

FREE 'ZAT CARDS

**DEPICTING OUR TEST
HEROES, THREE INSIDE**

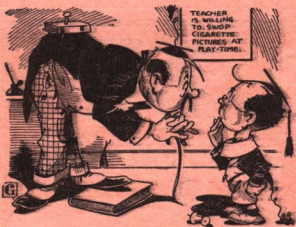
Boys' 2D EVERY SATURDAY Magazine



THE IRON SPIDER AND MUSTANG MORGAN WITHIN

VOL. XXII -No. 576-March 18, 1933

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Teacher: Now, Johnny, spell me the word ham.

Johnny: Please, teacher, do you mean the 'am you eat or the am you is?

(Football to R. W. JOHNSON, 26, Eaton Street, Runcorn, Cheshire.)

WHAT HE WANTED.

MR. JONES: Now if I'd been serving I would have given you the big piece and kept the small piece myself.

MR. ISAACS: Well, vat are you grumbling at? You've got it, haven't you?

(Fountain pen to R. N. RIMMER, Springwood House, West Bowling, Bradford, Yorks.)

'SCUSE OUR SCULLS!—

(Continued from page 29.)

creek, in the middle of his experiments on a new Admiralty invention!"

The Removites released their prisoner, whose headpiece came off, revealing the large head and bony features of Professor Posthethwaite.

"Audacious young rascals!" roared the angry Admiral. "Playing more of your foolish pranks! I'll—"

Admiral Thresher broke off as the sound of a revolver shot rang through the rambling old mansion. Johnny Gee was the first to break the tense silence which followed.

"Come on!" he shouted, pushing past the Admiral and running down the wide hall. The other Removites promptly followed their captain. Johnny Gee thrust open the door, behind which a man's voice was calling faintly for help.

In the moonlight that came streaming in through the open french windows at the end of the room, they saw a man lying on the floor, in front of a small wall safe, which was open.

"Jessop!" cried Admiral Thresher. "What has happened?"

"That villain—Henschel—I disturbed him at the safe, sir, and 'e shot me in the leg!" gasped the wounded butler. "He has stolen the code! There he goes!"

Johnny Gee gave a shout as a dark form, in peaked cap and heavy overcoat, darted out through the french windows and over the balcony. His quick eyes saw that the man held in his left hand a small bundle of papers—

"Quick, Catchpole—your spring-bow!" yelled the Remove leader excitedly.

He almost snatched the instrument from Catchpole, and focused it upon the running figure.

Twang-ggggg! Straight as a die, the small

The JESTER'S REALM

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HIS TRADE.

WARDER (unlocking door of cell): 'C'mon, Bill, you're wanted!

CONVICT (an expert safe breaker): What for?

WARDER: The governor's safe has stuck again!

(Fountain pen to ROBERT McDONALD, 52, Kirk Road, Carlisle, Lanarkshire, Scotland.)

THAT'S THE RUB.

CIRCUS MANAGER: What's the matter now? Are you leaving?

INDIARUBBER MAN: Yes, I'm fed up with this show. Every time the strong man writes a letter he uses me to rub out his mistakes.

(Fountain pen to TREVOR GRICE, 37, Gunthorpe Drive, Sherwood, Nottingham.)

JOKE COUPON.

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

18/3/33.

boomerang-like missile sped. The rope coiled round the long paper packet that Henschel was carrying, and as the projectile returned, it snatched the paper from his grasp!

Back to Johnny Gee came the rope, with the paper still held firmly in the coil. Henschel stopped in amazement, but men were crashing through the bushes towards him. He darted away, and disappeared from view.

Admiral Thresher's face was a study in mingled amazement and joy.

"By—by thunder!" he cried. "Look here, Professor, these brave lads have got back the Unbreakable Code! Crack my turret, I'll have to commend them to their Headmaster for this!"

"And will you get us off the punishment the Head gave us over that other affair, sir?" asked Johnny Gee eagerly.

"Yes, of course, I'll see that you are pardoned!" cried the Admiral.

Admiral Thresher was simply bubbling over with delight. He ordered out his car, and the chauffeur drove the Removites back to St. Giddy's. Chuckling softly to themselves, they made their way across the moonlit quadrangle to the lower box-room window. Lord Reggie raised the sash softly and quietly.

"Oh, begad!"

The grim, forbidding form of Mr. Cattermole was framed in the window!

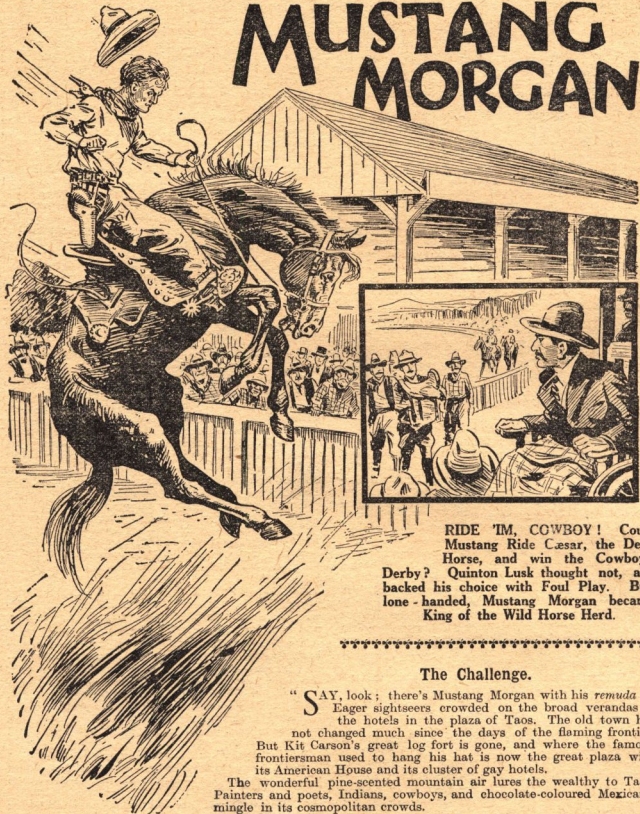
"You may well look surprised!" he rapped. "So, Gee, you have been on the river, I see, in direct disobedience of the Head's orders! You will return to bed at once! I shall deal with you in the morning."

The heroes of the Remove trooped up to their dormitory. But as Johnny Gee pointed out on the way upstairs, Admiral Thresher would make things "all right" for them with the Head in the morning!

You simply must not miss the Jovous Juniors' Great Boat Race next week. More merry japes and thrilling surprises in this ripping school yarn.

THRILLS PACKED TIGHT IN THIS GRAND COMPLETE YARN OF THE WILD-HORSE WONDER. MUSTANG MORGAN'S AS WILD AS TEN TIGERS, BUT A PAL TO BE PROUD OF. MAKE HIM YOURS.

MUSTANG MORGAN



RIDE 'EM, COWBOY! Could Mustang Ride Caesar, the Devil Horse, and win the Cowboys' Derby? Quinton Lusk thought not, and backed his choice with Foul Play. But, lone-handed, Mustang Morgan became King of the Wild Horse Herd.

The Challenge.

"**S**AY, look; there's Mustang Morgan with his *remuda!*" Eager sightseers crowded on the broad verandas of the hotels in the plaza of Taos. The old town has not changed much since the days of the flaming frontier. But Kit Carson's great log fort is gone, and where the famous frontiersman used to hang his hat is now the great plaza with its American House and its cluster of gay hotels.

The wonderful pine-scented mountain air lures the wealthy to Taos. Painters and poets, Indians, cowboys, and chocolate-coloured Mexicans, mingle in its cosmopolitan crowds.

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

So it was that plenty of people saw the famous broncho buster make his entry into Taos with his *remuda*. It consisted of twenty, strangely silent, lean-faced men, wild horse catchers all of them, each leading two horses.

Mustang Morgan hated show. He called himself "a horse gentler," not a broncho buster. Of course he was champion of the Ski Hi Stampede, but he competed in these rodeos because the money was part of his living.

That was why the varied, picturesque colony of Taos crowded round to stare. Because Mustang Morgan was more picturesque than any of them. He was a strange being; different from these dude ranchers in their silk shirts.

"Why, he's only a boy!" exclaimed somebody disparagingly.

A dusty brown-faced boy, smoking a brown curly, tugging at horses' bridles. A slim figure in worn, batwing chaps, walking in his still-heeled, spurred boots with a queer, mincing stride; wearing a slouch hat that was in perfect keeping with the chaps.

Quinton Lusk, standing on the broad veranda of the Ricardo Hotel, frowned heavily. He was a very rich American, the boss rancher around Taos. A big, hard-faced, handsome man, with a chest like a barrel and curiously oblique, cruel eyes. To see him riding on his big, sleek, grain-fed buckskin was to see a man, a master of men, as the oppressed peons and Mexicans acknowledged with fear. For he was not above lashing out with his quirt in his anger.

But in the Ricardo hotel, with its big open gaming hall, Quinton Lusk was different. He was the genial host. For he owned the Ricardo hotel, and its gaming rooms brought a generous flow of coin into his coffers. His eyes glinted angrily as he stared at the boy broncho buster.

"Hey, Morgan," he cried stridently. "Come here, yuh son of a welsher!"

Mustang Morgan dropped the reins he had been holding and whirled instantly. At that first proper sight of his face some of the wealthy idlers gasped.

What a youth! Long, unkempt, black hair, brown face that had the immobility of the stark sierras, though it glowed with health and vitality. But it was his eyes that gripped and held attention. Black as midnight, they held the distrustful gleam of the wild animal. And as he came swiftly up the veranda steps, lithe as a cat, a sudden flame lit their depths.

"You called?" he said softly. His lips set thinly as he stared at Quinton Lusk.

The big rancher was inwardly raging, seething inside like a cauldron. He reckoned to tear this brown-faced boy apart, for several reasons.

Everyone knew he owned a big horse spread, just as everyone knew he had the Government permit to comb the cañons and mesas around the district for wild horses. They weren't mangy, prairie mustangs, either, but real bloodstock. For some years Quinton Lusk had been pulling in fully-fledged thoroughbreds to his horse ranch.

This year, however, the permit for him to hunt in a certain district known as Wild Horse Cañon had been withheld, and Quinton Lusk had wondered why. Now he guessed he was hitting the bull's eye dead centre when he snarled:

"You come snooping around here to catch hosses in th' big cañon."

The youth's white teeth showed in strong contrast to his dark skin—but it was not a friendly smile.

"*Es verdad*—it is true," he said softly. "I have the Government permit. *Cuidado, señor*—take care," he added sharply. "You said I am son of welsher. That is bad for you. You make *mucha tribuajo*—much trouble!"

The big rancher's eyes thinned and flamed like a jungle cat's.

"Why, yuh—yuh——" he shouted wrathfully.

He choked for words. While a murmur rose from his rancher cronies that was in accord with him. They had all suffered from Mustang Morgan's father, and suffered in the place they felt most—through their pockets. Three years before Quinton Lusk had owned a wonderful horse, Flying Argosy, which everyone thought "a certainty" to win the big race on the Taos race track, The Cowboys' Derby.

But Binns Morgan, the father of this boy, had entered a "dark horse" called Satan. He had ridden it himself, and the wonderful black thoroughbred had raced home the winner by lengths.

That was cause enough for ill-feeling against Mustang Morgan. It was entirely untrue that his father had done anything dishonest, or against the principles of racing. But the ranchers liked to believe he had.

"Yuh—yuh dare stand there and talk tuh me, yuh greaser, you?" shouted the big rancher.

Mustang Morgan's burning eyes stared at him, and seemed to beat down his glare. Suddenly Quinton Lusk, with the suddenness that was characteristic of him, loosed his great fist in a lightning, savage punch full in the face of the young broncho buster. But strangely, his arm whistled over the young horse gentler's shoulder. Mustang had moved his head just sufficiently to one side to slip the blow—and still he stared with burning eyes. A gasp rose from those who had been looking on.

Quinton Lusk, feeling foolish and enraged, nevertheless got a grip on himself. That lightning feint had impressed him.

"Tricky, eh?" he snarled, his rage roaring out of his throat. "Listen, yuh. I'm gonna bash yuh head in for yuh, and right now."

"*Gracias!*" smiled the lad softly. "Shake hands on it, and then we can start."

Still smiling dangerously, he extended his slender, brown hand towards the other.

Quinton Lusk hesitated. Then he saw his chance. Once he got hold of that brown hand, he could smash the lad on to the stones beneath the veranda. But as he took it, he felt something like a thousand-volt electric shock shooting up his arm. Mustang Morgan had jammed a vital nerve with his thumb.

Lusk's howl of agony and rage startled everyone as he grasped his numbed, pain-shot arm.

"What th— He tricked me," howled the rancher. "The young fiend."

"Now, *señor*, shall we fight?" smiled Mustang Morgan. "If not now, I think some time I shall kill you."

Quinton Lusk took a hold on himself. He stared at the boy with lowered brows. He recognised the cold impassive hatred of this young broncho buster, and he knew the reason.

For Mustang Morgan's dad had been shot in the back shortly after the big race on the Taos track—shot and killed by a murderous Mexican, they said. But who was behind the Mexican? He had been on the back of Satan at the time, and his wonderful, black thoroughbred had bolted in fright into the foothills. He had never been caught again. He was somewhere in Wild Horse Cañon, king of his band of wild horses.

"I'll get yuh," growled Quinton Lusk quietly at last. "It's war tuh th' knife, then, huh? And yuh've come to Wild Horse Cañon tuh get Satan back, huh?"

"No, *señor*, you are mistaken," said Mustang Morgan. "Satan is too old to alter his ways. But you let loose Comanche Kate in Wild Horse Cañon, and now she is caring for a young colt. This son of

Satan I have already called Cæsar, and he shall be mine."

Quinton Lusk started violently. He glared. He had deliberately sent Comanche Kate, who had been a winged demon as a racehorse, out to the wild horse bands. And there was nothing in the world he was more determined to have than Comanche Kate's colt—a youngster, coal-black like his father, and with all Satan's fire and speed.

He was just a sleek black baby at present, but

Satan and Cæsar.

TWO days later found Mustang Morgan high up in the Taos mountain country where is born the Rio Grande. He sat amongst the rocks in one of the great cañons just below timber line. He made a queer figure, for he sat tailorwise with his head in his lap in the hot sunlight, as if asleep.

Thus Mustang Morgan had squatted throughout the night, without moving, only keeping his strange,



POTTING THE PUMA.—With the mountain lion clinging grimly to her back the mare raced for the trees. Mustang Morgan raised his rifle and took careful aim.

what a horse he would be! And Mustang Morgan somehow had found out about the colt and meant to have it; had already named it Cæsar!

Moreover he had the Government permit to hunt horses in Wild Horse Cañon! Little wonder that Quinton Lusk's rage flared.

"Listen, yuh fool. If yuh take them roughneck men of yourn, you'll stampepe th' horses, and break Cæsar's wind and legs," he growled. "Yuh ain't got th' pluck tuh go alone and ketch that colt."

"Señor, that is just what I will do," said Mustang Morgan. "I will go alone and get him."

For a moment an evil satisfaction flared in the big horse rancher's eyes.

"And I say I'll get him and brand him first," he shouted.

Mustang Morgan smiled, and again slightly bowed. This also was just what the strange young brñcho buster had wanted.

"It is a duel then, señor, if you will come alone," he said. "Who wins will get the most wonderful horse in the world."

He turned and abruptly departed, leaving everyone staring.

A match, to catch a wild horse! It promised sensation.

black eyes fixed on the horses, sometimes whistling to them in a low, peculiarly sweet tone.

Ordinary horsecatchers would have been frankly amazed at the sight. For in the cañon was Satan's roving band of wild horses. And they were taking not the slightest notice of this singular, two-legged creature.

Not far away was the colt, Cæsar, an awkward, long-legged, sleek, black little chap. Mustang Morgan watched him with delight, for he was going to be a flash of the old devil, his father. A precious little chap, he was trying to run on his queer long legs already. But they would not support him, and he tumbled over and over in the grass and lay still and presently went to sleep in the hot sunlight.

Black Satan was some distance away with the rest of the herd, grazing. The great stallion had recognised in Mustang Morgan the brown-faced boy who had petted him and given him sweet lumps that were sugar in the days when he had worn a saddle. The stallion still remembered flying round a track, packed at places with a sea of faces, with his master clinging like a burr on his back.

He remembered the terror of a shot, too, and his master falling from his back. Since he had bolted he had never wanted to go back to the places where



TORTURE—YET TIGHT LIPS.—Caesar gave a violent start, its head went up and its strong white teeth buried themselves deep in Mustang Morgan's arm.

For so he hoped to make friends and to take charge of Caesar. It might take weeks. Caesar had to be won over himself, for he would never be broken in by force. He was the son of Satan, and time would find him unafraid with an unconquerable soul.

So Mustang Morgan squatted amidst the rocks, whilst all unknown to him Fate was even then sending a tide of terror to engulf both the horse he coveted and himself.

The Brand Of Death.

THE first dreadful menace came from above half-an-hour later. It crept down the rim rock of the cañon wall on its belly, paws stretched with its sinking stride; a great, sneaking yellow beast, tail switching ever so slightly, eyes narrowed with an awful malevolence, the upper lip lifted in a voiceless snarl. It was a cougar, or mountain lion.

It moved in like a yellow streak below rocks that hid it from Mustang Morgan, and then stopped for the final spring.

Some instinct woke Comanche Kate in a trice to the danger. The mare gazed in horror into the fiery eyes of the crouching cougar and at the snarling, puckered face, with lips drawn back over white fangs.

With a start Mustang Morgan saw the mare lay her ears back, with teeth flashing; ugly, fighting; about to rush to protect the colt.

