

GRAND GUY FAWKES NUMBER

**BIG SURPRISE !
INSIDE, BOYS !**

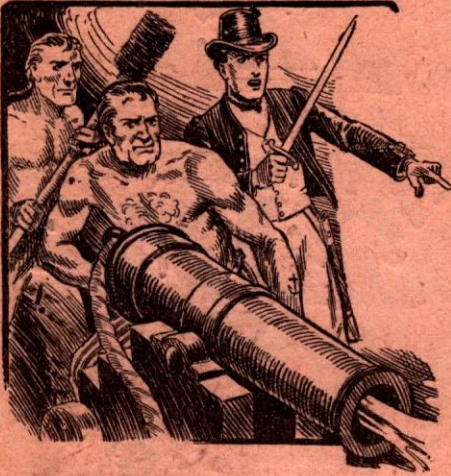
Boys' 2D EVERY SATURDAY Magazine



THE MENACE OF THE MONSTERS BEGINS WITHIN.

VOL. XXIII—No. 603—November 4, 1933 REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION BY CANADIAN MAGAZINE POST

OUR CORNER: The Editor's Weekly Chat With His Chums.



Another Wonderful Story Scoop
NEXT WEEK:

KING of the CANNON

Comes to Thrill and Fascinate You
with His Daring Exploits in
Nelson's Stormy Days.

MY DEAR CHUMS,
How did you enjoy the opening chapters of the "Mag's" latest and greatest scoop? I refer, of course, to

The Menace of the Monsters,

by Mr. John Hunter, which I am pretty sure you will have read already before turning to your old Editor's corner. Great stuff, isn't it—this wondrous vision of a possible future calamity by the greatest author of popular yarns living to-day? But what you have read this week is only the beginning of it all. What happens when the dreadful cargo of the nightmare ship is loosed on England? The answer to that you will read in the gripping chapters of this

Magnificent Tale of Marvels

booked for your entertainment during the weeks to come. Things happen in this stupendous yarn that have never appeared in a boys' story before. Yet behind it all is the sound, solid base of scientific truth, which any present-day scientist will tell you is absolutely possible. It may happen!

But here's another big story feature I have secured for you next week. Nothing less than the amazing and thrilling exploits of a great new "B.M." hero,

King of the Cannon.

Tom King, a go-getter boy middy of Nelson's glorious days will keep you on tip-toe as you read of his exciting times behind the wooden walls of old England. In this colourful epic you will read of a deep-laid plot, of the dreadful plan of Gonzales, the

Spanish dwarf, and his accomplice, Captain Swope, to sink Nelson's flagship and turn the tables against the whole British fleet. And the setting in front of which this grand drama is enacted—the glorious drop-sheet of battle at sea; the thunder of smoking cannon; red-lit haze of burning wreckage, terror, heroism, glory! Yes, chaps, you'll like Tom King because he's a giant of thrills.

Another treat for you next week. Nothing less than the return of Jimmy Brent, the Amazing Man-about-Town, to the "Mag." In

Stolen—by James!

you will read how the daring charity crook sets out to steal a valuable Rubens painting of the Red Cavalier. And, thanks to his daring, the gay idler in the black mask pulls it off. But, before he can make a getaway, Jackie Craddock, his old college chum, who has become a 'tee, turns up. The tussle of wits and wills that follows is a continuous laugh and thrill.

Do You Want a Model Aeroplane?

If you are a model-plane enthusiast—and what boy is not?—you will find some good news in this page next week. Look out for it—and a galaxy of other grand surprises, including yarns of the Bullseye Sheriff, Washington Hayseed, the Darkie Detective, the Football Camera, in addition to our usual article and prize-joke features.

Your sincere friend,

THE EDITOR.

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(With which is incorporated "Pals.")

MASKED AND CLOAKED MARAUDERS AT ST. GIDDY'S! AND ALL THE FUN OF THE FIFTH. GUYS GALORE AT THE FIERY FURORE!

BONFIRE PLOTTERS BEWARE!

Smarting for Revenge.

"GROOOH! Hang Kramer! Six on each hand—and on Guy Fawkes day, too! Hang him! I'll get my own back on the rotter for this."

A burly figure doubled up with anguish hissed the words with deep, deep feeling. The figure had just come from the study of Herr Kramer, the fat German master at St. Giddy's. It was the figure of George Cadman, the bully of the Remove.

George Cadman had been receiving some of his own medicine. He had been ordered on the previous day to deliver five hundred lines of Goethe to Herr Kramer for showing a colossal ignorance of the works of the old court poet in form. Cadman had turned up at Kramer's study at the appointed time to tell the German master that he hadn't done the lines. And hoping to play on the fiery but good-hearted German's feelings, he had pleaded that as it was Guy Fawkes Day he should be let off the lines. Kramer had let him off the lines—but he had taken penance in the form of six on each hand! Hence Cadman's humanness.

Oblivious of the vengeful Cadman, Herr Kramer returned to the study of his *Berliner Tageblatt*. But he was not allowed to remain in peace very long.

Bang! Fizzzz! Pop! All at once a fiery missile came whizzing through the open study window, tearing a hole clean through his beloved



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

Berliner Tageblatt and setting it on fire on his hands. The rocket—for it was a sky-rocket that had shot through the window—then exploded in Herr Kramer's lap.

"Himmel! Ach! Vat iss—Mein Gott! Yah!" he roared, and dashed the flaming newspaper to the floor, where he had to stamp on it, to put out the flames.

Herr Kramer, with a bellow of wrath, grabbed the cane and dashed to the window once more. He glared forth, and was just in time to see a number of school-boy figures disappear through the wash-house window below.

Johnny Gee & Co., who had fired the rocket, were fleeing before the wrath to come! They made swift tracks for Study No. 4, and dashed inside.

A grotesque effigy was propped up by the bookcase, representing a Guy Fawkes *par excellence*. This was the Joyous Juniors' guy, and they had spared no expense or labour in making it.

"Old Kramer will confiscate our fireworks and make us destroy this guy, if he spots it!" gasped the Remove leader. "Kimmon—we must hide it, quick!"

Johnny and Dick Bannister took the guy between them, whilst the rest of the Co. scooped up the fireworks, and they rushed upstairs to a large cupboard on the top landing. There were so many other things in the cupboard, that no room remained for the fireworks, of which they had a goodly bundle.

"Shove 'em inside the guy somehow!" said the Remove leader hurriedly.

By deft manoeuvring, the dummy was stuffed with the fireworks, and other Fifth of November paraphernalia. The Removites closed the cupboard door and silently crept away.

Dick Bannister had a Guy Fawkes mask in his hand—it was the only thing not stuffed inside the guy.

"I say, Johnny, shall I stick this on my chivvy, and give old Kramer a scare?" he whispered, as they made their way along to the school Art Room.

"Don't be an ass, Dicky!" replied his leader. "We can use that mask to hold him off our track, though. Come in here, and I'll show you!"

The chums of the Remove went into the Art Room. There was a life-size statue of Apollo there, and swiftly Johnny Gee placed the mask over the face of the statue. Then he grabbed a dust-sheet from one of the near-by easels, and draped it round the statue.

"Now—bunk!" hissed Johnny Gee. The Co. promptly made themselves scarce, just as Herr Kramer came scurrying along the corridor, blowing breathlessly.

"Ach!" said the German master. "Dot I hear der footsteps, ain't it? Ah!"

Herr Kramer peered into the Art Room, and his little round eyes opened wide as he saw that motionless, draped figure near the window. Gripping the cane very firmly, Herr Kramer advanced towards the figure.

"Poy!" he thundered. "Dot you tink to pull mein legs—hein? Dot you shall be punish for trying der fool of me to make! Hold out der hand!"

The figure remained immobile and silent. That was too much for Herr Kramer! He raised the cane, and brought it round in a swift, powerful swipe.

Swish! Crack! "Ach! Himmel! Yaroooooogh!" The short-sighted German master dealt that statue a whack that might have broken it, had it not been made of stone.

At the same time, the dust sheet came off, revealing the statue of Apollo, in its Guy Fawkes mask! Herr Kramer gazed at it in amazement.

In the privacy of Study No. 11, meanwhile, George Cadman was looking more than usually elated. He had just come in from the village, and his cronies,

Snell, Mecke and Lucas looked inquiringly at him. The rascal of the Remove chuckled.

"I've got a jape I'm going to work on Kramer to-night," he said. "I'll get my own back on the old rotter. I'm going to work a gunpowder plot of my own, and blow him up in bed."

"Wha-a-a-a-t?"

"I've just been down to the village and got everything I need," chuckled Cadman. "There's a meeting of masters to-night, and while Kramer's away I'll hop into his bedroom and fix things. I'll load his bed with fireworks, and plant a couple of bombs underneath, so that he'll have a high old time generally. That'll make the old rotter wriggle—what?"

"Great pip!" ejaculated Snell. "It's a grand idea, Cadman, but—but you wouldn't have the nerve to do it."

Cadman grinned.

"There isn't an atom of risk attached to it!" he said coolly. "You see, I've arranged with Jem Hawke to set the caboodle going when we're in bed to-night. I've written out a plan for Hawke, showing him how to get into the school to-night, and how to locate Kramer's bedroom. I've also written down where I shall leave the tinder trail for him to light."

Cadman's cronies drew deep breaths.

"My word!" gasped Mecke. "It's as safe as houses, Cadman, the way you've worked it out."

The Big Blow Up.

"SHUSH-SH-SH!" hissed a voice in the darkness. Starlight glimmered upon St. Giddy's, and the whole school was wrapt in the stilly gloom of night. The soft, mystic light of the moon revealed the stealthy forms of Tommy Rhodes, the leader of the Earlswood juniors, and his chums Nutter, Girling and Cakebread, climbing in the wash-house window.

"Are you certain you know where those scallywags have hidden the guy?" inquired Frank Girling.

"Of course I do!" whispered Tommy Rhodes.

"Didn't we hear 'em talking about it in the tuck-shop? The guy's upstairs in the cupboard."

The Earlswood marauders crept upstairs, and the cupboard was quickly located. It did not take them long to get the door open, and the Joyous Juniors' guy was revealed to view, in Tommy Rhodes's flashing torchlight.

They had come fully prepared for the rag, and they set about "doing up" the guy, to represent Herr Kramer. At last they stood back to gaze at the converted guy and they chuckled softly in the darkness.

"Now yank it downstairs—and gently does the trick!" whispered Tommy.

They were traversing the lower corridor with the raided guy, when all at once Bob Nutter gave a warning hiss:

"Cave! Someone's coming! Hide that giddy guy—quick!"

The Earlswood raiders looked round desperately. The guy must be hidden, at all costs. Fortunately, there was a box-room near at hand, and Tommy Rhodes & Co. nipped quickly inside. They blinked out wonderingly into the corridor.

A shaft of moonlight, coming through the tall window at the end of the passage, revealed a stealthy figure.

"Come on!" muttered the Earlswood leader. "Leave the guy here for the time being. We'll fox this merchant, and see what he's up to!"

Hawke, following the directions on the paper, made his way to Herr Kramer's bedroom. From the other side of the door came the sounds of deep, stertorous snoring. The poacher gave a low chuckle

as he opened the door softly, and crept inside. He flashed on his pocket torch, and consulted the paper that Cadman had given him.

"Lemme see, where do I have to apply the light?" he murmured. "Oh, 'ere we are!"

From underneath the slumbering German master's bed, there came a thin, scarcely perceptible string of tinder. Grinning evilly in the darkness, Hawke struck a match and applied it to the tinder.

It caught immediately, and a trail of tiny sparks started to run along the floor, under Herr Kramer's bed!

Bang! Fizz! Crack! Brr-rang! The stilly peace of night was rent by a hideous explosion that broke from beneath Herr Kramer.

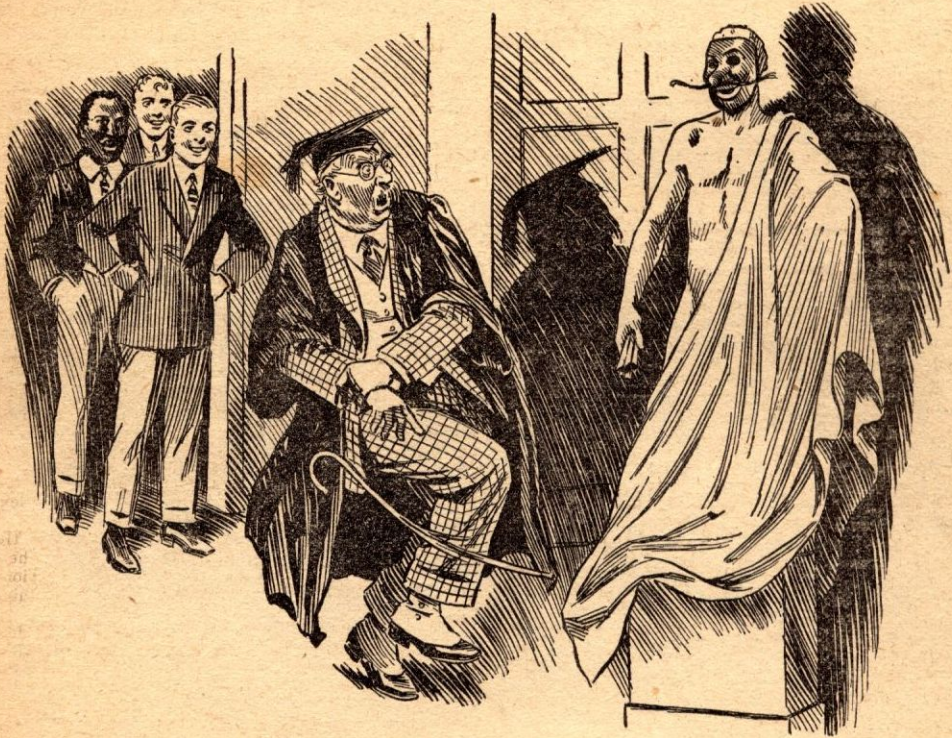
Cakebread, causing them to let go of one another and dash off down the corridor for their lives!

Meanwhile, the whole of the school had been aroused by the terrific din that had so rudely disturbed their slumbers. Doors banged open, and startled voices demanded to know what was happening.

Johnny Gee & Co. almost dropped with horror at what they saw. But Tony Graham grabbed a fire-bucket from the wall and emptied its contents round the German master's legs.

Swoooooosh! Sizz-zzz-zzzz! The wave of water effectively put out the flame that was devouring Herr Kramer's pyjamas.

Dick Bannister gave a yell of alarm.



A JAPE GUY. —Herr Kramer swiped at the draped and masked figure. Next moment he let out a howl, for the figure was a statue and not a junior as he had thought.

"Yah! *Mein Gott!* Vat iss!" roared Herr Kramer, waking up and staring wildly round him in the dark.

Bang! There was a terrific explosion from below, and the whole of Herr Kramer's bed heaved upwards. The terrified German master was projected through the air, and he landed on all fours on the carpet, roaring at the top of his voice.

Two figures were struggling in the doorway, but Herr Kramer did not see them. Hawke, in trying to make his getaway, had run full tilt into Cakebread of Earlswood, and together they sprawled on the floor.

A large-sized cracker went off behind Hawke and

"Oh, crumbs! Look out! Kramer's bedroom's on fire!"

Dick spoke truly! Johnny Gee & Co. lost no time in fetching the fire hose and turning it on the fire in Herr Kramer's bedroom. By their promptness the flames were quenched before they had time to take a hold.

Herr Kramer was in a state bordering on the frantic. Dr. Holroyd's face was deadly grim.

"*Ach! Mein Gott!*" roared the German master. "Dot I haf been plown up in mein ped for vun choke, ain't it? Ach! Ach!"

He bent down and picked up a sheet of paper that was lying by his collapsed bed. Herr Kramer

blinked at it, but without his eyeglasses he was unable to make out what was on the paper. George Cadman, standing in the doorway went pale when he saw the missive in Herr Krammer's hand. It was the paper that he had given Hawke, containing full directions for reaching the chamber of night horrors!

"It is an outrage, Herr Krammer!" said the Head angrily. "Such an affair exceeds the limit of a joke. But I do not think we shall have far to seek for the culprits. I have just picked this up from the floor!"

Dr. Hofroyd held up an Earlwood cap. There was a name inside it—Cecil Cakebread. A buzz of amazement went round the assembled boys.

But then Wellesley and the prefects marshalled the juniors back to bed, whilst Herr Krammer was accommodated in a spare bedroom.

Krammer Gued.

"IT'S hard luck on Earlwood!" commented Dick Bannister.

Johnny Gee & Co. were seated in Study No. 4. News had just been received concerning developments at the rival school. Cakebread was under sentence of a flogging, Tommy Rhodes & Co. had had all their holidays stopped until further notice, their fireworks had been confiscated, and they had been forbidden to indulge in any further Fifth of November celebrations.

"The silly asses!" said Johnny Gee. "They must have been scatty, to play a dangerous trick like that! They've pinched our guy, too! I vote we go over there, and make 'em tell us where it is!"

The Joyous Juniors left St. Giddy's and made their way to Earlwood. They appeared in the gateway of the rival school, waving their handkerchiefs, symbolical of the white flags of truce.

It was not long ere Tommy Rhodes & Co. themselves appeared on the scene. They glared truculently at the heroes of St. Giddy's.

"We want our guy!" snorted Johnny Gee. "What have you done with it. We know—"

"You can jolly well look for it!" snapped Tommy Rhodes. "But for that confounded blow-up in Krammer's room, we should have got clean away with your blessed guy last night."

It was Johnny Gee's turn to glare.

"Like your cheek, anyway, you Earlwood worms, to come into our school, ragging our German master!" said Johnny, with umbrage.

"Rats! It wasn't us at all!" hooted Tommy Rhodes. "We followed the amateur anarchist, whoever he was, into Krammer's room, and I've got a strong suspicion that it was Jem Hawke."

"Hawke? That poaching villain who hangs about Merivale!" exclaimed Johnny Gee, and he drew a deep breath. "My hat! It's possible! Cadman is often seen hanging about with Hawke. We'll watch Cadman and try to bowl the rotter out. But mind—this won't make any difference to the rest of the bizney."

The rivals glowered at one another, and the Joyous Juniors took their departure.

Meanwhile, in Study No. 11, George Cadman and his cronies were in serious conclave.

"There's only one thing I'm worried about," said the Remove bully, with a snarl. "Hawke dropped the paper I gave him, and Krammer picked it up. He's jolly well got to be stopped from looking at it, otherwise I'll be implicated. That paper's got to be pinched from Krammer's desk somehow!"

His cronies racked their brains in silence for a while, and then Cadman's brow cleared.

"I know!" he exclaimed. "Slocum—he's the chap to do the job. I'll go along and see him."

Sammy Slocum was at home in Study No. 9. The fat youth of the Remove was scrawling out an impot for Mr. Cattermole when Cadman looked in.

"I say, Slocum, is half-a-crown of any use to you?" he asked.

Fatty Slocum looked up eagerly.

"Half-a-crown!" he exclaimed. "Oh, my hat! I should jolly well say it is! I'm hungry, and I've had nothing to eat since dinner."

"Well, I'll give you half-a-crown to do a little job for me, Slocum," said Cadman. "All I want you to do is to go to Krammer's study, open his desk, and fish out a piece of paper he confiscated from me yesterday. It's a diagram of something jolly important. Will you do it?"

"For half-a-crown?" said Fatty. "Rather! I'm on!"

Ten minutes later, a plump, round form stole into the German master's study. It was Sammy Slocum—and Fatty was chuckling.

