

GIFTS GALORE! COLLECT COUPONS INSIDE

Boys' 2D Magazine

EVERY SATURDAY



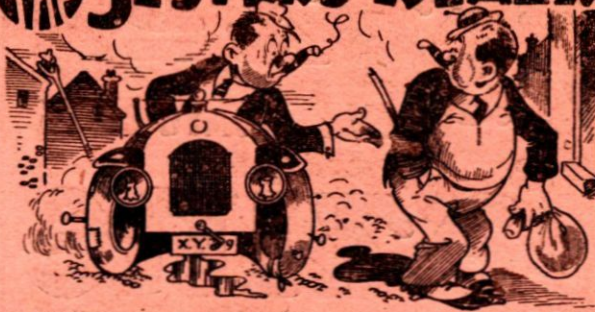
THE SKYWAYMAN

VOL. XX—No. 526—April 2, 1932

HIS LATEST GLAMOROUS EXPLOIT
APPEARS WITHIN.

REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION
BY CANADIAN MAGAZINE POST.

JESTER'S REALM



Footballs and Fountain Pens awarded to senders of jokes on this page. Send your favourite joke on p.c., with coupon below, to the Editor, "Boys' Magazine," 196, Gray's Inn Rd., London, W.C.1.

1st Crook : What make of car, Bill?
2nd Crook : Foreign.
1st Crook : Be patriotic, steal British!
(Football to J. BROOKS, 186, St. Albans Road, Seven Kings, Ilford, E.)

A LONG JOB.

JOINER (to his new apprentice) : Well, Willie, have you sharpened all the tools?
WILLIE : Yes, all but the saw. I haven't quite got all the gaps out of it!
(Fountain pen to CHARLES LEESE, "Heathfield," The Heath, Sandbach, Cheshire.)

COURAGEOUS.

"We are doing fifty miles an hour," said the driver to his companion. "Are you game for another ten?"
"Yes," he replied, swallowing another mouthful of dust. "I'm full of grit!"
(Fountain pen to T. E. CLAMP, The King's School, Grantham.)

BROTHERHOOD

TEACHER : If I saw a boy beating a donkey, and stopped him, what virtue should I be showing?
BERTIE : Brotherly love, sir!
(Fountain pen to J. WATT, 16, Cragside Walk, Kirkstall, Leeds.)

SOME MORE.

SMART TOURIST : You take all kinds of rubbish in that old car of yours, don't you?

VILLAGE CARTER : That's right, sir. Jump in, jump in.
(Fountain pen to CAREY MORGAN, Llethryd, Bank Road, Pontyberem, Llanelli.)

THE DEAD CENTRE.

AMERICAN (to village yokel) : Say, boy, can you tell me the "dead" centre of this hole?
YOKEL : Aye zur, the cemetery.
(Fountain pen to FRANK CHANNING, 14, Methuen Street, Barrow-in-Furness.)



Boy : Threepennorth of Castor Oil.
Chemist : The tasteless kind, I suppose?
Boy : No fear! It's for father.
(Football to M. WHITTINGTON, 21, Play Green Way, Bellingham, London.)

NOT WANTED.

TONY : Could I change my name just for to-morrow?
MOTHER : But why? Tony is a very nice name.
TONY : It is, but daddy said he would give me some slipper to-morrow as sure as my name is Tony.
(Fountain pen to JACK OTTER, 28, South Crescent, Duckmanton, near Chesterfield.)

JOKE COUPON.

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

2/4/52.

QUITE SAFE.

A gentleman travelling north in a train worried the Tynesider guard by asking at every station whether his trunk was safe. At last Geordie got tired so he said:

"Hinney, if ye'd been born an elephant, instead of an ass, ye'd hev had your trunk wi' ye aal the time."
(Fountain pen to JAMES WATSON, "Nesta," Whaggs Lane, Wickham, Newcastle-on-Tyne.)

NOT A HEN.

DINER : Waiter, what's the matter with this egg?
WAITER : I couldn't say, sir, I only laid the table.
(Fountain pen to THOMAS HUGH WILLIAMS, Halford Alun, Mold, Flintshire.)

A LIFER.

OLD GENT (to Convict) : And what sort of man will you be when you come out?

CONVICT : A very old one.
(Fountain pen to R. BEAVIS, Glasshouse Lane, Countess Weir, Exeter, Devon.)

CRAMPED.

OLD SALT : Yes, guv'nor, I was shipwrecked, and lived for a week on a tin of salmon.

LISTENER : By Jove! not much room for you to move about.

(Fountain pen to JOHN HAYWARD, Down Farm, Chelmark, Salisbury, Wilts.)

(With which is incorporated "Pals.")

Gigantic Thrills!
Excitement and
Drama—Sky High!

THE SKYWAYMAN!

With Silverstreak
His Wonder 'Plane
and Jim Webster.



A Yarn that will Stagger you,
Chums! A Titanic Tale of Terrific
Exploits, in the Clouds, featuring
that Glamorous Adventurer..the
Skywayman and a Sinister Sky
Crook's Startling Plot!

The Meteor Machine.

A LONE monoplane came diving out of a swirl of cloud and, in a graceful spiral, circled the Air Liner droning its way across the English Channel.

Marshal Hawke, Skywayman and gentleman of the air, and his inseparable chum, Jim Webster, were combing the night skies in search of adventure. But there was no hostile intent in The Skywayman's dive on to the course of the Air Freighter.

As he leaned from the cockpit of *The Silverstreak* the outlaw's admiring gaze was studying Britain's latest challenge for the commercial supremacy of the air.

Through the porthole windows of the cabin,

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

anxious faces peered towards the hurtling monoplane. The appearance of *The Silverstreak* in the night skies invariably heralded some dramatic quest.

Jim Webster chuckled. "Those ginks are scared that we're after their wallets, sir."

"Haven't they learnt yet that The Skywayman isn't a common pickpocket?" snapped Marshal Hawke. The master hand on the control stick moved back a trifle and a touch on the rudder bar sent the wonder plane into a climbing turn towards the English coast.

Then suddenly into that scene swept swift and terrible disaster.

A vague black shape leapt across the silver bows . . . there was a flickering flash of flame. . . .

Then the uncanny mystery menace had gone, leaving an impression of incredible speed. A wave of displaced air smashed against the startled faces of the skyriders, flinging the quivering monoplane into a dizzy spin.

The Skywayman fought with stick and rudder to right the plunging plane. Slowly it straightened, slender tongues of bluish flame leaping from the exhausts.

"Thunder," Jim gasped, "what do you make of that, sir?"

Again the startling menace that filled the night silenced him. His breath caught in his throat in a gasp of alarm and horror. A thunderous roar beat against his eardrums, a vivid sheet of flame suddenly lit the dark vault of the sky. Above the turmoil came the shrill scream of the Air Liner's engines as if in a death cry. Then they died into silence.

"By heaven, Jim. Look. . . ."

The youngster's quick gaze followed the direction of the outlaw's pointing finger, and he saw the grim shambles of all that was left of the Air Liner, shattered planes and twisted spars and a flaming cabin spinning down into the sea.

It was uncanny. The Air Freighter had been ripped to destruction by some invisible force, as if it had been pulverised by dynamite.

The skyriders stared in silence at the tragedy. It had happened with such inexplicable swiftness that they were struggling with a sense of unreality.

The Skywayman's grim voice broke the silence, his eyes were dark with anger.

"We're going to find out what lies behind this devil's work, Jim."

Down swung the mono's silver nose in a dive to where the scattered wreckage floated on the waters. If anyone had survived that ghastly smash, he would be in need of aid.

Jim stood by with the silken ladder as they searched for survivors. But other help was now on the way. The throb of turbines drew the boy's gaze to where a destroyer came hurtling to the scene of the disaster.

The Skywayman hesitated. He was reluctant to go without some clue as to what lay behind this dastardly outrage. He dropped nearer to the charred cabin tossing on the waters and switched on the helicopters.

"Try to find the pilot's log book, Jim," he ordered. "It may help us."

The boy dropped the silken ladder from the hovering machine and slid down the slender rungs. The next moment he was balancing himself on the swaying wreckage of the pilot's cockpit. He clambered over the smashed bucket seats and then his hands groped over the instrument board with its cubby holes. As he had hoped he found at last the log book in one of those recesses.

"Good lad," the outlaw muttered, as Jim climbed back into the cockpit, and with a roar of its mighty engine, the monoplane rose up into the night. "What's the last entry in that log book?"

"Passed over Folkestone, 9-25 p.m. Visibility good." Jim bent nearer, with difficulty deciphering the blurred wording. "Course: Twenty degrees. South . . . west. . . ."

The Skywayman nodded, his eyes resting on the compass. The needle flickered as the monoplane yawed on to its new course.

"That compass bearing is the only clue we have, Jim," The Skywayman yelled above the roar of the engine. "It's a frail clue, but it may prove to be a valuable one. The thing that crashed through the Air Liner was travelling approximately on the same course. If we follow the direction it took we may get to grips with the fiends behind it."

The outlaw opened the throttle to its fullest extent. With a throaty roar *The Silverstreak* flashed through the night shadows on its vengeance quest.

Red Garth.

"SPOTTED anything Jim?" There was a note of impatience in the Skywayman's voice. He was fretting to get busy.

Jim craned over the cockpit at a perilous angle, searching the darkened landscape two thousand feet below.

"Drop lower, sir," he yelled.

The boy's attention had been caught by a queer violet light that flickered fitfully in the darkness below. As the skyriders dived closer they saw that the light with its queer radiance shone through the upper casements of a gaunt desolate stone house.

With sudden resolve, the Skywayman decided to land. The roar of the engine died into a muffled throb as he throttled back and cut in the silencers. Swerving away from the silent house he landed smoothly on the paddock hidden behind the shrubberies.

"Looks promising, Jim," the Skywayman laughed, as he sprang from the cockpit and stood watching the flickering violet light stabbing the darkness overhead. "That's the flash of high power dynamos. We'll find out what those gadgets are doing in an apparently peaceful house . . ."

His voice snapped off, silenced by Jim's warning hiss. A shadow stirred in the weed-grown path as a strange figure moved quickly from the darkness of the shrubberies.

"Put 'em up," challenged a guttural voice. "I've got the right kinda medicine for spies in this gun."

The man holding a Colt levelled in his hand surveyed the intruders. He was garbed in a queer suit of padded rubber and a crash helmet with ear-phone attachments accentuated his Robot appearance. On his chest hung a box respirator with a dangling hood and flexible mouthpiece.

The Skywayman stiffened, his fighting spirit rearing in revolt at the thought of surrender. Slowly he raised his hands as if in token of defeat. But the wide gauntlet of the silver glove hid the revolver his crooked fingers had lifted from his belt.

A twist of his wrist and he fired. The bullet from the silenced weapon tore a crimson groove along his adversary's wrist. With a snarl the ruffian dropped the Colt. Jim flung himself full length at the fellow's legs and the outlaw chuckled grimly as the man crashed on to the turf.

"Good lad," the Skywayman breathed. "Hold him . . ."

The plucky youngster hung on like a game terrier. But the ruffian staggered to his feet opening his mouth to let loose a yell of alarm. But his cry died in his throat as the Skywayman's bunched knuckles crashed against his jaw. He went down like a ninepin and lay in a huddled heap.

The Skywayman tensed as, through the darkness, came a raucous impatient voice.

"Jake . . . come quickly . . ."

That call came from the house. In the shadowed porchway the adventurers could discern the dim

outline of a man, garbed in the same strange fashion as the ruffian lying unconscious on the turf.

The Skywayman hesitated and then with a low laugh he cupped his hands about his mouth.

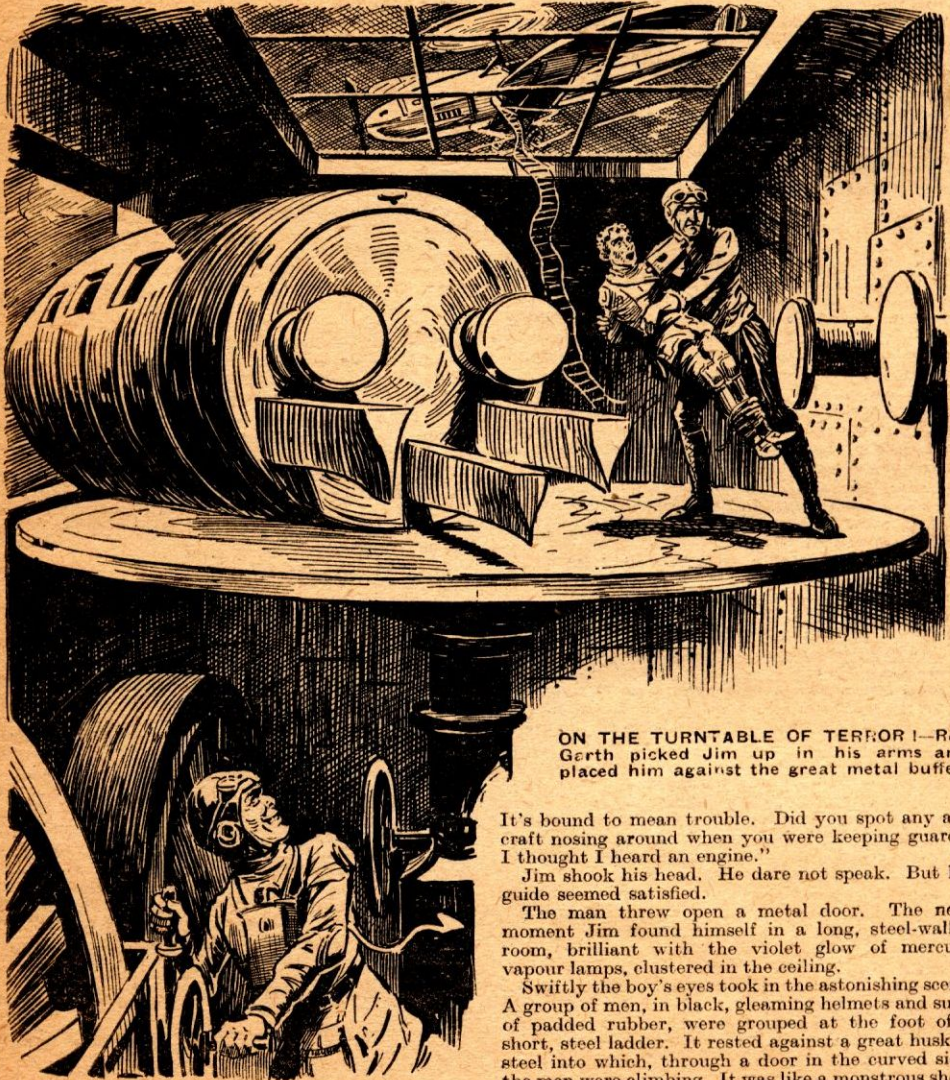
"Coming," he called imitating the guttural tones of his unconscious attacker. "We'll fool him, Jim. Quick! Get into that padded suit. It will disguise you sufficiently well for you to get into the house. Find out all you can. I'll be at hand to butt in if there's trouble."

porchway. There was a moment of suspense as the stranger greeted him. . .

"Get a move on," he jerked. "The Boss sent me to find you. He's fair got the jumps to-night, and now he's refuelled he's anxious to get away."

The man scarcely glanced at the boy's shadowed face beneath the helmet. Jim drew a breath of relief as the stranger turned and led the way up a gloomy stairway, talking as he climbed.

"That crash over the Channel scared the Boss.



ON THE TURNTABLE OF TERROR!—Red Gerth picked Jim up in his arms and placed him against the great metal buffer.

Jim donned the padded suit the outlaw had stripped from the unconscious ruffian. The man was small and lightly built and the strange garb was not too unwieldy for the lad.

"Good luck, son."

Drawing the crash helmet over his tousled head, the boy walked boldly to the waiting figure in the

It's bound to mean trouble. Did you spot any aircraft nosing around when you were keeping guard? I thought I heard an engine."

Jim shook his head. He dare not speak. But his guide seemed satisfied.

The man threw open a metal door. The next moment Jim found himself in a long, steel-walled room, brilliant with the violet glow of mercury vapour lamps, clustered in the ceiling.

Swiftly the boy's eyes took in the astonishing scene. A group of men, in black, gleaming helmets and suits of padded rubber, were grouped at the foot of a short, steel ladder. It rested against a great husk of steel into which, through a door in the curved side, the men were climbing. It was like a monstrous shell, a streamlined, menacing thing with a pointed nose and a cluster of black cylinders protruding from the flat, circular stern.

Jim stared in amaze at two huge, hydraulic buffers whose extremities pressed against steel flanges curving from each side of the steel shell.

A man crouching over the switchboard of the

throbbing dynamos embedded in the metal floor, swung over a lever.

With a throb of hidden machinery the huge buffers were slowly forced back compressing the coiled springs behind them.

There was much that puzzled Jim. But the purpose of the steel shell with the powerful pistons behind it suddenly became clear. The pistons were part of a powerful, launching machine that was being primed to hurl the steel hulk into space.

"Get up that ladder, Jake. Am I to wait here all night for you?" A raucous voice brought Jim back to the realisation of his peril.

Coolly the boy moved towards the steel ladder. A moment's hesitation would prove fatal. The man who had flung those impatient words at him had turned from the long ebony switchboard, and Jim caught a glimpse of dark, merciless eyes regarding him.

"Phew! what a nasty cove," he thought. "Who is he, I wonder? His face seems familiar."

He clambered into the steel shell and dropped on to the metal floor. In that darkened hold he was safer from detection than in the brightly lit launching chamber. But he was anxious. How could he keep in touch with The Skywayman?

"Looks as if I'll have to play a lone hand," Jim murmured. "Until something turns up."

Came the clang of the closing door as the heavy jawed leader of the mystery gang dropped down into the hold.

"Hold tight," he rasped. "The timing apparatus is set . . ."

The crooks were clinging to rubber straps fastened to the curved wall, their bodies braced against the padded metal. The husk of steel quivered and Jim heard the roar of the freed pistons as they flung the shell forward. Through a porthole window the boy caught a fleeting glimpse of the metal doors of the launching chamber swing back into place behind the projectile.

He understood now the purpose of the padded suit, that helped to deaden the terrific vibration. When the air was exhausted in the projectile no doubt the oxygen respirators strapped to each man's chest came into operation.

Jim lurched against the leader of the gang and he averted his face as the man snapped out an imprecation. The crook was concentrating on a switchboard, watching the flickering needle of a speedometer. When it wavered back from the three-hundred-mile-an-hour mark, the crook moved a lever on the wire-clustered switchboard. The projectile quivered with the explosion of one of the power cylinders in the stern and the shell leapt forward with quickened speed.