But it was too late. The cougar hurtled for the kill in great, sweeping leaps that brought it up with heart-shrivelling quickness.

In mid-air its terrifying shriek came from its flat, vicious head. It thudded on the mare's back with tremendous force, seemed to slither, then fixed its sharp teeth in the horse's back and commenced tearing great strips of hide loose with terrible strokes of its long, sharp claws.

It was a fearful battle while it lasted. Comanche Kate hurtled like a shell for the overhanging branches of a tree, screaming. Mustang Morgan, eyes sharp as diamonds, rose and steadied his Sharps rifle at his shoulder. Satan came hurtling like a black thunderbolt with a wild, mad whistle across the distance.

The mare reached the spruce tree, and went up like an eruption. But the flattened cougar held on grimly as he was scraped and torn by the overhanging branches. Mustang Morgan chanced a shot with his long range Sharps—a difficult shot.

Crack! The mountain lion got the lead clean through his ugly skull, as the mare crashed down and rolled over, screaming. The cougar flung over and over, lifeless. And while Satan stopped, head up, Comanche Kate sprang in and dashed out her enemy's brains with flashing hoofs.

men congregate, for he knew the master he loved was dead. And he was happier racing in the wind at the head of his band.

But he was quite content to leave Comanche Kate and the colt, Caesar, with the brown-faced boy sitting amongst the rocks, which was in itself wonderful.

And both of them needed taking care of. Comanche Kate was almost asleep. Her head drooped, and as she did so the black and white birds came wheeling down from the near-by trees. There were nearly a dozen of them, and they commenced pecking at the jelly-like substance on the little hoofs of the sleeping colt.

The mischievous cunning magpies and crows can soon eat off the soft hoofs of a new-born colt, and if they succeed in doing so the little animal will die. Then there is food for the crows.

Providence had sent Mustang Morgan there. His face grew iron-hard as he saw the threat to the little sleeping animal. He took up a powerful air rifle which lay by his side and, scarcely taking aim, he potted two of the magpies. The rest flew away in a black cloud.

Comanche Kate saw nothing of the incident. But it was probable that when she wakened and looked for Caesar she would understand the significance of the dead birds, and there would be a concave of the horses and shrill whistling in the grass-covered cañon. Whistling in which Mustang Morgan would take his part.

A breathless pause ensued. Like a hush, an interlude in a storm, and following that pause came crashing action of a different sort.

Fortune favoured Quinton Lusk and his men in their raid upon Wild House Cañon. They came scrambling down from the rock rim on their horses, unheralded. But for the fight with the cougar the wind would have given the wild horses their scent long since. As it was they took the band, and Mustang Morgan, completely by surprise.

"Get him! Plug that kid!" shouted Quinton Lusk furiously as he rode.

He himself set the example by blazing away with his six shooters. Mustang Morgan's slouch hat was jerked off. Then he gave a bitten off cry of pain as another bullet smashed through his ankle, and he toppled forward.

Quinton Lusk's men rode furiously, hazing the wild horses with pistol shots and whirling their lariats. Satan and his gallant band fought like mad creatures. They dashed in with jaws clashing, reared with flashing forefeet, but all to no purpose. Whirling ropes looped some of the colts, and they were flung and hobbled.

But it was Cæsar, the prize colt of all, that Quinton Lusk wanted. For the rancher knew a horse that would become a flyer when he saw one.

The herd were making off with flying manes. They had had enough of the battle, and were leaving their

Satan coming for him like a black thunderbolt. Showing his teeth, the rancher reined in and carefully levelled his rifle.

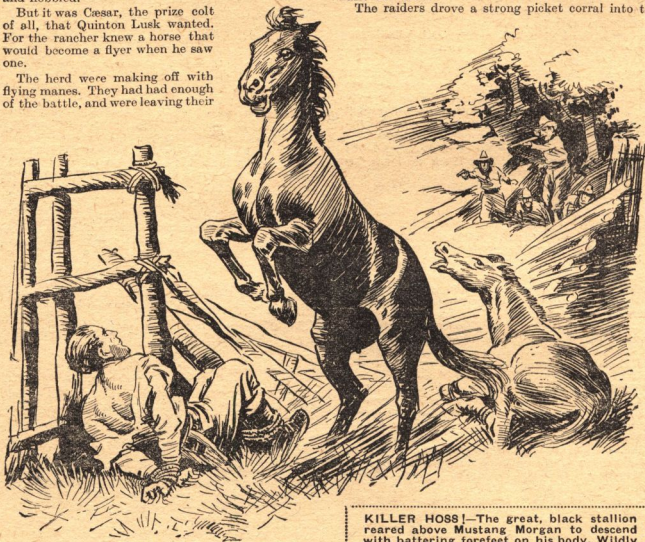
Crack! Satan reared up, crashed over, then lay still. A fire of torment and rage blazed through Mustang Morgan to see the deed. He crawled towards his Colt which he had dropped to the ground. But one of Lusk's horsebreakers, spurring up, bent over from the saddle and smashed at him savagely with the business end of his quirt. The wild horse catcher collapsed unconscious.

Laughing hoarsely Quinton Lusk secured the squealing colt, Cæsar. It had been a good day's work. They had secured several young colts, and of course Comanche Kate to look after Cæsar.

"We'll brand 'em right here," growled Lusk. "I've a mind to brand that Mustang Morgan, too, afore we throw his carcass over some precipice. Drag him along."

Lusk laughed and his horsebreakers laughed with him. They set to work branding the horses, and the squealing of some of the wild colts was enough to raise the dead.

The raiders drove a strong picket corral into the



KILLER HOSS!—The great, black stallion reared above Mustang Morgan to descend with battering forefeet on his body. Wildly the youngster called to Satan.

unfortunate lost ones on the ground. They were speeding through an almost concealed passage now, making for the Horse Caves. In those caves it would be hard to track them down.

All but Satan. For once the grand stallion deserted his band.

With a yell of evil triumph Quinton Lusk rode down on the ungainly colt, Cæsar. Then he saw

ground, to fence in the horses, for the squeals of pain and terror breed madness even amongst broken-in horses. By the time they had lit their camp fire and the branding irons were hot, night had fallen in the cañon.

One after another the horses were dragged towards

the fire, hog-tied and the hissing, searing iron pressed into their flesh.

When it came to Caesar's turn, the little colt became like a thing possessed. Crazy with fear he rushed about in the corral, trying to dodge the whirling rope hissing above his head. Swearing luridly, one man rode in and hit him hard over the nose, then threw the loop over his head.

Even so Caesar struggled and pulled till he almost choked. Squealing madly. Then he was silent as he was crashed down on his side and dragged to the fire.

"By grab, he'll make a hoss!" cried Quinton Lusk exultantly. He straddled the kicking Caesar as it lay on its back, fanning the air frantically with its paws. Twisting the colt's head, despite his slashing teeth, the rancher hoarsely ordered the men to bring forward the iron.

"And bring that greaser along," he added huskily. "I'm gonna brand him along with th' colt."

Mustang Morgan was dragged forward, tied hand and foot. He looked up steadily through the lurid light of the flames at Quinton Lusk.

"If you do it, you will die for it," he said quietly. "Remember that."

Quinton Lusk laughed madly and raised the iron, tearing back the young broncho buster's shirt with clawing fingers.

Out in the dark, a horse scrambled up unsteadily. It was Satan, his ears flat back, his eyes glowing like balls of fire in the dark, while his teeth were bared. The bullet had merely "creased him," grazed the spinal cord on his neck. Now he had come round, and as he heard the cries of his colts he went mad.

A moment he pawed the ground wildly, then broke into a charge. He was like a black shell and his whistling scream was an awful sound.

The men behind the fence looked up, saw him coming, and hastily grabbed their rifles with cries of alarm. They crashed lead into him; a dozen red hot stinging slugs tore into Satan's body. But nothing could stop him. He charged against the fence, which broke under the force of his weight.

With yells of fear and alarm, the horsebreakers scattered. Satan plunged on, and came to his colt Caesar lying on the ground beside Mustang Morgan.

The young horsebreaker, looking up, saw a great darkness obscuring the stars. It was Satan, rearing aloft to descend with battering forefeet on his body.

The boy cried out in horror. Mustang Morgan was not so much afraid of death as he was horrified that the loved horse should deal it. His cry was a wild appeal.

And Satan heard. The stallion's forefeet thudded an inch beside his head, making the ground tremble. Then Satan was going to veer away, seeking others to kill, but at that moment a bullet found the gallant stallion's brain. The horse dropped dead, half upon Mustang Morgan, and the young horsebreaker mercifully lost his senses, swimming away in a sea of blackness.

Cæsar's Vengeance.

HE came to his senses in pain, to find his foot shattered and all the horse raiders and colts gone. Only Satan's dead body was lying there.

Mustang Morgan remembered that he had seen Quinton Lusk fire that last shot that had killed the great stallion.

The young horsebreaker crawled away, his lips set tight and face white under his tan. He crawled away farther into the wilderness.

Two ribs were broken in that fall of the horse on top of him; and in the caves Mustang Morgan lay in a fever and very near to death. During that time

he spoke aloud of his one intention. It was to make Quinton Lusk pay.

As the weeks passed into months no news came to him. He did not know that the thing he wanted done had been accomplished, and that by the colt Caesar. It was eighteen months before the wild horsebreaker caught a horse for himself and rode it. He would always limp, but he could ride again.

Now he was going back to Taos, to find Quinton Lusk. And Caesar, his horse, Caesar would be a fine shapely two-year-old colt now.

"SAY, there's Mustang Morgan come back! And lookit thar, he's limping. Shore is."

The ranchers who thronged round Quinton Lusk on the veranda of the Ricardo Hotel did not see that he had suddenly gone deathly white, was gripping the sides of his chair, leaning forward and staring. . . .

"Say Morgan," cried a rancher loudly. "I guess Lusk and these other guys would like to spill a few words with you."

The young broncho buster whirled with his usual disconcerting suddenness and came up the steps of the veranda. His burning eyes met Quinton Lusk's—a glance like the flash of swords between them. In Lusk's eyes were fierce hostility and defiance. Mustang Morgan's were almost unreadable. What he saw did not surprise him. For since he had arrived back in Taos he had learnt the news. Quinton Lusk was in a wheel chair. He was a cripple.

He had tried to break in Caesar, and ride him. But the untamable colt had avenged his sire's death. He had thrown Quinton Lusk a year before and made the big man a cripple for life. Since then Caesar had become a devil horse—a horse no man could master.

"Say, yuh've come back, Morgan," he said. "Wal, I got my brand on Caesar like I said I would, didn't I? And say, he's some speedy hoss, if only a guy could ride him. Now, why don't yuh take a chance with him, Mustang? That'd be a thing tuh see, a man that's never been throwed and a hoss that's never been rode."

Mustang Morgan's burning eyes met Lusk's, and he saw the terrible meaning in the other's. Lusk did not want to see Caesar ridden; no, his whole aim in life was to lure other men to their death or to the crippling he had come by. And now he had picked Mustang Morgan to be the victim.

"My hotel—and th' hoss, I offer," said Quinton Lusk in a jeering tone.

Flame seemed to leap suddenly from Mustang Morgan's eyes. "I came to kill you, Lusk," he said with twitching lips. "But—I cannot kill a cripple. Very well! I will ride Caesar, my horse, and break him in. And if I win the race the day after to-morrow you must close up this gambling hall and clear out of Taos."

"I'll take that bet," said Quinton Lusk. He held out his hand to shake, but Mustang Morgan only gave him a deadly look and turned away.

The Devil Horse.

SWIFTLY the news spread. And all the varied assortment of social life in Taos crowded after Mustang Morgan and the group of cowboys who were walking in the hot sunlight down to the race track.

Caesar was kept in a special paddock. A more magnificent animal Mustang Morgan had never seen in his life. He was terrible in some respects, terrible in his vitality, his fire and the fury that glared from his blood-flecked eyes. But he was beautiful—stamina, fire, speed, intelligence; all these he had.

NEXT WEEK'S GRAND BOAT-RACE NUMBER.

Big Thrills on the Bill,
Chaps.

**THE LIGHTNING
BLUES**
(featuring Falcon Swift)

**THE X-RAY FOOT-
BALLERS**
(versus Zorro)

**THE HOWLING
CARGO**
(Pal of the Monsters).

GOOD DAY GUNMEN!
(The Coon Sleuth).

**CHAMPIONS OF THE
RIVER**
(The Joyous Juniors).

MY DEAR CHUMS,

Two big events of the sporting world take place next Saturday—the Boat Race and the Semi-final of the F.A. Cup. And you can be sure that both will be well represented in our up-to-date *Mag*. In fact, the secret service man who created Falcon Swift has written a special thriller of the Monocled Manhunter's greatest boat-race case. It's entitled **THE LIGHTNING BLUES**. New thrills, white-hot drama and excitement are simply crammed in its gripping chapters. And a mystery that I know has never before appeared in print. You'll enjoy every word of it, chaps. Those great school favourites, the Boys of St. Giddy's back up the Sporting Sleuth in another grand boat-race yarn—the sequel to the dramatic events you will read of in their exploits this week. Things go all wrong at the beginning. The admiral does not 'phone for the Head's pardon; Henschel is free and plotting further frightfulness, and Davenport is scheming to row his crew against Earlswood and Asheton instead of Johnny Gee & Co. But who eventually become **CHAMPIONS OF THE RIVER** I'll leave you to read for yourselves in this ripping school tale next week.

The Miracle Boys fight their greatest Cup Battle yet in their semi-final match with Rodwell Rangers. The game is played on neutral ground, of course, and away from the Crater they think they are safe from the machinations of Zorro. Yet even here the master science villain finds a dreadful means of reaching them. Look for the title, **THE X-RAY FOOTBALLERS**, for the hall-mark of **THRILLS!**

Fun with Washington Haysseed "on the spot" and Pal of the Monsters' exploits en route for England; a further smashing episode in **THE MASTER OF MASKS**, and I hope a big surprise next week on the page of

Your sincere friend,
THE EDITOR.

The great black was blindfolded and saddled, but as one who scents danger he stood with his head thrown high and his ears thrown flat against his neck.

The young horsebreaker climbed the high fence. "We will start fair," he said, and jerked away the bandage from Caesar's eyes. The horse tossed his head, reared and snorted, and gave a terrific buck jump into the air, coming down with stiffly braced legs and the steam spouting from his nostrils. Then he cast his wild eyes round to the mob on the other side of the fence, and finally looked round and saw Mustang Morgan.

The sight seemed to amaze him for an instant. A man standing alone in the corral within a few yards of him unprotected. It seemed incredible. He lunged straight at the hated stranger and from the mob came a yell of horror.

But Mustang Morgan did not stir. He stared at the great beast tearing down upon him, and this was the end—or wasn't it?

His teeth bared like those of a tiger, the horse flung himself at Mustang to crush him to death. He came almost upon him, and then—swerved.

Mustang Morgan breathed again while Caesar stood panting and quivering. And then suddenly he flung up his head and snorted in sheer amazement. For the man was actually walking towards him. Slowly, steadily Mustang Morgan approached.

Caesar stood panting and quivering, suspicious and savage. But a voice was talking to him now, and it was telling him of things he remembered on the range—the free open range. Vaguely he remembered this man.

Still the voice kept talking to him in low and soothing tones. A hand was laid on his head. He gave a violent start, and with a snort of rage and fear his head went up and the strong white teeth buried themselves in his arm.

The mob outside gave a great gasp like the sigh of storm wind through the pines. Mustang Morgan hardly winced. He did not move a muscle, but continued to murmur softly, soothingly.

Slowly the beast loosened his teeth, and out of his liquid eyes he gazed at Mustang Morgan inquiringly. Then he felt a touch, soft as velvet, on his nose, a touch like a caress.

Mustang Morgan was standing near the paddock gate. He deliberately drew back the iron bolts and opened it, while the mob watched in fascinated wonder.

He was telling the horse that they would ride away into the hills together, that they would be free—as free as the wind. The horse understood, and he whinnied gently.

What was coming next? He felt the hand shift to his back, knew instinctively that a foot had been

NEW CIGARETTE CARD CATALOGUE FREE

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THE LONDON CIGARETTE CARD CO. LTD.,
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placed in the stirrup, and then suddenly he felt a tearing pain.

Cesar, with a sound between a snarl and a scream, buck-jumped. It was no ordinary buck-jump. It was a series of what the cowpunchers call sky-fishing, each jolt sufficient to bring the blood spurting from a man's mouth and nose.

Mustang Morgan was amazed—amazed and deeply, bitterly disappointed. He had failed. Now with a wild frenzied scream, Cesar raced for the underlying branches of a tree against which he had killed so many men. But something happened before he reached it.

Mustang Morgan, swaying in the saddle, suddenly pitched forward and crashed to the ground in a cloud of dust. Cesar was free! He had escaped, and was heading for the hills.

And Mustang Morgan? They carried him out on a stretcher, and the word went round that he would not live until the next day. He would never ride Cesar to victory in the Cowboys' Derby.

Needles Of Torture.

BUT the silvery stars and the slim crescent moon were witnesses to the approach of a man into the wilds that night. A slim figure in worn batwing chaps and slouch hat, Mustang Morgan was easy to recognise as he lifted his brown, lean, handsome face, listening. He had followed the tracks of Cesar, and was running him down in Wild Horse Cañon.

Mustang Morgan had not been hurt, he had not even been thrown, but had jumped from the horse and rolling over and over in the dust had looked bad. He had whispered to the men who came with the doctor and stretcher to make out he was dying. Mustang Morgan wanted to fool Quinton Lusk.

He found the horse at last in the silvered glades, and it took Mustang Morgan three hours and all his horse savvy to make friends and approach.