He soon had a bent pin at work on the lock of the desk, and after a bit of fumbling there was a click, and the lock was picked. Slocum raised the lid, and his fat hand groped inside. It came out, grasping a sheet of paper, burnt at the edges and stained with water. A hasty glance showed Fatty that on it was the diagram that Cadman had described, and he crept to the door.

All at once, he gave a start. A well-known tread sounded in the corridor. Blinking round fearfully, he saw the ponderous form of Herr Krammer coming along.

"Ach! Gum pack, Slocum! Vat was you up to in mein room—hein?"

But Sammy Slocum affected not to hear. He hurried on, scuttled along the back corridor as fast as his fat little legs would carry him, and he simply tore into the box-room. He shut the door and turned round, puffing. Then Fatty received the shock of his life! There before him stood the well-known plump form of Herr Krammer, complete with cap and gown! Fatty blinked, and started to stammer out something, then:

"Oh, my hat! It isn't Krammer at all! Only—only a guy!"

Next moment alarm gripped him once more, as he heard the heavy footsteps of the German master approaching along the corridor. Fatty's hand went to his pocket, and took out the sheet of paper he had just stolen from Herr Krammer's desk. Too late to destroy it now—the incriminating evidence must be hidden! He thrust the tell-tale paper into the inner pocket of the guy's coat. So clumsy was Slocum in doing this, he gave the guy a shove that sent it toppling over, to fall behind a stack of boxes. There it lay, out of sight.

The door handle rattled, and Herr Krammer strode in, his eyes glittering behind his spectacles and his moustache bristling with wrath.

"Ach! So I haf caught you, Slocum! Vat haf you stolen from mein desk?"

"N-n-nothing, sir!" gasped Fatty. "I—I—really—"

"Dot you gum to mein study to take sometings, Slocum—hein?" snorted the German master. "I giff you der cane for trying to steal! Gum mit me!"

When the luckless Sammy emerged from Herr Krammer's study, he was groaning in a truly pitiable manner.

"Ow! Wow! The old Hun! I'm hurt!"

But on his way to the Remove passage, Fatty's gasps of woe subsided. An eager gleam entered his eye, and he rolled along to Study No. 4.

"The burning question of the moment, chaps,

is—what’s happened to our guy ?” Johnny Gee was saying. “Those Earlswood scallywags couldn’t have taken it out of the school very well—”

“I say, you fellows—”

“Seat, Slocum !”

“Oh, very well !” said Fatty with dignity. “If you don’t want to know what I know. About your guy, I mean—”

But Dick Bannister grabbed the plump Remove

and became stuck on a projecting stone gargoyle. The Removes on the roof gave a tug, and to their dismay, the cord broke—leaving the guy of Herr Krammer dangling on the wall.

“Oh, jerniny !” gasped Johnny Gee. “That’s done it !”

To crown their misfortune, Dr. Holroyd came striding across from the cloisters, with Mr. Tattersall, the master of the Remove.



“UP” WITH THE LARK!—Herr Krammer yelled in terror as fireworks burst all around him. Suddenly there was a terrific explosion that hurled the German master out of bed.

and swung him back. Lord Reggie produced two half-crowns, which were placed temptingly on the table before Fatty Slocum. His grubby paws closed over them instantly.

“If you look in the back box-room, you’ll find it behind the trunks,” he said. “Only mind old Krammer doesn’t spot you—he, he, he !”

Johnny Gee & Co. hurried off to the box-room whilst Fatty Slocum went downstairs to the tuck-shop.

The juniors yanked up their guy from behind the boxes, and they gave vent to gasps of wonderment when they saw how it had been changed into an effigy of Herr Krammer.

“Oh, my giddy aunt !” exclaimed Johnny Gee. “The awful villains—so that’s what Rhodes and his gang were doing here last night ! If Krammer or any of the masters see this, we’ll get into an awful row ! We’d better haul it on to the roof and hide it among the chimney-pots until it’s dark !”

The others hurried away, and ten minutes later they lowered a cord over the parapet of the roof to Johnny Gee at the box-room window. The Remove skipper dragged the guy of Herr Krammer to the window, tied the cord to it, then gave the signal for the others to haul away.

But alas ! There was a sudden jerk as the guy

“Dear me !” exclaimed the Head, adjusting his eyeglasses and peering upwards. “Is it—can it be ? Herr Krammer !”

All of a sudden, a horrified yell went up from the crowd. The figure on the wall gave a lurch, and then fell headlong to the ground ! Dr. Holroyd and the Remove master went pale.

“Good heavens ! He has fallen ! He must be terribly injured !”

“Ach ! Vat iss ? Dot der poys play more chokes, ain’t it ?”

To the utter amazement of everyone, the plump form of Herr Krammer himself came striding round the corner.

“B-Bless my soul !” ejaculated Mr. Tattersall. “I believe, Dr. Holroyd—in fact, I am sure—this is an absurd jape on the part of my pupils. It is a— a guy of Herr Krammer !”

“Indeed, Mr. Tattersall !” said the Head, with a grim look at Johnny Gee & Co. “I presume, Gee, that this is your guy !”

“Ye-es, sir, but—”

“How dare you exhibit an image of Herr Krammer in public in such a manner !” cried the Head angrily. “The boys responsible for this outrage will follow me !”

Johnny Gee & Co. had the mortification of seeing

their guy dragged off by Remington of the Sixth and thrown down into the school cellar. Then they all had to go to the Head's study—and their interview with Dr. Holroyd was an extremely painful one!

The Fiery Festival.

DARKNESS was already falling over the countryside. The Fifth of November celebrations started with gusto at St. Giddy's. Fireworks were being let off on every side, whilst large bonfires cast their bright, flaming glare into the gloom!

Johnny Gee & Co. gathered on the waste ground behind the ruined chapel, where a huge pile of books, faggots and all things inflammable had been built into a grand pyre, all ready to be lit.

"Chaps, we'll get our own guy!" said the Remove leader grimly. "Tell you what—hop up to the dorm, and fetch down some bolsters. I'll sneak into the cellar and take the Krammer disguise off our guy. We'll put that on the bolsters, and take the real guy away and burn it—how's that?"

The others agreed eagerly, and rushed off to get the necessary substitute. Meanwhile, Johnny Gee made his way to the cellar where the confiscated guy was being kept. He was making his way over the coals, when all at once four cloaked figures attacked with a rush.

"Got him!" said the voice of Tommy Rhodes. "Tie him up and bury him in the coal!"

Johnny Gee was bound and gagged by the marauders, and buried up to his neck in the coals. The four masked raiders vanished into the gloom of the cellar, taking the effigy with them.

Johnny Gee struggled desperately to rid himself of those hastily tied bonds, and found himself able gradually to work his hands free.

All at once, Johnny paused in his wriggling. Stealthy footsteps were approaching and a voice—the voice of George Cadman—hissed out through the darkness:

"This is the cellar! Careful how you go—"

The door was opened cautiously and the dark forms of Cadman & Co. came creeping in.

"Tity we can't nab the guy itself," remarked Snell. "Do you think that would be too risky?"

"Of course!" snapped Cadman. "All I want is the paper that Slocum shoved into its pocket."

"Does he know that it was the paper that you gave Hawke, with instructions how to get in here last night?" asked Meeke. "If the nosey beast knew that the blowing-up of Krammer was a put-up job between you and Hawke—"

"Oh, shut up!" growled Cadman. "Don't jaw so much, Meeke! Where is the confounded guy? Why, it's gone!"

Cadman picked up a cap that was lying on the coals. His eyes narrowed in the darkness of the cellar. He struck a match and looked at the name-tag inside.

"Great Scott! This is Gee's cap!" he muttered swiftly. "So those rotters have been down here, and pinched the guy, after all!"

"What shall we do, Cadman—tell Remington?" said Meeke.

"Yes—after the guy's been well burned!" replied Cadman. "The paper in the coat pocket will be burnt on the bonfire. I'll be safe, at any rate! Then Hawke, in disguise, is coming along with the water cart, to put out the bonfire, as we arranged this afternoon. Hawke's arrival will be the signal for us to fetch Remington on the scene."

The others chuckled. Next moment, they howled in very terror as an unknown figure darted amongst them, slashing out vigorously with a long birch broom. Thus, Johnny Gee kept them away from the

door. A few minutes later, the head and shoulders of Dick Bannister appeared in the opening of the coal-hole above.

"Mum-my only hat! What's going on down here? Is that you, Johnny? Oh, crumbs! Come on, chaps—Johnny wants a hand!"

Dick dropped down into the cellar, and was swiftly followed by the rest of the Co. Cadman, Snell, Meeke and Lucas were bowled over and rolled amongst the coals, yelling dismally.

"Got 'em!" chuckled Johnny Gee breathlessly. "Now, tie 'em up and leave 'em here—we'll come back for the rotters later. Chaps, those Earlswood villains have pinched the guy. They're going to burn it at the cross-roads. We must stop 'em before they set fire to it—there's a paper in the coat pocket that proves who was at the bottom of the conspiracy to blow up Krammer last night."

The Co. gasped in amazement at the revelations made by their leader. They clambered out of the coal-hole, and gathering more followers, they dashed along the Merivale Lane.

A glare from the cross-roads, and the sounds of loud shouting, told them that Tommy Rhodes & Co. were holding their impromptu Fiery Fifth celebration already. At the same time they overtook the local water-cart, with a figure in yokel's clothes driving. Johnny Gee drew a deep breath. Jem Hawke was unrecognisable in his disguise, but thanks to what he had overheard in the cellar at St. Giddy's, the Remove skipper knew the real identity of the driver!

He turned to his chums, and uttered a swift command. On the word, the St. Giddy's contingent swarmed across the road and attacked the impecunious looking water-cart.

"Yah! Leggo! 'Ang you—Ow! Yarough!" howled Jem Hawke as his hat and muffler were dragged off. He was quickly made a prisoner, and dumped heavily on the tank.

Johnny Gee, Dick Bannister, Snowball and Lord Reggie mounted on the water-cart, and Johnny took the reins. The cart was driven at a fast trot along the lane, back to the cross-roads. Yells of wrath and dismay arose, as the water-cart burst through the ranks of the Earlswoodies.

Sizzzz-zzzzzzzzz! A powerful jet of water gushed from the hose, which was directed full upon the burning guy. Clouds of steam and smoke arose. Tommy Rhodes & Co. let out wild, infuriated howls: "You rotters! Gerraway! Yah! Ugh! Gerrooooh!"

Sizzzz-zzzzz-zzzzz! The guy flopped limply in the barrow, smoking and steaming. Johnny Gee jumped down from the water-cart, whilst his chums kept the wrathful Earlswood boys at bay with the hose. Johnny went to the guy's pocket, and withdrew a sheet of paper, slightly burnt and drenched with water.

"Good egg!" he chuckled. "Just take a look at this, Tommy old scout! It's a diagram of our school, made out by Cadman and given to Jem Hawke so that he could break in last night and set off those fireworks in Krammer's bedroom. Aren't you glad we stopped you from burning this guy?"

Tommy Rhodes' face was a study as he looked at the drenched document.

"Great pip!" he ejaculated. "So this—this clears us! It was in the guy's pocket all the time. Well, I must say, Gee, you've done us a good turn."

"We've got Hawke here—and Cadman's crowd are tied up in the cellar at St. Giddy's," said Johnny Gee. "Now, you scallywags, I vote we make it pax for to-night, and combine forces to have a real Fiery Fifth."

(Continued on page 34.)

More Comical Exploits
of the Chem-mystic Kid

THIS WEEK : SETTING
'EM ALL ALIGHT !

Putting the Fire in
Fireworks



Here He Comes—the Big Bang ! So
Hot His Feet Sink into the Floor ! If
Ever Tommy Tries Again Professor Hypo's Heat Mixture, He'll
Make Sure There's No Fireworks About !

Tommy Gets Het Up.

DOCTOR THEOPHILUS HYPO squinted over his spectacles at the preparation he was working on and rambled on in his usual absent-minded manner to Tommy Pink, his assistant.

"Pass me the hypodermic syringe, Mr. Green. Yers—as I was remarking, the normal temperature of the human body is about thirty-seven degrees centigrade, but this temperature is purely arbitrary, as it were. It is dependant on the blood—the amount of muscle energy—the type and quantity of food consumed, and so on. There is no reason, whatever, why a man should not be normal and healthy with a temperature of, say, a hundred degrees, or, conversely, a few degrees above zero. Nature, as I say, is purely arbitrary in the matter. Theoretically, a man could be normal at a temperature approaching that of a red-hot iron, providing the heat had no corrosive effect on the tissues."

"Gosh ! Guv'nor, we don't want any red-hot men wanderin' about the place."

Dr. Hypo smiled. "I was exaggerating, I fear—but to return to the subject, I presume you will have no objection to submitting to a little experiment ? I assure you it will be quite harmless—I hope, and expect, this drug will produce a slight rising in your bodily temperature. You will merely feel it, I am sure, as an increased chilliness in your surroundings."

"Okay, guv," said Tommy, cheerfully baring his arm.

The Doctor inoculated him with his preparation,

and then popped the clinical thermometer into Tommy's mouth. They waited a few moments. Tommy seemed to feel no effects whatever. He seemed just as comfortably warm as before, in spite of the fact that it was early November and quite chilly—it was, in fact, the great Fifth, and Tommy had been planning, mentally, how he was going to celebrate the occasion that evening ever since he had arrived at the lab. No—he didn't feel any effects of changing temperature, but he certainly did feel a yawning vacancy in the pit of his stomach, bespeaking the approach of lunch-time. Doctor Hypo took the thermometer from his mouth at last and examined it.

"Tk ! Tk ! Tk !" he clicked, frowning. "No alteration whatever ! Not a single degree rise ! How strange ! How extr'ordinary ! Well, well—we scientists learn by failures, Mr. Green. I must try again !"

Doctor Hypo turned back to his books and chemical formulæ on the laboratory bench and went over his reasoning. Tommy looked sympathetic—but still he felt no change in his bodily warmth. He did feel ravenously hungry, however, and seemed to be getting emptier and emptier every second.

"D'you mind if I go to lunch now, Dr. Hypo ?" asked Tommy. "It's not really my time yet, but—"

"Certainly, Mr. Green. Go when you wish."

"And—er—guv'nor," added Tommy, "d'you mind if I take a bit longer to-day ? Y'see, it's the Fifth of November, y'see—Guy Fawkes Day, like—an', y'see, me an' some of my pals, y'see, are goin' to have a little firework spree, y'see, an' I want to buy—"

"Take as long as you wish, Mr. Green."

"Thanks, guv.," said Tommy, grabbing his hat

and coat and dashing from the laboratory with the unpleasant sensation that if he didn't get something to eat at once he would collapse with starvation.

Red Hot Rollicks.

TOMMY PINK arrived at Baloni's Restaurant with an air of having recently completed a three-weeks' hunger strike. The meal he ordered seemed to astonish even the Italian waiter, who was used to the appetites of healthy youths.



DONE BROWN.—The baker dropped his dough with a howl as Tommy Pink, glowing uncannily and with his clothes smouldering, stepped out of the oven.

When the food eventually arrived before him, Tommy swallowed the large steak from his mixed grill like a lion pouncing on its prey, popped three sausages in his yawning maw, a load of potatoes and vegetables, swallowed a roll and butter, and then demanded a repeat of everything.

"Goodnessa gra-a-ciousa!" gasped the waiter. "You wassa da hungry with yourself—yes!"

He was more prompt with the second supply. He watched Tommy eat this at a more dignified pace; but when Dr. Hypo's assistant ordered yet another dish, the English language was inadequate to express the waiter's astonishment and he relapsed into his native Italian.

Tommy attacked his third helping of food with less marked eagerness, but still with relish. The waiter and another customer gazed at Tommy as though fascinated. Tommy finished his third helping with a sigh, ordered two puddings and a glass of water, and when they arrived, disposed of the puddings with gusto. The others stared—pop-eyed. "He wassa glowing lika da glow-worm!" gasped the waiter, in an awed voice. "Looka da face!"

Tommy glared indignantly. "Kindly refrain from making personal remarks, or I will complain to the management—an' gimme me bill. I'm in a hurry."

As the waiter scrawled out the bill in a hand that seemed strangely unsteady, Tommy picked up the glass of water and took a long gulp. Strangely enough, the water seemed to evaporate in his mouth, and he failed to feel the familiar sensation of liquid trickling down his throat.

The waiter tore the bill from his pad and placed it gingerly before Tommy. The Chem-mystic Kid glanced at it, put a couple of half-crowns on the table. He rose from his seat and made towards the door.

"He's smouldering!" gasped the other customer, in bated breath.

He and the waiter watched Tommy Pink leave the restaurant. Then the waiter absently picked up the two coins on the table. He dropped them with a wild yell and leapt into the air.

"Ow! I burna de hand! Yah! It are da hot!"

He sucked his burnt fingers and looked at the two coins which he had hastily dropped on the floor; then he looked at the white tablecloth. There were two deeply scorched brown circles on it.

Meanwhile Tommy Pink went merrily on his way, a little puzzled by a pungent scorching smell that seemed to be following him about. Not far from the restaurant was a large shop, which specialised entirely in fireworks at this time of the year. He went over to it eagerly, for here he intended to buy a good supply for the evening's celebrations.

The window of the shop was arranged to capture the heart of any boy. There was an effigy of the late Mr. Fawkes, seated on a barrel of gunpowder, and smoking a large size cannon in the manner of a cigar; around him was a display of Chinese crackers, Roman candles, golden rain, catherine wheels, rockets, and every variety of firework imaginable.

Tommy entered the shop. The man inside looked at him curiously and sniffed.

"Something burning," he said.

"Yes," agreed Tommy. "I can smell it all over the place. Somebody burning rubbish in their garden around here, I should think. Can I see some fireworks?" he added, ignoring the fact that his eyes were unable to settle on any spot without doing so. "To begin with, I want something big; to go off with a terrific crash."

The shopkeeper gave another suspicious look and a sniff, then he beckoned Tommy over to a glass case.

"Wakem's Special Howitzers are the thing," he said, taking a cracker as thick as a stove-pipe from the case. "Feel the weight of it—contains nearly a pound of powder!"

"Seems pretty good!" said Tommy!

He took the huge firework and fumbled the fuse arrangement at the end.

"This is where you light it, I suppose?"

Tommy suddenly stared in amazement. The fuse, specially treated to light easily, was glowing in his fingers. It was as though his very touch had ignited it.

The shopkeeper gave a yell and leap back instinctively. *Fzzzzzz!* went the fuse of Wakem's Special Howitzer, eating its way rapidly down to the danger point.

Tommy, following the example of the salesman, gave a yell and dropped the huge firework, jumping back out of range. Unhappily Tommy dropped it back into the glass case of fireworks.