Jim strained his ears, listening with difficulty to the muffled conversation that drifted in his direction.

"Bad business, Boss—that smash over the Channel," one of the gang was saying. "It may mean trouble . . ."

"It was no fault of mine," broke in the leader. "The air liner swung across our course and it was impossible to avoid the crash. But we escaped unscathed and I am not likely to be called upon to explain that it was a regrettable accident . . . Let the fools try to catch Red Garth. Whilst to-night they search London for me, we shoot across Continents with our gains . . ."

Red Garth! Jim's mouth tightened. Garth's criminal coups had completely baffled the police. To-night Jim realised how the super-crook had gained his reputation for invulnerability. He had staked everything on the incredible speed which his scientific genius had achieved by means of the mechanical devices Jim had seen to-night.

"Jingo, what a scoop if I can lay Red Garth by the heels!" Jim thought, with quickening pulses.

Guardedly, he was edging closer to a wireless transmitter, clamped to the curved wall. If only he could wireless the compass course of the projectile to The Skywayman!

Now he was leaning with apparent carelessness against the table, his swaying body masking the instrument that was his only chance of bringing the masked outlaw to his aid.

Behind his back his hand groped for the transmitting key. His eyes were fixed on the compass beside Red Garth, and when his fingers clenched over the ebony knob, he rapped out the code signal that the masked outlaw would recognise as an urgent SOS.

The scream of the wind, lashing against the steel walls, drowned the buzz of the instrument. Jim's spirits rose as he succeeded at last in sending the compass bearing flashing out across the night.

Then swift disaster came. The speeding projectile suddenly accelerated as the dull boom of another exploding detonator came from beyond the steel wall.

Too late Jim grabbed at the rubber strap. He was flung off his balance, and, as fate would have it, fell sprawling across the instrument board. For a moment the rays of the overhead lamp lit the boy's upturned face. Red Garth glared down at him with incredulous eyes. Then with an angry yell he snatched the helmet from the youngster's head.

"By heck—a spy!" he yelled.

Jim ducked beneath a great hand that grabbed at his shoulder. His shoulders braced against the metal wall, he faced the yelling crooks.

Red Garth came on like a whirlwind but Jim's bunched knuckles smashed against the crook's chin, straightening him surprisingly. He swayed back on his heels, roaring with rage.

"Get him, you fools. Are you afraid of a kid?"

A surge of helmetted figures closed in on the youngster.

He went down fighting, but a blow from a spanner crashed against his temple. As he sank into unconsciousness, Jim hoped that his SOS would bring The Skywayman to his aid.

"Silverstreak" to The Rescue.

JIM opened his eyes, the blood throbbing at his temples like the beat of hammers. He found himself lying against the wall of a steel-lined chamber, similar to the room of purple shadows where first he had seen Red Garth.

As the mists cleared from his eyes, he saw the flying shell looming above him, on a giant turn-table. The same hydraulic buffers and dynamos and switchboards were visible.

It was clear that Red Garth had a number of secret launching chambers concealed in isolated houses.

From the drive below came the throb of high-powered cars, which Jim guessed were part of Red Garth's speed organisation.

He heard the crook's impatient voice as he superintended the unloading of the metal shell.

"Blazes, can't you get a move on," Red Garth snapped as he leaned against the ladder leading up to the hold. "You've got to be in Berlin with the stuff before dawn."

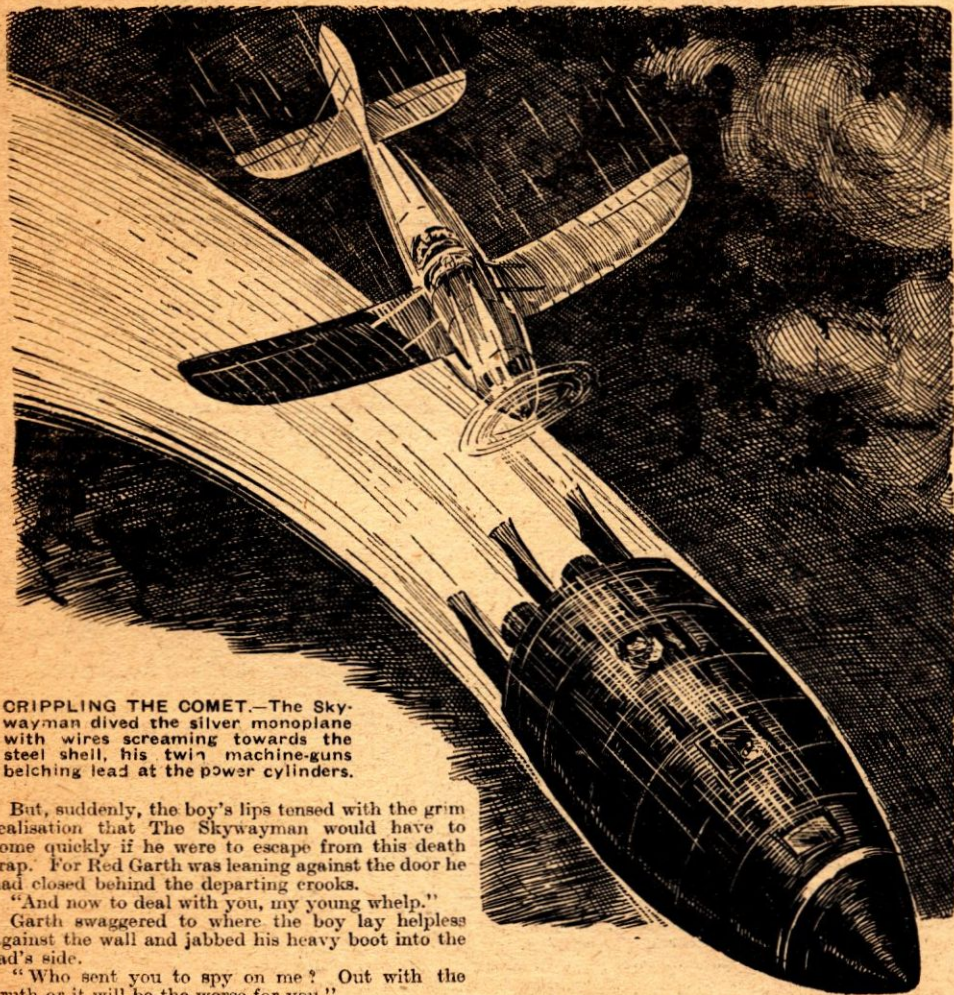
Jim whistled softly. He was beginning to understand the workings of Red Garth and his gang. No doubt that "stuff" had been looted from strong rooms in London, but a few hours before. And before the alarm had been raised Garth and his gang were on the outskirts of Berlin planning to dispose of their loot.

Jim braced his muscles, vainly striving to loosen the knotted cords binding his wrists and ankles. If only The Skywayman would come. In his supreme belief in Marshal Hawke's courage and resource, Jim did not doubt that the outlaw would find a way to rescue him and smash Garth's criminal power.

hurls you into eternity. That is the alternative if you refuse to tell me how you learnt my secrets."

Jim met the crook's eyes steadily. "You'll learn nothing from me," he gritted.

Red Garth shrugged his shoulders. He stepped



CRIPPLING THE COMET.—The Skywayman dived the silver monoplane with wires screaming towards the steel shell, his twin machine-guns belching lead at the power cylinders.

But, suddenly, the boy's lips tensed with the grim realization that The Skywayman would have to come quickly if he were to escape from this death trap. For Red Garth was leaning against the door he had closed behind the departing crooks.

"And now to deal with you, my young whelp."

Garth swaggered to where the boy lay helpless against the wall and jabbed his heavy boot into the lad's side.

"Who sent you to spy on me? Out with the truth or it will be the worse for you."

"You go to blazes," Jim flung back defiantly.

"You young fool," Garth snarled. "I'll find a way to loosen your tongue."

He bent and lifted the boy in his arms and flung him on to the metal turn-table.

Crossing to the switchboard the crook threw over a lever, and there came the whirl of machinery as the circular launching platform revolved away from pneumatic buffers.

Red Garth clambered up on to the platform and dragged the boy against the great, metal flange of the buffer.

"No doubt in your prying you have seen something of the power of my launching apparatus," Red Garth taunted. "If I loose the power of that buffer, it will certainly smash every bone in your body before it

down to the switchboard and as he pressed a switch the dynamos burst into a strident song of death.

Jim's hands clenched as he steeled himself for the torture that was to come. His gaze rested on Red Garth with horrible fascination. He saw his hand move towards the lever that would loose the piston pressed against his rigid body.

It was not entirely the desire to prolong the lad's torture that made Red Garth's movements so cruelly slow. His eyes were fixed on Jim's pallid face, hoping to see signs of his nerve cracking. For though he hurled him to eternity and silenced his dangerous tongue, he would never know how Jim had got on to his tracks.

But he saw no signs of finching on the lad's pale, set face.

Garth's gaunt hand tightened over the lever, and Jim closed his eyes with a prayer that death might be mercifully swift.

He felt the cold sweat at his temples. Every nerve in his body was tense with torturing suspense. The great metal flange behind him quivered. . . .

Then suddenly above the throb of the dynamo rose the deepening roar of an aeroplane engine. Like a meteor, a silver shape flashed above the glass roof. Then, with helicopters thrashing, *The Silverstreak* poised there.

Crash! With a hefty smash of his flying boot the Skywayman broke his way through the glass panels.

Red Garth swung round with a defiant laugh and wrenched back the lever. The Skywayman dashed down the quivering ladder and whipped his arm about Jim's bound figure. With a supreme effort the outlaw swung him clear of the giant buffer that smashed forward with a vicious whine.

"Thank heaven I was in time, Jim. I got your S O S and came at once. . . ."

Jim grinned weakly as The Skywayman's reassuring voice seemed to come from far away. The outlaw swung the boy up the ladder and lifted him through the jagged skylight.

Down in the metal launching chamber the baffled Red Garth whipped out a revolver. There came a flash, but The Skywayman laughed defiantly as the bullet whined close to his leather-clad head. In the half-light he was an elusive target.

He swung back into *The Silverstreak* and dropped Jim into the rear cockpit. Then with a roar the monoplane shot into the skies.

"ARE the jackals stirring, Jim?"

The Skywayman's voice came through the darkness as he crouched beneath the trees on the wooded slope where for many hours the adventurers had intently watched Red Garth's lair.

The super crook was scared and, much as The Skywayman was tempted to force the fight, he was waiting for Red Garth to make the next move. So he had waited for daylight to fade, convinced that with the coming of night Red Garth and his gang would steal from their lair. And it was in his natural fighting element, the air, that the masked outlaw wanted to meet Red Garth in a duel to the death.

"There's something doing," chuckled Jim. "See those lights?"

From the narrow windows of the desolate house, came the familiar gleam of purple light, and faintly the throb of machinery drifted to the watchers' ears.

"Quick, Jim, we've no time to lose."

The Skywayman straightened up and he raced towards the waiting *Silverstreak*. As Jim ran at his heels he glanced over his shoulder and saw the metal doors of the launching chamber slowly opening.

The outlaw clambered into the cockpit with Jim close behind him.

A roar of the powerful engine and they were tearing into the night, the wind slashing against their tense faces.

It was a matter of split seconds if Garth and his gang were to be trapped. For the first time in his lawless career, Marshal Hawke was up against colossal speed against which even the flashing *Silverstreak* was comparatively useless.

Skimming the trees he zoomed towards the gaunt house.

"Here they come!" yelled Jim.

With wires screaming as if in some defiant war cry The Skywayman dived the silver monoplane. Beneath him the steel husk from the giant catapult flashed through the night.

There was only one way to check the projectile that was flashing the crooks to safety.

The outlaw's eyes flashed along the gun sights. There came the chatter of the twin machine-guns as he played a rain of lead at the cluster of black cylinders at the rear of the giant shell.

The silver nose of the plunging monoplane swept within inches of the bright husk, that sped past in a flash, seemingly too swift even for the bullets from *The Skywayman's* guns.

The Silverstreak flattened out of its dizzy dive and Jim groaned as he caught a fleeting glimpse of the steel shell as the moonlight touched its sleek shining outline.

It seemed to have escaped unscathed, but suddenly the outlaw's triumphant yell rose above the roaring engine.

"We've crippled them, Jim. I must have done some damage to the power tubes."

He was craning excitedly over the cockpit watching that steel shape that now yawed erratically, its speed checked.

But it righted itself and suddenly gathered some of its former speed as again it shot away into the darkness. Faintly came the dull boom of a detonating cylinder, telling the adventurers that some of the cylinders had escaped damage from the fusillade of lead.

"A pity," the outlaw jerked laconically. "I hoped to have winged the brute. But at least we've crippled her sufficiently to keep her in sight."

He followed the grey blue shape streaking through the night. But even with its lessened speed, it retained its lead. The masked adventurer craned on every atom of power to keep pace. . . .

He moved restlessly in the wind-swept cockpit as the chase went on. There was the risk that Red Garth and his gang might elude them in the darkness. Although it was crippled, his projectile was flying through the shadows at a good two hundred miles an hour.

"How long can we hold out, sir?" Jim muttered, his eyes anxiously watching the petrol gauge.

"Another ten minutes at this pace," The Skywayman snapped. "We've got to force the fight, Jim."

There was a light of battle in the outlaw's eyes as he dived closer to the hurtling shell. He had emptied every drum of ammunition he had against the power cylinders and now he must resort to more drastic measures.

"We've got to stop him, Jim," the outlaw gritted. "I've a hunch that he's making for some mountain lair where we may never find him. Take over the controls. I'm going to drop on to the shell. I'll find a way to make Red Garth land."

It was a desperate resolve, characteristic of the outlaw's love of red-hot adventure.

He swung over the cockpit, balancing himself on the quivering wing, the two-hundred-miles-an-hour gale tearing at his body as he clung to a strut.

"Drop lower, Jim!" the outlaw yelled. "It's our last chance."

Jim tried not to think of the peril awaiting his beloved boss out there in the darkness. He sent the plunging monoplane into a screaming dive and skillfully flattened out above the metal shell.

Coolly The Skywayman judged his distance and then flung himself into space. The blue-grey shape hurtling beneath seemed to rush up to meet him, and then there were horrible moments of suspense as his rigid hands slithered over the slippery curved roof.

He hung on grimly, his wits working with flashlight speed for all his peril.

Through the plate-glass skylight he could see the startled crooks staring up at him, their faces like pale masks in the darkened interior.

With lightning decision he smashed an opening in the glass with the butt of his gun and recklessly

crashed his way through. He dropped lightly on his feet, his gun flashing as he faced the circle of crooks.

"Guess you'd better land this sardine tin of yours, Garth," he laughed mockingly. "Or I'll riddle you with lead."

The crook's eyes spat venom, but that menacing silver-clad figure braced against the wall was master of the situation. With a shrug of his shoulders Red Garth's hand went towards the control board.

"Curse you!" he muttered. "You win..." He stopped abruptly, his voice catching in his throat. And The Skywayman felt an intuitive warning of danger as he saw Red Garth's furtive eyes look beyond him. Too late he swung round to face the burly figure of the crook who had sprung from the doorway of the hold.

A steel-like arm whipped about the outlaw's throat. He went down fighting gamely, but the rest of the gang were on him like a pack of wolves.

"Hold him," Red Garth roared. "We'll silence the interfering fool..."

The Skywayman met his eyes contemptuously. "Maybe this isn't the last round, Garth." But with a mocking laugh the crook turned away and rapped out orders to the waiting crooks.

There was a rush to the door that swung open in the curved side of the machine that, robbed of its power, was now lurching into a death dive.

Red Garth made a final adjustment of the controls as the crooks leapt into space, tugging at the rip cords on their chests to open the parachutes that would land them safely.

Garth was the last to leap from the doomed shell, and from the doorway The Skywayman, struggling vainly to break his bonds, heard the crook's last taunting words:

"You fool, Marshal Hawke, to think you could break Red Garth."

WITH increasing anxiety Jim watched the crooks deserting the plunging shell. Those bellying parachutes were the first warning that the outlaw's daring coup had failed.



CAUGHT IN CROOK'S CLOTHING!—With an angry yell Red Garth snatched the helmet from the youngster's head. "By heck—a spy!"

He sent the silver machine close to the steel husk that was now spinning into its death dive. And he gave a husky cry of alarm as he had a fleeting glimpse through the shattered skylight, of the Skywayman writhing helplessly on the floor.

Only too clearly Jim grasped the grim significance of the horrible death trap Red Garth had laid. In a few moments the diving shell would disappear into the flaming crater towards which the crook's last adjustment of the controls was directing it.

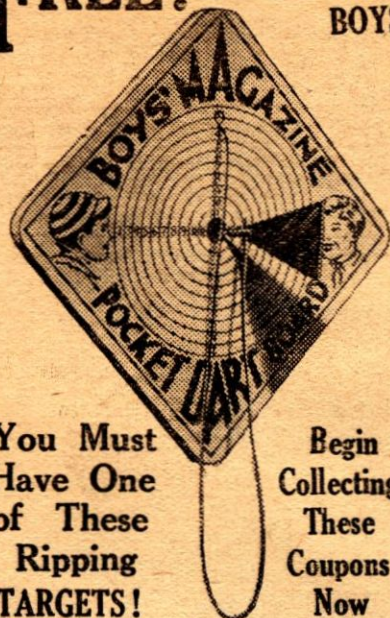
Something must be done. That thought drummed in Jim's brain like the beat of hammers. And suddenly he saw a desperate chance, but how slender that chance was he scarcely dared to think as he dived *The Silverstreak*.

He leant over the cockpit and concentrated on the blunt rudder above the curved back of the diving

A cunning gleam leapt into his eyes as through the smashed skylight there came a blood-red glow. He peered down through the observation window, and some hundred feet below he saw the wide flaming crater of Vesuvius.

"You crippled my machine," he snarled, turning towards the Skywayman. "But it has power enough to carry you, my interfering friend, to the crater where certain death awaits you, when you drop into the flaming lava..."

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shell. If only he could swing that rudder without wrenching it from its socket he might divert the helpless projectile.

He shook his head to clear his brain of the fumes that swept up from the mighty crater as he dived so near that it seemed that the flames rose up to engulf him.

Setting his teeth he swung the aeroplane into a side-slip, across the pit. The diving shell loomed up before him and he yanked up the plane's silver nose, so that its wheels whipped against the rudder.