Something was wrong. Why wouldn't Cesar let himself be ridden? The saddle was still on his back, but Mustang Morgan didn't try again.

The young bronco buster got a bag of flour out of the Horse Caves where he had been living, and lifting the heavy bag, he dumped it on the saddle.

Cesar went mad. He exploded and went up into the air like Mount Vesuvius. *Thud!* He landed, and looked round, squealing, with the light of murder in his eyes.

"Reckon there sure is something wrong, old boss," he said when two hours later he had patched it up with Cesar again. He took off the hateful saddle. Then he fell to examining it.

Under the padding he found four fine, long, steel needles! When he examined poor Cesar he found the punctures. Whenever a weight was put on the saddle it drove the needles down, deep into the flesh of the horse.

Cesar was not really a devil horse at all. He had been made that way and had killed men because of this diabolical torture.

When Mustang Morgan looked up at last, his hand-

some lean brown face was distorted with the anger that convulsed him.

"All right, Quinton Lusk," he said thickly. "Tomorrow at the race . . . we'll square accounts."

The End Of The Race.

THE Cowboys' Derby at the Taos race track is a wonderful festival, almost as spectacular as our own great meeting at Epsom Downs. Thousands crowded round the rails and the grand stands were packed with a seething mass of humanity.

A prominent figure was Quinton Lusk in his wheel chair. The favourite for the race was Quinton Lusk's horse, Flying Argo II. It was his day to-day. He stood to win a fortune.

Suddenly a man came running up to him with an expression on his face that sent a stab of dread to the cripple's heart.

"Cesar!" the man gasped out. "His name's up on the board. He's going to run, and that feller Mustang Morgan's riding."

Quinton Lusk stared as if he saw his grave open. Mustang Morgan alive and riding Cesar in the Derby? He himself had nominated the horse, but that had only been a blind. He had never thought it would run.

But it was too true. Now the field of sixteen were cantering towards the starting gate. And amongst the jockeys' silks was a figure in a khaki shirt, chaps, and slouch hat, astride a beautiful coal-black colt. Mustang Morgan on Cesar!

"They're off!" came the excited shout.

The whirring swish of the tapes, the sweep forward of silk jackets, and off they were!

The crowd shouted and swayed as it watched that charging troupe of horses. A wonderful Derby. Flying Argo II was in front as they came round the three mile oval into the straight. Ah! They were strung out now. Flying Argo II still leading. Cesar—where was Cesar? Last! Quinton Lusk breathed heavily.

But what was happening? A horse was coming up at an electric pace, passing others as if they were cantering. The cry came from all throats.

"Cesar! Cesar wins!"

The horses were in the straight, going past the stands. The distance with its post, where the "steam" was turned on. Two horses racing neck and neck. The rider of Flying Argo II saw the danger—saw it in a moment when he half turned his head to the left and glimpsed a brown, strained face under an old, slouch hat crouched forward over the back of a horse moving at an electrifying pace. Flying Argo II's rider cracked his whip again and again. Mustang Morgan made no move, merely strained forward.

A few yards to go. Head to head still. The crowd was roaring itself hoarse as they raced locked together. The winning post but a few yards ahead—then something flashed away in front by two lengths. It was Cesar.

And up in the grand stand Quinton Lusk gritted his teeth. Then he turned his head as he saw the sheriff and four deputies approaching. He knew his fate as he saw the saddle in the sheriff's hands—that tall-tale saddle from which protruded the four murder needles.

Mustang Morgan riding back to the winner's enclosure, looked over, and as he saw the Law take Quinton Lusk he lowered his head.

"Dad," he whispered; "I guess it's all right now."

Don't miss the "Lightning Blues," a splendid new Boat Race yarn next week. Falcon Swift and Chick Conway are featured in this unusual mystery of the Rivals of the River.

THE GREATEST YARN OF MYSTERY AND INTRIGUE, OF SPIES,
KINGS AND THE SECRET SERVICE EVER PENNED.

The MASTER of MASKS



Begin This Thriller To-day
Specially Written by
JOHN HUNTER.

DARK forces of evil were at work! Horror was let loose! Incalculable danger! Death, swift and sure was on every hand!

Such tremendous forces were at the disposal of the sinister crime confederation that used the strange, numbered steel visiting cards, the Society of Seven. And at their head, overawing them with his amazing resource, was the all-powerful One Over Seven, known to his crooked myrmidons as the Master of Masks.

Against this grim criminal organisation Billy Trent, ex-page-boy at a London theatre, found himself waging war, when he became the assistant of Mr. Brame Sentence. It all happened in a few swift hours on one memorable night, when the Lithkranian Ambassador was kidnapped from the theatre where Billy worked.

Under the vacuous, futile exterior of a dandified nincompoop, Mr. Brame Sentence concealed the keen, decisive, magnetic personality of the most successful agent of the British Secret Service.

In Paris where he had been sent by Mr. Sentence, Billy came up against the Master of Masks himself in one of his many clever disguises. At this first meeting Billy successfully stalled off the master crook, when a message arrived from Mr. Sentence.

This message led Billy to the house of Jules Debar, a mad singer, who talked incoherently to Billy.

"Years hunted . . . death at my heels. A little farm near Caen. Burnt, nearly killed. Marseilles . . . the Old Port. Here . . . rue St. Jacques. But Karl was cunning. Snug and safe in Brussels, thirty-three rue Galon. Call on him when you're there. Fine fellow."

Three men entered the room and shot Debar dead. As he was dying he tried to speak.

"Tell him Stahn . . . Stahn . . ."

He suddenly shouted: "Snow and dark trees, and great mountains . . . Schloss . . ." he fell back dead.

His youth and agility saved Billy though he had his heart in his mouth. He suddenly eeled from the hands that had killed Debar and slid down the bannisters to freedom. A taxi was taking him towards the Belgian frontier when his pursuers got on his trail with another car—and a machine-gun. Billy's driver pulled up, but Billy hid in the trees. A few words with the French taxi-driver convinced the agents of One Over Seven that Billy had run away.

When the plotters continued their journey to Brussels, however, they little guessed that Billy rode on the carrier behind their own car.

Bad luck dogged the boy, however. The men ran out of petrol. They stopped and walked to the back of the car to fill up. Billy was discovered, and, being too stiff and cramped to move fast, he was caught.

While the men were still pouring petrol into their tank a great, powerful car approached and drew to a halt. And from it stepped Mr. Brame Sentence.

"I say," he said, not once looking at Billy, "can I be of any help?"

The Road To Brussels.

THE advent of Mr. Sentence was an unfortunate event for Billy's kidnappers. How he had arrived on the scene Billy never knew.

Now Mr. Sentence was giggling inanely, fixing a monocle into his left eyesocket and staring at the petrol tank as though he had never seen one before. "I do believe you've run out of petrol!" he exclaimed, as though he had hit on a brilliant idea.

Billy's guardian answered him. As Mr. Sentence spoke in English, what he said was unintelligible to the other men.

"That's right. But we've got plenty, and we don't need any help." He added, grudgingly: "Thanks all the same."

"But I like helping," said Mr. Sentence. "I've got a lot of petrol. Tons and tons of it in the back of my car. Like a travelling petrol pump, I am. Ha, ha. That's a good joke!"

He walked towards the Hispano. The man who spoke English whispered fiercely to Billy: "If you want to save that fool's life, keep quiet."

Mr. Sentence was now returning with a petrol can, from which he was unc screwing the stopper.

"Free, gratis and for nothing," he chuckled. "Here you are, my dear old fellers. I simply can't resist helping people. I simply can't."

He turned the can upside down in the big funnel and as the liquid plopped and gurgled away into the tank he stood by with a beatific smile on his foolish face.

"Have another!" he asked, when the can was empty. Then laughed. "Think I'm standing drinks all round. That's another joke. By jove! My wit's keen to-night. Do have another."

"The tank's nearly full," growled the Englishman. "But we're much obliged to you."

Mr. Sentence backed away. "Well, good night, and sweet dreams, and all that. I'll be getting on."

He climbed into the big Hispano. Billy felt bewildered and utterly disappointed. Mr. Sentence had made no effort to rescue him.

The exhaust of the Hispano was drumming heavily. The machine leapt forward with a rush as Mr. Sentence lifted his clutch pedal too hastily.

The Englishman grunted: "Some driver! He'll have the back axle out of her before he's through. Come on."

They all got into the car and the man depressed his starting pedal. The engine spluttered, fired in spasmodic fashion, and died out. Again the starter was jabbed, and again the engine spluttered and died out. For the third time the starter slammed in and whined, and this time the engine made no response whatsoever.

"It wasn't petrol after all," growled the Englishman angrily. "Like ignition trouble to me. Let's have a look at those points."

With the aid of a powerful electric torch they took down the distributor and looked at the points. They were bright and hard and in fine order. They looked at the brush and the contacts, and then they tried each plug with a screw driver, while the starter swung the engine. From each they got a long, hot, blue spark. The ignition was obviously all right, so they turned to the carburettor, and made a discovery.

"Water . . ." said the man who was working at the engine. "She's as full of water as a rain barrel on a wet day."

There was a short and awful silence.

"How'd that much water get in?" demanded the Englishman. "If she'd had it when we started . . . we'd never . . ." He broke off. "That grinning fool!"

The two Frenchmen began to rave. The English-

man looked strained and tense, and while this happened two great lights leapt into view from the further road and they heard the unmistakable drum of the Hispano's exhaust.

"He's coming back!" yelled the Englishman, his northern calm broken. "Get him!"

He was coming back all right, but, despite the Englishman's order, Billy did not feel a bit worried about Mr. Sentence. The Hispano slid to a standstill under screaming brakes and Mr. Sentence literally fell out of it.

"I say!" he gasped. "I'm most frightfully, fearfully sorry. I mean to say . . . Awfully foolish. I do hope you'll forgive me. If I thought . . ."

"Here!" snarled the Englishman. "What's your game?"

"Game? Eh?" Mr. Sentence gaped, and fixing his monocle into his eye, stared at the speaker. "Game? I'm not playing a game, my dear boy. I hate games, except snakes and ladders, and it's too dark to see the dice just now. But I've done you a most awful injury, just through carelessness."

The Englishman seemed about to speak again, but Mr. Sentence gave him no chance.

"You see, it was this way. My jolly old bus has got a leaking radiator joint. I ought to have had it attended to, but I was too jolly lazy, and all that sort of rot. So I always carry a couple of petrol tins full of water on a long run. And I put one of them into your tank." Mr. Sentence laughed bleakly. "Awfully funny, what? I mean . . ." He left off laughing abruptly and stared uncertainly at the Englishman.

"Darned funny!" growled that individual. "Let's have a look at your radiator." He walked to the Hispano and viciously slammed its bonnet open. The leaking joint was there all right.

Mr. Sentence was at his side babbling excuses still. "I can't tell you. I simply can't. If there's anywhere you want to go. I mean. I can't take all of you. But any one or two of you . . ."

"Look here, we were on a very urgent journey. We've got to reach Brussels to-night. Will you take as many of us as you can?"

Mr. Sentence appeared to ponder this. "Awfully long way," he said. "But, still, it's jolly well up to me. I mean, I can't tell you . . . I just can't . . ."

"You've said all that before," snapped the Englishman. "It's Brussels, then, eh?"

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Sentence brightly. "I don't mind. Now, look here, the body of this car will only take three abreast, and the dickey's full of stuff."

Once more the Englishman talked to his companions and then informed Mr. Sentence that he and the boy would travel inside with Mr. Sentence, one of the others in the dickey, while the third man stood by the stranded car until he could get help to put it in running order.

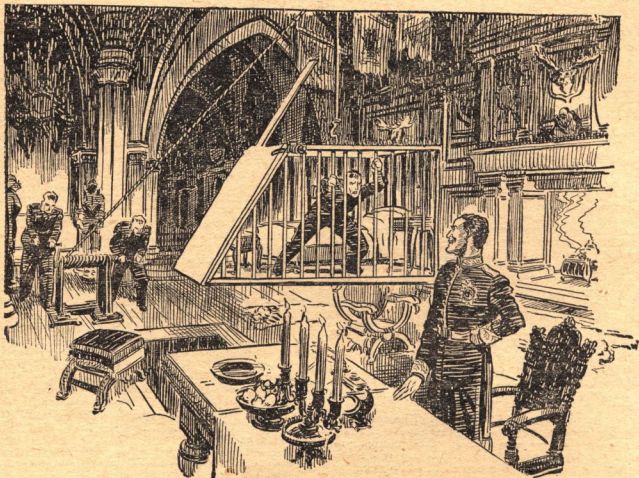
"Splendid," said Mr. Sentence. "Boy, help me shift this kit in the dickey."

Billy moved to help him. As they dived into the dickey, something was slipped from Mr. Sentence's hand to Billy's. It was a piece of paper wrapped round a thick, soft wad of something, and Mr. Sentence had written a message on the paper during the time that had elapsed between his leaving the other car and returning to it.

Billy had to read this message. He pretended to slip getting down from the dickey, and he fell in the road at the rear of the car. For a couple of moments he was able to hold the paper under the rear lamp. On it, in large, square, easily-read lettering, was this:

First chance escape. Go Brussels as best can.

The thick wad about which it was wrapped was a bundle of mille notes, screwed tightly. Billy had the



THE MYSTERIOUS PRISONER.—Slowly the rat trap descended. Inside was a man, and he clutched at the bars of his prison, glaring at the man in uniform.

notes and paper in his pocket by the time he picked himself up. He climbed into the car with the Englishman, the second man got into the dickey, and the machine started off with an awful wrench at its transmission.

Mr. Sentence was some driver. He had the Englishman gasping in less than five minutes; while as for the fellow in the dickey, with his head and shoulders exposed above the low body, he nearly died of fright and cold.

"Jolly old bus, eh?" said Mr. Sentence. "Toddles along, doesn't she? Often think what would happen if I hit anything? But I've got a super-charged Mercedes at home that makes this look like a perambulator for speed. Wish I had it here now. I'd show you."

"I'll bet you wouldn't," said the Englishman.

On they went. The big Hispano was simply slaying distance. Mr. Sentence took the most frightful risks, but, somehow, he kept her on the road. They crossed the frontier. Passports were all in order.

On and on, with the kilometres slipping away like magic. Until . . . ahead . . . they saw the flare of Brussels against the night sky.

"That's Brussels," said Mr. Sentence. Billy knew he was being informed of the fact.

As Mr. Sentence spoke, the car did a curious sort of twist and crashed into the ditch. The long-promised accident had materialised.

It was cleverly done, wonderfully clever. She

simply up-ended, and stood on her bonnet. Her twisted body opened all ways, and Billy actually fell out. As he fell, he ran into the darkness.

He heard Mr. Sentence's voice raised in a high wail. "I've spoilt my car. My beautiful car!"

Above this was the roaring Englishman's voice: "Let me get out, I tell you! Where's that boy? Boy! Boy!"

But Billy ran and ran, and lost all hearing of the sounds behind him as he plugged against the flat fields that lie all around the capital of Belgium.

Billy walked the distance into Brussels, arriving with the dawn, and there a disappointment awaited him. He found the Rue Galon near the big Palace Hotel. Karl Wertzheim was not there. A rather bewildered Belgian landlady showed Billy a telegram Wertzheim had left behind him. It ran:

Debar met fatal accident.

Billy realised instantly that Wertzheim had had an arrangement, probably with Debar's landlord in Paris, whereby he was to be advised if Debar were slain.

He asked the landlady questions, and a glimmer of hope shone through the clouds. Wertzheim had a relative in Hamburg. The landlady thought he had gone there. Billy, who had counted up the notes Mr. Sentence had given him, and found they amounted to ten *mille* notes (over a hundred pounds, English money), set off for the great free city of Hamburg.

The Rat-Trap.

WHILE these things were taking place, a strange scene was being enacted in a certain place.

Picture a mighty hall, floored with Austrian oak and panelled with the same beautiful wood, with great rafters crossing its roof, and with a massive baronial fireplace set against one wall, a fireplace in which a dozen men could stand with ease. Across one end a gallery ran, with a minstrel's dais at its middle. Against the walls, at various points, stood complete suits of mediæval, European armour, while swords, lances, targets and daggers decorated the walls, together with trophies of the chase.

Outside this massive hall, and against its tall and stained-glass windows, the wind howled like a striding giant in pain, while beneath its howl was the constant thrush of gale-smitten, close-set trees.

A man came into the hall and looked up at that which was suspended from the mightiest of its cross-beams. He was a very handsome man, with a fine, clever face, and he wore some sort of plain uniform on which was a single, blazing decoration. It was only when you got close to him that you discerned something in his eyes and his mouth which marred his handsomeness and made you recoil.

Two big fellows, also in uniform, had followed him into the hall. He said, curtly: "Lower!"

They ground a winch and that which was suspended from the great cross-beams began to descend to the floor of the hall. It was nothing more nor less than an enormous model of a trap such as mice and rats are caught in.

It was wood-floored, but the rest of its walls consisted of immensely strong iron bars save at that end where the spring-operated flap, with its top, projecting handle, closed down. Inside it were a bed, a screw-down table and a chair . . . and a man.

The man was very much like him who had ordered the lowering of the trap. They were plainly relatives, but whereas the one had something evil about him, the face of the man in the trap disclosed a high purpose.

The man in the uniform smiled. "Well, Karl. Still caught like a rat in a trap, eh? D'you remember those words . . . years ago? When I gave you a little trouble, and you told me you had me . . . like a rat in a trap. I've never forgotten them. Are you ready to talk?"

The man in the trap smiled. "I'll talk. I want to ask you a question. Have you found him yet?"

"I don't know," said the man outside. "I think I have . . . in Paris. At an hotel there. I talked to him in one of my disguises. A fine boy. His name is Billy."

