

GRAND GIFTS FOR ALL BOYS INSIDE

Boys' 2D Magazine

EVERY SATURDAY



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SNAPSHOT
CARDS

of
TEST OUR HEROES

COLLECT THESE CARDS AND
EXCHANGE THEM FOR THE
GREAT NEW GAME 'ZAT

PAL OF THE MAMMOTHS! GRIPPING YARN OF PREHISTORIC MONSTERS AND WONDERS WITHIN

VOL. XXI—No. 570—Feb. 4, 1933

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H. BUTCLIFFE.

FREE! 3 MORE SEPIA 'ZAT CARDS NEXT WEEK.

AND DON'T MISS

THE GET-'EM- ALIVE SHERIFF!

When You're Blue, With Nothing To Do, Remember There's a Pal Who Wants to Hear from You.—THE EDITOR, 200, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1. Drop Him a Line.



MY DEAR CHUMS,
At the height of the soccer season there is one topic of conversation among sportsmen just now—CRICKET! This strangely contradictory situation has, of course, arisen through the great battle for the Ashes now being waged between the English and Australian test teams at the other side of the world.

That's why our natty sepia snapshot cards of Famous Test Players are going to cause such a sensation. Chaps, you've got three of them in this number. Dandies, aren't they? But nothing like the

Full-size Set of 'Zat Cards

I will send you when you have collected a complete team of eleven different players, including one wicket-keeper.

The game of 'ZAT is played by four people, so if you want to own one of these ripping games immediately, you can do so by pooling your miniature cards with three chums and exchanging the duplicates with other fellows. Then send up the complete set to me, and I'll exchange them right away for a 'ZAT game complete with rules.

Get all your pals to buy *Boys' Magazine* each week and help you to be first in the field for one of these topping gifts.

Three More Miniature 'Zat Cards

will be tucked inside next week's *Boys' Mag.* And there's a *Bumper Programme* of first-rate yarns.

How do you like Pal of the Monsters, who makes his bow in this issue? As thrilling as he is unusual, eh? Well, you'll not be disappointed in his latest exploits next week. But the Big Thrill is provided by JOHN HUNTER, the most famous boys' author. He has just returned from a visit to the Far West, and from old records has written a gripping, complete cowboy yarn featuring

The Get-'em-alive Sheriff!

Out of the blue comes Two-Gun Rafferty to Starlight City, that northerly, wild Cowntown ruled by lawless men. The place is terrorised by the Phantom, a dreadful figure of menace. But there are lesser villains such as Gonzano, the quickshot Mexican Gunman. He's swift as lightning on the draw, but Rafferty is lightning—greased! The account of the Get-'em-alive Sheriff's duel with Gonzano is one of the most thrilling things I have ever read.

Startling things happen to Hoppy Travers, the Boy Millionaire. A crooked professor kidnaps him and alters his appearance so effectively that even

Hector Soames, Hoppy's valet, doesn't know him! Then the professor gets another toy to pose as Hoppy and enjoy his millions. But Hoppy isn't so easily beaten. How he proves his identity is told in the riotously funny yarn, entitled

Mixed Doubles

which appears in our paper next week.

Then there's "The Leo Pirates." This mighty serial tale is reaching its white-hot conclusion. But there are some breathless happenings yet. You'll read some of them next week.

Though cricket is so much in the limelight just now, owing to the Test games and our Sepia 1/2 at Card Portraits, football has not been forgotten. One of our most popular writers is at present busily engaged on a gigantic New Series of Footer Tales that hit the high spots for thrills. He tells me this is the biggest football idea he has ever had. Meanwhile, you are to have next week the final yarn of the *Monster of Marston Rovers*, entitled

The Pyramid of Peril.

Here the grim plotting of Professor Xerxes Mirapolis, the infamous Greek, reaches its dreadful culmination! But when the treasure is in his grasp a startling thing happens. The *Mummy of Marston* plays an amazing part in this denouement.

Oh, and I mustn't forget to mention the *Boys of St. Giddy's*. Those great story favourites come back in one of the most amusing yarns of the school of shocks and surprises ever told. In

The Schoolboy Lawyers

you will find them with a new craze. Philip Brooke of the *Remove* wants to be a barrister when he grows up and begins to practise that fascinating craft at St. Giddy's. Johnny Gee & Co., scenting fun, enter into the spirit of it all, and so The St. Giddy's Court of Summary Jurisdiction and Civil Process comes into being. The court is held in the *Remove* Form-room and all manner of prisoners are brought forward. Fatty Slocum is charged with entering enclosed premises to steal tuck! Wilkinson Minor is charged with bowling a hoop in the quadrangle without a rear-light; Cadman for committing assault and battery—and many more laughable cases are fought out by the bewigged schoolboys amid scenes of wild excitement. But there's a strong dramatic plot in the yarn, too. You'll enjoy every word of it.

More news next week.

Your sincere friend,
THE EDITOR.

NIGHTMARE ADVENTURES IN A LAND OF PREHISTORIC MONSTERS.
 Meet the First Boy in the World. Pal will Capture Your Imagination with his
 Strange, Untutored Ways. Unusual Thrills in this Grand Yarn of a Lost
 World. Quite Complete.



PAL of the MAMMOTHS

Out of the Crevasse.

BOO-OOM! The roar of a distant avalanche echoed in the mountains. Duke Humphreys hurled himself forward with renewed vigour, and the powdery snow hissed beneath his skis as he glided down the precipitous, craggy slopes, bent almost double and trailing his stick behind him. "Come on, Prof!" he yelled, without looking back. "Keep your feet! We don't want to get caught by that!"

There was no reply; and Duke instinctively slowed himself up with a skilful telemark that

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

ploughed a deep S in the snow. He glanced back over one broad shoulder, and then burst into an involuntary chuckle.

A pair of wildly kicking legs, brandishing enormous skis, was the only sign of his companion! Professor Lucien Temeraire had taken another header!

The learned scientist was the expert of the little party, consisting of Duke, a Yankee cinematograph operator called Hank Craven and his Japanese partner, Yoshi Korikoru, which was exploring the lost Albino Mountains in a remote part of Siberia in search of the vast hoards of mammoth-ivory rumoured to be preserved in the frozen swamps. Although there was nothing the little Frenchman did not know about geology, anthropology and all the other "Ologies," his legs were not so sound as his head. But his heart was lion-like, and Duke—a first-class young athlete, a crack shot and a ski-champion—hurried back at once to extricate him.

The Professor's mild, round, bespectacled face and shining bald head were soon brought to light. "*Tiens! tiens! tiens!*" he spluttered. "Zis skiing seems contrary to ze established laws of dynamics!" He struggled to rise—no easy feat on skis. "*Merci*. You need not help me." He put all his weight on one leg, which instantly crashed through the snow-crust, spilling him on his face. "*Morbleu!* I slip down a 'ole!"

"Don't struggle!" Suddenly tense, Duke sprang forward. "You're over a crevasse!" His keen eyes had seen a gaping hole beneath the snow displaced by Temeraire's contortions. Rapidly he made a bridge over it with his skis, and, stooping, lifted the Professor bodily by the shoulders. "Place your skis like mine," he commanded tersely. "You were within an inch of being entombed! Look!"

He pointed with a ski-stick, and Temeraire, peering between his outstretched legs, saw the snow avalanching down an abysmal pit with walls of polished ice.

The Professor started—but not with horror at his own narrow escape. "Someone else has not been so lucky," he observed, in a sombre tone; and Duke, staring down the treacherous crevasse, saw a huddled fur-clad shape lying in a heap at the bottom.

"Good heavens! It's a man!" he gasped. "Is he dead?" He unhitched the coil of mountaineering rope he always carried at his belt. "It's almost impossible, but—"

"Zere is only one way!" said the Professor, laying a hand on his arm. "You must lower me down!"

"You?" Duke stared. "No, it's too dangerous." "Zen we cannot leave him zere, *certainement!*" declared Temeraire, decisively. "Besides, I have always wanted to see inside a crevasse!" He attached the rope to his belt, and kicked off his skis. "Lower me gently!"

Duke realised that there was no arguing with the Professor, who simply did not know the name of fear; so, having secured the rope round all four skis, he lowered him slowly into the crevasse. Temeraire touched bottom, and was about to stoop over the prostrate man when he suddenly uttered a gasp of incredulous amazement.

Through the solid walls of blue ice that surrounded him he could see dim, gigantic shapes with monstrous, curling tusks and elephantine trunks! Mammoths!

As his eyes grew accustomed to the gloom of the crevasse, he realised that it was packed with the frozen monsters of the Ice Age. It was a mammoths' graveyard. The wild rumours which had lured them to this icy wilderness were sober fact. Herds of the prehistoric titans were preserved in their entirety; the ivory alone was worth a king's ransom!

Temeraire found his tongue with difficulty.

"Duke!" he bellowed wildly. "Eet is a mammoth's cemetery! Zere is a fortune here!"

But humanity's claims came before those of science; the Professor bent over the still figure at his feet. Duke hauled at the rope, and, after some anxious minutes, the little Frenchman was lifted out with a limp form hanging over one shoulder.

"He breathes!" he announced triumphantly.

Tenderly they laid the unconscious man out on the snow, and Duke forced a few drops of brandy between his bearded lips. A faint flush stole into the haggard cheeks. Presently he opened his eyes—mad, staring eyes—and muttered some words in Russian.

Duke shook him by the shoulder. "Who are you?" he cried. "What is your name? Can you speak French—English—?"

"English!" The word broke from the pallid lips with eager hope. "Ah, they are good, the English! They do not condemn poor wretches to exile in a frozen hell!"

"I believe he is an escaped convict from one of the penal settlements!" announced the boy.

At the word "convict" the man lifted his head.

"Yes," he whispered. "I was convicted—many years ago!" He brushed his hand across his lined brow, with an effort of memory. "I escaped—I wandered in these cruel mountains for months, until I fell down the crevasse. And I have seen things!" A strong shudder shook him.

"Seen things? What things?" demanded Duke, eagerly.

"I have seen—a dragon!" The wretch pointed vaguely at a distant, cone-shaped peak of the Albino Mountains. It looked like an extinct volcano. "Fire and smoke! It breathed forth fire and smoke! And I saw an elephant!" A haunted look came into his roving eyes. "A huge, nightmare elephant. It disappeared. It sank slowly—slowly through the ground!"

"He's mad," whispered Duke; but Temeraire's eyes were gleaming with suppressed excitement. "An elephant?" he repeated. "*Sacré nom*, why not? Haven't we come all zis way to find elephants?"

"Mammoths," corrected Duke, "and dead ones at that. Dead for twenty thousand years or more!"

"Who knows?" murmured Temeraire, and suddenly he gripped the Russian's shoulders. "What else have you seen? What else?"

"This." The convict fumbled in his pocket, and produced the broken blade of some bone implement.

"After I saw the elephant disappear—vanish, I tell you, like mist!—*this* was thrown at me."

The Professor snatched the weapon and hungrily devoured it with his eyes.

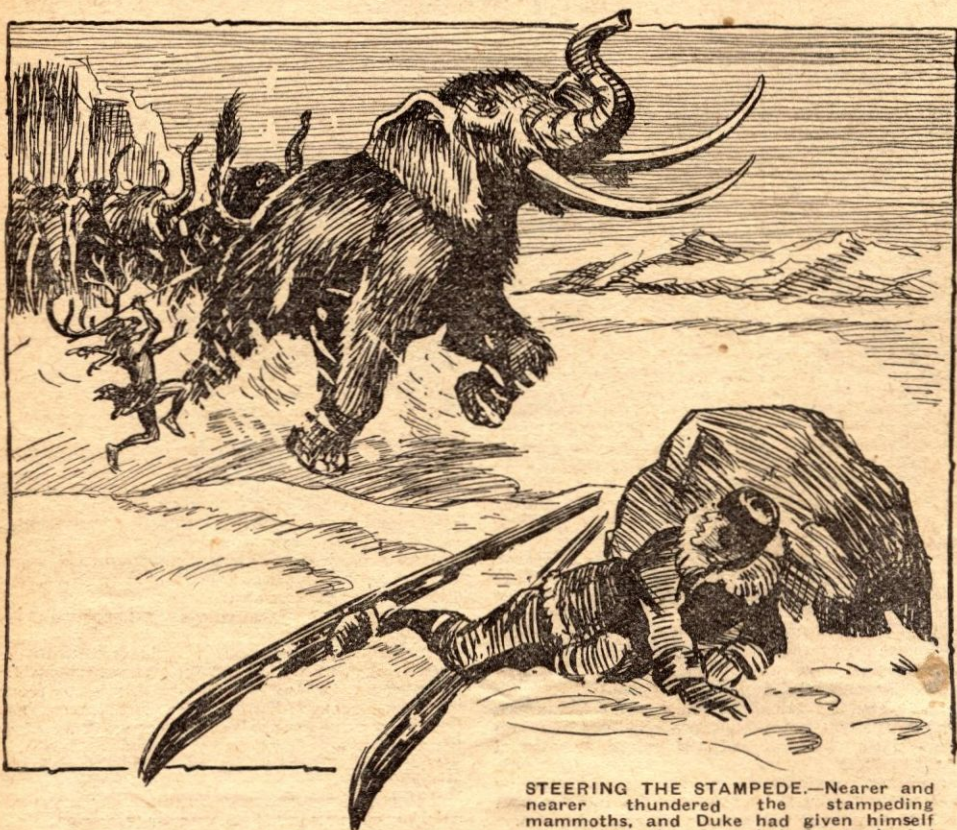
"Duke, I believe zis man has seen a living mammoth and zis is a prehistoric blade. We are on ze brink of a great discovery!"

Duke was about to laugh at the fantastic suggestion when a deep booming sound—perilously near—made him leap to his feet.

"Put on your skis!" he yelled. "There's an avalanche coming!"

Feverishly they strapped on their skis. Temeraire, went shooting off downhill, and Duke, pausing a moment to fling the unconscious convict across his shoulders, followed in a flash. The avalanche raced after them, a roaring landslip of snow and ice and boulders and uprooted trees.

Duke saw the little Frenchman whirl round a cliff, and was stooping for the turn when suddenly a colossal weight struck him full in the back. He went sprawling on his face. The fall saved his life. Great rocks and tree-trunks went bounding over the place where he lay buried beneath the snow.



STEERING THE STAMPEDE.—Nearer and nearer thundered the stampeding mammoths, and Duke had given himself up for lost when the whole herd wheeled in fright from a weird, dancing figure.

When, after frenzied exertions, he struggled out, the first sight that met his eyes was the Russian convict. A boulder had killed him.

"Poor fellow," murmured Duke—and then he remembered Temeraire. As if the thought had recalled him, the little Frenchman appeared from behind a rock a little further down. He paused to watch the avalanche thundering on below him, and then toiled back uphill towards Duke. He said nothing as the boy pointed out the inanimate form of the Russian, but shook his head sadly. Then suddenly he glanced up the mountain, and his expression changed.

"*Sacré nom!*" he gasped. "Ze crevasse is hidden! We shall nevair find ze mammoths again!"

The avalanche had altered the whole face of the mountain, as if a giant hand had blotted it out to paint an entirely new scene. The grave of the mammoths—discovered by the merest chance—was now buried, perhaps hundreds of feet, under the snow. They had found a mine of priceless ivory—only to lose it again!

The Track of the Mammoth.

"MILLIONS of dollars' worth of ivory! And you say you don't know where it is?" Craven, the big Yankee cinematograph operator, glanced meaningly across at Yoshi Kori-koru, his little partner in the Western-Oriental Film Syndicate. "D'ya hear that, Yosh? These guys have let a fortune slip through their fingers!"

"You must be patient, *mon ami*," said Professor Temeraire. He and Duke had just returned to their camp by the bank of the frozen stream. The Samoyed natives—six squat, flat-faced hunters—looked on as impassively as the huskies grouped round the sledges. "What does ze ivory matter? Zat poor Russian told us of stranger zings. He has seen a living mammoth! Craven, we might even be on ze track of Pleistocene Man!"

Craven gave a scornful snort. "You and ya Plasticene man!" he jeered rudely. "That Russian must have been plumb crazy! Didn't you say he saw a dragon, or something? Bah! It's ivory we're after—not fairy tales!" The Yankee stumped off to his reindeer-skin tent, followed by the silent and somewhat sinister Jap.

It was not the first time there had been friction in the camp. Craven, who was jealous of Duke and despised the Professor, resented all this "blamed science"—there was no money in it, and the almighty dollar ruled all his thoughts.

Duke and Temeraire went into their tent, and discussed the day's events far into the night. At last they crawled into their sleeping-bags, and it was not long before the young Englishman was fast asleep. His dreams were full of great, hairy mammoths and ape-like men of some former age. He imagined a thumbless hand reaching for his throat, and a similar face pressed into his; suddenly he felt hot breath

on his cheek, and, rising to push away the phantom, his hand encountered a wet muzzle.

There was a savage snarl—and Duke was half out of his bag in a flash. A great beast, whose paws were planted on his chest, started back with another hiss. At the same time the air was alive with demoniacal howls.

"Wolves, by thunder!" In an instant Duke had drawn his revolver. There were three gaunt Siberian wolves circling round him in the tent. A horde of grey shapes hovered outside the entrance in the pale light of dawn, which was just stealing over the icy mirror of the stream.

Crack! Duke's revolver spat, and one lean beast rolled over in the death agony. Another sprang, to meet the same fate. The third, cowed by the explosions, darted towards the rest of the pack storming the entrance. Duke followed, and blazed away at the howling beasts, which scattered before the hail of lead.

Flinging down his empty revolver, he dragged another from its holster—but there was no need. Unused to gunfire, the baffled wolves had fled in terror across the river. Then, peering out through the flaps, Duke gasped with amazement. The whole camp had disappeared. Tents, sledges, dogs, men—all were gone! His own frail shelter was the only one left in that silent wilderness of snow and ice!

"Temeraire!" Bewildered, he turned to look for his companion, and found that the tent was empty. Then a note pinned to his sleeping bag caught his eye. Ripping it off, he read:

I have gone exploring. Perhaps I shall find the mammoths. Shall be back before nightfall.

TEMERAIRE.

Not a word about the rest of the camp!

Gradually the truth dawned on Duke's numbed brain. He could not believe that Temeraire had deserted him—but he was not so sure of Craven and Yoshi. Perhaps they had seen the enthusiastic Frenchman steal off in the early dawn, and, fearing that he would find the hidden ivory before them, had broken camp and deliberately abandoned Duke.

Half-an-hour later, armed with a brace of revolvers and provisions for the day, he was gliding on his skis in the direction of the distant Albino Mountains. It was quite easy to follow Temeraire, for he had taken a luge or one-man sled with him, and it left two distinct trails over the hard snow. As for the larger tracks of the big party, they wound off towards a belt of firs, where they disappeared.

Duke ski-ed rapidly along over the level snow for two hours. The ground began to rise, and willow-scrub gave place to firs and sparse vegetation. At last the incline forced Duke to remove his skis, and, just as he was straightening up to carry them on his shoulder, a vast shadow fell across the mountain path ahead of him. It was as if a section of the mountainside had dislodged itself and taken on life. It swung clumsily round, to march on ahead with a curiously swaying gait.

A mammoth! Duke caught his breath; for a few dizzy moments he wondered if the Siberian wilderness had turned his brain. Almost unconsciously he followed this unbelievable relic of prehistoric times as it toiled up the narrow, twisting path. Fifteen feet high, clad in long ginger hair and armed with immense curving tusks, it filled his heart with the terror of the unknown.

There, in the silence of those eternal mountains, the monsters of the Ice Age lingered on in ignorance of the passage of time.

For three hours Duke hung on the trail of the plodding leviathan, as it tortuously mounted the heights. They were now in the heart of the range.

Still the mammoth toiled up and up, higher and higher—to what strange lair?

Suddenly the mammoth stopped on what seemed to be the edge of a precipice or ravine, ringed by the glittering peaks. Raising its hairy trunk, it trumpeted loudly—three times. The weird, primordial call re-echoed in the mountains.

Duke, sick with fear and yet keenly curious, watched it sink slowly—slowly from sight.

