

**OUR SMASHING GUY FAWKES NUMBER!**  
**CRAMMED WITH YARNS OF THE GLORIOUS FIFTH!**



# Boys' Magazine

**2D**  
EVERY SATURDAY

**FIZZ-BANG FUN AT ST. GIDDY'S!**

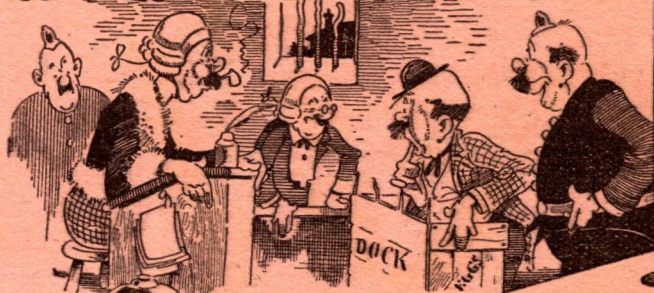
**GRIPPING LONG YARN OF MIRTH  
AND THRILLS AT SCHOOL**

Vol. XIX—No. 505—November 7, 1931

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# THE JESTER'S REALM



FOOTBALLS AND FOUNTAIN PENS AWARDED TO SENDERS OF JOKES ON THIS PAGE. SEND YOUR FAVOURITE JOKE ON P.C. WITH COUPON ON PAGE 26, TO JOKE EDITOR, "BOYS' MAGAZINE," 196, GRAY'S INN-RD. LONDON, W.C.1.

Prisoner: I ain't a bad man, yer honour. Give me time to repent . . .

Judge: All right. Time it is: Ten years!

(Football to A. C. READ, 155, Mark's-road, Essex.)

## WAR.

SCHOOLMASTER: Don't you know it is very wrong to fight, little boy? What does the Good Book say?

TOMMY (who has just polished off the school bully): I dunno. I ain't read it no further than David an' Goliath.

(Fountain pen to F. J. BARTER, Swastika, Merryland's Road, Laindon, Essex.)

## STUFF AND NONSENSE!

WAYFARER WILLIE: Don't yer find that there drain-pipe 'ard for a pillow?

TRAMPING THOMAS: Well, no; yer see I've stuffed it wiv straw.

(Fountain pen to RICHARD GILBERT, 7, Railway Terrace, Heath Road, Weybridge, Surrey.)

## PALE!

BILL: I wonder how Tommy Brown always manages to get off school when there is a football match.

JACK: Oh, that's easy for him. He simply washes his face, and the teacher sends him home thinking he is ill.

(Fountain pen to JAMES BROWN, 9, Dorward Place, Montrose, Angus.)

## A BULL!

FATHER: Which lesson at school do you like best?

TOMMY: Geography.

FATHER: Why?

TOMMY: Because you can hide a B.M. Pocket Dart-board behind the Atlas.

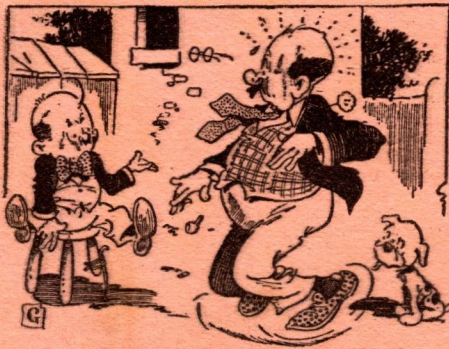
(Fountain pen to MASTER A. M. BENSON, "Green-side," Greatham, Stockton-on-Tees.)

## HE'LL LEARN!

GRANDMA: I wouldn't slide down the banister like that, John!

JOHN: Wouldn't you, Grandma? Show me how you'd do it.

(Fountain pen to CHARLES PANTON, 104, Blake Av., Barking, Essex.)



Father: Why didn't you tell me the truth?  
Son: I thought my story was much more interesting!

(Football to F. BREAKWELL, "Perthyre," Rockfield, near Monmouth.)

## INVITATION!

Naughty Tommy had escaped from his angry mother, and hid himself under his bed. When father returned she sent him upstairs with a birch. Father stooped down by the bed, and the voice underneath exclaimed:

"Hallo, father! Come under! Is she after you, too?"

(Fountain pen to H. MARSH, Hurstvale, Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent.)

## NOT IN HISTORY.

TEACHER: Who succeeded Edward VI?

TOMMY: Mary, sir.

TEACHER: And who followed Mary?

TOMMY: Her little lamb.

(Fountain pen to JAMES POND, 26, Ella Road, Thorpe Hamlet, Norwich, Norfolk.)

## LET US ALL BLOW.

A professor was engaged in showing his class an interesting experiment.

"Now," he said impressively, "if anything goes wrong, we—and the laboratory with us—may be blown in the air.

"Come a little nearer, so that you may follow me closer!"

(Fountain pen to R. GODFREY, Sutton, Wymondham, Norfolk.)

## SUBSTITUTE.

BOY (in shop): 'Ow much is that weddin' cake?

SHOPKEEPER: Fifty-five guineas.

BOY: Give us a half-penny bath-bun, then!

(Fountain pen to G. B. YOUNG, 3, Whittinghame Gardens, Glasgow.)

## IT WAS A FULL STOP!

TEACHER: Explain the meaning of punctuation, Tommy.

TOMMY: My mother (comma) bought a car (semi-colon), hit a wall (full stop).

(Fountain pen to P. COLLINS, 18 "B" M. grs., R.A.F., Cranwell, Lincs.)



**HAIR-RAISING COMPLETE  
THRILLER OF THE IRON  
ROAD.**

**A Yarn of Mystery, Intrigue, and Thunderous  
Excitement, Played Out on Shaking Footplates  
of Trains Doomed to Crash!**

# The Phantom Wrecker



**Symbol of Disaster to the Drivers of the London & Border Railway. Dreaded because its appearance presaged a smash on the line! Pat Healey, driver, and Tom Kennedy, signalman, fighting for life and honour, soon proved that the Phantom suffered from a very human failing—revenge!**

## The Phantom.

**I**T was a dark, chill night, and in the air was a hint of Northern mist that had drifted off the moors.

The thin, stray vapours weaved ghostly patterns about the crouching figure that skulked along the main line of the London and Border Railway.

Bearded and sinister, with wild eyes and a shock of unruly, flaming hair, the creature seemed like some demon who had stepped out of a nightmare to take mortal form.

A light shone steadily ahead. It came from a signal box, which turned out to be the prowler's objective, for, climbing its tall flight of steps, he pushed his lean, dead-white face against the windowpanes and scanned its interior with glaring eyes.

A young fellow in shirt-sleeves occupied the box. His back was turned to the watcher, as he worked on the array of levers. Close to the window, on a small ledge, was a steaming can of tea from which he evidently intended to take some refreshment.

*All the characters in the stories printed in this paper are fictitious, the names do not refer to any living person or persons.*

It was on that steaming tin cup that the prowler's eyes became riveted. He took from his pocket a small tablet, and noiselessly opened the window to drop it into the can with a swift and stealthy gesture.

The draught caught the attention of the youngster in the box, but, when he turned, hand and phial had disappeared and the window had been quietly shut.

"Draughtiest cabin I ever struck," the young signalman muttered, his clean-cut, boyish face registering disgust. "I'll have to fix some felt around that darn' window."

Signalman Tom Kennedy was a watch-dog of the iron way, posted on a lonely yet busy section of the London and Border line, a mile from the new Doone River Bridge.

Signalman Tom glanced at the clock in his cabin. A quarter-to-twelve, and nothing to trouble him on his section till the midnight "goods" from Burnford-in-Helmsdale approached the main track from the moorland branch line. For fifteen minutes, then, he could sit back at his ease, with the signals showing the "all clear" for passenger traffic.

In fifteen minutes his hand would grasp the lever that would alter the points and swing the midnight "goods" from branch to main line.

"Now for a spot o' wet and warm," Tom said, reaching for the can of steaming tea. "Through the teeth an' through the guns, look out, stomach, here it comes." And he proceeded to sip the refreshing beverage.

He did not see the face that was peering in at him through the windows, but presently he noticed a strange, tired sensation. He tried to fight it off, but it gained a hold of him, and by the time he had finished the tea he was visibly sagging.



He tried to rouse himself, and blinked at the clock. "Got to switch those points," he murmured drowsily. "Another ten minutes yet, huh . . . ? Hang it, what's the matter with me? Never felt so confounded sleepy . . ."

He attempted to stand up, but in a moment had sunk back in his chair with a hollow groan, his head drooping on his breast.

Outside, the man on the cabin steps uttered a low and evil chuckle, then rapidly descended to the ground and slunk northward. He passed the points and swerved to follow the moorland branch line to a remote station around which a group of quarrymen's dwellings clustered.

The Burnford-in-Helmsdale "goods" was standing there, its powerful engine swathed in lazy wraiths of steam, and the furnace glowing red. Presently, with a series of thunderous gusts from its funnel, the loco pulled forward, trucks clanking in its rear.

It was scarcely out of the wayside station, and had still to gather speed, when the sinister prowler of the iron road sprang to its buffers and perched himself like an ugly gnome in front of the massive boiler . . .

WITH his grub-tin swinging from his fingers, and his peaked cap set at a jaunty angle, Driver Pat Healey swung along the road that led to the Doone Bridge signal-cabin.

He had just come off duty, after bringing a train across the Border into England, and he was homeward bound to a cottage near the edge of the moor. The Doone Bridge road was not his quickest route, but he had decided to look in on his chum Tom Kennedy.

He was still some little distance from the cabin when he saw the furnace glow of an engine that was approaching from the Burnford-in-Helmsdale branch line, and a moment later the midnight "goods" thundered into full view.

Pat Healey stopped dead in his tracks. He had seen something that his eyes could scarcely credit—a wild, inhuman figure clinging to the side of the boiler and waving one skinny arm aloft in a mad paroxysm of unholy glee.

For an instant the strange apparition was impressed on Pat's mind, a creature poised amid the weaving drifts of steam and linned in the lurid glare. Then the figure leapt from its perch to roll over and over on the soft, mossy moorland, and next second the train clattered over the main-line points.

The engine gave a wild lurch, and a sharp cry escaped Pat as he saw it tumble like a stricken giant. It hurtled down a steep embankment that dropped to the road along which he had been striding. Tender and trucks followed it and piled themselves at the foot of the declivity in shattered chaos. A thunder of sound filled the youngster's ears, and then all was silent except for the hissing steam that rose from the overturned loco.

Pat broke into a run, passing the wreckage of the trucks and speeding on till he reached the spot where the engine lay, and as he ran there came to his ears the echo of soul-chilling, demon laughter. But the youngster did not heed it. His eyes were fixed on the sprawled form of a man in overalls.

He was the driver, and as he fell on his knees beside him Pat recognised him as a veteran of the Company. The old fellow's mate lay mangled under the crushing bulk of the loco, and it was clear that the driver himself had not long to live. But he opened his eyes and spoke in a whisper as Pat raised him.

"The Phantom Wrecker," he groaned. "I saw 'im with me own eyes—a-ridin' the engine just before the crash. Ben Garwood—'twas he, lad . . ."

## The Level-Crossing.

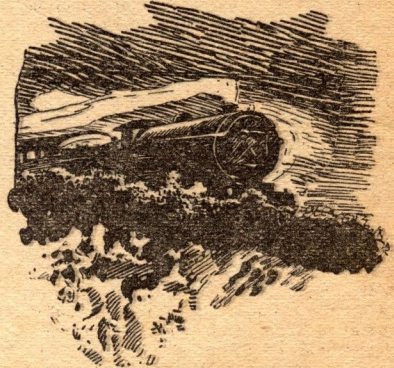
WAITING cap in hand outside the Superintendent's office at Helmsdale Junction, a mile or two north of the Doone Bridge, Pat Healey saw his chum Tom Kennedy emerge with downcast mien.

"What was the verdict, Tom?" he asked, fearing that it had been the very worst for his pal.

"What could it be?" Tom rejoined hopelessly. "I was found asleep in the cabin, wasn't I? I'm suspended from duty pending an inquiry, and I know what that'll mean. I'll be held responsible."

Pat bit his lip, and then, with a mute gesture of consolation, he knocked at the door of the office and entered.

Two men were seated within. One was the Superintendent, and the other was a rugged, grey-haired man of whom Pat and every other employe of the London



THE SHATTERING JUGGERNAUT COMES.  
—The express came sweeping round the bend.

and Border-line had heard. He was James Denton, managing director of the Company.

"This is Driver Healey, sir," the Superintendent told his superior. "Healey," he added, "we understand you were an eye-witness to last night's tragedy."

At Denton's request Pat related all that he had seen.

"There's one thing that may interest you, sir," he finished, thinking his information might possibly stand in Tom Kennedy's favour. "When I reached Beldon, the driver of the 'goods,' his last words were these: 'The Phantom Wrecker—I saw him with my own eyes. Ben Garwood . . .'"

Denton seemed to start. Then he gave vent to an impatient exclamation.

"Nonsense," he said. "There has been a lot of crazy talk about this Phantom Wrecker who is seen riding doomed trains, but it's rank folly. The plain truth is this: There has been a chapter of accidents on our line during the last month or so, and we're losing prestige. Passengers are avoiding our route and travelling by a rival and inferior service—the Northern Company. Merchants are taking business away from us, and sending freight by the Northern Company, too. And we've got to re-establish ourselves in the confidence of the public."

"Yes, sir," Pat murmured. "But I can tell you Tom Kennedy is one of the most conscientious—"

Denton interrupted him. "No one knows better than I do that a signalman *ought* to be conscientious," he said. "For I started in life as a signalman myself. And I never slept at my post. Last night's affair was a case of sheer neglect on Kennedy's part."



"But the driver of the 'goods' said that this Ben Garwood . . ."

"Listen, young man," put in Denton. "Do you know who Garwood was? . . . No, well, I'll tell you. He was a driver in the London and Border Company some years ago, and his negligence cost the lives of a hundred people. He was sent to prison, convicted on the evidence of a signalman. Lately, all kinds of stories have been going around about him laying a curse on the Line he used to work for. It's rubbish—rubbish, I tell you!"

He pulled a wallet from his pocket and produced a newspaper cutting.

"Read this," he went on. "I happen to be interested in this man Garwood, whom you have mentioned, and that cutting concerns him."

Pat scanned the Press notice:

**LONG-TERM CONVICT ATTEMPTS ESCAPE.**  
*Recaptured, Garwood Forfeits all Remission of Sentence.*

**ECHO OF CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE CASE.**

"That happened six weeks ago," Denton observed, "and Garwood, still in prison, has another eighteen months to serve. So you'll understand why these legends are so much drivel, the series of accidents on our lines having occurred within the last month."

Pat left the office a little while later to go on duty, and, Garwood at liberty or Garwood in jail, of one thing he felt certain, the mysterious figure he had seen riding the "goods" engine had been no illusion, and the mocking, demon laughter he had heard still rang in his ears. . . .

Meanwhile James Denton was giving instructions to the Superintendent. "I'm staying overnight at my country house on the Doone Bridge Road," he said. "To-morrow evening I want a special train to take me on to London—leaving the junction at six-thirty. Arrange accordingly."

He walked out of the office and stepped into a big car. He started for home in the gathering dusk.

A mile from Helmsdale, a rug on the back seat betrayed signs of another presence in the car. Its folds moved, and were lifted aside by a gnarled hand, and a moment later the owner of that hand was revealed as the Phantom Wrecker, terror of the drivers on the London and Border Line!

Raising himself silently, he lifted a heavy spanner above the unsuspecting Denton's head, and with one terrific blow he bludgeoned the senses out of his victim.

Denton sagged forward, hands falling from the wheel. The car swerved wildly, almost running down a solitary wayfarer who sprang aside in the very nick of time. Then the Phantom straightened the automobile.

It was bowling down an incline that led to a level-crossing, and the glaring eyes of the Phantom suddenly picked out a red danger-lamp that told him the gates were closed to road traffic.

The pedestrian who had so narrowly escaped injury was left staring at the automobile, and as he watched it approach the level-crossing gates at undiminished speed he saw the Phantom spring forth.

The Phantom struck the road, fell forward on all fours, scrambled to his feet and then vanished into the midst of a dense range of gorse. Next instant the car smashed into the red danger-lamp on the level-crossing gates, and, splintering the barrier to matchwood, rocked to a standstill on the main line metals.

At that same moment Tom Kennedy—for the pedestrian was none other—became aware of an ominous thunder; and as he turned his head he saw an express train sweeping round a bend in the track.

A shout broke from Tom's lips. On impulse he raced towards the shattered gates. . . .

### The Hut on the Moors.

**L**EANING out of the engine-cab of the south-bound express, Pat Healey peered ahead at a twinkling green signal-light. Pat kept a wary eye on the line ahead, yet he had room in his mind to embrace the wreck of the night before.

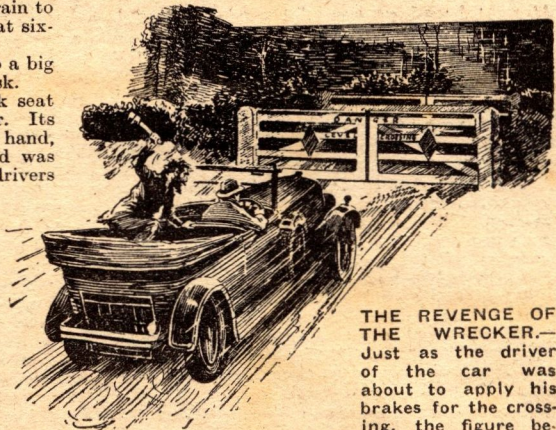
"I can't get Tom Kennedy out of my head," he said to his fireman, as the latter hurled fuel into the greedy furnace-flames. "It may mean prison for him—like that fellow Garwood. And speaking of Garwood—whether he's in jail or not, I saw the Thing they call the Phantom Wrecker . . . Great Scot! Look out, mate! The air-brake lever!"

The last words escaped him in a strident yell. For as the train swung round a curve he saw a car extended athwart the track before him.

The Westinghouse brakes fastened on the train's wheels, and the steel rims shrieked piercingly against the gleaming lines. Three hundred tons of bulk, hurtling through the night at sixty miles an hour, strained forward against the sudden check.

Tom Kennedy saw the steam-wrapt monster bearing down on him and knew that it could never stop in time. Yet he did not hesitate, and at the risk of his life he wrenched open the door of the car and reached inside for the man who lay over the steering-wheel.

Tom dragged him from the seat, lifted him in his arms and turned to stumble over the metals with his burden. The harsh, grinding scream of the train deafened him. A rush of air as it rushed past came near to sweeping him off his balance, and then



**THE REVENGE OF THE WRECKER.**—

Just as the driver of the car was about to apply his brakes for the crossing, the figure behind him brought a spanner crashing down on his head.

battered him there was a resounding crash as the loco battered the car from the track.

Tom set Denton on his feet. The director's eyes were open and he was conscious, though he was unable to stand unsupported.

"It's—it's you, Kennedy!" he faltered. "Why, I—I—"

The train had drawn up, and Pat Healey came running from his cab at that moment. His eyes widened as he recognised Denton.

"Are you all right, sir?" he panted.

"Yes—thanks to Kennedy here," Denton answered. "Don't worry about me, young man. Kennedy, will you help me to my house? It's just down the road. I'll phone the police from there. . . . I was struck down from behind. . . ."



Tom willingly acquiesced, and he saw Denton to the drive of his own home, where they parted.

"Kennedy," Denton said, "I owe you my life, and at the official inquiry I only hope I can put in a few words for you that will save you at least from jail. It's the least I can do. . . ."

Tom thanked him, and turned to make his own way home. It was as he turned that he saw a figure skulking away through some thickets on the other side of the road.

Tom's first impulse was to cry out, for he recognised him as Denton's assailant. But, changing his mind he resolved to shadow him.

Beyond the thickets, the quarry was swallowed by the deep gloom, but, from the sound of his footfalls on a gravelly moorland track, the young signalman managed to follow him.