A second passed in which the two of them stood

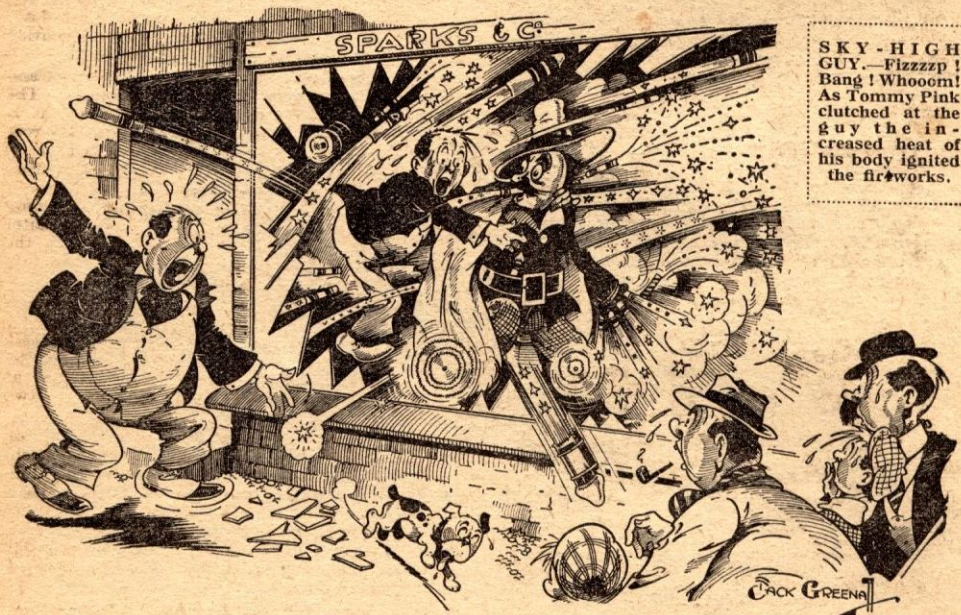
Mister Fawkes burst into flame, and Tommy found him blazing in his arms. Instinctively he dropped the guy, thereby igniting a further battery of display fireworks.

Somehow Tommy found his way out of the window. The whole place was a positive inferno of exploding fireworks. For the fire had spread rapidly from the blazing show-case and the window.

A breath of wind blew a temporary rift in the clouds of smoke and Tommy sighted the door. He staggered towards it, gasping and spluttering with the fumes. Something that felt like a steel ramrod struck him a blow in the chest and knocked him backwards into the shop again. When he recovered his breath and was able to blink around him, he saw a long steely jet of water shooting over his head far into the shop. The firemen had arrived and got their hose into play!

"Thank heavens they've arrived!" he gasped. "They might save the building at least—"

Suddenly Tommy gazed down at his own body and



SKY-HIGH
GUY.—Fzzzzp!
Bang! Whoom!
As Tommy Pink
clutched at the
guy the in-
creased heat of
his body ignited
the fireworks.

spellbound with horror by that insidious little fizzle—then came an ear-rending roar. Wakem's Special Howitzer exploded with such force that the salesman staggered. There was a blinding flash and then up went the whole case full. Howitzer after howitzer exploded, like a battery of the real variety out on the Somme front.

"Get out of my shop!" shrieked the salesman. "Firebrand! I'll have you arrested! Help! Fire!"

The salesman seized a broom from behind the counter and thrust it fiercely in Tommy's chest. Instead of pushing Tommy towards the door, however, he shoved him clean into the shop window into the very arms of Guy Fawkes.

Things began to happen now with a vengeance. Mister Guido Fawkes, who was mainly composed of dried shavings and straw, commenced to smoulder as soon as Tommy clutched him involuntarily round the neck.

Fzzzzp! Bang! Woooooom! Tzzzzzzzz! Crash!

gasped with amazement. Clouds of steam were rising from him and he was fizzing like a red-hot poker that had been plunged in water!

"Gosh!" he howled in a sudden rush of revelation. "I set the place alight! Doc. Hypo's dope is working after all!"

Tommy sprang to his feet and dashed for the shop door. There was only one thought in his mind. He had to get back to the laboratory quickly!

But outside he found a crowd surrounding the shop. At sight of him the firework salesman suddenly let out a shriek of recognition.

"There he is, constable! That's the anarchist! The fire raiser! Seize him!"

A burly policeman thrust himself forward and grabbed the scruff of Tommy's neck.

"Gatcher! Best come along quiet, or—Yow! Ow! Cor lumme! Oooo mi 'and! Mi 'and!"

The bobby let go of Tommy suddenly, tucked his injured hand under his armpit and commenced a sort

JACK GREENE

of fandango. Tommy didn't wait to explain, but dashed through the crowd, which instinctively parted to make a passage for his smouldering and steaming person.

Tommy darted down a side street, the whuzzz of the policeman's whistle sounding in his ears. Hardly twenty yards had he progressed when he met two other bobbies running up the other way.

Instinct told Tommy Pink to bolt. It would be impossible to explain if he were caught—they would think him mad! He darted down a side-alley that luckily confronted him as he turned round. It was a cul-de-sac, but there was a gloomy building with an open door down there. Tommy dashed in.

He took one swift glance at the place. It was a bakery and luckily it was deserted at the moment.

By the time the two policemen arrived it appeared likewise to be deserted.

"Funny! I swear he must have come in here!"

As they were trying to puzzle it out an extremely large and floury looking gent with a bad-tempered face strode in.

"Hello! What's up here?" he demanded, fiercely.

"Keep your hair on," said the sergeant. "We're lookin' for a chap—somebody to do with the fire up there, we reckon. Know anything about the fire?"

"Just been to look at it," said the ill-tempered baker. "Good job, I say! Them pestering fireworks a-dingin' an' banging all day long—it's the devil!"

The sergeant winked at his companion bobby and left the bakery to the annoyed gent. The baker seized a lump of dough and punched it viciously, as though he bore it a personal grudge, then he plopped it on a large iron tray with many others.

"It's the devil!" he repeated as he carried the big tray over to the oven.

He swung open the huge oven door and prepared to shove the tray of bread in. Suddenly he dropped it with a wild howl and fell back in horror.

A youth with an uncanny glow about him stepped out of the oven. His clothes had smouldered and scorched to a few draggled rags, but the lad himself seemed none the worse for his sojourn in that terrifically hot oven.

"S'cuse me," said Tommy Pink. "I just popped in there to dodge those two fellows, y' see. Much obliged for the use of your oven!"

At which the glowing youth strode hurriedly out of the place, leaving the horrified baker gazing at him spellbound.

"Cor!" he gasped at last. "It is the devil!"

The Human Guy.

AN anxious five minutes' dodging down side-streets to avoid detection brought Tommy Pink safely outside Dr. Hypo's house, but here, in front of the very door stood a large, jovial-looking gent wearing a cigar in his face and struggling with one of those pocket lighters which never, by any mischance, happen to light.

Tommy walked boldly up to the gent with the cigar, said "Pardon me!" and applied his finger to the end of the weed.

"Now puff," said Tommy.

The man gave him a look, as if he thought Tommy a harmless lunatic who wanted humouring, and then he puffed. The cigar glowed into life.

"Don't thank me," said Tommy airily. "Just a little knack, y'know."

Whereat the Chem-mystic Kid hurried past the astonished gent, entered the house and closed the door. He dashed up to the laboratory and hastily stammered out the whole story to Dr. Hypo.

"Good heavens!" said Dr. Hypo, busying himself

with hypodermic syringes and chemicals. "It's my fault entirely, Mr. Green! I should have realised! Natural bodily heat is caused by the consumption of food—Ah! There!"—Dr. Hypo applied the thermometer—That's better. Now you had better get some clothes on—"

There came a ring on the front-doorbell. Tommy gulped. "That'll be the firework chap, Boss. I expect somebody must have recognised me!"

Dr. Hypo also looked worried. "All right, Mr. Green. I will see him and try and explain."

Tommy adjourned to another room, while Dr. Hypo went to the door. He found a jovial-looking gent, with a large cigar, there.

"I'm Jameson H. Blugg, the big showman," boomed the gent with the cigar; "an' I'm searching for the wonder of the age! Listen—a young chap just lit my cigar with nothing but the tip of his finger, and he came in here!"

"Er—possibly—er—possibly," stammered Dr. Hypo, and then, seeing that the gent was one of the inquisitive sort, he saw nothing for it but to tell the whole story.

"Boy! We're on to good money!" cried Jameson Blugg, when the doctor had finished. "It'll be the most startling show the public's ever seen! An' we'll make enough dough to pay that firework chap nine times over. Lead me to that boy!"

"I have no wish to make money out of science, but—"

"Aw nuts!" said Jameson Blugg.

* * * * *

BEFORE the evening shadows had crept into the sky, the district was plastered with posters; vans rushed back and forth to a small local recreation ground carrying loads of fireworks, refreshments, and fuel for a huge bonfire. The great Jameson himself whizzed back and forth, between the offices of local newspapers, bullying the advertisement editors to hold up the evening editions for a few minutes so that he could get his announcements in.

THE WONDER OF THE AGE!

Burnt alive—yet still living!

Jameson H. Blugg

presents

THE LIVING GUY.

You weren't born in time to see Guy Fawkes burnt, but you can see as good a show for a shilling to-night! Don't miss it!

Children half-price, including free toffee-apple!

And Jameson Blugg's swift publicity did not go unrewarded. The recreation ground was packed to bursting point by the time the display commenced.

It began with an ordinary firework display, which Blugg managed to persuade the audience was something marvellous; then he assured them that "You ain't see nut'n yet, folks!" and introduced the Human Guy.

Tommy Pink came on the scene, doped with the temperature-raising fluid. He felt a bit sheepish before all those people, but he bluffed it out for the sake of the cause. First he ignited the special firework display, on the frames at the back of the recreation ground, by merely touching them with the end of his finger. The audience gasped with surprise, when they saw him walk calmly through the flames and sparks. Then, while the attendants continued the display, he sat on a brazier of red-hot coals, juggled with red-hot coals, put them in his mouth, and such-like spectacular tricks.

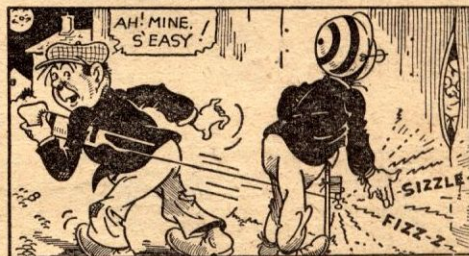
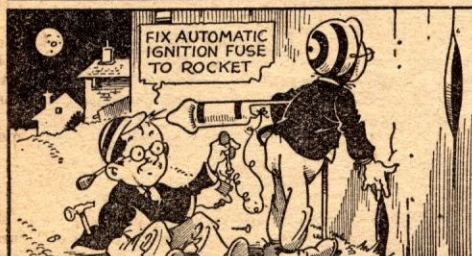
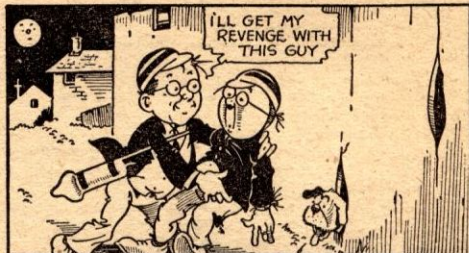
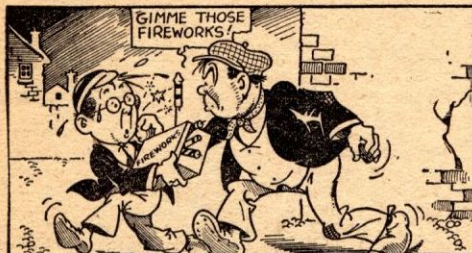
"And," bawled Jameson Blugg, "if any gen'leman thinks that a fake fire, I invite him to go an' sit on it himself an' be convinced!"

Finally came the grand Human Guy act. A great wood-pile, soaked with petrol, had been erected in

PLAYING WITH FIRE.



ARTLESS ALGY'S BUST-UP BRAINWAVES!



the middle of the ground. Tommy Pink, amidst thrilled applause, ignited the bonfire by touch, climbed on to the top of it and sat calmly amidst the flames, amidst a crashing accompaniment of discharging fireworks, flashing rockets, and the hoarse bawling of Jameson Blugg. He remained there, glowing dully as if he were red-hot himself, until the great fire burnt itself out.

"Great stuff, boy!" said Jameson, when Tommy was once more dressed and restored to normal heat. "Gosh! If I could take you to the States I'd make your fortune!"

"Thanks," smiled Dr. Hypo. "I'm afraid we're too busy with science here in England. But we're much obliged to you. And now, if you'll excuse us, we're going straight away to re-imburse that shop-keeper for the damage Mr. Green did unwittingly this afternoon."

They said good-bye to Jameson Blugg and left by the back entrance to the recreation ground.

Now it chanced that two small urchins had recently been arguing about Tommy Pink. They had not seen the show, but they had read the posters. One

of them doubted their truth, the other was a believer.

"Betcher he can't stand burnin'!"

"Betcher he can! The bill sez he do!"

"Garn—it's a fake! Betcher!"

The discussion followed these lines until Tommy Pink and Dr. Hypo suddenly appeared.

"That's him," said the doubter. "Prove it!"

"Orl right! I will!"

The believer produced a large roman candle from his pocket, lit it and waited until it was a fizzing, brilliant fountain of light and flame. Then he crept up stealthily behind Tommy Pink, and applied it adroitly to his rear. A tense second—then Tommy gave a howl of pain and leapt into the air, the seat of his trousers on fire.

The disillusioned believer dropped his roman candle, and bunked for all his worth.

"There!" gasped the doubter as he joined in the panting flight. "Told yer so!"

"Zoo Clues" is the title of next week's spanking fun-yarn. Washington Hayseed, our comical coon sleuth, is at work once more—in a zoo. A whale of a laugh in this screaming yarn, chaps.

FALCON SWIFT'S GREATEST GUY FAWKES DAY EXPLOIT.
The Case of the Gunpowder Plotter.

ROCKET ROBBERS!



Prince and
Plotters.

CROOK MAGIC. How
Did Prince Ishti Steal
the Eyes of Mahnee?

THE big car, purring smoothly through the dusk of the frosty November evening, was surrounded on all sides by the densely wooded Surrey hills. On one side the trees came down thickly to the edge of the road. The car glided to a standstill, and from it stepped a tall, dark-faced man wearing European clothing and a turban of black silk, in which sparkled a single great diamond.

He was Prince Ishti of Mahnee, one of the wealthiest potentates of the mystic East.

"Wait!" he said in his own tongue, to his native driver.

Without another word he plunged into the darkness of the wood. He had taken no more than twenty paces through the tangle of undergrowth when four Brown Men, with faces of incredible evil, gathered silently about him.

"It is good," said the Prince, with a nod. "You are ready."

"Great Master, we are here to do your will," said one of the men, with a deep, obsequious salaam.

"To-night the Eyes will be mine," said Prince Ishti, fiercely. "Your work will be on the morrow, whilst the foolish white men burn their fireworks. You must work swiftly, silently, and there must be no mistake. It is enough. Go!"

The Brown Men salaamed in silence, and, as mysteriously as they had come, they disappeared into the fastnesses of the wood.

An evil, smouldering light of satisfaction burned in Prince Ishti's eyes, as he returned to the road and got into his car.

For three miles the car drove, before turning into an imposing gateway, to follow a gravel drive through the fair parklands of Orme Towers. The great mansion stood in stately distinction amongst its noble trees; and beyond the ornamental gardens, in the open parkland beyond, stood a strange-looking square edifice. The Prince's eyes blazed for a moment as he caught sight of it.

Lord Orme, bluff and genial, warmly welcomed his distinguished guest.

"You are doing me a great honour, your highness, by accepting the hospitality of my roof," he said. "I am grateful, too, for your gifts, although I am consumed with curiosity as to their nature."

"Would it gratify you if we were to unpack them at once?" asked the Prince with a twinkle of amusement in his eyes.

As they walked away from the mansion, towards that strange building in the park, Lord Orme enthusiastically told his guest of the great fete which he was holding on the evening of the next day.

"It is your famous Guy Fawkes night, yes?" asked the Prince, amused.

"When it comes to fireworks, I'm no better than a big kid," confessed Lord Orme. "But, really, I'm giving this great display for the benefit of the five hundred boys of a neighbouring Orphanage. They'll revel in the whole show, I'm sure."

"I must confess that I accepted your kind invitation merely as an excuse to gaze upon the Eyes of Mahnee," said the Prince. "Ah, my good friend, I am sorry you would not listen to my proposals. I have offered you a great price for those emeralds."

A cloud came over Lord Orme's brow.

"Your offer was amazingly generous," he agreed; "but the Eyes of Mahnee form the very gem of my collection, and although these jewels once belonged to your ancestors, I should be reluctant to part with them. Please do not embarrass me, Prince Ishti, by renewing your offer."

"I will be silent on the subject," promised the Prince gravely.

As they walked across the park, Lord Orme pointed out the great set pieces which were already prepared for the magnificent firework display. The Prince was more interested, however, in the strange, squat building which now loomed before them in the dusk. This was Lord Orme's unique Treasure House, constructed of reinforced steel, without a window of any description, and absolutely burglar-proof.



THE FIERY FALL.—The firework waterfall swept slowly nearer to the trench where Falcon Swift and Chick lay helplessly bound. Desperately, the sleuth strained at his bonds.

At closer quarters, it was difficult to see any door, for the walls on every side were of solid steel. Only a pathway, leading to an apparently blank wall, gave a clue. Lord Orme produced a key, and a moment later an oblong section of the wall swung back.

The opening of the door had automatically switched on a number of electric lights, within. Ranged about the splendidly furnished room were a number of beautiful showcases, containing Lord Orme's peerless collection of priceless antiques and curios. Near the door, stood two objects which were out of place—a huge packing-case and a quite small iron-bound box.

Several of Lord Orme's servants came in with tools, and the great packing-case was opened.

"Amazing! Wonderful!" cried his lordship, as he gazed upon the Prince's gift.

The workmen carefully lifted the great, bronze idol, with exquisite native carving, from its case. Lord Orme, who was an expert, saw at a glance that the idol was worth a great deal of money. It was a magnificent gift.

"I cannot express my appreciation, your highness!" he said breathlessly. "But I must confess that I am diffident about accepting it."

"Because you have refused to sell me the Eyes of Mahnee—even for a king's ransom?" asked the Prince, smiling. "Do not let the matter concern you, my friend."

"You are very good," said his lordship. "And yet there is another present—"

"Oh, no, please," said Prince Ishti. "That other box contains nothing but a dozen fireworks from my own country. They are rockets of a novel kind. I thought they would be of interest to your guests."

As he was speaking, he walked across to the central showcase of the Treasure House. Unseen by his host, he gazed upon the Eyes of Mahnee with evil, gloating anticipation. They were two emeralds of extraordinary size—the greatest emeralds in the world. Three hundred years ago they had reposed in the eye-sockets of an idol in far-off Mahnee. They had been brought to Europe by one of Prince Ishti's ancestors, who had given them to a European king. Since then they had become world-famous relics, passing through many hands before being purchased by Lord Orme.

At last, host and guest left the Treasure House together, and after the steel door had closed and locked, all was pitchy darkness within—darkness and silence.

So it remained until after the midnight hour.

Then came a sound; the faintest of metallic clicks. A strange, mysterious thing was happening. The entire back of the bronze idol was opening! As the gap grew wider and wider, a tiny flicker of light, like that of a will-o'-the-wisp, appeared. It was not a lamp, but a great glow-worm which clung to the brown shoulder of a grotesque, human figure.

The man who emerged was brown-skinned, and so extraordinarily shrunken and skinny that he resembled a mummy. His cheek-bones stood out starkly, and his eyes, at the base of the deep sockets, burned and glowed in the eerie, greenish light from that living lamp.

The man was stiff and cramped, and for some minutes he rubbed and flexed his limbs to restore the circulation.

At length, he moved silently across the Treasure House, to the central showcase; he bent low, and winking up at him were the emerald Eyes of Mahnee.

Working carefully, with his skeleton, claw-like hands, he opened the case—so cunningly, so painstakingly, that he left no trace. He took the historic Eyes, and having closed the showcase again, he moved across the Treasure House like a ghost of the night itself.

