kind manage, if not to shake down among the rest, at least, in process of time, to secure their good-will. They get known as "old" so-and-so, spoken of as "awful old swot, doncher-know; knows a heap 'bout stinks an' rabbits' guts, an' so on"; and in the end are rather liked. Not so with Piggy Porson. There was a certain

element, not of pluck exactly, but dogged tenacity or resistance rather, in his character, that ultimately caused him to be let go his own way. It was known that, driven into a corner, Piggy would fight like a wild cat at bay; thus did he in time attain to a sort of suzerainty—the right to exist, but to exist in a kind of perpetual semi-Coventry; and that was all. He was never liked; in fact, at that time at all events there was but little that was likable about Piggy. He hated back, too, just as cordially as they hated him; and it was characteristic of the boy—and of the man—that his hatred lasted. In after years no one ever heard Piggy refer to Eton as "the dear old school"; it was always frankly "that damned hole." During the whole of his school career he made but one friend, and made him, so to speak, by accident. Having arrived automatically at the standing in the school at which, by Eton usage, a boy is allowed a fag, little Jack Demerse, much to Piggy's disgust, was allotted to him in that capacity. It was no good for him to say that he did not want a fag; the house-captain told him that he had got to have one so did the house-master. Among his colleagues the latter expressed the hope that "now that he has a younger boy to look after, perhaps something may be made of that queer boy Porson. I have often observed that even the most perverse boys, quite hopeless cases apparently, often respond remarkably to the stimulus of a little wholesome responsibility, etc., etc." For the house-master took himself seriously as an educationalist.

And, to a certain extent, the house-master was right. For chance had willed that little Demerse and Piggy should have characters, which, though not in the least alike, were yet admirably fitted to dovetail. The fag was a weak edition of the ordinary English boy, above the average in cleverness, and with a strong capacity for admiration. His fag-master being, of course, far too senior for him to think of setting up as a critic of his solitary ways, or know anything about his unpopularity, he, with ready loyalty, obeyed his behests, making himself useful as laboratory boy—in connection with his private experiments, and learning, it is to be feared, a good deal that a little boy had better not learn in connection with certain disquisitions with his fag-master affected "up-town."

So, little by little, Piggy thawed, and learned that human companionship is not always such a bad thing

and, to that extent, the new arrangement did benefit him. But if the house-master thought that his moral side would respond to the incentive to set a good example to his fag, the house-master was mistaken. At this period of his existence it is doubtful if Piggy had anything worth calling a moral side to his character at all; and that, really, was not so much a proof of natural badness as of defective training. While far from meaning to say that Piggy had been born with the attributes of a saint, yet it will be seen by the reader who cares to go on with this story, that a germ at any rate of good was there—must have been there somewhere; but so far, no one had taken the slightest trouble to cultivate it. At home no one had, for Piggy had no mother; and his father—a vulgar, pompous, worldly man—had considered that his part was over when he settled the half-yearly school bills. Had he been an ordinary boy the discipline of the school would have hammered a certain amount of rough-and-ready morality into his composition. This is no tirade against the English public school system; but it is a fact that here and there is a boy for whom that system is quite unsuitable. Piggy was such a boy; and he grew up, as we see, not so much immoral, as non-moral; he had not yet considered the question. There was, it is true, at this time, a seething mass of literature fermenting in his brain; for Piggy was an omnivorous reader; but it was still fermenting, gestating; ideas, still less opinions, had not yet arisen from the mass. At nineteen he left Eton to go to Cambridge. His father had wished Oxford, as being more aristocratic; but Piggy had had enough of classics, stuck out a sulky jaw, and said "No!" Mr. Porson, senior, he said, that time something more, so as to do than to fight the point, so to Cambridge Piggy went.

But his sojourn on the banks of the Cam was not destined to be prolonged. Before he had attended his third lecture, all the world knew that Mr. Joseph Porson had come a most horrible financial cropper, and as a result of a long series of more than questionable transactions, was now a fugitive from justice, supposed in Brazil. It was the old story. A manufacturer makes money, and thinks that, after middle life, he can blossom out into a full-fledged financier. Naturally he falls as easy a due to the hungry city crew as, in former days, the guileless public who bought his sand for sugar fell to him. Then desperate efforts to reconvert; chairmanships of shady companies—which, however, despite their

shadiness, are milked by others just as shady, but clever enough to less the right side of the law—false balance-sheets, a deeper and yet a deeper wallowing; then, when things can no longer be concealed, the loudly advertised trip to Cairo, a ticket at the same time being secretly purchased for Hamburg; the false moustache, the night passed in a low German lodging-house, and the long passage from Hamburg to South America, the landing at Rio in shuddering half-expectancy that, simultaneously with the first step taken on terra-firma, will come the clutch of the policeman's hand on the collar; and then—generally—the trip back to England in custody. Whether the police were more stupid, or old Joe Porson took his measures more craftily than usual, the arrest on landing, in his case, did not eventuate. So his son was spared seeing his father in the dock.