Some time later he found himself descending into a hollow in which a car stood, its lights shining on a lonely hut. A tall, saw-toothed man climbed out of the automobile as the Phantom approached, and, moving as close as he dared, Tom heard them exchange a greeting.

"I don't like coming here like this," the tall man said, "but there's no one I dare trust with messages. Listen, you'll have to change your plans for to-morrow night. The train you've marked isn't running to schedule. Denton has ordered a Special—to leave Helmsdale at six-thirty and pick him up at Moor Halt near his home. It's the 'goods' that you're to wreck, and its time has been changed to—"

But the Phantom interrupted him. "It's the Special I want," he snarled. "The Special, I say! Denton shall go down—down!"

"All right, have it your way," the other muttered. "Anyhow, all these accidents are bringing freight and passengers to our Line. Jove! And I thought our Company was on its last legs. Why, I'll be buying a controlling interest in the London and Border Railway for a song before the year's out. It was a lucky day for me when I read about that attempt to break jail, and got in touch with the down-and-out Variety entertainer, Rogerson."

"And a lucky day for me, too, Barkham," was the croaking rejoinder.

Barkham! Tom knew that to be the name of the man who controlled the Northern Railway, and the mention of it confirmed a suspicion that had already occurred to him.

With narrowed eyes he watched the scoundrelly railroad magnate climb back into his car without bargaining for what was to follow. For Barkham turned his automobile in the width of the road, and even as Tom dashed for cover the glare of the headlights swept round on him.

He heard a dual cry from Barkham and his murderous associate, and he ran like a hare across the moor. Then the car's engine stormed into full acceleration and, throwing a glance over his shoulder, he saw it swerve from the road and bump after him across the rough ground.

The headlight beams loomed closer on his track. The car was at his very heels. Tom tried to dodge on the run, but the big saloon swung with him and the bonnet struck him a glancing blow that hurled him to the ground.

By the time Tom had managed to pick himself up, Barkham was out of the car and covering him with an automatic. Meanwhile the Phantom was coming across at the double, and as he reached the spot he gave an exclamation of recognition.

"It's the young feller I drugged," he said. "What's to be done wi' him?"

For answer Barkham ordered him to fetch some

rope out of the car and truss the young signalman securely.

"Perhaps we could let him be involved in one of the wrecks. . . . I don't know just how, but we'll figure it out. Meanwhile, let's carry him into the hut. And here—you'd better take this gun in case you're forced to use it."

### Danger on the Line.

FOR an entire day Tom Kennedy had lain huddled in the moorland hut under the watchful and baleful gaze of the Phantom Wrecker.

"I'm goin' now, matey," the murderous scoundrel said with a leer. "There's a big log of a felled tree lyin' near the Doone Bridge. To-night I'm goin' to jam it between the metals. When the engine o' Denton's Special strikes it, the whole train will jump the rails—an' Denton 'll see the last o' this world. . . ."

"But you ain't seen the last o' me, matey," he went on. "I'll be back, an' when Barkham an' me have put our thinkin' caps on you'll be sorry you ever meddled in affairs that don't concern ye."

With these ominous words he slunk out of the hut and Tom was left alone.

The young signalman immediately racked his brains for some plan of escape, which it had been impossible to contemplate while under the vigilance of his half-crazed captor. But it was only when his glance travelled to a window in the hut that he saw any prospect of gaining his freedom.

Struggling to his feet, he hopped across to the window and with a lunge of his shoulder smashed the pane. Then he twisted round and thrust the bonds at his wrists against a ragged fragment of glass that remained in the frame.

Soon the strands were severed. It took him only a few seconds to cast off the rope around his ankles and, the door of the hut being locked, he scrambled out through the shattered window and ran across the lonely moor.

The night was pitch dark, but he knew his route to the main line and he was calculating that he must be near it when he saw a dancing glow in the sky. It was a train approaching from the North, and could be none other than the Special. But to arrest its hurtling progress seemed impossible.

At that very moment Tom saw a flare of light ahead of him. It came from a hollow not far from the track, and as he reached the brink of this natural pit the young signalman perceived a crowd of men, women and children all shouting excitedly as they watched a display of fireworks that had thrown a blaze of illumination about the hollow.

It struck Tom then that it was the night of November the Fifth, and he knew that the inhabitants of several villages in the neighbourhood generally held a celebration at this rendezvous.

The circumstances gave him an inspiration and, running down into the hollow, he blundered into the mob of villagers.

"Danger on the line!" he gasped. "There's a train coming now and it's got to be stopped. Quick, that giant catherine wheel!"

He pointed to a massive firework that was about to be lit and, as one or two of the men in the crowd grasped his meaning, they laid hold of it and rushed it up out of the hollow and across to the railway line.

The Special was now very close, and there was not an instant to lose. The giant wheel was hammered to a telegraph pole and with his own hand Tom held a match to the fuse. There was a loud hiss, and next second the firework was whirling in a blaze of splendour.

Tom sprang in front of the spinning mass of fire and stood limbed in its glare. Sparks showered all



around him as he waved his arms frantically at the oncoming train.

Pat Healey, driving the Special, saw him at once, and with an exclamation the young engineer reached for the brake switch. Screeching, the train slackened speed.

But Pat Healey was not the only one who had spotted Tom. The Phantom Wrecker skulking along the track from the opposite direction, had caught sight of the signalman, and with a low snarl he plucked Barkham's automatic from his pocket.

The special was slowing down to a standstill, and Pat was leaning from the footplate to fling a question at his signalman whom, when the Phantom scrambled aboard at the other side of the engine-cab.

"Keep away from those controls," he shrilled.

Pat and his fireman whipped round, and, before the menace of the gun and the glittering threat in the maniac's eyes, they slowly raised their hands. In a flash the Phantom had reached for the controls to ease off the brakes and give the engine full acceleration.

"Now jump!" he ordered, still keeping Pat and his mate covered with the automatic. "Quick You first, fireman!"

The fireman obeyed, hitting the gravel of the trackway and rolling violently against a telegraph pole. But Pat did not jump. Even as his mate sprang from the cab the engine-driver made as if to follow him—then unexpectedly pounced on the Wrecker.

The gun went off, but Pat had seized the Phantom's wrist and the bullet clanged harmlessly against the footplate.

They grappled savagely. Pat though superior in physique, was battling against a madman's strength. For all the youngster's efforts to turn it aside, the muzzle of the gun was turning slowly towards his temple.

Locked in a death struggle, they swayed back and forth across the rocking cab. And the Special forged on through the night in a smother of flame-tinged steam—thundering southward to the Doone Bridge and destruction.

### The Switch!

**P**ARALYSED for the moment by the suddenness of the Phantom's appearance on the footplate, Tom Kennedy stood inactive as the train drove on. Then with a ringing shout he began to run alongside the track.

The signal-cabin where he had been on duty the previous night was a hundred yards along the line, and he knew that if he could reach that in time the occupants of the Special might yet be saved.

The receding train thundered past the cabin, and fifteen seconds later Tom reached the box and sped up the steps. In a few brief sentences he explained

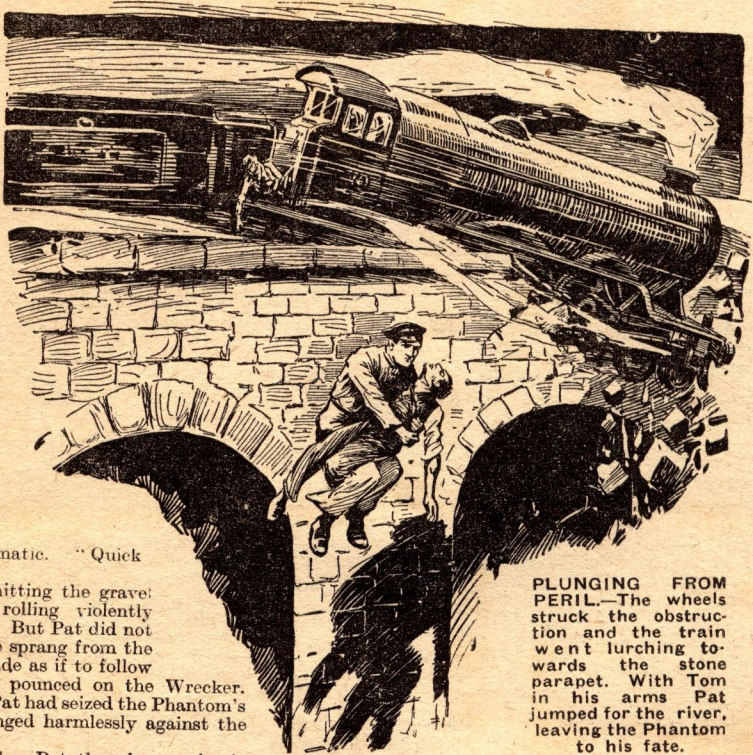
the situation to the man who had relieved him, and the answer he received was startling.

"That tallies with a message that's just come through," the man said. "Take a look at it."

Tom scanned the note swiftly.

*Following information to be delivered to Mr. Denton as early as possible.*

*Prison authorities at Craigness state man in Garwood's cell clever impostor, a former Stage artiste known as Rogerson, Master of Make-up. Rogerson has confessed to arrangement with Bark-*



**PLUNGING FROM PERIL.**—The wheels struck the obstruction and the train went lurching towards the stone parapet. With Tom in his arms Pat jumped for the river, leaving the Phantom to his fate.

*ham, of Northern Line, whereby he was to receive £5,000 for taking Garwood's place . . .*

There was more of the message, but Tom had no time to read it in detail.

"Listen," he said. "The Special is still a mile from the bridge, and between there and the river is the loop line that the freighters use when they pick up market produce at Wellington. The loop line branches off a quarter-of-a-mile away, then joins the main track again near the bridge. Swing the Special on to the loop; that'll give me time to reach the Doone Bridge ahead of it," Tom rapped out. "Quick, over with that switch!"

And as the other signalman made to comply, Tom Kennedy rushed from the cabin and sped along the permanent way as fast as his legs could carry him.

He could still see the Special, and suddenly, to his relief, he realised that it was swerving towards the left. The points had been altered in time and the doomed train side-tracked to the loop line. Before it could cover the extra mile or two which the detour would entail, Tom might be able to reach the bridge,



and move the obstruction. If the Phantom had put it there, he could remove it!

Running on at the top of his speed, he sighted the lofty outline of the Doone Bridge at last, for the moon had swum clear of a dense bank of clouds and every feature of the countryside was now flung into vivid relief.

Along the loop line came the Special, and, with only half-a-minute to spare, Tom stood ready for it as it came.

He had an impression of the giant loco storming past, and of Pat Healey and the Phantom Wrecker still fighting like tigers in the swaying engine-cab. Then he jumped.

His hands clutched at the rail of the tender, and held. He climbed on to the rocking tender. He was at the end, between tender and coaches.

His eye caught the Janney coupling that held the luxurious Pullman car Denton had reserved. It occurred to him that he would be making certain of the managing director's safety if he were to detach the coach.

He stooped to the locking-pin, and as he lifted it the coupling came asunder and the Pullman fell behind.

Tom climbed to the tender again and scrambled across the black, grimy fuel towards the engine-cab, where Pat and the Phantom were in the throes of their titanic struggle.

Tom flung himself from the tender, but the rocking motion of the loco spoiled his judgment. Instead of landing atop of the Phantom, he collided fairly and squarely with Pat, and in another moment driver and signalman were sprawling on the footplate, with an armed madman standing above them.

Eyes blazing with a demonic light of exultation, the Wrecker levelled the automatic at them, but with a cry Tom scrambled to his feet and lunged at the man, whom he knew now as Garwood.

Garwood drew the trigger, and a shot rang out amid the clamour of wheels and steam. Down went Tom Kennedy, but ere the Wrecker could fire again Pat had leapt from the floor of the engine-cab to grapple with him once more.

They closed, and the young engine-driver bundled the madman against the controls. Then he lashed out at Garwood with his fists. He ripped his right to the point of the Wrecker's jaw with an impact that dashed him senseless to the floor.

The young engine-driver turned to his chum. There was blood in Tom Kennedy's hair, where the madman's bullet had grazed his scalp and temporarily stunned him. But, though he was still dazed, he had recovered his wits to some extent and it was with a thrill of horror that he realised the loco was crossing the Doone Bridge.

"Jump, mate!" he gasped. "The engine's goin' to jump the line. Never mind me. Take a header into the river an' swim for it. Leave me..."

Pat acted promptly. "Leave you, be hanged!" he jerked, and with the words he gathered Tom in his arms and lurched to the edge of the footplate.

Even as he braced himself for the jump there was a sudden and ugly jar, and the giant engine seemed to stagger. Next instant it had left the rails and was hurtling towards the parapet of the bridge.

There was a sound like a thunder-clap, and a shower of masonry tumbled into space. Engine and tender plunged after it in a disastrous dive, carrying the huddled form of the Wrecker. But in the moment of the impact with the parapet Pat Healey had sprung into mid-air with his burden.

The great sweep of river seemed to rise to meet him. He heard a tremendous splash as the loco and

its tender struck the surface, and then he experienced a chill shock...

TWO dripping figures stumbled to the spot where the Pullman car had rolled to a standstill, about a hundred yards from the Doone Bridge.

Denton was standing beside the coach, and as they came up he fired a question at them. It was Tom Kennedy who answered, and, when he had explained all, he repeated the message that had been received by the signalman.

"So you see, sir," he finished. "Garwood was responsible for the wrecks, and incidentally I'd like to clear myself of that charge of negligence by telling you I was drugged."

"And Barkham was hand-in-glove with Garwood, eh?" Denton ground out.

"Yes, sir," Tom rejoined, "and before the night's out he can be under arrest. There's only one thing I don't understand, sir, and that is—why Garwood seemed to have it in for you so much?"

Denton smiled a grim smile. "You probably know that I rose from the ranks, young man," he said. "I was a signalman once, and it was on the evidence of a signalman that Garwood was sent to prison. I was that signalman."

"Well, anyway, sir," Pat Healey assured him, "you'll never have anything to fear from Garwood now. I swam around with Tom Kennedy for five or ten minutes, and—Garwood never came to the surface..."

How's that for a Gripping Yarn of fast Thrill upon Thrill? An Old Pal Comes Back—Captain Fury, that Dashing English Officer of the Foreign Legion.

## THE PYROTECHNIC BOMBSHELL

(Continued from page 13).

Cabinet Ministers were heard wondering if the famous scientist had suddenly lost his senses... five seconds... the droning of that aeroplane above was the only thing that broke the stillness... two...

The whole of the sky suddenly seemed to split asunder, and an immense flash of light lit up everything in stark relief. And limned in the red heart of the explosion was the flying-machine that had been hovering there. The plane was disintegrated before the watchers' horrified eyes.

A moment later came a sound to burst the eardrums of a deaf mute—a stentorian, reverberating peal of thunder echoing back and forth from building to building.

AT the Government inquiry into the dramatic affair, which took place later, the full facts were detailed by Captain Kenrick after Larry had told him the amazing truth. The Fighting Scientist and his astute young assistant became the best-known pair in the country, especially after it was learned that Lassiter and his accomplice had been killed by the very bomb they had prepared for others. The photographs of the two scientific 'tecs appeared in every paper, accompanied by glowing accounts of the startling affair in which they had played the roles of heroes. They were personally thanked by the King, fêted by Cabinet Ministers, and mobbed by excited crowds whenever they appeared in the London streets.

And then they disappeared! For both agreed that they would far rather face the fury of the Ghost of Lassiter than suffer the penalties of fame.

Live Wire Larry will be Back Again Soon. There's a chortling yarn to please the funny men Next Week, entitled, "Gaston the Gruesome Garcon," and look out for the Grand New Serial, "The Time Ship Treasure Hunters."



A MODERN GUNPOWDER  
PLOT—EXPLODED.

Live-Wire Larry, the kid with a Chemical Complex,  
and his patron, the Scientific Sleuth, in a startling  
Guy Fawkes Day Exploit



Over three centuries  
have winged their way  
into limbo since Guido  
Vaux suffered the final  
penalty for concocting the first  
Gunpowder Plot.

### Devilry at Devil's Hollow.

**L**IVE-WIRE LARRY, the Scientific Errand Boy, "turned up the wick" of his new mo'bike, and grinned with pleasure at the roar that burst from the exhaust. It was his first ride on it—a present from his friend Captain Kenrick, the Fighting Scientist, for "services rendered" in a recent case. And Larry, after a hard day's work at his job, was even now speeding towards Devil's Hollow, where Captain Kenrick's laboratory stood out on the heath.

Even when not thinking of his roaring speediron Larry's thoughts were pleasant. For to-day was November the Third—and the great celebration of the year was but a scant forty-eight hours away! The thought is enough to make any boy grin with pleasant anticipation, but Larry had special cause to congratulate himself. For the Fighting Scientist, whom he sometimes assisted in his experiments when the day's errands were done, had included Larry in an invitation to what was perhaps the greatest firework display of all time.

It was a very special affair, Larry knew, being given by the Government in honour of visitors from a foreign country. It was to be staged on the Terrace of the Houses of Parliament, and the Cabinet, the rulers of

England, the foreign visitors, and a chosen few of the most famous men of England, were to view the affair from inside the Houses of Parliament. And among those chosen few would be Captain Kenrick, the great scientist, and—Live-wire Larry!

Larry's thoughts were rudely interrupted as he came in sight of the Captain's house in Devil's Hollow. An open car came roaring out of the drive, skidded into the road, and dashed past him with a screech of tortured tyres. Larry, almost flung off his bike by the rush of wind, had a fleeting vision of two men inside, one of them, a sallow man with a lank, black beard, bending over the wheel with a fiendish grin on his face. Then Larry had to slam on his brakes for the turn into the drive to Captain Kenrick's house.

He propped his bike against the pleasant ivy-covered porch, and walked in. There was no sign of the Captain. He went through to the laboratory, expecting to find the Fighting Scientist at work; but still there was no sign of him.

"S'funny!" thought Larry. "I know he's had something up his sleeve lately and he's been working overtime. S'pose he must be out. I'll put away the bike and wait."

He pushed the machine up the long garden to the tool shed. He got the front wheel inside, and then he let the machine drop with a shout of horror.

For there, his wrists bound behind him, a noose from the ceiling round his neck, and standing on his toes so as not to tauten it, was Captain Kenrick. Larry



leapt forward to release him, but the Captain spoke in a strained whisper—the best he could do through the tight cord: “Don’t, Larry. Listen!”

Larry stopped, his surprise mounting. Then a curious thing struck him.

The cord was thin, so thin that had the Captain taken the strain for a moment off his toes he must have snapped it; yet he was straining to keep the weight off that cord. The sweat was streaming from him, and it was clear that he could not keep it up for long.

His voice came again to Larry. “Get some scissors and cut this cord. But carefully, so as to put no strain upon it. Understand! Don’t pull on the rope at all!”

There was urgency in his voice. And Larry, realising that something out of the ordinary depended on the cord, was careful to cut it without straining it down at all.

When this was done, Captain Kenrick’s hands were quickly released and for a moment he sat in the only rickety chair the shed boasted to collect his strength after the ordeal he had been through. Larry found it hard to suppress his curiosity, but the Captain did not leave him long in doubt. “Well, Larry,” he said, soon recovering his cheery good-humour, “you’ve just pulled me out of about the most uncomfortable hole I’ve ever been in!”

Larry could only gape. “But what was it, sir?” he asked. “The only hole I saw was the noose!”

Captain Kenrick grinned. “Well, what do you think of that little pill-box on the bench? No, don’t touch it”—as Larry bent over the article in question—“it’s rather dangerous.”

Larry looked at the little box. He noticed a thin wire running from it along the wall up to the ceiling. Then he blinked as he saw it was tied to the cord that had been fastened round the Captain’s neck!

The Fighting Scientist smiled at Larry’s utterly bewildered face. “All right, Sherlock Junior. The oracle will now expound,” he said.

“You know I’ve been very busy lately? Well, that little pill-box contains the result of my experiments. It holds a small quantity of Kenetin.”

“Kenetin?” Larry had never heard the name.

“Kenetin is the name I have given to my latest discovery, an explosive with energy immeasurably superior to any known high explosive.”