Mastering his terror, Duke sprang up and raced to the spot. He halted just in time to prevent himself shooting over the brink. Below him was the mammoth, squatting on its hind quarters, and sliding like some colossal living avalanche down an ice-smooth slope!

Duke saw that it was a frozen fall, which in the brief Siberian summer must have cascaded thunderously down into the dim valley. And that valley! It was alive with mammoths! A great herd of the prehistoric monsters was gathered there in silent conclave!

With starting eyes Duke watched the mammoth gathering speed down the strange entrance to its secret lair. He remembered the Professor telling him that playful elephants in Africa enjoy a slide down the muddy banks of a river; here was the prehistoric origin of that elephantine sport!

Then Duke, gazing into the valley as the mammoth sailed ponderously among its trumpeting companions, gave a sudden start. Amidst the circle stood a comical little figure—Professor Lucien Temeraire!

He was not cowering away in terror from his enormous associates. Far from it! With a calmness that concealed his scientific excitement, he was busily taking notes in a little book. While the gigantic kings of the snow, with the quiet curiosity of the elephant tribe, were staring at him through the matted hair that hung round their little red eyes, he was jotting down data as fast as he could.

Feverishly Duke began to fasten on his skis. He had some wild idea of plunging down that icy slope to drag the Professor from danger. But, just as he had fixed the last binding, a familiar voice out the frosty air behind him.

"Say, buddy, d'you wanna be in the pickter too? Trying to get in first again, eh?"

He wheeled round, to find Craven and Yoshi standing at his elbow. The Yankee was armed with an automatic, and there was an ugly gleam in his eye as he jabbed the barrel into Duke's ribs.

Stampede!

"ARE you mad?" cried Duke. "Or just a crook?"

"Maybe I'm a crook," retorted the Yank grimly. "I jest took to the picture-making business to get at the ivory, see? You and the Prof. are coming to a sad end. Lost in Siberia! Too bad—but these things happen. We got our camp fixed somewhere else—the Samoyed boys are on our side—and we got the sledges to cart the stuff away!"

"If you can find it," said Duke contemptuously.

"Waal, boy, that remains to be seen. Any way, you ain't going to find it. Is he, Yosh?" He turned once more to the grinning Jap, and that movement of the head gave Duke his chance. He realised that he was in deadly peril from these treacherous partners. They were just a brace of crooks! Suddenly thrusting Craven aside with a blow of his hand, he leapt sheer off the brink of the precipice. His skis came down crack on the polished ice, and, as he bent to the impact, he shot off down the slope like a shell from a gun. A whiplash report split the air as Craven fired, but the bullet merely spun by his head.

The young explorer had picked out a smooth boulder half way down the track, and, hoping that

he could clear the mammoth herd by a powerful jump, he steered himself boldly for it.

His skis mounted the incline and, with a forceful shove of his sticks, he rose into the air like a swallow on the wing. Craven blazed away, trying to bring him down in full flight; but the Yankee's shots flew wide.

Coiled up in a ball, his skis clamped together and his sticks trailing out behind, Duke soared over the valley. It was a perfect jump, which would have broken any record for poise and speed in Switzerland or Norway. But length was deceptive in that white world, and, as he curved in the descent, Duke realised that he could not clear the herd. He was falling straight into their midst!

Before the mammoths could stampede, Duke planed down amongst them. His skis struck the broad back of a great bull mammoth, and for a moment the shock of collision threatened to ricochet him off. But Duke was practised in forced landings of all kinds, and, though the crash shook every breath out of his body, he gave to it and dug his fingers into shaggy fur.

The next moment he felt his living perch moving beneath him. The mammoth, terrified by the shots and the blow in the back, trumpeted shrilly and lurched away. Duke secured himself on the great beast's neck as he felt it gathering speed. Across the valley it raced on booming feet, and a chorus of screams tore the air as

the other mammoths took the alarm and bundled after in cumbersome haste. In a flash the whole colossal herd was stampeding!

Professor Temeraire, who had watched the magical appearance of his friend with bulging eyes, sprang to one side as the bellowing monsters thudded past him.

The leading mammoth, with Duke still clinging to its matted mane, made straight for a pass in the mountains—the exit from the secret valley. It crashed through the firs, smashing down snow-laden branches with its heaving shoulders, and it was only by a miracle that Duke was not swept off. When he dared to look up again he found they were in a long

narrow pass between walls of blue and gleaming ice. His strange mount went careering madly along, blind with terror, and was now beginning to make frenzied efforts to shake off its mysterious rider. Though he grabbed handfuls of tough hair Duke knew that he could not hang on for long.

Rousing himself from his coma, he resolved on a desperate course. "It's that or nothing!" he muttered between set teeth, and dragged one of his revolvers from its holster.

Reaching round the great rearing head, he thrust the barrel deep into one ear and pressed the trigger. The crash of the explosion was lost in the echoing din that filled the gorge. Duke fired again and again, emptying the chambers into the mammoth's brain,

but the plunging stride was unchecked. Then, just as he was fearing that no bullet could reach that tiny brain locked in its bony cell, he found himself suddenly catapulted through the air like a stone. The mammoth had stumbled to its knees, and was rocking slowly over to one side, a stricken leviathan. But Duke saw nothing of that.

He had fallen on his feet, with the instinct of a trained ski-er, and was glissading onwards down the gorge at thirty or forty miles per hour!

Behind him raged the stampeding herd. They swept over the body of their fallen mate, and crashed and thundered and trumpeted through the pass like an invading army.

Suddenly Duke gave a shout of triumph and relief. He had burst out of the gorge on to a rolling expanse of virgin snowfields—a vast stretch of open country between the mountains. No longer trapped in that pass, he felt himself a match for any mammoth. The herd could never overtake his lightning skis.

But his triumph was short-lived. As he bent double to increase his speed, one ski turned its edge



A SIMIAN GUNMAN.—Desperately Pal kicked out and gripped the rifle with his toes, one talon closing round the trigger, while he pointed the muzzle at the startled Yank.

on a jutting rock half hidden in the snow. The next instant he was somersaulting over and over and over, to come to a shattering rest against a boulder. His leg was twisted under him by the fall, and when he struggled to rise a stab of agonising pain made him sink back groaning. And the mammoths were even now storming out of the pass, their great shaggy bodies jostling together, their tusks tossing in the air. They were bearing straight down on him, a solid phalanx weighing hundreds of tons!

Duke gave himself up for lost. Lying helpless in the snow, he stared with fascinated eyes at the vast herd thundering towards him. In another moment he would be smashed to a pulp beneath their colossal hoofs.

Then abruptly, when they were within a few yards of him, the leading mammoths made a terrific swerve. Those in the rear tried to force them on, but something drove them irresistibly out of the straight, and the whole herd wheeled. It was like a cavalry manoeuvre on a gigantic scale.

Duke propped himself up to see what had alarmed them—and blinked in sheer disbelief.

A weird figure had sprung from behind a rock and was dancing a fantastic dance to an accompaniment of uncouth noises. Its huge, antlered head, like that of a reindeer, was disproportionately large in comparison with its slim, hairy, ape-like body. In one simian hand it gripped a javelin, which it suddenly hurled at a fleeing mammoth. Duke remembered the wild tales of the Russian; this semi-human beast had not figured in them, yet it might be some hitherto unknown species dating back to the Ice Age.

The mammoths were obviously terrified of its queer, jiggling dance, and were fleeing in headlong panic across the snowfields. Satisfied with its victory the creature approached Duke, who fumbled for his second revolver. But the apparition plainly meant him no harm. Standing over him it suddenly raised a hairy hand and ripped the reindeer mask from its shoulders—disclosing a face beneath.

A face—but hardly a human one! A low, retreating brow, an ape-like jaw, close ginger hair fringing its cheeks and thickening into a heavy mane round the neck, pointed ears and little, red, deep-sunken eyes. The expression was at first one of simple curiosity, but presently it changed to a broad, childish smile as the strange creature pointed derisively after the mammoths which it had routed.

A "Pal" from the Past.

THAT smile reassured Duke. He held out his hand for assistance, and his rescuer, understanding at once, gripped it in long, powerful fingers and hauled him to his feet.

"Thanks," he said, although he knew that his words could mean nothing to this child of the snows. "You came in the nick of time. I wonder what you are—man or monkey?"

He looked keenly at the stranger, and saw that, in spite of his long and immensely powerful arms, he was slightly built. Probably a boy of his strange tribe. He was dressed in a few skins, but the thick hair with which he was covered protected him from the cold. He carried himself with a stoop, as if he used his hands as often as his feet, while his toes were prehensile—almost like fingers.

The savage returned his scrutiny with interest. He ran his hand up and down Duke's sleeve as if he could not decide whether it was hair or clothing, and then pointed at his skis with a puzzled grin. He evidently thought Duke had enormous wooden feet!

Suddenly a ringing shout made them both start. They swung round and saw a small form shoot out of the pass and come careering over the snow towards them. It was Temeraire, following on his luge!

In another instant he had joined them. As he sprang up off the luge, he was about to say something to Duke, when his eye fell on the stranger and he stood petrified.

"Sorry I can't introduce you," grinned Duke. "This gentleman saved me from the mammoths."

Professor Temeraire did not answer. He stared fixedly at the strange being, and then slowly put out his trembling hands and let them rove over the shaggy, unkempt head.

"Is eet possible?" he whispered. "Yes, ze primitive skull! Ze ridged brow!" He turned exultantly to Duke. "Zis is no savage of our modern world!" he exclaimed. "Zis is a reindeer-hunter

from ze Ice Age! Duke, you have discovered ze first living specimen of Palæolithic Man!"

"We'd better call him Pal, then," remarked Duke cheerily. "A Pal from the Past, you know!"

The primitive had suffered Temeraire's examination with good-humour. Now, feeling it was his turn, he neatly whipped off the Professor's spectacles and put them to his eyes. His expression, as he saw his two new friends grow suddenly large and vague through the distorting lenses, was ludicrous. He dropped the glasses with a guttural expression of alarm.

But Temeraire didn't care. "Craven can keep ze ivory—if he can find it!" he announced jubilantly, as he retrieved his specs. "He tried to bump me off, so I left—a little 'zriedly—on ze luge. But who wants ivory, when zere are live mammoths, and prehistoric men, and—"

"I say! What's that?" Duke was pointing to a distant range. They followed the direction of his finger, and saw the cone-shaped peak which the Russian had pointed out the day before. A thin spiral of smoke was rising from its crater.

An active volcano in that snowy region was strange enough to make the Professor stare, but they were not prepared for the effect it had on Pal. The boy gave a startled gasp, and then, shaking all over with horror, started babbling in some barbarous tongue.

"He can speak!" exclaimed the Professor. "Bon! Zen I can teach him to understand English—in time! What is ze matter, Pal?" He seized the shuddering boy's arm, and pointed towards the smoking crater. "That terrifies you, *hein?*"

Pal nodded his head, understanding the sense if not the words; and then, snatching one of Duke's ski-sticks, began to trace some design in the snow. The two civilized men gathered round their primitive friend in curiosity.

"He can draw!" gasped Duke. "It's a picture of—"

"A dragon!" The words burst from Temeraire's lips as the boy put the finishing touches to his crude picture. Rough though it was, it bore a distinct resemblance to the mythological monster that St. George was said to have slain in the old legend.

Having completed his work, Pal pointed to his own mouth and then blew out his cheeks and deflated them with an explosive sound.

Temeraire broke into a chuckle. "I see what he means!" he cried. "Ze dragon breathing smoke and flames! It must be one of ze superstitions of his people, to account for ze volcano!"

"I'm not so sure," said Duke gravely. "That Russian said he *saw* a dragon!"

"Impossible!" declared the Professor. "Mammoth, yes, but dragons are not science. Zey are fairy-tales!" Nevertheless, he relapsed into a thoughtful silence.

"I'm ready to believe anything in this country," said Duke, "but I reckon we've had enough for one day. Let's take Pal back with us to the tent. Tomorrow we'll look for the crevasse again; I'm not going to let those scoundrels Craven and Yoshi find the ivory!"

The Professor agreed to the suggestion; and, though Pal seemed at first a little reluctant to accompany them, he changed his mind when presented with a piece of cheese from Duke's rucksack. Munching it with surprised relish, he hopefully followed the strange men who could produce such delicious food as if by magic. Once or twice he glanced fearfully back at the distant crater, which had ceased to spout smoke, but he soon forgot his dread in curiosity at Duke's skis, and delight in the Professor's luge. He insisted first on riding on this, and then cheerfully dragged it along with the Professor mounted on it.

At last, by a long, roundabout route, they reached the lonely tent by the side of the stream—and Duke for one was not sorry to see it still there. He had half expected Craven and Co. to swoop down and carry off their last remaining stores. Fortunately for them, however, the Yankee and his party were busily searching the track of the avalanche for the lost crevasse.

While Duke busied himself with lighting a fire to

primitive could make nothing of it. He doubled his chin to examine his chest, peered anxiously at his new friends and gabbled some gibberish. After a long time, however, he grasped the fact that these were their names, and, tapping his own chest, made a sound which it was impossible for a civilized tongue to pronounce!

"Zat's no good!" exclaimed the Professor. "We must christen you Pal." He tapped the boy's chest



CRASHED IN THE CREVASSE!—There was a tremendous splitting sound, and the hind quarters of the charging monster vanished through the snow.

cook supper, Temeraire got out the gramophone and put on a lively dance record.

Pal, who had been wandering round, fingering the reindeer-skin tent, picking up cooking utensils, touching and handling every wonderful, incomprehensible thing he saw, with a kind of pleased timidity, suddenly stiffened as the jazz tune floated out from the sound-box. At first he looked all round to see where it came from; then he peered so close to the whirling record that it grazed his nose and sent him skipping back; and finally, curiosity forgotten in the primitive urge to dance, he began jiggling up and down with the weird, spasmodic movements of a savage.

Watched by the thoughtful Professor, he worked himself up into a frenzy of rhythm. He danced with his whole body. His feet tapped the ground, his arms jerked up and down, he wriggled his hips and shoulders. Suddenly, whirling round like a teetotum, he struck the gramophone and overturned it, and, with a screech, the music ceased!

Pal collapsed like a deflated balloon. Seeing the Professor smiling at him, his look of alarm changed to a grin, and he snatched up a rock to smash the music-box which had offended him. Temeraire gripped his wrist just in time!

Over a bowl of steaming soup that night the Professor suddenly touched Duke on the chest and said distinctly: "Duke." Then he indicated himself and said: "Temeraire." Finally he touched Pal's hairy torso, with an inquiring smile. At first the

again, repeating the name. The primitive looked puzzled for a moment, and then nodded and mouted the word "Pal," after which he pointed at them in turn, saying proudly: "Jee-ook! Dem-rare!" It was the first step in Pal's education.

The Ivory Hunt.

IT was a fortnight later. Duke had just returned from one of his frequent expeditions into the mountains. Almost every day he had searched for the lost crevasse, and several times he had watched, through his glasses, Craven's party probing in the snow for the hidden ivory. He had also discovered the rival camp, pitched in the heart of the range, but he did not know that his own tent had been spied on by Yoshi and one of the Samoyed hunters, and that his conversations with Temeraire had often been overheard by skulking enemies.

He kicked off his skis and leant his rifle against the tent. "Hullo, Professor!" he shouted. "I believe I am on the right track at last!"

The flap of the tent opened and Temeraire and Pal emerged. The little Frenchman wore an expression of excited triumph. "Moi aussi, Duke!" he cried. "I am on ze right track! At last Pal and I can understand each other!" Every day he had painstakingly instructed the dawn-man in the mysteries of the English language. Pal, who had consented to stay with them owing to the delicious food and comfortable quarters, had proved an apt pupil. He had the mentality of an intelligent child.

"I spik English!" he announced with pride. "Mammoth—mountain—man—food—fire—'ot—cold—ice—watter—snow—"

"*Assez, assez!*" exclaimed the Professor, for Pal was prepared to babble his whole vocabulary in one breath. "Already he has proved useful. He tells me he knows where *ze crevasse* is hidden. He watched *ze avalanche*, and—"

"Yis!" put in Pal. "Dead mammoth! Know him!" He made a motion of digging. "Plenty tusk—ice—freeze—cold—'ot—watter—"

"Stop, stop!" yelled Temeraire. "Zat is enough! Come in *ze tent*, Duke, and have a bite of food. *Zen* we will search for *ze ivory!*"

The two white men disappeared, leaving Pal outside. He gazed slowly round, his curious eyes searching for some fresh toy. Suddenly they fell upon the rifle leaning against the tent. A mischievous grin lit up his simple face. He had been warned not to touch the firearms, but the strange men were out of sight. Now was his chance to examine the stick that said "Bang!" Eagerly he stretched out a trembling hand. Gingerly, timidly he took the weapon and turned it over and over. Nothing happened. Perhaps it was asleep. He put his eye to the muzzle and tried to peer inside the barrel, while his thumb caressed the trigger.

So engrossed was he with the fascinating toy that he failed to notice the arrival of a sledge drawn by four huskies. It drew up behind a large boulder. The Samoyed driver whispered to the dogs to halt, and two men sprang lightly out and approached the primitive boy on tiptoe. They were Craven and Yoshi.

The scoundrels had decided on a bold move. From information they had gathered by spying round the tent they believed that Pal could tell them the exact position of the crevasse. Now, they crept towards him while Duke and Temeraire feasted inside.

Suddenly, Pal looked up and lowered the rifle. His sensitive ears had caught the crunch of their feet over the snow. He saw the two strangers cautiously approaching him, and his primitive instinct told him that they were enemies. Alarm made him tighten his grip on the trigger, and instantly there was a shattering report!

The explosion startled him so much that he sprang back, tripped over a bucket and turned head over heels on the ground. The rifle escaped from his hands as he fell. In a flash, Craven and Yoshi had leapt on him, and, before he could regain his feet, they had pinned his long arms behind his back and lifted him bodily in the air.

"Quick!" snapped Craven. "Get him on the sledge!"

As they raced towards the waiting Samoyed with their kicking, struggling burden, Duke appeared at the entrance of the tent. He saw at once what had happened, and shouted to Temeraire for a revolver.

The Samoyed stood up and levelled a rifle, and Duke ducked back under cover only just in time. A shot rang out and a bullet ripped its way through the reindeer-skin.

"A gun! A gun!" panted Duke, and his fingers closed round the revolver which Temeraire thrust into his hand. "They're kidnapping Pal!"

He darted again to the entrance and fired, just as the native whipped up the dogs and the sledge lurched away. The three fighting figures on it were so inextricably entangled that it was impossible to distinguish Yoshi from Craven, or Craven from Pal. Duke fired again, aiming at the Samoyed, but the sledge swung out of sight behind a boulder, and they heard the driver's guttural voice urging the huskies to greater speed.

"Follow them!" cried Temeraire, rushing out, gun in hand.

But Duke knew that it would be useless to run on that breaking crust. He hastily grabbed at his skis, and began to fasten them on his feet with shaking fingers. Temeraire ran a few steps after the disappearing sledge—to sink knee-deep in the crumbling snow!

"*Sacré nom!* Zey will get away!" he groaned. "And Pal will tell zem where *ze ivory* is hidden!"

But the Professor was doing his pupil an injustice. As he fought madly for his liberty, Pal knew that he had fallen into the hands of evil men, and his savage heart turned black with hate. He realised, however, that it was vain to struggle with the powerful Yankee and the sinewy Jap, and suddenly he relaxed with the sullen stoicism of a dumb animal. His eyes glowing with rage and resentment, he suffered his captors to bind his arms behind his back with cruel, biting thongs.

"He's quiet at last!" muttered Craven through set teeth. "Wal, I guess that was a smart bit o' work, YOSH!"

"They will never catch us up on skis," smiled the Jap, looking behind him. "We will make for the track of the avalanche, and the honourable savage will tell us where to find the ivory."