Of course, he left Cambridge. He was rather glad to do so, even on these terms. He knew no one, and had no plans; but he had some money. He came to London, and took rooms in Bloomsbury, but soon left them for an attic in Soho, where he felt free. Then began the happiest time that, so far, he had ever known. He read enormously, getting his books from a free library; took a good deal of cheap dissipation at second-class music halls and third-class public-houses, went about shabby, not because he needed to, but because it was less trouble; smoked shag tobacco in a clay pipe, and either cooked his meals himself or took them at some cheap workman's coffee-house.

Such a life can be kept up on a ridiculously small sum, and it was the third winter, almost simultaneously, two things happened: Piggy decided that it was time to quit dreaming and start to do something, and a cheque of his, which, as usual, he had got changed at the chemist's at the corner, came back marked "refer to drawer." The few hundreds which had been lying at his bank were finished.

When Piggy, soon after moving into his attic, and still more or less decent as to outward appearance, had taken the first cheque to the tradesman, at the same time making a purchase and stating where he lived, the latter had offered to pass it through his bank; but had excused himself from advancing any cash thereon. However, week after week the cheques had come, and week after week they had been honoured; and this notwithstanding the fact that, with each week that passed, the drawer grew shabbier; so that finally the chemist, who got a good deal of custom from Piggy, who purchased many things for his experiments—and in a desultory, irregular way he did a good deal of scientific work in his attic—put him down as some curious phenomenon that he could not explain, and gave him cash for his cheques without question. Now this last cheque was considerably bigger than usual, being, in fact, for no less a sum than twenty pounds. The awakening process had antedated the exhaustion of the exchequer by a few days, and Piggy had resolved to go to Paris. Exactly why he would have found it hard to say; probably

because he had vague plans of putting some of his scientific ideas to profit, and the Gallic atmosphere is proverbially more favourable to the fruition of such schemes than the cold, matter-of-fact, material climate of Anglo-Saxondom.

He had just finished his preparations for departure. Of his old wardrobe there was plenty that was still quite decent, and of these things he had packed a valise. Then, putting the laid battered of his two pot hats on his head, he locked his door, and, valise in hand, descended the stairs and set off for Charing Cross Station. As he passed the chemist's the latter spied him, and, leaving a customer whom he was serving to an assistant, ran out and called him: "Mr. Porson, would you mind speaking to me a minute?"

"Can't stop, got a train to catch—going to Paris."

"Going to—eh! Well, I'm sorry, but I must ask you to stop all the same," said the tradesman, in a voice which had suddenly become a good deal less polite.

(To be continued.)

## THEY OBJECT TO TIPPING.

Bargain Hunting Shoppers Refuse to Give Gratuities.

(From the Chicago Tribune.)

The shopping woman, especially the elegantly dressed woman, of leisure, according to the matron of one of the popular Chicago waiting rooms, is the poorest tipper in the world. The matron, to whom she turns for stationery, pens, books, needles, pins and thread, or whom she asks to watch her things while she goes here and there upon an errand, or the maid whom she asks to assist with some refractory part of her dress seldom receives even a dime from her for this kind of a service. If she is ill, however, it is a different story. She is then inclined to pay generously for the most trifling service.

"She seems to be so frightened if she is the least bit ill, downtown," said one of the matrons, "that she is ready to estimate even the most trifling service and if she has but little money with her at the time it is not uncommon for her to send a check to the maid afterward. If it wasn't for the things we are able to do for those who are ill the tips in a place of this kind would be few and far between. Most of the women say 'How perfectly lovely,' when we get out hairpins or hatpins or any little thing they happen to want, and they exclaim in admiration at the generosity on the part of the management which supplies the things, but if we brush them or help them to sew or pin things together they take it as one and the same thing with the pins and needles and lay it all to the loveliness of the store."



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**J. RHEA**

## STUDENTS IN FIERCE FIGHT.

Italians and Germans Mix it Up at an Austrian University with Fatal Result.

Innsbruck, Austria, Nov. 3.—The opening of the Italian faculty at the University here today led to a terrible affray between German and Italian students. Italian students fired upon the others with revolvers and six were wounded, one of them fatally.

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