Larry began to see daylight. “Then—then that cord was a switch!”

“Exactly. Had I for one moment taken my weight off the points of my toes, that cord would have set off a detonator inside that box by pulling on that wire. In which case—well, there would have been no inquest, for there would have been no body.”

“Gosh!” breathed Larry. “As powerful as that! And the blokes that did it had a grudge—”

“Worse than that!” The Captain’s voice was grave. “I never saw either of them before. They wanted the Kenetin!”

“And they got it?”

“They got it, Larry! A couple of pounds—enough to blow half of London off its hook! They must have been keeping a pretty close watch on me, for I only completed the formula, and made the first sample of Kenetin, this evening!”

“Blimey! And you hadn’t breathed a word about it even to me!” Larry exclaimed. “How on earth did these crooks get on to the game?”

“That’s a problem, Larry. But obviously they’ve stolen the stuff for some pretty terrible piece of devilry. I got no chance to look at the men—they took me by surprise. Now, just in case they are waiting to see that nothing goes wrong—”

Captain Kenrick rose, and tied the end of a ball of

string to the still hanging cord, trailing the end out through the door.

“Now, Larry,” he said, “if there’s anything in here you particularly want, get it out quick, for it won’t be here much longer.”

There was nothing there of any value; the shed contained only a few gardening odds and ends. Captain Kenrick went on:

“Now you ride away on your bike as though you hadn’t found me. I’ll give you five minutes, and then from the house I’ll pull this string. Then, if they’re waiting, the thieves will think I’m done for. I’ll phone the police and place the matter in their hands. Now, hop it, and I’ll meet you in the Houses of Parliament on Thursday at eight.”

Larry went. He had got about a couple of miles when, from behind there came a harsh, reverberating roar, as though the whole earth had collapsed. Larry felt the road quiver under his wheels, then all was quiet again. The crooks, if they had waited to hear that would now be patting themselves on the back. Larry grinned behind his goggles at the thought.

### The Firework Prison.

NEXT day, during his lunch hour, Larry got through to the Captain on the phone.

“Hello, sir. Any news? . . . Nothing at all? . . . The police found no clues, eh? . . . Well, if you couldn’t, I’ll bet they couldn’t. . . . No, nothing this end at all. . . . No, I didn’t notice the number of the car, but I could recognise the driver. . . . I’ll keep my eyes open, of course. . . . I may be a bit late. . . . Yes, very busy. . . . all right, I’ll try to be there at eight. . . . I’ve got my ticket, anyway. . . . Good-bye, sir. . . . see you to-morrow night.”

He hung up. It was clear that the affair was worrying the Captain. There seemed no possible means of tracing the crooks. Also, there was their strange action in taking only the two pounds of Kenetin that were already made, and ignoring the formula that the Captain had in his pocket. It looked as though they just wanted to put through one “job,” and then finish.

However, Larry could find no solution to the mystery, and he soon forgot it in the midst of his work. He was kept busy all the afternoon. And then, at a few minutes to six, when he should have been knocking off, the manager sent for him.

“I want you to run this packet down to Forest Hill, to the Grant Firework Factory. It must get there to-night, because they want the stuff to finish off one of the rockets for the firework display to-morrow. You’ve a motor-cycle, haven’t you? Well, run it down on that. It won’t take long.”

Larry didn’t mind the overtime work. He had nothing to do to-night, and a glimpse at the inside of a firework factory was a thing he’d often dreamed about. In five minutes he was threading his way through the traffic of London, on his journey to Forest Hill.

But Fate was against him. As he came across Southwark Bridge there was a splutter from his motorbike, and then silence. It had conked.

Larry knew enough about motorbikes to discover, within a couple of minutes, that the trouble was due to water in his magneto; and that, though he could do the job himself, it might take five minutes or it might take an hour. And the firework people were waiting.

He phoned them from the nearest box, and told them of the possible delay. The manager of Grant’s agreed that it was unavoidable, and told him to take his time about the job. As long as the little packet was there first thing in the morning, that would be all right. Larry could bring it along when the job was done, and drop it into the office letter-box.

It was seven-thirty, and quite dark, when at last



the bike was ready. And once more Larry headed for Forest Hill.

He arrived at last at the factory, lying back in a piece of waste ground facing the Museum. All was dark and still. He left his bike to be refilled with petrol half-way up the hill on which the factory stood, and strode up the gravelled path leading to the factory and office building.

He dropped the parcel into the letter-box of the office, and it fell soundlessly into the wire holder behind. He was about to retrace his steps, when he gave a startled gasp.

For a flicker of light, like a moving torch, had crossed one of the windows!

Silent as a scouting redskin, Larry crept up to the window. It was raised in its casement. Someone had come in this way!

"Must be some kids want to pinch some fireworks!" the Scientific Errand Boy muttered to himself. "No one else would find anything worth stealing in here."

Larry decided to investigate for himself. If he fell into trouble, he could always shout, and rouse the watchman.

He slid through the window. He found himself inside an office. A door at the far side gave on to the factory room. And once again Larry saw that flickering light—this time on the factory wall.

Cautiously he stepped into the factory—and then he realised that the nocturnal visitors were not "kids," and that they had left a rearguard. For a hand slipped over his mouth from behind, and a powerful arm encircled his own limbs!

Thus suddenly bound and gagged, Larry could only struggle and squirm ineffectively. He was lifted off his feet and carried into the centre of the factory floor, amid a huge jumble of monster fireworks of all descriptions.

"A stranger here, Chief," said a soft, guttural voice. "No one else following."

A light was flashed into Larry's face, and a soft hiss of breath came from the "Chief."

"Ah! Kenrick's brat! What's he doing here?"

Larry started. The man knew him! Then, as the light wavered a little, he got a glimpse of the "Chief's" features. It was the man he had seen driving away from Devil's Hollow last night!

Larry felt his heart leap to his mouth. These, then, were the men who had tried to kill the Captain. He knew he could expect no mercy from them. They must be mad, a couple of lunatics, he thought with a shudder. Why else should they, after stealing enough Kenetin to blow up half London, come to a firework factory at dead of night?

Madmen or badmen? Larry found himself wondering, in the midst of his awful predicament, which really was worse.

The two were talking in muttered tones. "Just chance," the first was saying. "He brought a parcel to deliver. But we can't let him go now."

"No. But we must get on with our work, Hobbs. The watchman will come on duty at nine-thirty—we've half an hour to finish."

"Are all the windows shaded?" asked Hobbs.

"Yes; you can turn on the light. And when we have finished, then you"—his leering face came close to Larry—"shall learn what it is to cross the path of Israel Lassiter!"

They bound and gagged Larry, then threw him roughly on the floor. He struggled furiously, but was helpless; and when, a moment later, Hobbs switched on the lights, he was forced to lie inactive and watch the pair of scoundrels at their fell work.

One half of the factory floor was covered with neat little piles of fireworks of various sorts, all obviously for use on the morrow at the Houses of Parliament display. There was a huge rocket, the biggest Larry



#### ON THE ROCKET RACK.

—Larry freed himself from his bonds and burst open the top of the great rocket, and at that moment the huge firework took fire.

With a roar and a hiss the rocket began to move, and Larry gave a lightning leap for the frame.

had ever seen, standing in one corner; its stick, a veritable rafter, lay on the floor. Beside it was a pile of letters formed of wood, with a sort of firework laid along the face of each. These, Larry knew, were to be hung on a frame on the south side of the Thames, opposite the House, so that when the fuse was lit a message of welcome, in letters of fire, would appear before the eyes of the foreign visitors. The huge rocket was to open the display, shooting into the air, and, miles high, throwing out fiery balls in the national colours of the foreigners. The other heaps, all neatly labelled, were to be let off from the edge of the Terrace, the favoured spectators watching through the windows.

And as he watched, the enormity of their crime was unfolded to Larry. For they were emptying the ordinary gunpowder and fire-balls from one of the roman candles and packing the empty case with Kenetin!

It was a second Gunpowder Plot! They were planning the blowing-up of the Houses of Parliament, and the annihilation of the whole ruling body of England, together with the foreign potentates and all the most famous men in the land. Larry knew, from what the Fighting Scientist had told him, that



there was enough Kenetin in that cylinder of cardboard to blow the whole of England's most famous building clean off its foundations!

Utter consternation in his eyes, and writhing at his impotency, Larry watched Lassiter and Hobbs putting the finishing touches to the job. A percussion cap was placed on the end of the fuse, then the firework was cleverly sealed up so that no trace of the interference could be seen.

Leering triumphantly, Lassiter came over to the lad. "Now you see, boy, why that sample of Kenetin was stolen. Yes, we know that your precious Captain was not killed, though he deceived us for a while. But no matter; they cannot trace me. To-morrow every man of the Government of England will die; the Houses of Parliament will fall like a pack of cards, and the people of England will turn to me for rule—me, Israel Lassiter, who will be the first to step out of the chaos to lead them!

"But you, interfering brat—you shall die, in most exalted company!" He turned to Hobbs, a leering grin on his face. "The rocket, Hobbs. Does that suggest anything to you?"

"The very thing, Chief," replied Hobbs. "But we must hurry."

Lassiter gave a ghoulish chuckle. "Aye, the very thing. In the top of that rocket, boy, is a compartment containing coloured flares. They will be ignited when the rocket is at the peak of its flight, and they will burst open the compartment. You shall go up in that compartment, boy—alive till, miles above the earth, you are flung into space, to die either by the explosion or the fall! I, too, shall be up there, in a plane, watching, laughing, while first you, then the others, die!"

The scoundrel doubled up with fiendish laughter. Then, at a sign, Hobbs seized the trussed and gagged boy and carried him towards the huge rocket. Raising the domed top, Lassiter helped push the lad inside, then sealed it up again. A moment later their receding footsteps and the sound of the light switch going off told Larry that they had gone.

Larry's mind could hardly grasp the horror of his position. His limbs were so cramped that he could not move. He could not kick against the sides to attract attention, and gagged as he was, breathing was difficult. To-morrow he was to be shot into the air—to his death, without a chance. And there were twenty hours of horrible suspense yet!

Panting, sweat of sheer fear running from him and soaking his clothes, Larry tried to writhe and twist in his cramped prison. But there was no chance of escape—and the only mercy shown him was by Nature. In his agonising terror he lapsed into unconsciousness.

### 'Ware Fire.

WHEN Larry returned to consciousness the whole thing came flooding back to his mind. But he had spent his fear. He was resigned to the fate that was his. He wondered dully what the time was—how long he would have to wait before the end came.

Voices, muffled, came to him through the sides of the rocket. Voices of cockney workmen.

"All right, Bill. Let's read these 'ere instructions agin. 'Message of welcome. In three lines. Top line: *Greetings in Fireworks*'—that all correct?"

"Top line O.K.," said another voice. Bill's voice, Larry supposed.

"Line two. *To our Ally from . . .*" went on the first voice.

"Line two O.K."

"Line three. *Across the Water.*"

"Line three O.K."

Larry grinned wanly to himself. The irony of the message struck him.

### *Greetings in Fireworks To our Ally from Across the Water.*

A fine greeting they'd get, these foreigners. And the English, too. They'd be blown to bits, and . . ."

Larry gave a horrified start.

Those men, due to be destroyed, hundreds of them, Captain Kenrick among them . . . and he was the only one, save the crooks themselves, who knew of this horrible Twentieth Century Gunpowder Plot!

He began to writhe and squirm. If only he could make those workmen hear! But he couldn't. He stood no chance. Bill's voice came to him again.

"Come on, Harry. I've set the time fuse for the big rocket. That'll start the show in half an hour. We'll be the last to see this little lot before it goes up."

Sound of receding footsteps shuffling along the wharf on which the huge frame was erected; the clang of the wharf gates as they shut and locked for the night, then silence.

Larry renewed his frenzied struggles. Not in palsied fear for himself now, but for those other people across the water, depending on him, and him only, even though they didn't know it.

He heard Big Ben strike the three-quarter. Half his time gone, and still no sign of success. Still he could not move. . . .

Stay! His head rubbed against the side of the great cardboard prison; he felt the knot of the gag roll slightly.

He compressed himself as tightly as he could; the gag rolled the other way. A chance at last! Again he moved . . . again . . . and then the knot rolled down to his neck. With a gasp of triumph he spat the handkerchief out of his mouth.

His teeth got to work, eagerly, hopefully. They tore at the cords on his wrists, that Lassiter and Hobbs had not troubled to put behind him. The stout cord began to fray. He spat bits of it out of his mouth, grudging the time it took; bits got to his throat, irritating him, making him retch; but still he bit and bit, never caring when his teeth found his wrists, but biting the harder next time for having missed. And at last, with a sudden wrench of his wrists, the cord parted.

He rolled over, putting his back against the domed top of the rocket, and prised upwards with hands and feet. The sealing gave, and with a shout Larry leapt to his feet.

All around were the lights of the river, and London. The huge rocket stood right opposite the Houses of Parliament, on the framework that held the message of welcome. He could see the great wooden letters, each slung on a hook in its place. The fuses were all connected below.

And as he looked at the fuses, he gave a gasp of dismay. The fuse to the rocket was alight! He was too late!

It was a quickmatch fuse. He saw the light shooting up towards the huge firework—then he realised his own peril. He was still standing in the rocket.

On the instant he came into action. Cramped and stiff though his legs were, no tree-monkey ever made a finer or surer leap than Larry made then. He simply flew from the top of the rocket to a projecting arm of the framework.

*R-R-O-O-O-A-A-A-A-A-A-A-A-A-A-A-R!* The mighty firework swept up into the sky like a huge projectile even as his feet left it, spurting a cloud of sparks behind it. Larry received almost the full blast, and for a moment he clung to the frame, dazed, his hands and face blackened and stinging from the sparks. But then he came back to life with a start. He had avoided the fate intended for him, but the others . . . they were still threatened by that little



cylinder. And already the slow fuse leading to the bunched fuses of the message had caught. How could he warn them in time? As soon as this message had burnt itself out, the other fireworks over there, among which was the fatal bomb, would begin to go off.

And then, born of desperation, inspiration came to Larry. In about three minutes the message of welcome would take from the slow-moving spark; and into that three minutes Larry crammed the quickest action of his life.

Running about the face of the framework like a chimpanzee, he grabbed at those letters, changing some of them round, tearing the fuses leading to others, blotting them out till he had rearranged them. He blotted out the *G*, *G* and *S* in *Greetings*, tore off the top of the *R* to make *K*, tore off one leg of an *M* in line two to make *N* and put it between the two *E*'s till he had changed the first word to *Kenetin*. Then, taking some more from line two, he carried them down under line three, and blotted out the rest. And he had just finished his job when, with a burst of coloured fire and a roar and a crackle, the message burst into flame.

INSIDE one of the windows giving on to the river terrace of the Houses of Parliament, Captain Kenrick was watching the grand display. He applauded with the rest when the great rocket went up, though even he noticed that nothing happened when it reached its peak. Somehow those coloured balls of fire did not materialise.

Another queer fact was that an aeroplane had appeared and was hovering in the air above the scene. He dismissed this from his mind with the natural thought that it was occupied by some young airman who had chosen to view the display from aloft.

Other matters, indeed, fully engaged his mind. For one thing, Larry was not here. True the lad had told him he might be late the day before, but the Captain had expected another telephone message confirming that. He had not phoned Larry's employers himself or he would have found that a message had been received to the effect that Larry was unfortunately indisposed.

And then again there was the matter of the theft of the *Kenetin*. It seemed to be the work of a madman, with no purpose behind it. But a madman loose with enough explosive to blow up half London is a dangerous thing. . . .

He came out of these thoughts with a start; a gasp of surprise had gone up from all those about him. He looked up, across the water, where that message of welcome should have been. And his eyes nearly popped out of his head when he read, in great flaming letters:

*Kenetin in Fireworks  
Across the Water.*

*Larry.*

A message from Larry! *Kenetin*—the stolen

explosive—was in the fireworks across the water . . . that would be this side, on the terrace. And even as his mind grasped this fact, the Fighting Scientist saw a splutter of sparks. The time fuse had lit! The fireworks this side were going off!

With a hoarse shout the Fighting Scientist leapt to his feet. Action! The war had taught him that! That fuse must be put out . . .

He elbowed a duke from his chair, leapt on to it, and with a flying leap went crashing through the window amid a shower of broken glass. He raced across the terrace towards the spluttering fu—



**TO FOIL THE FIRE-PLOTTER.**—The fuse on the Terrace had already begun to burn, and one of those fireworks was a bomb. Acting on the moment Captain Kenrick leapt clean through the window, amid a shower of broken glass, racing for the spluttering fuse.

too late to stop the spark reaching two of the fireworks. A rocket and a roman candle! He tore the fuse away from the others, but it was already inside those two. In thirty seconds they would begin to work. Was the fatal firework one of these two?

Not the rocket, anyway. That began its preliminary fizzing even as the Captain stood there. And on a sudden thought he acted.

He grabbed at the roman candle—only twenty seconds left—tore it from the cords that held it to the terrace balustrade, and in the same movement flung a loop round the spurting rocket. Only just in time. With a *swoo-oo-oo-ooosh!* it went soaring up, taking the roman candle with it.

Fifteen seconds left . . . was it the fatal bomb, or just a harmless firework? . . . Ten seconds . . . started

(Continued on page 8.)



**THE KIDS THAT COPY Their Fake Firework Fun Becomes Fact When They  
CAPTAIN KIDD. Find Their Treasure Island Pirated!**



**THE KID PIRATES  
FIREWORK GOLD RUSH**

**Two Scoundrelly Salts thought their plot was safe when they tried to rush the Boy Buccaneers' claim to the treasure of their island, but the kids caught the crooks on the hop and the plot went up in smoke!**

**The Ghost on Keelhaul Cay.**

"YO-HO, me hearties! Hoist the Jolly Roger and clap on all sail! It's us for Blakestone's Island to-night, and the biggest carousal of the year!"

Llewellyn Barker, Chief of the Boy Buccaneers and the greatest mischief-maker of his home village, growled the words in true pirate style. Though unfortunate enough to have been born in the twentieth century, Lew and his chums, Harry Ffoulkes, Copper Brown, Eric Ladds, Bob Harper, and the rest, still kept up the traditions of gallant Captain Kidd and his jolly freebooters.

To-night certainly promised to be a red-letter night in the annals of the Pirate Gang. A glance at the cargo of their raft, as they set sail for their new lair, Blakestone's Island, would have been explanation enough. For it was loaded with huge logs, and wood, and a goodly pile of fireworks of the most violent sort. To-night was Firework Night!

For months the Kid Pirates had been collecting paper, wooden boxes, branches, in fact all the combustibles they could lay hands on, and had bought as many fireworks as their pocket money would allow. Now they were taking the last load to the hoard that they had collected in a clearing on Blakestone's Island.

There they could revel to their hearts' content. Mr. Blakestone, the kindly old owner of the property, had given them the full use of it, and there was no fear of interruption.

"All sail set?" demanded Lew. And at a hearty "Ayo! Ayo! Cap'n!" from his fellow-pirates he gave the order, "Up anchor and away!"

Harry Ffoulkes heaved up the stone that acted

as anchor, from the river bed, and the raft was punted out into the stream.

The Kid Pirates, with an aptitude born of long practice, had fully mastered the intricacies of raft sailing. It was not long before, with the home-made sail bellying in the breeze, they were in sight of Blakestone's Island, in the middle of the river about half-a-mile upstream from the village. The Skull and Crossbones flag was flaunted bravely at her peak, and altogether they looked a fearsome crew indeed, with their wooden cutlasses, false moustaches, and brilliant kerchiefs round their heads.

There was no moon, and the darkness was intense when they grounded on the island. A November mist had come up from the river and seemed to grip the wooded island with ghostly fingers, white in the faint starlight.

The place was shunned after dark by the villagers; it was supposed to be haunted by a ghost of the man who had last lived there. He certainly had been a queer customer, old Jacob Farley. And though nearly a hundred years had elapsed since the old, one-legged sailor had arrived in the village, the story of his coming and of his death was as fresh as if it had been yesterday.