Jim straightened and brushed the smoke fumes from his eyes, his heart torn with suspense as he beat over the cockpit.

The rudder was buckled and for a dreadful moment Jim told himself that he had failed. The steel shell

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plunged on, the blood-red glow of the death pit gleaming on its polished surface.

And then after what seemed an eternity, the smashing wind caught the twisted rudder and slowly the steel nose swung round. The machine slid over the very lip of the crater and glided into the valley below.

A few minutes later *The Silverstreak* landed smoothly beside the shell.

Jim gave a yell of relief as, plunging through the splintered skylight, he dragged out a very angry, but unscathed, Skywayman. The outlaw straightened his cramped limbs as the severed cords fell away.

"Thanks to you, Jim; I'm still full of fight." He gripped the lad's hand in gratitude. "And now we'll make Red Garth and his gang pay for this. They can't be far away . . ."

Jim laughed as he pointed to where the swaying headlights of a fast-driven car came furiously along the white road.

"Reckon that's the police who will save us the trouble of collecting Red Garth and his bright beauties," he chuckled. "I wirelessed police headquarters when I landed that if they were slick they would arrive in time to capture Red Garth and his gang."

"Good lad," The Skywayman laughed. "Reckon the last round is yours, Jim."

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OUR TAME 'TECS SOLVE PROFESSOR ALLBUNK'S SECRET.

On the Scent.

MR. SPLURGE, of the firm of Hoppleweed, Splurge, and How, estate agents, rubbed his hands gleefully in anticipation of new business and said "Show the gentleman in." Whereat the clerk ushered into the office a dusky person, ornamented with a huge white moustache that stuck out some inches on either side of his face.

"Pray sit down, sir," said Mr. Splurge politely. "You are looking for a house, no doubt—or a little furnished flat. I have several ideal—"

To Mr. Splurge's surprise the dark gent suddenly grabbed his white whiskers and tore them from his face.

"Washington Hayseed, the private defective!" he announced, flinging something that looked like a small placard on to Mr. Splurge's desk. "Dere's ma card. Hayseed an' Buskit is de greatest defective org'nisation in de country. Criminals tracked down singly or in bundles, an' delivered to your own door in a plain van—stolen property located—shadowing done by de day, week, or hour—estimates free."

Mr. Splurge opened his mouth to speak, but before he could utter a word Washington Hayseed was off again.

"Hayseed an' Buskit is specialists in disguise," he

said finally, "as you see f'yourself! If Ah hadn't took off ma disguise you'd never have recognised me!"

"Of course I wouldn't," answered Mr. Splurge, getting a word in at last. "I'd never have recognised you, anyhow. I've never seen you in my life before."

"Say! Ah never thought a' dat!"

"However," Mr. Splurge went on, anxious to get rid of Washington, "I've no use for a detective just now, but I'll file your card for future reference. Thank you for calling."

"S'all right, sah. Ah'm jest runnin' round doen' a bit a' advertisin' to-day, but any time you's in trouble jest call up Hayseed an' Buskit. Good day, sah."

Washington was reaching for the door handle when the door suddenly flew open and struck the great detective an unpleasant thwack on the olfactory organ.

"Ow! Minose!" said Washington, but the flustered gentleman who rushed into the office ignored him.

Straight up to Splurge's desk he went and flung down a bundle of keys.

"There are the keys of 'Homeleigh,' Brierwood Road. I'm not going near the place again. It's haunted! All through the night we can hear shrieks

and groans and somebody yelling "You're killing me!" and we can't find a trace of where the sounds are coming from. It's horrible!"

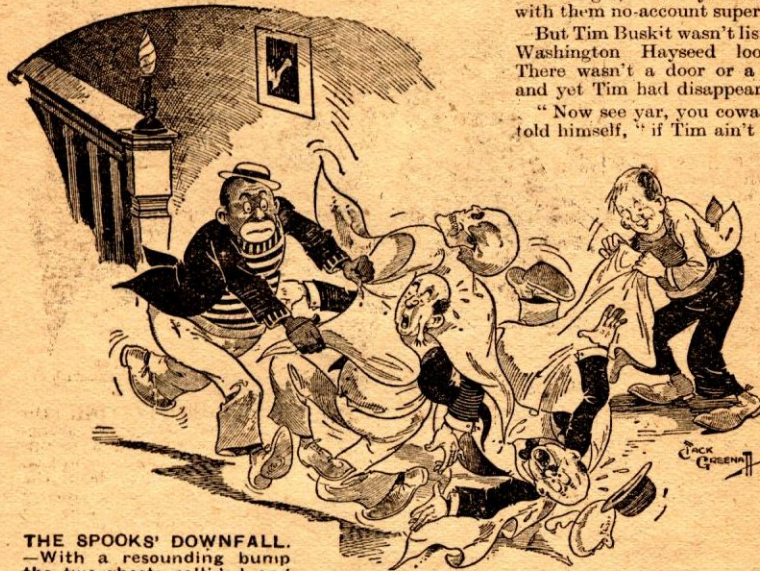
"My dear Mr. Mussle," said Splurge, trying to soothe the agitated gent. "It must be a delusion surely. The late Professor Allbunk lived there for years, and he never complained!"

"Maybe he didn't!" said Mr. Mussle. "But he must have been a bit cracked to have all those skulls and plaster heads lying about all over the place!"

"Professor Allbunk, deceased," said Mr. Splurge with reverence, "was a phrenologist—but anyhow, Mr. Mussle, when I let you that house furnished, I pointed out that you were under no obligation to keep things as they were."

"I tell you the place is haunted, and I'm clearing out! In fact, I have cleared out! There's the keys—all except the one for the back door, which I'm keeping so that we can get our luggage out to-morrow!"

"But—" Mr. Splurge did not get a chance to say anything, for with this first word the agitated Mr. Mussle had left the office, slamming the door behind him.



THE SPOOKS' DOWNFALL.

—With a resounding bump the two ghosts collided and fell in a heap on the ground. Tim and Washington rushed down the stairs and collared the 'spectres.'

Washington Hayseed was still in the room. The heated conversation had interested him so much that he had entirely forgotten his injured organ. He stepped back to Splurge's desk eagerly.

"Say! Ah'm jest de guy dat can help you! Hayseed an' Buskit can lay ghosts quicker'n a hen can lay eggs!"

"Ghosts! Pah! Piffle! Anyhow, this s none of your business! Please go, before I have you forcibly ejected!"

Washington Hayseed looked at him in astonishment. At last he said, slowly: "Shuba—if a guy laks to have a gang of no-class ghosts hongin' around his place, s'pose it ain't none a 'ma business." And with these remarks Washington left the office and rejoined his companion Tim Buskit, waiting outside the building.

Washington explained what had happened to his young "assistant," who registered an expression of profound thought.

"I smell dirty work," he said darkly. "Why should that estate agent bloke get all hot and bothered when you offered to help? Do you know the address of the house?"

"Homeleigh, Brierwood Road, de guy said."

"Right. Washington Hayseed, we're going there to-night!"

The Haunted House.

BLEAK, desolate, and to-night beaten by a driving rain and a high wind that moaned about its eaves like the sobbing of departed spirits, that rambling, ugly old dwelling called Homeleigh seemed a fitting place for the eerie reputation the perturbed Mr. Mussle had given it.

Washington Hayseed shuddered involuntarily as he and Tim squelched through the mud of the carriage drive which led up to it.

"Tim, ah got a prohibition we oughta cut out ghost hunt'n. Ah jest calls to mind de words a' ma ole pop, way back in Tennessee. He sez to me, 'Washing'n, don't you never have nuth'n to do with them no-account super-national beans.' Ah—"

But Tim Buskit wasn't listening. He had vanished. Washington Hayseed looked around anxiously. There wasn't a door or a window open anywhere, and yet Tim had disappeared completely!

"Now see yar, you cowardly nigger," Washington told himself, "if Tim ain't yar, it stands to common savvy dat somehow or other he's gotten into de house without let'n you know. You must get into de house, too, any fool can see dat!"

He turned his attention to the upper windows of the house, as there was manifestly no obvious way of entry on the ground level. He grasped a sturdy drain pipe that ran up the wall and proceeded to climb up it.

He scrambled to the level of an upper window, and preliminarily to trying its fastenings, peered into the darkness of the room within. Had not horror at what he saw frozen his grip to the drain-pipe,

Washington would inevitably have fallen.

Staring back at him, with ghastly, empty sockets was a human skull. Its two rows of grinning teeth parted as he looked, and the lower jaw moved as though it were speaking.

A half-choked gurgle escaped from Washington's lips and in a fraction of a second he found himself on the ground again with a very foggy notion as to how he got there.

"J-j-just you behave, you legs," he admonished his trembling knees. "'T weren't nuth'n, really! Only a man's head—'ceptin' it'd got no meat on it!"

Not until his rolling eyes lit on a new object of interest did the vision of that grinning death's-head fade from his mind—and then only temporarily.

One of the lower windows was wide open! But a few moments before it had been securely fastened.

Now it gaped invitingly for him to enter. With an effort, Washington drove himself towards the open window, and falteringly, climbed in.

He stumbled against a chair in the pitch blackness of the room inside. The sudden contact startled him so much that he staggered.

A hand touched his neck—a clammy hand, cold as death itself.

Washington's epiglottis vibrated to a shriek that was stone dumb. Like his body, his voice was petrified with terror.

And then: "Shush! Washy, it's me," said the voice of Tim Buskit. Washington heaved a sigh of relief like the hissing of a burst tyre.

"S-say! You nearly scared de life outen me. How'd you get'n here?"

"Sh—! Don't talk so loud."

Tim cautioned in a whisper. "I came in through a side door. You'd never find it unless you knew. It's all overgrown with ivy and creepers. But I saw somebody go in that way and followed. If I'd come back to tell you, I'd never have located that door again, so I just slipped in right away and opened this window."

Suddenly a blood-curdling shriek echoed through the house. It trailed off into a half-throttled screech, and a muffled voice cried: "Don't! Don't! You're killing me! Oh—!"—then a dull thud as of a body falling to the floor.

"Come on, Washy. That noise came from the room across the hall!"

With the last dregs of his nerve oozing out of his boot-soles, Washington turned his back on the open window and followed young Tim as he opened the door of the room and crept stealthily into the hall.

They crossed the hall, and Tim grasped the handle of the door which led into the room from which those eerie cries had undoubtedly issued. Suddenly he pushed the door open and leapt in, Washington Hayseed close on his heels.

The room was empty of human beings.

"This is weird," said Tim flashing his lamp round the room. "There's no one here. I could swear those shrieks came from this room!"

Washington was backing towards the door apprehensively.

"Reckon Ah lak dat other room best. Dat open window gave you a kinder more comfy feel'n at your back."

At the threshold Washington paused and peered into the hall preparatory to leading the way across it. Casually, his eyes turned upwards towards the top of a staircase leading to the upper part of the house. Tim saw something there hold Washington's gaze rigid. Tim sprang to his side and followed his stare, and then, in spite of himself, Tim's own back hair bristled.

On the landing above their heads stood a tall, white-robed figure. But it wasn't its tallness, nor yet its white robes that gave it that indescribably unearthly appearance. It was its head. Its head was a skull, glaring down at them with sightless eyes that yet seemed to see.

Slowly the spectre raised its arm and pointed towards the door.

"Go!" said a sepulchral voice. "Go while you may!"

The figure turned slowly and passed on into the shadows.

"I'm going after it," Tim said. "Come on!" Washington groaned, but he followed. Step by step, they walked slowly up the creaking stairs.

All of a sudden Tim felt Washy clawing at his arm, and turning, followed his mutely pointing finger down into the hall they had just left.

Another white-robed phantom was gliding slowly across the hall into the very room they had just left. Somehow there was a genial air about this ghost. Not until the spectre had disappeared from view did it strike Tim what it was.



GRUESOME GREETING FOR WASHINGTON.— Washington scrambled up a drainpipe to an upper window. Staring at him, from the room beyond, with ghastly empty sockets, was a human skull.

"I say, Washy, did you see? That ghost had a bowler hat on!"

"Shuha! B-b-but Ah reckon it was a spiritual bowler hat. De spooks must wear somethin' on deir heads to keep 'em warm in winter!"

"Anyhow," answered Tim. "It doesn't seem quite appropriate to me. You follow that one. I'm carrying on after the other fellow."

When Washington reached the bottom of the stairs he looked around him, fearfully. He rallied the last dregs of courage that remained in him and made slowly towards the room into which the last spectre had disappeared.

He entered, with a pounding heart. To his relief the room was empty.

Washington made a half-hearted examination of the room, for he was anxious to rejoin his companion. As he was so engaged a sudden faint clicking noise startled him.

A piercing scream suddenly echoed in his very ears. Washington leapt into the air with fright.

"Don't! Don't! You're killing me! Oh——!"
Thud! The sounds seemed to come from the very air about him—yet the room was empty! Washington was out of that room and rushing up the stairs in less time than it takes to think.

"Tim! Tim! Where are you?"

Professor Allbunk's Secret.

UP the stairs, along the landing, his one thought to regain his chum's comforting presence,

Washington Hayseed dashed. He came to a door, tore it open and rushed in. Only then did he stop, and panting, look around him. But it was too dark to see. He thrust forth a hand and groped around to get his bearings.

He touched a face—cold, hard, corpse-like. Washington jumped back as though he had touched something red-hot. With trembling hands he groped in his pockets for a box of matches.

He struck a match and made an investigation of the room. There was a large cupboard let into one of the inner walls. He turned the key. At the same moment the match in his hand blew out.

Something fell against him. A body! Unmistakably this time! Washington jumped away with a half-strangled cry of horror. The body struck the floor with a thud. Washington stifled an instinct to bolt, and feverishly groped for another match.

By its light he saw a human form lying on the floor. It was swathed in a white sheet—and as Washington looked, the form wriggled. It was lashed round with a stout rope.

"Gurgle-glug!" announced the "body."

Washington knelt down and untied the ropes, and in another second the "body" sprang to its feet, tore the gag from its mouth. It was none other than Tim Buskit.

"How'd you get in dis yar state?" said Washington.

"Dunno, quite. When I left you I found my way to this room and came in. Just as I entered somebody grabbed me from behind, gagged me, threw that sheet over me and had me trussed up before I could so much as yell. I never expected anything solid to attack me!—Hello! What's the matter?"

Washington was staring fixedly into the cupboard from which Tim's trussed form had just fallen.

"Look!" was all he said.

Tim was getting used to surprises, but this one was entirely unlooked for. At the back of the cupboard, in letters of flame, was the sign:

Whosoever has had the resource to seek thus far is worthy to know the secret of Professor Allbunk. It lies hidden behind this panel. Depress the loose board two feet from the door and it shall be revealed.

Tim whistled. "Corks! We've struck buried treasure or something now! Two feet from the door, it says—the cupboard-door, I suppose."

He found the spot indicated with the aid of his electric-torch. Before he could press the loose board, however, his quick ears detected a faint creak on the stairs outside. Like a shot, he sprang to his feet, opened the door of the room and peered out. Washington followed him.

They crept out on to the landing and peered over the banisters.

The eerie spectacle of the skull-headed ghost walking down the stairs met their eyes. As they looked, the other ghost, in the bowler, emerged from a door downstairs. It looked as though they would collide sooner or later. Or would they simply pass through each other as phantoms are reputed to do?

The answer came swiftly—and with a resounding bump. The skull-headed ghost gave a shout of astonishment as they collided and his head toppled

off and rolled on the floor. The bowler-hatted ghost lost his balance entirely and gave further evidence of his dressy tastes by revealing spats on his feet.

All this Washington and Tim saw from the upper landing. Then, with a whoop, they rushed down the stairs and collared the two "spectres."

"Switch on the light!" yelled Tim.

Washington grabbed his man and dragged him around in his search for the electric light switch. He found it at last, and the next instant the hall of the "haunted house" was flooded with light.

Then the two spectres ceased to struggle and passively allowed the sheets to be drawn from over their heads. One of the men was Splurge, the estate agent, and the other was Mr. Mussle, the tenant.

"So it's you, you old swindler!" said Mr. Mussle to Splurge. "I half guessed that haunted business was a fake—but I've never seen you wander about in this get-up before!"

"No," said Mr. Splurge, looking sheepish. "I've never done this before. I relied on the gramophone to frighten you away."

"Gramophone!" echoed the three others in one voice.

"Yes. I had an electric gramophone fitted under the boards when the workmen came to repair the floor a fortnight ago. That's the thing that keeps shrieking and shouting 'Don't! Don't! You're killing me!' It's set to go off at a certain hour every night and repeat itself at intervals."

"Half a minute," Tim Buskit butted in. "What's all this about?"

"Well," mumbled Splurge. "Professor Allbunk is said to have been a miser as regards money. His solicitor had good reasons for thinking he had hidden a small fortune somewhere in the house. Unfortunately I had already let the house to Mussle here, before I knew of this."

Mr. Mussle gulped. "I heard this about old Allbunk from somebody else after I left your office—and that's why I came back—to look for it myself!"

"And I suppose you were already here?" Tim asked Splurge.

"Yes."

"So it must have been you who grabbed me and tied me up?" said Tim to Splurge.

"Yes—I was getting desperate——"

"What about Professor Allbunk's treasure?" interrupted Tim.

Mr. Splurge made a hopeless gesture. "I've searched the place. I can't find any trace."

Washington and Tim gazed at each other.

"C'morn boys, we'll jest lead you to dat dere treasure."

They followed Washington and Tim up the stairs, nearly falling over themselves in their anxiety to get there.

Tim Buskit found the loose board again, pressed it and a panel slid back in the cupboard, revealing a large trunk behind. Gleefully Splurge and Mussle dragged it forth and forced open the lock.

Within the trunk was a box, within that another, and so on.

"This must be the last one!" said Splurge, his trembling hands holding a case no bigger than a cigar box.