"Adolf, you're lying!" The hands of the man in the rat-trap closed on its bars so tightly that the knuckles stood out white through the flesh. "You're lying. It's more of your torturing methods."

"I'm not lying, Karl. I'm telling the truth." Adolf spoke so soberly that his words carried conviction. "I'll be frank with you. I'm not sure yet. Not at all sure. But by this time the boy should be in the hands of my people." His voice dropped to a smooth sibilance. "Then . . . you will talk, eh?"

Karl hung on the bars. His pale face was whiter than ever. "I don't believe it," he muttered.

"Why not? Billy they call him. Wilhelm . . . eh? The name stuck." Adolf took a step forward. "Now listen to me, Karl. I offer you, literally, the kingdoms of the earth. You know what I could accomplish—at one word from you. Talk to me, tell me, and I'll bring the world to your feet as a footstool. Your banners shall wave from here to San Francisco and on to Yokohama and Leningrad. Isn't that something to stir your blood, Karl?"

Adolf's voice rang. He had the gift for declamation which makes the true demagogue.

Karl shook his head. "I stride to no ambitious heights over the bodies of the sons of men," he said. "That's ended, Adolf, whatever you may say, whatever you may do . . . to him . . . even."

They stared at each other, and the man outside the trap knew that no inside it was the greater spirit of the two. His face suddenly flamed.

"Curse you!" he snarled. "You keep those words locked in your brain. You refuse to say them. Then you shall suffer, and he shall suffer. Like a rat in a trap I've got you, and like a rat I'll hold you, as, like a rat, you shall die . . ."

He flicked his hand. The winch groaned heavily, and the great rat trap swung slowly aloft, swaying slightly on its supporting ropes.

From the trap, as it lifted above eye level, came a low, contemptuous laugh, the laugh of a man whose body might be torn to shreds, but whose soul and spirit would continue to soar to the clouds.

The Dock Chase.

IN the heart of Hamburg, where the ancient canals run through the splendid city, there is a district soon to be pulled down and cleared as pleasure parks. It is a district into which, even in the daytime, entry is questioned by the police, so dangerous is it. There Karl Wertzheim had hidden himself.

Billy reached Hamburg and stayed at an hotel overlooking the Binnen-See. The place amazed him with its magnificence and its opulence, for he had always imagined it to be a dirty shipping port. On the night of his arrival he set out to find Karl Wertzheim.

Now a boy may travel where a man might tread perilously. The police guard about the forbidden district indicated to Billy what dangers he ran, and having slipped through this guard he came to the area of sinister shadows and dangerous ways.

Wertzheim's hiding place was, so far as Billy's inquiries told him, on one of the old narrow canals, and with its front on a narrow and twisting street which was practically in darkness, for only one lamp lit it when Billy arrived.

Billy found the house in which Wertzheim had taken refuge, and from the moment he slipped inside it things began to happen. He found the street door open, and had hardly closed it behind him when he heard, from above, in the darkness of the stairwell, the boom of a gun.

There was a high scream and a metallic tinkle. Something came down the stairs and fell at Billy's feet. It was a knife. Now a light leapt up, and Billy, crouching back in the shadows, looked upwards.

A man, pinned to the headpost of the bannister by a long knife, was screaming. The blade had gone through his jacket at the shoulder, puncturing the double thickness, back and front, and had buried itself deep in the hard wood.

Two men were standing on the landing, and it was one of these who had fired, for he still held the gun in his hand. He was the Englishman of the road from Paris.

"Come on out, Wertzheim," this man shouted. "You won't do any good staying there."

No reply came, and the Englishman said to his companion: "If there's a window to that room it overlooks the canal. C'mon."

He rushed forward and recklessly tore the door of the room open. The room was empty. By this time Billy was creeping up the stairs, and he saw the Englishman and his friend climb from the window and drop out of sight. He ran after them. The man

pinned to the newel saw him and cursed him, and then begged to be released. Billy ignored him and looked out of the window.

Below was the narrow dark canal with a great, shapeless mass of barges close against the house-wall. Hitched to these barges were various small boats, and Billy could see two such boats heading away down the canal, the one chasing the other. He realised that Wertzheim was making a great effort to escape, and that if he wished to speak to him he must take a chance and go after him.

As he understood this he heard a rending sound behind him and the slip of strained feet on flooring. The fellow pinned to the newel had torn himself loose and was coming after him. He was mad with rage, and wanted to "take it out" of somebody. He had picked Billy.

Below were the barges. Billy clung for a moment to the window sill and then dropped. He landed on some bales in one of the barges. The bales broke his fall, and he was unhurt. There was a thud as he turned to scramble across the desk. The man had landed, too.

It was now or never. Billy turned on the fellow as he got up, a bludgeon in his hand.

Billy went for him, before he had properly recovered his balance; and, head down, took him clean in the solar plexus. The man yelled, and was butted right over the side of the barge into the water. While he splashed about Billy scrambled across the bales leapt to the next barge, which was empty, sprinted along its footboard and so came to a boat, into which he tumbled with ungainly speed.

He began to row the boat for all he was worth. Fortunately, he had often hired boats during the summer boating season in London, and was thus able to give a good account of himself with a pair of oars. The man he had butted into the river was now climbing back to the barge, but Billy no longer worried about him.

He pulled for all he was worth, sliding under dark bridges, between the high walls of the sinister, old Hanseatic houses, until suddenly the canal shot into a long, tunnel-like *Brucke*, from which it emerged into wider waters and the high clamour of hard work.

He was in one of the docks for which Hamburg is world famous. It was, in fact, the Ober Hafen. Billy had never, in his life, seen so much shipping congregated at one point as here.

Arc-lamps blazed and sizzled everywhere, as night loading and unloading was carried on. There were darting about all over the place small steam pinnaces and motor-boats, carrying dock people about their business.

Wertzheim had pulled under the stern of a big freighter and was rounding it as quickly as he could. The pursuing boat went after him.

Billy swung the stern of the big freighter. The chase was holding. Wertzheim was now ahead of the ship and rowing hard. High above the noise of everything else sounded the threatening sinister boom of a ship's siren. The big vessel which was swinging for the sea was warning all other shipping, while the tugs pulled and nozed at her.

Billy, casting glances across his shoulder, saw Wertzheim slip into the circle of radiance cast by a number of great arc-lamps beating down on a gang of stevedores unloading a big English ship.

Billy determined to go after him.

As he settled down to pull with all his might he heard, once more, the awe-inspiring, sustained, deep voice of a great ship's siren, thundering and rolling across the dockland.

It seemed to come from right over his head. A loud cry made him look up, and, doing so, it seemed to him that he looked straight up a perpendicular wall of white-topped black steel, which, reaching



THE HOUSE OF HORROR.—Billy saw three men on the landing. A long knife held one of them securely to the bannisters by the shoulder of his jacket.

to the stars, ground him down into the waters of the dock as the prow of the great ship crushed his little boat like an eggshell.

Run down by an ocean greyhound! Has Billy met his doom in the dock? Don't miss the astounding revelations in next week's thrilling episodes.

HUNDRED PER CENT PERCY—OUR TAME, STUTTERING SALESMAN!
In a Riotously Funny Dash to New York City!

THE RASH RASH RASH!



Five Days to Get to New York and the Last Boat Gone! That was the Latest Task Given to Percy by Big Business Bogg! Percy Went POST haste in More Senses than one. Result—Nearly 4,000 Miles of Fun and Excitement.

"I'LL say it's a mighty tough proposition, sir, but the motto of my organisation is 'Fixit Fixes You Up.' Yessir! We'll get that Concession over to New York for you, if it's humanly possible, in the time!"

J. Bertillon Bogg, President of The Fixit Corpora-

tion, chewed his pungent cigar from one side of his large mouth to the other and slammed his podgy thumb on a bell-push at the side of his desk.

"I'm going to introduce you, sir, to the smartest go-getter since Alexander the Great put over that deal with Magna Charta and them other British politicians. Yessir! I'm tellin' you in confidence—" "You then? for me, thir?" interrupted a lisping voice.

J. Bertillon Bogg and his client, to whom the foregoing remarks had been addressed, turned round as an unobtrusive-looking youth entered the office in answer to the President's summons.

"This, sir," the great J.B.B. said, "is Percy Bodkin, the young man I was telling you about, and whom I propose to send on your mission to New York. Percy, meet Mr. James Patrick, managing-director of South England Tin Mines Ltd. Mr. Patrick, d'y'mind givin' my assistant the works?"

Patrick nodded assent.

"It's a vital matter to my company, Mr. Bodkin," he began. "You have probably heard of the International Trade Convention held some years ago"—Percy hadn't, but the blank look on his face could

easily be mistaken for intelligence—"Well," went on Patrick, "at that Convention, my company was fortunate enough to secure a special concession to import tin into the American State of New York, free of all duty. Unfortunately, however, there is a clause in our agreement which stipulates that it must be re-granted every year, en, or before, the first of March at twelve o'clock noon. This means that we have to get the signature of the Governor of the State, in New York City, on a new document every year. If we fail to do this the monopoly of the New York tin imports automatically goes to a Belgian firm, who are an unscrupulous lot of scoundrels. Ever since we have held the monopoly, they have done their utmost to prevent our getting it regranted every year at the stipulated date, so that they can obtain the monopoly for themselves."

Percy Bodkin blinked in slight bewilderment. Only the general drift of the business-man's explanation did he grasp.

"I have been in the habit of going to the United States myself, every year, to get our tin monopoly re-granted," went on J. Bertillon Bogg's client. "But this year the agents of that rascally Belgian firm of tin merchants have succeeded in delaying me until I have missed the last liner across the Atlantic to arrive in New York City before the final date. This means that unless somebody can get to New York by some miraculous method by the first of March—five days' time—my firm is ruined."

"And by hickory!" said J. Bertillon, slamming his fist on the desk so that the inkpot gave a startled leap into the air, "if anybody can save your company, it's Fixit Corporation! Fixit Fixes You Up! See here, Percy, you are goin' to New York City right now!"

"Yeth, Mithter Bogg," gulped "Hundred Per Cent" Percy. "B-but how!"

"But how!" barked the President of Fixit. "You

mean, and how! We'll get you there some way! Now, Percy, rush along home an' pack your grip! There's not a second to waste!"

Percy Bodkin hurried from the office, his head in a whirl. He went home, however, as ordered, and hastily packed a bag as best he could, at such short notice, for the trip.

He arrived back half-an-hour after the despairing managing-director of the tin mining company had left. J. Bertillon Bogg slammed on his hat—J.B.B. was always slamming things—as Percy entered, and seizing the lad by the arm, rushed him out again, repeating the slamming progress with the office door.

Percy Bodkin found himself being bundled into a taxi.

"Drive like heck for the station!" shouted J. Bertillon to the taximan.

In a second they were hurtling in the direction of the railway station. Mr. Bogg now found time to recover his breath and explain to the wondering Percy.

"Just got time to make the eleven-ten boat-train," he gasped. "I came along to save time on the explainin'. When Patrick had gone I made the

of the boat-train, and then hastily dragged out a number of papers from his pocket.

"Here's the paper for the Governor's signature—two witnesses wanted! Here's your authority for South England Tin Mines Ltd. Here's your permit for the boat. Money! And here's—"

The shrill *peep* of the guard's whistle interrupted him. Percy stuttered a hasty adieu and the train moved out.

J. B. Bogg watched the train snake out of the station with satisfaction.

"That," he told himself, "is what you call *en' hustle!* Fixit sure fixes you up!"

Mr. Bogg returned to his office leisurely. He found a messenger waiting on the door-mat with a letter on the headed paper of South England Tin Mines Ltd. He tore it open and read:

Dear Mr. Bogg,

I regret to say that there has been a stupid mistake over the matter I came to see you about to-day. Our monopoly from the Governor of New York has already been signed. A colleague of mine in the firm had already taken the precaution to secure it some weeks ago without informing me.



A MALE MAIL.—A key rattled in the padlock of the mailbag. Percy was free. To the accompaniment of startled yells he poked his head out.

wires hot 'phoning the steamship companies. The fastest mail-boat in the world leaves for little ole New York to-day and she's scheduled to dock there on March the first—the sixth day from now. I've arranged for you to go on that boat as a special passenger—cost no end it will—and as soon as the boat reaches the three-mile limit they're gonna radio for a speed-boat out from Long Island for you. With luck, you'll just get there before twelve noon!"

"Yeth, Mithter Bogg," gulped Percy. He had no time to say more, for the taxi jerked to a standstill before the station. J.B.B. grabbed his arm, rushed him forth, and practically hurled him into a carriage

I sincerely apologise for troubling you. Please let the matter go no further.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES PATRICK, Managing-Director.

J. Bertillon Bogg gave vent to a transatlantic roar of anger, hurred open the door of his office and strode in. He grabbed the 'phone.

"Say, operator, I wanna send a telegram. Royal Mail Steamer *Minerva*, Number One Dock, Sou—huh? What's that? Telegraph service not operating? Well, then, can you get me the telephone number of—huh?"

(Continued on page 35.)

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That bulb had been supplied by him to kill the supposed monsters of the abyss in Central Africa. The lad now substituted another bulb whose contents were comparatively harmless.

He listened intently. He was sure now of the sounds coming stealthily down the stone steps to the cellar. Footfalls!

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And he had a vision of a hawk-faced man wearing a flashing monocle, an overcoat with an Astrakhan collar and bowler hat, and beside him a keen-looking lad in overcoat and cap. Behind them were two or three Scotland Yard detectives.

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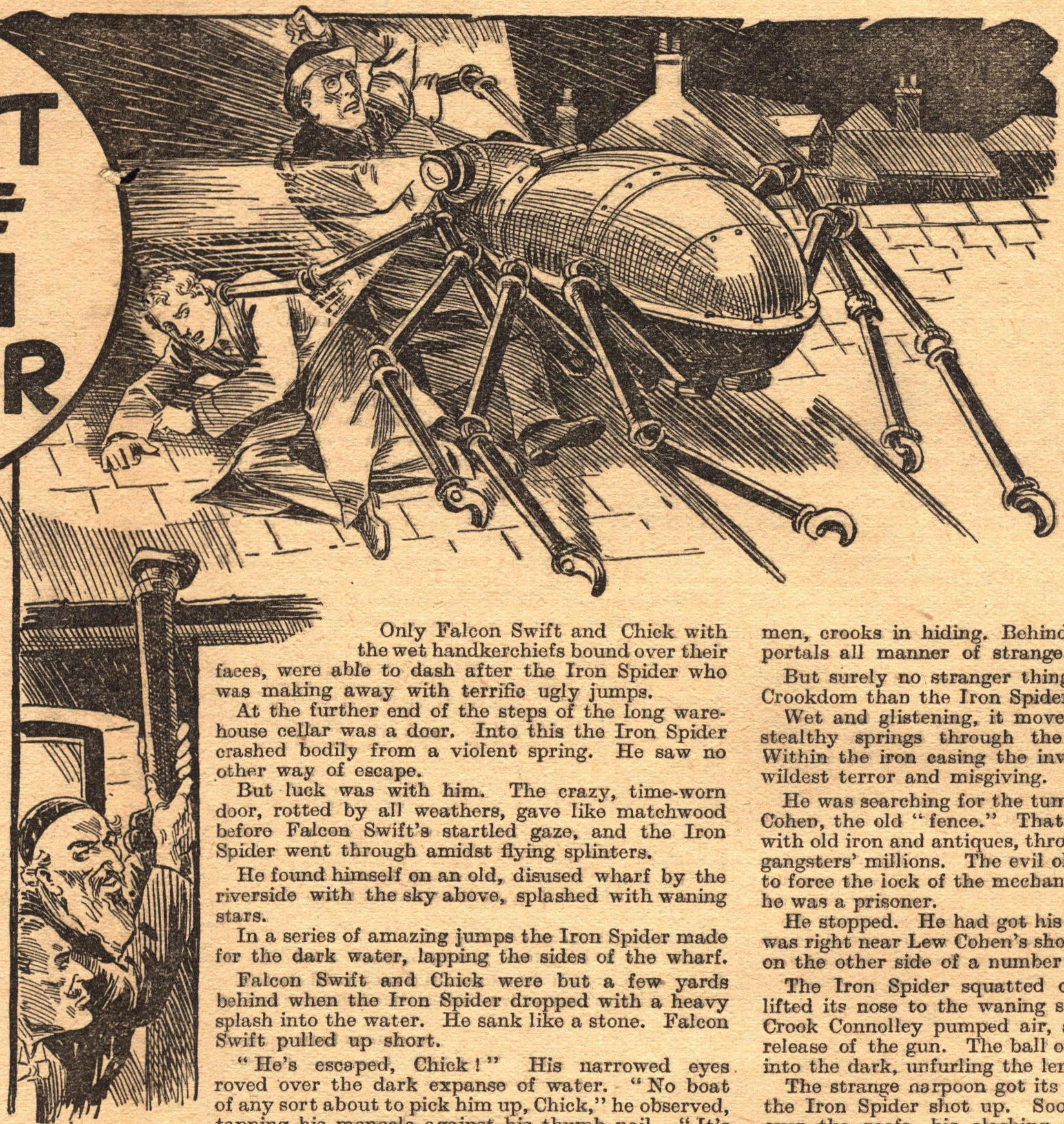
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THE QUEST OF THE IRON SPIDER



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'ZAT Teams Now
to 'ZAT Dept.,
Boys' Magazine,
196, Gray's Inn Rd.,
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He was searching for the tumbledown shop of Lew Cohen, the old “fence.” That strange shop littered with old iron and antiques, through which had passed gangsters' millions. The evil old man would be able to force the lock of the mechanical monster in which he was a prisoner.