Reported fabulously wealthy, he had certainly seemed to have plenty of good gold to throw about, strange foreign coins nobody knew the worth of. He had bought the island outright, built a small house on it for himself, and then died suddenly. A strange will was found with the body—leaving all his possessions (the will spoke of "treasure") to the Mr. Blakestone of that time, the only man with whom old Jacob became at all friendly. No treasure had been found, though rumour had it that Jacob, in his wanderings round the earth, had found a vast store



of hidden pirate treasure, and had, in fact, done a little pirating himself.

Anyway, the island had ever since been Blakestone's Island, and had passed, a valueless piece of ground except for picnics in the summer, into the hands of the present Farmer Blakestone.

But it was of some use to the Kid Pirates. Mr. Blakestone had agreed to their using it for a pirates' lair, and it didn't take those young washbucklers long to change its name to Keelhaul Cay!

By this time their raft was grounded on the island. Instantly all was bustle. The craft was made fast, and then Lew and his chums sprang ashore and began to unload the "booty."

All the logs were unloaded and the fireworks placed alongside. Loading themselves as heavily as they could, the Kid Pirates carried most of the logs up to the clearing in the centre of the island, and added them to the heap of combustibles that was already there. They returned for the rest, and they were just about to drag the biggest of the logs that remained to their fire, when Lew gave a startled gasp.

"Jumping Jack Robinsons! Look there!"

The others followed their leader's petrified gaze, and they, too, gasped in terror.

Peering at them through the trees was a fearsome figure clad in the garb of a sailor of the late seventeenth century. The Ghost, for there was no doubt in the Kid Pirates' minds that such was the visitation, glared at them with a look of fearful malevolence. A black patch over one eye and a wooden stump for a leg enhanced its fearsomeness.

It was too much even for the iron nerve of the Boy Buccaneer gang. Even as the figure, with a horrible snarl of ghostly rage, came running out of the bushes toward them, they dropped the log with a concerted yell of terror and rushed aboard the raft.

The rocking of the solid planks beneath his feet brought back some of Lew's courage, however. It was not the game for a pirate chief to show such craven fear in front of his men.

He turned round. The phantom figure had disappeared. That helped to restore his courage to its usual pitch.

"Hold, me hearties," he commanded, as Eric Ladds was about to slip the cable and push off. "I don't see why we should run away from—that! I know there ain't such things as spooks. It was someone trying to frighten us. . . . Hedley Gnomes and his gang, I expect."

Hedley Gnomes was the leader of a rival gang—a bullying youth who was jealous of the Kid Pirates and had sworn eternal enmity against them and all their works.

"Come on, men. We're going back to investigate this!" cried Lew boldly; and without waiting to see if his chums were following he stepped out on to terra-firma again. The rest came after him without hesitation. There is nothing so encouraging as a display of courage from one's leader!

Through the trees they crept, Lew, though he managed to conceal it, really as fearful as the rest. But no sign did they see of the intruders on Keelhaul Cay, till at last they came to the clearing where they had built up their fire.

### The Treasure-Trove Tree.

IT was lucky they had been creeping slowly, looking for their enemies, else they would certainly have fallen into the danger that awaited them as they were about to break cover into the clearing.

A warning hiss came from Lew as he glanced through a gap in the bushes towards the fire.

Two men were in the clearing—rough, sea-faring men, of an extremely villainous aspect. And one of the men had a patch over one eye!

"There's our ghost, me hearties," whispered Lew. "And look—that peg-leg was a fake! There's the straps he fixed it with, and the peg, lying over there!"

But it was the strange occupation of these two ill-favoured scamps that astonished the Kid Pirates most. For they were tearing the bonfire to bits as if for a wager, and tapping and hammering at all of the big logs, in turn!

"Well, I'll be blowed—I mean keelhauled and sunk!" exclaimed Lew, remembering even in his excitement his piratical vocabulary. "The rotters—the sons o' cross-eyed barnacles! Busting up our fire! I wonder what their game is?"

The boy buccaneers were soon to know. The two men evidently thought they had frightened the lads away, for they did not appear to fear any further intrusion. With an exclamation of disgust, Black Patch flung down the hammer with which he had been carefully tapping the logs.

"No use, Steve! By the Cast-Iron-Capstan of Columbus, there's no gold in none o' those logs! They're solid."



THE GHOST SCARE. — The sight of that terrible figure was too much for the Boy Buccaneers. They made a rush for the raft.



Lew promptly added that "Cast-Iron Capstan" to his vocabulary, and waited eagerly for Black Patch to say some more. He was doubtful of the two rogues' sanity, but the pseudo-ghost's mention of gold made him prick up his ears.

"Sure we're on the right lay, Mark?" growled Steve. "If yer arsts me, that there map o' yourn is all bilge-water."

"I'll swear it's genuine!" said Mark. "I picked it out o' the selfsame chest the pirate's treasure had been lifted from, and it was signed by this same Jacob Farley, sayin' as 'ow when 'e died 'e was a-goin' ter hide what was left o' the gold in the trunk of a tree on the island where 'e was born. An' this 'ere's the island as the map proves. They told us in the village that not a single tree or log 'ad been removed since the death o' old Jacob, so it must be in one o' these the kids have collected!"

"Yes, but 'ow do we know the cove 'e left the island to ain't got the gold? It says on the map as 'e was goin' ter give a copy of it to whoever 'e left the stuff to."

"Aye, but no such map was found! 'E must 'a' died afore 'e 'ad a chance ter make it."

"H'm!" Steve's grunt of doubt came to the listeners in the bushes, who were by this time trembling with excitement. A treasure hidden on their island! Real pirate's treasure, too! Which log could it be? There were still some old logs lying on the island that they hadn't collected, though Black Patch and his fellow seamp seemed to think they had collected them all.

"Well," Steve went on. "It's clear the log we're after ain't here, so we better go ashore agin an' make sure o' our latitude and longitude."

"Right, come on then—an' stop grousin'," grunted Black Patch. And the two rogues stamped off into the trees—fortunately passing several yards from where the Kid Pirates lay in hiding.

"Fry me for a sea-cock!" exclaimed Lew, when they were out of hearing. "What do you make of that?"

"There's treasure in one o' them logs—that's what, Cap'n!" growled Harry Ffoulkes. "What had we better do—tell the police?"

Lew gave him a look of withering scorn. "Us let the cops in on this?" he grated. "No, my bullies. We came here for a fire, and a fire we'll have, or know the reason why. If the gold's in one of those logs, the fire will melt it out, and find it for us—and gold is as good cooked as raw. Come on—those barnacle whiskers have gone, so let's collect the rest of the logs and put 'em all on."

"Aye, aye, Cap'n," said Copper Brown. "Shall we get the fire going first, and then bring in the logs?"

"Good idea," said Lew. The fire was soon going—a huge roaring pyre that lit up the trees in stark relief. Then the Kid Pirates went back to the raft and collected the rest of the logs and fireworks.

There were several old rotted logs lying about half-buried in mould—evidently some of them had been there for many a year. And now the Kid Pirates were careful to bring all these in, since they had heard the conversation of Mark and Steve. They never knew but that one of them might contain the gold!

Mr. Blakestone had given them permission to burn all deadwood and logs they found, so long as they did not damage any of the greenwood.

They carried back all the wood they had brought from the shore and piled it on the huge blaze, then at Lew's orders, they went scouting through the woods to make sure there were no logs they had missed. They went separately, and many a log was found that added to the glory of Guy Fawkes!

Lew himself, scouting along the path that led to their raft, soon came across a huge log of dead and rotted tree-trunk. Dry rotten wood always burns well, and a piece this size was a find indeed.

He bent down, removing the grass that had overgrown it. He grabbed the end to lift, and to his surprise the rotten wood crumbled and his hand slipped inside the log.

His fingers encountered something cold and hard. With visions of beetles and woodlice, he withdrew his hand hurriedly—and after it, on to the grass, rolled a huge, shining, gold coin!

Lew picked it up, his eyes nearly popping out of his head. It had a king's head on it, and an inscription in a language he did not know. He dived his hand in again, and drew out a handful of coins, several sovereigns among them.

"Dobloons and pieces of eight!" he gasped. "Old Jacob's Treasure! Gosh! I'll call the lads..."

He opened his mouth to yell the news... but a horny hand was thrust over it before he could utter a sound. Then hard fists grabbed him, and he found himself looking into the eyes of Mark and his confederate!

Mark chuckled—a deep throaty rumble. "Found the treasure for us, 'ave ye? And you're goin' ter tell yer pals, eh? Well, yer ain't, me young shaver. We want the treasure, and you an' yer pals won't stop us."

At a sign from Mark, Steve bent down and tipped the log on end. It was quite hollow—no more than a shell, and, being rotten, it was very light. And out of its inside dropped a stream of gold and silver coins, together with rubies and diamonds that sparkled in the reflected light from the fire, such as Lew had never imagined in his life!

Steve eagerly grabbed them up, dropping all the coins and gems into a bag he carried.

"Aye, that's the treasure all right!" he chuckled. "Mark, you an' me is rich fer life! We'll go ter London an' live like kings! But—what's ter be done with this bilge-rat?"

He pulled a knife out of his pocket, and unsheathed the wicked-looking blade. Lew squirmed and struggled in Mark's hands, but he was helpless.

"No, a better way than that. We mustn't leave no evidence agin us," growled Mark. "We'll let 'is mates do it, see? Shove 'im in that log, so's 'e can't move, then 'is mates'll git the log and burn 'im, and there won't be no ways o' finding 'ow 'e got there, even if the body's found at all. They'll think 'e got there accidental!"

Steve grinned assent, pocketing his knife. A gag was thrust round Lew's mouth; then he was thrust and shoved into the rotten interior of the log. His arms and legs were firmly gripped by the timber, so that he could not move, or even struggle. And the gag prevented him from crying out as the two crooks pushed the log into the middle of the path...

\* \* \* \* \*

ALL the Kid Pirates had returned to the clearing, except Lew.

"Wonder where the Cap'n is?" growled Copper Brown.

"Got a heavy one, I expect," said Eric Ladds. "Let's go and help him." He cupped his hands round his mouth and let out a yell: "Lew! Cap'n Lew!"

There was no reply to the shout. They felt no misgivings, however. The wood wasn't big enough for Lew to lose himself in.

"He went down this way," said Copper, pointing. And the Boy Buccaneers trooped down the path he indicated.

They had not gone more than a dozen yards when they came to a log, an old, mossy, rotted piece



of timber, lying right across the path. Evidently it had been moved there recently.

"Hullo!" exclaimed Copper. "The Cap'n must have dragged this out and left it here for us to take in. Come on, we'll get this on the fire and then go and see what else he's found."

The five of them leaned down and bent their backs to the weight of the log. They struggled back with it along the path.

"Groogh!" groaned Eric. "Lew must have been pretty strong to drag this out of the clump of bushes. Why, it takes all of us to carry it!"

They stumbled on; they didn't notice the two burly forms that followed them with grinning eyes, else they might have wondered more how Lew had managed to shift that weighty though rotten piece of timber.

The Kid Pirates got the great log close up to the fire, but then a new problem presented itself. They could not get close enough to the fire to put it on.

"I know," exclaimed Copper. "We'll throw it. Get some ropes, and swing it back and forward like

chieftain inside to break his way out. The fire as yet was only burning round the outermost edges of the huge pile, and a shout of horror went up from the buccaneer gang as they saw their leader suddenly appear from out of the shattered log.

The two rogues watched, spellbound, while Copper Brown led a rush to the great fire that promised to be a funeral pyre for Lew. They dragged at the logs, throwing aside the burning brands, searing and scorching themselves, but still tearing away a path to safety for their singed and smoke-blackened chief.

Then, as Lew staggered out of range of the flames, into the arms of his gang, the crooks came to life. They saw that the game was up, and they broke cover and fled, crashing through the trees in an effort to get ashore and away.

Lew pulled himself together at the sound. "After them, me hearties! They're the crooks that have got the treasure!"

They needed no second bidding. Racing through the woods, they reached the shore just in time to see Black Patch and his confederate leaping into a

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they used to work battering-rams, and when it's swinging enough we'll let go!"

The others chorused assent, and ropes were quickly brought forward. They were slipped under the log; and then, one of them holding each end of the ropes, they began to swing it to and fro like a swing. Little did they guess that it was their struggling and horror-stricken leader they were preparing to throw on the fire!

But it was a lucky chance for Lew that he was too heavy to be carried to the fire. The log began to swing, harder and harder, gaining momentum with each swing.

"Now, all together," shouted Copper, when it was swinging fast. "One . . . two . . . three!"

The log went sailing through the air, to land with a crash in the middle of the fire. The two villains, watching through the bushes, were just patting themselves on the back when there came a yell from the Kid Pirates.

"Look! It's busted!" It was true. The crash on to the rest of the blazing logs had burst the rotten timber asunder, enough for the struggling pirate

boat. But they were not destined to escape the Kid Pirates so easily. Lew himself jumped for the side of the boat as they were pushing off, and, leaning his weight on it, he turned it over. The crooks, with their bag of treasure, were precipitated into the stream, and before they had really recovered from the effects of their first bath for many a year, their hands and feet had been firmly bound by the rest of the Boy Buccaneers. The gold was retrieved from the water, and they all trooped back to the blazing fire, taking their prisoners with them.

"Well, me hearties," said Lew to his chums. "We've keel-hauled these two sharks all right, and we can hand them over to the police in the morning. The treasure, according to the will, is the property of Mr. Blakestone; he may give us a small reward, and if he does we'll have another firework show to-morrow. In case not, let's make the most of this one. Any way, there's nothing like being a pirate for excitement!"

Our Gripping New Serial Starts Next Week: "The Time Ship Treasure Hunters." It is the most stupendous yarn that has ever appeared in a boys' paper. Don't miss the opening chapters.





All the Fun of the Fifth at the School of Shocks and Surprises. Johnny Gee and his Cheery Chums in a Rippling Long Complete Tale of their Bonfire Night Celebrations and the Deep Mystery that made it the most eventful Fifth ever.

**Catty's High Horse!**

"ALL set for the Fifth!" grinned Dick Bannister. "Rather!" chuckled Johnny Gee. "Our merry arsenal is chock-a-block with fireworks now. Just look at 'em! Did you ever see such a spiffing collection?"

"Toppin', begad!" said Lord Reggie Cholmondeley Pelham-Smith, wiping a smear of gunpowder from his monocle. "Everythin' ought to go off jolly well, y'know—excuse the pun, old chappies!"

The joyous juniors of the Remove were gathered in the old woodshed at the back of the quadrangle at St. Giddy's. Dusk was falling; tea and prep. had been hastily scampered through, and they had come down to the woodshed—now turned into an arsenal—to put in a good evening's work at pyrotechnic pursuits.

The Fifth of November, an anniversary dear unto the heart of all boys and celebrated with gusto at St. Giddy's, was now drawing nigh, and great preparations were being made to make Guy Fawkes Day this year a real feast of fire and fun.

Johnny Gee and his cheery followers were making most of their own fireworks this year, and had enlisted the able assistance of Timothy Catchpole, the youthful scientist of the Remove.

A bench had been rigged up in the woodshed "arsenal," and Johnny Gee & Co. and Catchpole were all there, with sleeves rolled up and aprons girded on, working away merrily in an atmosphere redolent of fire and brimstone.

Catchpole, that bulbous-headed brainy man, was putting the finishing touches to the stunt that was to be the *piece de resistance* of the Fifth.

It was a mammoth sky-rocket, of special design, and embodying many unique features. It contained a large guy, which, when the rocket burst, would float to the ground by a parachute that was attached to it!

All the Removites' fireworks were designed on the super scale, in fact. They had gigantic pin-wheels, and huge Jumping Jacks, extra-capacity Blue Devils, Golden Rains, Fire Crackers, and so forth.

The Joyous Juniors were hard at work, when a sudden warning hiss came from Johnny.

"Look over there, you chaps—Earlswood rotters coming over the wall!"

Johnny, standing at the woodshed door, had suddenly caught sight of three stealthy forms clambering in the darkness over the school wall, near the cloisters.

"Tommy Rhodes, Nutter and Cakebread—those horrid Earlswood scallywags!" he exclaimed. "They're after our fireworks, you can bet your Sunday boots!"

The boys of St. Giddy's and Earlswood schools, lying near together, were in a state of constant rivalry—especially the lower forms of each!

Johnny turned swiftly to Timothy Catchpole. "Here's a chance for you to shine again, Timmy, old scout!" he exclaimed. "We've a big bag of dud gunpowder here—stuff that wasn't mixed properly and that we've scrapped. We'll mine the blessed doorway of our arsenal with our junior model gunpowder—it'll go off with a bang, and make a flash and chunks of smoke, but the explosion won't be dangerous—see? You rig up a sort of trip wire across the door that will set it off as they go in."

"Very well, my dear Gee!" said Catchpole, smiling gently. "That will be quite a simple matter, really."

The genius of the Remove set about making his trip-wire electric fuse, whilst Johnny Gee & Co. laid a mine of low-power or "dud" gunpowder outside the arsenal.

Catchpole soon had the electric fuse fixed. Johnny Gee & Co. waited in the shadows of the old elm trees near by.

They waited a moment, and then Johnny gave a soft chuckle as he heard footsteps approaching.

"Here they come, chaps. Get ready for the big bang! They—oh, my giddy aunt! Gug-g-g-good lor'! Look who's coming!"

The Removites blinked from under the trees, frozen with horror, as they saw four tall forms hurrying direct to the front of the woodshed!

The leader was Mr. Ernest James Cattermole, M.A., the cantankerous Housemaster of St. Giddy's. With Catty were Remington, Slade and Burgess, the three bullying prefects of the Sixth and the Housemaster's ever-willing allies in his campaigns of frightfulness against the juniors!

Catty & Co. were on the warpath. They must have got wind of the juniors' "doings," and they were bearing down on the Removites' arsenal!

"Oh, jeminy!" gasped Johnny Gee. "I—I hope Catchpole doesn't let off that gunpowder, or the fat will be in the giddy furnace! Let's hop—Yarrooogh!"

**BANG!** The Removites hopped—in fact, they leaped like grasshoppers in the air—as that terrific detonation sounded from the woodshed, under the very feet of Catty, Remington & Co.

**Fizz! Bang! Fizz-zzz!** "Yarrooogh! Yah! Wh—what the—Gurrogh! Oh, crumbs—Ya!"

Catty and the hapless prefects jumped and groped at one another, and spluttered wildly in the black, all-enveloping shroud of smoke! They sprawled over on top of one another, jumped up again as fresh explosions burst forth around them, and

The things they did—those daring Removites—They guyed Catty; set the fuse of their Earlswood rivals' wrath spluttering; broke bounds on Bonfire Night, and fired a sinister plotter from his sinecure.

cannoned into the shed, and went down again with concerted howls.

The gunpowder they had laid was harmless enough, but it had very potent powers, nevertheless! Roars of mocking laughter came to the juniors' ears, as though from another world, and they saw three enemy forms skedaddling towards the cloisters, making a fast escape!

"Oh—groogh My hat!" moaned Johnny, staggering to his feet. "Those Earlswood rotters! Yah! They arrived too late! Garrrooch!"

But their troubles were not over yet! The noise in the wood shed seemed to have quietened a little. Only a faint fizzing was heard among the groans of Catty and the prefects. Then suddenly—

**CRASH! BANG! WHOOOOOSH!** A terrific explosion rent the air from the wood shed, accompanied by a burst of multi-coloured lights and shooting balls of fire that sky-rooted through the window and the open door.

Through the loud bombardment of bangs and fizzes came the wild howls of the denizens within, who were now in the midst of the most highly-concentrated firework display it was possible to imagine!

The bursting bags of dud powder had ignited the juniors' home-made fireworks!

Remington, Slade and Bond came leaping out through the woodshed door amidst a salvo of golden rains and fireballs.

There was a sudden, terrific bang louder than the others, and the watching crowd were amazed to see the roof of the woodshed go sky-high! Next moment, they were treated to a spectacle that brought gasps of amazement to their lips.

