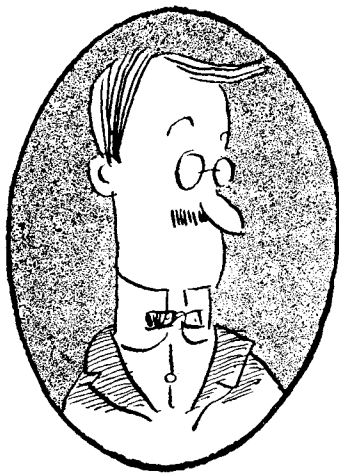


# The Crooks' Convention

Continued from page 44



## McGoofey's First Reader

By H. I. Phillips

Illustrated by the author

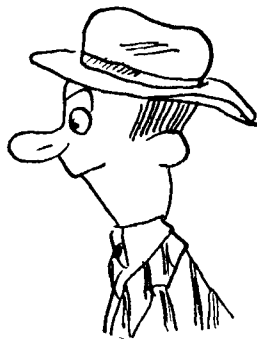
Who is this? *This is Luke.*  
Who is Luke? *Luke is a hat salesman.*

### Lesson 2

And who is this? *This is Gus, an average citizen.*

Where is Gus going? *Gus is going down to the haberdasher's to get a hat.*

Does Luke see Gus? *No, but before he gets through he will see plenty of him.*

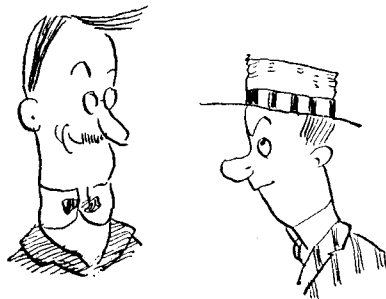


### Lesson 3

*This is Gus trying on the first hat Luke hands him. Is it a good fit? Perfect. Is the price satisfactory? In every respect.*

*Does the hat look well on Gus? As well as any hat in the shop.*

*Will Gus choose this hat? No.*



### Lesson 4

What is Luke doing now? *He is carting up more hats for Gus to try on.*

How many has Gus tried on so far? *About eleven dozen.*

Is Luke weary and out of patience? *Very much so.*

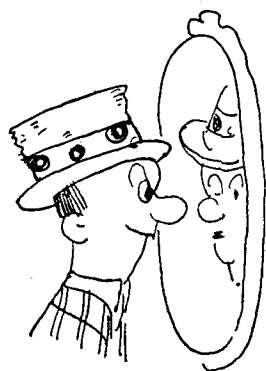


### Lesson 5

*Hasn't Gus found a hat to suit him yet? No, but he is still looking.*

*But Luke isn't waiting on him in this picture, is he? No.*

*What became of him? Luke went mad, and they had to shoot him.*



### Lesson 6

Who, for the luvvamike, is this? *This is Gus in the hat he finally bought.*

Could he look worse in anything? *Nothing except a water bucket.*

Then how did he come to take it? *The salesman who succeeded Luke had a dominating personality and a you-take-the-hat-I-tell-you-to-or-I'll-sock-you-in-the-eye manner.*



"The A. A. S. W. issues few warnings, Mr. Harrington," said Gildad. "We stretched a point in your case, and sent several. Yet today, in defiance of them, you held a meeting in opposition to our aims."

"And I'm organizing others. I'm going to put every crook in the country out of business or behind the bars." He glared at the confidence man. "Now I'm going to ring for the police."

"Better not, Mr. Harrington," warned Gildad.

"Do you think I'm afraid of you?" blustered Harrington. "Why, I've half a dozen detectives outside. Make a move toward me, and I'll have them in here."

"But you'd be dead before you could ring, Mr. Harrington," said Gildad.

AID lay at the alarm in a room fifty feet away, and Harrington's hand was within inches of the bell that would sound the alarm. He banished a panicky fear that had come to him.