He stopped. He had got his bearings at last. He was right near Lew Cohen's shop, but it was situated on the other side of a number of dark houses.

The Iron Spider squatted on its haunches, and lifted its nose to the waning stars. Inside Square-Crook Connolley pumped air, and then pressed the release of the gun. The ball of spikes sped upwards into the dark, unfurling the length of rubber elastic.

The strange narpoon got its grip on the roof, and the Iron Spider shot up. Soon he was scrambling over the roofs, his clashing steel springs sending slates slithering.

He came at last to a stop on the roof of Lew Cohen's shop. With a wild surge of hope and relief the young inventor saw a yellow, sickly light coming from a window immediately below the roof. That meant Lew Cohen was up, or was awake in his bedroom.

The Iron Spider slithered down the sloping roof to the rain gutter. The window was a little open at the top. Clinging with his steel claws the Iron Spider hovered over the edge. Now he could see into the room, and the lad got a distinct shock.

Lew Cohen was there in his dressing gown, peering over his spectacles on his broad flat nose. An old man of many crimes, he was a terrible character.

But it was not the sight of the old Semitic that made the young inventor quiver and tremble. It was the sight of the man with whom he was conversing in guttural accents.

Only Falcon Swift and Chick with the wet handkerchiefs bound over their faces, were able to dash after the Iron Spider who was making away with terrific ugly jumps.

At the further end of the steps of the long warehouse cellar was a door. Into this the Iron Spider crashed bodily from a violent spring. He saw no other way of escape.

But luck was with him. The crazy, time-worn door, rotted by all weathers, gave like matchwood before Falcon Swift's startled gaze, and the Iron Spider went through amidst flying splinters.

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That man was the bogus Professor Silver, alias Flash Harry. Still in evening dress, he was dragging on a cigarette nervously.

"Look here, I've had word that the kid got away, Cohen," he snarled. "He's in the clear, and in that Iron Spider casing he can make things hum. We've got to watch out for him."

Lew Cohen's laugh cut harshly through the room. "That kid—he ain't got the guts. Besides he can't get away from that lock I put on the spider."

"You said it," snarled Flash Harry. "But you think he'll come here, for you to break the lock?"

The old fence chuckled evilly, rubbing his hands all the time.

"That's it. And I'll lock him up in the cellar and call the police," he chuckled.

The young inventor on the roof listened in horror, his brain reeling. His last hope was gone. It was Lew Cohen who had devised the lock that made him a prisoner inside the Iron Spider; and the old fence was hand in glove with Professor Silver.

Flash Harry talked on, somewhat at random. It had been a big haul, and he was suffering from nervous reaction. He wanted to escape from the country.

"Yes, my boy—yes," said the old fence soothingly. "Well, Harry, I want to see the diamonds." He rubbed his hands.

Flash Harry cast a furtive look round the room and then took the chamois leather bag from his hip pocket. He opened it and displayed the winking, gleaming stones.

The old fence looked really impressed. He fished out a magnifying glass and poked amongst the diamonds with a podgy forefinger. After examining them, he peered at the crook.

"Wonderful, my boy. But I don't want them here, I dare not keep them," he said abruptly. "You must take them to Amsterdam, to my friend, Herr Lieger, yes."

"You said all that before," said Flash Harry impatiently. "I want to get out of the country. But how?"

The old fence leered at him. "The submarine, my boy," he chuckled. And quick conversation passed between them. The old fence had acquired a captured German submarine. It was waiting down under the river. But there was a big drawback to escape. He had been able to get only a little fuel without attracting suspicion, for it was believed that he had long ago broken up the submarine.

"How am I to get away without oil?" asked Flash Harry, furtively.

The old fence soothingly him and told him of his plan. They would raid the oil chamber of the Northfall Lighthouse. The great oil chamber was of course, sunken under the rocks at the base of the lighthouse, so what more easy than for the submarine to connect up with a pipe and drain off the oil?

Flash Harry seized on this plan with avidity. Up on the roof the Iron Spider listened with strained ears as they discussed it. He meant to stop Flash Harry getting away. He was determined to get the diamonds, and the key to the Iron Spider.

Suddenly he heard a faint sound on the roof, and scrambling round in fear, he switched on the glaring searchlights a moment.

They revealed the danger at once. The ugly monster was face to face with Falcon Swift and Chick.

The Fight on the Roof.

THE famous detective and his boy shadow were creeping over the tiles cautiously, hoping to come up with the Iron Spider unobserved. The sudden fierce blaze of the twin lights came as a decided check to them.

To Chick, at least, discovery brought a fearful moment. The horrifying resemblance to some nightmarish giant spider was truly staggering. But the Monocled Manhunter whipped up his revolver.

"Hold hard, Chick," he gritted. "I'm going to fire at the brute."

Then the Iron Spider sprang. Straight at the detective and his assistant hurtled the iron body and crashed into them before Falcon Swift's gun could speak.

Falcon Swift and Chick were almost knocked senseless by the impact. They felt a weight upon them as the spider trampled on them roughshod, and then with a snap their wrists and ankles were suddenly imprisoned by some novel form of steel spring gyves.

The Iron Spider shuffled towards the edge of the roof, alarm ringing its tocsin warning within the young inventor's brain. And not without cause. The noise made on the slates of the roof had served thoroughly to rouse the two plotters in the room beneath. They cast looks of consternation at one another. Then seizing up a queer device from the corner of the room, the old fence rushed to the window, opened it and thrust out the long instrument.

It was a periscope. Its ingenious system of prisms reflected all that was taking place on the roof to the startled eyes of the two crooks.

Flash Harry turned with hissing breath. His face was fury-whitened.

"You see, you old fool," he hissed. "The Iron Spider's on us, and Swift, the cleverest 'tee in the world."

The old fence merely grinned, and shuffled over to the centre of the room, rubbing his hands. He pushed back the bed, and then raised a trapdoor. His next actions were startling, for he opened a safe and took out a fuse bomb which he placed on the floor.

While Flash Harry stared aghast at the lethal machine, the old fence calmly struck a match and lit the fuse.

"Come on, Harry, my boy," he chuckled, rubbing his hands. "Long time I have wanted the insurance on this place with all the rubbish in the shop, that's vat it is. Rubbish! Now the bomb will blow the roof up, and the Iron Spider and all go with it. Quick, vat for you stand there, my boy?"

His laugh sounding like a crazed snarl, Flash Harry leapt for the trap door, and they went through, descending quickly to the cellars that led down to the river.

The fence's crazy old shop was due to blow up any moment. And Falcon Swift and Chick were helpless on the roof with the Iron Spider!

The House of Doom.

THE Iron Spider, however, leaning over the edge of the roof and hanging on with his clawed springs, had seen these terrible preparations.

For a moment or two the young inventor inside his iron prison seemed paralysed, unable to move. He had let them get away with it. Bitterly he cursed his slow-moving wits.

Then another thought struck him like a hammer-blow, and he scrambled round on the roof, staring with wild, lighted eyes. The detective and the boy bound together were in a terrible case. In another thirty seconds at most they would be blown sky-high.

Square-Crook Conolley's brain was spinning with horror. They must escape. He must save them.

He made a wild leap over the roof towards them. This time Falcon Swift and Chick distinctly saw the metal covers to the armholes snap back on their hinges as the Iron Spider straddled over them, and the young inventor's arms came through. In a trice

he had removed the gyves from their wrists and ankles.

"If you value your lives, hurry; get off this roof," an urgent voice within the iron casing bade them almost pleadingly. "It's due to blow up at any second."

The tense earnestness of the panted words carried dreadful conviction. To emphasize his warning the Iron Spider thrust bodily against the detectives as they scrambled to their feet.

"Hurry, I tell you!" he shouted.

A sense of their dire peril woke in Falcon Swift and Chick. Together they pounded over the roof, their faces tense.

A voice shouted after them: "If you escape, make for the Northfall Lighthouse. Stop the real thief. He's getting away in a submarine with the diamonds."

They hardly heard, much less heeded those shouted words. The Iron Spider himself was making great, convulsive jumps for the edge of the roof. They saw him no more. He appeared to hang a moment over the edge, and then dropped.

Falcon Swift and Chick raced for their lives. The detective felt the breath of doom. Impossible to get off the roof in time. Then he saw a ladder rearing above the rooftop, and he gave a sharp exclamation.

"Jump to it, Chick!" he cried, and he allowed his young assistant to dash ahead to get on the ladder.

Chick got on in the usual way, facing the roof and climbing down on the rungs. But Falcon Swift

As it did so there was a mighty harsh roar, and in a lurid red flash everything seemed to go up out of the house on the other side of the road whose roof they had just quit.

The Monoeyed Manhunter and his assistant climbed safely to the ground from the ladder.

"Well, whoever he is, the Iron Spider saved our lives that time, Chick," breathed Falcon Swift. "I wonder——"

He stopped short, and was silent.

"Boss, what—what do you think?" asked Chick breathlessly. "D'you think the Iron Spider is—is really the thief of the diamonds?"

"He saved our lives, Chick," repeated Falcon Swift. "But that's not going to prevent us from probing the mystery of the Iron Spider. He gave us a clue—I wonder whether it was a true one; something about the Northfall Lighthouse."

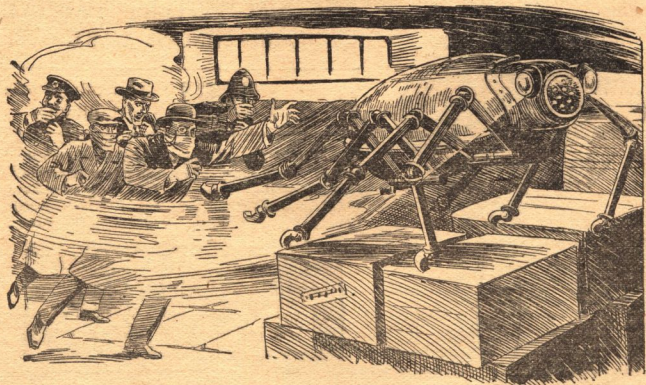
"I heard him, boss. But somehow I think he's a square crook," the lad said.

A square crook! Strange that the shrewd boy detective should pick on that very phrase!

"Laddie, we're following up that hint," the Monoeyed Manhunter said abruptly. "The Northfall Lighthouse—to see what happens there."

A Scrap on the Seabed.

THE blowing up of the old fence's shop had roused the whole neighbourhood. People were running through the streets. And something



THE METAL MENACE.—As the Iron Spider scrambled over the crates he loosed a cloud of pungent tear gas. The detectives reeled back, choking and gasping.

coming behind took a running jump at the ladder, and they both swung out on it in mid-air.

Chick held his breath as the ladder went over in a great, dizzy arc. Falcon Swift, however, had seen the roof of a shed some twelve feet distant. As he had anticipated, the ladder went over, commenced falling with a breath-stealing ruck—and then slammed shuddering and twisting against the roof of the shed.

like terror was let loose, for the Iron Spider had been seen, and news of the apparition had spread.

The Monoeyed Manhunter, however, had little hope of rounding up the Iron Spider in the neighbourhood. And queerly Falcon Swift's mind was torn with doubt concerning the man in the metal shell.

The conflagration quickly brought the Scotland Yard men to the scene. Briefly Falcon Swift told of

what had happened and voted for immediate action. They must get the police launch and go down river, via Gravesend to the Northfall Lighthouse.

Inspector Hawker 'phoned instructions, and at the river police station the motor launch was waiting them. It had Diesel engines and was more than capable of the long journey.

When, at length, the police launch, chugging close to the shore, sighted the Northfall Lighthouse, disappointment lay in store for them.

The lighthouse was undisturbed in its serenity and peace. The keeper and his assistants had no story to tell of any danger or threat.

It seemed as if the Iron Spider had put them upon a false scent.

They did not know all. Keen-witted and vigilant though the police were, not to mention Falcon Swift and Chick, they failed to detect the Iron Spider as the strange metal monstrosity dropped off the deck of their own vessel.

The Iron Spider had crouched unseen all the time under a tarpaulin awning concealing three mounted machine-guns which had been taken in readiness to deal with the Iron Spider.

Square Crook Connolley had calmly removed the machine-guns by dropping them overboard, and had hidden there instead.

Dropping down with a clang of metal springs

Dusk deepened to darkness; the great lantern of the Northfall Lighthouse was lit and blazed its light over the rough seas like the mighty warning beacon it was. At last the Iron Spider moved.

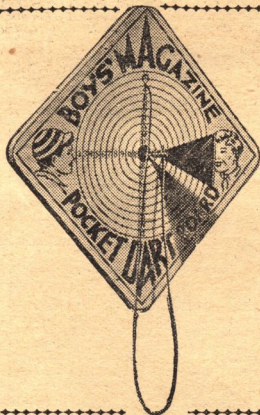
With a clashing of its spring legs the strange metal thing moved over the rocks, towards the lighthouse.

It was just past midnight and Square-Crook Connolley calculated that it would be the time when the crook in the submarine would make his attempt to tap the oil chamber of the Northfall Lighthouse.

The Iron Spider commenced to make his ascent to the gallery of the lighthouse. To any who watched it must have appeared a weird, eerie sight. The monstrous Iron Spider went up the sheer lighthouse wall, clinging, crawling, hauling up on the strange rubber rope to the great platform round the lantern room.

The blinding light from the great lighthouse beacon flooded it as it clambered clumsily over the rails of the gallery and into the lantern room, its claws clashed and clanged. That sound came as a startling interruption.

The lighthouse keeper was bending over his gauges. He had just uttered a low exclamation, for he had been watching his oil gauge, and it had sunk suddenly, showing that the oil in the great chamber beneath the rocks was being drained away. But a further shock awaited him, for as he heard



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on a great fang of black rock, around which the sea was sweeping with an angry hiss of white water, the Iron Spider immediately slithered down out of sight of those aboard the police launch.

Half submerged by the angry, surging water, clinging to the rock like some monster of the deep, the Iron Spider watched the police launch as it navigated the dangerous channel between the rocks. He heard those aboard hail the lighthouse keeper and hold long parley with him.

Then they went away. Falcon Swift decided to cruise around and wait until darkness, to watch developments.

the sounds behind from the gallery, he swung round . . . and saw the Iron Spider moving into the room! An awful cry of fear, quickly stifled, left his lips. He seized up a spanner.

Square-Crook Connolley touched the catch that released the spring of his strange helmet, and when he pushed it back, it revealed his good-looking, young face to the man's startled gaze.

"Don't be alarmed."

"You—what do you want?" the man cried. "You—you're stealing oil from the chamber. The gauge shows it's being drained fast."

Thus apprised, the Iron Spider made a leap with

the intention of inspecting the oil gauge himself. It startled the lighthouse keeper so much that his hand went out instinctively, and he switched out the great beacon, plunging the lighthouse into darkness. He made a dash for escape.

But this was just what Square-Crook Connolley wanted. Darkness! He sprang for the gallery again, and looked over the rails.

Far down below under the sea he could see a light, moving. He guessed what it was; some diver from the submarine was busy at the pipe that connected from the submarine's oil tanks to the great chamber under the lighthouse base.

Quickly the Iron Spider snapped closed his helmet, and clambered over the rails again. He commenced to clamber down to the rocky base, and with a splash disappeared beneath the surging waves.

Crawling along the sea bed, the Iron Spider saw the huge, dim shape of the submarine waiting out at sea beyond the rocks. Ahead he saw the figure of the diver on the sea bed.

The Iron Spider crawled for it, no longer able to spring because of the weight of water. When he was almost upon the diver, he switched on the powerful, terrifying glare of his eyes, and the sea bed was illumined as if by a flood of limelight. The diver whirled. But he was unprepared.

The metal monster closed with him, and his steel claws clashed out and struck. The diver toppled to the sea bed with the Iron Spider all over him. The fight was short, sharp and vicious, the Iron Spider striking again and again with his terrible spring claws.

When it was over, the diver's life line was disconnected, and water gushed in through his suit. In a few moments more he would have drowned, but the Iron Spider dragged him out on to the rocks at the lighthouse base, and there, thrusting his arms through the apertures, he removed the diver's helmet.

The face of Flash Harry, the diamond thief, or Professor Silver as he was pleased to call himself, was revealed.

Square-Crook Connolley saw the police launch approaching at furious speed, and he knew he had but a short time. Fortunately the diamond thief was reviving. His eyelids flickered upwards, and he stared at the Iron Spider. A shriek left his lips.

"Mercy!"

The Iron Spider drew nearer to him, menacing and awful.

"The key?" demanded the unfortunate inventor locked in the iron suit. "Quick! The key to unlock me from this terrible prison—give it to me!"

"I haven't got it," shrieked the terrified diamond thief. "Cohen's got it! I swear it!"

A look of wild despair crossed the unfortunate inventor's face. He was condemned still to remain in his terrible iron prison.

"And the diamonds?" he asked after a pause.

The thief made to get them out from under his diving suit. But the effort was too much for him, and he swooned away.



STEPS FROM DOOM.—Falcon Swift took a running leap at the ladder. As it went over in a dizzy arc, the house they had just left disrupted with a thunderous roar.

The Iron Spider, seeing that all was hopeless left a brief note, and pinned it to the diver's suit. Then he shut his helmet and slithered down under the water.

Three minutes later Falcon Swift and Chick with the Yard men were bending over the prostrate diamond thief on the rocks. Inspector Hawker had the leather bag containing the glistening diamonds in his hand, while the Sporting Sleuth read aloud that brief sprawled note from the Iron Spider.

This is the real thief, and he will confess all, for he fears the vengeance of the Iron Spider. You will never catch me. I am seeking my own freedom. And if you drive me too far, beware of

THE IRON SPIDER.