Catchpole's Super Sky Rocket shot through the open top of the woodshed 'midst a shower of sparks, with Mr. Cattermole hanging on to it like grim death!

"Oh, corks!" gurgled Dick Bannister wonderingly. "Catty—he—he must have got hold of the rocket before it went off, and—Great pip! L-Look!"

The rocket was sky-rooting over St Giddy's. Fortunately, Catty's weight prevented it from



**OLD MISER PEPPER WAS THE BANE OF THE BOYS, BUT THEY PESTERED HIM WITH PYROTECHNIC PRANKS TILL HE PRODUCED HIS STOLEN HOARD.**



travelling at any great height. Mr. Cattermole had a dizzy time of it with streaks of coloured fire shooting all round him.

Then the rocket burst, as per programme, with a loud report that echoed far and wide over St. Giddy's. The explosion was accompanied by a terrific outburst of fireworks and a grotesque figure of a Guy Fawkes floated out with a parachute attached!

Mr. Cattermole, after performing a series of most amazing evolutions in mid-air, made a frantic grab at the floating guy, and clasped it lovingly round the neck. There he hung, desperately hugging the guy, which floated wobblingly in the air, illumined by coloured lights and bursting fireworks.

"Look out!" yelled Pumfret of the Third. "Catty's coming down! Mind your top-knots!"

*Swoooooosh!* The parachute had caught fire, and Catty and the guy descended at one fell swoop into the fountain.

*Splash!* "Yah! *Gerrrooooooh!*" Mr. Cattermole emitted those choking yells as he went sprawling into the fountain basin, which was full of water.

"Oh, my giddy aunt! That's done it!" gasped Johnny Gee, rushing towards the fountain with his chums at his heels.

Wellesley of the Sixth and his fellow prefects Duncan and North assisted the dripping Housemaster from the fountain.

Mr. Cattermole was in a parlous state. He stood there, shivering and dripping with water, his scholastic gown singed and torn and his face blackened with smoke.

"Yurroogh!" he gurgled, blinking wildly round him. "Wh-where am I? Wh-what has happened?" "Wow-wow! Is that you, Wellesley?"

Mr. Cattermole was led away, still dazed and dizzy, by the prefects.

Johnny Gee and his chums gathered in Study No. 4. They were awaiting the summons they knew would come. And it came soon enough! Buttons presented himself at the study door, and, with an eloquent jerk of his thumb, directed them to the seat of judgment.

Mr. Cattermole was in a terrific tantrum, which was only to be expected, under the circumstances. His rage was really awe-inspiring. He poured forth all the vials of his wrath upon Johnny Gee & Co. He fairly heaped invective upon them. He seized his stoutest ashplant, and lining them up before him he proceeded to commit assault and battery upon their tender palms. Catty was not an athlete in the ordinary way, but when it came to wielding the cane, he was a champion unsurpassed!

*Swish—swish—swish!* "Wow-wow-wow!" Mr. Cattermole laid down his cane at last, panting after his extended labours.

"I am fully aware," he said with crushing sarcasm, "that you are making preparations for the—er—ridiculous anniversary of the Fifth of November. Following this evening's incidents, you boys will remain under detention in the Form-room directly lessons are over on the Fifth of November. You will not be allowed to participate in the celebrations!"

"**R**OTTEN!" said Dick Bannister glumly. The Co. were strolling through the ancient High Street at Merivale, and the expressions on their usually sunny "dials" were most lugubrious, as they thought of Mr. Cattermole's order that they should be detained on the Fifth.

There was a crowd of village boys standing round the big sports shop in the High Street, where the windows were decked out in tempting and attractive array with fireworks for the Fifth. Johnny Gee and Co., as they strolled up, noticed the wistful expressions that the village boys cast in the direction of those fireworks in the shop window.

"Funny the local kids aren't letting off fireworks," remarked Johnny Gee.

They also paused outside the firework shop, and gazed with wistful looks at the gorgeous array of pyrotechnic novelties displayed therein.

The chums of the Remove were in funds. Doting aunts and uncles had thoughtfully remembered them at this season of the year; but what was the use of expending their pelf on fireworks, as they longed to do, whilst under Mr. Cattermole's spiteful ban?

Johnny Gee glanced across the road, and his brow darkened still more. The tall, burly forms of Herbert Remington, Slade and Bond, of the Sixth, were discernible in a doorway opposite.

The prefects had "foxed" Johnny Gee & Co. from St. Giddy's, and were keeping a wary eye on them now, to see that they did not invest in any fireworks.

There was a sudden stir amongst the village boys, who were seen to be glaring towards the form of a wizened old man who came into view along the High Street. Johnny Gee & Co. glanced in that direction.

"Hallo! Here comes Cornelius Pepper—that measly old miser!" exclaimed Tony Graham.

The old man shuffled along the pavement, carrying a knobby stick. It was Cornelius Pepper, the village miser. He wore a skull cap over the straggling white hair that came out in tufts about his ears, and a pair of old, cracked spectacles were perched on his long, beak-like nose.

Cornelius Pepper was not a popular man in the village. He lived alone in Pepper Lodge, an old house just off the Merivale lane, and there he maintained himself like a recluse, subsisting on the most frugal manner possible, begrudging every penny he spent and never giving anything away—not even a cheerful word or a smile!

Johnny spoke to young Bob Towler, one of the lads of Merivale.

"Old Pepper doesn't seem to like you kids," he said. "You haven't been annoying him with fireworks, I suppose?"

"Fireworks?" snorted Bob Towler indignantly. "Why, it's all because of 'im that we've got no fireworks this year! Yah! Swindling old Pepper! *Boooo!*"

Mr. Tappin, the manager of the shop, had come to the doorway. "I don't blame the lads for booing old Pepper," he said. "The old curmudgeon is simply hated in the village since his brother, John Pepper, died."

"John Pepper was a decent sort of man, wasn't he?" said Johnny. "I believe he was very rich, and spent a lot in doing good work in Merivale."

"Yes, Master Gee," replied Mr. Tappin. "John Pepper was as liberal as his brother Cornelius is miserly. John Pepper, you know, ran Pepper's Paper Mills, which gave employment to a large number of people in Merivale. When he died, some weeks ago, he left a will, bequeathing the house, Pepper Lodge, and other property to his brother Cornelius, but leaving all his money to the people of Merivale, instructing that the mill should be carried on and extended, so as to give more work to the unemployed. He also directed that five pounds apiece should be given to every poor person in Merivale and five shillings to every child under fourteen. You see, young gentlemen, John Pepper was rather eccentric, and he kept all his money and valuables in the house."

"Well, haven't the people received the money?" asked Johnny Gee.

"No, Master Gee," was the reply. "When it came to carrying out the terms of John Pepper's will, his miserly brother Cornelius denied that there was any money left for distribution. The house was searched, of course, but only a very small sum was found. The paper mill has had to close down, throwing more



people out of work, and no one has had any money, though, goodness knows, the poor people of Merivale need help bad enough in these hard times."

"My hat!" said the Remove captain, his brows contracting a little. "Old Cornelius Pepper must be sticking to all the money his brother left!"

"The old rotter!" exclaimed Dick Bannister wrathfully. "Can't he be made to fork it out somehow? We jolly well ought to raid his place and dig up his blessed hoard!"

"But raiding the old money-grabber wouldn't do any good, unless we had proof that he was sticking to the money left in his brother's will," said Johnny Gee. "Anyway, we might as well do our good turn by letting these kids have our fireworks—the merry fireworks we aren't allowed to buy!"

"Begad! That's a good idea, y'know!" exclaimed Lord Reggie. "We'll let these youngsters buy the jolly old fireworks an' let 'em off for us—what? A toppin' notion! Dub up, old chappies!"

Bob Towler's eyes brightened when Johnny Gee presented him with a handful of silver, and his companions gasped with delight as the other

Suddenly, they gave violent jumps as a fusillade of crackers came flying into their midst, exploding merrily.

*Bang—Bang—Fizz—Bang!* "Yarooop! Yah! What the—Whoooooop!" howled Remington. The rascally prefects simply leaped out of the shop doorway, like rats scared from their holes, and they performed all manner of wonderful feats of agility as the squibs and crackers burst round their legs.

"Yow! You little hooligans! You rowdy young villains—Ooogh!" bawled Slade, losing his balance and falling heavily on the cold, hard cobblestones.

"Ho, ho, ho!" roared the village boys, and from higher up the High Street Johnny Gee & Co. joined in the laughter. Remington, Slade and Bond retired in disorder, and disappeared down a side street with squibs and crackers flying after them in great profusion.

The village boys trooped up the High Street, throwing their fireworks about and having a high old time.

Johnny Gee & Co. returned to St. Giddy's, chuckling. They considered that their money had



THE SPOTTED SPIES POTTED.—Remington and Co. gave loud howls of dismay as the lads of Merrivale began to hurl fireworks around their feet. Johnny Gee and Co. chortled with mirth at the plight of Catty's spies.

Removites did likewise, following Lord Reggie's call on them to "dub up."

"There you are, kids!" said Johnny Gee. "Buy all the fireworks you can and let 'em off—on one condition! Give those three big chaps over there a regular jamboree and make 'em run for it!"

"Wot-o!" chirruped the village boys with gusto. They shared out the money so generously contributed by Johnny Gee & Co., and made a raid on the shop. A moment later Mr. Tappin and his assistants were veritably inundated with orders for fireworks, and the village boys came forth triumphantly, armed with a goodly load of fiery purchases.

Johnny Gee & Co. were strolling along serenely towards the Market Square, and Remington, Slade and Bond were stalking them, determined to keep a close watch on the heroes of the Remove. They took their stance in another shop doorway.

been well spent in providing fireworks for the impoverished youth of Merivale. Fair play was a jewel to the cheery heroes of St. Giddy's, and in their boyish hearts they cherished deep indignation at the unscrupulousness of Cornelius Pepper.

### A Ghost of an Idea!

**T**HUMP! Johnny Gee smote the table in Study No. 4 with a sudden mighty thump that caused the inkpot to jump violently and send a spurt of best blue-black all over the cloth.

There was a concerted roar of wrath from Dick Bannister, the Hon. Bob Vernon, Tony Graham and Snowball, who were busy writing impositions on the table.

"You dummy! You raving lunatic!" howled Dick Bannister. "Look at my impot! Smothered in



ink! Nearly a hundred blessed lines of Livy spoilt, and—

"Oh, ring off!" said Johnny Gee excitedly. "Blow your impots! I've got something more important to talk about. I've got a wheeze—a regular, slap-up, gilt-edged idea! We have been barred from fun—Catty is going to keep us in till bedtime. But what's to prevent us having our Guy Fawkes celebrations after bedtime? This is my wheeze. We'll go out after bedtime, rigged up as grisly ghosts, and take Earlswood by storm! Phosphorus paint, daubed on some flowing shrouds of white calico will do the trick, and we can get all the stuff in Merivale. What do you say to that for a stunt? Are you prepared to play the Ghostly Guy Fawkes game at Earlswood after lights-out on the Fifth?"

Johnny's chums answered as with one voice, forgetting their damaged impots.

"We are—we is!"

"Then we'll do it!" said Johnny Gee determinedly. "We'll hop off to the village now, and get all the stuff we want for the ghost business."

The heroes of the Remove left their impositions and sallied forth to the village in high spirits. There they purchased radium paint, yards of calico, and all necessary make-up for disguising themselves as guy-ish ghosts on Guy Fawkes night!

The shades of night were falling fast as Johnny Gee & Co. left Merivale with their purchases. They hurried back towards St. Giddy's, intending to finish their impositions before Mr. Cattermole should go out upon the warpath.

They were hurrying along the Merivale Lane, when a small form detached itself from the shadows. It was Tom Pumfret of the Third, the leader of the fags' brigade.

"Shush-sh-sh!" he whispered. "I say, Gee, Catty and Remington and those other rotters are out looking for you. They've discovered that you went out about half-an-hour ago. I thought I'd nip out and give you the wire."

"Thanks, Pumfret!" said Johnny, gratefully. "We've got to keep our weather eyes open for Catty and his gang now—eh? We must get this stuff back somehow, and—Oh, crumbs! Look out! Here they come!"

Four dark shadows came round the bend in the lane ahead. Pumfret hissed a warning, which the Removites were prompt to obey. As Mr. Cattermole and Remington & Co. came stalking along the lane, Johnny Gee and his chums promptly skipped off into the trees at the side.

They heard a shout from Remington in the distance: "There they go, sir! The young rascals have seen us!"

The juniors made off at top speed, and followed their leader over the fence of a large house that stood in its own grounds a little way off the Merivale Lane.

It was not until they were crouching in the bushes quite close to the house, that Johnny Gee recognised where they were.

"My hat!" he muttered. "We're in the grounds of Pepper Lodge!"

"Golly, golly! Tink de ole miser will catch us, Massa Johnny?"

"Not if we can help it!" responded Johnny, grimly. "Now we're here, I vote we have a nose round. Look—there's a light burning in that old basement window. Let's take a squint—but not a sound, mind!"

The Removites crept away with bated breath, and they shaped their course through the shadows towards the basement window, where a light glimmered fitfully through the dirty, cracked glass.

Johnny Gee & Co. stood on the steps outside, and

peered into the room beyond. Low gasps of wonder and astonishment came to their lips at the scene revealed to them within.

They were looking into a cellar, very bleak and barely furnished. Cornelius Pepper had a large oak chest beside him on the floor. The lid was open, and the Removites' eyes popped wide with astonishment at the great pile of banknotes and heaps of golden coins they saw within the chest!

The miser was counting them with his long, skinny, trembling fingers, his eyes glittering with avaricious pleasure and greed as he ran through the pile. He was cackling in shrill, cracked tones, showing his hideous, toothless gums in a ghastly leer.

Johnny Gee & Co. looked breathlessly at one another outside the window. "Mum-m-my only hat! The horrid old wretch!" muttered Dick Bannister, softly. "So that settles it, Johnny! We know it to be the truth, now—Cornelius Pepper has that money he swore his brother never left!"

Johnny nodded. His teeth clicked together with a snap; his eyes were gleaming brightly in the yellow light that came through the cracked window from a smoking oil-lamp.

"Yes, Cornelius Pepper's got the dibs, and he's going to be made to fork 'em out!" he said grimly. "Now's our chance, and—and I've got an idea. Dick, I want you to dress up as John Pepper's ghost. We've got all the things here—the radium paint, the white calico sheets and a lot of make-up materials. Your job is to scare Cornelius Pepper into parting with all those spondulies! Make out you're the ghost of his brother who has returned from the grave—see? Scare him out of his socks, and we'll cart off the boodle!"

"Right-ho, Johnny!" chuckled Dick. "I get your drift. Leave it to me!"

Dick scuttled off in the darkness, taking a supply of the necessary articles with him.

When he reappeared through the gloom, even his chums received a great shock, so scared were they at the glowing, grisly apparition that glided towards them from the garden, in robes luminous white!

"You'll do, Dick!" said Johnny, drawing a deep breath. "Kimmon—this is where the fun starts!"

Dick was shoved through the old door. He crept within, and Johnny and the rest watched at the door. They did not see the four forms that came along the garden path to the other side door!

Cornelius Pepper was still seated at the table, counting out his gold when suddenly he jumped up with a croaking yell, a look of utter horror on his shrivelled, cadaverous features.

Through the gloom of the basement a spectral form had appeared—a grisly, ghostly figure in robes of white that glowed with a supernatural luminosity! An awful face, with a long beard, glared hideously at him, and as it glided into the shadows opposite the table this wraith-like figure raised a hand, pointing a finger accusingly at the miser.

"Cornelius, I have come!" The words were uttered in deep, sepulchral tones that sent a chill through the old miser's quivering spine. "I am the ghost of your brother John, and I have returned from the grave to haunt you. You have stolen the money I left to the poor people of Merivale! Repent, ere it is too late, otherwise—Oh, mum-my hat!"

The "ghost" broke off with a startled gasp as a hasty step sounded behind him, a door was thrust open and in rushed—Mr. Cattermole! He was followed by Remington, Slade and Burgess of the Sixth. Seeing the light in the basement from the other side, they had come to ask the miser's permission to search his grounds!

Catty and the prefects stopped short, petrified with amazement at the scene that met their gaze. Then,



as the "ghost" made a sudden dive for the door, revealing a pair of very material boots—and large-sized boots at that!—under the robes, Mr. Cattermole recovered his breath, and dived after him, lunging at the spectral form in the flowing robes with his umbrella.

"Boy! Rascal! I have caught you! How dare you play your outrageous tricks in such a place?" screeched Mr. Cattermole, swiping desperately with the umbrella. "Surrender, do you hear!"

Dick heard, but did not obey. He made one dive for the door, where his startled phums watched, and they scampered off together.

Cornelius Pepper had clapped his gold back into the oak chest and slammed down the lid, and he now stood by the table, demanding an explanation of this intrusion. But neither Mr. Cattermole nor Remington & Co. waited to explain.

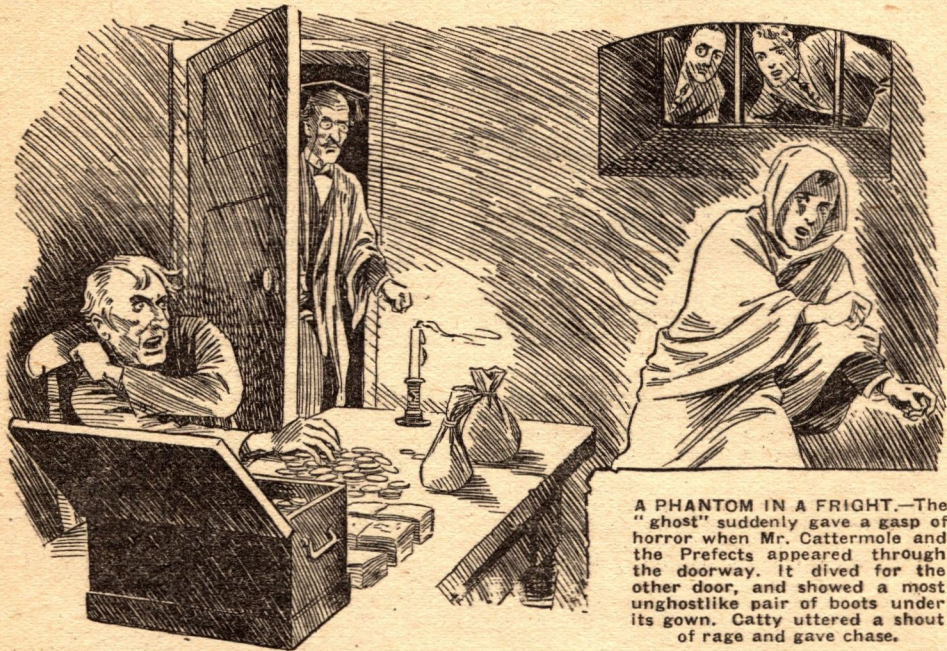
Dick Bannister and the others, of course, had

before them," he said. "You did quite right, Gee, in reporting this matter to me."

The Remove leader returned to the bosom of his chums, and they all agreed that, should the legacy now be forthcoming from old Cornelius Pepper, the licking they knew was due for the night's work from Mr. Cattermole would have been worth while.

But the cheery chums were doomed to disappointment. The licking came all right, but just before bedtime, the Head returned, and shortly afterwards Johnny Gee received a summons to his study. Dr. Holroyd's kind old face wore a very grave look.

"I have laid your information before the police, Gee, and we have visited Pepper Lodge, together with other executors of the late John Pepper," he said. "Cornelius Pepper has adopted a most hostile and truculent attitude. He denies absolutely that there is any money in the house other than his own;



A PHANTOM IN A FRIGHT.—The "ghost" suddenly gave a gasp of horror when Mr. Cattermole and the Prefects appeared through the doorway. It dived for the other door, and showed a most unghostlike pair of boots under its gown. Catty uttered a shout of rage and gave chase.

climbed over the fence and were running down the Merivale Lane as though competing in a race on the cinder track. He presented a fearsome sight in the darkness, for he still wore his ghostly robes and beard.

At length they paused for breath by the wayside, within reach of school, to remove all traces of the "jape" from Dick's person.