An hour passed . . .

Then the shrunken Hindoo did two strange things. He took the glow-worm from his shoulder, placed it upon the great mat which lay in its sunken well, just inside the door, and stamped out its light. Then, in the absolute darkness, he felt his way to the bronze idol. He entered, closed the secret door with a click. Having settled himself in his former position,

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he took a little pill from his loincloth, placed it upon his tongue, and swallowed it.

Within five minutes he had sunk into a state of utter unconsciousness.

Trapped in the Treasure House.

FALCON SWIFT thoughtfully polished his monocle as he listened to Lord Orme. He and his assistant, Chick Conway, had hastened to Orme Towers in response to an urgent telegram from Lord Orme; and on his arrival he had found his client, with Prince Ishti, in a state of acute agitation.

"The police have done nothing, Mr. Swift," he said. "The local inspector, who has charge of the case, is baffled. And I don't wonder. This robbery is the most astounding crime which has ever been committed."

"It is like magic itself," said Prince Ishti, who had been introduced to Falcon Swift. "And it is a wonder that I am not under suspicion. I have attempted to buy the great emeralds from my host, and their disappearance during my presence under Lord Orme's roof is most unfortunate."

The Sporting Sleuth cast a swift, searching glance at the Prince, whose eyes seemed to contain a malevolent challenge. In a moment the impression had gone, and Falcon Swift wondered if it had been some trick of his imagination.

"Come, come, Prince Ishti, you must not say things like that," said his lordship gruffly. "The emeralds disappeared from the Treasure House during the night—and it was locked as securely as a bank vault. It is absolutely impossible for any man to have gained entry or exit."

"May I look over the Treasure House?" asked the Monocled Manhunter.

His host nodded, and they at once proceeded there. Once he was within the Treasure House, Falcon Swift lost no time in making a minute survey of the great chamber.

"I understand, Lord Orme, that you were the last to leave this place last night?" he asked. "You were also the first man to enter it to-day?"

"Yes."

"And when you entered, you immediately discovered the loss?"

"Not immediately," replied his lordship. "Not, in fact, until I happened to be passing the showcase. You see, I came to admire this wonderful bronze idol which Prince Ishti has given me."

"Indeed!" said Falcon Swift, turning his attention upon the bronze idol with sudden interest. "It was

not possible, Lord Orme, for any intruder to have slipped in whilst your back was turned, and to have removed the emeralds?"

"Quite impossible—for I closed the door after my entry. I was absolutely alone when I made the discovery."

"I see," said the Monocled Manhunter, nodding. "That narrows our field of search down almost to a minimum."

He turned suddenly upon Prince Ishti, and he thought he saw a light of mocking contempt in the Oriental's eyes.

"Can you tell me if this idol is hollow?" he asked.

"I believe it is," replied the Prince suavely. "You are suggesting, of course, that it contains a living human being? An ingenious theory—but, I fear, groundless. The idol remained in its great packing-case from the moment it left my own country until it was unpacked here, last night. If any living creature concealed itself within, it must now assuredly be dead."

"We can, at least, make certain," said Falcon Swift.

He examined the idol closely, his monocle gleaming in his eye. He went over every inch, bringing to his aid a powerful magnifying lens.

Suddenly he uttered a low, exultant exclamation.

"This looks promising!" he muttered.

Even then, the Prince remained immobile, while Falcon Swift's lightning fingers passed up and down the carved bronze. Suddenly, there was a click; the entire back section of the idol swung open.

"Good gracious!" ejaculated Lord Orme.

He was doubly startled; for as the door swung back, an incredibly shrivelled figure fell limply to the floor.

"A mummy!" ejaculated Lord Orme.

"No; a living man," said Falcon Swift grimly.

He was bending over the emaciated figure, his fingers on the shrunken man's pulse. He felt the feeblest of movements under his touch.

"But this is most singular," said the Prince gently.

"This man is in a trance, Mr. Swift. No doubt he is a priest of some little-known cult—for such men, in my country, will sometimes go into a trance-like condition for months on end. It is impossible that this man could have emerged from the idol during the night. But if, by some miracle, he did so, then the stolen emeralds must be within the idol."

Falcon Swift looked crestfallen.

"Yes, Your Highness, you are right," he said.

"The man is in a trance. His starved appearance proves that."

The Sporting Sleuth made a thorough search of the hollow interior of the idol—but, as he had expected, he was unrewarded.

"It is impossible for the emeralds to be here," he said, at length. "I am afraid, Lord Orme, that the shrunken man's presence within the idol is a mere coincidence."

He looked round with brooding eyes.

"What is in this steel-bound box?" he inquired suddenly.

"Oh, that," said the Prince, with a smile. "Fireworks, my dear sir—quite harmless rockets for the display this evening."

He insisted upon the box being unpacked then and there; and Chick Conway eagerly assisted in this work. But there was no sign of the emeralds. Falcon Swift had not expected to find them—for it was the Prince himself who had insisted upon the rockets being unpacked. And Falcon Swift was already acutely suspicious of Prince Ishti.

At the Monocled Manhunter's suggestion, the unknown Hindoo was carried into the great mansion

and placed in bed. The detective continued his investigations, but, as he told Lord Orme during the afternoon, he was compelled to admit that he was baffled.

"It is a bad business, Mr. Swift—and I am disappointed," said Lord Orme, almost curtly. "Have you no hope at all?"

Apparently Falcon Swift had none, for he walked away moodily without answering; and it was not like him to be rude. In this worried condition, Chick Conway found him pacing up and down the terrace of the great mansion. Together, they went indoors.

"No luck, Boss?" asked Chick sympathetically.

"Plenty!" said the Monocled Manhunter, his voice crisp and vibrant. "Ever since we arrived, laddie, I've been trying to shake off his leech-like highness, and at last I have succeeded. Quick! Upstairs with you!"

They hastened up the great staircase, and Chick, bewildered, followed his famous Boss into the bedroom, which contained the unconscious Hindoo priest.

"Stand by the door, laddie—and if anybody comes, give me the tip," said Falcon Swift, tensely.

He took a tiny, glittering instrument from his pocket, and with this he extracted a drop of the

under the influence of a powerful drug, which was administered not more than twenty-four hours ago."

"Great Scott!"

"The trick fooled Lord Orme—but I am not so easily deceived," continued the Sporting Sleuth. "Prince Ishti is our man, Chick—and he is as cunning as a forest full of snakes."

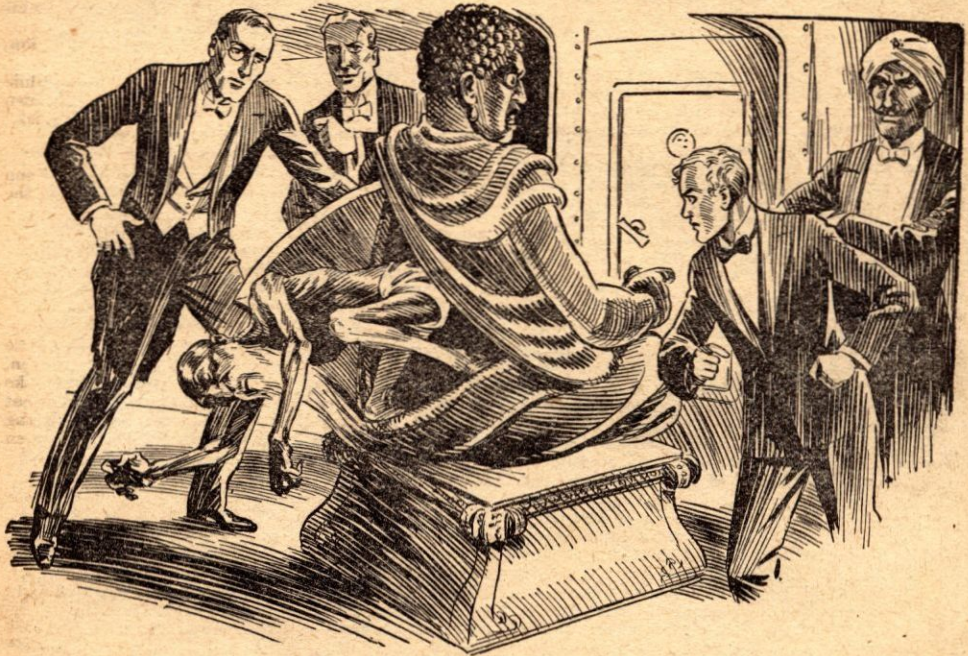
"But—but how—"

"I don't know—yet," said the detective. "The Prince expected us to discover the Hindoo in the idol—he was prepared for it. But he thought that the trance story would 'get over.' This Hindoo emerged during the night, stole the emeralds, hid them, and then took the drug. I doubt if the Prince has yet acquired the emeralds. Such a thing would be too risky with me on the premises—to say nothing of the police. He is biding his time."

It was growing dusk when Falcon Swift and Chick went out once again. The famous sleuth was still looking moody; and once again, when he met the Prince, he read a silent challenge in the latter's eyes.

"I must make another search of the Treasure House, Lord Orme," said Falcon Swift. "Will you permit me to take the key?"

"Certainly," said his lordship. "I would come



THE IDOL'S SECRET.—With a click, part of the carved bronze idol swung back like a door and out tumbled a shrivelled, emaciated figure.

Hindoo's blood. Crossing to the window, he removed from his pocket a folding chemical case. He selected a little test-tube, and poured into it a few drops of colourless liquid from a little phial. Then he added the Hindoo's blood.

The clear chemical became tinged with pink; and then, suddenly, it turned cloudy, changing almost immediately to a bluish tint.

"As I suspected!" said Falcon Swift, with grim satisfaction. "This man is not in a trance; he is

with you, Swift, but I am wanted at the house—to greet the guests. And the boys from the Orphanage will be arriving soon, too."

He was a busy man as well as a worried man. But, as a host, he had to attend to his duties. Prince Ishti, too, was required within the Towers, so that he could be introduced to the in-coming guests.

Thus, Falcon Swift and Chick had the Treasure

(Continued on page 35.)

AWESOME! THRILLING! STUPENDOUS! EVEN GREATER THAN KING KONG, THIS BREATHLESS SPECTACLE TALE WILL HOLD YOU SPELLBOUND. Telling of the Extraordinary Feat of Professor Laban Twick, the Scientist who Never Smiled; with Bigshot Bruce, Adventurer; Harry Langham and Pongo.

By

JOHN HUNTER

THE night was dreadful with stillness, close with stifling heat, and all around the great ship the waters of the sea were flat and dead, so that it seemed as though she ploughed through oil. Astern, widening immensely, her wake showed white and phosphorescent, and only the beat of her engines told of life amid all that sullen, death-like waste.

She was a mystery ship, perhaps the most mysterious ship that ever sailed the Seven Seas. Originally laid down for a great shipping company, and intended to be the biggest and fastest liner afloat, she had never been finished owing to lack of funds . . . until Professor Laban Twick bought her and fitted her out according to his own peculiar ideas and amazing requirements.

She was eighty-five thousand tons register, and she carried the most terrible cargo that ever was loaded under hatches. She had not even been named by the Professor, but still retained the distinguishing number of her original builders—913. Added together that came to thirteen, and there was thirteen in it. Perhaps the curse of a malignant fate was on that great ship from the laying down of her keel-plate.

Professor Laban Twick was the grandson of old Laban Twick, long since gone to his fathers, Twick of Twick's Infallible Rejuvenator. Old Twick had made millions from his famous tonic, which, indeed, was an extremely good one, for a gift for chemistry and science ran in the family.

The Professor was a tall, spare and melancholy man to whom millions and a fame in the world of science that was unequalled, had brought no apparent happiness. A scientific foe had once declared that he had been brought up on the Book of Job, and, indeed, the Professor was never known to smile.

He had brought with him on this fantastic voyage his nephew, Harry Langham, and Harry's school friend, Pat Mansfield, popularly known as Pongo.

And so—observe No. 913 homeward bound from a place that lay beyond the dark curtain of one of the world's unknown places, her open hatches emitting a sickening odour of musk and foulness, a slow steam of hot and monstrous living creatures.

Now and again sound came up through those wide-flung hatches, a dreadful roar, the snarling chatter of a savage, prisoned thing, the crash of gigantic movement. All else was silent. Save for 913, no ship moved on that equatorial and windless sea.

Harry Langham was standing on the fore-deck when Pongo came up alongside him. When 913 was taken over by the Professor she was a mere shell, and the whole of her interior, save her engine-room, was completed to his designs. The engines were amidships, right down in her bowels, hidden away below the waterline. Aft, a comparatively small section of her was devoted to the living accommodation of her crew and the Professor and the two boys.

THE MENACE OF THE MONSTERS



The whole of the rest of the monstrous structure, greater than a cathedral, had, save for the girders that supported the sides and the top deck, been left clear, and afterwards fitted with cages and cases.

Pongo stood beside Harry for a little while. Harry was a tall fair lad, quick and alert and athletic. Pongo was snub-nosed, freckled, inclined to be fat, and shockingly untidy. As the two boys stood there a man came up alongside them. He was tall and lean-framed, bronzed, with hard and very clear blue eyes. Known all over the world as Bigshot Bruce, he was the greatest hunter and adventurer who ever lived.

"Well," he said quietly, "we're homeward bound at last, and with the biggest catch anybody has ever netted." He paused. "I've hunted here and there in my time, but never such a hunting as this. I hope never to see the Place of Mists again, and I don't mind confessing it."

Neither of the boys said anything. They, too, looked back on the Place of Mists, on the mighty and hideous hunting that had taken place there, as they might look back on a nightmare indescribable, a horror the years would never efface. For in the Place of Mists, they had stood on the edge of the great bowl of all the forgotten centuries and stared down into its limitless darkness and seen what it held.

"How would you like to have a look at them?" Bigshot Bruce said. "They fascinate me, even though they repel me. Come along."

They moved with him to where a frail ladder dipped into the festerous darkness of the forward hold, which, really, was almost half of the great ship. They went as though they were hypnotised, as though they must gaze on a horror which repelled them and yet attracted them.

The Big Game Hunter went down like a cat, for he had served in sail, and the lads followed with the agility of schoolboys. So at last they stood scores of feet down, in the well of that immense place, and looked round them in the half-light that glowed constantly within it from dimmed electric bulbs.

If a madman's fancy had been unchained to the

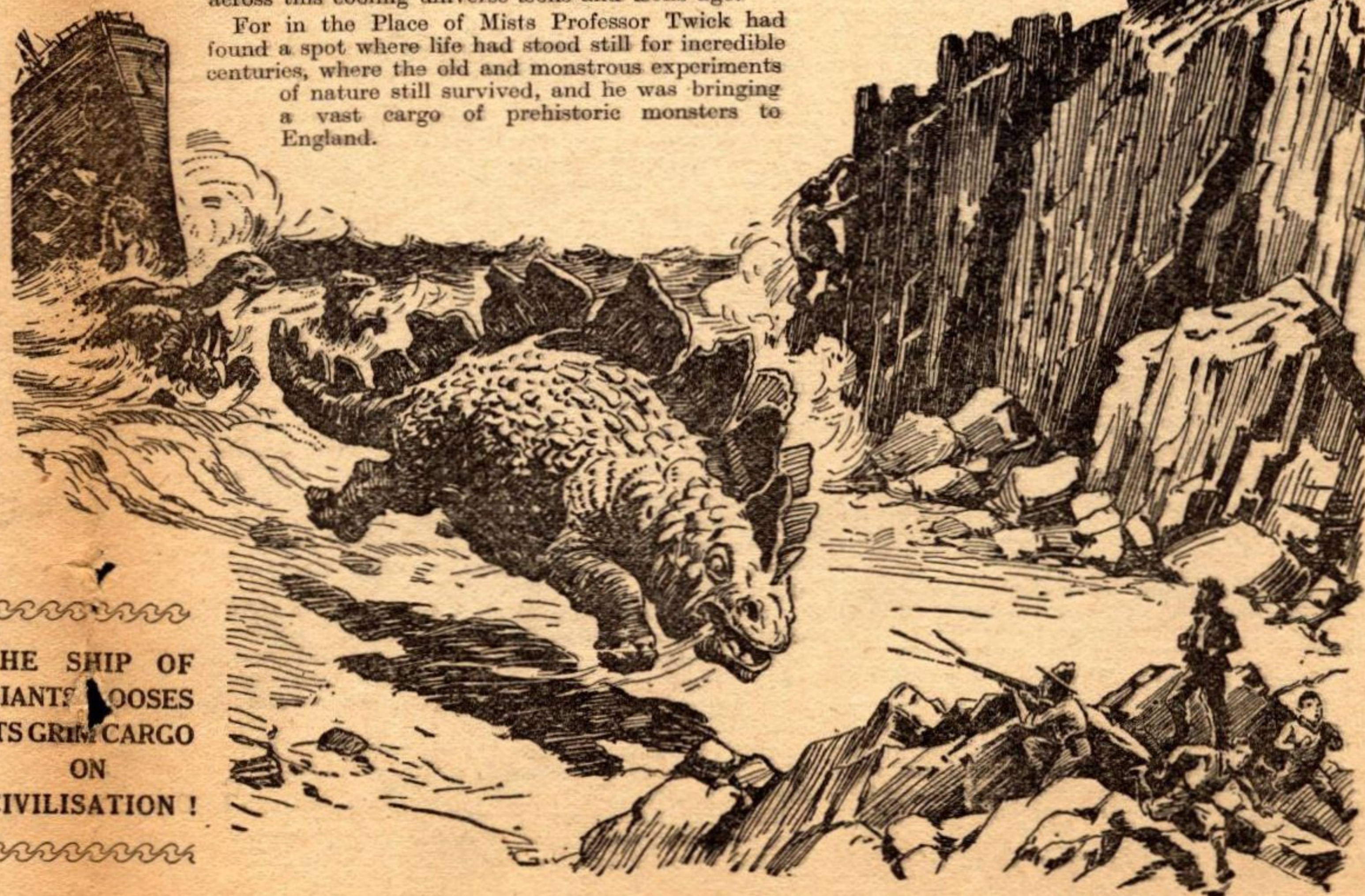
making of a scene of evil, nothing more dreadful could have been presented to their gaze.

All around the hold, so vast that only a narrow lane ran between them, were cages, and in those cages were things that looked like monstrous shadows in the dimness.

Here, the incredible bulk of a stegosaur hunched; there, a pterodactyl squawked and fluttered; and again a dinosaur heaved itself like a moving mountain; or a plesiosaur's long neck wavered like a serpent. Ahead of them a mammoth stood, mighty and statuesque. Behind glass shot with wire, two serpents lay, thicker than the body of a bull, a hundred and twenty feet in length . . .

They stood, the two boys and the Big Game Hunter, in a hall-way of the world that was before man trod the heated earth, in the presence of the things that waded in the stinking marshes of the forming world, that sunned themselves on the steaming mudflats, that fought and tore and ravened across this cooling universe eons and eons ago.

For in the Place of Mists Professor Twick had found a spot where life had stood still for incredible centuries, where the old and monstrous experiments of nature still survived, and he was bringing a vast cargo of prehistoric monsters to England.



THE SHIP OF
GIANTS LOSES
ITS GRIM CARGO
ON
CIVILISATION!

ENGLAND INVADED BY PREHISTORIC MONSTERS—A TALE OF TREMENDOUS THRILLS!

A sabre-toothed tiger snarled and crouched, for opposite, towering, grotesque and awful, was a tyrannosaur who preyed on the sabre-toothed tiger, and whose jaws could cleave through tiger or monstrous alligator as steel pliers snap through wire.