"If he don't, he's for it!" growled Craven. They drove on and on, up and up, the dour Samoyed lashing the dogs to a frenzy of speed. Pal glared sullenly over the side of the sledge, and saw that it was mounting the track of the recent avalanche. The dogs panted as the incline grew steeper; their pace slackened. At last, as they crawled round a corner into a kind of snowy amphitheatre ringed with giant boulders tossed from the heights by the landslip, the American shouted to the driver. He tugged at the reins, and the weary huskies came to a ready halt.

"It's somewhere round here, I reckon," grunted Craven, "but we don't wanna spend weeks digging if this ain't the spot. The chimp will tell us."

He seized Pal's arm in one brawny hand, lifted him off the sledge and flung him roughly down in the snow. The primitive boy lay where he had fallen, chattering with rage and hate, his sma'l eyes shooting venom.

Craven took up a long hunting-rifle. "Now, buddy," he snarled, thrusting the barrel into his captive's face, "we wanna know where the crevasse is hidden. (*revasse, see? Is this the place?*)"

Pal shrank away from the deadly "stick," but clenched his teeth and said nothing.

"Don't be in such a hurry, Craven," put in Yoshi quietly. "Ishtok," he turned to the Samoyed, "take up a position behind the boulder, and watch the mountainside. If you see our enemies coming, shoot! Now, Craven, let me talk to the honourable savage."

Ishtok took up his post, which commanded a view of the land on all sides. He thrust his long rifle over the rock, ready to pick off Duke or Temeraire the moment they might appear.

Yoshi stooped towards the scowling prisoner. "Ivory," he said, pointing down to the ground. "Mammoth—dead mammoth—in ice. Is it here?" He smiled expectantly.

A look of sullen indifference settled on the simian face. Only Pal's eyes spoke—and they spoke nothing but hate.

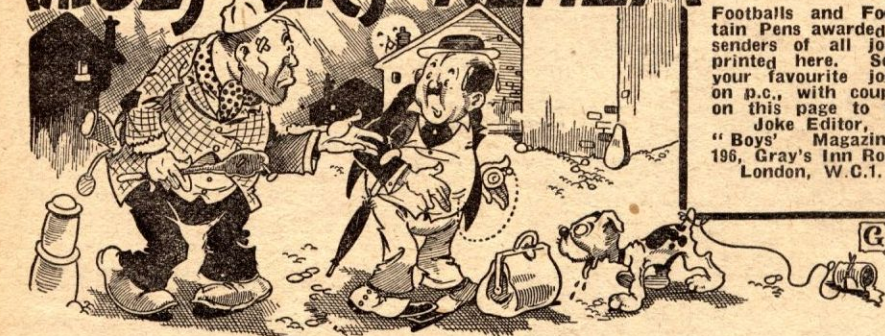
"Mammoth—crevasse—ice—ivory!" repeated the Jap, still smiling. "Is it here? Speak. We are friends. Where is mammoth?"

Craven impatiently flung his rifle down. "Bah! That's all boloney!" he snorted. "Let me put him through the third degree!" He thrust his coarse

(Continued on page 12.)

Our Footers are Best for Joke or Jest.

THE JESTER'S REALM



Football and Fountain Pens awarded to senders of all jokes printed here. Send your favourite jokes on p.c., with coupon on this page to the Joke Editor, "Boys' Magazine," 196, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

Footpad: What time is it?

Gentleman: Nine o'clock!

Footpad: I'll never remember that; lend us yer watch!

(Football to HARRY HALLOWS, 24, Lyon Street, Latchford, Warrington).

GOOD TRAINING.

OLD GENT (to young man who has staggered, panting, into train compartment): You young people have no stamina! When I was your age I could run and catch a train without turning a hair.

YOUNG MAN: Yes, but I lost this train at the last station.

(Fountain pen to W. SLEPPARD, 61, St. George's Avenue, Newbury).

PAIN FROM PANE.

GENTLEMAN (to small boy crying): What happened, my little man?

SMALL BOY: My big brother broke a window.

GENTLEMAN: You shouldn't cry for that; you should laugh.

SMALL BOY: I... I... did!

(Fountain pen to SIDNEY DRIVER, 187, Milkwood Road, Herne Hill, S.E.24).

SAME STY(LE).

A man called at the house of one of his friends and a boy answered the door.

"Is your father in, please?" demanded the visitor.

"Yes, sir!" replied the boy. "He is in the pigsty, but you will know him, he's got a hat on."

(Fountain pen to DOUGLAS PROTHEROE, Glannant Rd., Carmarthen, S. Wales).

A HARD GRIND.

MOTORIST (trying to start car, to friend singing inside): I say, do be quiet, people will think this is a barrel organ!

(Fountain pen to H. McLEOD, 28, Rowland Street, Birkenhead, Ches).

WELL MATCHED.

A stranger in Aberdeen stopped a man in the street and asked for a match, which he got.

"My friend," he said, "I see you use our matches, and my firm has authorised me to give a guinea to every man I meet who produces one of the boxes."

He handed over the money and walked away, but

JOKE COUPON.

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

4/2/33.

he had not gone far before he heard the man shouting to him to stop.

"Here," said the Scot, as he came up, "I thoct there wad be a catch in it; ye're awa' wi' ma matches!"

(Fountain pen to N. WYLIE, 23, Kent Street, Jarrow-on-Tyne, Co. Durham).

SELF-SUSTAINING.

TRAMP: Give me some food, mister!

GENT: We don't feed tramps!

TRAMP: Give me the grub and I'll feed myself.

(Fountain pen to Master GERRY FRAYNE, Olive Cottage, Nook Road, Waverley, Liverpool.)

FISHY.

FIRST SHIPWRECKED SAILOR (on raft): Saved! A ship! We're saved!

HIS COMPANION (a very keen angler): Hush, you'll frighten my fish away!

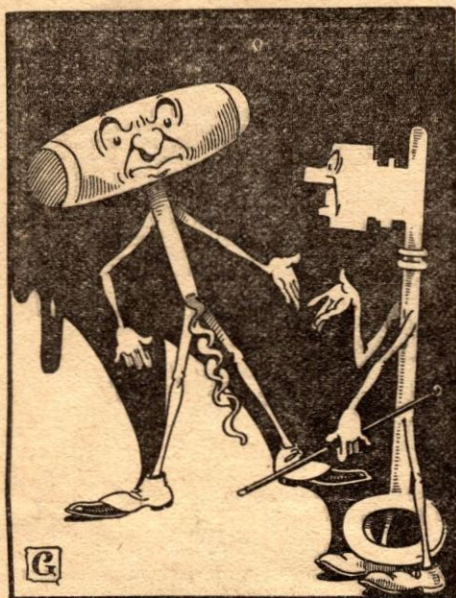
(Fountain pen to STANLEY GLOVER, Ingoe Lane, Kirkby, Liverpool.)



Referee: Hi, the bell has rung for the tenth round!

Boxer: Aw, let's sit this one out!

(Football to JOHN STEELE, 3, Rheda Terrace, Cleator Moor, Cumberland.)



Corkscrew: I must be too honest. I'm always being twisted.

Key: Well, I get a few good turns myself, but as a rule I'm always in a hole!

PAL OF THE MAMMOTHS

(Continued from page 10.)

face into Pal's. "Mammoth!" he shouted. "You tell—we kill! See?" He seized one of the pointed ears and gave it a savage twist. Pal's stubborn expression did not change. "You speak mighty quick. See?" Swiftly he struck the savage in the face, once, twice. Then he bounded to his feet and picked up a rock. He stepped back and flung it at Pal, so that it whizzed past his head. "The next one kills you!" Again he snatched up a rock—a great, craggy fragment of flint—and poised it in one powerful hand. "Speak—or I'll smash in your blamed nut, monkey-face!"

Pal might not have understood the words, but he grasped the significance of the threat.

Wildly he looked round for some means of escape—and his tortured, unhappy eyes fell on the rifle. The stick that said "Bang!" He was terrified of it, but his terror of Craven was greater. And hate—red hate—was searing into his brain.

Craven was swinging the rock for a cast. Pal's arms were bound behind him, but his feet were free—and he used them as often as his hands. His cruel captors had not reckoned with that simian power. Desperately he kicked out and gripped the rifle with his toes, one prehensile talon closing round the trigger.

The Yankee gave a startled yell as he saw the muzzle rise towards his breast. He launched the rock with all his might, and at the same time the rifle rang out with a sharp report. Craven staggered, clutching at his breast. A large stain of blood spread warmly beneath his hand. He coughed, and sank fainting to his knees.

Pal had fallen back, terrified by the explosion, and the rock thudded into the snow beside him.

A moment later there was another rifle shot. The

Samoyed had fired over the boulder, and now he turned a face green with terror towards the others. "A rhino!" he gasped. "A woolly rhino! We must run!"

Even as he spoke, there was a scurry in the snow, and a huge, unwieldy shape launched itself into the arena, and stood, swaying its giant head, as if preparing to charge. It was an enormous woolly rhinoceros, another fearsome monster of the Ice Age, twice the size of its modern descendant, and armed with two spear-pointed horns!

Yoshi's quick brain grasped the situation in a flash. Half-carrying, half-dragging Craven over the snow, he flung him on to the sledge. The panic-stricken driver gathered up the reins, the howling dogs strained at the traces, and they dashed away in a smother of snow.

The rhino lowered its formidable head and charged blindly. The sledge whipped round a boulder just in time, and there was a sickening crash as horn met stone. The cumbrous beast staggered back from the harsh contact.

Then, wheeling and plunging round in baffled fury, its small red eyes caught right of Pal struggling to his feet. Livid with horror, the primitive boy fumbled for the rifle with his toes, but it was out of reach. And the rhino was preparing to charge again.

At that moment another staccato report smote the frosty air. Duke's anxious face appeared over a rock; the smoke curled away from his rifle. He levelled it again and emptied the magazine in a rattling fusillade of shots. The rhino's charge was unchecked, but Pal hurled himself to one side, and as the shaggy beast swerved round after him its forelegs suddenly gave way under it and it staggered. "Shoot, Temeraire, shoot!" screamed Duke. "My gun's empty!"

The little Professor bounded fearlessly into the arena. He raised his rifle, but the wounded rhino was tossing and rearing round and round, scattering blood and froth, in a blind fury. It was impossible to hit such a revolving target, and Temeraire's shot went wide.

As the report died away, the rhino saw the Professor. Down went the ugly head—a wake of snow was churned into the air as the monster charged. But, when in mid-career, the snow went up all round it in a dense curtain. There was a crashing, splitting sound, as of rending ice, and the beast's hind quarters sank from sight. A last mad struggle, and, with a rush and a roar, the rhinoceros vanished through the ground, tearing a huge hole in the snow. A deadened thud told them that it had struck bottom some fifty feet below.

Duke was the first to break the stunned silence that succeeded. "The crevasse!" he shouted, a note of triumph in his voice. "It has fallen through the crevasse! This is the spot!"

The next moment all three—Pal, in the relief of his escape, hardly heeding the fact that his arms were still pinioned—were peering down an abysmal pit. The dark form of the slain monster was stretched out below. It was the crevasse from which they had rescued the ill-fated Russian, and even from that height they could see the dim outlines of the entombed mammoths through the ice-walls.

"We have found ze ivory!" announced Temeraire, as he cut through Pal's bonds, and began to chafe his nerveless arms. "Our quest is at an end!"

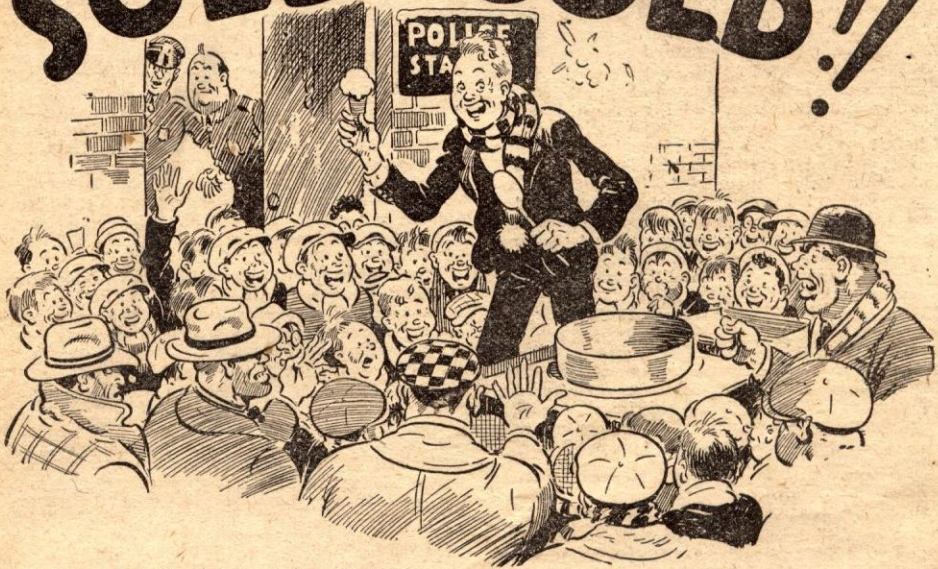
"Not yet, Professor!" Duke pointed to a distant cone-shaped peak, and Pal gave a convulsive shudder as he saw a wreath of smoke rising from it. "We haven't exhausted the resources of this country by any means. We have yet to find Pal's dragon!"

Another gripping yarn of Pal of the Monsters next week, telling of more weird creatures of a past age.

HUNDRED PER CENT. PERCY . . . SELL ANYTHING KING!

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SOLD-COLD!!

Perhaps Peculiar—But Percy Ain't No Quitter. How he Sells Half-a-ton of Ice-cream to Rival Gangsters told in this Chortling Complete Yarn.

Percy the Purveyor.

"YEH!" bawled J. Bertillon Bogg into the mouth-piece of the telephone. "This is sure the offices of Fixit Corporation Inc. an' J.B.B., president, speak'n! Fixit fixes you up! We sell everyth'n from peanuts to battleships, we can build you a skyscraper, or collect you a set of cigarette cards. Send your goods to us—an' we sell 'em—an' all on a fair commission basis! Fixit fixes you up! Fixit spells hundred per cent big business. Fixit fixes—huh?"

Mr. Bogg's eulogy of his own business firm suddenly dried up and his eyebrows rose. He glanced towards the windows of his office as he listened at the telephone receiver, and his face dropped; the window-pane was coated with frost and long icicles drooped about it; the outer world was white with frozen snow.

"Say!" said J. Bertillon Bogg in a changed tone. "That's a bit of a tall one, ain't it? Want us to sell ice-cream for you this weather! It's impossible!"

"Buta you say you sell any'ing—yes!" said the voice on the 'phone. "Fixit fixes you up!—no? I haffa da half-a-ton of ice-cream on my hands from da summer. I lika get rid of heem an' I t'ink you sell heem for me—yes?"

"Aw—shucks!" answered J.B.B., "anyth'n reasonable—but ice-cream now! I'd sooner sell hot-dogs to tropical niggers! Still, Fixit'll do what it can for you. Leave your address, an' if anyth'n comes along I'll let you know."

The address was given and duly noted and Mr. Bogg—"Big Business Bertie," as he was nicknamed—slammed home the receiver with a disgusted grunt. He rose from his desk, walked over to the window and scowled out at the wintery aspect.

"Fixit fixes you up—but Fixit don't work gosh-danged miracles! Ice cream! Ugh!"

As he gave voice to this disgusted thought there came a gentle tap at the door of his office and a round, cheery youthful countenance peered in.

"Mithter—ahem!—Mister Bogg?"

"Yeh! That's me!"

The youthful countenance manifested itself as being attached to an equally youthful body which advanced into the room confidently.

"I wished to see you," said the youth very slowly, "about—"

"Siddown, sir," invited J.B.B. smiling genially, evidently taking the youth for a new client.

"You've come to Fixit Corporation to get you out of a jamb—huh?"

"Not ex—"

"Waal, Fixit fixes you up. Anyth'n you want—we got it!"

"That's jolly decent of you," answered the youth in a slow, drawing speech. "I want a job!"

Mr. Bogg's expression swiftly changed.

"What!" he gulped, "another red-herrin'! Say, I'm a busy man. I ain't got no jobs for lads like you. Beat it 'fore I go haywire!"

"Pleath! Wait a minute!" lisped the youth excitedly. "I'm a hundred per thent thalethman mythelf! Give me a chanth! I'll bootht your buthinheth hundred per thent. I'll—"

"With that lisp!" interrupted J.B.B. derisively.

"Why, you couldn't sell toffee-apples to tootingh

babes! My salesmen gotta have personality, punch an' pep!"

"I've got 'em," said the youth slowly. "I can't help my lisp—I mean lip, and it only happens when I'm excited and speak too quickly. But I can sell things—I can sell anything. Percy Bodkin's my name, and I shouldn't want much wages to start with!"

"I guess you got nerve," grunted Bogg, "—an' that's a good sign. But to spill the straight haricots, big boy, I ain't need'n no one! Business is bad—frowsy! Besides, you're too young!"

"Please give me a trial," pleaded the youth, being careful to speak slowly so as not to lisp. "Give me something difficult to sell, and I'll guarantee to do it!"

"I ain't got nuth'n—I—" Mr. Bogg broke off short as his eyes wandered towards the frosted window. He grinned. "Say, though—" He laughed outright. "Shucks! I'll give you a trial though! An' if you bring it off, I guess I'll agree you're the smartest go-get'm he-salesman what are! Sell me half-a-ton of ice-cream—to-day!—an' I'll engage you, buddy; if you can do that I'll be proud to have you on my staff!"

"Ithe cream!" gasped Percy Bodkin. "To-day!"

Bogg chuckled at his joke. "I thought that'd make you pipe down a bit. That's my offer, bozo. Sell half-a-ton of ice-cream. My men have to be smart, but if you can pull this off, with this freezin' weather on, I'll say you're the smartest! If you can sell that stuff, I'll sure hand you the dried sausage!"

The youthful Percy Bodkin did not reply for a moment. But he was not one to give in easily. Suddenly a grim expression came into his face.

"All right," he said, "I'll thel the ithe-cream!" "You won't," laughed Bertillon Bogg, "but I'll let you try. Here's the address of the guy what wants us to sell it for him."

"Don't worry, Mr. Bogg," said Percy Bodkin, confidently. "I'll th-sell it!"

"That kid's sure got nerve!" grinned Big Business Bert to himself as Percy left the office.

J.B.B. would have grinned broader still had he been able to see through the door, where Percy had paused to draw a handbook from his pocket and consult it. The book was entitled "Secrets of Salesmanship," and Percy was glancing at a passage which said:

The first secret of salesmanship is to find a market for your goods. If you cannot find one, you must CREATE one!

Percy nodded profoundly, put the book back in his pocket, went on his way, his cheery young face set with youthful determination.

* * * * *

IT behoves us now to switch the scene from the businesslike offices of Fixit Corporation Inc. to a ramshackle dwelling some distance away, outside which stood half-a-dozen "tough-lookin' bozos," as J. Bertillon Bogg might have called them, scowling at the barred front door of the dwelling. Said bozos were a section of the notorious Mike Kurtz's gang of cracksmen, who prided themselves on being the cutest collection of safe-blowers this side of the Atlantic; and Mike Kurtz himself was with them, voicing his dislike of the people within the house in strong terms.

"I allus noo them three guys weren't honest crooks!" he growled. "The low-down double-crossin' dirty dogs! Never did trust that Dirk Dugan guy an'—"

"Tain't no use us standin' around shootin' off our mouths, Mike," grunted another of the crooks.

"We got to get 'em out a' that place an' get the sparkler from 'em."

"You're right!" said Mike. "But how're we goin' to get 'em out? Soon's we go near the doors or windows, od' pokes a coupla unfriendly look'n shoot-irons, an' I'm sorta averse to get'n shot-up at my time of life."

The truth of this situation was that the three men in the barricaded house were late members of Mike Kurtz's gang, who had suddenly decided to leave and go into business on their own. This swift decision on their part had come at an inconvenient moment for Mike, because they had in their possession the valuable Anersworthy diamond which Mike Kurtz and his men had been at great pains to steal—and which the police were still looking for. But a crook deprived of his swag is like a lioness deprived of her young, and Mike and the rest of his gang had not been long in running the double-crossers to earth.