"Yah!" panted Dick. "I'm—wow-wow!—dashed if I'll try any more of your marvellous brain-waves, Johnny! You can work 'em off yourself—gug-gug!"

"Never mind!" chuckled Johnny Gee. "We've properly bowled out old Pepper! Something attempted, somebody done, my sons! Now we'd better go and see the Head about all this."

Johnny Gee & Co. hurried back to school, and sought out Dr. Holroyd at once, telling him the whole affair.

Dr. Holroyd listened in astonishment. "I will visit the police at once, and lay this information

I am afraid, Gee, that we have no alternative but to accept the old man's explanation, false though we know it to be."

"Oh dear!" said Johnny Gee, in dismay. He rejoined his chums and told them the disappointing news.

"No one can touch Cornelius Pepper—eh?" he muttered. "I'm not quite so sure about that. I shouldn't be surprised if we don't touch the grasping old skinflint—and touch him hard!"

THE Removites' secret preparations for a midnight furore on the Fifth of November went on apace. The rest of St. Giddy's, of course, were celebrating Guy Fawkes Day in a fitting manner. Sundry guys had been rigged up—some of them scarcely complimentary to the various notabilities they purported to represent—and soon after lessons were over, a huge bonfire was in course of being stacked upon the waste ground by the footer field.



Johnny Gee & Co. were due for detention in the Form-room after tea. In Study No. 4 they gathered over the festive board. Their expressions were doleful in the extreme.

"What about hurrying over tea, and hopping across to Earlswood for a bit of a joke?" Johnny asked. "We have another half-hour before Catty starts to look for us, and a lot can happen in half-an-hour."

"Good biz, Johnny!" The others brightened considerably at the idea. Tea was left, and they hurried from St. Giddy's via the back door and took a short cut through the wood to Earlswood.

They got over the fence by the football field, and along by the pavilion. They had no definite plan, but they were confident the occasion would supply the inspiration.

Happening to glance through the window of the pavilion, as they passed, Johnny Gee gave a sudden start and halted in his tracks, staring as though petrified.

"Gug-g-g-great Scott!" he gurgled, like a boy in a dream. "Look what's in there!"

There were six figures in the pavilion, standing in a group by the wall. They were schoolboy figures, and were rigid in their attitudes, staring straight before them as though transfixed. The sight of those six figures caused Johnny Gee & Co. to gaze at them in utter, unbelieving astonishment, for they were the exact counterparts, almost, of themselves! There was Johnny Gee, staring the real Johnny in the face, and Lord Reggie Pelham Smith, complete with monocle, and Snowball, woolly-headed and coal-black in complexion, and Dick Bannister, Tony Graham and the Hon. Bob Vernon.

"They're guys!" gurgled Johnny Gee, faintly. "Guys of ourselves! Don't you see? Those Earlswood rotters—I suppose their idea is to bring 'em along to St. Giddy's, knowing that we're detained, and burn 'em!"

Johnny Gee's eyes glistened. "My word! What a discovery!" he gasped. "Supposing we get 'em into St. Giddy's and shove 'em in the Form-room instead of ourselves? It's jolly dark in there, and Catty'll think the six figures at the desks are us—see? And I've got another stunt to work off on old Pepper, while we enjoy our freedom!"

"Oh, ripping!" They managed to smuggle the effigies up the back stairs without being seen.

THE bonfire in the quadrangle at St. Giddy's was well alight, and a gay throng of juniors were trooping around it, letting off fireworks and parading their guys. The fun of the Fiery Fifth was in full swing.

The air at St. Giddy's, in fact, fairly reeked of gunpowder smoke and brimstone. Rockets and coloured lights were shooting through the air; crackers, squibs and fireworks of all varieties were being let off to the accompaniment of joyous jinks in the open air.

Meanwhile, in the grounds of Pepper Lodge, not far away, a scene of Dirty Deeds was being enacted!

A group of six figures, draped in black robes, and with whiskers and beards protruding from under broad-rimmed hats, made their way to the basement kitchen, carrying ominous bundles under their arms.

They peered through the cracked glass, and saw the cadaverous old miser seated at the table, munching from a loaf and a meagre piece of cheese.

Suddenly, Cornelius Pepper gave a start, and his evil, glittering, raven eyes turned sharply to the window with a look of fear. Guttural voices sounded outside the window, speaking in tones that sent cold shivers down the old miser's backbone!

"This is the house, my men!" said one, a voice

heavy with double-dyed villainy. "The miser Cornelius Pepper lives here, guarding his hoard of wealth! This job's going to be easy—and we've chosen the right night for it, too! We blow up this house, and old Pepper will go up with it, and as it's Guy Fawkes night, people won't guess that it's Pepper Lodge going sky high—blown up by the work of anarchists!"

Old Cornelius Pepper clutched the side of the bare oak table and shivered with horror, as though smitten with the palsy.

The husky, villainous voice outside went on: "Blow up the house and take old Pepper's treasure chest from the ruins—that's the lay! There'll be fine pickings for us to-night, my men! Got the gunpowder ready?"

"Yus, boss!" was the guttural response.

"Let's get on, then, with the dirty work!"

Cornelius Pepper gazed towards the window, and his eyes caught sight of a number of villainous-looking, black-draped forms fleeing through the darkness. Anarchists! The gang had come to blow up his house and take his treasure from the debris! A terrific crash and a flash of light and smoke from the window galvanised the old miser into instant life. He made a dive for the ancient fireplace in the kitchen, pressed a switch, and immediately the whole fireplace swung inwards, revealing a deep, dark cavity beyond.

Croaking shrilly in his horror, and trembling in every limb, Cornelius Pepper groped within the secret cavity behind the fireplace and dragged out his big oak chest. His one thought was for his gold. He must save that at any cost!

The anarchists—otherwise Johnny Gee & Co.—gazed through the window and saw this sally, and their eyes gleamed.

"Now!" muttered Johnny. "He's fetched the box out of hiding. Now give the old rotter all we've got in the way of fireworks. Let it rip!"

*Crash! Fizzzzz! Bang! BANG!* Through the window of the basement kitchen came a bombardment of fireworks, terrific in volume and intensity. Huge cannon-crackers burst round the legs of Cornelius Pepper, jumping jacks and leaping spurts of fire encircled him, and when Dick Bannister touched off the "bomb" made of damp gunpowder, there was a flash and a burst of smoke that filled the whole kitchen and made the whole scene doubly hideous.

And, whilst Cornelius Pepper scudded like a rat through the dark corridors of his house, convinced that bloodthirsty anarchists were on his track, Johnny Gee & Co., having made the treasure chest secure, proceeded to give a firework display on a large scale at Pepper Lodge!

"WELL, of all the rotten frosts!" It was Tommy Rhodes of Earlswood who spoke.

He and his chums had come from their school, and were hovering in the lane outside St. Giddy's.

"We must get our own back on those rotters somehow!" hissed Tommy. "They've stolen those six ripping guys we made! I wonder what they've done with 'em? Perhaps we can get the last laugh of those scallywags, after all. They don't know that the guys are stuffed with fireworks, and they've got special rockets in their legs, to make 'em jump! Let's get in, anyway, and have a scout round!"

The Earlswood boys, consumed with wrath and thirsting for vengeance, clambered over the wall of St. Giddy's by the cloisters and crept across the darkened quadrangle.

The light of the bonfire illumined all the boys who were celebrating the Fifth, but Johnny Gee and Co. were nowhere to be seen. So the Earlswood



marauders went onward, and entered the School House by the washhouse window.

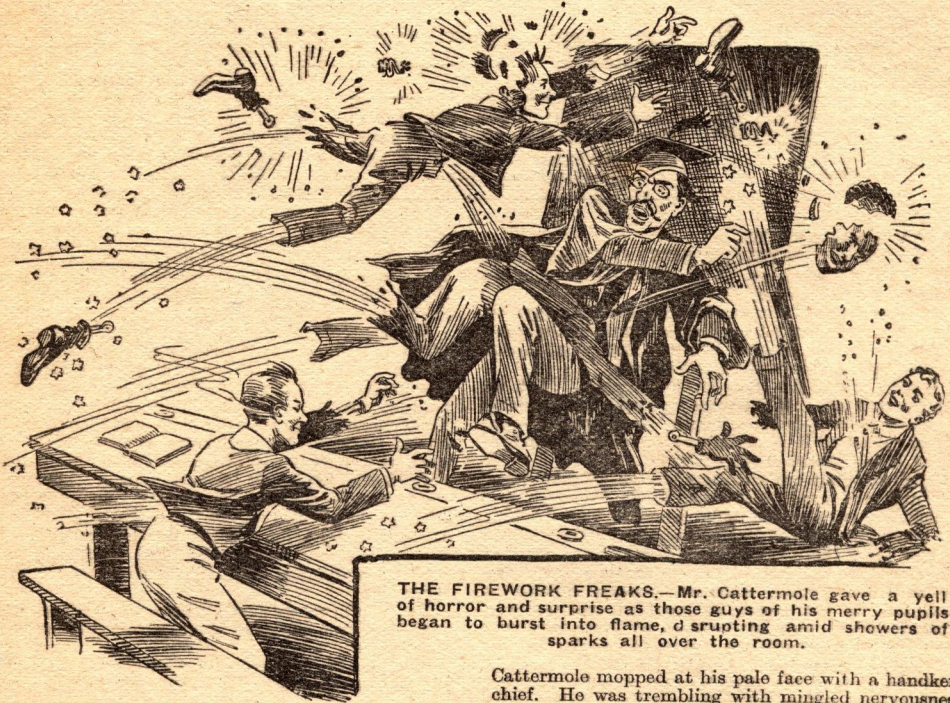
They had carried out many previous raids at St. Giddy's, and so knew their way about. They reached the Remove Form-room, and peered within. They uttered gasps of astonishment. At first, it seemed, in the semi-gloom, that the six figures seated at the desks were Johnny Gee & Co. themselves, but the keen eyes of Tommy Rhodes quickly detected the truth.

"Our guys!" he muttered. "Oh, the spoofing villains! They've altered the dummies a bit, to look

*Fizzzzzzzz-zzz!* **BANG!** *Crash!* **BANG-BANG!** Those six figures of Johnny Gee & Co. suddenly became alive! Coloured lights shot from their eyes, and tongues of flame leaped from their mouths, whilst all of a sudden those figures, with terrific bangs, leaped clean out of the desks and shot through the air like live things, towards Mr. Cattermole!

Mr. Cattermole, with a wild dive, beat a hasty retreat from the Form-room, and those guys of Johnny Gee & Co. came jumping after him!

Down the stairs went Catty followed by Remington and Co., who had been with him. In the quad. Mr.



**THE FIREWORK FREAKS.**—Mr. Cattermole gave a yell of horror and surprise as those guys of his merry pupils began to burst into flame, disrupting amid showers of sparks all over the room.

more like themselves, and left 'em in the Form-room, under detention! Well, of all the cool nerve!"

Tommy Rhodes's angry look gradually cleared, and a grin suffused his face.

"Now for an impromptu indoor firework show!" he chuckled. "Let's touch off the wicks, and watch 'em go!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" The Earlwood raiders crept into the Form-room, and pulling out the fuses that were underneath the jackets of those six guys, they touched them off with matches.

*Fizz-zzz-zzzzzzz!* The touch-paper started to glow and sputter, and Tommy Rhodes & Co. chuckled softly.

Suddenly, a step sounded on the corridor outside, and Cakebread gave a hoarse, terrified whisper. "Mr. Cattermole's coming!"

The Earlwood raiders promptly "scooted." They got away only just in time. Mr. Cattermole came striding round the corner, looking more sour and dour than usual. The fireworks and noise in the quadrangle were fraying his nerves.

"Ah!" rasped Mr. Cattermole. "It is well for you that you are remaining quiet! I shall come back again, and—Why, wh-what—Yah! Good heavens—Yaroooooogh!"

Cattermole mopped at his pale face with a handkerchief. He was trembling with mingled nervousness and rage.

"This is an outrage!" he bellowed. "Those young rascals—where are they? Gee and his companions must be found! I shall demand Dr. Holroyd to expel them for this night's work!"

Mr. Cattermole and Remington & Co. rushed off in search of Johnny Gee and his chums, leaving the rest of the school in hysterics! Down the Merivale Lane they rushed, and soon a great commotion at Pepper Lodge met their view.

Crowds of villagers, both boys and grown-ups, were gathered in the grounds of Pepper Lodge. A huge bonfire had been lit in the garden, and this brightly lit the amazing scene. The boys of the village, with Bob Towler & Co. in the forefront, were making merry, whilst Johnny Gee & Co. were plying the hose from a portable fire-engine through the windows of the house, through which smoke was pouring in dense volumes.

"Gug-good heavens!" gurgled Mr. Cattermole. "What has happened? Have those young reprobrates set this house alight?"

"Nunno, zur!" spoke up one bluff old countryman. "They boys be having a foine game wi' Cornelius Pepper! They've filled the house wi' smoke an'

(Continued on page 34.)



# SENSATIONAL SCIENCE SERIAL STARTS NEXT WEEK!



## YOUR EDITOR'S GRAND NEWS FOR NEXT WEEK!

Special Story Number containing  
New Wonder Serial, Grand  
Foreign Legion Yarn, and a Store  
of other Good Things.



**M**Y DEAR CHUMS,  
News! NEWS!! NEWS!!! Gather round  
and listen, chaps. A New Serial, an absolutely  
New Thing in New Serials!

You've heard of treasure-hunting, eh? And you've  
often read of people travelling a couple of thousand  
miles to find a buried hoard. But what about  
travelling a couple of thousand *years*?

Yes, I mean it! But let me explain. It's an  
undisputed fact that there are *four* ways of measuring  
a solid object—height, length, and breadth—and  
*time*. Because if it doesn't exist for any space of  
time, it can't exist at all, can it?

Well now, say our scientists, we can travel in a car  
through the *space* distances, length, breadth and  
thickness, so why not build some sort of machine  
to travel through the *fourth dimension*, Time?

For years there have been disputes as to whether  
it is or is not possible. However that may be, there  
is a brilliant young scientist, working quietly in  
seclusion in the North of England, perfecting a  
machine which, he firmly believes, will have the power  
to resist the force of Time, just as an aeroplane resists  
gravity, a force of space. And Mr. H. Wedgewood  
Belfield, one of the *Mag.'s* most popular authors,  
who was at college with this young scientist, paid  
him a visit a few weeks ago.

The scientist propounded his theories to Mr.  
Belfield. Mr. Belfield listened in rapt interest—  
but he was not thinking of the gains to science of the  
success of such a scheme, but of the story value.

"Suppose," burst out our author, carried away  
with his enthusiasm, "suppose you perfect this  
machine; if you went back and watched somebody  
—bury something—in the year One Thousand B.C.  
for example, you could come back to-day and dig  
it up?"

His friend noticed the emphasis on the point, and  
was a little puzzled. "Yes, certainly," he replied.

"Then, by Jove, if we travelled back and watched  
the Pirates of old bury their treasure on Cocos Island,  
we could come back to 1931, and we should know  
the *exact spot* where they buried it!"

And that, chums, is how

**The Time Ship Treasure Hunters**  
came into being. The actual treasure they want

### JOKE COUPON.

Stick on postcard and send with your favourite  
joke to the JOKE EDITOR.

7/11/31.

was, according to a papyrus, buried in Egypt in the  
year 2000 B.C. Mr. Belfield has got all the scientific  
data from his friend, and has founded his story on  
things that have already happened to this brilliant  
scientist.

For example, though every precaution has been  
taken, the young scientist is well aware that a certain  
gentleman, leader of a powerful gang of crooks, is  
keeping an eye on him. He has in his mind some such  
plan as Mr. Belfield visualised—first stealing the  
Time Ship as soon as it is finished—and then collecting  
buried treasures from all parts of the world. This  
man, in the person of Reuben Tolley, plays a big  
part in the yarn, and forms a constant menace to  
the treasure-hunters. There are four of them—  
Roddy Blane, the scientist, with Mike Rooney,  
ex-heavy-weight, his "personal bodyguard"; Bob  
Morgan, sixteen years and six foot of whipcord and  
muscle; and Bob's uncle Bill, explorer and archa-  
ologist.

But you'll meet them all next week chaps, when  
you dive into the first chapters of this smashing  
serial yarn.

Gosh, I seem to have said a lot about that serial;  
I'll have to deal with the other grand yarns very  
briefly.

First there is

### Gaston the Gruesome Garcon,

a new character who is due for a long period of  
popularity. Why is he so gruesome? Well, I'll let  
you into the secret, but don't tell anyone—it's  
because he's always reading the Deeds of Dead-Eye  
Dick in the Shilling Shockers!

### Teutonic Touch-Line Tactics!

is the title of another dramatic complete yarn of the  
Joyous Juniors, with Otto, the German goalie, playing  
the leading part. But the tit-bit of the complete  
yarns I've left till the last. Nothing less than the  
dramatic return of Captain Fury, of the Foreign  
Legion, in a thrilling duel with

### Bandits of the Burning Desert!

Well, here's the end of my space, so I'll have to  
close. N.B.—Don't forget the footer plate, showing

### Brighton and Bradford,

and the next Free Dart-  
board Coupon.

Your sincere  
friend,

*The Editor*



FALCON SWIFT'S GREATEST FOOTBALL CASE. TOLD IN THE SENSATIONAL CHAPTERS BELOW! BEGIN THIS GRIPPING YARN TO-DAY, BOYS!



THE MYSTERY OF  
THE MISSING MEN

A Whirlwind of Excitement and  
Baffling Intrigue on the Green Arena of Halford.

### Chick on the Job.

IT was not by mere chance that the Monoeyed Manhunter and his clever young assistant were on the scene at such a crucial moment. Swift had not forgotten the reference he had heard to Matt Stutt, the master criminal who was incarcerated in Darkmoor Prison. It had been easy enough for the great detective to put two and two together. The Stutt Confederation was planning to recommence its grim activities! And the first step was to effect the rescue of "Mad Matt" himself!

So, when Dad Storey had slipped away from the Exstead match, immediately after the kick-off, Swift had known what to expect. Driving like the wind in the Hispano-Suiza, he had been in communication with the prison authorities; he had learned that Stutt had been rescued—that he had escaped in the mist, in an orange-coloured saloon; Swift had also heard that this saloon had overtaken a big furniture pantechnicion.

And, like a flash, Swift remembered a scrap of conversation he had once heard between the Man Monster and Arkwright, some days earlier—and the word "pantechnicion" had been used. With such "inside" knowledge, Falcon Swift possessed a unique advantage.

Driving recklessly across the moor, making a detour, he had got well in advance of the pantechnicion. There was a handy bridge. Leaving the Hispano-

Suiza some distance away, Swift and Chick had reached that bridge, and there they crouched.

But it was mere chance that the pantechnicion should stop immediately underneath!

"Look, Boss," breathed Chick Conway wonderingly. They saw the doors, with the furniture attached swing open; they saw the blue car backing out, with Dad Storey in the rear, and the chauffeur at the wheel. The other man, Freeman, was not visible.

"Clever—infernally clever," whispered Falcon Swift, almost admiringly. "They changed the car from blue to orange—they converted it into a saloon—and drove it straight into this pantechnicion, quite near the prison."

"Phew!" whistled Chick.

"The orange car has vanished as though into thin air," continued Falcon Swift grimly. "If the prison authorities see Storey in the blue car, it is not the car they are searching for. The acute danger-point has already been passed. Even if the pantechnicion is now searched, Stutt will not be found."

"But he must be in there, boss," whispered Chick.

"Undoubtedly—but cunningly hidden, I'll warrant," replied Falcon Swift. "Quick, Chick! Here's our chance! Storey is going back to Exstead—and I must be there first, or he will suspect. It will be left for you to carry on with this job."

The blue car, turning, was vanishing into the mist. The doors of the pantechnicion had closed, and the



lumbering vehicle was on the point of restarting. So low was the bridge that there was only just room for the high vehicle to pass under.

"You go with this van, Chick," whispered Swift. "See! There is a tarpaulin on top under which you can conceal yourself. Accompany it—see what happens—then report to me at the first opportunity."