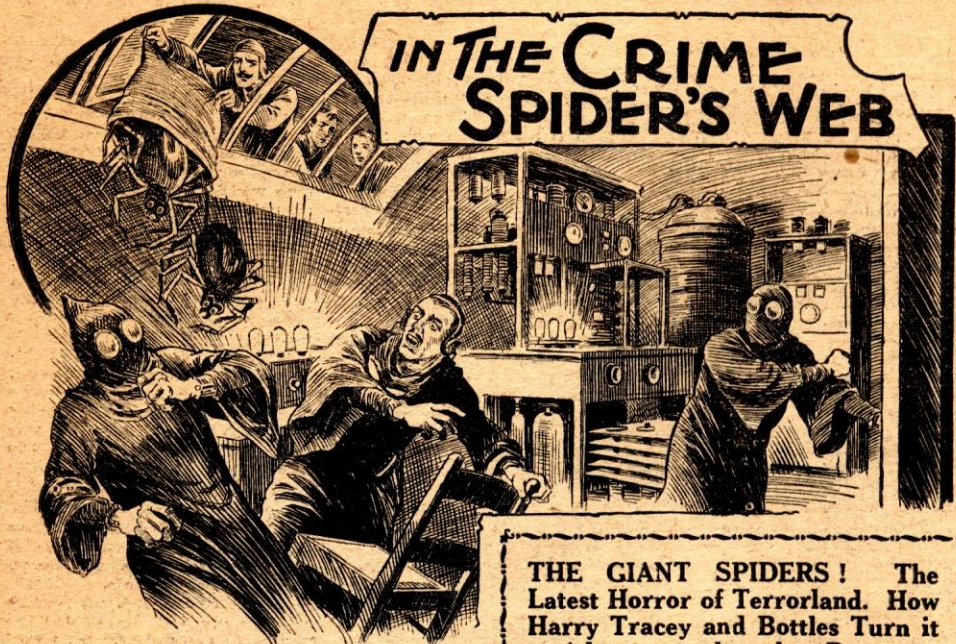
It was. Inside was a single sheet of paper, upon which the following was written:

This is Professor Allbunk's secret. Always use "SNUFFO" for coughs, colds, chills, and influenza. It has kept me fit and well all my life. Surely health is the greatest treasure any one could have!

Hoppy Travers, Boy Millionaire, comes back on Saturday, chums. Don't miss Hoppy Travers' bull fight, and that free gift book, Explorers and Adventurers is a wow!

TERRORLAND!

Another Absorbing Complete
Tale of the Garden of Ghouls
—Land of Mysteries!



IN THE CRIME SPIDER'S WEB

Things That Crawled.

TAP-tap—slither-slither—tap—tap-tap!

Out of an uneasy dream, Harry Tracey suddenly awoke. He could see nothing, for it was pitch dark in that secret chamber. Near him he could hear the regular breathing of his father, Captain Tracey, of the British Secret Service; he could hear the snoring of "Bottles" Glass, the young Cockney mechanic; he could hear the wheezy breathing of Professor Warren Kingswood. All were sound asleep.

Yet, outside, the sun was shining over the Harz Mountains, and with the blue sky overhead, the grim estate of Count Sylvanus von Stelth did not seem sinister or terrible. It was only at night-time that this land took on its cloak of horror.

Many of those horrors were deliberately manufactured by the confederation of desperate crooks which had appropriated this estate, surrounded by a vast mediæval wall, over which no man could climb.

Harry Tracey, the boy pilot, accompanied by Bottles, had accidentally crashed into Terrorland whilst on a long flight. They had rescued Professor Kingswood; and, later, Harry's father had come to the rescue—only to fall into the hands of the crooks.

Now, these four were pitting their wits against the enemy. They had found a secret passage within the ancient wall—a passage which was not even known to the criminals. And so they had been able to lie low, and to make spectacular raids upon the enemy.

They always slept during the daylight hours, for night-time was their working period. And sometimes they dreamed of escaping—of getting clear away. But every road for miles around was watched and barred by secret agents of the criminal organisation.

THE GIANT SPIDERS! The Latest Horror of Terrorland. How Harry Tracey and Bottles Turn it to Advantage when they Penetrate to the Wonderful Control Chamber of the Supreme Unknown.. Told Below.

No; they had to fight their battle against their relentless enemies unaided.

Tap-tap-tap—slither-slither! The strange noise that had interrupted his slumbers sounded again. Without disturbing the others, Harry threw his rug from him, and rose to his feet. There was a low, arched doorway leading into this secret chamber, and, beyond, some stone steps. They led downwards into the passage which ran inside the great wall—with cunningly concealed doors, invisible from the outside, at intervals.

Reaching the top of the steps, Harry listened again. He felt himself breaking out into a cold sweat. Something seemed to tell him that there was a dreadful significance in that tapping. Experience had taught him that this Terrorland was full of horrible surprises.

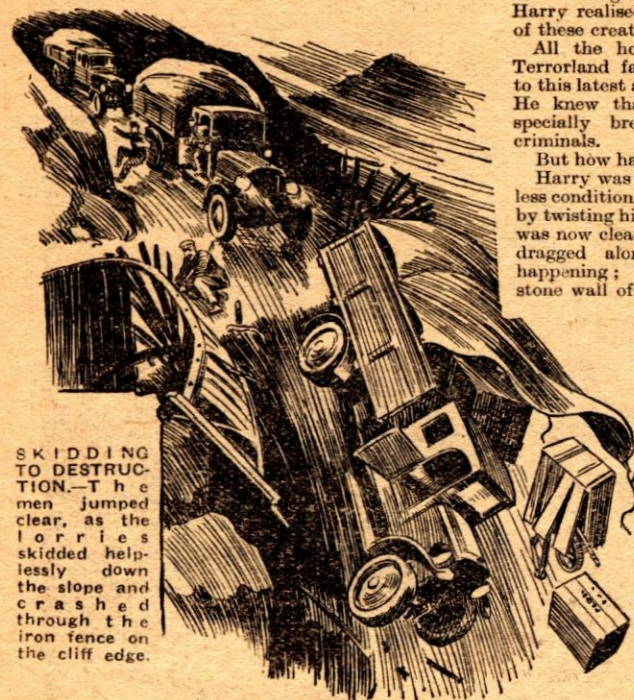
Slither-slither—shuffie-shuffie! It came distinctly this time—an eerie sound. Harry was half inclined to turn back, in order to awaken his father. But he hesitated. There might be some simple explanation of that sound, and then he would look foolish. Far better to investigate first.

He descended the steps, and now he was in the passage—and he could see. Here and there, at intervals, there were tiny spyholes through the solid stonework, and these spyholes admitted just enough light to provide the passage with a faint, intangible twilight.

Harry felt his heart thump. For he could swear that he could see, on the floor of the passage, some distance away, some black, shapeless things—which crawled! He blinked, and shook himself. He was getting imaginative! Yet he could not get rid of that sense of unreasoning horror.

Tap-tap-tap!—slither-slither! The sound was maddening—for it was so soft that even now Harry was half-inclined to think that his ears were deceiving him. He set his jaw, and moved forward.

Something clutched at his ankle—something soft, caressing. He looked down, breathing hard. He could see his legs distinctly in the gloom, but there was absolutely nothing there to account for that



SKIDDING TO DESTRUCTION.—The men jumped clear, as the lorries skidded helplessly down the slope and crashed through the iron fence on the cliff edge.

light touch. And now, to his ears, came the shuffling sound once more, continuous, baffling. It was closer, too, and when he looked down the passage he saw that those crawling Things were coming nearer and nearer!

He bent down, and his fingers came in contact with a thin, sticky thread which stretched like elastic as he touched it. So that was the explanation of the caressing touch! He took a step forward, and found himself entangled in more of those strange threads. So great was the resistance that he half-tripped, and the next moment he sprang over.

Then, suddenly, the crawling Things made a rush; they came at him out of the gloom, whipping forwards, and then backwards just as quickly.

Harry was a brave youngster, and ready to tackle any ordinary danger. But he saw, in the gloom, that the monstrous Things about him were—spiders! Spiders vile, of incredible size! And now, in a flash, he knew what those sticky threads were. Web! The horror of the situation almost overpowered him.

With a rush, the giant spiders attacked him; they ran across him, and the next moment he was

struggling frantically in an awful, entangling mesh of web which rendered him helpless.

The House of Horror.

THE giant spiders enclosed Harry in a net of webbing from which there was no escape. And with a cunning which was almost unbelievable, they attached their web cables to him, and now he found himself being drawn along the passage.

"Dad—Dad!" he managed to gasp. "Help!"

There were seven or eight of those great spiders—each one measuring seventeen or eighteen inches from tip to tip. By their united efforts they were able to drag their prisoner along—and, to his horror, Harry realised that he was being taken to the lair of these creatures, and when he got there...

All the horrors which he had encountered in Terrorland faded into insignificance in comparison to this latest adventure. Yet he found time to think. He knew that these vile monstrosities had been specially bred—and no doubt trained—by the criminals.

But how had they got into the passage?

Harry was soon to discover! In spite of his helpless condition, he was still able to look about him and, by twisting his head, Harry could see that the passage was now clear of the spiders. Yet he was still being dragged along. Now he perceived what was happening; there was a jagged hole, low in the stone wall of the passage—and he was being slowly but surely pulled into it.

The explanation came to him. The recent flood had seeped through into this secret passage in places—and Harry was now being dragged through wet slime. And the waters, no doubt, had weakened the stone wall, causing a part of it to collapse. In this way the giant spiders had escaped, but, owing to the flood, they had not found anything to eat. So now the dread creatures had ventured into the passage, hunting for food. And they had found—Harry!

Inch by inch he was drawn through that jagged hole—and now his head was within the spider's lair. There was more light here; he could see a metal grille, or grating, high up in one of the walls. The place was a sort of cellar, and festooned in the corners,

and across the roof were thick masses of web, so entangled, so monstrous, that Harry shuddered again.

Into this cellar—this Hole of Horror—Harry Tracey was being inexorably dragged.

"HARRY!" said Captain Tracey, in a low, sharp voice.

He had awakened suddenly; he did not know it, but Harry's despairing call, uttered far away in the passage, had faintly reached his ears. He sat up now, and whipping his cigarette lighter from his pocket, he snapped the catch. The little flame glowed, and the next moment Captain Travers was on his feet.

"Ullo! Anything wrong, sir?" asked Bottles sleepily, sitting up, and blinking at the light.

"I don't know, young 'un," replied Captain Tracey. "Harry has gone. I've warned him against venturing on solitary expeditions—"

"Master 'ARRY wouldn't do anything like that," interrupted Bottles. "E give his word, didn't he? Somethink must 'ave 'appened—or he wouldn't have gone."

Armed with an electric torch—which they could freely use during the daylight hours—they went down the steps into the passage, without disturbing Professor Kingswood.

"Strike me pink!" ejaculated Bottles suddenly. "Look 'ere, sir! What's this?"

Something glistened in the torchlight, and Captain Tracey gulped when he felt it. He saw more of those strange, glistening strands; he saw, too, marks of disturbance in the dust of the floor.

"Either I'm crazy, Bottles, or this is spiders' web," said Captain Tracey grimly. "Good heavens! Is it possible that Harry—"

He could not allow his thoughts to carry on. With fear clutching at his heart, he ran along the passage, the beam from the torch playing along the floor.

"Look, sir!" ejaculated Bottles suddenly, as they came to a slimy part of the passage.

They saw a pair of feet sticking out of a jagged hole in the wall, and ever as they looked, the feet were slowly disappearing.

"It's Harry! They've got him!" almost choked Captain Tracey. "Bottles, for Heaven's sake! Quick!"

They raced forward, seized Harry's feet, and pulled. There was some resistance, at first, and then, suddenly, Harry came through—and his father and Bottles were horrified when they saw the entangling meshes of web which held the boy in a trap.

They pulled him clear, and the loose stones were hastily wedged into position—so that the hole was blocked up.

Not until Harry was completely released from those vile webs did Captain Tracey breathe freely.

Later, when they had recovered, Captain Tracey was looking eager. "Perhaps we can make use of this discovery," he said. "Those spiders are terrible things. There might be a way—yes! If we arrange one of the rugs as a kind of trap, after removing the stones—"

In one of the topmost rooms of the castle, a room in which there were no ordinary windows, soft lights glowed. Two men sat at complicated instrument boards, studded with numberless, glowing radio valves.

The men wore earphones, and occasionally they turned dials, and various distant stations were tuned in. This room, in fact, was the control-room of the organisation. Here it was possible to get into instant touch with agents in all the capitals of Europe.

The door opened and a silent figure entered—a figure dressed entirely in rich purple. He was the Supreme Unknown—the all-powerful chief.

"The reports," he said briefly. One of the others removed his earphones, and handed some slips of paper to the leader.

"Good—good!" came the approving voice. "Success in Paris—a bank-raid, netting us a million francs. A great jewel robbery in London. What's this? Four lorry-loads of new materials arriving in the early morning? About time!"

The Supreme Unknown's voice had a note of annoyance. He was reminded of those English boys and of Captain Tracey. They had done enormous damage, and many other loads of machinery would be needed before the organisation was again running with its old smoothness.

"What of the fugitives?" asked the purple-clad figure suddenly.

"It is an absolute mystery, Chief," said the other man. "Our guards have searched every inch of the estate. We cannot discover their hiding-place. Yet it is certain that they have not got away."



THE WEB OF DOOM.—The giant spiders enclosed Harry in a net of webbing from which there was no escape, and slowly dragged him to their lair.

"You—you mean—?" Harry paused, thrilled.

"I don't quite know what I mean, son," whispered his father. "But I can see big possibilities!"

The Secret Control-room.

IT was a calm, windless night, with heavy clouds overhead—clouds which, in the distance, merged with the mountain peaks. Everything was quiet in Terrorland.

"It is certain that my men are fools!" snapped the Supreme Unknown. "These accursed Britishers harass us continually—and two of them are mere boys! How can they live without food? What of all our precautions—our traps—our—"

He broke off suddenly, for something, which

(Continued on page 32.)

YOUR EDITOR'S CHAT- and LEAGUE NEWS!



Another Spanking Free Wonder Book, "Explorers and Adventurers," Given Away Inside Next Week's Stunning All-Thrill Story Number. Chums. Read of the Good Things in Store—Below!



and LOOK! MONSTER STORY ATTRACTIONS next week

Write to The Editor,
200, Gray's Inn-road, London, W.C.1.

The Chief's address:
196, G.ay's Inn-road, London, W.C.1.

This week's password:
ETXTT

MY DEAR CHUMS,
I have so much to chat with you about this week, my masters, that nothing less than these centre pages of the old *Mag.* would do to blazon the great news to all my readers. You'll see, when you get your fascinating volumes of

Explorers and Adventurers,

that your old Editor has not exaggerated. It is simply crammed with fascinating facts and dazzling illustrations of the deeds of the supermen who "put the world on the map" during the last two thousand years. It will tell you all about the experiences of the hardy mariners, geographers, scientists and explorers who fought Nature with the gloves off to gain her secrets!

And, in addition, you will enjoy Six Glamorous Thrill Tales in the *Mag.* itself.

The Trail of Frozen Death!

is one of the finest detective yarns I have ever secured for you, chaps. I hung breathless on every word as I read it. The famous secret service man who created the Monocled Manhunter has given us a yarn that you will remember for many moons after you read it. Perhaps the inspiration for it came to him when he himself was tracking a terrible criminal band in the Arctic regions not many weeks ago—but I am not allowed to give away the workings of the British Secret Service, chums—so I must refrain from conjecture. The yarn describes Falcon Swift's gigantic battle of wits in polar snows against Black Galpin, crime monster of the Northlands. The *Northern Star*, an airship aboard which a gallant

band of explorers journeyed to the Pole, disappears in baffling circumstances. Crooks are at work—and the Sporting 'Tee is given the task of bringing them to book and finding the missing explorers. How could he guess the terrible magnitude of the task? With him and Chick you will be flung into a maelstrom of intrigue, cunning, and terrific thrills, as you read this powerful mystery thriller. You will read of the deadly rivalry of Black Galpin, Malpas, the plotter, and Stromvord, the gigantic and terrible half-breed Eskimo! You will traverse the bitter polar wastes and you will see the wonders of the Pyramid of Ice! In the

Fangs of Dr. Fendish

the scene shifts from the North to the steamy mystery lands of Africa. Leopard men, witch doctors and a startling surprise denouement are special features of this gripping complete. Don't miss it.

Fools' Day Frolics at St. Giddy's

is one of the funniest yarns we have had in our great school-tale series. Tommy Rhodes & Co. of Earlswood waken a hornets' nest when they jape the Remove at St. Giddy's on April the First. Johnny Gee & Co.'s counter jape ends in strange fashion, and drama stalks amid the laughter. Snowball, the darky Removeite, will keep you roaring with laughter with his First of April jokes and wheezes! Who is top-dog at Merivale in the end?

The Courage of Cornet Clermont

brings back a tried and true *Mag.* favourite in Captain Lefarge, the dashing first sabreur of Napoleon's army! To the accompaniment of the thunder of guns, battle and heroism, Andre Lefarge pulls off another daring and spectacular coup—and proves that Cornet Clermont is a true soldier of France.

The Boy Millionaire's Bullfight!

is another chortling tale of Hoppy Travers—and the next exploit of Nick Chance, Guillotine Gambler, will hold you spellbound.

See you next week, pals,
YOUR EDITOR.

You'll be Thrilled
by
**THE
BLIZZARD
BANDITS!**
Falcon Swift in the
Arctic. Gripping
Detective Tale
Next Week.
Chums!

**FOOLS'
DAY
FROLICS**
at St. Giddy's.
Ripping Complete
School and Fun
Tale on Saturday.

Thrills and Drama
in the African
Jungle—
**THE FANGS
OF DR.
FENDISH,**
Next Week, Boys!

**FIVE FREE
GIFT
COUPONS**
in connection with
the Great Offer on
page 34 appear
next week.

HAIL BRAVES,
We'll start with a code message this week, from one of our Braves. It's in the Chief's Own Private Code.
CHMTQ WTTKQSSSE, OHNDNAST EKMJT,
DSGYW YKRT RS HTNK QKSI CHMTQO SQ
SEHTK EKMJTO. NWWKTOO, YTOYMT
OSKJL, 49 XKSLMWTACT KSD, JTVTKYTL
KSNW, HGYY, LSKRO. NAL SEHTK
YTNUGTKO MA EHNE ESDA DMYD DTYCSITW
MAES HMO EKMJT. US NAW CNYY SA HMI.

This week's prize-winning letter is printed below. A special B.M. fountain pen has been sent on to the writer, NORMAN BENNET, Langham Farm, Cousley Wood, Wadhurst, Sussex.

DEAR CHIEF,

I am writing to thank you for the spiffing badge and code book you sent me. I am sending you another of my ideas. To make a good shield, first of all procure a piece of three-ply wood and make it to the shape required, then bore four holes near the centre and slip strings through. Clean the front with sand-paper and paint different patterns. More prize-winners next time. Make your letters as interesting as possible for the prizes, and send them to the address above.

Decode the pass-word given and head your letter with it.