"There's only one way to get 'em!" Mike Kurtz said at last, "an' that's to drive 'em out into the open, like they drive out rats! Set the place alight!"

"That's an' idea!"

"Sure it is! An' it'll be a natural lookin' occurrence too. Fires happen by accident most anytime—even on a freezing cold day like this! Here, coupla you guys scout round the back of this place an' see if there aren't a spot to start a nice blaze—accidental like, o' course. We'll soon find a few tins a' petrol for you!"

Ice Unto Ice.

TO return now to the ambitious Percy Bodkin, we find that in the meantime he had visited the Italian gentleman with the half-ton of ice-cream to sell. This gent, it seems, supplied ice-cream on a mass-production basis. He had dozens of ice-cream barrows with which, in the summer-time, various hawkers he employed patrolled the streets.

Percy had viewed the prospect of selling the stuff with some doubt, now that he had come up against the cold hard facts. But he was a trier. He had had one of the barrows filled up with ice-cream, to start with, and he was now wandering about the streets vainly trying to sell it to the already freezing populace.

"Ithe-cream—I mean, ice-cream!" he called. "Just, the stuff to keep you cool! Penny cornets—wafers! Ice-cream!"

People stared at him and made whirling gestures to each other near the temple, and then they hurried on home to roast their frost-bitten noses by the fireside. For half-an-hour Percy pushed the barrow around wearily. Then at last he stopped and sat on it in despair.

"S'no use!" he mused. "I can't even sell a penny cornet—let alone half-a-ton of it. Wish I could think of somewhere nice and hot—a hot place is the only place to sell ice-cream!"

His meditations were suddenly interrupted by a harsh jangling sound. He looked up to see a fire engine hurtle past, then, a second later, another. Percy Bodkin blinked.

"Hot place!"—the thought re-echoed through his brain—"they're going to a hot place all right! I wonder—Why not? Yeth!" he suddenly burst forth excitedly. "It's a hope anyhow! Thome of the folkh in that fire might be glad to buy it!"

Percy Bodkin grabbed his barrow and started after the fire engines as fast as he could go. The fire, it seemed, was at a slum house and the fire had got well hold of it.

As Percy barged his barrow through the crowd he passed close to Mike Kurtz and his men—watching the blaze, but he had no eyes for them. He brought his barrow up alongside the fire engine, hastily

grabbed a handful of penny cornets and dashed towards a smashed window, which by this time a fireman had battered in to allow the hose to play on the inside of the house.

"Stand away there! Hey! What you at!" But Percy Bodkin—with his ice-cream cornets—was through the window before the firemen could stop him. He emerged into a passage, comparatively free of smoke, where three men stood cursing and peering through a crack in the shutters.

"The-cream cornetth!" yelled Percy. "Penny each! Thuff to keep you cool in a hot place!"

"Say!" shouted Dirk Dugan—for it was he, "here's a maniac broke loose!"

"Never mind him!" yelled another man. "We gotta get outa this, Dirk! Curse that big boob Kurtz."

Percy Bodkin found himself unceremoniously pushed aside and the three men dashed for the open window whence he came. They stopped momentarily here and glared out.

"See here, you guys!" gasped Dirk Dugan through the smoke. "Kurtz an' his yahoo is only wait'n for us to get clear of the crowd an' then they'll pounce on us an' grab the sparkler! See that ice-cream barrer out there? I'll drop the diamond into it. Whoever escapes, comes back when the coast's clear an' grabs the sparkler! Savvy!"

"Okay, Dirk!" They hesitated a moment and then the three of them plunged through the window into the open. Dugan dashed immediately towards Percy Bodkin's ice-cream barrow, and with a swift motion, cleverly concealed, took off the lid of the ice-cream container and popped something into it.

"Well, of all the cheek!" gurgled Percy Bodkin, peering with watering eyes through the clouds of smoke, from within the burning building. "If that doesn't take the biscuit!"

Hardly had Percy lisped these words when something struck him in the chest with terrific force. He shot backwards like a cannon-ball and brought up with a sickening thud against the opposite wall, to find himself being soaked and battered by a powerful stream of water.

"Guggle! Gloop! Thopt! Help! Thave me! I'm drowning!"

Percy's cries were heard. The stream of water ceased swiftly and a helmeted fireman dashed into the room, slung Percy over his shoulder roughly, and hauled him out into the open, where he dumped the would-be salesman ungently on the pavement.

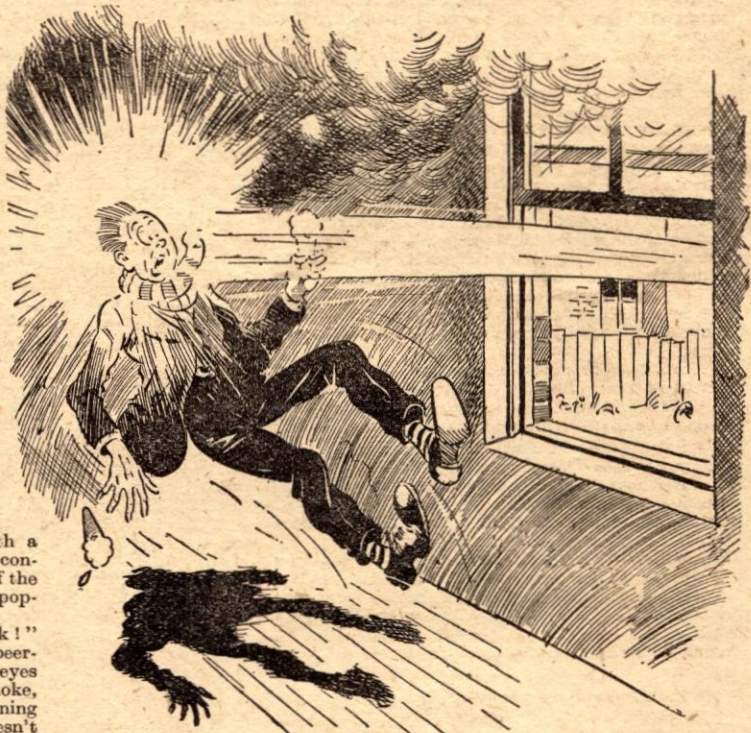
"Whyn't you keep out o' this!" growled the firemen. "Tryin' one o' them heroic rescues, eh? You

heroes is a blamed noosence to hard-worked salvage men!"

Percy picked himself up. Wrung out his soaking clothes as best he could and then took up his ice-cream barrow and pushed his way through the laughing crowd.

Meanwhile Mike Kurtz and his crooks hovered on the outskirts of that crowd like vultures. But Dirk, and at least one of his men, had been too sly for them. Dirk had made a swift escape over a garden wall and the other man had made his getaway by mingling with the crowd. The third man was not so lucky. Trying to make a dash for it, he was grabbed roughly from behind.

"Tim the Twister, huh?" grunted Mike Kurtz as his victim was cunningly held so as not to arouse the attention of the bystanders. "This is sure a happy meetin'. Bring him along, boys. We'll have a chat with him 'bout that diamond!"



NO SALE . . . BUT A GREAT SELL.—Percy, trying to sell his ice cream in the burning house, was suddenly knocked clean off his feet by a powerful stream of water.

Having a chat with Tim the Twister consisted of taking him into a quiet alleyway and twisting the wretch's arm until he yelled with the pain.

"Come on! Give me the low-down!" snarled Kurtz. "Where's that piece of ice?"

"Stop! Stop!" whimpered the wretched crook. "I can't stand it. Dirk shoved the diamond in the ice-cream bin of that phoney kid that was hangin' around! He's gonna get hold o' that barrow soon's the coast's clear!"

"Yeh?" grunted Kurtz. "Well, I guess we'll beat him to it. Come on boys!"

A Whale Of A Sale.

PERCY BODKIN wandered along the street pushing his barrow and trying to keep his teeth from chattering. He had an important mission now—he wanted to visit the police-station.

On taking a glance behind him however, he swiftly forgot that plan. He saw two men hurrying along behind him, evidently trying to catch him up, and it did not take Percy long to recognise Dirk Dugan and one of his men.

"Hey! Come here you!" yelled the crook. "I wanteher!"

"No fear!" gasped Percy.

He wheeled round his ice-cream barrow and darted down a side street, where he knew a small local police station was situated. Seeing his intentions, Dirk Dugan let out a furious curse and started after him wildly. But Dirk was so engrossed in his task of collaring Percy Bodkin that he did not notice Mike Kurtz and his men following equally swiftly behind.

Meanwhile Percy had put on an extra burst and landed himself and his barrow in front of the police station door. Dirk Dugan grabbed him, however, before he could rush in.

"See here, you. Gimme that ice-cream bin quick or—" Dugan broke off short and gulped. The door of the police station was wide open and the place swarming with bobbies. Dirk's tone changed. "S-see here, I just wanted to buy up your ice-cream I did. I—"

"Dugan," snarled a voice, "I got you where I want you, you dirty double-crossin'—"

Dirk Dugan swung round to face Mike Kurtz. He scowled and then grinned, nodding in the direction of the open police-station door.

"Guess this'll have to be a peaceable meeting," he mocked, "the kid's promised to sell his ice-cream to me."

"Not if the other gentleman wantth thome too!" chipped in Percy Bodkin. "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll thell it to all of you in penny cornetth, then the one who eatth them quicketht getth the moht."

"What!" Kurtz and Dugan moved simultaneously towards Percy with threatening gestures, but Percy merely glanced suggestively towards the open police-station door.

"I guess the kid's got the whip hand of us," grunted Dugan. "Gimme some penny cornets then, an' here, Jem"—this to his confederate—"you buy some too! This is a race for the lucky cornet!"

"Come on, boys!" said the furious Kurtz to his men. "Buy cornets—buy 'em as quick as you can!"

And then the rush started. As quick as Percy could serve the penny cornets and take the money they were searched for the missing diamond. Percy did a bit of quick thinking. He beckoned a small boy to him and whispered: "Go to Mr. Vermeccelli's and tell him to bring along the rest of the ice cream!" The small boy hurried off to do his bidding.

But the sight of that small boy—though he did not know his mission—inspired Dugan. He was at a disadvantage against Kurtz as he only had one man on his side against six.

"Quick, Jem. Collect some kids together and give 'em dough to buy ice cream for us!"

The words had not escaped Mike Kurtz though! He jabbed one of his men—about to stomach his ninth cornet—in the side and muttered: "You do the same and get more kid's'n 'im!"

Ten minutes later an avalanche of small boys descended on Percy Bodkin's barrow from two directions and demanded cornets. Luckily the invasion corresponded with the coming of Mr. Vermeccelli, the ice-cream merchant, in a motor-van

containing the rest of half-ton of ice-cream in bins to fit the barrow, and the crowd of frantic ice-cream buyers was so dense that Mr. Vermeccelli was able to change the bins underneath the barrow without the gangsters noticing.

This he kept on doing. No sooner did he seem to have changed an empty for a full one than the full one was empty. But Mr. Vermeccelli kept up the supply somehow—and so did Percy Bodkin, though his arms ached with handing out ice-cream cornets. The ice-cream was devoured so quickly by the swarming crowd of youngsters who, of course, had instructions to hand over anything they found in the ice-cream—that it never occurred to the gangsters that the supply of ice-cream was lasting about twenty times longer than it should have been!

At last the delighted Mr. Vermeccelli pushed the last binful in place. He rushed to the telephone box and got swiftly on to Fixit Corporation.

"Oh Meester Bogg! Your salesman, he was marvellous! Wonderful! He sella da ice cream—yes! Si! Si! Si! Fixit fixa you up!"

J. Bertillon Bogg, hearing this nearly leapt out of his skin.

"Say! Where are you!" gasped J.B.B. "I'm comin' right along in my car!"

When J. Bertillon Bogg arrived on the scene he gasped with amazement. The very last cornet of the very last bin had been reached just as he got there. Percy Bodkin was holding it aloft out of reach of eagerly grasping fingers.

"Here you are, gentlemen. The very latht—last cornet. Who wants it?"

The gangsters' eyes were fairly goggling by now. That stolen diamond which they so eagerly searched for had not yet come to light. Surely it must be in this last tiny dab of ice cream!

"A quid for it," gulped Kurtz.

"Two quid!" roared Dugan.

"Five!"

"I'll double that! Ten pounds!"

"Twenty!"

Before Percy could say yes or no, Kurtz thrust the money into his hand, grabbed the cornet, ran his fingers through the mass. "Not there!" he roared at Percy Bodkin. "You've got it! You've got it! Gimme that diamond or—!"

"Ere! 'Ere!" said the gruff voice of a policeman. "What's this about a diamond?"

The body of policeman had at last emerged from the station to have a look at the goings-on.

"Why!" one of the bobbies suddenly said. "Maybe these are the blokes what done the Anersworthy job."

Mike Kurtz made a wild dive for freedom and that gave the last fillip to the policemen's suspicions.

"Collar 'em, boys! They are crooks!"

Crooks dived in all directions, but they were handicapped on every side by the swarm of children. Not one of them escaped. Glowering with fury at Percy Bodkin, Mike Kurtz, Dirk Dugan and all their men were hauled into the copper shop.

"You're right!" said Percy Bodkin to one of the policemen. "They are the men that thtote the diamond! Here it ith! I've had it in my pocket all the time!"

"Gosh!" the policeman said, taking the sparkling gem which Percy produced. "You're lucky! But it was smart work! Give me your address. There's a reward of thirty pounds for the recovery of this."

"Say!" butted in a yankee voice. "I'll give you his address—it's care of Fixit Corporation Inc.! From now on this guy's gonna be my star salesman, an' right hand man. I'll say he is!"

The Kid with a cool million quid provides the fun in next week's chortling mirth tale. Don't miss Hoppy in his funniest yarn.

Kidnapped by the Cunning Greek, Marston Rovers Find Themselves in Egypt, Land of Tombs and Mysteries. But Unexpected Things Happen when Football Fever Hits the Arabs and Sets the Desert Alight.



THE DESERT FOOTBALLERS

THE TREASURE OF THE TOMBS!

Mahmoud, the Living Mummy, is the Key to a Vast Buried Treasure of the Ancient Pharaohs. Mirapolis, the Plotter, makes a Startling Bid for an ill-gotten Fortune Below.



in that stand—and there he 'energised' the mummy of an Egyptian priest."

"Do you expect us to believe that?" asked Midge Doyle, with a sniff.

"But it's true, Midge," said Ken eagerly. "Sir Hogarth took Smudge and me into his confidence. This crook—yes, he's a crook, all right—tried to get hold of Mahmoud, the mummy, because Mahmoud knows of a great treasure in Egypt. The lost treasure of King Raam IV."

"And I will have it!" gloated the professor.

He had planned to kidnap Ken and Smudge only, but the other members of the team, going to the rescue of their young pals, had shared the same fate.

"I'm afraid it will be many months—perhaps years—before you again see your native country," he went on mockingly. "My destination is the secret and mysterious oasis of Ra-ab, in the wilds of the desert, where interfering men may die, or may be sold in slavery. Good prices are paid, too, for strong, healthy young men," he added meaningly.

"You wouldn't dare!" said Skinny Hawkins, the Rovers centre-half. "You're just trying to bluff us."

"You will see, my friend," purred the professor. "You! Prescott is your name, yes? Sir Hogarth Drood took you into his confidence. How did he and Mahmoud get out of the country? By which ship?"

"I'll never tell you," replied Ken calmly. "Neither will Smudge."

"Not on your unclean life!" said Smudge. "Come, there is no reason for such obstinacy," said the Greek silkily. "I appeal to you other men.

The Kidnapped Team.

PROFESSOR XERXES MIRAPOLIS, the crook Egyptologist, laughed with evil amusement as he stood facing the First Eleven of the famous Marston Rovers Football Club.

"It is unfortunate, my friends," he said, with the slightest of accents. "But since you entered this trap of your own free will, you had better make the best of things."

It was a strange enough scene. Facing him stood eleven hefty professional footballers, including Ken Prescott and Smudge Smiley, the inseparable young pals who were mainly responsible for the whole situation. They were kidnapped, and yet their captors were lounging easily, without any show of weapons. Not a threat had been uttered.

The footballers knew that escape was impossible, however, for their prison was a cabin of a great passenger-carrying air-liner, and they were ten thousand feet above the earth.

"It's all very well," said Bull Cricks, the burly goalkeeper, thrusting forward his aggressive jaw. "But we want to know what all this monkey business means."

"I would have told you before had you been less excited," replied the professor, purring. "You have been puzzled, have you not, because Sir Hogarth Drood presented your club with a great new stadium? Well, he did so because he installed a secret laboratory

If you can persuade them to give me the information I require I will instruct the pilot to bring this machine to earth, and then you will all be released."

"Don't believe him, you chaps," said Ken, contemptuously. "He's just trying to trick you. The pilot—his name's Herman Slythe—is the biggest crook of the whole crowd."

"What's to prevent us from landing the 'plane by ourselves?" demanded Bull Cricks, with sudden violence. "Come on, chaps! Up, the Rovers!"

Crash! Without warning, Bull swung round and drove his fist with tremendous force into the face of Ankh, the giant Nubian slave who stood by the side of his master—Mirapolis. Ankh staggered, and in a moment Bull followed up his advantage by delivering a second pile-driving blow.

"Come on, the Rovers!" yelled Smudge, excitedly.

He dived at the Professor's feet, and so surprising was the move that Mirapolis went crashing over backwards. Ken leapt to Smudge's assistance just in time to kick a wicked-looking automatic out of the professor's hand. The two boys fell on their enemy with terrific fury.

At the same time Midge Doyle, who was always quarrelling with Bull Cricks, went to Bull's assistance with the ferocity of a terrier. He got a hold on Ankh's lashing feet, while Bull sat on the Nubian's chest, punching his head with monotonous regularity. Iron-hard though that head was, the black was soon pummeled into unconsciousness.

Bull glanced round. Buster Bragg, the left-back, and Skinny Hawkins were fighting madly with Pilson and Rowan, two members of Slythe's gang. Mirapolis was getting plenty of attention from Ken and Smudge, and the other members of the team were "mixing it" very thoroughly with Grell, the other gunman. In that confined space any real fighting was out of the question. It was just a wild rough-and-tumble, and the footballers, by reason of their superior strength, won the day.

All sorts of odds and ends were used as bonds. Thus, within fifteen minutes, Professor Mirapolis and his gangsters were tied hand and foot and plumped back into the saloon chairs.

"Huh! We'll show the blighters!" snorted Bull. "Where's that pilot?"

Bull grabbed one of the automatic pistols, and, accompanied by Ken and Smudge, he passed through the communicating doorway, forward, into the pilot's control cabin.

"The game's up, old chap!" said Bull gently, jabbing the gun into the back of Herman Slythe's neck. "You're going to take this bus back to England."

Slythe gulped. Owing to the roar of the powerful engines, he had heard nothing of the fight.

"Gosh!" he gasped, as Ken took his gun. "What's happened?"

"Why ask fool questions?" retorted Bull. "We've got your pals all roped up, and you're going to take us back to England. Get busy."

"I give in," Slythe muttered.

He touched his controlling levers, and the great 'plane zoomed round in a wide banking circle.

"That's it!" said Bull. "And keep going."

The Oasis Of Ra-Ab.

THE night was clear, and overhead the stars glimmered brilliantly in the purple sky. The footballers, their excitement over, were either sitting in the cabin or standing in little groups, talking. For the past two hours Bull Cricks had been complaining bitterly about the lack of food.

"It's getting milder, too," he grumbled. "Can't understand it."

"Well, we shall soon be home," said Midge. "The sea's right below us. Must be the Channel."

But the great 'plane sped on and on. Soon it was apparent to the footballers that the sea beneath them could not be the English Channel—for they should have crossed it long since.

"By Jove! I believe Slythe has tricked us! He must have made a complete circle instead of going back on his tracks," exclaimed Ken, with sudden anger. "This must be the Mediterranean!"

"Great jumping alligators!" roared Bull Cricks. "We'll soon find out the truth of it!"

He dashed into the control-cabin, the others crowding after him. Herman Slythe, who appeared to be expecting them, laughed with open contempt.