Chick was not the fellow to waste time by asking questions. He just gripped Falcon Swift's hand, and as the pantechnicon was starting off he dropped. With scarcely a thud, he alighted on the roof, and it only took him a second to slither underneath the tarpaulin.

Swift himself arrived back at Exstead whilst the second half of the big game was only twenty minutes old.

Unobserved, he slipped into Mr. Cobb's private entrance. He found the manager of the Exstead club waiting.

"I'm very grateful to you, sir, for your help," said Swift warmly. "I shall be even more grateful if you will treat this little episode as strictly confidential. Later, I will satisfy your very natural curiosity regarding my movements."

"Yes, I'm certainly curious," said Mr. Cobb bluntly. "I hear that there's been an escape from Darkmoor."

"A cunningly-planned *coup*," nodded Falcon Swift, as he removed his overcoat, and stood in his footer togs. "But the rascals will have only a brief success, Mr. Cobb. The strength of my position is that I know what has happened—and they do not even suspect me."

A minute later he hobbled across to the dressing-rooms with Mr. Cobb. And a sympathetic cheer went up from the Exstead crowd when Falcon Swift's lithe figure was seen emerging from the players' entrance, on to the field.

Exstead had scored two goals since Swift had left—thus, the score stood at four—two. And the Exstead forwards were pressing vigorously. After Swift's departure, the Hotspurs had concentrated upon defence.

"Going on again, Mr. Swift?" asked Beefy Arkwright, running up.

"Yes, I feel a lot better now," replied Swift, with a smile. "I think I might be of some use."

"Good man! Go ahead!"

Dad Storey, arriving back ten minutes before the final whistle, smiled grimly to himself. There was Falcon Swift, on the field! And Swift, too, had performed miracles in this game—scoring four goals single-handed.

Even when Storey was told, by Arkwright, of Swift's injury—and absence from the field—he suspected nothing. From first to last, the rescue of Matthew Stutt had been engineered with super-brilliance.

Little did Dad Storey realise the actual truth!

### Aboard the "Cygnet."

THE mist was thicker on land than at sea; and nothing interfered with the progress of the yacht *Cygnet* when she arrived at Plymouth Harbour, and docked.

The *Cygnet*, owned by Lord Roxhaven, was a smart craft. She had just returned from a world cruise. Her owner, one of England's greatest retired judges, was a bachelor, a lonely man. He had enjoyed this cruise, but he was glad enough to be back in the old country.

"I shall travel straight through to Halford—to Slade Manor," he said, after the yacht was securely in her berth, alongside the quay. "You will make all arrangements, Brent."

"Yes, my lord," said Brent, deferentially. Brent

was the steward—in fact, Lord Roxhaven's personal servant. He had been a perfect servant throughout the voyage, and never once had he given any indication that he was a secret agent of the dreaded Stutt Confederation.

The *Cygnet* docked in the early afternoon, and Lord Roxhaven was anxious to be away without any loss of time. But less than half-an-hour after he had given his instructions Brent presented himself in the comfortable lounge, where his lordship was stretching himself after a brief afternoon nap.

"I am sorry, my lord, but it will be inadvisable to travel to-day," said Brent. "There is a good deal of fog inland. I suggest, my lord, that you remain aboard overnight."

"Well, it's an infernal nuisance," said the old man. "The officers and crew have gone ashore, haven't they?"

"Yes, my lord; but that will make no difference to your comfort," said Brent. "Skelton and myself will gladly remain aboard until to-morrow."

"That's very good of you both," grunted his lordship. "H'm! Well, perhaps you're right, Brent. I hate travelling in fog, anyway."

Brent glided out, and on deck he met Skelton, the assistant steward. The Stutt Confederation was very thorough in all its undertakings.

"The old man has fallen for it," muttered Brent.

A telegraph messenger came over the gangway: the wire was addressed to Brent. He took it and read it.

"All right," he said to the boy. "No answer. That furniture is coming aboard," he added carelessly, turning to Skelton. "Thought we shouldn't have it until to-morrow."

They went below, to the stewards' quarters. "Action now, Skelton," said Brent, crisply. "You know what this wire means? Everything's all set. They'll be here within the hour."

Lord Roxhaven was in the yacht's library now; he was sitting at his desk, writing. He scarcely looked up when the door softly opened, and Brent entered.

"Well?" he asked, continuing his writing.

"Tea is served, my lord," said Brent.

"A bit early, aren't you?"

"No, my lord." Brent came nearer, and behind him was Skelton. Softly crossing the carpeted floor, Brent approached the back of Lord Roxhaven's chair. Surprised at the man's movements, his lordship looked up—and he was just in time to see the pad which Brent had in his hand.

The next moment the pad was clapped over his mouth and nostrils, and Brent's strong arms were gripping his shoulders. Skelton, at the same moment, swung the swivel-chair round and grasped the old man's feet.

"Good Heavens! What the— Uuuuuurrrrh!"

Lord Roxhaven's startled voice was smothered by the tightly-clapped pad. He struggled desperately for a moment or two, but the drug acted quickly. Within a minute Lord Roxhaven was lying limp and inert in the swivel chair.

"Good work!" said Brent, coolly. "You know what to do now, Skelton."

Ropes were quickly tied about his lordship's arms and body; his feet were tethered. Then he was dragged to a deep cupboard which opened out from the library. Bundled into there, the door was locked upon him.

"Gosh!" panted Skelton. "Supposing somebody comes? Somebody for the old boy?"

"Nobody will come," retorted Brent. "The Chief will be here himself within half-an-hour. Our orders were definite; we have to be ready."

The mist was creeping off the land now, and



gathering up from the sea, too. As darkness approached, the docks became enshrouded in a murky blanket.

A motor-pantechnicon lumbered on to the quay; it halted opposite the gangway which led aboard the *Cygnét*. Deck officials suspected nothing. This pantechnicon contained furniture for Lord Roxhaven's yacht; everything was in perfect order.

Men wearing green baize aprons were soon at work, with a foreman giving directions. Brent, the neatly-attired, dignified chief steward of the *Cygnét*, was superintending. Although the quay was active in all directions, not one of those officials suspected that they were really witnessing the final "get-away" of Matthew Stutt, escaped convict!

First of all, the articles which had been piled on the tailboard, against the doors. The men in the green aprons carried all the stuff aboard. Then came a fairly big article of furniture from within the pantechnicon itself—an exquisite sideboard, carefully roped and padded.

There was only one person on that dock who thought it peculiar that the pantechnicon itself should contain such a small amount of furniture—considering that some of the articles had overflowed on to the rear. But that person was very much "in the know"; for he was crouching under the tarpaulin on the top of the van—and he was Chick Conway!

### The New Lord Roxhaven!

CHICK was thrilled. He knew that Matthew Stutt was hiding inside that well-packed article of furniture—that he was being carried aboard Lord Roxhaven's yacht. And Chick, taking advantage of the swirling mist, slid down from his place of concealment. He took care that nobody should see him.

At the first opportunity he boarded the yacht. In the gloom and fog he made his way to another part of the docks, and here he secured a small boat.

Rowing silently, he approached the opposite side of the *Cygnét*. He threw up a rope, and it curled round the rail. A moment later Chick swarmed up like a monkey, and his boat drifted away.

Crouching low, the young detective, his heart throbbing, scuttled to a place of concealment. But he knew that there was little chance of his being discovered, for the usual officers and crew were ashore. But if he was discovered, it would mean short shrift!

The pantechnicon rolled away, its mission accomplished. With it went the men in the green aprons. Darkness completely descended, bringing more fog.

Work ceased at the docks, and the *Cygnét*, snugly berthed, scarcely showed a light.

Down in the library the steel shutters over the

ports were all clamped into position. Not a speck of light escaped. The door was locked. Outside, in the corridor, Skelton stood on duty.

Within stood Brent, the steward, and the man Freeman.

"Well, we're here, Brent," said Freeman tensely. "Nothing like being open and above board, eh? There were even a couple of dock cops watching us—and we brought the Chief aboard right under their noses! You've dealt with His Nibs?"

"Locked away—in the cupboard," said Brent, nodding towards the door.

"Good!" Freeman went to the newly-arrived sideboard; the ropes were removed, the door was unlocked. Matthew Stutt emerged.

He rose to his feet, stretched himself.

"Is everything prepared?" he snapped. "The make-up? The clothes? The trunk?"

"Everything, Chief," said Brent hastily. He indicated the clothes—Lord Roxhaven's—which were laid across a lounge. There was an open suitcase with everything necessary for the donning of a make-up; a big wardrobe trunk, commonplace enough outwardly, but with a novel interior.

"Bring him out," said Stutt shortly. There was nothing of the ex-convict about him. Even in his



MUTINY.—Lord Roxhaven turned in his chair as he heard his valet approaching. Then, a pad was pressed over his mouth while the steward grabbed his legs. Powerless to move, Lord Roxhaven found his senses slowly slipping away.

drab prison clothes he was a man of grim authority. His whole authority commanded instant obedience. No man had ever been known to resist his orders.

He was a dynamic force—and, just at this moment, he was labouring from some tremendous emotion. His eyes gleamed with a venomous fire, and the other two men scarcely dared look at him. Small wonder that he was known throughout the criminal world—and to Scotland Yard—as "Mad Matt." He was a Genius of Crime. He was ruthless—relentless. But those who worked for him prospered amazingly and he protected them, too. To be a member of the Stutt Confederation was the dream of every crook.



Lord Roxhaven, still unconscious, was dragged from the cupboard. Matthew Stutt stood looking down upon him, and he was fairly quivering with that terrific emotion which gripped him.

"The first of them," he muttered, speaking to himself. "Roxhaven—the judge who sentenced me to twenty years of living death! By Heaven! I shall sentence him to worse! Yes, worse than death! Every day, every hour, this man shall beg of me to put an end to his tortures!"

With a great effort he controlled himself; and in a minute he was calm and brisk.

"You have done well, Brent," he said, glancing at the steward. "You shall be highly paid."

"I only carried out orders, Chief," muttered Brent huskily.

"Get me the clothes—everything," commanded Stutt. "We have no time to waste."

Quickly, methodically, he arrayed himself in Lord Roxhaven's clothing. The two men were of very much the same build—and even their faces were moulded in a similar pattern, for both were broad-featured, heavy-jawed.

It was this very resemblance, in fact, which had prompted Matthew Stutt to choose Lord Roxhaven as his first victim.

The transformation was carried even further; for, seated at a big mirror, with lights all round him, Stutt proceeded to change himself into a second Lord Roxhaven.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE conspirators believed that they had taken every precaution. But there was one tiny slip—the fault of Skelton, the assistant steward. He had been told to cover completely the library skylight, so that no chink of light should escape. He had used a heavy tarpaulin for this purpose, tying it down all round. Matthew Stutt had looked up at the skylight, and had been satisfied. He knew, anyhow, that the watchman was on guard at the gateway. No unauthorised person could get aboard.

But Chick Conway—very much unauthorised—was already aboard!

Like a dim shadow in the swirling mist, he had crept from his place of concealment, and was, in fact, seeking a means by which he could steal below. He was taking care to keep on the starboard side—well away from the gangway and the man on watch.

And as he was creeping along he saw a tiny, almost invisible streak of light. He paused. He saw there was a skylight here—and he saw, too, that it was covered with a heavy tarpaulin. Crouching low, Chick investigated. He might easily have passed by—but all his senses were on the alert.

Carefully, cautiously, he unfastened a corner of the tarpaulin, and pulling his jacket over his head backwards, so that it formed a kind of hood, he crouched low, until his face was within an inch or two of the glass. If any light escaped through the chink, it would be trapped by the hood of his inverted coat. The watchman would know nothing.

Chick looked down—and there he saw Matthew Stutt, putting the last finishing touches to his make-up. And on the lounge, unconscious, lay Lord Roxhaven.

Only one glance did Chick Conway take—and he knew the truth. Matthew Stutt, the fugitive convict, was to go boldly out into the world as Lord Roxhaven.

### The Madness of Matthew Stutt.

PREPARED as Chick was for a surprise, he found himself breathing heavily with the amazement of it. Matthew Stutt's impersonation was uncanny. He was the exact double of Lord Roxhaven.

Chick was doing his spying at a crucial time. For not a minute was lost. The big wardrobe-trunk, now

opened, did not contain the ordinary drawers and hangers. It was quite empty, except for a curious amount of padding. And there was a seat, too, and straps.

Whilst Chick watched—now a little horrified—he saw Lord Roxhaven thrust into the trunk. He was strapped securely to the seat. The trunk was closed, clamped and locked.

Below, in the library, Freeman and Brent were watching, fascinated.

"You're uncanny, Chief," breathed Brent. "You're his lordship to the life! Never saw anything like it!"

"This is no time for compliments, Brent," said Stutt, briefly. "We leave immediately—for Slade Manor. The car is ready?"

"Waiting—my lord," said Freeman deferentially.

"Good! It is just as well that you two should get into the habit of addressing me in that way," said Stutt, nodding. "Go ahead, then. The sooner we start, the better."

He now spoke in Lord Roxhaven's tones—a little quavering and hesitant. It was a marvel of characterisation—for Matthew Stutt had not heard Lord Roxhaven's voice for two years. But his memory was acute, and as a mimic he was super-brilliant.

The dockside officials saw nothing suspicious in the fact that Lord Roxhaven had decided to come ashore—and to start for his home, somewhere in the Midlands. The mist was not so bad that motoring could not be done. A big car stood on the quay.

It was not of the ordinary type, for the driver's space was open—and there was no seat next to him. It was after the style of a taxi. And there, in that space, the big wardrobe-trunk was strapped into position. Cabin trunks and suitcases were slung upon the roof.

Lord Roxhaven, well muffled, came down the gangplank and entered the car. He was accompanied by the deferential Brent.

And a shadowy figure left the *Cygnets* and melted away into the gloom of the night.

"WELL done, Chick," said Falcon Swift, patting his ex-newsboy assistant warmly on the shoulder. "You have done splendidly."

Chick had made his full report. They were both in the Hispano-Suiza, speeding across England towards Halford. Swift had deliberately waited in Exstead, ostensibly the guest of Mr. Cobb, after the other players had departed for home. And there Chick Conway had joined him.

"So now we know the exact game, Chick," said the Monocled Manhunter, his voice fraught with grimness. "Matthew Stutt has escaped from prison, and he has vanished so utterly that the hue and cry will come to nothing. One of the most ingenious disappearances ever conceived!"

"I should think it is, Boss," panted Chick. "Nobody will suspect Lord Roxhaven, because he's just come from a long tour abroad. He can move about openly—he can live at Slade Manor without a soul guessing the truth! And he's going to keep the real Lord Roxhaven there—imprisoned in one of those horrible concrete cells. Even if people notice a little difference in the supposed Lord Roxhaven, they won't suspect anything. He's been away so long."

"That is one of the most cunning features of the plan," nodded Falcon Swift. "But Slade Manor has not been prepared so carefully merely with this one object in view, Chick. It is not to be a safe haven for Stutt—only. It is his new headquarters—the central office, so to speak, from which the Stutt Confederation will operate. Now we are beginning to see the full purpose of this great plot."



"And when are you going to act, Boss?" asked Chick eagerly. "You deliberately allowed Stutt to escape from prison—you could have stopped it if you had liked—and even now I can't quite see why you didn't."

"If I had prevented Stutt's escape I could have saved the police of the country a lot of trouble," admitted Falcon Swift. "But what of the Confederation? It would still have lived, Chick. When my evidence is complete, I shall pounce—and my bag will be complete."

"And—and how long will that be, Boss?"

"Not long now," replied the great detective, almost gloatingly.

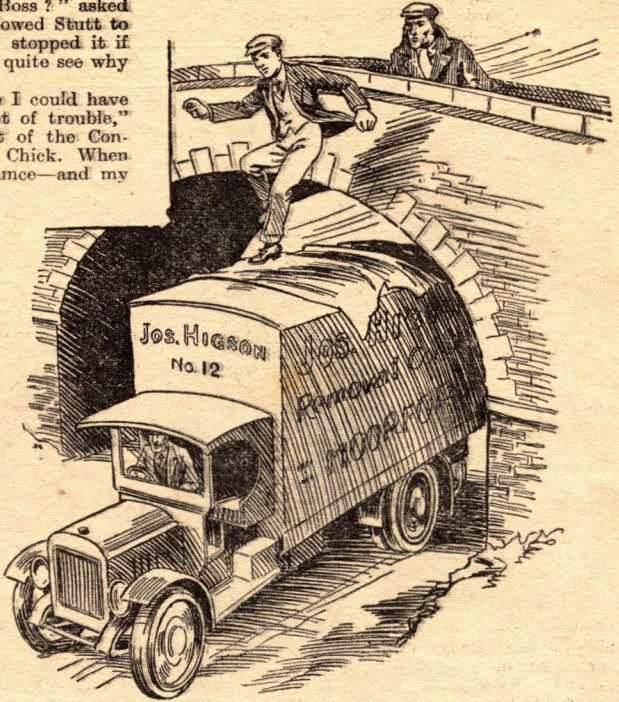
"Matthew Stutt's sojourn at Slade Manor will be brief, laddie! I am nearly ready for the 'big kill'!"

Late that night, whilst the whole country was ringing with the dramatic escape of Matthew Stutt, that daring criminal had arrived openly and with some pomp at Slade Manor.

The place was a blaze of light, in readiness for his lordship's return. A big staff of servants had been installed. And it said much for the cleverness and cunning of Matthew Stutt that these servants were honest, genuine domestics. They had been engaged in the ordinary way, through the ordinary channels. A butler, footmen, a housekeeper, maid-servants. All were above suspicion.

So complete were the preparations at Slade Manor that Stutt could take up the life of Lord Roxhaven in safety. There were secret ways by which he could reach the "private prison," far beneath the ordinary cellars. Not a living soul except those "in the know" could possibly guess at the existence of that prison. There was only one man in the household of Slade Manor who was a member of the Confederation—and that man was Brent, his lordship's personal servant.

It was late—past midnight, in fact—but Stutt did not go to bed. Brent's apartment was next to his own. And when the household were all asleep, Brent came into Matthew Stutt's room. The big wardrobe-trunk was open; the real Lord Roxhaven



**TECS ON THE TRAIL.**—The lorry with the crooks aboard lumbered under the bridge. Chick dropped down lightly from the bridge and concealed himself under the tarpaulin.

was unstrapped. Still unconscious, he was lifted out.

"At last," muttered Stutt, glowering upon his first victim. "Success—success! And now my vengeance begins!"

Like a madman, he fixed his venomous gaze upon the unconscious judge; and Brent, watching, shuddered.

The net closes in around the crooks—closer every move they make. But will Falcon Swift and his assistant be able to tighten the strings to bring these felons to justice before they have done their fell work?

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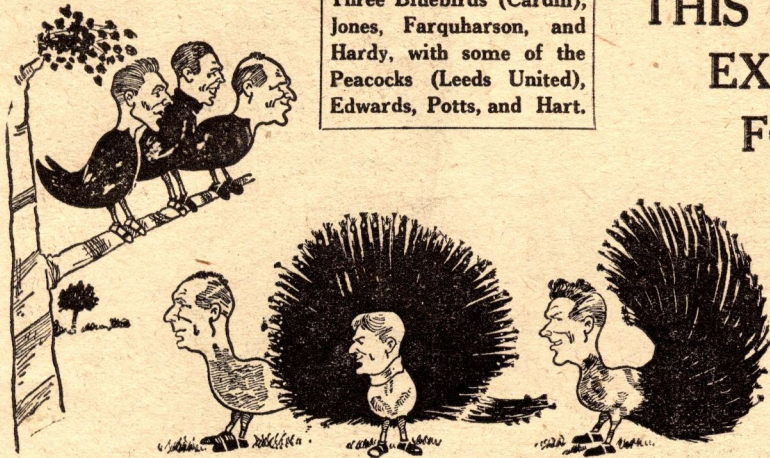
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## LEEDS UNITED and CARDIFF CITY described in

# THIS WEEK'S EXPERT FOOTER CHAT

Three Bluebirds (Cardiff), Jones, Farquharson, and Hardy, with some of the Peacocks (Leeds United), Edwards, Potts, and Hart.