"Don't be silly," he sneered. "Before you can reach me I'll have rung the bell. And you won't dare fire a revolver because it'll be heard outside."

As patiently as though he reasoned with a child, Gildad spoke:

"Don't you think I thought all that out in advance, Mr. Harrington?"

"What do you mean?" demanded the publisher.

"I'll explain to you," answered Gildad. "Keep your hands right near the bell. Don't be alarmed."

"Don't worry," said the other. "I'm ready for any move of yours."

Gildad rose easily to his feet. Harrington's hand, above the pushbutton, grew rigid. Gildad smiled, and now there was a blistering contempt in the curve of his lips.

"Not afraid of a man so much smaller, are you, Mr. Harrington?"

"Never mind about whether I'm afraid or not. I'm ready, that's all."

"And I'm walking away from you," said Gildad, moving toward the window.

"That makes it certain that I can't leap on you before you ring for help."

He was at the window now, and he pointed outward and downward.

"You've seen the crowd down below, Mr. Harrington?"

"Go on with what you have to say," growled Harrington.

"I planned a slight diversion today," said Gildad. "Unfortunately, eagerness caused the first diversion to occur too early. With you in your office were a group of people. I wished to see you alone. So—I called off my associates and caused them to regather a little later."

"It is quite a triumph of executive ability, Mr. Harrington, to be able to move considerable numbers of men exactly as one wills. And the triumph becomes greater when the people moved are a lawless lot, unused to obeying but the dictates of their own impulses. You'll pardon a little pride, won't you?"

He stood by the window, easily observable by anyone on the street below.

"When my followers regathered," Gildad went on, "their general aim was exactly as it had been in the first place. On the first occasion the arrest of a public speaker on a soapbox was to have been the signal for a riotous demonstration. A couple of hundred workers, involuntarily assisted by the curious crowd that would instantly gather, would cause considerable uproar."

"The same plan has been followed on this second effort. Instead of a speaker,

however, two automobiles collided. Their drivers quarreled, fought, and gasoline was ignited to cause a blaze. As the fire department arrived fights broke out on near-by corners. All this, my dear man, in order to distract attention from any occurrence in this office. That makes it so much easier for me to walk out of here."

"You are forgetting," sneered Harrington, "my bell here. The guards outside will not be distracted by any noise in the street." He grew braver as he measured the distance between Gildad and himself. "If you fire a revolver, you'll be heard."

"Unless," objected Gildad, "at the moment I fire, another noise, louder than any revolver shot, drowns the report of my gun."

"You mean the yelling outside? Maniac was what I called you, and maniac was right. If you think you can escape—"

"Not yells," said Gildad. "But suppose, as I raised my left hand thus, a bomb was exploded outside—"

As he spoke he raised his left hand. On the street below, staring intently up at the window, and removed enough from the milling crowd to be unimpeded, stood Manners.

As Gildad's hand flashed in the air, Manners hurled high in the air a round black object that burst into flame, that drowned, in the roar of its explosion, not merely the cries of the rioting crowd, but the sound of the revolver which Gildad simultaneously fired.

Harrington's fingers, obedient to the sudden warning which Gildad's upraised left hand had given him, descended toward the pushbutton. But he had never dreamed that the criminal leader would dare risk a revolver shot, and his hand was too far away, had wandered off in that security which Gildad's retreat to the window had engendered in him.

HE WAS dead, shot unerringly through the forehead, before his fingers touched the button, and when they did so they merely rested upon it inertly, without pressure.

Gildad stood still, listening, a fraction of a minute. Then he approached Harrington's body, assured himself that the publisher was dead, straightened his cravat, patted his lapels into place, and put in a pocket the weapon which he had drawn so suddenly and used in so deadly a fashion.

Then he walked leisurely to the door, opened it, saw the office boy lounging at the foot of a short corridor, and turned back into the room.

"Certainly, Mr. Harrington. I'll tell him now. A great pleasure to have had our talk, sir, I assure you. Good morning."