"You didn't turn back!" shouted Bull.

"No, my fat friend," replied Slythe coolly. "I kept straight on. Shortly after dawn, if all goes well, we shall land in the Oasis of Ra-ab."

Shouts of consternation arose.

"And you dare not harm me," went on Slythe coolly. "If you attack me, who will pilot the machine?"

He laughed, in the full confidence of his security. Bull Cricks stared, aghast.

It was a unique situation.

Eleven strong and determined footballers held in check by Herman Slythe, single-handed and unarmed.

On—on . . .

The hours slipped away, and the situation remained unchanged. Some of the footballers dozed, others chatted, all trying to break the monotony of that seemingly ceaseless journey. Dawn came, and below stretched the barren desert. . . . It was soon evi-

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dent that Slythe was flying according to a carefully worked-out route. He was avoiding every big city, and keeping, mainly, over the uninhabited desert. The sun crept higher and higher—and still the machine droned on.

The footballers were suffering more from thirst now than from hunger. The heat became unbearable, in spite of the height at which the 'plane was travelling. The glaring sun beat upon the fuselage, and converted the cabin into a kind of oven. By now, of course, Professor Mirapolis knew what was



THE STROKE OF DOOM.—Lower swung the great sword, and still lower. Suddenly a shout rang out and Mahmoud came leaping across the stone floor.

happening, and the evil glint in his eyes told its own tale.

Suddenly, the steady droning of the engines died away. A shout went up from the footballers when they peered through the windows. Dead ahead, in the midst of all the barren wastes of sand, a flashing gleam of water showed; palm trees, bushes, olive trees—green vegetation of all kinds. It was an oasis in the desert.

"Look!" exclaimed Ken. "There's an old ruined temple. And a kind of miniature sphinx and a pyramid! Must be the Temple of Ra-ab!"

Ken was right. Slythe had piloted the 'plane to her destination. He made a perfect landing on the hard sand at the outskirts of the oasis. Crowds of Arabs came running up.

"Allah be praised!" went up a great shout, in Arabic. "The White Prophet has returned! Hail to the White Prophet!"

"Seize these dogs of infidels!" shouted the professor, before he could be stopped. "They are my enemies—and yours."

Before the surprised footballers could raise a hand to defend themselves they were seized by the Arabs and made prisoners.

The Sphinx Of Doom.

PROFESSOR MIRAPOLIS was triumphant. As the footballers learned, later, he had been here on previous occasions, and, by the distribution of much baksheesh, he had won the Arabs over completely. He had embraced the Faith, too, and was regarded by the Arabs as a true Believer.

Within an hour, the footballers were flung into a half-ruined fort, where they languished in hot, reeking, noisome cells. Food and water were given them, and there was now no escape. For the Arabs of this oasis numbered some hundreds.

"We're in a proper mess now, Ken," groaned Smudge. "Even if we escape from the fort, we couldn't escape from the oasis. It would be death to venture across the desert."

"And Mirapolis is the lord of all he surveys," said Ken sadly. "Yes, Smudge, old man, we certainly are in a mess."

"What the dickens will the poor old Rovers do in the Cup Competition without any of their First Eleven players?" asked Smudge miserably.

In another part of the sun-scorched fort, Professor Mirapolis sat in council with the chiefs of the Arab tribe. News had come in, by natives, that a big caravan was on its way to the oasis—a great column of camels led by a gigantic stranger. There was a white man, too, in the party, and the whole caravan was costly and well equipped.

"The gigantic stranger is Mahmoud, without a doubt," said the professor, as he turned to Slythe. "The white man is Sir Hogarth Drood. Excellent, my friends! When the caravan arrives we shall seize Sir Hogarth and his mummy and the treasure will be ours."

IT was the next day when the footballers were released.

"You are at liberty to roam as you will," said the professor calmly. "But let me warn you, my friends, there is no escape from this oasis."

The Arabs did not interfere with them—but, in fact, were inclined to be friendly. As Bull Cricks remarked, it was a lucky thing they were dressed only in footer togs, for the garb was suitable for the climate. For want of something better to do, after the heat of the day, they punted a football about on the hard, level sand, in the shadow of the mysterious Sphinx. Nobody quite knew how this

football had been brought along; one of the players, in his excitement, must have carried it to the aeroplane.

"Jumping catfish! I'll tell you what!" exclaimed Bull Cricks suddenly. "Let's teach these Arabs to play the game!"

He was greeted by derisive laughter.

"It's a good idea!" insisted Bull. "There's nothing like football to engender a friendly spirit. Besides, it'll be something to do—and it'll keep us in training."

Bull, entering into the thing with enthusiasm, acted as trainer. The Arabs, nothing loth, were willing to learn. Bull himself selected a likely looking Eleven, and, with the aid of an interpreter, he explained the game, and the comical results kept the Rovers in good spirits during trying days.

Three days later the first match was played in the cool of the evening. The Arabs, as keen as children, played wildly. They were cheered by crowds of spectators who gathered round to witness this novel game.

It certainly kept the Rovers in training, but as an exhibition of football it was very much of a "flop." In the first five minutes the Rovers scored three goals, the Arab custodian dancing about like a Dervish, jabbering, gesticulating, and protesting. Several times the teams were on the verge of a free fight; but when the Arabs managed to score—Bull deliberately allowing the ball to pass him—the game improved.

Once, one of the Arab backs, in clearing, gave the ball such a mighty kick that it went soaring wildly upwards to be caught in an upper air current. It was swept right into one of the eye sockets of the inscrutable Sphinx—and it failed to come down.

"Goal!" went up a roar, mingled with laughter.

"I'll fetch it," said Ken, running. "We can't afford to lose that ball—it's the only one we've got."

Smudge went with him—which was lucky. Ken swarmed up the rough face of the image. He reached the eye-socket, squirmed in, and then suddenly let out a yell.

"Hi! Hold me, Smudge!" he gasped.

Smudge grabbed at his feet, and pulled him back. Ken had found the ball wedged against two pieces of rock.

"Why did you yell?" asked Smudge, as they descended.

"I nearly fell down a kind of passage," panted Ken. "We'll have a look at that later, Smudge—after dark. I believe I've made a discovery."

The ball recovered, the game went on. The Arabs, much to their delight, were "allowed" to score three more goals. Amazingly enough, the Rovers could not find the net again. They kicked wildly, missing the goal by yards. In fact, the Arabs scored again in the last minute, and won the match—to the unbounded delight of the spectators.

Later, when all was dark, Ken and Smudge went out—"for a stroll." In the velvet darkness of the cool night they stole to the great, silent Sphinx, and climbed the face of it. Ken had armed himself with a box of matches.

"There may be nothing in it, but it's something to do, anyhow," he muttered. "Follow me, Smudge."

He wormed his way through the hole and found that the tunnel dipped sharply down—right through the "head" of the great image. He felt himself slithering, and the next moment, with a gasp, he went shooting amid a cloud of dust into the mystic blackness. And Smudge came behind.

Thud-thud! They landed, one on top of the other, in pitch darkness. They were unhurt, however, and

in a few moments Ken struck a match. A level tunnel yawned in front of them.

"By jingo! An underground passage!" muttered Ken. "Come on, Smudge, this looks exciting!"

They pressed along the tunnel, and when Ken, who was leading, could no longer feel the walls, he struck another match. They were standing in a rock cavern, or chamber of vast dimensions.

"Better go back, hadn't we?" suggested Smudge, with a shiver—for the air was chill down here. "I don't like the look of this."

He turned suddenly, for he had heard the padding of footsteps. Then, unexpectedly, from two side tunnels came cloaked figures, bearing flaming torches. The boys were trapped. They were quickly seized and held tightly. They saw that their captors were quite unlike the Arabs of the oasis. These men, in their flowing robes, looked like pictures of ancient Egyptians. They were, in fact, the Secret Priests of the Temple of Ra-ab!

Without a sound, without a word, the boys were carried onwards through the underground chamber. They passed through another tunnel, and came to a queer vault, where torches flickered, and where mummy caskets stood in rows against the walls.

They were carried across to a stone slab which, they now saw, was resting in the lap, as it were, of a grotesque stone idol. The idol had a repulsive face, and one of its enormous arms bore a gleaming sword. The two boys were tied, with the same speed and efficiency, to the slab, their heads strung back so that their throats were stretched tight.

The priests drew back, muttering strange incantations for the first time. One of them leaned on a great stone pedestal, which rocked gently so that the arm of the idol commenced moving, swinging downwards, bringing that gleaming sword nearer and nearer to the prisoners.

"The devils!" panted Ken. "That arm is on a pivot, Smudge! In a moment or two the sword will reach our throats and we shall be killed!"

The torture of it was agony. Farther and farther swung the great stone arm, bringing the flashing blade nearer to the helpless victims. Ken shuddered, for the sword had just touched his throat—the merest flick, like the feel of a butterfly's wing.

"It's all up, Ken!" panted Smudge. "Next time—"

Fascinated, they watched the arm ascend. It came down, nearer and nearer. . . .

Suddenly a mighty shout rang throughout the rock chamber, echoing strangely. Ken, who had shut his eyes, opened them. A gasp of joy escaped him. For he saw an enormous figure leaping across the stone floor. It was the figure of Mahmoud, the living mummy!

In the nick of time Mahmoud reached the falling arm, and with one wrench he grasped the descending sword, snapping it off short.

Crack! Crack! Two pistol-shots rang out. The robed priests were fleeing. A figure in white, wearing a helmet, and flashing a powerful electric torch, ran up. It was Sir Hogarth Drood himself.

"Boys—boys!" he exclaimed. "Thank Heaven you are safe!"

"Thanks to Mahmoud, sir," exclaimed Ken breathlessly.

"It was Mahmoud who led the way into this secret tomb," said Sir Hogarth. "Yes, you may thank him for your lives. Come! We must get out of here quickly."

The prisoners' bonds were cut, and, led by Mahmoud, they made their way out into the starry night.

Mystery and Drama with Marston Rovers in Egypt in next week's dazzling Footer yarn.

A THRILLING QUEST TO
A MYSTIC GHOSTLAND.

Our Gigantic Wonder Tale of the Arctic. Crammed
With New Thrills. Begin Below.

The ICE PIRATES



Startling Science Secrets
and a Fascinating Bunch
of Thrilling Characters in
this Great New Polar Tale
by BERNARD BULEY.

TO the Lost Land Roger Treherne, sixteen years old, dark, curly haired, his cousin Phil, fair, blue-eyed, and their ally, Captain Silent, followed Carl Lieberstrom. The rascally German had stolen the log-book of the *Pride of Bideford*, belonging to Sir Vallance Treherne, who, with his crew, had dwelt for more than three centuries in the Lost Land.

The log-book told of the strange monsters of the vast cavern-land, and of the weird phenomena, of the pirates and their treasure.

Lieberstrom reached the Lost Land and, having shot Captain Crossbones, took his place as leader of the Ice Pirates. He got separated from his rascally crew, however, and suffered untold agonies from the cold and lack of food. He was finally picked up by Captain Silent and Co. in a parlous plight.

While the British naval man was tending to his rival, the pirates launched a terrible broadside upon the *Pride of Bideford*, which was the signal for a fearful onset. After a terrific battle the pirates were repulsed, their ship a helpless wreck.

During the engagement, Carl Lieberstrom recovered from his temporary stupor, and, after a meal of seal-meat, he was able to creep from the cabin unobserved and climb aloft. From the top of the mizzen mast it was an easy step into the gondola car of the air-ship hovering above.

Then he reached out for the telephone. He was going to impersonate Captain Silent.

The Icequake.

"THAT you, Lieutenant Carruthers?"—long ago he had acquainted himself with the name of Captain Silent's second-in-command.

"Aye, Captain," came down the answer.

"I want you to cruise the airship towards the icebergs. In the dark, you understand. No search-lights, unless I give the order. I shall remain here in the observation car. Cruise at first with only one engine pulling, to make less noise. You understand?" he demanded sharply.

"Aye, aye, Captain," the unsuspecting Lieutenant Carruthers replied.

NON-STOP ADVENTURES AND EXCITEMENT IN A WORLD OF WONDER AND AWE BELOW THE ICE.

In a few minutes' time the observation car commenced to swing away through the dark upper reaches of the Arctic night. Carl Lieberstrom settled to a golden dream as the gondola car whirled aloft. The German submarine commander was aroused presently to contemplation of the scene beneath him.

If his satisfaction had been intense at his flight and the mode of it, quickly it was changed to snarling rage, as he watched the ships grappling below in the seas. The fight of the Devon men against the pirates presented a weird, eerie sight from aloft. As he saw the buccaners being driven back, and then the magnetic stone transported to the *Pride of Bideford*, the German raised his clenched fist.

He knew what it portended. Sir Vallance, Captain Silent and the boys would follow in the *Pride of Bideford*. And still there must be a battle for that argosy of gold.

But then anon his attention was caught by a scene being enacted on the ice ahead.

There were two figures against the glittering ice. They were the figures of Ned Bunnicome, the stout old Devon A.B. and Pitaluk, the Eskimo lad.

Of their dreary wait on the ice whilst stirring events were toward it need only be said that they were irked the more because they could see all that was going on—the sea fight—and were unable to join in.

But all at once something happened around them that startled them to the cores of their being.

The ice commenced to crack and snap under their feet with reports like rifle shots. A great white island of ice was tugging and tearing away. And on that island stood the block of magnetic masonry.

What was happening was actually simple of explanation. The airship passing overhead was drawing on the magnetic rock because in its hold was a still larger slab. The ice, weakened by the explosion of the dynamite Black Silas had thrown, was breaking away with its burden.

But these were phenomena contriving to the undoing of Ned Bunnicome and the Eskimo lad. A black gulf of icy, swirling water loomed at their very feet, and they saw the island parting from them.

"Jump!" cried Ned Bunnicome.

Together the old sailor and the Eskimo lad, leaped, and landed, falling headlong on the ice island. It was drifting rapidly. When they recovered themselves they made instinctively for the slab of masonry, and scrambled on to it the better to see how the *Pride of Bideford* had fared.

Suddenly the old Devon salt raised a cheer.

"'Er be coming through the lead in th' ice, bearing down on us, me lad!" he cried to the Eskimo. "All's well wi' th' young masters. Glory be!"

Up aloft Carl Lieberstrom saw all his deep-laid schemes ganging agley. And he gritted his teeth. From his superior altitude he prepared to strike.

The Eskimos Amok.

TENSE minutes followed for Carl Lieberstrom.

When he saw the *Pride of Bideford* forging the lead in the icefields beneath and the great ice slab ahead of it carrying Ned Bunnicome and the Eskimo lad, the schemer wished devoutly that he had in his possession just two sticks of the dynamite that Captain Silent had put to such effective use.

He would have blown that stately ship, its outline silhouetted by its poop lanterns and cresset fires, sheer out of the water. He would have dropped dynamite on Ned and Pitaluk on the floating ice island. And so he would have smashed competition at the outset. The race to the Arctic gold would have been to him alone.

Not having dynamite, the German snarled a guttural curse and took up the airship telephone.

"Forge ahead," he ordered harshly. "All engines, as fast as you can make it."

"But Captain Silent—" remonstrated Lieut. Carruthers in the airship high above.

"I will not listen," snapped the scheming German abruptly, and hung up the telephone on its hook.

He was afraid, for one thing, of being detected; afraid that the lieutenant might discover he was not Captain Silent. On top of that the fever was running high in him; the gold lure was calling him with crazy whispering voice. At all hazards he meant to reach the Arctic treasure first.

Used to implicit obedience to commands, Lieut. Carruthers in the airship demurred no further. He had his own troubles in the airship, concerning which he wished to inform Captain Silent more fully. But that worthy—as he judged it—not consenting to listen, the disgruntled officer in charge of the airship, crammed on full speed ahead.

And the time ensuing was crammed full with terrors for Carl Lieberstrom.

The gondola car depended upon twenty cables of strong electrified chain, and since the windlass in the airship had given of its fullest extent, it had been reinforced with a cable's length of rope, to lower the gondola to the ice. So that the German hung suspended in the car some two thousand feet beneath the airship.

The electric current running through the chain had the effect of stiffening it against wind resistance. But the gondola car was for observation purposes chiefly, if not solely. It was never designed to carry a lone passenger far beneath while the airship forged through the heights at the top of her speed.

Consequently now the mighty long cable commenced to sway; and the gondola car containing the scheming German was rocked through the icy Arctic air.

It commenced swinging in an arc, gently at first. Then wider and wider, travelling in sickening dizzy swoops. Carl Lieberstrom was rapidly overcome by a terrible sickness. He lived through an eternity of sick giddy fear, but at length made a desperate clutch at his reeling senses. There seemed little

more left in him than the flicker of dogged resistance. But it enabled him to snatch at the telephone.

"Stop! Stop der engines!" he shouted frantically.

"Ah!" It was a cry of relief from Lieutenant Carruthers in the airship above; "that you, Captain Silent? I've been ringing you for the past half-hour, trying to get you. Things are getting serious here, sir. The Eskimos hold the ship."

The German submarine commander merely snarled and whimpered in frenzied fear. But Lieutenant Carruthers took it as a sign to go on.

"You ordered me not to shoot any of these Aleut savages, sir. And I didn't want to. They're armed with spears and slings, and they could have wrecked the ship. The crew have been busy carrying out your orders, sir—too busy to offer organised resistance."

"Slow down engines," shouted the German unheedingly. "Stop—you hear vat I say!"

"Slow the engines? Very well, sir. Now these Eskimos, sir; they've done no harm yet, and we've got Nanpook, the chief, on our side to restrain 'em. But they're certainly savage enough."

Lieut. Carruthers rapidly explained the position more fully.

Nanpook, acting as intermediary, had told the Eskimos that if they harmed the airship, all might perish. And so they had stayed their hand. But now they had seen the icebergs beneath, and at the sight of Lost Land they had become wild to get down.

Nanpook had convinced them the airship could not take them down. The magnetic mountains repelled too close approach of the great dirigible. And as a last resort the hardy, squat little savages had determined to follow each other, climbing down the cable.

"They're coming down now, sir, some of them, on top of you!" Carruthers shouted through the 'phone, glad to get the news out at last. But probably feeling as relieved at the departure of his unwelcome guests. "They're desperate climbers, sir—little, but they're devils! They'll be atop of you, sir; you'll have to look out!"

"Vat?" shouted Carl Lieberstrom instantly. "Lower me to the ice!" he cried in fury and fear.

The airship was almost hovering now, and the gondola car had at last ceased its crazy swing through space. High above two score and more of squat savages were climbing down on the steel cable, one atop the other. A slip would have meant death, but they were used to such perilous climbs over the glacier lands they inhabited.

Lieberstrom glanced down at the majestic scene beneath him. Ahead stretched the wild, white gallery of the towering icebergs. The fantastic coloured bars of the Aurora Borealis lit them weirdly as they pulsed up from the Polar rim, then vanished. Lit the great mile upon mile stretch of icefields with the dark, jagged tear running through them—that tear that was the waterway. The lane of black water was a mile across.

And the observation car was descending like a great well bucket into this dark water.

The German gave a hoarse cry and started up. It seemed he had the choice of two evils. To remain and grapple with the horde of squat Aleut savages, or to plunge down into that icy water which must numb him and drown him almost instantly. He made a frantic snatch at the telephone.

Then he paused as he saw a great floating cake of ice in the lead beneath. Figures upon it—figures of human beings. It was the floating ice island he had seen previously, containing Ned Bunnicome and Pitaluk, the Eskimo lad. And according to the German's swift reckoning, the observation car would descend straight upon it.

He gripped his revolver, the empty revolver he had snatched from Captain Silent, in readiness. The Arctic treasure was near at hand, and Carl Lieberstrom meant to play the desperate game through to the bitter end.

Lieberstrom's Whiphand.

THE boys had slept for hours, Captain Silent had snatched a brief rest too. But now, aloft in the rigging of the *Pride of Bideford*, the Naval man, peering ahead through the gloom, suddenly caught his breath with a sharp exclamation. He had just glimpsed the mighty shape of the dirigible seeking lower altitude in a majestic dive.