Of course, most Red Indians don't use shields. They are apt to be more trouble than they are worth, because they will get in the way when trailing through woods, and also they make it more difficult to hide in a small space from the enemy. They have their uses, however.

Another way to make them is to get a couple of five-foot canes or thin branches of ash or other flexible wood, and, tying them top and bottom, spread them out in the middle with another stick two feet long. Then weave willow twigs, quarter-inch thick, criss-cross over the whole surface till it forms an impregnable shield. The twigs must be woven close, of course. The ends can be bound where they cross the frame. This is the type of shield used by the savages of Africa.

The Red Indian, however, concentrates on weapons

of attack—the bow and arrow, the tomahawk, and the knife. The tomahawk is a throwing weapon, and is never used for chopping wood, or anything like that. The knife, too, is used for throwing. Any jack-knife is a good thrower. Use the large blade, and to throw hold the tip of the blade between the thumb and the longest (middle) finger. The point of the first finger is placed against the spot where the blade joins the haft. Try throwing first at a wooden floor, or a board on the ground. However long the throw, the knife should not somersault more than once before striking. When you can get the point in the floor every time, try throwing at tree-trunks six feet away, gradually getting farther and farther till you have good judgment as to the amount of turn to give the knife with the first finger. And don't forget—the jack-knife, thrown this way, is as dangerous a weapon as that of the Redskin, so be careful.

More hints in our next pow-wow. Let's have some more hints from Braves who want to win prizes.
Good hunting, THE CHIEF.

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I.....(name) enclose three coupons and stamped addressed envelope for membership of above. I am of British birth and promise to adhere to tenets and objects.
(2/4/32)

BOYS' MAGAZINE LEAGUE COUPON.

Boys' Magazine, 2/4/32.

**THE FAT BOY OF THE REMOVE
FINDS THE SCHOOL AT HIS
FEET—**

**THANKS TO THE PILFERED
GORGON MASK WHICH HOLDS
MESMERIC POWERS.**

Fatty Slocum—HYPNOTIST



**FATTY—FUNNIER THAN EVER!—IN THE
LIMELIGHT THIS WEEK. With the Aid of the
Hypnotic Mask he Makes Life at St. Giddy's One
Long Glorious Feast of Stolen Tuck...and Even
Compels the Irate Catty to do his Will! But
Jasper Grant and Professor Scrymgour Want
that Mask! And the Sinister Pair will Stop at
Nothing to Gain it!**

The Mesmeric Mask—Stolen.

MIST! Where's that duffer Mist?" It was tea-time and Johnny Gee & Co. were anxiously seeking Marmaduke Mist, their absent-minded Form-fellow, who had forgotten to turn up in Hall for "ditchwater and doorsteps." Neither had he materialised in his study since lessons.

Marmaduke Mist was a very keen amateur detective, but he was so forgetful that he had to keep a notebook to remind him of ordinary matters, such as the times for lessons, and bed. Mist's notebook was the material embodiment of his mind.

"Where can that scatter-brained jossler have got to?" snorted Dick Bannister wrathfully. "We must find Mist, to try and get the truth out of him about that Terror mystery."

"Rather! Mist! Where are you?"

The chums of Study No. 4 descended into the

quadrangle. A queer chalk mark on one of the wall buttresses caught Johnny Gee's eye, and he gave a gasp.

"That's one of Mist's secret signs. He's following some blithering trail or other, Kimmon!"

Johnny Gee & Co. hurried onward. They spotted Mist at last, crawling along on hands and knees, blinking at the ground through a huge magnifying glass.

Suddenly Mist dived round a corner, and they hurried after him.

There was a ladder reared against an upper window and just as Mist came round the corner, with the Removites close on his heels, a strange, burly-looking man in rough clothes entered the window from the top of the ladder!

Mist's vacant visage took on a wild, excited look. He broke into a loping run, and went straight up that ladder like a monkey up a tree.

"Stop!" he yelled, grabbing the legs of the intruder, as that worthy once more appeared at the window, feet foremost. "You burgling villain! I've followed your trail, and—Yarooooooogh!"

A large, clammy wet cloth swung round in the man's hand, catching Mist in the face, and at the same time a wave of water from an upturned pail swamped over the schoolboy sleuth, and flowed into the study beyond, through the window.

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" ejaculated Johnny Gee. "Mist has nabbed the window-cleaner!"

Crash! Mist, in a semi-inverted position, poked one waving leg through the window. There was a fearful smashing of glass, and the peil dropped to the ground with a clatter.

"Oh, scissors!" gurgled Dick Bannister. "Won't Catty be pleased when he finds his window busted. He—Gug-g-g-great pip!"

Dick broke off abruptly. For a face had appeared at the window—a hideous face, with awful eyes that gleamed with a strange green light!

"The Terror!" muttered Tony Graham, in a strangled voice.

Mist, perched half on the window-sill and half on the ladder, blinked at the apparition in a state of gasping wonder. There was a howl from the window-cleaner and the ladder came hurching outwards from the wall, with Mist and the window-cleaner clutched in each other's arms at the top! The face at the window vanished as suddenly and mysteriously as it had appeared.

Bonk! Mist and the window-cleaner fortunately landed in the upper branches of a tree and hung there, whilst the ladder crashed to the ground.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Hooper of the Remove. "Mist's up a tree again! Find it cold up there, old scout?"

The lower branch on which Mist and the window-cleaner eventually found themselves gave way. They fell, like a couple of Sir Isaac Newton's apples.

Mist jumped up in a trice and grabbed the window-cleaner's large cloth, still wringing wet, and the ladder. He meant to lose no time in getting on the trail of the Terror.

Mist ranged the ladder against Mr. Cattermole's study window and fairly bolted up it. At the same time as Mist arrived at the top, a face appeared at the window. It was Mr. Cattermole, the cross-grained Housemaster.

But Mist did not recognise Mr. Cattermole. He hurled the wet rag at the "Terror"—and there was a smothered howl from the luckless Housemaster as it enveloped his face.

"*Yerroooocch!*" *Crash!* Mist dived in at the window, grabbing Mr. Cattermole in one of his famous ju-jitsu tackles.

"Come on!" gasped Johnny Gee. "We must rescue Catty before Mist busts his ribs, or backbone, or something!"

The juniors dashed upstairs to the Housemaster's study. They flung open the door, and saw Catty, lying sprawled in a pool of water. Mist was on top of him. By some unhappy means, Catty's head had got jammed inside the window-cleaner's pail, and from beneath that all-enveloping helmet came a stream of weird, gurgling noises.

"Mist—you duffer—give over!" gasped Johnny Gee. "Don't you see it isn't the Terror at all, but Catty you've caught!"

The chums of the Remove yanked the luckless Mr. Cattermole to his feet, and by dint of much exertion—most painful to Mr. Cattermole—they dragged the pail off his head.

"*Groooooogh!* *Yah!* I have been—*wow-wow!*—grossly assaulted!" roared the Housemaster, wildly.

"Mist! Obstreperous young rascal!"

"Mist made a—*ha, ha!*—mistake, sir!" gasped Johnny Gee. "He thought you were the Terror!"

"Bah! Ridiculous! *Owp!* Utterly absurd!" snorted Catty, dragging the adhesive folds of his clammy gown from around his legs. "Good heavens! Who has been meddling with my desk?"



DIRTY WORK SCARES THE CLEANER.—At sight of the apparition at the window, the cleaner gave a howl, and the ladder lurched outwards with Mist and the cleaner clutched in each other's arms.

Johnny Gee & Co. blinked blankly at Catty's desk, wherein the papers had been ruthlessly turned over and mixed up. "Some unscrupulous boy has been here, for the purpose of looking at the examination papers that I intend setting the Remove to-morrow!" choked Mr. Cattermole. "He shall be flogged. *Groooooogh!* Mist, you will take five hundred lines!"

"Ye-es, sir," said Mist, with many blinks. "I will make a note of it."

Mist and the chums of the Remove departed and went along to Study No. 4.

"Now look here, Mist," said Johnny, turning a serious face to his absent-minded Form fellow. "We want to get to the bottom of this Terror business. That awful-looking fiend has been prowling about the neighbourhood, and we know that it has some terrible, uncanny power in its eyes that can hypnotise people. Both you and I have had a taste of that."

From the House on the Hill between St. Giddy's and Merivale had come that supernatural form called the Terror, with diabolical eyes that held within their depths the power of hypnotism.

Johnny Gee & Co. and Mist had met with the Terror, and had proved that it was no ghost—that it was flesh and blood.

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Like the fabled Gorgon, that turned into stone all who gazed upon its face, so had the Terror from the House on the Hill the power to petrify those upon whom it bent the baleful green light of its eyes.

The chums of Study No. 4 knew of these things, and they were certain that Jasper Grant, who owned the House on the Hill, knew more of the Terror than he cared to divulge.

"There are heaps of things we want to know, Mist, and you've got to stir up the slush in your noddle, and try and remember!" said Johnny Gee, grimly. "What have you done with the notes that you made of your discoveries at the House on the Hill?"

"I'm afraid I have mislaid them, Gee, and really, I cannot think where they can be," said Mist, sadly.

Johnny gave a snort. "I know jolly well what's happened to them! They've been pinched by Professor Scrymgour—your precious Mind and Memory tutor."

Suddenly the faces of Johnny Gee & Co. blanched. From the study next door a loud piercing yell broke suddenly on their ears.

"Begad! Somethin' happenin' in Mist's study, old chappies!" exclaimed Lord Reggie Pelham-Smith, jaunting his monocle agitatedly into his eye.

Johnny Gee led a rush to the door. As they gained the passage, the door of the end study came violently open, and a weird, terrifying form came out—a short, squat form clad in a flowing black robe, its face ghastly to behold.

"The Terror again!" yelled Dick Bannister, jumping back in alarm. "Don't let it get its eyes on you, for goodness' sake, or—Oh, jeminy!"

The fearsome form was running, and another figure came dashing out of Mist's study, waving the poker in a state of wild excitement. Johnny Gee & Co. almost dropped in their astonishment.

"Gug-g-great pip!" gurgled Johnny Gee. "Professor Scrymgour—that cunning old rotter—here again! Oh—my hat!"

Johnny gave a gasp of horror. For the Terror had turned those baleful eyes full upon the Professor. He fell against a cupboard—rigid.

A crowd of juniors had gathered, and they stared fearfully towards the spot where the evil-eyed prowler had disappeared. They did not hear the deep, gasping chuckle that sounded from the alcove wherein that gruesome form had darted!

"He, he, he! That's scared 'em properly! This blessed mask works beautifully."

A pair of fat, grubby hands came from under the folds of the black robe, and removed the hideous mask that covered the "Terror's" face. The podgy

features of Fatty Slocum of the Remove were revealed!

Samuel Arbutnot Slocum slipped off the robe, rolled it round the mask, and tucked the bundle thus formed under his jacket. Then he scuttled onward to his own study and, flopping his rotund body into the armchair, he kicked up his legs and chortled.

Hiding in the Merivale Wood, Fatty had overheard Professor Scrymgour gloating over a parcel that he had taken from Mermaduke Mist. The parcel had contained this ugly mask, attached by thin wires to a strange electrical apparatus that could be carried in the wearer's pocket. By simply turning a rheostat dial, the green rays from the eyes of the Gorgon Mask would hypnotise any who came within range.

And Fatty intended putting that mask to its fullest use at St. Giddy's!

Meanwhile, Johnny Gee & Co. were gazing at Professor Scrymgour on the landing in breathless horror.

"Golly, golly!" said Snowball, rubbing his black, woolly head. "What can we do wid de po' ole coon now, Massa Johnny?"

The Remove captain's look became very grim, and his eyes gleamed.

He vividly remembered the time when he, too, had come under the influence of those paralytic eyes; he had been brought back to normal by his tie-pin sticking inadvertently in his chest. And he knew it needed but the prodding of an ordinary common or garden pin into Professor Scrymgour's person, to restore him at once to normal!

"By Jove!" said the captain of the Remove. "Here's a good chance to see if he's got your missing notes on him, Mist!"

Johnny Gee and Dick Bannister ran through the Professor's pockets and Johnny gave a gleeful exclamation as he discovered a small book.

"Here they are! Good egg! That's bowled old Scrymgour out! Now we'll bring him round."

Johnny Gee bent down and, extracting a pin from his waistcoat, jabbed it two or three times into the Professor. With a gasping gurgle, the Pro. came back to "life."

"Yah! Oooooch!" he spluttered. "You little rascals—where am I?"

"At St. Giddy's, sir," said Johnny Gee severely. "Let this be a lesson to you not to come here again. You're barred—and you can think yourself jolly lucky we didn't put the police on you!"

"Gerroooooogh!" Professor Scrymgour scrambled to his feet. He shook a furious fist at the juniors, and gurgling with impotent wrath, made his way, with quite undignified haste out of the school.

The Fat Hypnotist at Work.

"I'M hungry!"

Thus Fatty Slocum. It was tea-time at St. Giddy's and Fatty was, as usual, in an unpeccunious condition. A gleam came to his eyes and a fat chuckle left his lips as he remembered that Fothergill & Co., the dandies of the Upper Fourth, had laid in huge supplies from the tuck-shop this afternoon, in preparation for a tea-party. Fatty tucked the Gorgon Mask and black robe under his jacket and hid him off to the Upper Fourth passage.

He peeped through the keyhole of Fothergill's study. The knuts were at home, in all their gorgeous array, and Fatty's mouth watered as he saw the piles of tuck laid out on the table.

"Haw! These pork pies are wippin', don'cher-know!" Clarence Vance was saying. "Pass the teapot, Weggie, deah boy—Ow! Bub-b-b-bai Jove!"

Clarence broke off with a jolt as the door came open, and the fearsome form of the Terror appeared. The knuts all emitted queer sounds of fright. But

ere they could move, those awful green rays bored into them, and they seemed to freeze where they sat!

"He, he, he!" cackled Fatty, in soft tones. "That's fixed those blessed tailor's dummies!"

The Terror scooped up the tuck and made off with it to hide it in an upper box-room. Then he stalked from study to study, emptying cupboards of all their tuck! By the time his rounds were completed, Fatty had filled several trunks and boxes with luscious edibles.

Snugly ensconced in his tuck treasure-house, he had been stuffing steadily for half-an-hour when the heavy tramp of footsteps sounded on the back stairs.

"He's up here, right enough!" The voice was that of George Cadman, the bully of the Remove. "Come on—I'll wring that thieving young rotter's neck."

Fatty Slocum trembled. The avengers were coming! Swiftly, his brain acted. He thrust himself into the black robe, put on the Gorgon Mask, crouched down behind a stack of cases and waited, with thumping heart.

Crash! The door was kicked open unceremoniously, and half-a-dozen wrathful-looking juniors strode in. Cadman, who was in the lead, glared round the room in a terrific manner.

"Slocum's been feeding in here!" he hissed. "Where is the little blighter? I—I'll—Oh!"

Cadman broke off with a gasp. The other fellows, too, stared in horror-stricken amazement as a hideous face arose from behind the boxes by the wall. Its

them, and they went, shambling suspiciously, from the box-room.

Slocum then got busy! He cleared away all traces of his feed, and then wrapped up the Gorgon Mask in the black robe, and scurried downstairs.

Having hidden the Terror outfit in his study, Fatty went along to the common-room.

"Hallo! Here's Slocum!" grinned Dick Bannister. "You burgling bouncer, Fatty, Cadman and a whole crowd of chaps are thirsting for your blood!"

"Oh, rats on Cadman!" said Fatty, in an airy manner. "I'll soon settle with that rotter when I see him."

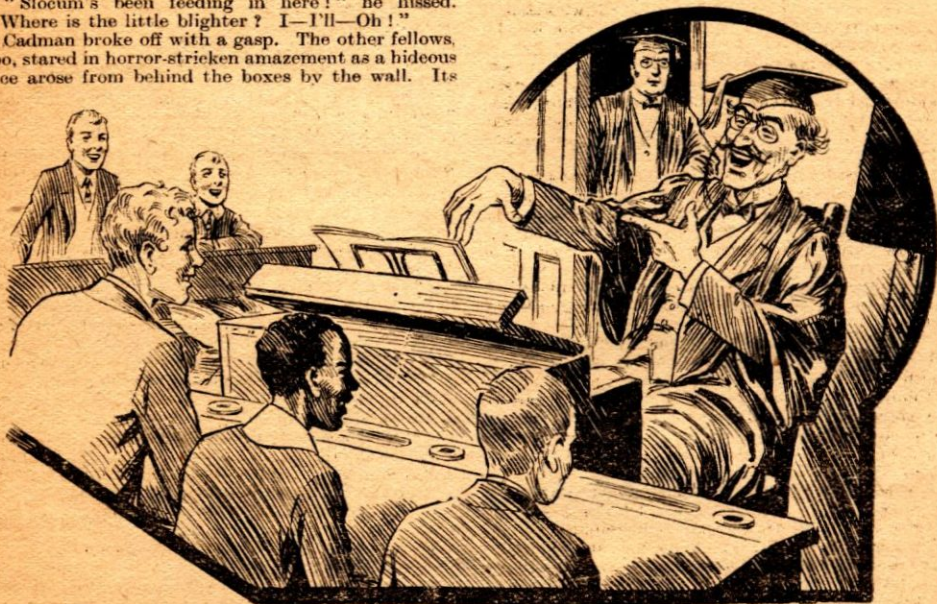
"Well, here's your chance, Fatty!" chuckled Johnny Gee.

The common-room door opened, and Cadman & Co. came in. The rest of the fellows expected Fatty to scuttle away and howl for mercy, but instead he greeted Cadman with a truly fierce look.

"Well, Cadman, I hope you've come to apologise to me?" he demanded in a loud voice.

"Yes, Slocum," was the reply in humble tones. "We're very sorry for the things we've said about you—*Ow!*" Fatty tweaked Cadman's nose with the utmost deliberation. The bully writhed, but made no effort to retaliate.

"I've a good mind to give you a licking, Cadman,



MUSICAL MOMENTS WITH CATTY.—Mr. Cattermole's feet worked overtime on the pedals of the harmonium as he warbled blithely to the strains of that croupy instrument. None of the Remove guessed that Fatty Slocum had mesmerised the Housemaster.

green, glittering eyes focussed themselves on the spellbound Removites. Cadman and his companions were completely hypnotised!

"Listen to my commands, and disobey me at your peril!" said the Terror. "You will all attend in the common-room in ten minutes' time, and will go on your knees to Sammy Slocum and beg his pardon for the things you have been saying about him! You will do all he says—understand?"