He stepped into the corridor, closing the door behind him.

"Here, boy," he called to the office boy.

That youth, remembering the two big tips he had received, leaped eagerly to his feet.

"Yes, sir," he answered.

"Mr. Harrington wishes you to tell the city editor to send reporters outside to cover that bomb explosion, if he hasn't men there already. And he doesn't wish to be disturbed for half an hour."

"Yes, sir," said the office boy.

Leisurely Gildad walked to the end of the corridor. He disdained the elevator. He was whistling almost gayly as he descended the stairs.

(To be continued next week)

# Your Plumber knows *why*— *do You?*



*ASBESTOCEL pipe covering is an investment which pays satisfactory dividends in more heat for less fuel*

**Y**OUR plumber knows that bare heater pipes cause uncomfortable homes. Bare heater pipes waste fuel and increase heating cost. Your house can be more comfortable for less expense if the heater pipes are insulated with Asbestocel pipe covering.

The reason for this is that the warmth generated in your heater must be carried to the spot where it is to work. If you send the heat along a leaking path, loss is certain.

Your plumber can easily reduce heat losses on your present system, or can start you right in your new home. He can do this by using Improved Asbestocel, the product of the world leader in the development of asbestos insulations.

Without protecting insulation on the pipes the huge power plants which furnish you electric light, or supply power for great industrial plants, could not operate. You *can* run your own heating plant with bare pipes, but every day that you do so means that you are burning more fuel than is necessary.

## *Ask Your Plumber about Fuel Saving*

Whether you are planning to build a new home or overhaul the heating system of your present residence, you will do wisely to give heed to the advice of your local plumber and steam-fitter. He is a man whose business lifetime has been spent in solving the plumbing and heating problems of others (many of them possibly being your neighbors). He will bring to your home this lifetime of experience plus mechanical expertness and specialized knowledge which, for the sake of living comfort, you can ill afford to do without.

If it is a new home you are building he will apply to it the concentrated knowledge he has received not only through experience but through contact with all the makers of heating equipment—people you never see in the course of your daily business. He knows a certain size pipe is needed to carry a certain quantity of warming steam or hot water—and he knows Improved Asbestocel is the one insulation which, when applied to that pipe, will give the steam most generous safe conduct to your radiators.

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# How would You play it?

**By Milton C. Work**  
Author of Auction Bridge Complete

**North**

- ♠ J-6
- ♥ Q-10-5-3-2
- ♦ Q-7-6-3
- ♣ 4-3

**East**

- ♠ 9-3
- ♥ 9-8-6
- ♦ J-8-5
- ♣ A-K-9-6-2

**West**

- ♠ A-K-Q-8-7-4
- ♥ J
- ♦ K-10-2
- ♣ Q-J-10

**South**

- ♠ 10-5-2
- ♥ A-K-7-4
- ♦ A-9-4
- ♣ 8-7-5

THE above Auction Bridge hand was given in last week's issue of Collier's; the description follows:

## The Auction

South made an initial bid of one Heart. A four-card suit is much weaker as the trump than a five-carder; and therefore it needs additional side strength to justify the bid. South's hand is an exact type of a perfectly sound four-card initial bid.

West bid one Spade. As the opponents had bid, there was little to be gained by attempting to preempt and to double would be more apt to deceive her partner than the adversaries.

North had one of those holdings with which a player hates to raise his partner's suit-bid from one to two, and yet dare not pass. While a suit-bidder usually needs side strength rather than length in his suit from his partner, nevertheless five cards of the partner's suit headed by Queen-Ten, two doubletons—one in the adverse suit, and a Queen in the remaining suit—is too strong a combination for a pass; so North bid two Hearts.

East had the holding with which many players err. Having only two cards—lack of normal support—she was not justified in raising her partner's Major; but she had sufficient strength in Clubs and bid three of that suit.

South of course passed on the second round.