The tyrannosaurus rumbled forward and touched the bars of its mighty cage. Instantly blue flame leapt and sizzled and crackled all about it, filling that place of stench and horror with evil light, and the monster, with a thunderous roar, drew back; for the Professor realising that steel bars might never hold these tremendous beasts, kept a high voltage current constantly running through the fronts of their cages, so that when they touched they were shocked to their minute nerve systems.

"It makes me feel ill," Harry spoke in a low voice.

Bigshot Bruce drew at his cigarette until it made a highly coloured point of scarlet in the dimness.

"I think we'd better go above," he said. His voice was changed slightly. He, who had stood up to charging elephants, who had shot tiger and lion, and who had trod many wild places, was plainly affected.

He added deliberately: "I'm not sure the Professor should have brought these things home. There's something unnatural about it, and deadly dangerous. Look at that fellow there, for example."

In a corner a giant ape crouched, watching them with an intensity that curdled their blood. The monster's hands were down at his sides, touching the littered and foul floor of his gigantic den. Beneath the straw that covered it his powerful fingers worked . . . and worked . . .

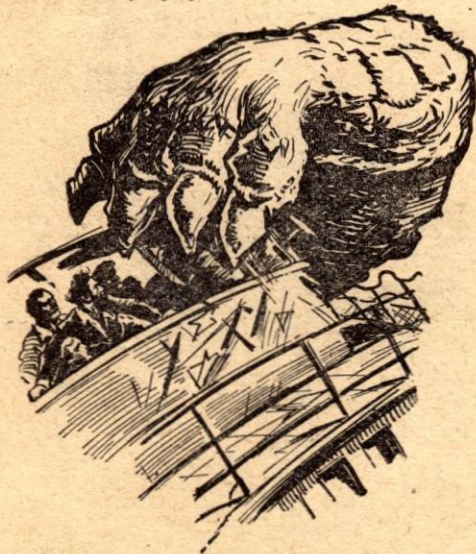
"Come on," said Pongo, "I want to go aloft."

They climbed the swaying ladder leading to the deck, to the stillness of the night and clear air, with which they could free their lungs of the musk and the odour of the things below.

And the giant ape, still working with his fingers, cunning with the eternal cunning of his kind, gradually tore at the little upturned end of one of the steel plates that made the floor of his cage. He had been tearing at that end ever since he discovered it a day after 913 started; and he had lifted it slowly, and still was lifting it. . .

The boys slept fitfully, for through the ship ran the constant roar and snarl of the things that could never have been captured alive if gas had not overcome them, and in the yellow dawn of an equatorial day they joined the Professor on the bridge of the ship.

He was solemnly talkative, pedantic, and, like all scientists, given to the use of imposing words, instead of everyday speech.



The monster's paw came down on the charthouse roof. Glass shattered, steel bent and was torn in that terrible grip.

"The Captain advises me that the vessel is maintaining the average velocity on which its original builders founded their estimates," he said. "That is perfectly satisfactory; but I wish it could be improved on. By the way, do I understand that you descended the forward hold last night with Bruce?"

"Yes, sir," said Harry. "We hoped you didn't mind."

"Er—no. An interest in specimens of this kind is admirable and not to be condemned." He looked

gloomy. "I hope and trust that we all arrive safely."

The Captain smiled. "This ship can get through anything, sir." Yet he looked anxious.

It was as he said this that there was a sudden scream aft. They saw a Cockney seaman named Batten running for his life. He shinned up to the bridge, his cheeks grey, his breath coming in panting gasps through pallid lips, and he screamed: "Look! Look!"

Over the edge of the after hold, laboriously creeping into view, came the head of a monster.

The Professor blanched. "It's a stegosaur—the one that was in the far aft cage which was left unwired for current!"

The edge of the steel hatch crumpled. A squat, scaled leg got a grip of the deck—and then another. A massive bulk heaved itself with ponderous, awful slowness from the fetid depths of the open hold.

It stood, swaying slightly, nosing from side to side, on the after deck . . . a thing three times the size of an elephant . . . its gaping jaws slavering with foam. . .

Horror Breaks Loose.

THE Captain snatched up a telephone and began barking orders. Every man was to keep off the deck. To the bridge were to be brought rifles and machine-guns. Sudden activity and tense life throbbled through the great ship.

The stegosaur moved. In moving it brushed the after derrick, and the thing canted sideways. Seamen poured up on to the bridge through the inner companionway, and they brought the weapons the Captain had ordered.

"We can't use bombs," the Captain explained. "They would tear the deck and open the tops of the upper cages."

He rasped orders once more over the telephone and above them the radio aeriels cracked and sizzled.

SOS—SOS—Warship wanted. And the ship's position. *SOS—SOS—Warship wanted.* And again and again and again.

Then the telephone bell tinkled and the wireless operator's crisp voice came over.

"Call picked up, sir. South American destroyer twenty miles off steaming to our assistance."

The stegosaur lumbered forward, its tiny eyes blinking in the blinding sun.

Bigshot Bruce was as cool as the skipper. He had a high-speed rifle in his hands, and taking careful aim, he let fly with it. The stegosaur shook itself as though a fly had touched it.

Bigshot Bruce observed: "I'll take a pot at his eyes. That might stop him."

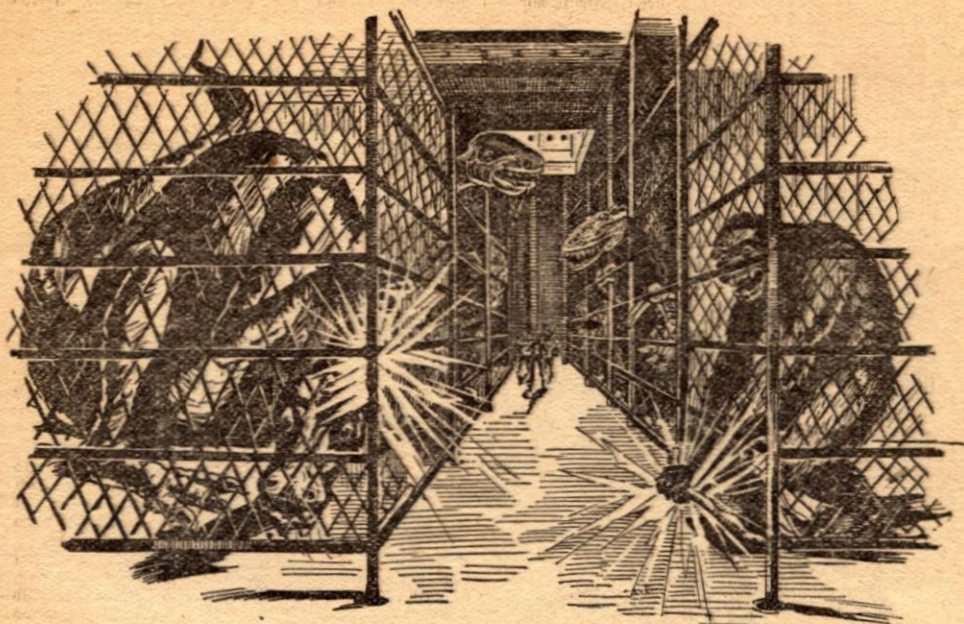
He fired again. The stegosaur stopped dead. Its left eye had suddenly and completely blotted out—like magic!

It loosed a sound that turned the blood of all those men to ice, and it lurched forward with hideous power and reached the bridge, towering beside it, nosing at it.

In their fragile cage of glass and steel the men crouched and stared at the Thing. Teeth like steel fastened on to a corner of the bridge and held and tore. There was a rending sound, a crackling. Steel twisted under that awful grip, and a corner of the bridge came away.

Bigshot Bruce still cool and steady, cuddled his cheek down to the small of his gun butt and fired once more.

The stegosaur threshed round. The bullet, travelling obliquely, had carried away its right eye, and a blinded monster tore and roared and crashed about the ship.



MONSTER CARGO.—At the appearance of Bigshot Bruce and the boys, a huge tyrannosaurus reared against the bars of its cage. Instantly, blue electric flashes crackled and spluttered from the steel.

The Professor was watching the stegosaur with dilated eyes. He observed: "It is perfectly obvious that the brain centre of these enormous brutes is so small that even shooting them through the eyes has no fatal effect. Did you observe the curious leverage of the creature's neck as it tore away that bridge corner? Rather an interesting demonstration, I think."

"Quite," said Bruce dryly, and slammed another cartridge into the breech of his rifle.

The Captain said: "There's smoke to port. The warship's coming up. Stand by and keep cool, everybody." He rattled orders through the telephone. The steersman swung her head to port and she steamed to meet the warship.

The blinded monster, swinging round in wide circles, roaring continuously and in a terrifying and indescribable fashion, cannoned into the bridge.

Its head came round like a ram, and the storm glass shattered under the impact. Had it been able to see, there would not have been a living man left on that bridge. But it could only destroy blindly.

The skipper still gave his orders calmly. The Professor eyed the monster with anxious interest, observing all its movements carefully. Bigshot Bruce put a couple of bullets into its gaping jaws, but they had not the slightest apparent effect on it.

The great blind head groped and muzzled . . . the gaping jaws found the roof of the charthouse and gripped and tore. The distorted legs pounded and strained, and the whole monstrous bulk of the thing slowed sideways. The charthouse roof came adrift with a crash and the stegosaur went staggering towards the port rail.

"If it falls into the sea, the job's done," said Bruce. "And it looks like doing it."

But it didn't. It pulled up. It slammed the charthouse roof to the deck and it ripped it to pieces. And now they saw the warship.

It belonged to a small and obscure South American State and it had been bought from a firm which had taken it over as scrap. It was a tiny torpedo boat, obsolete, hardly seaworthy, and at its peak fluttered the gorgeously coloured flag of its country.

It ran up alongside the mighty bulk of 913, and a person loaded with gold braid yelled through a megaphone.

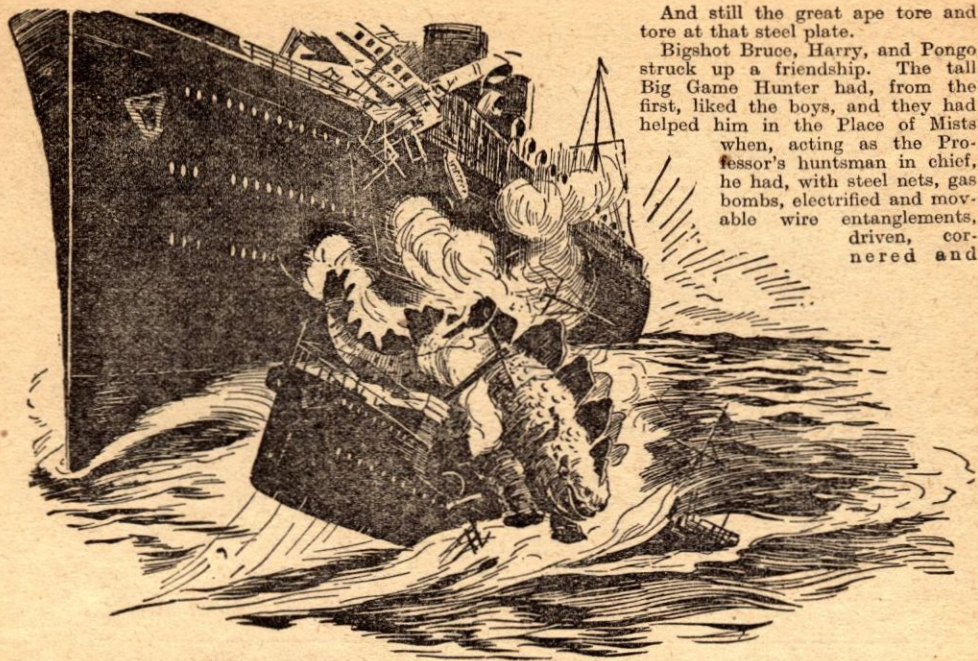
The stegosaur lifted its blinded head. It had smashed the charthouse roof to fragments, and it needed mere worlds to conquer. It lurched forward. The skipper yelled hoarsely to the miniature boat far below the towering side of his ship. The stegosaur hit the port rail and carried it away like paper. Below, the little steel ship suddenly moved as its engines were loosed full speed astern.

The stegosaur seemed poised for a split second high up on the mighty liner's side; then it dropped scores of feet through space, its legs moving spasmodically, and it crashed on the starboard side of the torpedo boat.

The little thing canted. Its flimsy deck and side gave. A high wild scream lifted to the sun-flayed stillness; and then the boat had capsized and gone . . . crew and ship, stegosaur . . . all gone below the churned and swirling water.

Boats were lowered and a few survivors picked up. But most of the crew of the little ship had gone down with it. The watchers saw a great shark swing and cruise and turn—and another. Somewhere food for a hundred sharks sank and sank, as the stegosaur drowned . . .

The skipper mopped his brow.



COLOSSUS CRASHES.—The blind stegosaurus reeled over the side of the great ship. Down it dropped to crash on the tiny torpedo boat.

And still the great ape tore and tore at that steel plate.

Bigshot Bruce, Harry, and Pongo struck up a friendship. The tall Big Game Hunter had, from the first, liked the boys, and they had helped him in the Place of Mists when, acting as the Professor's huntsman in chief, he had, with steel nets, gas bombs, electrified and movable wire entanglements, driven, cornered and

"If any more get loose we're done," he said; and then recovered himself and issued curt orders. The men began to leave the bridge, and the Professor followed them.

"I must go and ensure that everything is secure," he announced. "I have lost one valuable specimen and have no desire to lose others."

He was absolutely unperturbed by the immense danger they had just encountered. He would, as Bigshot Bruce said, have sat on the top of a comet and plunged to destruction and have tried to calculate his speed as he plunged, that it might be recorded for the information of his scientist colleagues. He was that type of man, wandering always in the realms of thought and theory.

No. 913 ploughed on her way, and all through her there throbbed and pulsed an omnipresent terror from which the Professor alone was immune.

And below, in the forrard hold, the great ape still tore and pulled at the steel plate which was gradually surrendering to his limitless strength.

Terrors of the Tempest.

IF the nerves of those on the ship had been stretched to breaking point during her voyage northward to the equator, many of them snapped following the breaking loose of the stegosaurus.

Disaster seemed to brood over the mighty vessel like a huge stooping shadow that stood between her and the sun, steam though she might. The crew talked in whispers. A thrum of pulsating fear hung tremulous through the ship.

The gigantic holds with their dim light, their stench, their incredible, looming movement, were like separate gateways to the Pit itself.

captured the mighty life that stirred in the ship's holds.

It had been a great hunting, that, fraught with peril, but Bigshot Bruce's iron nerves had never once faltered. All the resources of the hunter, plus all the Professor's wide scientific knowledge, had gone to its success. It was no wonder the boys were inclined to regard Bigshot Bruce as a hero.

The ship reached more northerly waters. She was swinging north-eastward, following one of the great ship roads to England's southern gateway. Now the weather was colder. It was the beginning of November, and as they flung behind them the regions of eternal warmth they struck changing conditions. The first hint of these conditions was a drop in the glass when they were forty-eight hours sail from Southampton.

"We're going to have a bit of a blow," Bigshot Bruce said to the boys. "Not that it will matter to this ship. But the Professor's collection below stairs won't enjoy it much, I'm afraid."

Nine-hundred-and-thirteen took it on her starboard quarter in the middle of one night. It snored up from the south-west like a giant striding to destroy—a south-wester which, in the annals of meteorology, was afterwards written down as one of the worst gales that ever thrashed the southern and western coasts of the British Isles.

The great ship plunged on. Her movement was sickening, big though she was, for a running high sea on the quarter is the worst possible sea of all from the comfort standpoint. Above decks, the ship-killing wind yelled like a fiend and slung great waves at her towering sides, so that they broke in sheets of stinging spindrift even as high as the bridge itself.

Below was inferno. The hatches were battened, and the big vents sheltered. The clamour of the prisoned monsters lifted above even the yell of the striding gale. The instruments in the patched-up charthouse recorded a hundred miles an hour. Deck stuff was carried away like rotten wood. Steel was twisted as though massive fingers had closed on it and torn it out of shape.

The Professor consulted the Captain. "I think I dare not leave that current running," he said. "The—er—specimens . . . are rolled against the bars time and again. I am afraid the violent movement and the constant electrical shocks will kill them, or impair their usefulness from the scientific standpoint. They can't keep off the bars, you see."

The skipper shrugged his shoulders. So the electrical current was switched off, and some of the hideous noise of the fore and after holds subsided.

All day, 913 rode the tempest like a castle that reeled through storm-tossed cloudland on a mad-man's fancy. A dozen men went down forrard and a dozen aft to feed her awful cargo. The dozen men who went down aft came back. The dozen who went down forrard never came back.

Of a sudden high and awful screams rang above the multitudinous clamours of the gale and the ship. There was a killing in that forward hold, a killing by a giant come to vengeance. For the steel plates of the floor of one of the cages had at last been rent away and the gigantic ape was loose—one of several on the ship.

The skipper, the Professor, others, clinging to anything on which they could lay their hands, tried to

help the doomed wretches below. Two machine-guns stammered gustily and hammered nickel-headed death downwards into the blue murk of that awful place. But the ape, chattering, tore his victims limb from limb, tore them with hands and teeth, and crouched, half-hidden, beneath the cage of the brontosaurus.

Then he made a rush, and they got the hatch slammed down in time to prevent him from climbing to the deck.

On drove 913, a stricken ship with Death himself as a grim passenger. Below, the ape was smashing and roaring at the door through which the feeders had come. Day fled and night came down.

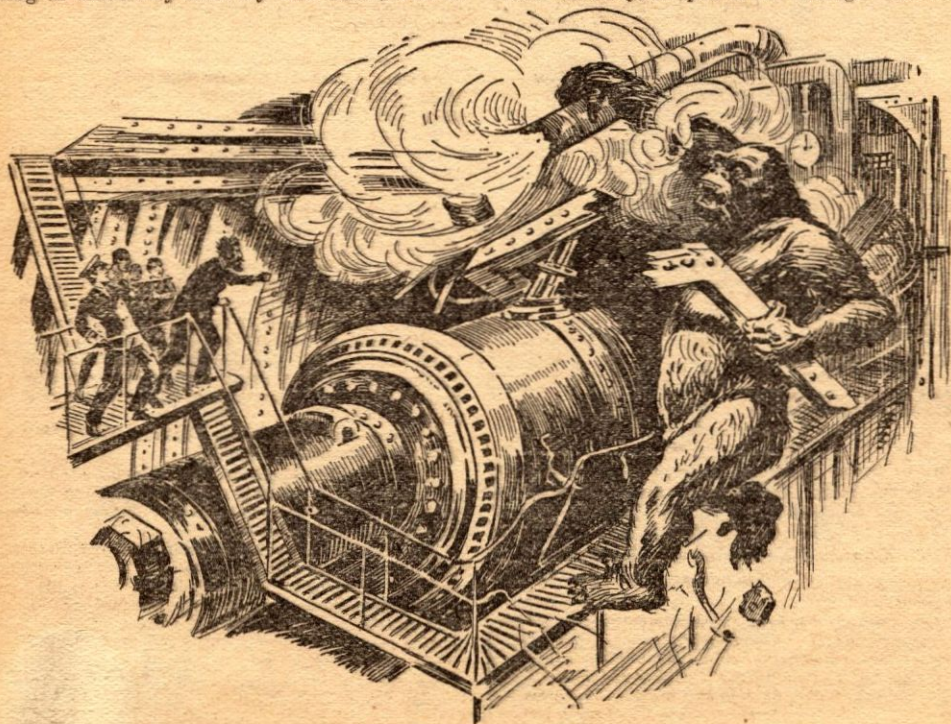
Death and horror plunged through the shrieking gale—Englandwards . . . and came home at last.