As it transpired at the trial, Flash Harry did not confess, but remained obstinately silent. He was sent to prison, but the stigma for the real crime still remained with the Iron Spider.

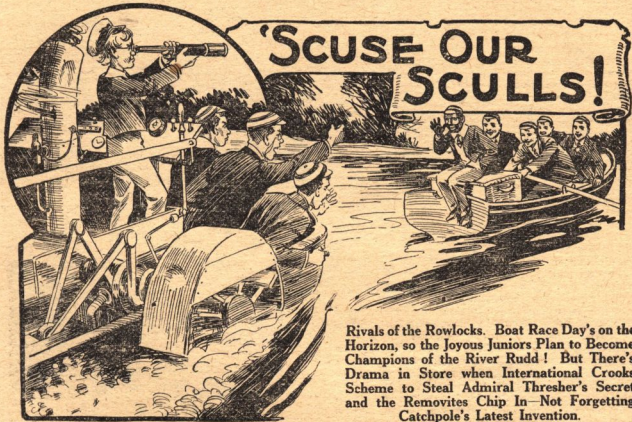
The Monoed Manhunter had his own ideas. But he kept them to himself. "Laddie," he said in answer to Chick's question; "all I can say is this: If the Iron Spider appears again, it is our duty to track him down."

Look out for another ripping yarn of the Iron Spider soon, telling of Square Crook Connolley's efforts to clear his name.

**MORE MERRY
ANTICS OF THE
REMOVE AT**

ST. GIDDY'S

**THE MOST
EXCITING SCHOOL
TALES EVER.**



Rivals of the Rowlocks. Boat Race Day's on the Horizon, so the Joyous Juniors Plan to Become Champions of the River Rudd! But There's Drama in Store when International Crooks Scheme to Steal Admiral Thresher's Secret and the Removites Chip In—Not Forgetting Catchpole's Latest Invention.

Ruictions on the Rudd.

"SPRING is here!" quoth Dick Bannister. "List to the sunlit waters rippling 'neath the leafy trees; behold the merry baa-lambs and the busy honey-bees! Fain would I say—*You-ov!*! What silly rotter kicked me?"

"I did!" said Johnny Gee severely. "What do you expect, spouting rhymes like that?"

The cheery chums of Study No. 4 in the Remove at St. Giddy's had come down to the river, to enjoy the Wednesday afternoon half-holiday. Spring, as Dick Bannister remarked, had come. For the time of year, the weather was remarkably warm; the countryside had shed its drab cloak of winter and taken on a coat of fresh, verdant green. The River Rudd sparkled in the bright afternoon sunshine.

"I think," said Johnny Gee, "that a pull up the river is indicated.

"Rather!" said his chums enthusiastically.

Johnny Gee & Co. managed to "bag" a large, sturdy skiff—a double sculler. Dick Bannister and the Hon. Bob Vernon took first turn at the oars, and the boat glided out into the river, the juniors pulling lustily.

"Row, brothers, row!" sang out Dick Bannister. "This is ripping! My hat! What's the merry outfit coming along?"

Round the bend in the river, a long, low craft came sweeping swiftly and gracefully. It was a schoolboy racing eight—and a fine spectacle they presented as they sped along the gleaming water, their blades sweeping, dipping and pulling with beautiful precision. The sturdy young oarsmen shot past, to disappear at a corking rate.

"My word!" exclaimed Tony Graham. "They're

the Asheton College Junior Eight, from higher up the river. What a topping crew!"

Johnny Gee nodded.

"Yes—Asheton rather pride themselves on their rowing, since they have been Head of the River for a couple of years. We've never had a chance to try our weight against 'em, but I reckon with a bit of practice we'd stand a chance of licking them—and—blow it!—I'm going to challenge 'em right now! Let's take a turn, Tony."

The two juniors changed ends, and soon they were off again, in the direction taken by the Asheton crew.

Suddenly, the splash of oars sounded alongside, and they became aware of another skiff, of similar size to their own, manned by six youths in blue and white school caps, rapidly drawing up to them. They were Tommy Rhodes & Co., their rivals of Earlswood School!

"Hallo, St. Giddy's microbes!" called out Tommy Rhodes, "What do you bargees reckon you're up to—rowing?"

"Why, you—you cheeky Earlswood worms!" roared Johnny Gee indignantly. "We can row your heads off, any day of the week!"

The two boats were alongside, now, and Tommy Rhodes & Co. seemed determined to pass the other boat. But Johnny and Dick bent to the oars and pulled lustily.

A swift, thrilling race ensued. It was neck and neck all the way, for the youthful rowers were equally matched. At length, they swept round a bend in the river, and a large, handsome boathouse came in sight, on the left bank. It was the Asheton College boathouse.

"Let 'em go, Reggie!" panted Johnny Gee. "Steer inshore, to the Asheton boathouse."

Lord Reggie tugged at the line, and the Remove boat turned towards the Asheton boathouse. Strangely enough, the Earlswood skiff did the same! Glaring at one another, the rival oarsmen rowed neck and neck to the bank, and both craft bumped heavily into the bank.

Johnny Gee flung down the oars, and jumped out of the boat, making a bee-line for a tall, sturdy, handsome youth who stood in the centre of the astonished crowd on the landing-stage. To the surprise of all, Tommy Rhodes did likewise!

"I say, Courtney—" gasped Johnny Gee.

"Yah! Don't listen to him, Courtney!" roared Tommy Rhodes breathlessly. "I was here first, and—"

"Oh, crumbs! Here I say, draw it mild!" ejaculated the Asheton skipper in some alarm. "Who are you chaps, anyway?"

"I'm Gee, of St. Giddy's—"

"Yah! He's a silly duffer! I'm Rhodes, of Earlswood—"

"All serene," said Tommy Rhodes. "Cheerio, Courtney! We'll be seeing you again on Boat Race Day!"

"Rats!" retorted Johnny Gee.

Tommy Rhodes returned to the Earlswood skiff. Johnny Gee & Co. followed their rivals' boat down the river as far as the latter's boathouse. Tommy Rhodes & Co. put in there, while the Removites went on towards their own boathouse.

"We'll start rowing practice directly we get our shell," said Johnny Gee. "On Saturday we'll show those cheeky Earlswood duffers what's what. Hallo! The Upper Fourth are out this afternoon—and it looks like a picnic!"

Fothergill and his fellow dandies—Royce, Heppelthwaite and Clarence Vane—had blossomed forth with the sunshine in brand new Spring outfits. As the chums of the Remove looked, they saw Tingey the boatman hump a large tuck hamper out of the boathouse and deposit it in the stern of the dandies' boat.

"It's a picnic right enough, Johnny!" exclaimed



QUEER FISH.—The Juniors' boat brought up sharply. Next moment they were rising bodily out of the water, enmeshed in a huge trap-net.

"Yes, the biggest idiot in that home for incurables!" snorted Johnny Gee. "Look here, Courtney, we saw you chaps sculling past, and thought we'd follow up, and challenge you to a race."

"So did we!" hooted Tommy Rhodes.

Arthur Courtney grinned good-humouredly.

"I've heard of St. Giddy's and Earlswood," he said. "Usually somewhere near the top at inter-collegiate sports, and always ragging one another. I'll tell you what, Gee and Rhodes. Saturday week is Boat Race Day, and we'll fix a race with the better of you two crews on that day, to be rowed on the Rudd, the winner to take the title of Head of the River. That arrangement is fair enough, I think?"

Johnny Gee and Tommy Rhodes drew deep breaths.

"Yes, rather!" they both said together.

"We'll get it over as soon as possible," said Johnny Gee, and he turned to his rival. "I propose that the race between St. Giddy's and Earlswood be rowed this Saturday afternoon."

Tony Graham. "We're going after that tuck hamper, of course!"

"You bet your Sunday boots we are!" chuckled the Remove leader. "I expect they're off to Pagg's Island. We'll follow afterwards."

There was a sudden commotion on the river, followed by a rush of excited fags along the towing path. Pumfret & Co. of the Third were hilarious with laughter, over some joke or another. Greatly wondering, Johnny Gee & Co. gazed, and then they fell back, gasping.

A weird craft came into view. It was an old boat that had been patched up and newly painted, and—wonder of wonders!—it had been converted by the one and only Timothy Catchpole into a steam paddle-boat!

The ancient boat was fitted on either side with huge paddle-wheels, operated by long cranks that

were connected to the piston rods of a weird-looking boiler mounted amidships. Catchpole's paddle boat was complete with chimney, navigator's bridge and steering wheel, beside which Timothy Catchpole himself was mounted. The schoolboy inventor's face was very black, but he beamed proudly over the rims of his eyeglasses.

"Mum-m-m—my hat!" gurgled Johnny Gee. "Mind the merry boiler doesn't blow up, Catchpole!"

The paddle boat, under a full head of steam, went merrily along the river, shaping a somewhat zig-zag course.

Johnny Gee & Co. set out in their own craft, and rowed with all their might after Catchpole's paddle boat. At length, it swooped out of sight round the bend. Then the Removites took it more easily until they came in sight of the island.

"Golly, golly!" exclaimed Snowball suddenly. "De ole steamboat am stuck, boys! Dem soppo coons on de island am tryin' to shove it off!"

Snowball spoke truly. Scarcely three yards from the shore of the island, Catchpole's wonderful paddle boat was stuck. The paddles, however, were still revolving at a fast rate and were hurling mud in vast quantities all over Fothergill and his companions, who had set their picnic on the green sward close to the bank.

Those beauteous knuts, using oars from their own boat, were making desperate efforts to shove off the stuck steamer.

Unobserved in the confusion, the heroes of the Remove rowed to the other side of the island. They disembarked and plunged into the trees, crossing to the other side of the island.

"Ooooh! Look out!" shrieked Fothergill at sight of the raiders. "Those Remove rotters are after our tuck— Yaroooop!"

Biff! Wallop! Crash! The dandies of the Upper Fourth went down before the Juniors' onrush. They were soon bound securely with their own tablecloth, their boat was scuttled, and the tuck stowed back into the hamper.

"We have done well, my hearties!" said Johnny Gee. "Let's go and enjoy our spoils."

With victorious shouts, the Juniors returned to their boat. The hamper was taken aboard. The Hon. Bob Vernon pushed off, and away they went down the river.

When they rounded the bend, they looked back, only to receive a great shock. They saw Fothergill and Co. push Catchpole's paddle boat into deeper water, then scramble on board and set out in chase.

"Oh, crumbs!" ejaculated Johnny Gee. "That blessed boat is faster than ours, too! Kimmon—row like anything!"

Their skiff fairly shot along, but the others gasped in consternation as they saw Catchpole's wonderful paddle steamer moving swiftly towards them!

"They mean to run us down!" gasped Johnny Gee. He cast a desperate glance around him.

They had come to a wide, open creek that led from the river into a large estate. Across the mouth of the creek, however, was a rope, on which the following notice appeared:

PRIVATE.

NO ADMITTANCE FOR RIVER CRAFT.

By Order!

"Let's row up here," said the Remove Captain.

Dick and Johnny pulled hard together, while Lord Reggie steered them into the creek. They ducked under the rope, and went merrily onward, between the tall, wooded banks. Much to their amazement, however, the Removites hearing a terrific whirring of paddles, saw Catchpole's queer craft turn into the creek!

"Oh, my giddy aunt! The idiots are coming after us!" ejaculated Tony Graham.

"Never mind—we'll lead 'em on till they get stuck again!" muttered Johnny Gee.

They had not gone far, however, when the skiff stopped with a sharp jerk. Next moment it began to rise out of the water! The whole craft, with the Removites still on board, was whirled upwards in a wide mesh of wire netting connected in the form of a drag to a couple of long poles.

"Hi!" yelled Dick Bannister. "Wh-what the dickens?"

Thoroughly "netted," the Removites rocked perilously in mid-air. Their hamper went overboard and they had much ado to save themselves from following it.

There was a crash, and a wild tearing of trees and shrubs, as Catchpole's paddle boat ran full tilt into the bank, sending Fothergill & Co. sprawling on top of one another.

While the joyous juniors were wondering what would happen next, excited voices sounded behind the trees on the right bank, and a moment later, two forms appeared.

One of the arrivals was a tall, portly, and very important-looking gentleman in naval officer's uniform. He had a very rubicund face, weather-beaten and grizzled, bucolic eyes, and fierce whiskers. Johnny Gee & Co. recognised him as Admiral Thresher.

The admiral's companion was a tall, elongated and rather learned-looking gentleman with a bulbous forehead, long hair and a bony nose adorned with a pair of spectacles.

"By gad, Professor—just a parcel of schoolboys!" roared the Admiral, in a thunderous voice. "What do you mean by trespassing in my private waters, you little rascals—hey?"

"We—we're awfully sorry, sir!" gasped the Remove leader. "We didn't know that you owned this property—"

"Didn't you see the notice, telling all craft to keep out?" roared Admiral Thresher. "Why, split my turret, you've upset all the work that took Professor Postlethwaite and me days to prepare! That trap was laid to catch a dangerous spy who is attempting to get into my house, to steal some secret work that the Professor and I are carrying out for the Admiralty! By gad, I'll—hey! Crack my plates, what in blazes is that?"

Admiral Thresher gave a jump when he saw Catchpole's paddle boat. The schoolboy inventor had shut off steam, and had been gazing in admiring interest at the clever trap in which Johnny Gee & Co. had been caught. Now Catchpole turned on the steam and started to manœuvre various levers and wheels. There was a fierce hissing of steam, clouds of smoke poured from the funnel, while the paddles started to revolve at frantic speed. Then the inevitable happened!

Bang! Up went the boiler! The boat itself disrupted, the paddles went whirring away in the air on their own. Catchpole and his companions were hurled out into the water, where they sank with choking gurgles.

"Split my turret!" bellowed the angry Admiral. "Give me your names! I'll lodge a complaint with your Headmaster immediately!"

Johnny Gee & Co. ruefully gave their names. Fothergill & Co., scenting trouble, scrambled out of the water and ran for it along the bank. Timothy Catchpole, being immersed in a semi-sunken portion of his ill-fated paddle boat, could only wave his arms.

Professor Postlethwaite, looking very severely at the juniors, operated a large crank behind the bushes, which lowered the wire entanglements. The

Removites' skiff jolted back again into the water and was free.

"Now be off with you!" shouted Admiral Thresher.

Johnny Gee & Co. dismally returned to the school boathouse, and thence to St. Giddy's. To crown their troubles they were met at the gates by Sergeant Rumble, with orders to go to the Head immediately. Dr. Holroyd received them coldly and severely.

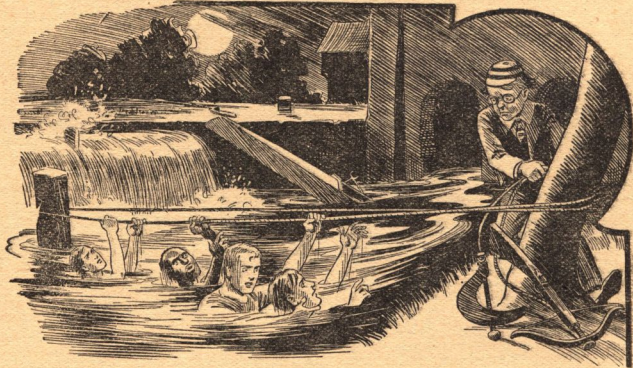
"I have just received a complaint by telephone from Admiral Thresher," he said. "It appears that your lads were guilty of trespassing down his private creek. The Admiral is engaged, with Professor Postlethwaite, in guarding an Unbreakable Code which that notorious international spy, Fritz Honschel,

"Things aren't any too well—eh?" said Davenport, with a sneer. "I hear the Head's barred you from usin' the river. So your boat race on Saturday with the Earlswood fellows is definitely off! I just popped in to tell you that I'm gettin' up a crew——"

"You!" almost shouted the company of Study No. 4.

"Why not?" asked Davenport insolently. "I'm as good an oar as you, any day of the week, Gee. An' I mean to prove it! My eight will be composed of fellows from the Remove and the Upper Fourth. I've been on the 'phone with my pater, and he's cabin' me the money for a brand new boat, so we shall have the very latest in racin' shells."

Johnny Gee's brows contracted angrily, and it was



"WARE WEIR!—The boomerang-like object curled round the post and whizzed back to Catchpole. The Juniors clutched desperately at this double life-line.

is attempting to secure. Professor Postlethwaite, an inventor engaged by the Admiralty to carry out certain tests with new secret devices, is working with Admiral Thresher, and Henschel also aims at getting information concerning these. You will thus appreciate the enormity of your offence, boys, in placing all their work in jeopardy."

"We're awfully sorry, sir," said Johnny Gee. "We did not realise——"

"You should be more careful, Gee," replied the Head coldly. "The serious nature of your offence calls for severe punishment. In addition to corporal punishment, you boys will be prohibited from using the river until further notice!"

The chums of the Remove were too dismayed to say a word. They were caned in turn, but in their chagrin at being "barred" from the river, they scarcely noticed their punishment. They went along to Study No. 4, feeling gloomy and glum.

Scarcely were they there when a tap sounded at the door, and Davenport of the Remove looked in. The company in Study No. 4 bristled at once. They did not like Cecil Davenport. They knew him to be a bonder and a cad at heart, and consequently they had no time for Cecil Davenport.

only by a great effort that he restrained himself from using his fists upon the mocking-faced dandy.

"We're not standing any interference from you, Davenport, so you can take my tip, and keep off the grass!" he said between his teeth.

"We shall see," sneered Davenport. "But I'm afraid the Grand an' Glorious Study No. 4 will have to take a back seat."

He gave a mocking laugh and went out, leaving the Joyous Juniors in a more dismayed and angry state than ever.

The Nocturnal Practice.