West, with her Spade holding, had no reason to hesitate about rebidding. She consequently became the Declarer at three Spades.

## The Play

North opened his partner's Heart suit and on the second round of Hearts. Closed Hand ruffed and of course promptly proceeded to exhaust the adverse trumps, being able to do so and still retain two long trumps in her own hand.

Declarer could now see that she was sure to make five Club tricks and consequently to obtain two Diamond discards; but that would leave her with a Diamond which then would lose and she would win 11 tricks, the extra trick would produce 59 points, and, as trying for it only involved a slight risk of a trick immaterial (there being a differ-

ence of only 9 points between taking ten and 11 tricks), Declarer determined to try for the Small Slam. She could do this with almost no risk because South, having initially bid a four-card suit, was marked with the Ace of Diamonds (North, who had raised Hearts, to trick 1 had led the Trey of Hearts and to trick 2 had played the Deuce of Hearts, so North originally held five Hearts and South consequently only four).

Nothing could be gained by a squeeze play, but the one possibility was an effort to deceive South. To trick 6 Closed Hand led the Ten of Clubs, winning the trick in Dummy with the King; and then led from Dummy a small Diamond through the Ace which she was quite confident that South held. This play was most embarrassing to South. He appreciated the possibility that a failure to play his Ace might result in his "taking it home with him"; but on the other hand it did not look as if Declarer's hand had solid Clubs and it might be that Declarer wished to finesse in Diamonds and that North's Queen would take a trick that otherwise would not be made, so this particular South foolishly risked a small Diamond on this trick. Declarer of course put up the King and, winning the trick, was able to discard her two Diamonds on the long Clubs in Dummy, thus virtually stealing a Small Slam from her adversaries. Most Declarers, as soon as the trumps were drawn, would have placed the cards face up on the table, conceding the adversaries one Diamond trick; but as long as there is a chance of making an extra trick, concessions are foolish. Give the adversaries a chance to err.

Next week's hand is given below; make up your mind how you would bid and play it before you read next week's description.

North	East
S. A-J-3-2	S. 10-9-8-6
H. 10-3-2	H. Q-J-5
D. K-J-2	D. 10-4
C. Q-1-2	C. J-8-6-5
West	South
S. 7	S. K-Q-5-4
H. 8-6	H. A-K-9-7-4
D. Q-9-8-7-6-5	D. A-3
C. A-10-7-3	C. K-9

# Double Danger

Continued from page 26

purchase from her quarter davits. "Answer, old man: are you all right?" persisted the voice inside my helmet. "Just—just a minute—I'm down!" I panted, scrambling on all fours on the gooey bottom of Narragansett Bay.

## Communication Gone!

I felt a tug on my line. Involuntarily I reached up and clutched at the slender hose which carried to me sweet life-giving air.

Ensued a few minutes of semi-confusion. I was trying to reply to hurried questions from above and at the same time rising drunkenly to my knees. Not until afterward did I know that it took months of practice for a man to learn to balance in the weird medium of the undersea.

Then, right in the middle of a sentence, "Try working toward—" came silence.

"Try what?" I shouted.

No answer.

"What did you say to try?" I bel-lowed.

No answer.

Fearfully I plunged a hand up to my helmet. My fingers closed on a bit of limp cord. My telephone line had been severed.

Remember, I was not a practiced diver. No man with experience would have moved rapidly at a moment like that. But I was too ignorant to avoid this worst of all diving mistakes: struggling out of a hole before one knows just what the hole is. I suppose that one-eyed glimmering face of the torpedo just three feet from me was what finally unnerved me. At any rate, I tried to run back to the ladder.

I must have succeeded in at least the first jump of my escape, for the powerful yank that bowled me over backward left me stunned and huddled in the mud. It was then, in a wave of terror, that I realized that my air line was foul.

As I lay there I experimented with a pull. Sure enough, when I put my full weight on the line the quiet stream that was being pumped into my helmet became a sibilant hiss, then ceased altogether until I slackened my pull.