It was still night. Away to port they saw the landwise lights of Britain.

Far below in the bowels of the mighty ship, the great ape beat down an iron door and so came to the engine-room. Of all the hideous things that happened below the waterline then nothing can be written, for no man lived to tell it. But there were dead and torn things scattered wide, and those on the bridge did not know it, for the telephones were destroyed by a blow from the ape's fist. That massive fist tore, too, at the gauges and controls.

Suddenly the gyroscopic compass above on the bridge was swinging giddily and the ship veered landwards.

She was opened out to full speed. The ape's hand had pulled the control and then left it. Her movement was crazy, in spite of her tonnage. The ship



THE MIGHTY DESTROYER.—The giant ape, mad to destroy, tore at the gleaming metal of the huge turbine.

was out of control. The delicately balanced and marvellous mechanism of her electrical steering had been shattered by an insensate beast which beat with a steel bar at everything that moved; and so it came upon the place where the three great dynamos hummed and droned like drowsy giants.

The steel bar lifted and flailed. The skipper and his men came in and a bomb hurtled through the air. The ape lifted itself screaming, and the bar dropped and crashed again. Switches and ammeters, voltmeters, gauges, crashed under those hammer blows.

A great blue flame sizzled and crackled and flung itself through the air. Darkness dropped, and as it dropped on all the ship, as the power itself died, a twisted, incinerated mass of singed brown fur writhed and twitched on the power-room floor.

The ship was dark now, and blinded, unsteerable, with no current, no lights, no control—eighty-five thousand tons driving through the shrieking smother at thirty-seven miles an hour! The velocity of her, the power of impact, was colossal.

What were left of her crew gathered above deck. The Professor was crying out about his collection, but nobody listened to him.

And 913, driving madly like a mighty insane thing, grounded below Thornecombe Beacon with a crash that broke her back.

[The Invasion of the Monsters.

HARRY, Pongo and Bigshot Bruce had kept close together, and it is only through their eyes that the subsequent happenings can be seen.

Bigshot Bruce made his voice heard above the gale. "We've got to get ashore somehow. The beasts are breaking loose. Look at the forrard hatch!"

The hatchway clampings had loosened under the shock that had slackened everything throughout the great ship.

And horror was coming from the depths.

The most hideous invasion that ever man conceived was beginning. The Menace of the Monsters had come to Britain on Britain's greatest ship.

Shapes appeared and disappeared. Vast things like the shadows of a lunatic's fancy heaved and vanished.

The boys and Bigshot Bruce lost sight of everybody else in the mad game of "save himself who can," that followed. A pterodactyl, tossed like a grotesque toy on the wings of the gale, whirled inwards, screeching and fluttering vainly.

They saw the skipper locked in the black and awful coils of a serpent that slithered down into the sea. Bruce was heaving at a life raft, slashing it free from its holdings, shouting to the boys.

They helped him. When it slid away to the side, they were flattened on it, and flat on it they stuck as it dropped the vast depth and hit the boiling seas on the ship's lee.

The impact sent the raft under, for the height was enormous. But it came up again, right side up, and the sluicing waves, urged by the maddened wind, hurled it shorewards, with its three passengers.

By it something lifted and gaped. They saw enormous jaws open and stoop and pluck. Then the gale itself whirled the monster away and the raft swirled onwards, spinning giddily.

The frail thing struck, lifted, struck again, spun round and broke into fragments. They were face downwards on shingle, biting at it with fingers and toes in the dreadful back run of the wave that hurled them shorewards. Another wave came crashing in. It flung them like driftwood—high—and when it rattled backwards they lay out of the water, and got to their feet.

"Come on!" shouted Bigshot Bruce. "We haven't a moment to lose!"

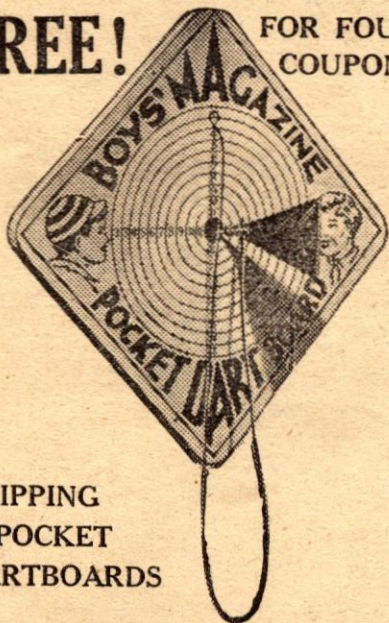
They blundered across the shingle, seeking an opening in the great sandstone cliffs of Dorset, going eastward. They heard a cry, and saw a staggering man in the darkness.

The Professor, extremely wet, but still detached and quite unruffled in spirit, said: "They've all come ashore. They're loose in the land!" On the edge of the surf something mighty towered and nosed and sought... "That's a dinosaur. I think we'd better run."

As they started off, the great dinosaur reared itself out of the surf and lumbered towards them with gaping jaws.

Terror let loose! Death strides unchecked across Britain! How can this Monster Menace be wiped out? Don't miss next week's stupendous chapters in this greatest of all Monster yarns.

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THE JESTER'S REALM

HIS PRIZE.

SARCASTIC RIFLE RANGE OWNER (to yokel who has smashed three prize cases): Well, you're the best shot I've ever seen. What prize will you have?

COUNTRY YOKEL: 'Ere, O'll have one o' they foine clay pipes standin' at the back!

(Fountain pen to JOHN MACDONALD, 167, Wallace Street, Glasgow, C.5.)

SHIELDED.

AIRMAN (to stout man): Would you mind stepping aside, please, while I see which way the wind is blowing?

(Fountain pen to JAMES CULSHAW, Salt Pit Lane, Maudesley, near Ormskirk, Lancs.)

TURNED OUT.

TEACHER: What are sausages?
PUPIL: Rissoles in marching order!

(Fountain pen to P. AYLWARD, 137, Clive Road, Fratton, Portsmouth, Hants.)

THE FUNNY SIDE.

GOLFER (disgusted at his putting): Are you laughing at me, caddie?

CADDIE: No, sir! I'm laughing at that gentleman playing over there.

GOLFER: And what is funny about him?

CADDIE: He plays just like you, sir!

(Fountain pen to GREGORY SMITH, 19, Wellington Terrace, New Walsoken, Wisbech, Camb.)

A SIDE-LINE.

CUSTOMER: How much for a shave?

BARBER: Threepence, sir.

CUSTOMER: How much for shaving one side of my face?

BARBER: Three-halfpence, of course, sir!

CUSTOMER: Right! Go ahead and shave the outside!

(Fountain pen to BERTRAM HUITSON, 3, Thirlmere Road, Darlington, Co. Durham.)



"Wait till I get the bloke who put that knapsack among the parachutes!"

(Football to JOHN G. DAVIES, 134, Milbank Street, Middlesbrough, Yorkshire.)

SHUT UP!

UNCLE: Well, Bobby, how do you like school?

BOBBY: Oh, I like it closed best!
(Fountain pen to HARRY SHAW, 1, Severn Villas, Rosmead Street, Hull.)

HAIR-RAISING.

BOSS (to office-boy): What would you do with a thousand pounds?

OFFICE-BOY: Lumme, guv'nor, I wasn't expecting a rise!
(Fountain pen to RICHARD WORTHINGTON, 3, Jemmett St., Preston, Lancs.)

IN FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS.

JIMMY: Dad must have been up to all sorts of mischief when he was a boy!

HIS BROTHER: What makes you think that?

JIMMY: Well, he always knows exactly what questions to ask me when he wants to know where I am going and what I've been doing!

(Fountain pen to T. CONLAN, 31, Aberdeen Street, Liverpool, 8, Lancs.)

FULL SIZE.

SCOTSMAN (to chemist's assistant): I see you display a notice on your counter, "Life-size enlargements from snapshots for two shillings!" Is this true?

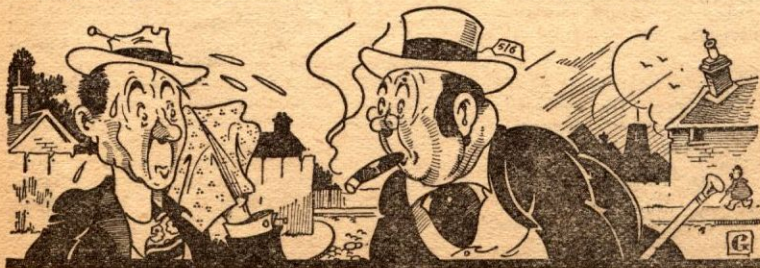
ASSISTANT: Yes, sir, quite!

SCOTSMAN: Well, here's a nice little snap of the *Empress of Britain*! When shall I call for the full-size enlargement?

(Fountain pen to ———, Tudor House, Highlands Hill, Swanley.)

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

Boys' Magazine, 4/11/33.



Binks: I've just been having a tussle with the dentist.

Jinks: Whowon?
Binks: It ended in a draw!

(Football to ERIC TARRAN, 89, Cotterill Rd., Surbiton.)

THE SOCCER TALE OF THE CENTURY FEATURING A WIZARD WITH BOTH FEET !



THE FOOTBALL CARNERA

THE BOY WHO
JOINED A FOOTBALL
TEAM TO FIND A CROOK.
Read of the Strange Quest of Billy
Sanders in these Gripping Chapters

SEVENTEEN-STONE of bone and muscle, a kick like a cannon-shot, and the speed of an express! That was Sammy Gantry, who was to become known to thousands of fans as the Football Carnera.

A story of strange and evil mystery brought Sammy and his orphan chum, Billy Sanders, to the ranks of Branton Rovers. For Billy sought one man among the Rovers—a man who held the key to the greatest mystery of modern times.

And this was the manner of it. On a night of dark and sinister deeds Billy returned to his uncle's house to find that his uncle, Tom Sanders, one of the greatest gem-setters in England, had disappeared. And a quarter-of-a-million pounds' worth of emeralds, belonging to the Rajah of Kilshahnistan, that the jeweller had had stored in his vaults, were also missing.

The finger of suspicion pointed to Uncle Tom Sanders. Billy knew better, however, for he had found on his uncle's desk a strange note in his uncle's handwriting.

"Billy, for you alone. Branton Rovers. Somebody there. Find him."

Billy's suspicions fell on the outside left, Steel. Ere he could confirm them, however, the footballer was kidnapped by a mysterious black-cowled man.

Steel was returned under sensational circumstances. Attached to a parachute he was dropped from an aeroplane on to the Rovers' ground during a match. He was absolutely helpless, however, drugged so that he could neither move nor speak.

The man in the Rovers Billy sought, suddenly struck. The two boys were waylaid and kidnapped in such a way that it could only have been engineered by somebody who knew of their movements. They were held as a bait to trap the mysterious, cowled stranger. But he came in an unexpected way—by 'plane, and rescued Billy and Sammy.

During the Rovers' next game, Mr. Trant was watching from the stand, when suddenly he heard a voice from the seat beside him, which had previously been vacant.

"Hallo, Trant!"

Mr. Trant swung round and all the colour left his cheeks. He stared at the curiously mutilated man who sat beside him smiling with the threat of death in his eyes.

A Man from the Dead.

A CORNER-KICK was being taken on the field, and it might mean a goal for Branton; but Mr. Trant, for the time being, had lost all interest in his team and he could only sit and stare at the man at his side.

He was a slight, tall man, with a suggestion of great and wiry strength about him. His black hair was over-long and streaked with grey. His face was mutilated, so that old scars creased and criss-crossed on his cheeks and forehead. They were curiously shaped scars. . . . An imaginative person might almost have thought that the letter "B" had been slashed into the man's cheeks.

The whistle shrilled. The corner was taken. The ball came across in a long parabola, dropping just inside the crossbar. Heads were leaping to meet it.

Mr. Trant stammered: "I thought you were dead."

"Obviously I'm not," smiled the scarred stranger. Goalkeeper had got his fists to the ball, and it was away; Gunson, the home centre-half, was standing back, and taking it as it dropped, he gently lobbed it into the goalmouth once more.

The crowd was roaring excitement, and beneath the thunder of its shouting the stranger added: "I want to talk to you. We'd better go somewhere less public."

Mr. Trant got up, and as he did so there was a yell which seemed likely to lift the roofs of Branton. For Sammy, bundling forward after the dropping ball, had rammed it with his head into the net.

Branton were one up on about the finest team in England!

Mr. Trant led the way into his office in the great stand. When the door was locked, Mr. Trant said:

"Well?"

"I want some money," smiled the scarred stranger. "Our money. And I want it now."

"Look here," said Mr. Trant earnestly. "You don't know what you're talking about. I haven't got any money except my own. And you know it."

The scarred stranger's hand slid to his hip and on to the table-top went a long, thin, finely tempered knife with a slightly curved point.

There was a tremendous yell from outside, a shout which shook the stand. The Everton centre, making one of his famous head efforts, had forced Billy to concede a corner.

"This," said the scarred stranger, "is the Knife of the Great Vindication. Recognise it? I've always carried it. It reminds me"—his eyes were sombre—"of a certain night, years ago." His voice became deadly. "It can still be used, Trant. Still be used. Now!"

Mr. Trant swallowed hard. "I'm telling you this. I know nothing. But, for the sake of our old associator, I am willing to help you. Would ten pounds do?"

"A hundred," said the scarred stranger, and tried the edge of the knife with his fingers.

"But that's preposterous."

"A hundred"—insistently. "I'll take a cheque, because if you stop it I shall come back . . . with

this!" The knife flashed like silver in the grey afternoon light.

A crash of shouting burst into the room. Rovers were pressing hard, and Everton's right back had just saved his goal.

Mr. Trant breathed deeply; then, pulling open a drawer, he wrote a cheque for one hundred pounds and signed it.

As he did so, he asked: "Do you know where Sanders is?"

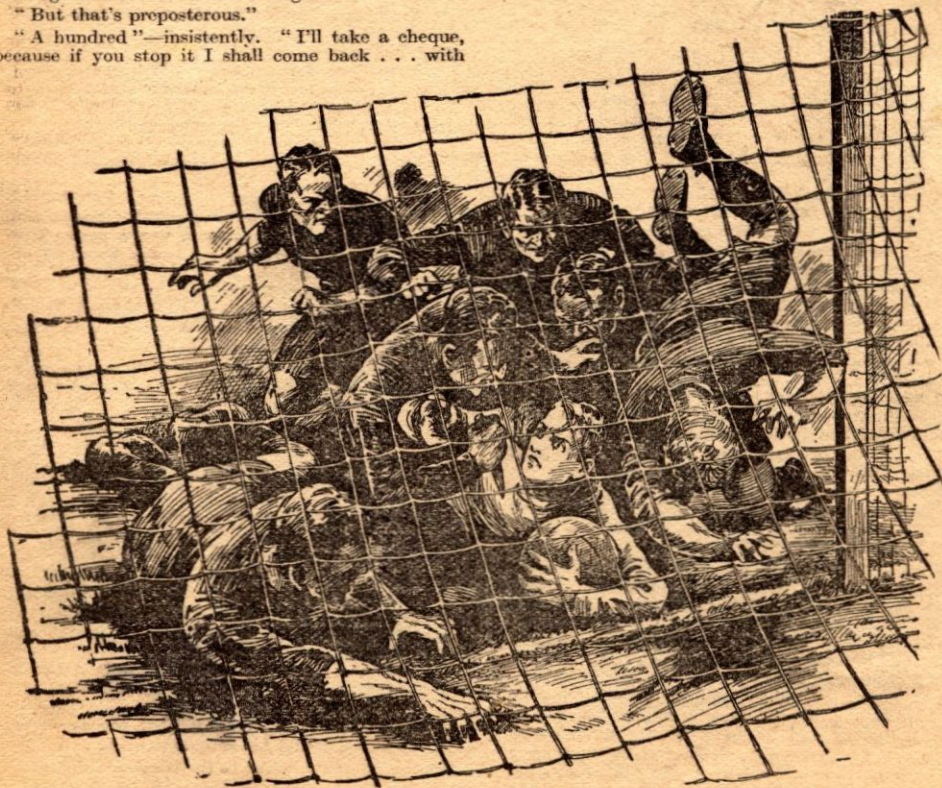
"Looking for some emeralds, I imagine," grinned the scarred stranger. "All right, Trant. Thanks. When I want some more I'll call on you again."

Trant seemed about to say something, but the man, his knife put away, had reached the door. As he opened it a thunderclap of cheers came smashing into the room.

Sammy, taking a pass down the middle in his stride, had scored one of his famous long-range first-time goals.

The door closed. Mr. Trant was alone. He sat for some time, staring straight in front of him. A ghost had arisen from a past he thought dead. He knew his life was in danger.

Outside, the game was going on. He felt no interest in it. He stayed in his office, thinking . . . thinking . . . afraid, while the Rovers, playing hard, beat the famous Everton team by two goals to nil.



DEATH IN THE GOAL.—Billy turned his head. In the medley of forms and faces he saw the dark centre-forward. And in the man's right hand was clutched a broad-bladed knife.

The House of Death.

IF Mr. Trant was perturbed, so were various other people, among them those fellows who had kidnapped Billy and Sammy and had tried to trap their mysterious, masked friend; to say nothing of the Rajah of Kilshahnistan.

That obese and horrid person was not only perturbed, but enraged. He had had a polite intimation from the Foreign Office that, pending a thorough investigation into the affairs of his mighty State in Northern India, it might be politic for him to remain in Britain.

He knew what that meant. He knew those polite and smooth advices. It meant that the British Raj might decide to take over his Government, to depose him and run his country for the benefit of its people.

Now the Rajah couldn't possibly hit back at the British Raj. It had only to lift its fingers, and bayonets and bombers leapt up from nowhere.

But he could do a bit of hitting back at one or two other people—to wit, the Brotherhood of the Bear and the two boys who had stolen his big elephant and humiliated himself.

Fortune favoured him in a way, as will be seen.

Billy and Sammy, following on the sea adventure, made up their minds that they would not sit still any longer. And they talked things over, preparatory to starting a bit of investigation on their own account.

"Here's my theory," said Billy, after a lot of talk and argument. "It all centres round the Brotherhood of the Bear. We know that my uncle, unless somebody is lying was what is called the Great Bear, i.e., the leader of the Order. That's quite possible, because we also know the Order was originally formed as a friendly, self-help society. Now supposing all these people were members of the Brotherhood of the Bear!"

"What?" gasped Sammy.

"I mean it," Billy persisted. "My uncle, the Rajah, the mysterious fellow who has saved us—all of them. It's possible, you know. But, somewhere, something went wrong. How, why, I don't know."

Billy became a bit excited. "Look here. They have to register all these things, with their officers listed, somewhere. We'll find out, and see."

In due course they did so. They wondered why they had not thought of it before. And this is what they learnt.

Thomas Samuel Sanders had been the Great Bear. William Trant had been Exalted Brother Treasurer. Boris Slavski had been Exalted Brother Secretary. The Rajah of Kilshahnistan had been the Most Exalted Controller of All Ceremonies.

It was revealing. It startled them. Trant, their manager, had been intimately connected with the Brotherhood. He must be the man Uncle Tom Sanders had directed Billy to seek.