QUITE a sensation was caused in the Lower School at St. Giddy's when a notice appeared on the board, in Davenport's handwriting, announcing his crew, composed of an equal number of Upper Fourth and Remove fellows.

When lessons were over, Davenport and his satellites went for a practice spin in a racing shell, of the very latest design, which had been delivered by special order!

On Friday, Johnny Gee & Co. went down to the river, and they gazed lugubriously at the shining

waters. Davenport and his crew came out in slips and shorts. They clambered into their nice new boat and raced away, with Burgess of the Sixth coaching them from the bank.

"This is rotten!" growled Dick Bannister. "I vote— My hat! What on earth has Catchpole got with him?"

Timothy Catchpole appeared, carrying what appeared to be a mechanical bow, fitted with a winding ratchet and spring. Under his arm were several coils of rope, and an object that looked like a small boomerang.

"Ah! I see you are interested, my dear chaps, in my life-saving device," said Catchpole eagerly. "It is a distinct improvement on the rocket-line apparatus. The projectile, instead of being an arrow, is a kind of boomerang, to which the life-line is attached. The mechanical release and firing apparatus are so designed that they will project the boomerang to any distant object, and enable it to coil round it, either fixing the rope to it by means of a noose, or returning the rope to the point from which it had been fired, thus forming a double line. Perhaps a practical demonstration will prove to you fellows the real worth of this apparatus."

"Go ahead, Catchpole!" chuckled Johnny Gee. "We will regard the flagpost of the boathouse as the mast of the ship in distress," explained the schoolboy inventor. "Watch carefully, my dear fellows, and you will see how the boomerang-projectile coils the rope round the mast, and fixes it!" Johnny Gee & Co. watched in some amusement. At that juncture, a tall, rather skinny form in top hat and frock coat came striding along the towing path, close to the boathouse. It was Mr. Ernest James Cattermole, M.A., the sour-grained Housemaster of St. Giddy's. His gimlet eyes fastened upon Johnny Gee & Co., and he increased his pace.

Whang-ggg-ggggg! Whizzzz! Timothy Catchpole released the catch on his spring bow life-line apparatus. Away went the boomerang-like missile, with the trailing rope. To the horror of Johnny Gee and Co. instead of shaping for the flag staff, it made straight for the oncoming Housemaster!

"Oh, crums!" ejaculated Johnny Gee, starting forward. "Mum-m-my giddy aunt! Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites saw the boomerang whirl round Catty's topper, whisking it from his head. The rope returned towards Timothy Catchpole, but half-way on its return flight the coil loosened, and to the great astonishment of all, Catty's topper went flying down into the river, and floated away towards mid-stream! Several boats, manned by chortling juniors, converged on the headgear.

"Gug-g-good heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Cattermole in a faint voice, "Catchpole! How dare you! This is an audacious outrage—"

"Really, sir, it was a—a mistake!" gasped the dismayed inventor of the Remove.

Crunch! Smith Minor of the Remove managed to secure Mr. Cattermole's floating topper, and held it out on the end of a boat-hook, the point of the hook jabbed well and truly through the crown of the dripping headgear! Like a man in a daze, Mr. Cattermole took his topper amid roars of mirth.

"Take two hundred lines for laughing!" shouted the infuriated Housemaster, glaring at Johnny Gee and Co. "Catchpole, return to school at once and wait for me in my study."

Catchpole went, shaking his head sadly. After stamped out several more impositions, Mr. Cattermole stamped away, fairly palpitating with rage.

Johnny Gee & Co., still chortling, rolled along the towing path. Suddenly there was a splash of oars, and Davenport & Co. came sweeping along in mid-stream.

"What a crew of bargees!" growled Dick Bannister. "Johnny, we must put a spoke in their wheel somehow!" Johnny Gee nodded grimly.

"Chaps, I've thought of a wheeze!" he exclaimed. "We'll arrange with Tommy Rhodes to row that race to-morrow in secret somewhere. They're sports, and will agree to that, I'm sure!"

"M'yes," said Dick Bannister. "But what about practice?"

"We'll fix that, too," replied the Remove leader quietly.

"What about getting our boat out to-night in the moonlight?"

"Gug-g-great pip!" The rest of the Co. gasped, but welcomed the suggestion eagerly. That evening in Study No. 4 the idea was put to the rest of the crew.

They all readily announced that they were "game," and so it was arranged, after they had sent a note to Tommy Rhodes.

Little did Johnny Gee & Co. realise that, outside their study door, a stealthy figure was lurking. Leslie Meeke, the sneak of the Remove, had heard every word!

Chuckling softly to himself, Meeke slipped along to Davenport's study. The dandy's eyes gleamed when he heard the information that Meeke had to retail.

"By Jove! Thanks for the tip, Meeke," he exclaimed. "Yes, I can lend you half-a-crown—catch! I'll let them go on their little night stunt, and see that Cattermole nails them as they come in. That will be better than stopping them altogether!"

The Peril of the Weir.

AT half-past eleven that night, nine shadowy forms could have been seen prowling round the school boathouse.

"Good egg!" muttered Johnny Gee. "I've got the doors open! Now for the boat!"

The Removites' precious racing craft was carried out carefully and set afloat. They stepped aboard and glided silently to the middle of the river.

"Go!" called out Snowball, the cox, and the eight oars dipped into the water as one. They were off! They alternated with short bursts at top speed and spells of easy paddling, finishing off with a fast row over the whole course. They finished in grand style, then rested on their oars, to take a breather.

"Whew! That was ripping!" exclaimed Johnny Gee rather breathlessly. "I reckon we're good enough to give those Earlswood bouncers a wallop to-morrow—and Ashton next Saturday! Great pip! What's this coming?"

The Remove captain broke off with a gasp as the dull, muffled roar of a powerful engine broke the silence. Next moment the hurling shape of a dark, low-built motor-boat flashed past them, with a reverberating roar, and its wash sent the flimsy racing shell rocking wildly.

Johnny Gee caught a fleeting glimpse of the man at the wheel. His sinister, foreign-looking face was partially covered by a peaked cap. A sharp-pointed moustache adorned his chin, and his eyes glittered like a raven's, through his spectacles.

"My hat!" exclaimed Johnny Gee. "I wonder if that foreign-looking merchant in the motor-boat was Henschel, the rotter, who is after the Admiralty code that old Thresher is guarding? I think we ought to follow, and try and see what he is up to."

The rest of the crew were game, so hugging the deep shadows of the right bank, the Remove oarsmen rowed swiftly in the direction taken by the motor-boat.

At length, they came within view of the creek that led to Admiral Thresher's land. Even as they

approached, a red light flashed intermittently from the trees on the bank ahead.

"Someone signalling across the river!" muttered Johnny Gee. "I was right, then—the spies are out to-night. Let's creep along, and see if we can land. Carefully does the trick, now!"

They were approaching the weir, with its many posts protruding from the water, marked with "Danger" notices. The turbulent roar of the waters quite drowned the noise of their oars. In order to keep in the shadows, they had to steer close to the weir.

The powerful drag of the water could be felt now, and the Removites' hearts thumped tensely as they tugged desperately against the fierce current.

They were half-way across when, all at once, the grey hull of the motor-boat appeared from the opposite bank.

"Pull!" cried Johnny Gee hoarsely. "He's coming across, and— Oh!"

A shaft of dazzling light suddenly shot from the motor-boat; a beam that swept full into the Removites' eyes, temporarily blinding them, causing confusion in the boat, which turned sharply into

clutched desperately at the rope. All managed to secure a grip upon it, and slowly worked their way along to the brick embankment and safety.

"My hat! You saved our bacon that time, Catchpole, and no mistake!" exclaimed Johnny Gee, when the Juniors had recovered. "It was splendid, old chap! But what are you doing out here, at this time of night?"

Catchpole blinked through his eyeglasses.

"Having rectified the slight—er—defects in this apparatus of mine," said the inventive genius of the Remove, solemnly. "I came out to-night determined to show it to Admiral Thresher. I thought that if I caught him on his own—"

"Catchpole, you're a tryer, and no mistake!" laughed Johnny Gee. "Well, chaps, I vote we go on and tell Admiral Thresher what's happened. Kimmon!"

The juniors made their way alongside the river to the Admiral's creek. There they moved warily through the trees, keeping a sharp look-out for the Admiral's enemies.

Suddenly, out of the dark, inky waters of the creek, two bright eyes appeared. Those awful orbs were

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the pull of the current. A cry of warning rang out from Snowball, but too late! The Removites' boat was swept by the swift current over the brink and plunged downward in the seething waters, to smash to matchwood against one of the posts.

Johnny Gee & Co. fought desperately against the mad waters. But with the seething waters choking and blinding them, the hapless juniors were swept into the hideous flood that raced to the mill stream.

Their horror-filled eyes saw the gaunt black arches looming before them; they could hear the grinding of the great mill wheel above the hiss of the waters.

All at once, they heard a shout that rang above the thunder of the waters, and they made out a vaguely familiar figure, running at the side of the weir. It was Timothy Catchpole, carrying in his hand a strange bow-like object and some rope . . .

Over the blinding rush of waters, the Juniors saw Catchpole take aim with his spring-bow at one of the posts at the opposite side of the mill stream. A boomerang-like object sped through the darkness, coiled the rope around the post, and returned to Catchpole. A double line was now stretched across the mill stream, directly in front of the arches and the wheel.

As the tide of madly racing waters swept them towards those yawning arches, the Removites

moving—some unknown creature was lurking in the waters of the creek!

Then the surface of the water was disturbed, and a monstrous head and black body came up, its eyes casting two bright shafts of light into the darkness.

"Gug-g-great pip!" ejaculated Johnny Gee. "Don't you see—it's a man dressed in a kind of diver's costume. My hat! It must be Henschel the spy! He—he's come in from the river! Grab the rotter!"

The eager Removites scrambled down the bank on top of their quarry and, despite his frantic struggles, dragged him bodily out of the creek.

Seething with triumph, Johnny Gee & Co. rushed their wriggling prisoner to the Admiral's mansion.

"Bang! Bang!" Dick Bannister beat a terrific tattoo on the knocker. Lights gleamed in the upper rooms, and in a moment or two the large front door opened and Admiral Thresher appeared in his pyjamas. He stared in amazement at the wriggling figure in the grip of Johnny Gee & Co.

"Here you are, sir—we've nabbed that villain Henschel, the spy!" exclaimed the Remove leader.

"Why—what—split my turret!" thundered the Admiral, going blue in the face with anger. "You—you've pulled Professor Postlethwaite out of the

(Continued on page 2.)

THE RASH CASH DASH

(Continued from page 36.)

regular intervals ever since it had been first sighted over Newfoundland.

Soon the machine was roaring over the heads of the cheering crowd. It landed without a jar, and two tired, soiled, but smiling faces peered out of the cockpits at the solid mob of cheering people that rushed towards them.

Eager hands grabbed them and bore them shoulder high across the flying field. But Percy Bodkin, in spite of the grumbling strain of the flight, had not forgotten his mission.

"Thopt! Lemme go!" he yelled to the men carrying him. "I've got important bithneth to thee to!"

Jimmy Joyce remembered what Percy was there for, also.

"Say, fellas, let the kid free! He's got someth'n mighty urgent to see to. If any of you've got a fast car what can rush him to Governor Hackwort's offices right now, I'd be some obliged!"

Half-a-dozen eager car owners were only too willing to oblige the great man.

At precisely a quarter to twelve Percy stepped out of the car and walked across the wide pavement towards the swing doors of the great building which housed the offices of the Governor of New York State. At precisely fourteen minutes and forty-five seconds to twelve Percy recognised two tall gentlemen of stern aspect whom he had recently encountered in England, standing not ten yards away from him.

"Goth!" gurgled Percy as he broke into a run. "Tho'th Belgian roterth mean to thopt me yet!"

Percy flung himself into a lift and gasped "Governorth ofth! Quick!" to the attendant. The door of the lift slammed in the face of the on-rushing 'tecs, to Percy's relief. But they were not thus to be foiled. There was another lift near. They dashed into it.

The lift stopped at the appropriate floor and they pounced out to see Percy Bodkin rushing for an office door marked *Josh. P. Hackwort, Goernr. N.Y. State*. With wild yells of "Stop!" they dashed after him.

Percy's hand was on the door knob when the leading man grabbed him. In spite of this, Percy flung open the door and literally hurled himself in, dragging the two zealous members of Grabbem's Agency atop of him.

Governor Hackwort rose from his desk with dignity and said "What the Nation is this!"

"They're tryin' to thopt me getting thith paper thigned by you!" shouted Percy. "They're a couple of Belgian crookth who—"

"Hold on!" said one of the detectives, rising to his feet. "Where'd you get that crook business? We're detectives employed by your boss to stop you getting that paper signed. It don't need signing. Here—read this letter!"

The detective drew from his pocket the letter which J.-Bertillon Bogg had received immediately after seeing Percy off at the station. Percy Bodkin read it and staggered limply to a near-by chair.

"What the dash!" yelled the Governor of New York. "Here! Get out! The whole bunch! Never seen such dashed cheek in my born days!"

"I'm thorry, thir," mumbled Percy, humbly. "I came to get the monopoly for Thouth England Tin Mineth Limited. But it theemth to have been already thigned!"

"Already signed?" grunted the Governor. "I'll say it hasn't. I was expecting somebody to come about it right now. They lose the monopoly unless it's signed by twelve."

"Funny," said Percy. "Read this letter."

Percy passed the Governor of New York the letter. The great man read it with a scowl. Presently he rang a bell and to the attendant who answered, he said, "Bring me a document with the signature of James Patrick, manager of South England Tin Mines Ltd., on it—and hustle!"

The attendant did hustle. When the Governor had a specimen of Patrick's signature he compared it profoundly with that on the letter.

At last he said: "Exactly as I thought! This signature is a forgery! The letter is a fake!"

"Heaventh!" lisped Percy. "Then thothe Belgiantn mutht have written it to—"

"Undoubtedly," said the governor. "Quick, my lad, give's that new monopoly—it's just striking twelve o'clock!"

"Fixit," said Percy, stifling his lip at last as he folded the completed document and put it into his pocket, "certainly always manages, somehow, to Fix You Up!"

Look out for a screaming, side-splitting humorous yarn next week featuring Washington Hayseed, the comical coon south.



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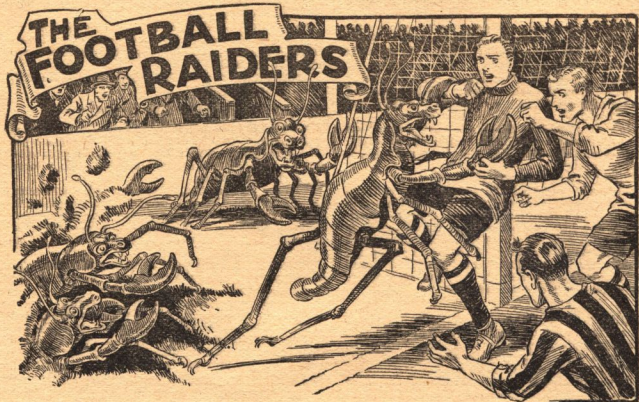
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THE HAUNTED ARENA. Through the crisp turf came the nightmare crustaceans. Soon the arena was an amazing sight. The footballers kicking, sprawling, struggling, were attacked on every hand. Spectators shouted in horror—on the verge of panic.

Zorro Strikes.

A JAX, the brawny, muscular skipper of Welham Wanderers, gave a whoop of joy. "Hurrah!" he yelled. "Here, brothers all! Good news!"

He was standing at the edge of the arena at the side of Lord Welham, his guardian. All the other members of the "Tin Can Trojans"—to give them their nickname—were at practice. But they came running up now—Argus, the lightning-eyed centre-forward; Perseus, the nimble inside-right; Eos, the goalie; Boreas and Eurus, the backs, and all the other members of this singularly named football team.

"The Chief has just brought us news of the English Cup draw," said Ajax, with glowing eyes. "Brothers, we're drawn against Rodwell Rangers in the semi-final."

"Where are we playing?" asked Argus breathlessly.

"Maple Park!" replied Ajax.

These valiant schoolboys were the adopted sons of Lord Welham; that had battled their way triumphantly through the competition, to the amazement of the whole country. Lord Welham and his Orphans were the talk of the nation. He had adopted them all in babyhood, and he had named them, in his own eccentric way, after mythical Greek gods.

The Crater, a strange, natural hollow made a perfect stadium for the Miracle Boys, with its terraces of rock, and a perfect stretch of turf. It was situated within the grounds of Welham Priors, the scientist-peer's country home on the outskirts of

Welham Town, the busy industrial centre in picturesque Derbyshire.

"Well, we've got nearly a fortnight to get in shape," said Ajax cheerfully. "The tie isn't until the Saturday after next, and we play Totham Rovers, in the Midland Counties League, this week-end."

He turned to his guardian—whom all the boys called "Chief"—and his expression changed. Lord Welham was staring fixedly at the deserted turf, and in his eyes there was a look of puzzled wonder.

"What is it, Chief?" asked Ajax quickly.

"There seems to be something wrong—" began the scientist.

He broke off, and strode forward on to the pitch. The boys ran with him. "Look!" exclaimed Perseus, in amazement.

A number of queer-looking creatures were worming their way out of the turf. They had apparently bored their way upwards from far below, and never had the boys seen such extraordinary insects—if, indeed, they were insects. They were whitish-grey in colour, sluggish in their movements, and they looked something like miniature lobsters. Yet, at the same time they reminded the boys of locusts.

"Great Scott! What are they?" asked Eos.

"They appear to be crustaceans," said Lord Welham, as he bent down. "Yet there is no record of this remarkable type."