And the discovery that the gondola car was missing had come as a blow to Captain Silent.

With the help of Sir Vallance's crew he had searched the ship from end to end for Carl Lieberstrom, and his failure to find his enemy had forced him to the only conclusion. The cunning Carl Lieberstrom had climbed into the gondola car.

Captain Silent realised that the German must have impersonated himself, and bluffed those in the airship. What mischief he had accomplished Captain Silent could only guess.

He had spent much of the intervening time with Sir Vallance in the state room, poring over the log book. And the old-time navigator had told him of the perils that lay ahead before they could get the vast store of gold.

Captain Silent had heated the dry batteries of his flash-lamp so that the torch worked again. Powerful as was the beam of light from his torch, it would not suffice to signal to Lieut. Carruthers high in the airship. And only faintly did it illumine Ned Bunnicome and Pitaluk, his Eskimo companion, on the large floating slab of ice some two hundred yards ahead in the dark broad water lane.

The magnetic masonry on that large floating ice island was drawing the *Pride of Bideford* on. Yet curiously enough the old ship could not approach nearer to Ned Bunnicome and the Eskimo on the ice slab. There must always be this quarter-of-a-mile of black icy water between.

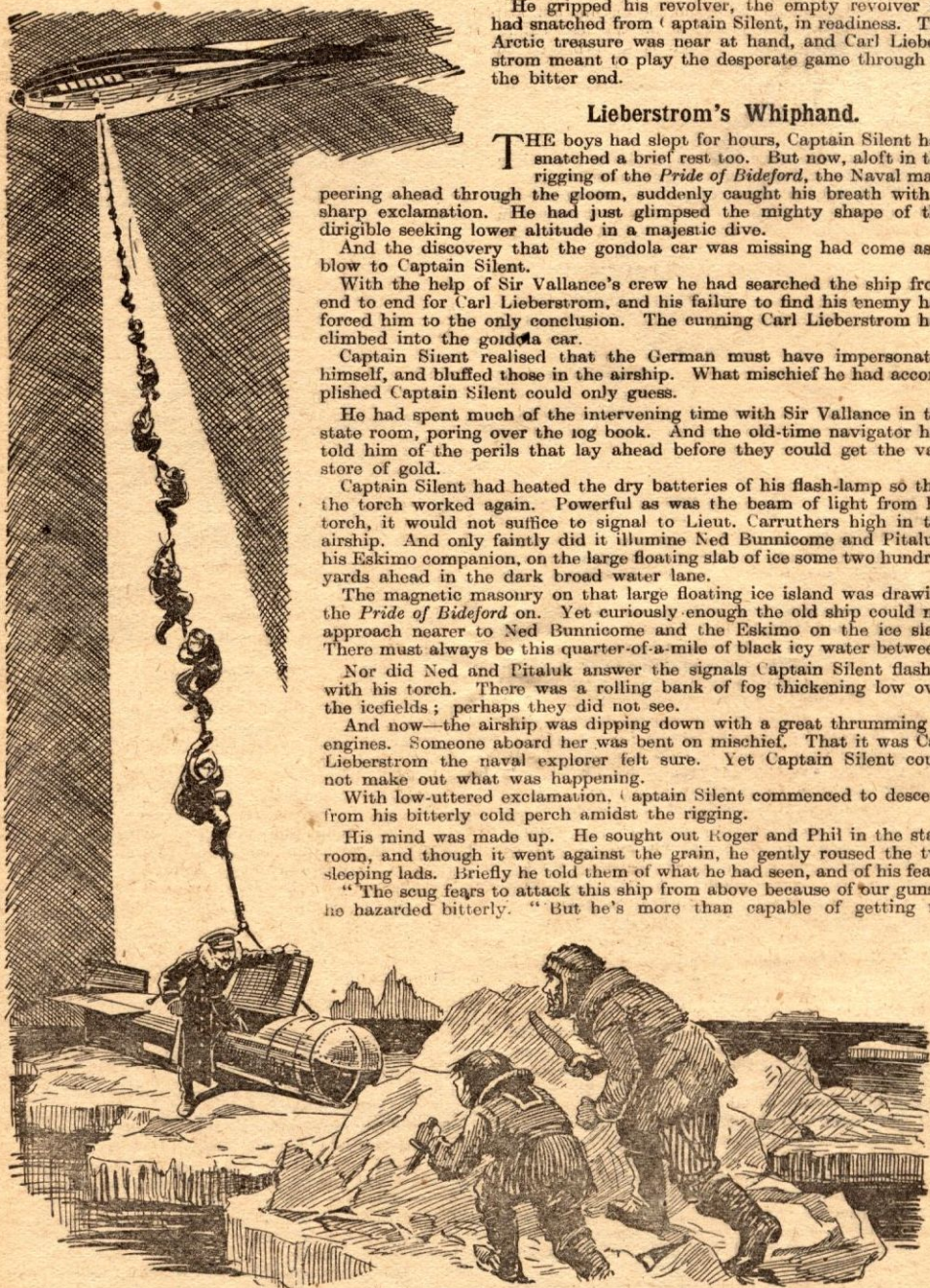
Nor did Ned and Pitaluk answer the signals Captain Silent flashed with his torch. There was a rolling bank of fog thickening low over the icefields; perhaps they did not see.

And now—the airship was dipping down with a great thrumming of engines. Someone aboard her was bent on mischief. That it was Carl Lieberstrom the naval explorer felt sure. Yet Captain Silent could not make out what was happening.

With low-uttered exclamation, Captain Silent commenced to descend from his bitterly cold perch amidst the rigging.

His mind was made up. He sought out Roger and Phil in the state room, and though it went against the grain, he gently roused the two sleeping lads. Briefly he told them of what he had seen, and of his fears.

"The seug fears to attack this ship from above because of our guns," he hazarded bitterly. "But he's more than capable of getting rid



ATTACKED BY ALEUTS.—Lieberstrom stepped from the gondola and drew a revolver. At the same time hordes of furred, squat, hideous figures came swarming down the rope from the airship.

of Ned and Pitaluk. Look here, lads, we're going to row out in one of the boats—if you're game."

Roger and Phil dashed the sleep from their eyes. They were thoroughly roused now at the thought of danger to old Ned and Pitaluk.

"Glad you woke us, sir," Roger affirmed quietly; "we're in this, eh, Phil?"

The fair-haired lad nodded quickly, his eyes burning with excitement.

It was an appalling enough business preparing for that journey, lowering the boat over the ship's side. Their breath hissed in great clouds of vapour in the frigid temperature. And heavily wrapped in furs though they were the cold bit at them like knives.

Captain Silent and the two boys got into the boat and bent to the oars.

It was freezing work, and if only to warm themselves, they laid to with fierce energy. And they had to make good way through the water to leave the towering hull of the *Pride of Bideford* astern.

Pausing in their labour after a while, they strained their eyes through the low-lying ice fog.

High overhead sounded the roar of the dirigible's engines. Ominous, somehow, like the first roll of thunder presaging a storm.

Suddenly a fierce exclamation was wrenched from Captain Silent's lips.

"Boys, look; they're in fearful danger. Row quickly!"

The boys heard cries and shouts now, and as they bent to the oars again, making the boat skim quickly through the black, gurgling water, they saw a fearful sight.

Carl Lieberstrom was clambering out of the observation car, which had landed on the ice. Confronting him, with their hands raised under the menace of his revolver, yet trying to back round the square slab of magnetic masonry, were Ned Bunnicome and Pitaluk.

All this the boys saw as if it were a vivid, terrible tableau through the curtain of the fog. The next moment their boat struck the ice heavily, and as they turned to scramble out they saw more.

Furred, squat hideous figures were dropping as if from the clouds, and swarming over the ice. The figures of the fierce Eskimos of Lost Land. They held their short spears poised to throw, and in another second those spears would have been hurled.

But Carl Lieberstrom cried out in the harsh Aleut lingo, which he well understood. Had he not bribed these Eskimos before with cheap beads, hatchets, and knives?

Only Captain Silent and Pitaluk amongst the little party understood what he said, but they saw that it had its immediate effect.

"Stay! Do not kill me, for I can show you how to get into the caves of Magnet Mountain, the entrance to which is at present blocked by a great iceberg. Within lie food and comforts. Seize these others, but venture not to harm me for I am powerful and know all."

Captain Silent was about to speak to them in the same tongue. But he realised the futility. They had answered to the whip of authority in Carl Lieberstrom's voice, and were closing upon the five members of the little party with an ugly rush.

Standing together, Captain Silent, Ned Bunnicome, Pitaluk and the boys put up a dogged fight. But they were unarmed, and overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers.

Roger saw a dark, bloated face with yellow teeth bared and little black button eyes gleaming savagely, and he smote it away. Only to find it replaced by another. Spears rained a welter of blows at the defiant five. But worst of all, when the squat,

hardy little Arctic men got a grip on waist or legs they clung like leeches, revealing a steel-wire strength. And the five found themselves dazed and breathless on the ice, pinned down by sheer weight of numbers, with horrid faces glaring into theirs and the reek of whale blubber and seal oil oppressing them almost to nausea.

Carl Lieberstrom stood with a wicked, glittering grin on his face, his hands in the pockets of the long naval overcoat he wore under the mass of ice-caked furs. Once more he was master of the situation, and he showed by the orders he gave that he was prepared to grasp it to the full.

THE battle on the ice island had been short and sharp. But nevertheless in the few minutes that had elapsed, there had come a sudden grinding shock, a collision. Though Captain Silent and Co. did not know it then, the ice island had reached the end of its journey and had grounded against the shore ice. The great icebergs loomed like towering white cliffs high into the darkness at about a mile distant over the sparkling, snow-covered ice. It was the end of the water lane.

But the *Pride of Bideford* was still ploughing on in that mile-wide lane of water, and she had appreciably lessened the distance between, now that the great ice island had halted.

Sir Vallance and the crew aboard were peering through the gloom. And shouts and cries rose on deck from the old Elizabethan sailors.

The fog, in the manner of ice fogs, had swirled aside like a phantom robe, and Sir Vallance, standing in the bows, could see the plight of Captain Silent and Co.

Carl Lieberstrom was crying hoarsely to the Eskimos.

"Hurl the magnetic stone overboard"—that was the purport of his orders—"else those on yonder ship will kill us all with the long tubes that spout fire and roar with loud voices!"

He meant the ship's guns, of course, and the Eskimos understood his meaning. In frenzied fear a number of them set their weight against the slab of masonry, sliding it over the ice towards the water's edge.

It dipped ponderously, and went down like a launched ship with a mighty splash, its suction pulling the ice island under a few feet of swirling icy black water for a few moments.

But the effect was instantaneous. The *Pride of Bideford*, no longer attracted by the magnetic masonry, fell aback, floundering with flapping canvas a quarter-of-a-mile astern. The crew crowded in the ratlines to give battle, shouted their impotent wrath as they realised they could not get to close quarters.

But there was another factor, with which Carl Lieberstrom had not so quickly reckoned. And that was the airship above.

Lieut. Carruthers had grown suspicious and anxious. And now, despite his orders to the contrary, he flooded the weird scene on the ice with the white glare of the airship's searchlight.

He could not fail to read the situation aright. Captain Silent and his companions were the prisoners of the Eskimos and of Carl Lieberstrom. The *Pride of Bideford*, impotent with her crew furious and brandishing cutlasses and pikes over the bulwarks, hung back.

There was only one thing Lieut. Carruthers could do, and he did it. The airship commenced forging on, high over the towering gallery of icebergs.

And the ship, answering the pull of the magnetic masonry in the airship, commenced to move forward once more.

Carl Lieberstrom's eyes glittered wickedly a moment as he saw the ship plunge as if to a breeze and come on again.

Then he grinned—his leering grin. It all fitted in with his plan to get at the lost galleons hidden amongst that mighty field of icebergs. The five galleons in which Captain Crossbones had laboriously stored the Arctic gold. Carl Lieberstrom, it has always to be remembered, had studied the log book till he knew its directions by heart. And he knew of the difficulties that lay ahead still in locating the treasure.

"They come on yet again," he cried in the harsh dialect to the Eskimos. "We must flee to Magnet Mountain with our prisoners. Does anyone of you remember where your forefathers hid the sledges that were used for seal hunting and journeys to the caves?"

Many remembered where the sleds were hidden, and they harshly cried answer. Throughout the years the sleds had been concealed in an igloo built up of a cairn of stones, ice and snow near by. This had once been the Eskimos' winter hunting quarters.

A number of the squat, furred figures hastened away, and were rapidly swallowed up in the Arctic darkness. But they soon reappeared, dragging native sleds of fine workmanship, being built of whalebone bound with leather thongs from the walrus and seal.

But Carl Lieberstrom could not afford to wait for their reappearance on the scene.

The *Pride of Bideford* was coming on with guns bristling. Her crew, under Sir Vallance, were busily sponging them and getting ready to launch an attack.

But it was only a gesture, and Sir Vallance Treherne knew it. He dared not fire his guns upon Carl Lieberstrom and the Eskimos whilst Captain Silent, Ned, and the boys were in their midst. He could only hope for an opportunity for himself and his men of Devon to get to close quarters.

This Carl Lieberstrom was intent on denying him. He ordered the Eskimos to drag their prisoners, who were now tightly bound with leather thongs, through the snow.

Thus Captain Silent, Ned and the boys had the mortification of being dragged through the whirling snow, fine and powdery as sand, at an amazing rate by these squat little savages. They saw the *Pride of Bideford's* towering hull and figurehead receding again, and when the sleds came upon the scene, they gave themselves up in despair of being rescued.

Roger and Phil found themselves lashed each to one of the sledges, as were Captain Silent, Ned, and Pitaluk. Then commenced a dizzy, sickening

whirling progress through the flying snow, compared to which what they had gone through before was as nothing. They were jolted almost out of their senses. The running Eskimos dragged them at the speed of a dog team travelling over a packed trail.

At last the whirling progress was halted, and Captain Silent and his companions, regaining some of their senses, found themselves under a towering ice cliff.

Magnet Mountain.

SICK and dazed, Captain Silent, Ned, and the boys lay with cramped legs tucked up under them, wondering what was to be their fate.

The hideous Eskimos, suggestively thumbing their knives and making grotesque pantomime all around them, were not reassuring. Nor was Lieberstrom's air of gloating triumph as he stared towards the ship.



THE BATS BEATEN BY THE BEAM.— Captain Silent threw down the torch as the giant bats swooped around the adventurers. Instantly the loathsome creatures circled away into the dazzling beam of light.

Captain Silent, with difficulty, managed to crane his head and look round; he gave a start.

"Why, the ship's coming over the shore ice after us!" he exclaimed to Roger Treherne by his side.

The lad's heart leapt with hope as he, too, craned round and saw the gallant old ship of Devon.

Undoubtedly she was traversing the shore ice, broken and rugged of character owing to discharges from the great glacier that now loomed over them. She was coming towards them, bumping against the ice hummocks and deep pits, filled with snow. And

all the time overhead was the mighty drone of the airship's engines.

Carl Lieberstrom, however, was still grinning in triumph.

The boys and Captain Silent saw him place a megaphone to his mouth all at once; he had taken the instrument from the ship's observation car.

The next moment his harsh voice rattled over the weird, bleak icefields.

"You cannot come any nearer, Sir Vallance. Ach! Look!"

The boys, craning round to see, felt a thrill of awe. The ship had stopped. At a quarter-mile distance it had suddenly lurched to a standstill. It almost seemed as if the scoundrelly treasure-seeker had power to stop it with his voice.

The *Pride of Bideford* had slewed round, presenting her larboard quarters full to them. Her side bristled with guns, and she was still able to fire a very effective broadside.

"How did Lieberstrom do it?" gasped Phil in dismay.

"He has no power," answered Captain Silent with quiet scorn. "It's the airship—you can no longer hear the hum of its engines. It's travelled high over the Great Glacier before us, and its magnetic masonry has ceased to pull the ship. Carl Lieberstrom knew it, the cunning fiend!"

Carl Lieberstrom grinned down at his enemy.

"Dat iss right," he nodded, showing his teeth in a white line beneath his moustache. "You haf studied the log book, mein frien'. You know den dat dese mighty bergs move in a circle round der Magnet Mountain—in der summer. In winter dey freeze and stiek fast, hein?"

"He's speaking the truth," Captain Silent said in a low voice to the boys and Ned Bunnicome. "The whole gallery of bergs mill slowly round and round in the summer, having the great mountain of magnetic rock as their pivot. Magnet Mountain, as it is called, is honeycombed with caves, and at present its entrance is blocked by the great iceberg before which we are now lying."

"Ja, das ist der truth," grinned Carl Lieberstrom. "And der ship's guns are going to move this mighty mountain of ice."

He conferred harshly, gutturally with the Eskimos. And, to the boys' astonishment, the squat little savages betrayed fear and alarm. Neither Roger, Phil, nor Ned Bunnicome could even guess what all the gabble was about. But Captain Silent, who had been listening attentively, now explained.

His sentences were terse, close-clipped, but there was an undercurrent of tense excitement in his voice.

"You see, lads, Lieberstrom proposes that the ship should fire a broadside into the ice. He hopes to move the whole circle of bergs, and disclose the cave entrance through the mountain. Through the caves on a great plateau in the centre of the milling bergs, is the Arctic treasure!"

Roger breathed quickly.

"Sir Vallance won't fire his guns at Lieberstrom's command," he said.

"If he doesn't—our lives will pay forfeit," commented Captain Silent grimly.

"But why are the Eskimos so afraid?" asked Phil quickly.

"There are swarms of giant bats in the cave," answered Captain Silent. "They must be fought and speared and trapped. But our friend Lieberstrom proposes to dash through in his urge to get at the treasure. Ah, listen . . ."

Carl Lieberstrom was harshly talking to the leader of the Eskimos. Now he grinned, and crossed over to Captain Silent.

"We will let you loose, and free—if you will go

into the caves first, all five of you," he purred. "It is your choice of life, and the treasure, Herr Kapitan Silent."

The naval explorer measured his enemy with a contemptuous glance.

He understood only too well. They were to be sent into the caves first to provide food for the giant bats. When the awful creatures were surfeited, Carl Lieberstrom and his Eskimos would make a dash through to the gold, with comparative chances of success.

And yet, suddenly, Captain Silent's blood was fired. His jaw jutted in bulldog fashion, and his eyes took on a savage gleam.

"Cut us loose, you hound," he snapped contemptuously, "before we freeze here. And we'll do what you say. I pass my word we will make no attempt to escape."

Carl Lieberstrom bowed mockingly. And so, somewhat to their bewilderment, the boys and Ned Bunnicome were cut free, and allowed to stamp in the snow to restore something of circulation and warmth.

As the whole party moved out of range, however, Captain Silent whispered to them words of warning. He had passed his word that they should all dash into those caves, infested with giant bats.

What chance had they of coming through safely with their lives? Small enough, it seemed, for Captain Silent's face was grave and set.

"But it's our only hope, lads," he whispered; "these Eskimos would kill us out of hand. We're in the hands of the enemy, and we've got to make a dash—for our lives."

Captain Silent himself, through the megaphone, instructed Sir Vallance Treherne, aboard the ship, to fire on the berg that concealed the entrance to the caves of Magnet Mountain.

It was by no means certain that the ship's gunfire, however, would shatter and move those vast tons of ice before the mountain. But the experiment had to be tried, and in a breathless hush the boys waited and watched.

All thirty of the guns were brought to bear on the great ice cliff towering ahead of the ship. The gunners bent at their stations. Sir Vallance paced the poop. Then suddenly he gave the word.

There was a harsh, shattering roar, and the whole larboard side of the *Pride of Bideford* burst momentarily into flames. Her guns had been loaded and double loaded, and ere the echoes had time to roll back, there sounded the mighty crash of that terrible broadside against the iceberg.

With an ear-shattering roar and crash the ice collapsed and toppled. The cannon had hit truly, and now revealed that those tons and tons of crashing ice were but the winter covering to Magnet Mountain.

It reared up like a colossal black fang, its top nuzzling in the black heights. And in its side was revealed the black yawning entrance to the caves.