A sickening suspicion came to Billy. The men who took off in the power boat had known exactly where to find them. He remembered they had chatted with Trant that afternoon and had said where they were going. Was Trant's the hidden hand behind all the attacks on them?

They decided to watch Trant.

On a certain evening, Trant went to London by fast train, and Billy and Sammy followed him. He reached Euston and he went in the direction of King's Cross. It was then dark, and the boys were able to follow him without much risk of being seen.

He turned down Gray's Inn Road, and he dived into a labyrinth of small thoroughfares behind Guildford Street, ultimately entering a tiny house which was very old, standing in a patch of drab garden. It was on a corner. Beside its garden was

a dirty yard, in which one or two vans and a motor-lorry were stored. Beyond the yard rose the high blank wall of a great warehouse.

Sammy and Billy crept into the garden of the little cottage and, circling the building, reached its back. There they found a long, low sloping roof above an outhouse. It was easy for them to get on to this roof, and they managed to wriggle up it with a minimum of sound and so reach an upper storey window.

The place was quiet, and the neighbourhood was also quiet in a dark and threatening fashion. They climbed through the window, and as they did so, two men who, unknown to them, had observed and followed them all the way from Branston, spoke to each other in snarling Hindustani.

"What shall we do?" said Mahmet Singh.

Ali Khat replied: "Wait a little. Send somebody to see."

A catlike Kilshah went up that roof and slid inside with the silence of one of his native cobras.

The boys had found that below stairs the little front room of the cottage was heavily shuttered and lighted. The door of it was ajar, and, risking the creaking of old stairs, they crept downwards.

The narrow passage entrance was pitch dark, and they were able to discern the interior of the room quite plainly without themselves being seen. What they saw confirmed all their suspicions.

Trant was there, and with him was the man, Pete, and the skipper of the boat on which Pete had sailed when they were kidnapped.

Trant had just finished talking, but what he had been saying, of course, they could not guess.

The skipper said: "But we had proof of it. All the papers published it. It's not possible."

"Am I lying, then?" snarled Trant. "Don't be a fool. Why should I make this journey if I didn't KNOW?"

In face of this the skipper was silent. Pete butted in. There were some minutes of a swift criss-cross of talk and argument. Then there was a pause, and during that pause there came a heavy knocking on the front door.

"Whassat?" gasped Pete.

"Somebody knocking, you fool," snarled Trant. "Wait a minute. Stand by, you two, with your guns handy. I'm opening the door."

Billy and Sammy crept, as rapidly as possible, towards the kitchen of the house and stayed just inside that dismal chamber's darkness, while Trant went to the door.

He opened it carefully, pulling it back an inch or two in order to peer round its jamb. The door was flung back, so that Trant staggered. Something hurtled inside.

There was a soft *plopping* sound, a sheet of flame, and dense smoke poured through the house. A smoke bomb had been flung in.

Into the smoke poured brown-skinned men. Billy and Sammy, choking, for the bomb had dropped near the kitchen door, turned towards the kitchen window, but not before they had a quick vision of awful events behind them.

Pete and the skipper started to shoot. A brown skin dropped, writhing. Trant's voice roared and then choked and gasped.

Pete was on his knees, and a Kilshah was over him, a Thuggee cord round his throat, twisting . . .

Sammy put his shoulder to the window and it went out with a crash. Kilshahs seemed to be everywhere. Two of them rose to meet the boys, and Sammy, hitting out right and left, skittled them, strangling cords and all.

But there were more in the garden, and the way

to the street was blocked. Ali Khat's shrill voice pattered directions in Kilshah.

Over the low wall went the boys into the yard beside the great warehouse. Brown forms were coming after them. At a distance a police whistle shrilled insistently.

They had a vision of a high-powered car in the road, as they climbed the garden wall, and knew who it had brought. Now they were in the yard amid the empty vans. In front of them was the great motor-lorry.

Two brown-skinned demons came at Billy's back. He felt cord tighten chokingly. He struggled and gasped. Sammy swung round. The man with the cord took a sock on the temple that dropped him unconscious. His mate tried to fight, flashing a long knife, but Sammy's big left paw closed on his fragile arm and snapped it like a stick. He reeled, screaming, backwards.

But numbers must tell. The shooting in the house had ceased. Somebody—they knew not whom—had made a breakaway, and they heard feet tearing down the street.

The police whistle was still shrilling. The boys had little vignettes of happenings thrust before their vision. They saw a policeman coming running. They saw two brown skins jump on him from the darkness and saw him clubbed to the pavement.

Now they themselves were in desperate plight, and it was Billy who leapt to the driving-seat of the lorry, for they could not hope to fight their way from the yard.

Sammy was up beside him. The starting motor swung, and the great ninety-horse engine spluttered into life. It was still warm, for the lorry had only been docked about an hour earlier.

The leviathan began to move. It gathered speed, and it hit the flimsy gates of the yard. They creaked and gave under the impact.

Kilshahs took running jumps at the lorry. One chung and stabbed at Billy, and Billy knocked him off like a fly. They were in the street.

The car swung round, fast and powerful. The lorry thundered on, and the car came at its heels. Up the street, skulking in a corner, panting for breath, his hat gone, a man watched. He had just escaped from that house of death. His name was Trant.

So the boys had watched him! He knew it . . . but . . . they did not know he knew it. Trant suddenly realised that and resolved to turn it to account.

Meanwhile, driving hard, Billy kept his big machine in the middle of the narrow street. He knew he would not get far. People were moving, despite the lateness of the hour, and police whistles were going all over the place.

He slammed up a narrow street between two tall warehouse buildings, giving the great engine all it knew. The car tried to pass and he pulled over. It hung to his tail.

He reached a crossing, and he slammed on foot and hand brakes with all his power—and they were servo brakes into the bargain.

The lorry stopped as though it had hit a hillside, and the car, its driver unprepared for such a happening, crashed headlong into its rear.

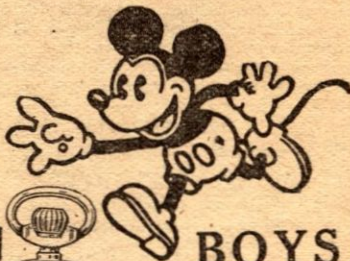
Out of the cab jumped Billy, and Sammy scuttled away down the right cross street, running for all they were worth. The car was wrecked beyond repair. None of its occupants was injured, but all were so dazed and staggered by the shock of the impact that, for a moment or two they could do nothing.

And so . . . the thing faded out.

The police squad got into the house at last, after breaking all its windows and letting out the smoke.

(Continued on next page.)

A CHUCKLE A MINUTE!



6/11

BOYS!

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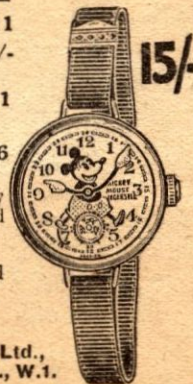
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THE FOOTBALL CARNER

(Continued from previous page.)

They found only one person in it. He was Pete, down against the passage wall, dead, with a cord bitten deep in his throat.

Nothing else did they find save the smashed car at the rear of the practically undamaged lorry. The car's ownership was soon established. It had been stolen from a public car park, and it offered no clue to the identity of the authors of the outrage.

And from that night sprang a strange football match.

Sons of Nemo.

THE newspapers featured it. A new team of "crusading" players wanted odd matches with the Big League. And they challenged the Rovers of Branston for their first match.

They called themselves The Sons of Nemo—the children of nobody.

Mostly they were foreigners—Frenchmen, Spaniards, Belgians, Austrians. But there was money behind them, beyond all doubt. In fact, there were millions of money behind them—untold millions, millions which no one man could ever spend, . . . the millions of the Rajah of Kilshahnistan.

But the Rajah of Kilshahnistan remained very much in the background of this team's organisation. Ali Khat attended to it, through the medium of an unscrupulous English solicitor, who, in turn, acted through two other and separate channels.

Naturally, with all the publicity it received, the scheme attracted vast attention, and on the Wednesday when the Rovers came on to the field, having travelled to London overnight, the old ground was packed with forty thousand people—its full complement.

The Rajah's agents had hunted up men who could kick a ball and whose consciences were dead. The centre-half was a giant of a brute. He had played football in Cayenne among the convicts there, and had recently been pardoned. His name was Brond. The rest of this precious team was on something the same basis. All were criminals first and footballers afterwards.

The Rovers of Branston did not know what they were in for when they came out to the field on that bright hard afternoon.

Mr. Trant was there. He was carrying on as usual, and the boys were willing to let him do so, while they watched him.

However, Gunson and Brond were tossing for choice of ends. Brond won, and the crowd stirred with excitement.

The Sons of Nemo played in all black, and they were a grim and forbidding-looking lot as they took their places on the line. The referee looked a bit anxious as he blew his whistle. He was a frail little man, who officiated in good class soccer without being one of the League referees. In fact, this game was outside the control of the League, though the F.A. would probably have had something to say about it had they been consulted. But they were not consulted.

Off! Away to the right, with Andrews wriggling along the line. A rush—a mass of blackness hurtling through the air, and Andrews over the line.

Whistle for heavy and dangerous charging while Andrews was picked up.

Free kick to the Rovers, taken by Murch, the right half. Into the goalmouth it went, and Sammy was after it.

Brond was there. His knee came up as Sammy rushed. Sammy got that knee in his stomach and went down in agony.

Penalty!

The crowd began to yell at the Sons of Nemo, but for all that, could not restrain its excitement.

Tom Holloway took the penalty, and he crashed it past the lean keeper, who had no chance.

From the kick off the blackshirts went away, grim and reckless of themselves and everybody else. Ball booted down the middle. Tom Holloway ready to clear. Something hit him—a head at his chest, and he went down like a skittle.

Ball in the middle. Billy caught it, but the whistle had gone for a free kick.

Fourteen stone of murderous centre-forward rushed Billy as he stood still and flattened him into the back of the net. Nothing like it had ever been seen anywhere. Three of the crowd jumped the fence. The game was stopped, and Tom Holloway and Gunson went to the barriers.

This looked like a free fight. The crowd should stay where it was. They, the Rovers, were going to show this lot how football ought to be played. And if they persisted in these foul tactics—well . . . they might get more than they bargained for.

The crowd cheered this. They settled down to watch something which threatened to be a cross between a football match, a bullfight and a pitched battle.

The Sons of Nemo took a packet of their medicine, and they took it all in one dose. When one of them had the ball he was simply crashed to the turf by heavy shoulder charges.

The left back of the Sons of Nemo was sandwiched by Andrews and Varney, and led to the touch-line in a daze. The free kick was cleared. Sammy ploughed through. Brond came up against him. The two giants fought shoulder to shoulder for the ball, Brond trying for Sammy's feet under the pretence of trying for the ball. Sammy won. He knocked Brond yards and then slammed home a terrific shot which the goalkeeper, instead of trying to save, ducked.

Rovers two up, and going stronger than ever.

Half-time came. The Rovers showed some hard knocks, but hard men can take hard knocks and grin.

Off once more, murderous and reckless, and the Sons of Nemo were pressed back. Sammy floored Brond systematically, time after time, but could not shake the ruffian's determination. Centre-forward of the Sons of Nemo hung around, his hands drawn up his shirt sleeves. He seemed afraid to run. Nobody yet knew why. He kept his hands hidden while wags in the crowd advised him to take a walk to warm himself.

A period of fierce and dreadful pressure on the goal of the Sons of Nemo was cleared by a huge kick, and their forwards and halves surged down the field like a black avalanche.

Tom Holloway and Taffley were swept aside. The ball came slicing in along the ground, bound for a corner of the Rovers' net.

Billy had anticipated the shot, and, seeing it coming, he dived for it and got his hands on the ball, three inches outside the line. They were at him.

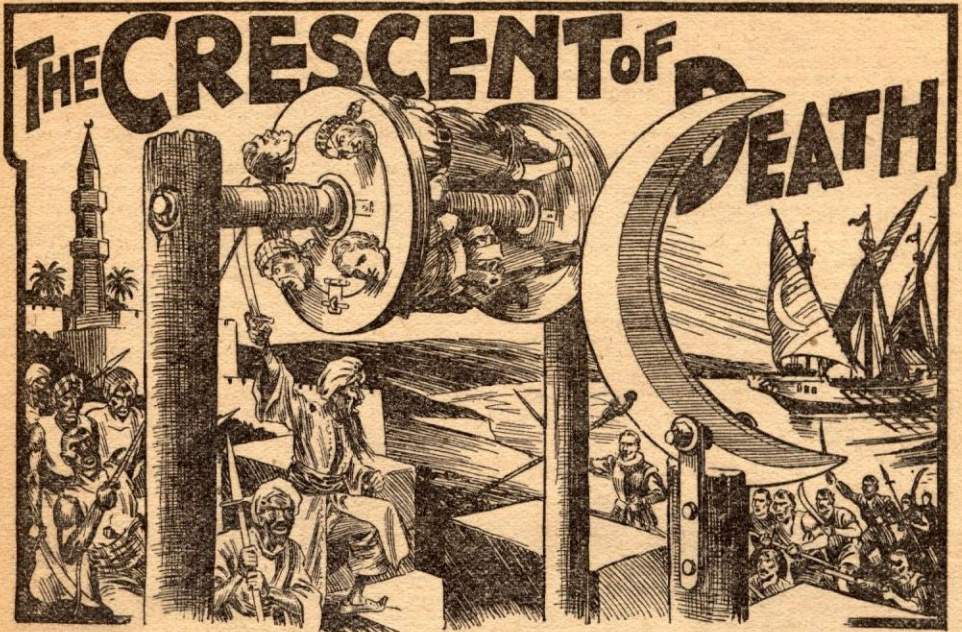
He had a confused vision of men tearing down, apparently from on high, upon him. He turned his head. In all the medley of prone faces and forms—beyond which the whistle shrilled unheeded—he saw a dark and saturnine face close to his own, the face of the centre-forward whose hands had been hidden.

But now his right hand was visible, and in its grimed fingers, clutched tightly, an inch or two from Billy's head, was a short, broad-bladed knife!

Death on the Footer Field! Can Billy avert this terrible danger? Look out for startling developments in next week's smashing chapters.

THE CORSAIR RAIDERS

Another Gripping
Old-time Exploit.



Chamber of Golden Pillars.

NASIR-ED-DIN, the all-powerful Corsair Chief, Basha of Terek-el-Bey, stood on the waterfront in the sunset, gazing out across the golden sea. "By the beard of the Prophet!" he exclaimed. "They come apace. The infidel dogs are conquered, praise be to Allah!"

The great man was surrounded by a group of his richly attired officers, attendants, and personal guard. From the squat, grim-looking fortress near by, men were pouring in hundreds. Great preparations were afoot.

For the galley which was approaching—an enormous vessel, double-masted, with full fifty-four great oars—was the personal galley of Murad Bey, Caliph of Barbary. She was gaily decked out and at the poop was a magnificent canopy of red damask, with the gold embroidery shimmering in the evening sunshine. She was a magnificent vessel—a Monarch of the seas.

Escorting her were two smaller ships—gallioti of unmistakable character.

"See! My own gallioti—recaptured from the infidel scum who call themselves the Raiders," went on Nasir-ed-Din, in the same gloating voice. "'Tis clear there has been a battle, and the Caliph, the Great One, has triumphed."

"Is it not like enough, good master, that the Illustrious Caliph will demand to know why your gallioti were in the hands of the infidels?" asked one of the Basha's officers. "'Twill be well to be ready for such questions."

A cloud passed over the Basha's face.

"Ay, truly said," he grunted. "But I am prepared."

Dusk had fallen before the little fleet came to

anchor in the bay. The Caliph stepped ashore, an impressive, richly robed figure, surrounded by a crowd of gorgeously robed officers and attendants. From the fort to the shore were lines of soldiers carrying flaring torches, and at the sea edge, Nasir-ed-Din was waiting. He salaamed low as the Caliph stood before him.

"Allah be praised," said the Basha. "Thou art welcome, great lord, and thrice welcome. For is not the Caliph great, and more than great?"

"Enough!" said the Caliph, and his voice was curt. "I am in no mood for ceremony. There is business between us, Nasir-ed-Din, which demands immediate attention."

He waved his hand significantly towards the two gallioti. Nasir-ed-Din, glancing round, saw the Corsair boatswains on the vessels cruelly lashing the chained infidel slaves.

"Be not impatient, O Great One," pleaded the Basha. "I can explain——"

"Then explain when we are alone," interrupted the Caliph, with an imperious wave of his hand. "Away!"

Nasir-ed-Din, humbled by this treatment, gave rapid orders. His attendants sprang to attention, and the entire procession moved towards the fortress.

Thus they reached its grim walls, passed within an arched opening, and went through paved corridors. Finally, great doors were flung open, and they entered a magnificent chamber, rich and oriental in design, with golden pillars on all sides.

"Dismiss thy attendants," commanded the Caliph.

Most of his own bodyguard had fallen away before he had entered the Chamber of Golden Pillars. He was now surrounded only by three men, and at the

order, Nasir-ed-Din instructed his own officers and attendants to withdraw.

"So!" said the Caliph grimly. "Secure the door!"

One of his attendants shot the heavy bolts; and Nasir-ed-Din began to feel strange qualms.

"Your sword, my Basha," said the illustrious visitor.

"By Allah, you would not deprive me——"

"Your sword!" thundered the Caliph.

Nasir-ed-Din surrendered his richly jewelled scimitar. As he did so he noted, to his dismay, that the Caliph's attendants drew close about him, hemming him in.

"'Twas neatly done, Tim!" exclaimed the Caliph, in a changed voice—and speaking English. "We have him alone."

Nasir-ed-Din started back, his brown face becoming an almost sickly green.

"Infidels!" he gasped. "By Allah's light! What treachery is this?"

With a sudden sweep of his hand, the supposed Caliph swept off his turban and flowing headgear. He retained the false beard, but peered closely forward into the Basha's own stricken face.

"See!" whispered the voice of Val Tregellis, leader of the Corsair Raiders. "Knowest thou me now, thou father of dirt?"

"The infidel, Tregellis!" breathed the other.

"Ay, and we have you in a trap, Nasir-ed-Din!" said the sturdy youngster. "'Twas my men who surprised the Caliph and seized his great galley. Then, daring all, we came on—for 'tis our intention to seize this fortress, and to hold it as our own."

"Thou art truly mad!" said the Basha. "For you and your men are caught like rats in a trap. I have but to shout——"

"Shout with all the strength of thy lungs!" interrupted Val, with a laugh. "Look you here, good Nasir!"

He strode to the windows, and flung the heavy curtains aside. Nasir-ed-Din followed him and stared out aghast.

Hundreds of half-clothed men, their rippling muscles showing in the light from the overhead torches, were advancing upon the fortress. They were coming from all directions—and Nasir-ed-Din recognised, in a flash, that they were white men. Ex-slaves! Val Tregellis' valiant Corsair Raiders!

"There are hundreds!" said Val. "No sooner had we left the water-front than they came ashore from the ships. If thou art reluctant to obey my orders, then this great force will attack the fortress."

The Corsair Chief was staggered by this revelation; yet, at the same time, a cunning, evil light, glinted in his wicked eyes.

"What wouldst thou have me do?" he muttered.

"Go forth and give orders that the fortress is to be surrendered," replied Val Tregellis promptly. "I desire not bloodshed."

"Never!" vowed the Basha.

Val only smiled, as did his attendants—who were none other than his faithful comrades, Tyburn Tim, Leatherface, and Paddy O'Button. Val placed a telescope in Nasir-ed-Din's hands, and bade him look upon the Caliph's galley.