The hypnotised juniors shuddered, and mumbled that they understood. The Terror then dismissed

but I'll let you off with a caution this time!" said Fatty, magnanimously. "Hop off, all of you."

Cadman & Co. walked meekly from the common-room.

Johnny Gee's boyish brow was wrinkled in perplexity. He looked hard at Fatty Slocum, who had assumed an unwonted pose of power, and was smirking glibly.

There was another surprise in store for St. Giddy's, when the bell rang for call-over, the places of Father-



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gill, Heppelthwaite, Royce and Vane in Big Hall remained vacant.

Wellesley & Co. were dispatched to find the absentees, and after a long interval reappeared, dragging the petrified Upper Fourth knuts with them.

"Good heavens!" cried the Head. "What is the matter with them, Wellesley! They—they appear to have gone into a trance!"

"We found them just like this in their studies, sir," said the captain of St. Giddy's.

"I'll see to them, sir!" Johnny Gee said, climbing on the platform, and before the Head could say him nay, started operations with a pin.

Jab! Jab! Jab!

"Ow-ow-ow! Haw! Yah!"

The dandies awoke to life and blinked about them, rubbing the spots where Johnny Gee had used the pin. They then told of the visit they had received from the Terror.

"Goodness gracious!" cried the Head. "Surely that fiend is not still abroad in the school? I must consult the police at once."

The school dismissed after call-over, and soon afterwards P.C. Dooley and a fellow-constable arrived from Merivale, to search for the Terror.

Johnny Gee & Co. gathered in Study No. 4 just before bed-time, to discuss the mystery.

"It's a jolly rummy affair altogether!" said Johnny grimly. "The Terror as we knew it was a murderous creature, and certainly not a practical joker, like this one seems to be. I shouldn't be surprised if the joker doesn't return to-night. What about fixing a booby-trap for him, at the top of the stairs?"

"Good wheeze, Johnny!"

When all were in bed, and the school was quiet, the chums of the Remove arose and pulled out the materials for the booby trap from under their beds.

The booby-trap was fixed up, and Johnny Gee & Co. returned to bed.

They did not hear the muffled chuckle that sounded from Fatty Slocum's bed. He had a little jaunt of his own to accomplish that night, and now he would be able to take a different route, and avoid the booby trap.

Doom! It was the first stroke of midnight, echoing over the sleeping school. Fatty Slocum stirred from his warm bed. He listened and then spoke cautiously: "You chaps awake?"

There was no reply. The rest of the Remove had dropped off to sleep, relying on the alarm bell fixed to the booby trap to waken them should any night prowler venture into St. Giddy's.

Fatty arose, slipped on some clothes, and crept

from the slumbering dormitory. He made his way along the dark, deserted corridors. Mr. Cattermole's bedroom at last! The sound of the Housemaster's snoring pulsed through the gloom.

Fatty chuckled and slipped into the room. He paused to don the black cloak and mask that he had fetched from his study, then snapped on an electric pocket torch, focussing its bright beam on Mr. Cattermole.

Fatty gave Mr. Cattermole a poke, and Catty sat up in bed, blinking in the light of the pocket torch. Ere the Housemaster could cry out, Fatty Slocum switched on the 'fluence.

"*Ooooooooooogh!*" Mr. Cattermole was under Fatty's hypnotic spell in a trice!

"Listen, Mr. Cattermole!" hissed Fatty in sepulchral tones. "To-morrow morning, you'll burn the exam. papers you've prepared, and cancel lessons altogether for the Remove. Furthermore, you'll bring the old harmonium from the Music Room into the Form Room and sing us some comic songs instead of giving us ewot. Now you can go to sleep."

Mr. Cattermole fell back in bed with a low sigh, and within a very few moments was asleep again. Fatty crept from the Housemaster's study, chuckling behind the Gorgon Mask.

"He, he, he! We're going to have some fun in class, instead of a rotten exam. I'd better get back to bed, and—Oh, gug-g-g-good lor!"

Creeping towards him along the corridor was a tall, burly man, whose face was fiendish to behold.

"Yah! Hellup! Thieves! Murder! Yarooooogh!" bellowed Fatty, and turning towards the stairs he ran for his life.

Fatty had not the presence of mind to switch on the 'fluence and so petrify his unknown assailant. He flew up the stairs, with his pursuer close on his heels, and it was not until they had got half-way that the catastrophe happened.

Crash! Bang! Swoooooosh! Clang! Clang!

"Yarooooogh! Yah! What the——"

The booby trap had been sprung! The alarm bell was ringing stridently. The storecloth, with the rods removed, simply rolled downward, and both Fatty and his unknown pursuer lost the run of their feet.

From the corridors above came the noise of opening doors, and Johnny Gee & Co. came from the Remove dormitory, armed with cricket stumps.

They stood aghast on the landing when they saw the Terror wallowing in the soot and water with a man, whom they recognised in spite of the soot that smothered him.

"Jasper Grant!" cried Johnny Gee.

"Yarooooogh!" came a bellowing howl from the Terror. *"Rescue, Remove! Fire! Murder! Wow!"*

"That—that's Slocum's voice!" ejaculated Tony Graham. "But——"

He was interrupted by a louder howl from Slocum as Jasper Grant seized him in his powerful arms and dragged him along the corridor. Johnny Gee & Co. dashed after them, but Grant's hand went to his hip pocket, and he whipped out a wicked-looking revolver.

Crack! Crack! Two shots rang out and the Removites drew back as they heard the bullets splintering the woodwork of the staircase around them.

"Back!" snarled Grant, passionately. "I'll shoot you like dogs if you dare come an inch further!"

Slocum's terrified yells rang out through the House. The Gorgon Mask and the electrical apparatus was snatched from him, and Jasper Grant fled into the darkness of the Hall.

Johnny Gee & Co. leaped down the stairs. But when they reached the Hall and switched on the

light, Jasper Grant's burly figure had vanished into the night.

Johnny Gee returned to the Hall where Dr. Holroyd and most of the masters had gathered, with Fatty Slocum in their midst, and explained the reason for the booby trap. Then all eyes turned on Fatty, who was whimpering with fear.

"Oooogh! Lemme go, sir! I only pinched the Gorgon Mask for a joke! Wow-wow! D-D-Don't lick me! Ow-ow!"

tion, I am going to sing you a few songs. Ah! Hum!"

Catty cleared his throat, pumped vigorously at the leaky bellows of the harmonium, blinked at the music, and then his voice burst forth melodiously.

"I'm *Henry the Eighth, I am!*" warbled Catty in dulcet tones. "*Henry the Eighth I am, I am!*"

The Remove simply shrieked. Nothing quite like this had ever happened before at St. Giddy's—not even at a school concert. "*Henry the Eighth,*"



TRAPPED IN THE TOMB.— Suddenly a shout rang out, and those schoolboy "corpses" sprang to life as the joyous juniors hurled themselves on Jasper Grant.

"Miserable youth!" thundered the Head. "What does this mean? The Gorgon Mask? Explain, Slocum, this instant!"

Trembling like a fat jelly, Fatty Slocum told how he had stolen the Gorgon Mask, and played the Terror!

"Good heavens!" cried Dr. Holroyd in horror. "Slocum—foolish, unscrupulous boy! I will see you in the morning. Boys, return to bed, and let there be no more disturbances."

The boys of St. Giddy's returned to bed, but it was long ere they slept. Fatty Slocum lay in bed groaning, and when he did get to sleep, he had awful dreams of the wrath in store on the morrow!

Music by the Mesmerised Housemaster.

"WHAT'S the matter with Catty?"

It was at the breakfast-table at St. Giddy's next morning that the question was first asked. Mr. Ernest James Cattermole seemed to be in a dreamy, far-away condition that contrasted very noticeably with his usual sharp, hawk-like demeanour.

The Removites had all been dreading the exam., but now they filed into the form-room with feelings of high hope.

Mr. Cattermole appeared in the Remove form-room, dragging along the ancient, wheezy harmonium that had been lying in the school music-room for years!

"Well, boys," said Mr. Cattermole, blinking rather vacantly at the class. "Lessons will be cancelled entirely this morning—and instead of the examina-

tion, I am going to sing you a few songs. Ah! Hum!"

came to a gasping conclusion, and the Remove applauded loudly whilst Catty took his second wind.

Mr. Cattermole sorted out his selection of comic songs, and started on another. "*Boiled Beef and Carrots!*" sang Mr. Cattermole, spiritedly, and the Remove took up the chorus, shouting out that classic ditty at the tops of their voices.

Fatty Slocum sat at his desk and quaked. He seemed to shrink visibly as the form-room door opened and Dr. Holroyd stepped in. His venerable face was the picture of shocked amazement.

"Mr. Cattermole—sir! Are you mad, to make such an exhibition of yourself?" cried the Head.

Catty blinked rather owlishly at the Head and would have continued with his next song, but Dr. Holroyd clapped down the lid of the harmonium with a very peremptory bang, and almost dragged Catty from the chair. The Head gazed at Mr. Cattermole, who stood sheepishly in front of the class, and then his eyes fixed on Fatty Slocum.

"Is this another of your preposterous jokes, Slocum? Have you mesmerised Mr. Cattermole? Ah, I see by your looks, Slocum, that you are guilty! Follow me to my study at once! Mr. Cattermole!"—the Head turned to the dazed Housemaster and took him gently by the arm—"Come with me, my dear sir. You have been made the victim of a dangerous joke."

Dr. Holroyd stalked away, leading Mr. Cattermole. Fatty followed the Head in fear and trembling.

Johnny Gee & Co. gathered in Study No. 4 for tea that day. They were not feeling quite so amused,

now. Mr. Cattermole had made a rapid recovery, and had been "taking it out" of the Remove this afternoon.

"Still, it was a prime joke while it lasted," said the Hon. Bob Vernon. "Fancy Slocum having the neck to pinch that mask, and work off the Terror stunt here! That rascal Jasper Grant has got it back again now. Any news of him, Johnny?"

The Remove captain shook his head, but suddenly a bright gleam came into his eyes.

"Listen, chaps! Supposing we get into the House on the Hill ourselves? We may be able to find out something. We have Mist's notes, you know, with clues showing a secret way into the place."

"Right-ho. We're with you, Johnny."

The chums of the Remove finished their tea, Johnny slipped Mist's decoded notes into his pocket, and they set forth.

They turned off from the Merivale Lane, and took the bride-path that brought them to the large spinney at the bottom of the hill. Johnny Gee paused now and then to consult Mist's notes. The trail led to the old well at the other side of the spinney. Johnny Gee found that bricks were missing at intervals down the side of the well, thus affording hand and foot hold to a climber.

One after another, the juniors climbed down into the dark, noisome interior of the well. Johnny flashed his pocket-torch on Mist's notebook.

"According to Mist, there's an opening down here somewhere—Ah! Here it is—half bunged up with rubbish. Careful how you go—and mind your top knots!"

The tunnel ended in a flight of stone steps, that led upwards in spiral fashion. At the top two narrow tunnels forked off at sharp angles.

"Straight on!" said Johnny Gee.

The tunnel ended abruptly, but above them a stone slab was let into the roof. Johnny pushed upon it. There was a sudden click, and the slab rotated downwards, leaving a black, open cavity above.

Tense and breathless, the Removites scrambled through the aperture. Johnny Gee switched on his torchlight.

They found themselves in a low, square-shaped vault. Ranged round the stone walls the shapes of a number of coffins, loomed weirdly. The Remove captain drew a deep breath.

"Don't you see, chaps? We're in the old mausoleum in the grounds of the House on the Hill—a burial place of the dead. Dr. Marsden lies in one of these coffins."

Johnny broke off with a gasp of alarm. The sound of a footstep broke on their ears. A section of the mausoleum wall was sliding outwards, and a form appeared—

"Quick!" hissed Johnny. "Hide behind these coffins!"

The light of a lantern flashed through the black interior of the mausoleum, revealing the tall figure of Jasper Grant, his face obscured by that hideous mask.

Grant halted before one of the stone coffins, and from the lips of the mask came low, hissed mutterings. Then the lid of the coffin began to rise slowly upwards, and a white figure arose from its depths. The trembling juniors recognised Dr. Marsden, the scientific recluse of the House on the Hill.

"Well, Marsden," broke out Grant in a harsh, grating voice, "this is the last time that you and I will speak together. "Too much is known about me, thanks to a pack of interfering schoolboys!" he went on. "But the truth will never be known—that your death was a sham affair. With the help of your green ray I shall be able to get people in my power, just as I have held you under the spell of

your own invention for nearly two months! I kept you alive because it was necessary to have you make the special cells that are used in the apparatus. You have now made sufficient for my purpose. It is no longer necessary to keep you alive. I have come back now to take the things from these coffins, and to bid you good-bye for ever."

Grant opened the coffins, and took out papers, bits of apparatus and various small boxes. Then suddenly, Grant started, and the green light flashed from the lens-orbs of his mask.

A snarl burst from him as he saw Johnny Gee & Co. crouched in the shadows. The green, glowing rays swept from one to another of the juniors, holding them powerless in their paralytic spell!

Jasper Grant lifted them, one by one, in his powerful arms, and thrust them savagely into the empty coffins.

"Get back into your own coffin, Marsden!" snarled Grant. "You will have company in your final hours—you and these interfering young whelps shall perish together!"

With a mocking laugh, Grant left the mausoleum, leaving the lamp still burning on the floor.

* * * * *

THE lamp in the mausoleum flickered fitfully, casting strange shadows through the interior of the death-vault.

All of a sudden, Johnny Gee realised, as in a dream, that the slab of stone in the floor was moving upward.

A tousled head popped up, and a pair of eyeglasses glimmered in the lamplight in the mausoleum. It was Marnaduke Mist!

Mist blinked at Johnny Gee & Co., lying like corpses in the coffins.

He pulled out a pin. Then he went from one to another, jabbing at his Formfellows. Johnny Gee & Co. felt the fresh, quickened blood surging through their veins.

The harmless letting of blood by means of pricks with a pin brought back Dr. Marsden to normal, although it was a slower process, for he had been long under the paralytic spell.

"Thank you, boys—how can I express my gratitude?" he said in husky tones. "You have heard, no doubt, all that Grant said to me? My brain is dulled—it will be days before I fully recover—"

"We know everything, sir!" said Johnny Gee. "Now, what about laying a trap for Jasper Grant, when he comes back to collect the things? We'll get back into the coffins as though we were still mummies. Then, as I say the word, go for him baldheaded!"

They had not long to wait ere Jasper Grant returned, carrying a large case. He had removed the Gorgon Mask, which was packed in the case. He pulled the lamp across, opened the case, and was about to pack the papers and articles of scientific apparatus into it, when suddenly a shout rang out, and those schoolboy "corpses" sprang to life.

Crash! Jasper Grant swung round with a snarling oath. But too late to cope with that massed attack of lusty juniors! Johnny Gee & Co. bore him to the ground, and after a desperate struggle, they held him prisoner.

The Joyous Juniors departed from the House on the Hill in triumph, taking their prisoners and trophies with them to the police station.

It was late ere Johnny Gee & Co. and Mist returned to St. Giddy's, but they had a wonderful story to tell the Head, and to their schoolfellows afterwards. Mist was acclaimed a great man, worthy of Sherlock Holmes himself, despite his unfortunate habit of absent-mindedness.

The next grand tale of the Joyous Juniors tells of their chortling doings on All Fools Day. Look out for this splendid tale of St. Giddy's next week.

The Dazzling Exploits of

NICK CHANCE—GUILLOTINE GAMBLER!

A Glamorous Tale of The Phantom of the French Revolution—a Human Enigma
that Steals the Guillotine's Prey.

The Black Phantom At Bay!



By JOHN HUNTER, Master of Mystery and Imagination.

THE blood-stained hand of terror lay heavy over France.

The mob, ground down for centuries, had at last turned like a wounded monster at bay and was busy trampling the lilies of the most despotic monarchy the world has ever known. The gleaming knife of Madame La Guillotine rose and fell, rose and fell—as into her dreadful maw the flower of France walked, head erect, a careless jest on the lip.

And then, when the Terror seemed to have reached its blackest hue, a white ray of hope illumined the night. A name was whispered, the name of one careless dare-devil who snatched her prey from the very steps of the guillotine—the Black Phantom.

The Vicomte de Belceaux was among those rescued, but he refused to go to England till he had found where his son, the Marquis de Saint Gervain, was imprisoned. His son had not been executed because he and his father alone knew the hiding-place of the famous Belceaux emeralds—and Robespierre and his colleagues were not above cupidity.

A spy found the old man in his hiding place, and tried to torture from him the secret. But the torture killed the Vicomte, and the spy died horribly.

During the search that followed for the Marquis the saving of other aristocrats by the Phantom went on apace.

While rescuing the son of an aristocrat Nick learned that the Marquis de Gervain was a prisoner in the Luxembourg.

Next evening, while strolling along the quay, Nick

saw a man about to be hanged on the mast of a barge.

He saved the seaman Arcot, and, with his help entered into service in the Luxembourg. Cassin, the governor of the gaol, was warned by his cousin Arcot that Nick was the Black Phantom.

Nick found out where the Marquis de St. Gervain was imprisoned. During the night, dressed as the Black Phantom, he freed the Marquis.

As they reached the prison yard, men appeared with torches and attacked them, while Cassin, in the rear, cried "Take him! Take the Black Phantom!"

The Black Phantom Captured.

GERVAIN was weak and shaking. Before the days of the Revolution he would have had that gate open in a trice, and he and Nick might have stood the slimmest chance of escape. But now the man was only a shadow of his former self. Even his proud spirit had been almost broken by his privations, and high terror filled him as the torch bearers rushed forward yelling savagely.

Somewhere in the background away from Dick's sword, dancing grotesquely in his excitement, was Cassin, yelling: "Take them alive. Take them alive."

That this might involve the slaying of several of the attackers was of no consequence whatsoever to Cassin, for he was taking good care not to be among those attackers.

Gervain sobbed: "I cannot fit the key, *Monsieur*. I am desolated. My hands shake so..." He clung to the gate handle, nearly falling.

Nick leapt forward, beat aside a cutlass and ran its bearer through.

The rush checked, hesitated. The notoriety of The Black Phantom was widespread. There was death in his long, slim blade that danced in the torchlight.

Nick panted desperately. "Try again, *Monsieur*. Try! For your life!"

Gervain set his teeth. It chanced that the light of one of the torches shone fairly on the great square lock, so that he saw the keyhole plainly and had not to feel for it with palsied hands.