**T**HIS week we do honour to Leeds United and Cardiff City, both at one time in the First Division together but now parted, Leeds having been relegated to the Second Division while the Bluebirds, of Cardiff City, have dropped to the lowest section.

Still, let's forget the past and have a look at the lads who carry the Peacocks'—that's Leeds United's nickname—colours. Mr. Dick Ray is one of the most popular managers in the game, while Arthur Campey, the trainer, is another football official known all over the country. Among the players there are several internationals, chief of whom is Willis Edwards, the skipper, who has also led England. Willis is the right-half who was found playing as a colliery lad in his native Derbyshire by Chesterfield some years ago. But Leeds United soon took charge of him, and now he has charge of Leeds!

Other capped players are Ernest Hart, the tall centre-half, and Russell Wainscoat, one of the inside forwards. Hart has played in South Africa. Wainscoat has also toured, and he has vivid recollections of playing in Canada. On one occasion he was presented with two shares in a gold mine, because he was regarded as the star man in the F.A. team. Nowadays, in addition to his footer, Wainscoat is in business as a boot and shoe outfitter at his native Cudworth, near Barnsley.

Jimmy Potts, the goalie, is also a comedian of the first water and is often to be found on the bills of local shows. Bobby Turnbull is another of the musically-minded, although he prefers a gramophone to Potts' music!

In the back division are the brothers Milburn, North-country lads, and Bill Menzies, a clever Scot. Copping, another of the younger fraternity, is the other half-back; while in addition to Wainscoat and Turnbull at forward, are Firth and Green, two newcomers this season, Charlie Keetley, one of five brothers all in the game, and Tom Cochrane, the winger previously with Newcastle United.

intense bad luck, and to-day finds the Cardiff team struggling to keep its head above water in the Third Division. Still, a club with such traditions as are behind Cardiff City will never remain in the lowest sphere of League football.

The present Cardiff team is vastly different from what it used to be. Such famous men as Fred Keenor, Len Davies, Jimmy Nelson, Harry Wake, George MacLachlan and others, most of them internationals, have departed and are now keeping the flag flying with other clubs. Two only of the "old gang" are left: Billy Hardy, who is now playing his twenty-second season of League football with Cardiff, and Tom Farquharson, the tall Irish goalie.

It is rather strange that, at the opening of the season, Billy Hardy was placed "on the shelf," so to speak, and was given charge of the coaching of the Cardiff youngsters. But within a fortnight Hardy was back in the first team. The club can't do without his cool, calculated half-back play.

Roberts and Smith are the full-backs. Smith is a Scottish international who was once with Ayr United and Middlesbrough. With Billy Hardy in the intermediate line are also Harris and Galbraith. Harris was formerly an inside-forward and played with a Worcester team that toured in Canada at one time, while Galbraith spent nearly a dozen years with Clapton Orient.

The forward line is almost entirely a new combination. Emmerson, another former Middlesbrough player, is on the right-wing, partnered by Keating, well-known to followers of Bristol City and Blackburn Rovers. The centre-forward is McCambridge, an Irish international, who has also served Everton, and the left-wing Jones and Robbins, both local-born lads who have been coached in the reserve string. Robbins is now a Welsh international and is a much-wanted winger by clubs in the higher divisions of the League.

"Farky," in goal, is the skipper. Both players are great favourites wherever they go. Farquharson, by the way, is a keen wireless expert, while Billy Hardy prefers to spend a quiet hour in his garden.

**N**OW for the Bluebirds of Cardiff! The City was at one time the pride of South Wales, but of late years the club has undergone a spell of



OUR WONDER TALE OF WINGS. NEARING THE CLIMAX TO  
OUR GRIPPING SERIAL OF THE AIR.

# BULLETS of the BLUE

## The King a Captive.

ON, stumbling through the undergrowth, falling, picking himself up, King Otto ran.

Terrified. A hunted animal, obsessed by a great terror. Wildly he looked around him, and a great dagger of fear seemed to stab to his heart and turn there.

A motor-car came lumbering through the bush, an open tourer, and at the wheel was Venskye. In the tonneau behind the Black Masker lolled, his fanatic face pale and fearful. Almost dead from the snake poison.

Venskye braked up with a shout of exultant laughter.

Stupefied, like a bird before a snake, King Otto stood while Venskye pounded through the undergrowth. The sky-fiend seized his arm in a vice-like grip, and chucking grimly, led him back to the car. "The real King—our dupe!" he vociferated. For King Otto's insensate terror proclaimed his identity.

"He shall ride in procession through the capital," Venskye muttered low. "The people riot for him. For the King is in great favour."

He was taking Shaunberg to the palace. There he kept under lock and key a little bottle containing an inoculation serum, antidote against the snake-bite.

It was all a question of time. To get to the palace, inject the serum by syringe into the Black Masker. For he was fast succumbing.

King Otto an abject prisoner by his side, Count Venskye sped the car through the mountains, at length reaching the royal palace.

The streets were decorated as for a gala. The palace besieged by impatient people shouting and crying for the King.

To avoid attention, the car entered the palace by a back way. It was under the domination of the Iron Dictator; his man held the palace. Entering the great reception hall, Count Venskye clapped loudly, shouting:

"Here quickly, Carl. Rufus! To me, all of you, prompt as death!"

At his call they came hastening down the broad staircase. Perhaps a score of his copper-faced sky-fiends. They set Shaunberg in a chair at the table, and drew back.

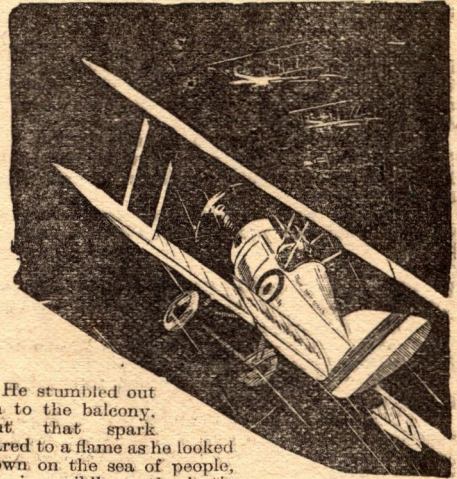
Count Venskye strode to the french-windows overlooking the balcony, threw them open, and with baleful, glittering eyes, turned on King Otto.

"Out with you," he gritted. "Wave; speak to the people!"

In an access of fury he drove his clenched fist to the jaw of the King he hated. "Out with you!" he snarled.

King Otto staggered under the blow, then, driven to desperation, he turned flashing eyes on Count Venskye.

It was as if the awful viciousness of that blow had awakened the desperate King, stirred some last remaining spark of manhood.



He stumbled out on to the balcony, but that spark flared to a flame as he looked down on the sea of people, their wildly-enthusiastic "huzzas" and "bravoes" dinning in his ears.

All this was for Ian! The young King's handsome fair face became stern and grim as he stood rigid and saluted. He was not worthy of this. *But he could, even yet, make himself worthy!*

MILES away a similar scene of enthusiasm was being enacted.

"The King! The King!" It was a mighty shout of acclamation that went up from a band of men numbering fifty thousand strong in the mountains. But Johnny and Tornado, who had arrived in the car, looked at one another, then at the Archduke Michael who sat on horseback.

Iron Michael smiled, but in his eyes was anxiety.

"A spy has got through on the field service 'phone from the capital to say that King Otto stands on the palace balcony taking the plaudits of the people," he said, speaking down from his seat on horseback. "We cannot know whether it is the real King, or Ian—the pseudo monarch. But in either case, we must strike for the capital."

Flight-Sergeant Tornado spoke to him quietly. "We might bomb the armed valley from the air."

"We must try. But I fear a trap," Iron Michael said sombrely. He turned once again to his army, speaking quickly. When he had finished, his officers barked out short commands, and the mountaineers formed into columns.

Silently the fifty thousand commenced on a march through the mountain paths.

They halted at last. And at the sight that met their eyes they stood in consternation. They had come out of the mountains, and they saw in the valley below an armed encampment.

It was an awesome sight. Way yonder faintly they saw the white spires of the palace and the city—their objective. But between them lay this valley of terror.

Shaunberg had massed in this commanding position such an array of guns and artillery as the mountaineers had never seen before. And all this artillery was trained upon the mountain paths which the Archduke's army would have to traverse to reach the capital.

The mountaineers stood silent, staring. Until all



at once from the rear there burst out the rolling thunder of battleplanes rising into the sky.

Tornado, Johnny and the rest of Ian's air circus were rising with a steady roar, bombs suspended from under their wings.

Tornado Wills, flying the leading 'plane in the big silver V, felt it first. Perhaps a second before Johnny. Suddenly his engine went dead. The propeller whizzed over—slowing. The 'plane commenced to pull down through the sky.

Dropping. A wing twisted through the edge of Tornado's vision. Johnny going down in his 'plane. Other 'planes were falling, their drivers wrestling with the controls.

Nine 'planes were dropping dead from the sky. Nine pilots desperately trying to pull up from sudden dives!

WHILE at the palace King Otto was receiving the plaudits of his people, which he told himself he had not earned.

He was desperate—at bay. The Black Masker and Venskye should not make a dupe of him.

He whirled on his heel, fist clenched, teeth gritted as he glared into the room.

The Black Masker sat at the table snarling in pain, while bending over him with a phial in one hand a syringe in the other, his sky lieutenant Venskye was preparing to administer the antidote to the snake-bite.

King Otto was thinking of his double. Ian! And a strange thought took hold in his brain.

Ian had been bitten by the snake. That phial might

save him. The King suddenly trembled. He took a tremendous grip on himself to drive out the sudden terror that assailed him. Now was his chance to make amends.

And just then, as Venskye bared the Black Masker's arm for the syringe, there sounded a loud whirring in the room. Everyone's eyes turned to an instrument on the table, something like a radio receiving set, from whence it came.

The drone of engines. Whirr of wings. Sounding so loudly in the room that a flock of winged fighters seemed to be roaring deafeningly in formation over the heads of those in the room.

The Black Masker gave a fierce start, and with an effort turned towards the instrument, raising a hand as if to punch it down on a knob attached to the weird-looking machine.

"The microphone!" Venskye cried in a stifled voice of fury. "It has detected them; enemy aircraft flying for our capital."

King Otto took a step into the room, heart throbbing to bursting.

"So!" snarled the Black Masker. "If I punch down on this knob it will cripple the 'planes? Good then. We will now see whether this ray device actually can put out of order the ignition of flying 'planes."

King Otto of Waldenberg took three rapid steps. Then halted, white-faced, desperate; thinking in a flash.

He had heard of this mysterious device. A German inventor's. The newspapers had contained an account of something strange happening in Germany.

## FIZZ BANG FUN AT ST. GIDDY'S

(Continued from page 25.)

fireworks, and now they be fillin' un wif' water! Haw, haw, haw!"

Mr. Cattermole rushed towards Johnny Gee & Co., and a loud shout went up. Catty ran too near the bonfire, and the tail of his scholastic gown caught fire!

"Golly, golly!" cried Snowball. "Jus' look at ole Catty, boys! Speck we shall hab to put him out, too! Yo, yo!"

Dick Bannister obligingly turned the hose on Mr. Cattermole. There was a swoosh of water, and a yell from Catty as that powerful jet of wetness caught him from behind. It certainly quenched the flames that were consuming his gown, but Catty received a sad drenching!

"Fetch out the treasure chest, chaps!" cried Johnny. "We'll start sharing out the money. These kids could do with their five bobs, to buy fireworks. The night is yet young, and the fun of the Fiery Fifth has only just started!"

"What-ho!" The chest was brought into the open and Johnny Gee began to pay out the money to the delighted village boys, whom the rest of the Removites marshalled into a line.

The general "whacking out" was in progress, when two gentlemen appeared on the scene, together with P.C. Dooley. The new arrivals were Dr. Holroyd and the Mayor of Merivale!

"Good heavens!" cried the Head. "Whatever does this mean? Gee! Bannister! Boys, have you taken leave of your senses?"

"No fear, sir!" chortled Johnny. "We've got old Pepper's hoard of wealth, that's all! Here's the money, sir! We're paying out to the local boys first, so that they can buy fireworks, and—"

" Bless my soul! Let me see the contents of that box!"

A swift examination of the money and the securities contained in the old oak box proved conclusively that this, indeed, was the treasure left by John Pepper for the benefit of the people of Merivale.

The Mayor was astounded. Dr. Holroyd scarcely knew what to say. The crowd rejoiced, whilst at the upper window Cornelius Pepper continued to rave and shake his fist.

Mr. Cattermole rushed up to the Head, and proceeded to utter a wild indictment of the joyous juniors. Johnny Gee & Co. looked anxious at first, but their faces soon cleared at the Head's summing-up of the situation.

"These lads have performed a splendid service, Mr. Cattermole, in bringing the legacy money to light," he said. "But for them, Cornelius Pepper would have remained in unlawful possession of all this property. As it is, we shall appropriate everything, and it will be devoted to the good causes mentioned in the late John Pepper's will. The juniors may have—acted in a somewhat drastic manner to achieve their ends—ahem!—but the results are most gratifying. Under the circumstances, they will be pardoned for their breaches of discipline."

"Hurrah!" chortled Johnny Gee & Co., and the village boys joined in heartily. Catty and Remington and Co. retired—snorting with rage and chagrin.

The Fifth of November was celebrated in joyous manner in Merivale that night. The whole village was elated at the wonderful work of Johnny Gee & Co. in forcing the old miser to unlimber the ill-gotten treasure.

Johnny Gee & Co. returned to St. Giddy's to celebrate still further, feeling that truly they deserved well of their country!

Otto, the German Schoolboy, is to the fore next week, in which the Remove goalie plays a leading part. And there is another footer plate, too—don't miss it from your collection.



A dozen cars, all running along a certain road, suddenly stopped dead at precisely the same instant. The same thing went wrong with all of them—their ignition systems ceased functioning.

That had been the first trial of the secret ray device. So the German inventor had sold it to Shaunberg, Iron Dictator of Waldenberg!

And now Count Shaunberg was using it to down Ian's Air Circus. He brought his clenched fist down with a crash on the knob of the strange ray device. And instantly the swelling roar of engines changed. There were splutters, ghastly, harsh petrol-choked coughs that told their own tragic tale. Then the violin-like wail of planes screaming down out of control through the blue.

King Otto stood cold. The scarred, terrible-looking flyers were closing round on him. They were grinning, and he felt helpless, not knowing what to do to save himself.

And then suddenly he did it. Quick as an eel he had got round the table. Before the astonished Venskye could realise what had happened, the phial and the syringe had been seized from his hand.

There was a rush by the copper-faced flyers. Men cried fiercely. But King Otto had seized a sword from the wall, and at the door of an ante-room he halted and turned at bay.

"Come on then, you curs!" he gritted.

### Spiking the Guns.

OF the nine planes of Ian's Air Circus so mysteriously and suddenly put out of action in the air, not one failed to land safely, though one or two crashed undercarriages. Flight-Sergeant Tornado Wills clambered out of his machine, enraged as a bull, and ran to meet Johnny, who had landed not far away.

"A trick, boy!" he shouted. "But listen! I gotta eye."

He rapidly detailed his scheme. Audacious, daring beyond measure. He and Johnny rushed away in the car, bringing back with them the balloon envelope which was partially inflated again from the hydrogen pump.

Tornado's idea was to balloon-jump over the valley.

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Very soon he had affixed the necessary straps, and he stood on the mountain path, the balloon almost lifting him from his feet.

"Let's go!" barked Tornado. He made a leap into the air with the wind behind him carrying him out from the mountain path over the valley.

Away he sailed, like a great lost toy balloon, those on the mountainside watching him tensely.

Tornado hoped to effect his object solely with the element of surprise. The wind drove him high for a time over the valley, then down, for he was loaded with bombs, strapped to his waist.

He pulled the valve cord, and as he commenced swirling down through the heights, the sky sergeant grinned, a twisted grin, to see men running out frantically in the valley, staring at the apparition aloft.

He dropped his first bomb—and it was devastating to those in the valley below. The continuous burst of bombs now rolled and echoed against the mountains. Tornado Wills released them in quick succession as he swirled down over the valley. They fell on the great mass of guns and did untold damage.

And as he looked back, Tornado saw the Archduke Michael leading his men at the charge down the mountain slope. They were following up the advantage created by his sudden, devastating bomb raid.

Tornado grinned, shouting back good-luck wishes to them which they could not possibly hear. He was sailing over the valley, and coming down slowly now as he lost the force of his first jump.

Over the town beyond, Tornado came down on a roof top with a scattering of slates. Gripping the chimney stack, he watched. And now nerved himself for the final jump... for the palace balcony.

The Fates were with him. The balloon made straight as a die for the rails of the balcony. *Crack!* The big balloon scathed the balcony rails, and Tornado clutched desperately.

The next moment he felt a terrible wrench on his arm as the balloon pulled the other way.

With sweeping strokes of a knife, he severed the straps, and the freed balloon floated away. A great cheer swept up to him as he climbed over the balcony, and Tornado dashed into the room.

His appearance caused startled faces to turn. King Otto was at bay at the door of the ante-room, bleeding from a revolver shot. And with a gasp he seized upon the diversion caused by Tornado Wills's appearance. He threw down his cutlass, and the door shut behind him. The men who commenced rushing upon it were suddenly spilled to either side by threshing arms and a great charging body. They brought themselves up motionless, to face Tornado with the cutlass in his hand.

The Black Masker had risen unsteadily, a man in the deadly grip of partial paralysis. And in his hand was a six-chambered revolver.

Step by step he advanced, his palsied finger fumbling round the trigger. There was a deathlike silence in the big reception room. Every man watched with bated breath.

The Black Masker, with a strangled cry, made a last desperate effort to pull trigger, and stumbled a step forward. And Tornado made a swift instant lunge. As coldly as killing a snake he ran the cutlass through the Black Masker's throat, and the point came out at the back of his neck.

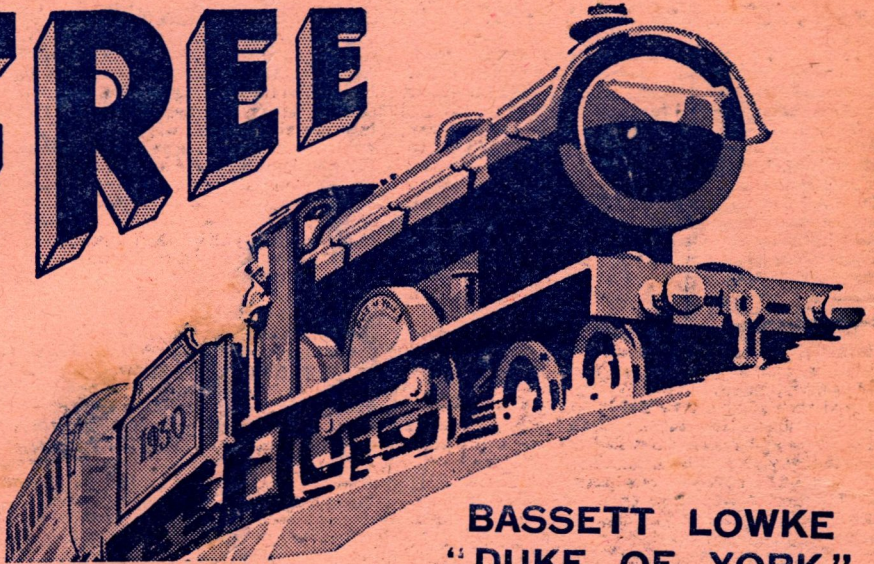
The Black Masker died, and with a jerk Tornado withdrew the blade and let him fall. He slashed the blue steel through the air.

"All right, you seum. Come on." With bows they launched themselves at him, and the next moment the fight was on.

Surrounded by foes, Tornado alone is near to protect the king. Can he keep these human wolves at bay till help arrives? Gripping conclusion of this yarn next week, chaps, and—the New Serrail!



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