Yet the fact that the danger was palpable at last had a strange effect on me. I lost all my panic and began to think swift rational thoughts.

I rose slowly to my feet, carefully balancing so I would not sway and put my weight again on the hose. There was a chance that it might be foul of some sharp edge that would saw it through in no time. If this happened, I was doomed. The ladder was much too far away for me to reach before I should be suffocated.

The pendent lamp still cast its brilliant light upon the greenish truncated cone of water lying there as if in wait for me. I twisted my body around. Yes, and there was still the yellowish mass of the destroyer's propeller.

I needed no divine prescience to know that I was afoul of the destroyer's after-works; probably the most dangerous predicament a diver could be in, owing first to the sharp metal corners of propeller blades, and, second, to the swaying and lifting of the vessel herself.

If ever a man was caught in a death trap, it was I.

And my world in that wretched moment consisted of but three grotesque entities: the eerie lamp that lit it, the massive and merciless propeller blade behind me, and the shining missile of steel-skinned high explosive at my feet. The oppressive liquid atmosphere in which I existed and the viscous mud on

which I stood were too nearly invisible to lend more than a nightmarish tone to my whole dreadful predicament.

As there was nothing safe to do but wait for rescue, I waited.

Presently I felt a light touch on my back. A thrill of joy went through me. They had sent down a diver. He would free me in an instant!

I reached back to grip the hand of my savior. My fingers touched only a hard, cold knifelike edge. It was the propeller blade. But it had been shoulder-high a few minutes before. Now it was—

Then I knew: the ebb tide was lowering the destroyer down upon me!

Panic came back. I fought a little at first, despite the danger that I might saw my air hose in two. But I might as well have tried to hoist a battleship upon my shoulder as to budge that big, cold blade that pressed me down closer and closer to the bottom and nearer and nearer to the deadly torpedo.

I began to wonder which would be the most painless way to die: Let the dropping vessel crush the life out of me on the bottom? No, that wouldn't be swift enough. Struggle until I'd cut my air hose loose, and suffocate? No, I had nearly drowned once before; it was too frightful a torture. Wait until the destroyer thrust me and my metallic helmet against the torpedo and in a second be blown to shreds? No, that would mean the death of the other men who at this very moment must be working frantically to free me.

While I was still brooding in this fashion I felt myself quietly but firmly pushed to a kneeling position right under the lamp and with the glass plate before my eyes not a foot from the business end of the torpedo. I tried to rise, but was bumped again for my pains.

This could mean but one thing. The wind had risen and was kicking up just enough of a sea on the bay to lift the destroyer in its ground swell. The last vestige of hope that my air hose might last now vanished. Surely in a matter of minutes it would be shredded through by the working metal edges that must be pressing it in half a dozen spots.

Closer to the torpedo the destroyer pushed me, sometimes bumping me, sometimes only ruthlessly easing her terrible weight upon me from behind.

## My Dream Comes True

I felt a cold touch on my shoulder's flesh. As I shrank from it I involuntarily put up one hand to fend the ghostly finger off. But the gesture was a vague one, for I realized immediately that my hand was OUTSIDE the suit, while I was within and that the cold touch was a leak: the first sure sign that the end was very near.

Then my dream of the night before came true: a warning serpent-like hiss—the dying gasp of my air supply—sounded in my ear. I felt as if I were being suffocated. I WAS BEING SUFFOCATED. Cold, clammy hands were at my throat. I couldn't move. Paralyzed with terror, I lay there waiting helplessly to choke to death.

Mercifully I lost consciousness. . . .

I came to on the dock. It was luck and the skill of an expert diver that saved me. He threw on his suit and came down when my telephone line broke. He found my line foul of a steel strut jutting from the destroyer's after body. Plying a crowbar with superhuman strength he wrenched me free. In doing so he shut off my air long enough to render me unconscious.

Since that day I can't bear even to sleep with the covers over my head.