He got the key against it, juggled with it, and felt it slide home.

"I ha' done it!" he gasped. And as he said this they rushed again.

Nick beat at them, stabbing, cutting, fencing. The ring of faces was close to his, teeth gleaming in the light, breath panting jerkily, with hoarse cries punctuating the strokes.

The gate swung inwards slightly.

Nick moved with fury and drove back the wave of attack momentarily—just sufficiently long to enable him to turn, to thrust Gervain through the widening opening of the gate.

And as they came at him again, he slammed the gate, turned the key and whipped it from the keyhole.

He knew that the only hope for the enfeebled Gervain, and for the brave boy who was assisting him, was for somebody to guard the gate until they were safe from all pursuit.

Nick held up the key. His voice rang loudly.

"Come and take it!" he taunted. "Who tries first?"

Outside, from beyond the gate, he heard the voice of Gervain, high and despairing.

"I must go back to help him! I cannot leave him to die for me!"

Nick was glad to hear this. The spirit of Gervain was not yet dead. In freedom it would revive. The voice protested still, but grew fainter. The boy had his instructions and was taking his charge to security.

And Cassin, apprehensive as to what might befall when Robespierre and St. Just knew their most valuable prisoner had escaped, urged his bandogs on to another fierce rush.

As they came Nick hurled the key far over their heads into the darkness of the courtyard, so that now, unless great luck befell them in searching for it with torches, it could not be found until daylight.

On this Cassin shrieked madly. He was locked in his own prison. His rage was stupendous. He would have Nick's heart. He swore it.

And the rush came at Nick. Steel clashed on steel and rang and rang again. A man sobbed and died. A cutlass smote sideways at Nick. He reeled as its heavy blade struck flatwise on the side of his head.

The ring of faces, the lurching torch flames, the dancing Cassin all swung wildly before his dazed vision. He parried a thrust that would have killed him, and slew the thruster.

Then a man, diving low, got both arms round his legs and heaved. Nick went back against the gate. His sword arm was clasped in two arms, cuddled hard and rendered useless.



NICK, THE GIANT KILLER.—Nick stooped as Cassin came in, grasped him by the collar and his leather belt, and raised the giant's arm's length above his head.

He went groundwards, still fighting. With his free hand he clipped a man's jaw and broke it. Somebody struck him in the side with a musket butt.

With dead and injured men about him, they had Nick at last. And even they, brutalised though they were, could not withhold a certain need of admiration from the man who had held the gate against such odds.

They dragged Nick to the dungeon Gervain had occupied, and there he made one request. He wanted clothes to which he was accustomed—the silks and the satins of his caste.

This Cassin agreed to, for Cassin, like all Parisians, had a high sense of the dramatic, and when the Black Phantom appeared before the tribunal, Cassin did not wish to show him as a gaping country lad.

That, surely, would make all Paris laugh—that a country lad had tricked the Triumvirate for so long. But a silk clad exquisite was another matter. The twisted Parisian humour would not see a jest in that. And the scorn of Paris is a powerful thing.

Then Cassin prepared to break the news to the most Excellent Citizen Robespierre.

Meanwhile the little lad, knowing every hole and burrow in Paris, contrived to guide Gervain through the streets absolutely unseen. Being already instructed by Nick, he knew exactly how to get into the house of the blind miser, and long before daylight, Gervain was lying on a comfortable couch of rugs under the miser's attic roof, with food and wine such as he had not known for many days.

He knew that he must lie there until such times as the boy visited him to take him out for short exercise.

Arcot's Reward.

PARIS flamed with the news. It stirred even the heat-dazed populace.

The Black Phantom was taken!

It was printed in the newspapers, with appropriate woodcuts of the unspeakable villain himself. It fled from lip to lip in the cafés and on the pavements, in the Bois and the rookeries of St. Antoine.

The Black Phantom was taken!

Paris chattered of it, seethed with the news. He was to appear before Fouquier Tinville. He would be given the "honour" of a trial. Such a trial!

They would fight for places. All the fantasies who seemed to have found birth in the Revolution would struggle with *sans culottes* and *tricoteuses* for a seat at the trial. The Palais Royale bubbled with it, its arcades rang with talk of it—save those three locked and barred shops wherein *Egalité* had lived and from which *Egalité*, the Father of the Revolution, had gone forth to the death his own child had decreed.

But Arcot was not finding life too easy. He was a seaman, and he had treacherously betrayed a seaman to his death; for the captain of the barge and his two men had justice on their side when they tried Arcot, even though their methods were open to question.

Therefore, the quays and all shipping places were closed to Arcot. He could not earn his daily bread. He dared not go near places where seamen gathered, else a knife had ended his black career.

Arcot wanted his reward. He saw Cassin.

Cassin was busy at the Luxembourg. Arcot was shown into his room, and he said to Cassin: "Well, cousin, the thing went well." He rubbed his hands.

Cassin didn't like the sound of that phrase—the thing went well. It was the opposite of that famous phrase of the Revolution—"La Guillotine ne va pas mal." And Cassin felt rather dangerously near the shadow of the guillotine just then.

He said to Arcot: "Listen, cousin. I have no time to talk now; but there are difficulties. Robespierre . . . You understand?"

Arcot said nothing. He did not understand. He knew that Cassin was a scoundrel, and he began to feel a strange sinking at the pit of his stomach.

Cassin leaned forward. "Let me see. We must talk—you and I. Now where are you staying? *Hein? L'Auberge de Peré Jules* in the rue Croissonniere? I know it. There I shall meet you to-night."

Arcot listened with a wooden face. None of this vague talk really meant anything at all, but it was quite impressive.

Cassin proceeded: "I am hemmed about. That I shall explain to you to-night. Do you take a private room there and leave instructions with the host that the stranger who asks for you is to be shown

into the room without question. Say at nine o'clock. Yes?"

Cassin grinned expectantly into Arcot's wooden face.

"But . . ." began Arcot.

Cassin made a gesture of impatience, even despair. "Imbecile that you are! Do I not tell you events are difficult? To-night at nine. And all may be straightened up."

He tapped the side of his nose and looked cunning. Arcot drew a deep breath and shuffled his feet for a moment.

"All right," he said at last. "I'll meet you. It shall be as you say."

He went off, and Cassin sat and thought for a while. His talk with Robespierre had been more than disturbing. The Incorruptible could be an alarming person when he chose—and he had chosen while chatting with Cassin.

Now, if it came to the ears of Robespierre or St. Just that Cassin and Arcot had laid a trap to catch the Black Phantom, those two terrible people might immediately guess that Gervain had been used as the bait for that trap. That would never do.

Their secret prisoner's safety risked that Cassin might gain ten thousand francs!

Cassin was all asweet as he thought of it. It would never do for them to learn that. He had told Robespierre that The Black Phantom had reached the prisoner and had been surprised by his, Cassin's, constant watchfulness and cleverness. That he had managed to get Gervain away was desolating; but Cassin had got him all right. Trust Cassin!

Robespierre had heard this with a face of stone, and then had told Cassin what he thought. What he thought hurt Cassin very much.



THE CROOKED HERCULES KILLS.—Cassin's great hand bit deep into Arcot's throat and held there. Arcot strove with both hands to tear away that awful erin

Meantime, Cassin waited for his ten thousand francs. Robespierre had promised him the reward after the trial and conviction—when the identity of The Black Phantom was established in law.

While Cassin thought these things, Robespierre talked to St. Just, and if Cassin could have heard what they said every hair on his head would have stood on end.

That day sped by. The night came. Arcot waited for Cassin at *l'Auberge de Pere Jules* in the rue Croisnienne. Cassin came at last. Before dropping his cloak, he pulled the curtains across the window.

"It is not good, cousin," he said, "for me to be seen. Robespierre has his suspicions."

Arcot grunted. He indicated the wine-bottle, and Cassin poured himself out a glass and seated himself at the table.

"Now," he said, "in this matter, cousin, there are difficulties. Robespierre is furious about the escape of Gervain. He cares more for that than for the taking of The Black Phantom, forsooth, though why—I don't know."

"That doesn't affect the reward," said Arcot. "Look here, Cassin. Paris cannot hold me. I must leave it."

"Go to-night," said Cassin, eagerly. "I will send the reward on. I will draw it in your name."

Arcot's eyes narrowed. "You will draw it? Has my name been given to Robespierre? Eh? Answer me that. Whose name appears in all the newspapers as the captor of The Black Phantom? About whom does everybody talk? The so-clever Cassin. Do you think that once you had that money in your hands I should see a single sou of it? Know yourself as well as I know you, Cassin, and think again."

Cassin tried to speak, but the torrent of Arcot's accusation swept on, silencing him.

"It's useless," he snarled. "I can see that. You will never mention me. Therefore, I shall go to Robespierre and tell him that it was I, and I alone, who discovered who The Black Phantom was."

"The guillotine!" panted Cassin. "You fool. If Robespierre thinks there was a trap, and that trap was baited with Gervain, and Gervain was lost to

him thereby, we both shall sneeze into the little basket."

Arcot laughed. "Don't try to tell me that petty lie, Cassin. I don't believe it. You keep me in the dark for your own advancement. 'Say nothing of Arcot. Oh, no. Then I draw all the reward.' That's you, Cassin."

He leaned across the table, his foxy face alight with malignancy.

"But it won't go, Cassin. It goes badly. See? To Robespierre I shall tell the truth; and then we shall see."

His face was within an inch of Cassin's. Cassin was staring straight into his eyes.

"You mean that, cousin?" panted Cassin.

"Yes. Every word . . ."

And Cassin's great hand slipped up under Arcot's chin, cut deep into Arcot's throat and stayed there.

Arcot, silenced, strove with both hands to tear away that awful grip. He kicked his chair away. The table lurched under his writhing.

Cassin, sitting still, his face right against Arcot's, laughed into Arcot's starting eyes, laughed as he saw Arcot's lolling tongue.

"Mean it!" he repeated, in a terrible whisper.

Arcot heard the whisper and the laughter as though it rolled amid distant hills and grew fainter as he listened.

Cassin did not move. He sat very still, his right hand still gripping, his left hand resting on the table.

And gradually Arcot ceased to struggle. Gradually he lay limply across the table, his face a ghastly sight; and still Cassin's grip persisted . . . still . . . persisted and held . . . for a long time.

The landlord, downstairs, saw his cloaked and cock-hatted visitor emerge from the stairway, still covering his face completely.

In his disguised voice the cloaked man said: "The Citizen Arcot is busy over some papers I have left him. He does not wish to be disturbed for at least an hour."

The cloaked man stepped out to the fetid darkness and vanished.

And above, Arcot sprawled across the table and did not move. He had found all his reward.

Awaiting Trial.

NICK was once again in the *Souricière*—the strongest prison in Paris. Now there was little hope for his escape, and he knew it. He was guarded night and day, even though other prisoners shared the dreaded hole with him.

These other prisoners were different from those whom he had seen when last he lay in the dungeon. Gone were the aristocrats. The Terror had either killed them or driven them overseas, and now it fed on lesser fry.

Now The Terror slew The People. Now, instead of silk-clad aristocrats, proud beauties in lace and satins, one saw arraigned before Fouquier Tinville humble folk—working people of all kinds. The Terror killed for the sake of killing. It killed itself.

To these humble folk, Nick was an object of intense interest. He stood for something which had definitely passed away—for Versailles, for *Le Roi Soleil*, for that fantastic incredible period when everything was grotesque, when expenditure did, not matter, when the people poured out sweat and blood that a privileged class might live as no other privileged class in all the world has ever lived.

To those poor condemned creatures huddling in the Mousetrap, Nick was the last of the *aristos*. They called him that. It was the name by which he became known throughout all the prison.

The Last of the Aristos.

They seemed in no hurry to try him, and Nick wondered a little at this until suddenly he realised

FOOTBALLERS PICTURE PUZZLE COMPETITION No. 1.

CORRECT SOLUTIONS.

The following are the correct solutions for Footballers' Competition No. 1:—

1 WARING	13 BOND	25 STOKER
2 BALL	14 ROUSE	26 BOTT
3 BROOKS	15 COWELL	27 HILLS
4 SPENCE	16 FLOOD	28 MILL
5 JONES	17 CRABTREE	29 WRIGHT
6 LYONS	18 STACK	30 HARPER
7 CARR	19 ARCHER	31 HUTTON
8 WALKER	20 WEBB	32 BASTIN
9 BARBER	21 COOPER	33 SHEPHERD
10 JAMES	22 WARREN	34 GLOVER
11 STARK	23 FORD	35 STONE
12 CAPE	24 PEACOCK	36 BELL

The winners' names and addresses appeared in last week's issue.

Solve These Simple Football Picture Puzzles and Win a Splendid Prize!

FIRST £10 PRIZE SECOND £5; THIRD £2.

Also 200 CONSOLATION PRIZES of Footballs, Bull's-eye Lanterns, Roller Skates, Knives, Cameras, etc.

HERE is the ninth set of puzzles for "FOOTBALLERS" Competition No. 2, in which you are given the opportunity of winning one of the excellent prizes set out above.

You will enjoy solving these simple puzzles, each of which represents the name of a football player. Here is a chance for you to compete with your chums in "The Mag.'s" own contest, for which over 200 splendid prizes are offered.

When you have solved this week's pictures you should cut them out and put them away in a safe place until the end of the Competition, when full particulars and closing date will be announced.

Each week a set of six puzzles will appear. Do not send any puzzles in until you have the complete set.

Solutions must be filled IN INK in the spaces provided on the entry forms.

Only one name must be given under each picture. The decision of the Competition Editor in all matters relating to this competition must be accepted as final.

Set No. 10 of this Competition will be published in the Wonder Book presented with the "B.M." next week.

START TO-DAY! Forty-eight puzzles have been published in the last eight issues of the "Mag." If you didn't get them you can get back copies from the Subscription Dept. "Boys' Magazine," Withy Grove, Manchester, price 3d. per copy, post free.

'FOOTBALLERS' PUZZLE No. 2. NINTH SET.



The Solutions to this week's Pictures are among the following Footballers' Names:

- CALLENDER
- DAY
- GLASS
- HAYMAN
- MARSHALL
- MILLER
- MILLS
- PAYNE
- PORTER
- RIX
- SMITH
- SWIFT
- TURNER
- WILES
- WYPER

Save these Puzzles until after the Final Set of Pictures has appeared.

that Robespierre and St. Just were probably scouring Paris for Gervain. He hoped that the little boy had the *ci-devant* Marquis securely hidden away.

Nick had been there two days when the door of the dungeon opened and a man was thrust inside.

Cassin! Nick almost cried the name aloud. Instead, he lifted his quizzing-glass and looked Cassin over from head to foot slowly and insolently.

Cassin was not a nice sight. He had evidently made a fight of it when they arrested him, for his face was puffed and bleeding, his front teeth were loosened.

Cassin was in front of Nick. "I'm here," he panted. "They've just taken me. Robespierre's order. Me. Who captured you. That's my reward. Where are the ten thousand francs? And the charge against me! Conduct subversive to the interests of The People. That can mean anything. It means the guillotine for me."

He flung his arms wide in a gesture of despair. He was turning away, when suddenly rage surged through him and he flung himself round once more.

"Through you," he screamed. "Through you and Arcot. Had I not listened to him I would still have been at the Luxembourg. It is through you..."

He hurled himself at Nick. The prisoners shouted with excitement. The armed guard who always watched through the grille in the door to see that Nick did not effect a miraculous escape, started to unlock the door.

As Cassin came in, Nick stooped. All in the dungeon expected to see the slim, silk-clad figure whirled away before the rush of the giant.

Instead, Nick stepped to one side and one hand closed on Cassin's collar. The other seized the leathern belt he wore about his waist.

A man shrieked with amazement. Cassin was being picked up—the giant Cassin, writhing impotently.

He went above Nick's head to arm's length, and as the guard came blundering in, Nick pitched him at the guard's feet.

"He belongs to you, I think," he said, suavely, taking out a snuff-box and tapping its lid. "Here, he is only a lodger—but your guest, I understand."

Cassin managed to scramble to his feet. He glared at Nick, but made no effort to come near him. One encounter with those white hands of steel strength was enough for Cassin. He retreated to a far corner and crouched there mumbling.

That day passed and the night, and the following morning an officer and a squad of soldiers presented themselves at the dungeon door. Nick was led out and placed in a closed chaise, which rattled off through the streets of Paris.

He was in a great building, and standing at a rail—the prisoner. He saw the Triumvirate. He saw a sea of faces rising tier on tier about him. The place was a babel of voices.

The trial of The Black Phantom was about to begin.

Nick Chance, the Elusive Phantom of the French Revolution, captured at last. Don't miss the great trial scene in this gripping tale next week, chums.

IN THE CRIME SPIDER'S WEB

(Continued from page 17.)

descended from the ceiling, attracted his attention. The next second he staggered back with a cry of alarm.

He did not see the skylight above—he did not even notice that it was propped open. What he did see was a hideous spider, with legs writhing, which was dropping on a string-like web. Only in the nick of time did the Supreme Unknown dodge—or the spider would have fallen upon him.

He ran for the door, and his hoarse cry caused the other two men to look round. They were in time to see two other spiders descending. Panic seized them, and they raced for the door, shouting with horror, and they slammed it after them.

Thud! A rope dropped from that skylight and Captain Tracey slid to the floor. His first move was to grab one of the heavy chairs and jam it hard against the door. That would keep the enemy out for several minutes, at least.

Then he turned his attention to the wireless instruments. He paid no attention to the spiders. For, if luck was with him, he would soon be in communication with the outside world.

He knew that he only had a few minutes in which to work. On the battlements, Harry and Bottles had wedged the door which gave on to the roof. In this way they hoped to prevent the crooks from getting up—for it was certain that the hooded men, knowing of those spiders, would go to the roof to discover the explanation of the creatures' entry.

Zurrrr-zipp! One of the spiders suddenly fell, and there was a blinding flash of blue flame. Instantly, all of the radio valves became black.

Captain Tracey uttered an exclamation of chagrin. The spider, in falling, had fouled some vital wires of the plant, and had put the instruments out of action!

Captain Tracey saw the notes which the Supreme Unknown had left. He read them rapidly—and his eyes glowed. Vaguely, in the distance, he heard the shouting of men—but, as yet, nobody had attempted to get back into the control room.

With lightning speed, Captain Tracey removed the chair from the door, and he swarmed up the rope, avoiding one of the horrible spiders. He reached the roof, and Harry and Bottles dashed at him.

"They're bursting through, Dad!" panted Harry.