The boys, full of curiosity, were running about, and the strange crustaceans had now vanished, burrowing back into their almost invisible holes.

"I will see to it that the ground is sprayed with some powerful chemical—which will leave the grass undamaged, but which will kill all insect matter," said Lord Welham sharply. "By heaven—"

He broke off, and his eyes were grim.

"What were you going to say, Chief?" asked Ajax.

"I believe that the crustaceans we just saw are not earthly creatures, but denizens of a strange Space World," said Lord Welham quietly. "As you know, my boys, this crater was made by the fall of an enormous meteorite, a great many years ago. Underneath here,"—he pointed significantly—"there is a tremendous subterranean cavern. In it, amid the rocks, is the meteorite."

"Yes, we know, Chief," said Ajax. "And Professor Mortimer Zorro, the archaeologist, has been playing all sorts of dirty tricks. Why don't you do something, Chief?"

"No! It would be a mistake to take police action against Professor Zorro," said Lord Welham firmly. "I desire no publicity. The meteorite, my boys, is worth millions."

"What!" went up a general ejaculation.

"Millions!" repeated the scientist impressively. "Zorro does not know this, and I do not intend to tell him. But I have made certain, delicate experiments, and I have discovered that the meteorite is charged with a wonderful metal, a hundred times more valuable than radium. I mean to develop the meteorite for the benefit of you boys. But it will take time—years, perhaps. For the present we must watch—and be constantly on our guard."

PROFESSOR MORTIMER ZORRO'S lips curled back from his fang-like teeth in an evil chuckle; his grotesque, spider-like body crouched, as he lurked in a dark, rock tunnel in the vicinity of the crater. Over his head he wore special earphones—and he had overheard every word which had passed between Lord Welham and his boys. For, hidden amongst the rocks at the arena he had placed cunningly devised microphones.

"So!" he muttered, his eyes ablaze. "The buried meteorite is worth millions! Curse Welham and his cleverness! A metal a hundred times more valuable than radium!"

He chuckled more evilly than ever as he ran, crab-like on his spindly legs, down the tunnel. Presently he came into a great cavern, where flares were burning. He gave a sharp shout, and several grotesque figures ran to him. They were Zorro's Grey Men—grim, desperate crooks, garbed in close-fitting grey suits and hideous masks, half-reptile, half bird.

"Listen to me!" said Zorro curtly. "For the time being, we will cease all activities."

"But what about to-night?" asked one of the Grey Men. "We have the Giant Bats ready, and we were to break into the bank at Melcham—"

"Forget it!" interrupted Zorro. "There are to be no more bank raids for the present. It is too risky—with these boys about. We must get rid of them—once and for all."

He said nothing of what he had overheard; he kept that valuable information to himself. When he called for a ladder, his men instantly obeyed. They held it upright while Zorro mounted far into the gloom—up towards the very top of the cavern.

He flashed a powerful electric torch, and he gazed. For the cavern roof was literally one heaving, writhing mass of whitish-grey crustaceans!

"They develop well!" muttered Zorro.

By the use of heat ray lamps he had hatched the hideous things from their dormant stage. He had discovered that when the heat ray was concentrated upon the crustaceans, they grew at an incredible speed.

Suddenly, a number of the vile things dropped from the roof, falling on Zorro's head and shoulders.

He screamed aloud, for the crustaceans were attacking him, biting viciously.

"Help—help!" he shrieked wildly.

He lost his hold on the ladder, and went tumbling headlong. Crashing upon the Grey Men, he was lucky to escape serious injury.

"Kill them—kill them!" he croaked, as he struggled to his feet. "By all the powers! If they bite like this now, how will they bite when they have grown to maturity?"

And, in spite of his pains, he chuckled with evil, gloating anticipation.

The Haunted Arena.

DARKNESS enshrouded Welham Priors and the estate. Lord Welham and his Orphans were supposedly asleep; but three dim figures were silently walking across the parkland. They were Ajax, Eos and Argus.

"I may be mistaken, of course," Ajax was murmuring. "But I've got a hunch that something is wrong at the arena. We've seen nothing of Professor Zorro all this week, and he's probably hatching some devilish plans to spoil our game to-morrow and get us out of the Crater."

It seemed that Ajax's fears were groundless; for when they arrived at the arena, everything was still. They stood on the terracing, listening.

"Nothing wrong here," murmured Argus.

"Listen," urged Ajax. "There's no wind, and yet— By Jove! What is that rummy sound?"

They listened intently, and from below, coming up to them in waves, sounded a queer rustling and whispering. It rose and fell, now almost inaudible, now swelling weirdly.

"Look!" whispered Eos, clutching at Ajax's arm.

It seemed to the boys that the whole floor of the arena—the entire playing-pitch—was glowing with a bluish-purple fire. It shimmered eerily, flickering, dying out, then coming to full strength again.

"Come on!" said Ajax grimly. They went tumbling down the rock terracing to the turf. Here they halted, breathless and baffled. For there was no sheen of bluish light now; no unusual sound struck their ears. Everything was normal.

"The place must be haunted!" muttered Argus uneasily.

"I'm thinking of those horrible crustaceans we saw some days ago," said Ajax. "I wonder . . . But, of course, the glimmer may have been caused by the chemical which the Chief sprayed over the turf."

"Look out!" yelled Eos suddenly. "We've been tricked—"

He broke off. From all sides dim, mysterious figures were leaping at the three boys. The Grey Men were attacking, and there were six of them—two men to each boy. Ajax and his companions fought gamely, but they never had an earthly chance. Presently the plucky youngsters were on their backs, and heavy steel manacles had been clamped round their wrists, so that they were helpless.

"Foolish youths!" mocked Professor Zorro, seeming to materialise out of the surrounding blackness.

"You can't do this sort of thing with us, Professor Zorro!" said Ajax fiercely.

"No? But I am doing it," said the crook-archaeologist. "Moreover, I'm afraid there will be no game for you to-morrow, my boys."

He gave his orders, and now the hapless youngsters were carried across the arena. On the other side lay a great, sprawling creature of unbelievable size. It was neither bird nor animal—for it was, indeed, a denizen of that unknown Space World, a fragment of which had struck the earth so many years before.

It was not unlike an enormous bat, but it seemed to be composed of some transparent substance, as tough as leather, yet soft and jellyfied. The boys were compelled to climb right upon the monstrosity's back, which was of great size. With them went Zorro.

The Professor suddenly uttered some sharp, strange-sounding words. The bat-creature shuddered from end to end, its great wings spread out, and with a clumsy, lurching movement, it left the ground. Once in the air, however, it flew gracefully, swiftly, speeding through the night with extraordinary ease.

"I have my own magic carpet, you see," said Zorro presently. "Useful beasts, aren't they? Silent, efficient, and they cost nothing to run."

He chuckled amusedly, and, bending forward, he produced a key and released the boys. In his other hand he held an automatic pistol.

"I should not advise you to attack me," he said gently. "I have released you because I do not desire any evidence of foul play."

"What are you going to do with us?" asked Eos, trying to keep his voice steady.

"I am flying to the coast—and then far out to sea," replied Zorro. "At the right moment you will

strong wires! In other words, the great Welham Broadcasting Station!

Unnoticed by Zorro, Ajax nudged his "brothers"; and they, too, saw the great aerial. They understood—and were filled with hope. The giant bat, flying, as it believed, high above the land, was unaware of that link with the ground, over which it soared at close quarters.

"Jump!" yelled Ajax.

Simultaneously, the three boys leapt from the back of the flying creature. The distance they fell was trivial; they clutched at the wires, and found themselves entangled amongst them. But they saved themselves from hurtling headlong to the ground.

"You chaps all right?" panted Ajax.

"Yes!" came a gasping reply.

Yet it was necessary that they should make all speed, for Zorro would be certain to land somewhere, in an attempt to recapture them. Desperately, they swung themselves along the great wires. The boys



AERIAL ESCAPE.—"Jump!" yelled Ajax. Simultaneously the three boys leaped for the giant wireless aerial, their hands outstretched.

be tipped off—to fall into the ocean. I understand that death by drowning is most unpleasant!"

"You—you fiend!" said Ajax fiercely.

Zorro shrugged his shoulders. "Of course, if you care to jump now, it will be your own concern. We are five hundred feet up, and—"

He did not finish his sentence, but the tone of his voice was sufficient. The three plucky boys crouched there, with the wind beating past their ears.

Suddenly, Ajax stiffened. He had seen something immediately ahead—something which had escaped Zorro's attention. Two enormous towering steel masts—and, stretched between them, festoons of

had to thank their athletic prowess for the comparative ease with which they reached one of the towering masts. Rapidly they clambered down, swinging from girder to girder. They reached the ground, in an open meadow, and without pausing for breath they ran until they reached a country road.

"Safe!" panted Ajax. Professor Mortimer Zorro, for all his cunning, had been beaten.

"COME on, the Miracle Boys!"

"Hurrah!"

The Crater was practically filled to overflowing; people from all over the country had come

THE RASH CASH DASH

(Continued from page 17.)



J. BERTILLON BOGG.

"I'm sorry, sir," said the voice in the receiver, "An accident that happened not half-an-hour ago has entirely disorganised all that part of the line. It will take about two hours to get it in working order again. Shall I call you?"

J.B.B. slammed down the receiver and glared into space as though he bore it personal resentment. He had a long list of clients to interview that day and was unable to follow Percy even had he been able to intercept him before the boat sailed.

Presently, however, Bertie's scowl cleared and the light of inspiration came into his eyes. He seized the telephone again and demanded a local number.

"Grabben's Detective Agency? Bogg of Fixit speaking. Got a hot hustlin' job for you. My assistant, Bodkin has gone off on a chace what ain't even got wild goose in it. Want you to stop him before he sails on the two o'clock mail from Southampton. Can you do it in time in a car? You're coming to my office? Make it snappy then!"

A Male Bagged.

WHEN Percy Bodkin neared Southampton he found that he had half-an-hour to spare before the mail boat cleared for her trip across the Atlantic. He therefore snatched a hasty, though substantial, meal at a near-by restaurant.

Returning aboard the ship again, he saw that the last of the mails were being cleared out of the ship's hold. Percy remained on deck to watch the final preparations.

Suddenly, he caught sight of two tall, officious-looking men running madly along the dockside towards the ship. They charged up the gangway, only to be stopped by a seaman on duty at the top.

"Can't come aboard now!" he said.

"Stand aside there!" barked one of the tall gents. "We've come for a fellow named Bodkin and we've got orders to stop him!"

"There he is!" shouted the other man, suddenly catching sight of Percy. "I recognise him from the description!"

The seaman found himself pushed aside by the two strangers, and they rushed on deck towards the astonished Percy. Unfortunately, Percy misunderstood the zealous employees of Grabben's Detective Agency; their eagerness to stop him sailing on the boat could have only one explanation to Percy—they were agents of that rascally rival firm of Belgian tin merchants. Percy took action.

Turning swiftly, he dived down the long corridor of the main deck, the two detectives hot in chase.

Without hesitation Percy shoved open a rivet-studded door and scuttled down the steep iron companionway leading below into the black depths of the ship. He dashed on to find himself in the hold of the ship, the open hatchway above giving a view of the winter sky.

All that interested Percy, however, was a number of empty mail bags lying in the hold. He seized a large one, scrambled into it and lay as still as if he had been a bagful of belated Christmas cards. He heard his pursuers come into the hold.

"Not here," said a voice. "He must have given us the slip somehow!"

"Come along!" grunted another voice. "He must be aboard somewhere!"

To his relief, Percy heard their retreating footsteps. He was about to climb out of the mailbag, when the approaching steps of newcomers bade him pause.

"This hold's been cleared, sir," said a new voice.

"What's that then?" came the answer of another voice. "There's a full one there. Put a jerk in it, and get that ashore—they're haulin' in the gangways!"

"Aye, aye, sir," then retreating footsteps and some uncomplimentary mutterings. "Aloft, there!" came a hefty sailorman's hail. "Send down a line o' that derrick."

There were various clanking noises, and presently Percy, who, of course, could not see what was going on, had a peculiar sensation of being hoisted into the air.

A jarring bump made Percy grunt involuntarily, and then the floating sensation ceased. There was clanging of bells, the howl of a ship's siren, then a chugging, churning sound as of beating propellers. Strangely enough, these noises grew fainter and fainter as though fading away in the distance.

"Quiet moving ship this," concluded Percy. "Wonder if it's safe to have a peep out?"

He decided to risk it, and parting the closed mouth of the mailbag, he pushed forth his head. A cry of horror and surprise congealed in his throat, His eyes fairly goggled.

He was on the dockside amidst a pile of similar mailbags, and the mail steamer, *Minerva*, was already steaming away on her trip to the States!

"G-g-g-good heaventh! I've got left behind!"

Percy Bodkin remained motionless as though smitten rigid with horror. He failed to notice the gang of men busy throwing the bags into a heap near Percy.

Thud! One of the bags struck Percy full on the cranium. Alas! It was a sorry day for Percy when an affectionate uncle in Wigan decided to send his nephew in foreign parts a heavy brass tobacco jar, for that receptacle happened to be in the part of the mail bag that struck Percy on the napper. Percy sank limply back into his mail bag, his world completely full of blankness.

PERCY'S return to consciousness was accompanied by a sickening headache and an oppressive sense of being buried under several fathoms of soft

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matter. It was absolutely dark and gradually he became aware of the fact that he was still in the big mailbag. He wriggled wildly as soon as he realised this and shook off some of the smothering weight above, but he could not get out of the bag. Indeed, the mouth of it had been clamped tight, with the orthodox mailbag padlock, by an official some time before.

Many things had happened to that mailbag since the kind uncle's tobacco jar had struck Percy on the bezer. The bag had been locked, as aforesaid, dumped on to a train, dumped off, laid on a wayside station for an hour, slung on another train, shot down the hold of a channel steamer, hauled up again, and finally hurled into the train where Percy now found himself—for a label on the mailbag was written thus: *Liverpool to Paris, via Southampton.*

Several centuries drifted by—or so it seemed to Percy—before the train stopped. He heard voices shouting in some strange tongue and the sound of the mail-truck door being unlocked and slid open. Then Percy yelled—yelled with all the strength of his youthful lungs.

Somewhere out there beyond the confines of Percy's mailbag came a confused and excited jabbering. He felt hands seize the bag and haul it forth. A key rattled in the padlock of the bag. Percy was free!

He leapt out like a released Jack-in-a-box to the accompaniment of startled cries from a number of blue-smocked gentry who stood around in the light of a hand lamp held aloft. A torrent of excited French burst on Percy's ear.

"Half a minute! Half a minute! Where am I?" stammered Percy. "What the death are you babbling in French for? Can't you speak English, you thilthy uth?"

They could not, but they made up for the deficiency by physical action. Percy was grabbed by numerous hands and dragged forth on to the platform of the station. Two French policemen hurried over, and took a firm hold of Percy's collar.

"*Allez!*" grunted one of the gendarmes, forcing him forward.

Percy Bodkin was powerless to resist. He was marched forward, stuttering and choking in frantic

attempts to explain and have things explained, but all the policeman grunted was "*Allez!*"

Alas! Within the police station nobody could speak a word of English and Percy was jolted into a cell where he had to spend the rest of the night.

Not until next morning did the requested linguist put in an appearance. He was the station warden, and as he entered he said: "Ah spik Inglesch!"

"Thank heaventh!" cried Percy, springing to his feet. "When can I get out of here?"

"You must see thee—how you say?—three magistrate. If he find you not guilty, you go; if he find you guilty, you are peneched. *Vous comprenez? Oui?*"

"When can I see him!" groaned Percy—he had been expecting something of this sort. "At once?"

"*Ah non, m'sieu*, it are imposseble! Not until the day after the day after to-morrow can you see him. When the court sit."

The Non-Stop Salesman.

It was far too harrowing to record those two sad and dreary days that poor Percy Bodkin spent in the cell. Sufficient to say that the magistrate had heard his explanation through an interpreter and had released him on payment of a heavy fine. In the early afternoon of February the 26th he stood outside the police station surveying the honking bedlam that is Paris.

He repaired at last to a restaurant and appeased the sorrow in his stomach with the first square meal since he left Southampton. Thereafter he mournfully hailed a taxi and ordered to be driven to the Paris Aerodrome, where he proposed to take the swiftest route home—by air-liner.

At the Aerodrome he solemnly booked his passage and went on to the tarmac to take his seat in the plane. He passed a young man in flying kit, surrounded by a group of eager newspaper reporters. Percy's ears pricked up as he heard the words of one of the reporters.

"And when, Mr. Joyce," said the man in English "do you expect to land in New York?"

"Waal," answered the airman in an American accent. "I guess if I don't meet contrary winds I ought to be there on the morning of March the first."

"This is your first trip across the Atlantic from East to West, Mr. Joyce," the reporter went on, "do you think it—Hey! Who're you shoving!"

An excited youth thrust his way to the fore of the group. "Y-y-you—p-please—that it to thay—are you going to f-fly the At-at-Atlantic?" burst out the wildly excited Percy.

"I am," answered the airman good-humouredly, "Start in an hour's time."

"Then for heaventh take!" gulped Percy, trying to control himself, "take me with you! It'll vital!" He grabbed the airman by his coat and hastily lisped out the whole sad story.

"All right," agreed Joyce, after a long, thoughtful pause. "You come at your own risk, though!"

An hour later, to the cheers of admiring onlookers, Jimmy Joyce's powerful machine rose into the air, carrying Percy Bodkin as an additional passenger, and headed due West towards the land discovered by the late Mr. Columbus.

At eleven o'clock in the morning of March the first a great crowd had collected at Brooklyn Air Park to welcome Jimmy Joyce. The progress of his machine had been telegraphed at

(Continued on page 30.)