Carl Lieberstrom turned upon Captain Silent.

"Your word—the word of an officer and a gentleman!" he barked.

"Come on, boys! Come on, Ned," cried the naval explorer. They dashed up over the ragged broken blocks of ice, dashed into the dark cavern.

Darkness within those mountain caves. Crawling darkness. Side by side and panting, the boys, Captain Silent, and Ned Bunnicome ran.

A swoop and screech. Something flapped into Phil Treherne's face, causing him to utter a choked cry and reel back. He was aware of a horror and fear that tingled through him like fire. He felt a sharp pain, like the stab of a knife, in his forehead.

"Roger, something got me . . ."

"Gerroff!" It was Roger Treherne's ferocious,

WHEN WAS YOUR BIRTHDAY?

Were You Fourteen on July 12th Last?

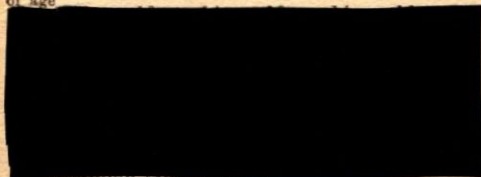
EVERY reader whose age last birthday appears on this page, together with the correct date, can claim a wonderful Birthday Gift. Lists of dates and ages are given below. Look out for your birthday. If you cannot claim a present to-day, you may be able to do so next week.

This week's special presents will be sent to all readers who claim that they were

14 years old on JULY 12th last.

In addition, every reader whose age last birthday appears in the list given below, under the correct birthday date, will qualify for a delightful present from a splendid range of birthday gifts.

Birthday Dates	Feb.	Mar.	May	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
Years	17	31	7	12	15	22	4
of age	8	9	10	11	12	13	14



Boys' Magazine,
Pump Yard, Manchester, 4 (Comp.),
to arrive not later than first post on Thursday,
February 2nd.

boyish cry. Stout-hearted though he was, stalwart Roger suddenly became panicky. All around him there was a screeching like the wail of witches; giant black things hovered, swooped and struck him blindly. And when they struck a sharp pain followed, and he felt the trickle of blood.

Roger was afraid, both for himself and Phil. "Giant bats!" he cried chokingly. "They're all round us! Phil—fight 'em—your coat off!"

He dragged off his own sealskin jacket and flapped it about him madly. Ned Bunnicome was crying out in his Devonshire accent and beating about him wildly. Faint from loss of blood and crying out, Roger, Phil, and Pitaluk felt that they could hold out no longer.

Then Captain Silent, who all this time had been fighting grimly against insuperable odds, suddenly remembered his powerful torch. He dragged it out and switched it on.

Renewed cries broke from the lads at sight of the horrid creatures.

They had heads like rats, gleaming cruel little eyes, these giant bats. They sickened the boys to look upon. And the result of Captain Silent switching on the electric torch was but to make matters worse, for the bats thickened all around to a black cloud.

"They're attracted to the light . . . run, boys, run!" cried Captain Silent.

He dropped the torch and led the way. The boys dashed through the swarm of bats, beating with their fists at the horrid rat faces. Ned Bunnicome followed.

But how long would the loathsome bats remain round the light, once they discovered that they had been cheated of their prey?

Can the gallant adventurers fight free of these nightmare creatures? You simply must not miss next week's episodes crammed with excitement and thrills.

Lists of Birthday Gifts will also be found in IDEAS and Town Talk, BETTY'S PAPER and WEEK END NOVELS this week. Tell all your family about these wonderful offers, and, above all, don't fail to look for your own birthday in each of these splendid gift scheme lists.

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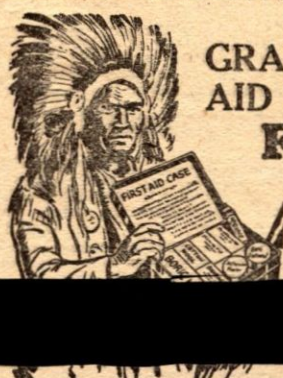
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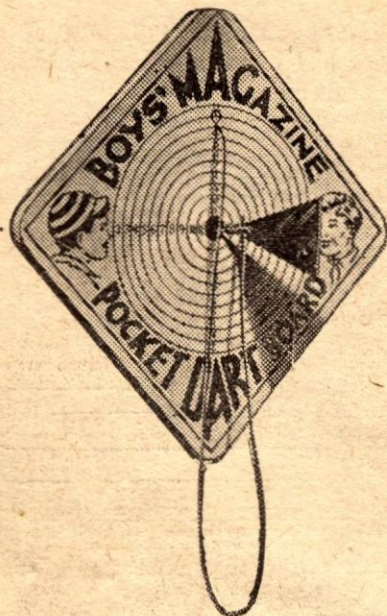
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VENGEANCE IN TERRORLAND

(Continued from page 32.)

Captain Tracey and his companions raced across the rough, rocky ground. Towering above them, on the summit of a mount, was an enormous crag, misshapen, monstrous, bare. It stood out like a building, and on every side the hill was desolate.

They reached a slab of rock near the base, and at a touch it swivelled back. Down they raced, Harry first, then Bottles, and finally Captain Tracey. The latter swivelled the rock into place, and shot two enormous bolts home.

"Safe now, boys," he said quietly.

Outside, the enemy, swarming over the very spot, looked in and about the rocks—but never thought

of the simple truth. They believed that the raiders had fled across the countryside. Yet here they were, close at hand. They went through a short rock tunnel and then mounted a shaft. They came up into a remarkably cosy dug-out—a rock chamber with neat sleeping bunks, a cooking stove, shelves stocked with food and water supplies, and everything necessary for a long stay. It was like the winter quarters of an arctic expedition.

This secret retreat was actually situated inside the great barren rock which surmounted the hill. For the rock was hollow, and for weeks Captain Tracey had been working at night, constructing a tunnel and slowly but surely carrying the supplies into the dug-out. Not until the last preparation had been made had the trio essayed their first raid. There was nothing of chance in any of Captain Tracey's activities. He had come on this mission grimly determined to succeed.

"By jove, dad, that was pretty warm!" said Harry as they faced one another in the dug-out. "Everything would have been all right if that table hadn't given way."

"Strike me black and blue!" exclaimed Bottles. "I thought it was all up with you, Master 'Arry! Your dad's a mivvy! He didn't turn a bloomin' 'air."

"I'm glad the table gave way," said Captain Tracey, his eyes glowing. "For it enabled me to get a look at the bullion. It's there—and the crooks are reorganising. Boys, we're safe in this retreat of ours, and we deserve some sleep. We have a long and grim fight before us—but we hold the trump card."

Terrorland was destined to see many grim and stirring adventures in the near future!

The Joyous Juniors of St. Giddy's decide on Law and Order next week and become the Schoolboy Lawyers. Look out for this ripping school yarn.

Harry Tracey and Bottles Come Back in More Amazing Exploits and Adventures.

ANOTHER GREAT NEW SERIES OF WEIRD STORIES OF THE GARDEN OF GHOULS!



Figures of Mystery.

STELTH CASTLE, standing miles from any village or hamlet in the grim fastnesses of the Harz Mountains, was black and forbidding under the night sky.

Terrorland! The castle and its walled estate had been well-named! It was not long since that this sinister estate had been the headquarters of the greatest criminal organisation in history. It had been owing to the efforts of Captain Tracey, of the British Secret Service, and his plucky son, Harry, that the relentless confederation had been shattered. Without any outside help they had waged war against the Supreme Unknown and his gang; and they had scored a triumph.

The walls, which had been built in medieval days, were so thick that they contained secret passages running from end to end. To-day they were moss and lichen-covered, crumbling in places, but virtually as strong as ever. For months the ancestral home of Count von Stelth had been locked up; the great gates had been fastened, and the property had been left to develop into an utter wilderness, where the wild creatures of the mountains roamed without check.

In the faint, elusive starlight, three mysterious figures approached a section of the wall, crossing the hard, rocky ground to the south of the estate. Figures as fantastic as any of the grotesque Shapes which had once haunted Terrorland. Dressed entirely in black, to match the night, the phantom shapes made no sound upon the hard ground; their

Don't Miss This Thriller, Featuring THE MAN WITHOUT A FACE.

arms, even to their hands, were encased in the same blackness. At the ends of their arms were queer-looking suckers, like those of the octopus. Their heads were encased in round helmets with bulging and hideous-looking eye-pieces. In the centre of each, at the forehead, was a big protuberance, not unlike a horn, and on either side were ear-shaped projections.

They reached the wall, and then an extraordinary thing happened. The tallest of the trio commenced climbing the wall deliberately and actively, and he mounted without a falter, in spite of the fact that the great wall was of smooth stone, with scarcely a niche or a crevice. He climbed it like a spider, his feet and hands attaching themselves to the stonework apparently by suction, and working automatically, releasing themselves freely and without delay.

The others followed in just the same way.

Having reached the top of the wall in uncanny silence, they stole across the great width of it, and descended into the castle grounds with the same ease. Before them the towers and turrets and battlements of the castle were dimly silhouetted against the night sky.

The leader paused, and he seized the arms of his two companions, drawing them to him. Their weird helmets came into contact one with the other.

"We've got to take it carefully now, boys," said the tallest figure. "The castle is reputed to be deserted, but I'm taking nothing for granted."

It was the voice of Captain Tracey! And his companions were none other than Harry Tracey

and Jim Glass, otherwise known as "Bottles." Jim was really an aero-mechanic, and he was Harry's boon pal.

"Never mind the risks, Dad," said Harry, his voice throbbing with excitement. "You've always said that attack is the best form of defence."

"Strike me up a lamp-post!" came an eager murmur from Bottles. "These togs are a knockout!"

Bottles spoke truth. The suits and helmets, designed by Captain Tracey himself, were little short of marvellous. And they were proof against any form of surprise or attack. During their previous sojourn in Terrorland the redoubtable trio had had all the odds against them. This time, they had come prepared.

IT was an ambitious mission. Some weeks earlier Captain Tracey had been commissioned privately by the Association of European Banks Limited, a powerful organisation which looked after the interests of all the great banking concerns of Europe. Captain Tracey had obtained special leave from the Secret Service in order to embark upon this enterprise.

It appeared that many banks, owing to the depredations of the lately disbanded criminal gang, had lost fabulous sums in the shape of gold bullion and specie. It had never been recovered and, although Stelth Castle and its grounds had been searched from end to end, no sign of the gold had been found. Yet it was believed to be there—gold to the value of three million sterling. It was Captain Tracey's task to locate it—and then to effect its recovery.

It was a formidable proposition, for Captain Tracey knew well enough that the Supreme Unknown, the criminal genius of the gang, was back in Stelth Castle—lurking there like some monstrous ghoul, surrounded by many of his former myrmidons.

So Captain Tracey had a double objective—to recover the gold and to stamp out the crooks. He did not hesitate to take Harry and Bottles with him, for they had already proved their mettle. And this was essentially a job for a limited party. Gigantic raids would have been worse than useless. The only hope was to surprise the crooks.

CAUTIOUSLY, the adventurers approached the great arch which led into the wide baillie, or courtyard. And as though from nowhere, figures merged out of the night, two from the left, two from the right. A challenge sounded, and the words were uttered in German.

"Halt! Who comes?" demanded a low voice.

Without even pausing, the three pressed on.

Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud! Automatic pistols, effectively silenced, spat fire and lead. But still the trio advanced. Every inch of those suits and helmets was bullet proof, even at close range.

"*Mein Gott!*" went up a gasp. "Are these men or devils?"

Devils, apparently, for another volley of bullets, aimed with unerring precision, had no effect. On came the three. Then their hands were thrust out—just as the guards were about to bolt.

Sizzzzzzzz! The curious weapons which the three had removed from their waists—holding them by means of suction—were like squat flash-lights. From them came an intense spray of luminous vapour. It was a form of gas invented by Captain Tracey, and as it hissed round the enemy, it spread, completely surrounding them in a greenish halo. And they stood as though petrified—for the effect of that gas was to render their muscles and nerves rigid.

Yet they remained in full possession of their wits—and could not lift a finger or move an inch. Thus

they stood, and were destined to stand until the effects wore off.

In the same irresistible advance the raiders reached the sheer wall of the castle itself. They climbed the wall, mounting unceasingly, moving swiftly upwards towards the battlements.

The Castle Of Crooks.

SMALL wonder that Harry and Bottles were full of serene confidence!

Up they went, spider-like, for Captain Tracey knew the uselessness of attempting to break into the castle from the ground level. Climbing over the battlements, they passed along the flat roof until, presently, they reached a skylight. This was of modern origin, and although strong, Captain Tracey conquered it within a minute.

At a sudden touch of a hidden switch, the protuberance in the captain's helmet flashed into life. It was, in fact, a powerful searchlight. The captain took another weapon from his belt, and it looked rather like an ordinary pistol. But when he touched the trigger a thin, almost invisible flame leapt out,



Captain Tracey peered through the hole that he had burned in the door with his torch.

It was a super-oxy-acetylene jet, and as the flame touched the glass, the glass melted.

In a moment the skylight was unfastened. Captain Tracey dropped lightly into the room below. Harry and Bottles followed.

"It was easy, dad!" whispered Harry, touching his helmet against his father's. "What do we do now?"

"Explore the castle," replied the captain. "I believe the crooks are living here in secret. If we can give them a scare, so much the better. Come!"

They left the small room, and came out upon a stone-flagged corridor, at the end of which a staircase led steeply downwards. Captain Tracey was in the lead, and he, alone, showed a light. The knowledge that they were safe from pistol shots gave them

complete confidence. They were ready to face any number of enemies.

Down another flight of stairs they went, and then into a wider corridor. All was gloom and silence. In places, great cobwebs festooned the corners, and even stretched across the corridors, proving that no human beings had been here for months.

But suddenly Captain Tracey halted, and the light in his helmet went out. Each helmet was fitted with microphone-like "listeners." Sounds which were normally inaudible to the human ear were easily picked up by these delicate instruments. Captain Tracey had heard voices.

He walked on with extra caution, warning his companions to be careful. They turned a sharp corner of the corridor, passed down a wide, arched passage, and came out upon a great stone balustraded gallery. Before this, however, they had seen a vague glow of light, shooting upwards from somewhere below.

The mystery was explained to them now. The gallery ran the entire length of a vast medieval hall. And as they stood against the stone balustrade, they looked down upon an astonishing scene.

The hall was in dense shadow, except for a patch in the very centre. Here stood a great table, and round it sat at least a dozen grotesque figures. Captain Tracey gripped the arms of Harry and Bottles as he stood between them. He was fairly quivering with triumph—for this strange party, below, proved the truth of his theories.

Suspended from a beam near the table, a light glowed down upon figures which were clothed in red, and figures which were clothed in green. At the head of the table sat a man in rich purple—his face masked, his head hooded. Nearest to him were the red figures, the green occupying the bottom of the table.

The man at the head was the Supreme Unknown himself—that evil genius who was sometimes known as the Man Without a Face. The others were Red Controls and Green Controls. At one time such men had been in charge of vast working parties throughout the length and breadth of the Stelth estate. Captain Tracey did not doubt that the Supreme Unknown was now preparing to revive the full activities of Terrorland.

"Our object is to strike fear into the enemy," whispered Captain Tracey. "Boys, we'll take a chance. As we dealt with the men outside, so we'll deal with the Supreme Unknown himself. Then we'll vanish—leaving the enemy in doubt and fear."

"But the range is too great, dad," said Harry. "Not if we jump," replied his father, softly. "Come. We'll leap into the centre of the table—and the surprise, I fancy, will be complete."

Harry and Bottles glowed. This was the real thing! Attack all along the line! They gently hoisted themselves over the balustrade, stood poised for a moment, and then at a signal from Captain Tracey, they leapt. Down—down!

Crash! They landed in the very centre of the table—black, mystery figures from the unknown! With wild shouts, the cloaked crooks leapt back. But something happened which was not in the programme.

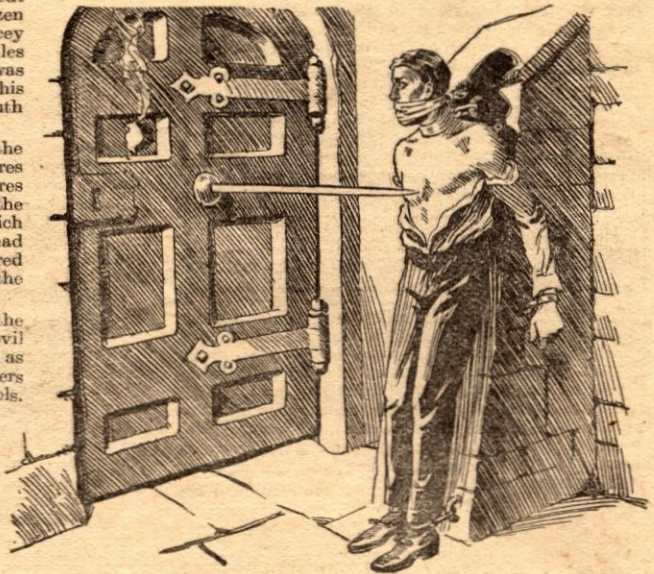
Even as the trio struck, the table shot downwards through a great gap in the floor! Captain Tracey had not known of this secret device for suddenly ridding the room of the table—and the violent shock had released the hidden catch. Down it went, carrying Captain Tracey and Bottles with it. But Harry, losing his balance, fell, staggering sideways. In that last second he was grabbed by quick hands, and held.

Slam! As though by magic the table returned to its former position—but Harry's companions were no longer there. They had been shot off below, and sent hurtling down a sloping stone shaft to the castle dungeons.

"Remove that helmet!" snarled the Supreme Unknown.

Harry resisted; but he was helpless in the hands of so many enemies. They unfastened the ingenious catches, and the helmet came off with ease.

"By Heaven! Young Tracey!" exclaimed the Man Without a Face. "We might have guessed! Again they defy the terrors of this stronghold! But this time Captain Tracey is too daring. Quickly! Get the boy out of that suit! I have a plan."



DEATH THROUGH THE DOOR.—Horror-stricken, Harry awaited his fate, for as soon as the door was opened the sword would be driven into him . . .

Harry, who had been so confident, now felt helpless. Deprived of his wonderful protective suit, he was at the mercy of the crooks. Stripped of it and still held, he was made fast to one of the black, grim old walls. And immediately afterwards he saw the fiendishness of the Supreme Unknown's plan. For he was roped to a jutting buttress of the wall, and just near him stood a great iron-studded oaken door. To this door a gleaming sword was lashed, point outwards. It was tested. The door, when opened, would send the sword clean through Harry's heart!

"Now!" exclaimed the Supreme Unknown, gloatingly. "We shall inform Captain Tracey as to how he may escape from the dungeon. He will come up the circular stairway, and as he thrusts open this door he will kill his own son!"

The Escape.

FALLING down the rock shaft, Captain Tracey and Bottles had been deposited into a great square dungeon, in which there were two massive metal doors. Having got to their feet, the prisoners switched their lights on and it seemed, during the first moments, that escape was impossible. But Captain Tracey had come prepared!

It was the Supreme Unknown's plan to shout down information concerning a secret door—an exit which was not apparent. But for some minutes Captain Tracey and Bottles were left entirely to themselves. They spent those minutes well.

"We must get up to Harry!" exclaimed Captain Tracey, urgently. "Come, Bottles! There's not a second to lose! They might kill him in their fury. I was a fool to take such a chance."

He was nearly distracted with worry. Again he took that pistol-like flame projector, and when he directed the flame at the steel door, it melted just as the glass had done. A fine line was cut in the centre of the door—a complete circle. When the circle was made, the inner part of it fell through at a kick from the captain. That intense flame melted steel as rapidly as a wire cuts through cheese.

Crouching low, Captain Tracey and Bottles passed through. But there was no passage here—nothing but a great stone chamber, with no exit. It was, in fact, an inner dungeon. The captain was on the

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point of turning away, in order to attack the other door, when he paused. A number of small, but heavily made wooden cases were packed against the wall at the far end. Captain Tracey affixed the suckers of his arms to the nearest box, and pulled with all his strength. It failed to move. And the captain could scarcely believe his good luck. Here, at the very first attempt, he had made the great discovery! This dungeon, in fact, was the treasure chamber of the confederation! It was stacked with stolen gold! Every one of those boxes contained bullion and specie!