"Come!" hissed his father.

They ran along the battlements, and just as the door gave way, and men poured out upon the roof, the three dodged through a narrow opening in the stone wall of the castle, closing it after them.

The crooks saw nothing suspicious; they reached the skylight, and, staring down into the control room, they saw the spiders. But nothing more. It was another of those baffling mysteries which had lately troubled these desperate men.

Within the secret passage Captain Tracey briefly explained what had happened.

"Another time, perhaps, we may be able to get into communication with the outside world," he went on. "At least, our adventure was not futile. I have made one important discovery."

"What's that, Dad?" asked Harry eagerly.

"Four lorry loads of new materials are on their way to the castle," replied Captain Tracey. "By hook or by crook we must prevent them from arriving."

Over The Abyss.

"DON'T get the 'ang of it, Master 'Arry," said Bottles wonderingly.

"It's simple enough," replied Harry, his eyes

glowing. "We've destroyed the crooks' private mint; we've wrecked the plant where they manufacture their forged banknotes, and we've done other things, too. Until new machinery arrives, all those crooked enterprises are at a standstill."

"There is only one road by which they can come," said his father slowly. "There is one section of the road where it dips steeply, and on one side there is a terrible chasm—"

"Wait a minute, Dad," panted Harry. "I've got an idea."

THEY emerged from the secret passage in the wall far from the castle, carrying the necessary supplies for the task they contemplated. The blackness of the night helped them. Even if the guards were out—as was almost certain—they were not in any great danger.

With the silence of shadows, not daring to exchange a word, even in whispers, they padded across the country, leaving the great wall far behind, until at last they came to the place they sought.

It was a long stretch of the mountain road. It dipped steeply here, and the surface was smooth and well made. At the bottom of the dip, on the near side of the road, there was a strong iron fence—and beyond that fence a black abyss, with cruel rocks hundreds of feet below.

Harry and Bottles and Captain Tracey selected various sections of that strip of road that dipped towards the abyss—and then they set to work.

At last, within an hour of dawn, the work was accomplished, and the three daring conspirators, weary, their hands blistered, gathered together in the shelter of the neighbouring rocks.

They scrambled up the rocks, and gained a position high above the road. At a moment's notice they could retreat into the cover of some fir trees behind them. And from this point of vantage they could look down upon that stretch of road.

The lorries came—four of them—enormous six-wheelers of the most modern type, all of them heavily laden with great packing-cases.

The first lorry suddenly slewed slightly, and the silent watchers heard the startled shout of the men in the cab. The next moment the great vehicle was skidding helplessly; the alarmed shouts changed to yells of terror.

The second lorry commenced skidding—then the third, and the fourth!

Crash! The first lorry, skidding broadside, went hurtling into the iron fence—and the fence vanished. Over went the lorry, to be immediately followed by the other three.

And then—*crash-crash-crash-crash!* It was like a succession of explosions, dim and vague. The great lorries had gone hurtling down to the bottom of the abyss, to be smashed to utter wreckage, with all their loads.

"Well, that's that!" said Harry quietly. "Time we got back, Dad!"

And like shadows they slid through the night, reached the great wall, and entered the secret passage.

And the crooks, when they came to examine that stretch of road, found that it was coated, for a distance of several hundred yards, with a film of axle-grease!

With all his scores of men, with all his vast organisation, the Supreme Unknown could not win a single trick against that valiant little band which had sworn to wage war to the bitter end.

Another mighty tale of Terrorland, booked for the Mag. Look for the title *In the Crime Spider's Web*. The creepiest tale in this series yet.

OUR NUTSHELL COMPLETE NOVEL



Grand Surprise Tale of Two Speed-boat Boys' Strange Adventures in an Attempt on the Cross Channel Record!

The Garage H.Q.

"Oh, help! I thought something would have to go wrong!"

Bill Spencer left the steering-wheel and flung open the "engine hatch" with a jerk that nearly upset the boat. A moment before, the big eight-cylinder Rolls-Royce ex-car engine had been purring softly under full power, driving the speedboat across the gentle Channel swell at sixty knots. Now, after a splutter and a cough, the engine had stopped and the boat lay motionless.

"Well, better to-day than to-morrow," said Tom, his younger and more philosophic brother. To-morrow morning the great race started—the race across the Channel, for which the brothers had entered this gigantic boat. It started early in the morning, and Bill had suggested a final run this evening, to make sure all was well.

They had built the boat themselves, and put in it an engine from a fifteen-year-old car, that ran as well now as the day it left the works. It took a lot of petrol—but they had heaps of exhilarating fun out of swooping silently across the Channel's waves—for the engine was perfectly silent, like a well-bred car.

"Sounded like the carburettor," Tom said. "Better have it off quick, too, or it'll be dark before we get back."

It took them upwards of half-an-hour to get the carburettor off, cleaned and replaced. The trouble was located as a drop of water in the jet; but by the time they had the job done to their fancy, it was dark, and they had to replace it by feel. They had not thought to bring lights on this short trip from their home in Dover.

With the light wind and the flowing tide, they had, they knew, drifted a long way by now, up-channel, towards Deal. And then, just as Bill was about to swing the starting-handle and get the engine going again, they realised that they could not see the shore lights nor the lighthouses, and that several fog-signals were beating in the distance. They were enveloped in mist.

"What on earth are we going to do now?" inquired Tom. "I've no idea, even, what direction England lies in. I believe it's over there," he added, pointing towards France.

"No, it's..." began Bill; then stopped. Another sound had come to his ears; a motor-boat was approaching them fast. Even as they stared about, a vague shape swished by four fathoms away—they could just make out the one occupant of the craft.

"That's Boland—the only chap that might be able to lick us to-morrow," said Tom. "He seems to know the way somewhere. Let's follow."

Bill swung the engine-handle, and in a moment they had given chase. As their fast boat sped on, they made out the shape of the other boat ahead.

Throttle wide open, they sped in its wake. They were overtaking it slowly, Bill saw with satisfaction. They shouted, howling in unison till the driver turned. They waved, hoping to make him understand their difficulty.

Boland took no notice of them. Instead, he heaved something over the back of his boat. Surprised, the brothers pressed on, till Bill saw in their path what the man had thrown overboard. Something small and round, like a football. And with sudden fear at his heart he threw the wheel over, chining the boat till she almost capsized. Then he had throttled down to stop near the thing. Tom leaned over and stared at it.

"Gosh! It's metal! And those spikes... do you think it's...?"

"We'll see!" said Bill grimly. He started up the engine, and when they were well away he raised a spanner, took careful aim, and threw it.

Cr-a-a-ash! The mist was split by the sudden explosion and a gout of flame. The water leapt and rocked after the receding boat, and the brothers stared at each other, horrified!

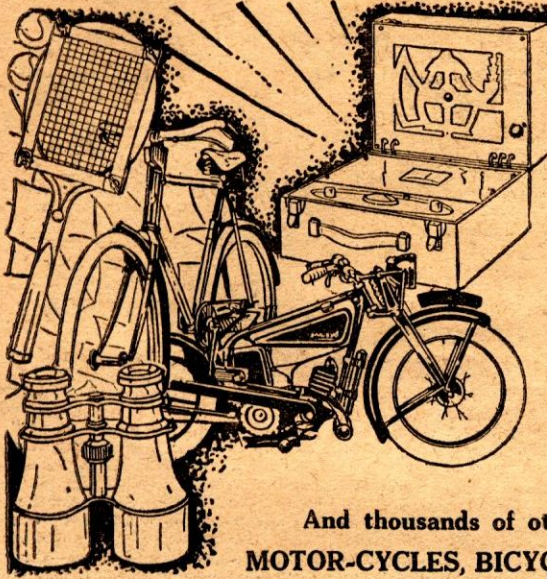
"It was! A mine... and he dropped it for us!" "He wants us out of the race!" Bill said.

"Though the prize-money doesn't seem to me worth

(Continued on page 35.)

FREE GIFTS FOR ALL!

Look Boys! Thousands of Valuable Prizes Must be Won for COLLECTING COUPONS. Start Now!



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TO qualify for one of these smashing gifts you simply have to collect coupons. The tenth set of prize coupons will be found on Page 35.

Four popular papers, one for every member of the family, contain prize coupons every week. IDEAS for Father, WEEK END NOVELS for Mother, BETTY'S PAPER for the younger women, BOYS' MAGAZINE for the Boys. Why not tell the members of your family about them, and all join together in pooling coupons for the big prizes?

This contest will continue for fifteen weeks. Watch particularly for special bonus weeks, when an increased number of coupons will be given.

Grand Prizes for Grown-up Members of the Family are included in the scheme. Full particulars in IDEAS and Town Talk, price 2d.

The First Prize will be awarded to the Reader who collects the Greatest Number of Coupons and the remainder of these Wonderful Gifts will then be awarded in turn to the Next Best in NUMBER. But Remember that EVERY READER who collects All the Coupons from only Three of the Papers mentioned—255 Coupons—is Guaranteed a Valuable Prize.

TURN TO PAGE 35 AND CUT OUT THE TENTH SET OF FREE GIFT COUPONS. TELL YOUR DAD, MOTHER, BROTHERS, SISTERS, AND FRIENDS THERE ARE COUPONS IN IDEAS, WEEK END NOVELS, AND BETTY'S PAPER ALSO.

THE RACING CROOK

(Continued from page 33).

killing for. He'll think he's done for us! Come on . . . we'll follow, and find out what his game is!"

He threw open the throttle, and the boat leapt forward again, following where the swirling foam showed them the other boat's trail. They moved fast, yet like wraiths of the night, for their engine would give no warning whatever of their approach.

Through the swirling mists lights became visible. "Land!" said Bill. "Those are the lights of a garage—the 'moons' they have on top of the pumps. See the word *petrol* across the light?" He closed the throttle completely. "Now whereabouts is there a garage so near the shore as this?"

"St. Margaret's Bay!" Tom whispered promptly. "The road's a hundred yards back from the sea wall, and the lights are facing the sea—that proves the garage is on the other side of the road."

"You know my methods . . ." grinned Bill, quoting from the immortal Sherlock. "Stout fella! Well, where will that other boat be?"

They peered ahead as their boat guided on under its own weight. Then they saw the sea wall, with the tide running high against it; and on it, silhouetted against the dark sky, a man. He was talking to someone in the shadow of the wall—obviously the man in the boat.

As they drew in, they heard the muttering of voices. Clearly, they had not been seen. And by skilful use of the rudder, Bill managed to manoeuvre the gliding boat to the other side of a groin that ran up to the wall, not three yards from where the man stood.

Now they could make out words.

"I met those Spencer kids, an' got rid of 'em," Boland was saying. "Now I can be sure there'll be no one near when I reach France to-morrow. You heard the bang?"

"Yeah, I heard," said the other. "We shall read in the papers to-morrow that another of those war mines has turned up again. Better wait here for the signal—boss's servin' juice to someone."

The two boys scarcely dared to breathe. There was no doubt, now, that Boland had tried to put them out of the race. And the mention of "the

boss"—it looked as though a gang were at work, just to win a race! The boys were mystified.

A moment later, while the man watched the garage, there came the sound of a car being driven away. Almost immediately, one of the petrol lights went out. "O.K.," said the man. "Come on." And the two of them moved off. The boat was obviously tethered.

"Gosh!" Bill breathed. "What next, Tom?"

Tom, who had spent many an hour fishing along this lonely stretch of coast, was the guide. "Across the field," he said.

They made their way across the field, keeping low and in the shadows. The men all went into a little hut beside the garage buildings.

"No one on guard, it seems," said Bill. They crept up among the pumps till they could peer through the glass of the single window. The hut was fitted as a bedroom for the garage mechanic, and the two men sat on the bed. There was no sign of the Boss previously mentioned.

Boland was talking. The boys knew he was the mechanic at this garage; but as they listened they were surprised to hear, from the mouth of the man in greasy overalls, the cultured voice of an educated man.

"Well, you know all the arrangements?" he said to the other—a man dressed in well-fitting clothes. "You'll go to Gris Nez, in France, by the first boat in the morning. You take up your residence as a holidaymaker at the Hotel Royale. I drop the stone when I win the race, beside the finishing-buoy; and then later, you take a swim, and pick it up. All clear?"

"Yes," said the other. "But it seems a lot of trouble, doesn't it?"

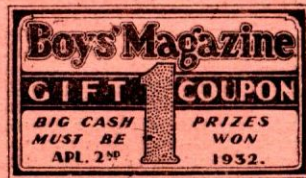
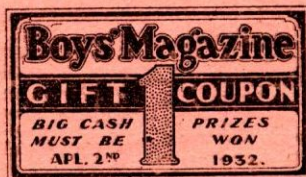
"Not for the Bedlington Diamond. Ever since we pinched it, three days ago, the cops have been watching every exit from the country like hawks. We've done a lot of work from here, but this is the last job; we're closing down when it's done. I wouldn't have called it worth blowing up those kids just to make sure no one was near enough to see me drop the stone—but they were the Boss's orders."

In his astonishment, Bill gasped; and his breath, spreading a film of vapour over the cold window glass,

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SAVE THESE COUPONS—FIVE MORE WILL BE GIVEN NEXT WEEK.

was his undoing. The men in the room saw it, and came pelting out.

Bill grabbed Tom and pushed him away. "I'll stay and keep 'em occupied," he hissed. "You find a 'phone, and fetch the police."

Tom was off like a shot. He skirted the petrol pumps silently, to the other side of the garage.

A few yards down, almost next door to the garage, he saw a bungalow with telephone wires running to it. Through the uncurtained window he could see a man sitting before a typewriter. An author probably.

He knocked at the door, and the use of the telephone was freely granted by the man at the typewriter—a harmless-looking fellow in horn-rimmed spectacles. He was ushered into a side room, and the door was closed on him.

"Police—quick!" he said into the receiver in an urgent whisper. "He waited a moment, till he heard the connection made, then said: 'That the police, Folkestone? I want...'"

A large hand was whipped over his mouth, and an arm like steel held his arms. As he dropped the receiver, the bespectacled "writer" went on into the mouthpiece: "... to speak to the inspector, please. Will you get him? My name is Smith."

And while the policeman went on his errand, the man thrust a handkerchief into Tom's mouth, still holding his arms firmly. Then he took up the receiver, and when the inspector came, gave him particulars of a dog he said he had lost.

That done, he slammed down the receiver and carried Tom bodily out, across the road, and to the hut by the garage.

"Here's one of those Spencer kids," said the captor of Tom. "I was typing out final instructions for you two, when he asked to use my 'phone, and called the police." Hullo— His eyes lighted on Bill, who had been captured and now stood bound in the room—so you get the other one!"

The Race.

"A pretty pair," remarked the harmless-looking, bespectacled man. "Boland, you bungled your job."

"Boss, I'm sorry," quavered Boland, and his voice showed his fear of the other. "I couldn't...."

"You need be sorry!" snarled the Boss. "You let on 'a mine, and probably have all the coast-guards about our ears, and you bungle your job. It's lucky we're clearing out to-night!"

Boland subsided, and the Boss turned to the two boys, now bound. "These two can stay here," he said. "The fuse will be set to start the petrol pumps blazing at exactly the same hour as the race starts—ten a.m.—and these two will be here!"

The alarm clock hanging to the bedrail said 1 a.m. when the crooks went out. The two boys were left there, bound and gagged firmly.

Hours passed. They struggled more and more wearily, as their limbs became more cramped. The fumes tickled away on the little clock—and at eight-thirty Bill woke from a dazed sleep to find that he could slide his hands up and down a little on the chair-back to which they were tied.

In desperation he worked, wrenching and tugging, and at last he had a free hand. He was about to tear the other hand loose—then he sank quiet—the Boss and his accomplice entered the room.

"They're still safe," said the Boss. "Boland will be getting ready for the race now. The fuse is set for ten—come on, we've got to clear things up, and get the rest of the stuff into the car."

They went out, and as soon as they were gone Bill tore his hands free. In a moment he had himself and Tom free of the bonds and gags.

They stole to the window, and looked out. The two men were just climbing down through a man-hole. It was the top of one of the huge tanks that fed the petrol-pumps from underground. This one was obviously disused, and was an admirable hiding-place.

Then Bill grinned as he noticed the car, with engine already running.

"Here's where their bright ideas are going to serve us a turn," he said. "He went out of the hut, Tom on his heels. 'When I give the word,' he whispered, 'you shove that cover down.'"

He climbed quietly into the car, pushed in the gear, then yelled: "Now!" And as the cover slammed down, he sent the car leaping forward till one of its front wheels, with half-a-ton of engine over it, held the cover down.

"We can't stop to find the fuse," he said, "but they'll be safe down there. Come on—back to the boat!"

The boat was where they had left it. Boland had taken away his own in the dark, so it had not been seen. It started up at the first flick of the handle, then they were away toward Dover.

The tanks were nearly empty, and when they went to the great petrol float that had been anchored in the middle of the harbour for the use of competitors, the rest were lined up to start. The gun went as Bill was screwing back the cap of the tank—then they were away, a hundred yards behind the rest.

But slowly and surely they overhauled them, till, a mile out from Cap Gris Nez, they and Boland were the only two in the race.

It would be a close finish, Bill saw. Boland had recognised them, and his hate-filled face was turned back to them, while he coaxed every ounce of speed out of his special marine engine. But it hadn't the speed of the Rolls-Royce, and he knew it.

His only chance, now, was to try and make a gateway after he had dropped the stone. And with bare yards separating them from the finishing buoy, Bill and Tom gave him their wake.

Next moment they were round the buoy—winners! And turning in triumph, Bill saw Boland's hand go into his pocket, to come out and reach over the water, with a white bundle in it!

The Diamond! In a moment Bill had flung himself on to the side of the boat, tipping it while he whipped the wheel round. The stern threw itself around the nose, till she was facing the other way—then she stormed forward to run alongside Boland's boat even as he dropped the packet.

The man gave a yell of rage as the little bundle fell into the bottom of the brothers' boat. He tried to turn about and steer out to sea again—but Bill was in his path, and he was forced to steer inshore. He would not risk a smash.

Bill "rode his tail" till the boat ran aground. And in a moment Boland was surrounded, and Bill had got hold of a sergeant of Gendarmes. The man was taken in charge, and, at Bill's dictation, a message flashed over the cables to the police at Dover, telling of the two crooks who, probably, were still roasting in the oven-heat of the underground tank. The fire had, in fact, passed over their heads, and they, along with Boland and the "holiday-maker at the Hotel Royale, lived to pay a stiff penalty for their misdeeds.