But Captain Tracey was robbed of much satisfaction by the knowledge that Harry was not here to share his triumph. Harry was in danger! Without a word to Bottles, the Captain swung round, made his way through the hole in the door, and then he attacked the second door.

In just the same way, a circular hole was made. They passed through. And then, suddenly, a voice sounded from above. Captain Tracey went back, and, staring up, he saw a light at the top of the narrow shaft in the dungeon roof.

"Yourson is in our hands, Captain Tracey," said the Supreme Unknown, his voice echoing strangely down the shaft. "If you will press the third stone from the top corner to the right of the smallest door, a part of the wall will swing back. You may then ascend a stairway. At the top you will find a door. I am anxious to discuss terms."

"I will come," replied Captain Tracey, curtly—and, by opening a valve in his helmet, his voice was audible.

He touched the stone, and, sure enough, a section of the wall swung back. As a matter of fact, this exit led into the same short corridor as the second door. And as Captain Tracey reached a narrow stone stairway he thought rapidly. He was full of grim suspicion. There was something significant in the Supreme Unknown's suggestion. Knowing the ruthless criminal as he did, the captain believed that some dread fate was marked out for Harry.

Thus when he reached the door at the top of the stairway he paused. Once again he brought that queer flame-thrower into action, and one touch was sufficient. A film of smoke appeared for a moment, and there was a neat hole bored clean through the door. To this, Captain Tracey applied an eye-piece of his helmet. And he caught his breath in sharply. For he could see the deadly nature of the trick. Harry was in full view, bound helplessly—and there was the sword.

"The devils!" muttered Captain Tracey.

But he was ready for them. Judging his distance, he cut a similar hole near the door-handle. That flame, spurting through, quite invisible, played upon the base of the sword, where it was bound to the door. Captain Tracey had his eye glued to the other spy-hole, and he saw the steel melt as though by magic—until the sword was on the point of falling in half.

Then, with a sudden thrust, he opened the door until the sword came to within an inch of Harry's breast. Round swept the captain's hand—watched in amazement by the crooks. They knew, in that flash, that he was aware of the trick, and they were baffled. Their amazement was staggering, however, when the sword, at the lightest touch, snapped like a carrot and fell clattering to the floor.

"No, my-friend, not this time!" snapped Captain Tracey.

As he spoke he strode forward, and the weapon in his hand splashed its green vapour. In the same moment Bottles got busy. The Supreme Unknown and his Controls were left standing—transfixed to the floor, helpless. Their diabolical plan had failed.

"Oh, dad!" gasped Harry. "I thought it was all up."

"Your suit and helmet!" exclaimed his father. "Bring them! Don't trouble to put them on. There's no time!"

There was every reason for Captain Tracey's urgency. For those peculiar "guns" contained only a limited amount of energy. They were now nearly exhausted—and would be useless until recharged. The "dose" which the Supreme Unknown and his Controls had received was merely a quarter strength one. Within a few minutes they would recover the use of their limbs and would give chase.

They could do no harm to Captain Tracey or Bottles—but they could kill Harry. Speed was therefore essential. With their miniature search-lights flashing they leapt across a great hall, reached a door, and Captain Tracey shot the bolts. Into the night they fled, across the baillie, and then out into the grounds. They saw figures dimly chasing them—proving that there were others in this stronghold. But they ran like the wind, and when they reached the outer wall, Captain Tracey commanded Harry to leap upon his shoulders.

Up they went, climbing spider fashion, making their exit as they had entered. And even with the extra weight of Harry, the captain accomplished the feat with ease. Harry himself was carrying the suit and helmet, gloatingly pleased that neither had fallen into the enemy's hands.

As they ran off into the darkness they heard the shouting of men. They could see, too, the flashing of lights. The enemy was in stern chase.

(Continued on page 28.)

THE TALKIE THRILL-HUNTERS
IN THE WHITE WILDERNESS.

NEWS FILM-MAKING BECOMES
STARK, TERROR-FILLED DRAMA.



Murdock was gloating over the Avalanche he had set in motion to Sweep his Enemies to Death when a flying rock hit him! An incident from the Thriller Below.

"NOW, Mister Murdock, we're ready!" said Joe Grouse, the stout little camera man of Imperial Films Ltd., twiddling the stops of his camera. "If yer'll just say yer piece me an' Jerry here will make a talkie picture of it."

Gat Murdock smirked.

"Reckon I'm all set, gents!" he said. "Guess I'm sure crazy to look my best in my first talkie, an' I want the folks to git several good optic loads o' the big noise o' Golden Gulch Camp."

There was no doubt that the whole world would be clamouring to see Gat Murdock on a talkie, for he had recently made the biggest gold-find on record, and as a result was now making millions.

Thus it was that the Talkie Thrill Hunters, those three red-hot filmgetters, who, with portable camera and sound registering sets, always got the goods, had come north to the camp at Golden Gulch.

While Daredevil Don Carroll, the leader, had stayed in the camp itself to make arrangements for their stay, Joe Grouse, who was a camera man to his finger tips, had come up through a blizzard to Gat Murdock's sumptuous shack half-a-mile outside the camp to get pictures, with sound effects, of the man who had made the strike.

It had been no difficult task to persuade Murdock to pose. The fellow was simply eaten up with conceit and had insisted on changing into his best togs, while in each hand he held a gold nugget that would have almost bought up a railroad.

"Ready, Jerry!" Joe Grouse called. "Get 'er goin'."

Jerry Bevan, the youngest of the Talkie Thrill Hunters, switched on the sound recorder, while Joe began to turn his camera. Sweining out his chest, Gat Murdock started to say his piece.

"Folks, these is jest li'l bits o' yeller dirt that'll cash in fer fifty thousand dollars apiece," he said. "You might think it's luck that's made me the richest guy breathin', but you'll be wrong—it's brains an' singlehandedness. I use ta hev a partner once, but he died three weeks before I struck Golden Gulch, that's what I called this camp after I'd registered my claim, an' that's sure what its bin—Golden."

At a sign from Joe, Jerry stopped the sound recorder.

"Say, Mister Murdock, that's a good touch about losing your partner just before you struck rich," Joe said. "D'you mind explainin' how it came about?"

"Sure, I'll explain!" Murdock said. "Guess, folks," he went on, when the apparatus was going again. "It was mighty hard the way young Rolly Phillips cashed in. He was a real good hombre—young and quick-headed maybe—but a mighty good pard. He wasn't strong, though, and he got fever. I nursed him like his mother would, but I reckon it was no use, an' when he passed out I was real cut up. After that I just went crazy trying fer gold jest anywhere, an' that's how I came to make my strike in this gulch here, where nobody else thought o' lookin', right under Sleeping Mountains. Yeah, it sure was a pity about young Rolly Phillips."

As he paused he chanced to look towards one of the windows of the shack and his eyes filled with wonder. Jerry saw the blood drain from his face, and he switched his own gaze over to the window.

There a face peered through the glass, a gaunt, bearded face with hungry, hate-rimmed eyes that bored straight into Gat Murdock's fear-stricken ones. The miner swayed as if he had seen a ghost, and clutched the gold nuggets tightly in one hand.

"Mad Jake!" he gasped.

Suddenly rage seemed to flood through him. His hand flashed down to the gun-butt swinging low at his hips. Before he could fire, however, there was a double explosion, and the crashing splinter of glass. One bullet shattered the glass of the oil-lamp, the other drilled Murdock's hand, and with a cry of pain, he dropped his gun.

Gat Murdock, Jerry Bevan, and Joe Grouse could do nothing but gape as Mad Jake's gun was poked through the broken window and directed steadily upon Murdock.

The fellow's hate-rimmed eyes never left the miner. He said no word but pointed eloquently toward the nuggets in Murdock's hand. Then he held up one finger. His meaning was only too clear and in the face of that menacing gun Murdock dare not refuse.

He tossed one nugget into Mad Jake's extended palm. The weather-beaten fingers clutched it and withdrew. Then with a crazy laugh the gun was withdrawn and Mad Jake disappeared.

For a moment all three were left speechless. Murdock was still white, his legs trembled, but he reached down and recovered his gun from the floor.

"Mad Jake!" he muttered. "An' it looked like—like—Gawsh, it can't be him!"

Suddenly he plunged to the door, jerked it open and, amidst a flurry of snow, slammed the door shut.

"G-gosh! That bloke sure is scared!" Joe gasped, excitedly. "If he catches Mad Jake there'll be a murder. Come on, Jerry. Help me change this film and pack the outfit, then let's go. Where there's excitement there's pictures, an' that's where we're going!"

A Devilish Plot.

It was a matter of a few minutes to change the film and pack the apparatus, then, with it divided in the packs, they plunged out into the blizzard. Short as the time had been, Mad Jake and Gat Murdock had been swallowed up in the storm.

"Better try Mad Jake's cabin if we can find it in this muck," Jerry declared shrewdly.

They staggered through the whirling, stinging snowflakes towards the cabin nestling upon the lower slopes of Sleeping Mountain.

Mad Jake was quite a character. He had drifted in three weeks before, and he wandered about the camp, the butt of rough jokes, doing nothing at all. Joe and Jerry had only a vague idea of the position of Jake's hut, and they tramped around for some time before they descried the dim outlines of the shack through the snow.

"Better be careful!" Jerry warned. "Both those fellows have got guns and I've no desire to be perforated."

They approached a window. The storm drowned any sounds they might have made, but they clearly heard Gat Murdock's voice rasping triumphantly.

"Mad Jake, eh? Wa-al, I reckon Mad Jake as this is yore fadeout. Reck'n I've ideas o' my own o' gettin' rid o' yore dead body."

While Joe was getting out the sound registering apparatus and feverishly fixing his cameras, Jerry peered cautiously into the room.

Bound hand and foot upon the floor of the shack was Mad Jake. Towering over him was Gat Murdock, with a gun in his hand and a murderous gleam in his eyes. That he intended to shoot Mad Jake in cold blood was obvious. He was actually squeezing on the trigger when Jerry shouted desperately.

"Stop, you fool!"

Gat Murdock swung round, his face contorted. For a fleeting second it seemed that he would send a bullet crashing at the lad's face. Then miraculously his face changed. He laughed and pushed the gun away.

"Cripes, I musta gone loco!" Jerry heard him say, and next moment he had stepped outside. "Come in, guys. Gosh, yuh jest saved me bein' a murderer. Reck'n I was that wild with this half baked bun I cotld a shot him. Come in."

Jerry hesitated. There was something funny going on, of that he was certain. Gat Murdock saw his hesitation and snarled.

"Won't eh? Then stick 'em up!"

Like a flash his gun was out and menacing both of them. Murdock had put his gun away only until he was sure how many he was up against. Unarmed as they were and still very much mystified the two Talkie Thrill Hunters raised their hands.

"Kimmon in, an' no monkey business!"

Jerry started forward. But he wasn't the lad to take this lying down. As he passed Murdock he lunged for the big fellow's wrist, only to be sent sprawling next moment by a blow from Murdock's other fist that caused the whole world to swim before his eyes and then go black.

The sight of Jerry laid out in the snow, made Joe forget his love for his apparatus, and with a shout he leapt at Murdock, swinging the film pack.

The big fellow dodged nimbly for his size, and brought his gun down a solid rap behind Joe's temple. The stout little cameraman just folded up in the snow.

When they came to, a minute or two later, they were in the hut bound alongside Mad Jake, and Murdock was standing over them.

"Reckon it couldn't ha' happened better," he leered. "Yuh two hombies sure were the only fies in the ointment. Now I guess yuh go out with—Mad Jake!"

"Yuh always were a dirty rotter, Murdock!" It was Mad Jake speaking, and he didn't sound so mad. "Let them two guys go! Even if they do know anythin' an' split, they couldn't prove anythin' that 'ud harm yuh!"

"Don't spill baby-talk, Phillips," jeered Murdock. "Yeah, that's his name," he went on, turning to Jerry and Joe. "He's the guy I was tellin' yuh was my partner, Rolly Phillips. That sob stuff I said about him dyin' an' me buryin' him was just boloney."

Jerry watched Murdock closely. Outside the blizzard had blown itself out and a soft buzzing reached him that at first he couldn't quite understand, and then like a flash he knew. It was the sound recorder outside, left by Joe. No doubt the cameras were still turning, too, making a talkie picture of themselves and Murdock through the window. Jerry gritted his teeth at the irony of it, and listened to Murdock.

"Brains!" he boasted. "Brains, no luck, is the way to get on. Phillips had the luck an' look where he is. He found the gold but hadn't the brains to keep it to himself. He told me an' I left him stranded without a gun an' without food. Luck agen helped him 'ces an' Eskimo found him—he jest told me that—an' the Eskimo looked after him while he was sick. When he got strong enough to travel he came back to Golden Gulch an' found the camp. Reck'n he was purty sick an' figured he'd look out fer me, that's why he called hisself Mad Jake, an' the beard helped him. Ain't that so?"

"Reckon you're right, you skunk!" Phillips spat. "I always was a hot-headed cuss else I'd have sung slow when yuh was bragging for the benefit of these two."

"Wa-al, I guess that's about all," Murdock concluded. "I could shoot the three o' yuh an' make sure, but I reckon I'll erase you all same way as I told Phillips I'd do for him. S'long."

The door closed behind him. Jerry turned to the bearded man who was the real discoverer of Golden Gulch.

"What's—what's his game?" he demanded.

"An avalanche!" Phillips explained briefly. "It will sweep this shack away like smashing a chocolate box, and then wipe out half of Golden Gulch Camp.

"But—how?" Jerry wanted to know.

"Sleeping Mountain," Phillips went on. "There's thousands and thousands of tons of snow and rubble there. The least decent disturbance'll start it going an' once started—it'll be it! Murdock intends to move it with a stick of dynamite. If I could get into the other room I could beat Murdock's scheme. I've known the danger, should any of the blast charges set the snow going, an' I've spent some of my time, while I've been hyar, layin' a

to do something in case an avalanche gets started," he grunted. "Them things are better prevented than cured when it's too late."

It was at that moment that a figure emerged from the shack, slammed the door shut and trudged away up the slope to the right of Sleeping Mountain—more toward Murdock's shack.

"If he's the owner of that shack down there," Don suddenly decided, "maybe it'll be better to have a chat with him right away than with Murdock."

No sooner decided, than Don changed his direction slightly, so as to intercept the man further on. Don made no sound as he trudged after him and the man—he was Gat Murdock—was too intent on his purpose to look behind. Don climbed the slope to the bluff, and was twenty yards to the miner's rear when, with a dry chuckle, Murdock took something from his pocket and balanced it in his palm.

Don saw him shake his fist toward the cabin which the big dare-devil thought mistakenly was his, and then he heard him mutter:



charge of my own that'll make a hole lower down to take all the avalanche. But I reckon the switch that'll fire it is in the next room an' I guess we can't reach it—not as we are!"

They tried. The sweat broke out on their bodies as they wriggled and twisted. But Murdock had tied them well and slipped their ropes around the legs of the table which was hewn from the solid tree.

Suddenly from outside came a tremendous, muffled explosion a good distance off.

"That's Murdock's dynamite," said Phillips. "The avalanche'll be on us in less than five minutes."

The Avalanche.

DON CARROLL was worried. He had finished his business in Golden Gulch and still Jerry and Joe had not shown up. With a dread sense of foreboding he set out through the snow for Gat Murdock's shack.

He was more than half-way to Murdock's shack when the blizzard blew itself out, giving him his first real glimpse of Sleeping Mountain.

"Gosh!" he muttered. "There's danger there."

He trudged on toward his objective, but he could not keep his eyes from a little button of a shack which he had to pass, by a quarter of a mile.

"Reckon if I see Murdock I'll tell him he ought

TALKIE-MAKING . . . WITH SIX-GUNS.—There was a crashing splinter of glass as Mad Jake shot through the window, and Murdock's gun dropped from his nerveless fingers.

"This'll finish Mad Jake an' the other two meddlin' bums!"

While Don was making up his mind what to do, Murdock tossed the thing in his hand far out from him. It struck the hard snow and then exploded with a mighty earth-shaking roar. Snow heaved upwards, a hole appeared where the stick of dynamite had struck.

High up something rumbled ominously, a whisper of moving snow. Murdock, standing gleefully safe on the edge of a bluff, watched a slight movement high up, then he turned his triumphant gaze down the valley towards the hut.

"Wiped out!" he shouted, hysterically. "Clean erased. Jest in five minutes."

As Don realised the devilish significance of Murdock's wild words, a sudden rage flared up in him and he leaped forward.

"You skunk!" he cried hoarsely.

Gat Murdock turned at the sound. His hand flashed down to his ever-ready gun, but Don was too fast for him. Every ounce of his tall, fit body was behind the blow that crashed to the point of Murdock's jaw. The fellow was lifted clean off his feet and deposited in a senseless heap in the snow.

Short though the time had been Sleeping

Mountam's awakening had progressed. The suggestion of movement high-up had developed into a grey mass sweeping rapidly down.

Without a glance upon the senseless Murdock Don shot down over the edge of the bluff. It was the quickest way. Keeping on his feet only by a miracle he gained the slope of the valley. On winged feet he sped over the snow towards the hut.

Behind him the rumble of sound had grown. Tons and tons of snow and rubble were tumbling down the hillside gaining in volume and speed every second.

But Don Carroll was used to desperate chances. His feet hardly seemed to touch the ground so quickly did he move. His eyes were riveted on that hut as if held there by magnetic force, and suddenly he saw something that made him catch his breath.

It was the talkie apparatus outside the cabin's solitary window, standing just as Joe had left it. Jerry or Joe or perhaps both of them were inside that hut. The thought drew an extra ounce of speed out of Don's limbs and a few minutes later he burst through the door into the cabin.

He took in the situation at a glance. His knife was out in a second and he was bending over Jerry. To his surprise Jerry protested.

"The dynamite charge first. It's in the other room, and it's the only way of saving our lives!"

Rapidly Jerry explained. By the time he had finished Don had cut him free and thrust the knife into his hands.

"Look to Joe! I'll find that charge."

As Jerry grasped the knife, Don flung through into the other room.

They forgot about Phillips.

"Quick, Jerry, outside!" Joe breathed, as soon as his bonds were cut. The little camera man was feverishly impatient to get to his beloved camera. As they rushed outside there sounded, above the harsh rumble of the fast approaching avalanche, a

mighty ear-splitting detonation. The whole ground seemed to shake and a great cavity like a deep canyon appeared right in the path of the avalanche.

"Gosh! Look at that!" gasped Jerry, as he and Joe at last had the camera facing toward Sleeping Mountain.

Jerry had caught a glimpse of Murdock, who had recovered from Don's blow, standing upon the bluff, clearly outlined against the snow, watching the avalanche sweep down Sleeping Mountain. Then a piece of flying rock must have hit him, for his hand shot up to his head. He staggered, tried desperately to recover, then plunged helplessly down into the path of the avalanche.

The hurtling, irresistible mass caught him, lifted him, and swept him along on its crest towards that gaping hole into which the avalanche tumbled itself. Hundreds of thousands of tons of snow, rock, and rubble piled in after him, while Joe turned the camera and the sound apparatus recorded the thunderous noise of it all.

"Blimey, Guv'nor, wot a blinkin' picture!" Joe exclaimed, when Don Carroll came out with Phillips. "Reckon that bloke got all he deserved."

"He has!" Don said soberly. "But I'm afraid Murdock's taken the truth with him to his grave. Phillips here has just told me what's happened, and I agree with him he's going to have a tough job in proving he's a claim to at least half the mines in Golden Gulch now that Murdock's lips are sealed."

Then Joe laughed. "Yep, his lips are sealed, Guv'nor," he said. "But his bloomin' talkie voice ain't. The sound recorder was working all the time that bloke was gloating over us an' explainin' everything, so I guess we won't have much difficulty proving whose right—Rolly Phillips or Gat Murdock."

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