Nasir-ed-Din did so; and he caught his breath in with a sharp hiss. For through the instrument the startled man saw something which turned his blood to water. The Caliph—the Illustrious One—the mightiest man in all Barbary—was bound hand and foot to the cross-trees of the mast of his own galley. Below him, on the deck, a number of Corsair Raiders were ready with bows and arrows.

"Art thou still obstinate?" asked Val mockingly.

"If thou wilt not surrender the fortress a signal from me will be sufficient for my men to execute the Caliph—as he deserves. But if thou art reasonable his life will be spared—ay, and thine, too."

The Wheel of Death.

FOR some moments Nasir-ed-Din did not speak. The rage within him was great; but he was cunning-enough to conceal it.

"So be it!" he muttered, at length.

His mind worked like lightning. If he could turn the tables on Val Tregellis now—before it was too late—he would earn the Caliph's eternal gratitude. And a cunning, evil idea came to him.

"Let there be no treachery!" warned Val, as Nasir-ed-Din walked slowly towards the great doors.

"Am I not alone?" retorted the Basha bitterly. "I go to obey thy orders."

Just before he reached the locked door, however, he gave his hand a sudden loud clap, and shouted one thunderous word.

"Sink me!" roared Tyburn Tim, his iron hook stretching forth to grasp the Basha. "What's this now? What snakish trickery?"

He broke off, his jaw dropping, for at that moment every one of the golden pillars swung round, as though by magic, revealing dark openings. From the openings sprang gigantic Nubians, naked, except for loin cloths, who swung clinking metal-mesh nets.

Val was struggling in the grip of one of these nets, and his movements were hampered; it was the same with Paddy O'Button and Tyburn Tim and Leatherface. The Nubians, ebony-skinned giants seven feet tall, hurled themselves upon their victims, and held them prisoners.

"Now we will see who is the master!" exclaimed the Corsair Chief. "Ye came here, ye of all, and ye shall be used as you would have used me! Away with them to the roof!" he added, addressing the Nubian slaves.

Two of the Nubians sprang to one of the pillars; they heaved, and a big section of the stone wall, beyond, opened out, revealing steps leading upwards.

Val and his faithful friends were carried up the stairs at lightning speed; they arrived, soon, on the flat roof of the fortress, the Corsair Chief and his men taking care that their movements were not seen from the ground.

Lying on the flat roof was a great, crudely made wooden wheel. It was all of twenty feet in diameter—and was, in fact, a double wheel, with duplicate spokes and two rims—one rim about four feet from the other. In this rim, at intervals, there were holes.

Val Tregellis found his head thrust through the hole of one rim—and his feet were pushed into the corresponding hole of the other rim. He was wedged there, so that it was impossible for him to escape, no matter how hard he struggled. Tyburn Tim and the others were treated in exactly the same way.

"Faith, I little thought the Corsairs would take us this time, Tim," said Val. "'Tis my fault, good comrades. I was over-eager to make the triumph complete."

"Arrah, now, be aisy with your tongue, Cap'n!" growled Paddy. "Like enough we'll have the best of the spalpeens before the adventure's over."

Some scores of the Corsairs had reached the roof now, and were working feverishly. They were pulling on great ropes, and a curious wheel was being hoisted upwards. It rested on a spindle which, in itself, was driven into the top of an enormous pole—a tree-trunk. This pole, a hundred feet in length, was being placed upright.

Shouts from below told the prisoners that their plight had been seen by their comrades. The

advancing Corsair Raiders, still awaiting the signal from their leader, were aghast. They knew not what to do.

At last, the pole was upright, and firmly secured. And there, at its top, swung the wheel, with its human freight.

Nasir-ed-Din, perspiration streaming from him, was still giving orders. More of his men pulled on other heavy ropes—ropes which were wound round a kind of inner boss of the wheel. The wheel itself started revolving, and as the ropes were pulled, the movement grew quicker and quicker—until, finally, the wheel was spinning round like a top.

"Praise be to Allah!" shouted Nasir-ed-Din. "All is ready! Men—move forward the Death Crescent!"

There was another structure up there, on the roof—a solid wooden framework, which held, in its upper part, a representation of the Corsair Crescent. It was of metal, with its rounded edge as keen as that of a razor—and the whole thing was being moved slowly forward.

Val Tregellis, in spite of the fact that he was spinning round, knew exactly what the danger was. The razor-edged crescent was on a level with the wheel—and it was being pushed forward until the blade thrust itself *within* the two revolving rims.

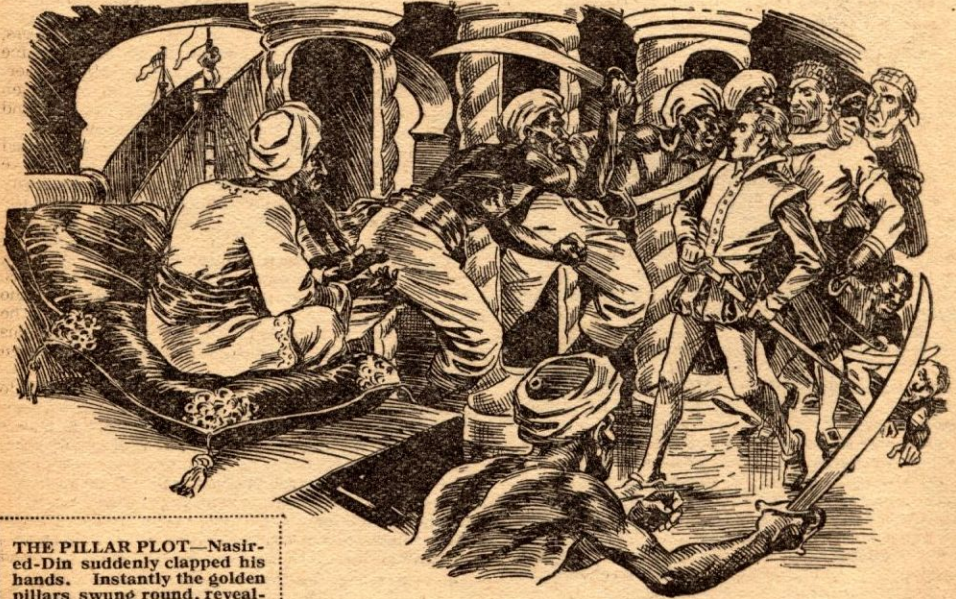
some danger from arrows. But he had to take this chance.

"Let any man seek to kill me, and it will be the death of the infidel Tregellis, and his friends!" he thundered. "Hear me out, and their lives shall be spared."

It was enough; Val's sturdy comrades listened. "Ye can see the death which awaits the prisoners!" continued the Basha, pointing. "Return to your ships, after throwing down your weapons, and the life of your leader will be spared. But press forward to the attack, and he will die before your eyes. There is one other thing. Ye must release the Caliph, the Illustrious One, and bring him here. Ye have but a minute to decide."

ABOARD the great galley, guarded by only a handful of men, Sir William Tregellis was in an agony of suspense. Val's father had desired to take part in the daring deception; but Val had urged him to remain aboard. With his naked eye, Sir William had seen the dread peril of Val and his comrades, and he could think of no way of helping them.

"May Heaven help the boy," he muttered, his face pale and bedewed with cold sweat. "Even if the men retreat, it will make no difference. Nasir-ed-



THE PILLAR PLOT—Nasir-ed-Din suddenly clapped his hands. Instantly the golden pillars swung round, revealing dark openings, from which leapt giant Nubians.

In a word, the prisoners, whirling round, would be sliced, by degrees, clean in two when that hideous knife drew near enough!

The Fight for the Fort.

NASIR-ED-DIN, his eyes burning, strode boldly to the edge of the flat roof, where, in the flickering glare from the torches, he stood in full view of the raiders below.

"Hold!" shouted the Basha, in a great voice.

Yells of execration answered him; and he was in

Din will have the life of my son! This is a night of tragedy, indeed!"

And it was to have been the night of the Corsair Raiders' greatest triumph! Had all gone well, they would by now have been in possession of the fortress.

"By the light of Heaven!" shouted Sir William suddenly.

At the last moment an idea had come to him. It was desperate—for, by his own hand, he might kill his own son.

"The guns—the guns!" shouted Sir William, dashing from the poop, and running along the plank gangway which ran from one end of the galley to the other. He reached the fore-deck, where the great guns were mounted.

"What do ye propose, good master?" asked one of the men, who ran with him.

"I'm a fool to have forgot!" panted Sir William. "Let one of the guns be fired—and aimed so that the ball shall strike the roof."

"And if it should hit the spinning wheel, master?" asked the ex-slave, staring in horror.

Val's father did not answer him. He knew something of guns, and he was getting to work himself. These crude weapons, he knew, were charged with heavy cannon-balls. Perhaps the range was too great . . .

"Ready!" he cried.

Craaaaash-BOOM! The explosion was terrific; clouds of white smoke, like solid cotton wool, hung in the air. The cannon-ball whistled forward and crashed through the fortress wall, just under the roof parapet.

Nasir-ed-Din, who was standing on the roof, gritted his teeth savagely as he felt the shock.

"Forward with the Death Crescent!" he thundered.

There came an answering shout from the Corsairs; they heaved and wrenched at the travelling cradle; the Death Crescent moved forward with awful speed. At the same moment, other Corsairs hauled on the ropes, spinning the great wheel rapidly.

Val closed his eyes, and sent up a prayer. For as the wheel came round, he saw that the keen-edged blade was not a foot away. . . . Round again, and this time the blade was no more than six inches away. The wheels spun again . . .

Boom—craaaaash! In that moment, betwixt life and death, another cannon roared. Providence directed the great ball, which struck the base of the upright post—the tree-trunk. It was shattered to a thousand splintering fragments, and the whole post, carrying the wheel at its top, went sagging over. In its fall, it caught scores of the fleeing Corsairs, crushing them, mangling them to death, and thus the shock of the crash was lessened. Val Tregellis and his comrades escaped with nothing worse than a shaking.

As the wheel struck, its two rims came apart, falling to fragments. Val picked himself up amid the wreckage, scratched and bruised, but, to his astonishment, otherwise unhurt. He saw Tyburn Tim struggling up, too—and Paddy O'Button and Leather-face.

"Split my windpipe!" yelled Tyburn Tim, waving his iron hook. "Where's the enemy? Comrades, the day is ours!"

Tumultuous shouts came from the raiders below. All those ex-slaves had seen what had happened, and they swept forward to victory—with a grim, inexorable strength. Nothing hindered them.

When, at last, the fortress was taken, Val Tregellis gazed with pride in his men.

"We have prisoners by the hundred!" he exclaimed. "Ay, and these Corsairs shall be chained to the oars of our galleys, and thus taste their own medicine."

Nasir-ed-Din, it was discovered, had fled. In the confusion, he had got away; furthermore, he had managed to get a band of his own men together—fugitives all—and they had made a desperate raid upon the galley. Sir William had been overwhelmed, and although he had preserved his own life, and the lives of his men, the Caliph had been cut free.

He, Nasir-ed-Din, and a handful of others had managed to escape to sea in a small galleasse—and there could be no doubt that the mighty Caliph would soon get galleys and men and make a determined attack.

Bullseye Bailey, the no-gun sheriff, is here next week in a ripping Wild West yarn. Look for the title, "Bullseye's Ghost."

BONFIRE PLOTTERS, BEWARE!

(Continued from page 8.)

Half-an-hour later a strange procession came into view, composed of a long line of weird figures in Guy Fawkes masks, carrying flaming torches and yelling like dervishes.

At the head of the fery procession was a guy stuck at the top of a pole. It was dressed in a grotesque manner, and was seen to be wriggling and writhing.

"Comrades, fetch the other conspirators, and hoist them aloft!" commanded a stern voice.

The procession, bearing torches and four long poles, marched across the quadrangle to the coal-hole. After some delay, four weird and fearful forms were dragged up and affixed to the four poles. They were Cadman & Co., dressed up as guys, and howls of mirth arose from the onlookers at their comical appearance!

The five human guys—Jem Hawke, of course, was the other—were carried high aloft on the poles, amidst the flare of the torches and the incessant exploding of fireworks.

In the midst of the celebrations, the tall form of Dr. Holroyd came striding across, followed by Herr Krammer and a number of prefects.

"Bless my soul!" cried the Head, staring in amazement at the guys on the poles. "Boys! What is the meaning of this? Who have you got on those poles?"

"Conspirators, sir!" explained Johnny Gee. "Their names are Cadman, Snell, Meeke, and Lucas, and a villain from outside named Hawke, a dangerous character. They confess to having blown up Herr Krammer last night. Here is the plan used by the conspirators—a plan of our school, showing the way to Herr Krammer's bedroom."

Dr. Holroyd and Herr Krammer gazed in amazement at the bedraggled document handed out by Johnny Gee. Then their glance turned angrily upwards.

"Cadman!" thundered the Head. "This diagram is your work! Then you conspired with these others, to have that dastardly outrage perpetrated on Herr Krammer last night!"

"Groogh! Ow! Ye-es!" came a wild voice from the top of the pole. "Groogh! I'm sorry, sir! Ow! It was only a j-j-j-joke—"

"Release them, boys!" said Dr. Holroyd. "I will—ahem!—deal with the matter!"

The five guys were lowered from the poles, and they crawled in sorry procession after Dr. Holroyd and Herr Krammer.

The Firework Day celebrations went on, as merrily as ever, the Earlswood guy being burned, amidst loud cheers. Cadman & Co., meanwhile, had received a record licking from Dr. Holroyd, while Jem Hawke was thrown out neck and crop by the juniors.

Get ready to welcome Jimmy Brent, the dress-clothes crook, next week in a ripping yarn entitled "Stolen—By James!"

BOYS, LOOK!

Build an electric motor in 5 minutes. The most educational toy of the decade. Has speed of 2,000 r.p.m. Will run from single dry cell. **FULL KIT OF PARTS** and simple instructions for assembly, 1/- (postage 2d.), crossed P.O.'s only **POWELL BROS., 33, Water St., Manchester.**

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THE ROCKET ROBBERS

(Continued from page 17.)

House to themselves, and the detective was able to enter wholeheartedly into a thorough search.

"The emeralds must be here somewhere, Chick," he declared, frowning. "We have taken on a big job—"

"The lights, Boss!" yelled Chick suddenly.

All the lights had failed, and the Monocled Man-hunter and his assistant were plunged into stygian darkness. Like a flash, Falcon Swift swung round towards the door, one hand gripping his automatic.

He saw the great door swinging open—at least, he saw a patch of semi-darkness widening. His finger pressed on the button of his electric torch, and for one instant a bright beam of light cut through the blackness.

"Look!" shouted Chick.

They both saw four nimble, animal-like figures—Indian types, wearing nothing but loin cloths; skinny, hideous, with eyes gleaming murderously. Then the vision passed—for something knocked the torch out of Falcon Swift's hand.

Hands gripped him, and Chick. They both struggled desperately—and met with a shock.

For the bodies of their attackers were greased, so that they could obtain no hold. The Brown Men slithered through their fingers like eels. . . . Something crashed upon Falcon Swift's head, and he staggered. The next moment he was down, and the greased attackers were upon him, holding him to the floor.

Fountain of Death.

STOUT cords were tied round Falcon Swift and his young assistant. With swift, pattering footsteps, the Brown Men carried their captives out into the darkness of the frosty November night. They removed all traces of the struggle. The vault-like door was closed and locked.

Then, picking up their burdens, the Brown Men went stealing across the park, like evil shadows. They penetrated, at length, a clump of dense trees, where the darkness was absolute.

A patch of darkness moved, and came forward. It proved to be Prince Ishti.

"You have succeeded?" he asked in his own tongue.

"Master, they are here!" whispered one of the Brown Men.

At the same time, he handed Prince Ishti the key of the Treasure House. The Prince laughed softly, and tossed it into the trees.

"Good!" he murmured. "My excellent host will imagine that these fools have locked themselves in the Treasure House; he has no second key. It will be many hours before the Treasure House can be opened, and then . . ."

He bent low over Falcon Swift, and he saw the detective's eyes open.

"You are clever—too clever, I fear, Mr. Swift," gritted the Prince mockingly. "I can take no chances. You must die."

"Shall I waste my breath if I ask you to spare the life of my assistant?" asked the Sporting Sleuth.

"He is dangerous, too—so you must both die," retorted the Prince, in his soft, silky voice. "Do you think I am going to be cheated by you?" he went on, suddenly revealing a fierce emotion. "All my life I have waited to obtain the Eyes of Mahnee! Now, at last, they are mine. They belonged to my ancestors—to my family. Why should this fool keep them locked in his cheap house of steel?"

He turned to his slaves.

"Strike!" he commanded. "Strike swiftly—and deal death at the first plunge."

Two of the Brown Men raised long, wicked-looking

daggers. . . . Then, like magic, the thicket sprang into a blaze of coloured illumination.

"A thousand curses!" snarled Prince Ishti, starting back. "Hold! Wait, fools!"

He was utterly startled—and angry with himself for not having foreseen this possibility. All the clumps of trees in the park were festooned, in their upper branches, with electric fairy lamps! And at the touch of a master switch from the mansion, the illuminations had been turned on. There were many people strolling about in the grounds—and Prince Ishti and his myrmidons, far from being hidden in blackness, were now exposed in that coloured glow.

"Away—away!" panted the Prince in savage fear. "Carry them out of the park. Then kill them."

He swiftly retreated—plunging out of the trees, so that if he should be seen, no suspicions would be aroused in the minds of the other guests. This unexpected development had given him a shock.

The Brown Men lifted the prisoners, but they knew not which way to escape. They ran at random, and from somewhere directly ahead of them came a tumultuous cheer. Scores of nimble figures, running hard, loomed into view.

The Orphanage boys, revelling in their freedom—dashing across the park!

The Brown Men swerved, and almost before they knew what they were doing, they found themselves in amongst the skeleton-like framework, upon which the fireworks were arranged for the set pieces.

Abruptly, with a terrific report, a maroon went soaring into the sky, to explode with an ear-splitting detonation.

In the single flash of light, the Brown Men saw that there were guests on every hand. There was no escape—at least, not whilst they were burdened with their captives. And in that moment they thought only of their own skins.

Almost at their feet they found a deep gully—a kind of pit, which had been dug in the turf. Falcon Swift's captors tumbled him into the pit, and the other Brown Men followed their example. Chick Conway followed; then, like evil shadows, the thugs ran off into the darkness.

Falcon Swift silently thanked Lord Orme for the fairy illuminations—for the sudden switching on of those lights had saved two lives.

The great firework display was now in full swing. Flights of rockets were going up to the cheers of the Orphanage boys, and the more subdued clapping of the older guests. Roman candles were sending their coloured stars into the sky, to the accompaniment of ear-splitting explosions. Then came the showing of an enormous set piece—a wonderful scene representing a battle at sea.

It was, indeed, a splendid firework display, and the evening was perfect for the purpose; for there was but a slight wind, and the air was crystal clear.

It was not until some time had elapsed that Falcon Swift realised, with a horrified shock, the dreadful nature of the trap into which he and Chick had been plunged. It was the light from the exploding rockets, far overhead, which told him the truth.

His blood ran cold and his skin tingled. Towering above that long pit was a gaunt structure—a great firework, known as a "waterfall." At the top of the framework there were numbers of long cylinders, all joined together by fuses. At the touching of the end fuse, the whole thing would be set into action—and immense, white-hot sparks would pour down, with a waterfall effect, to the ground.

The pit had been dug to catch the living fire—and Falcon Swift and Chick Conway were in that pit! The sparks would smother them, blind them. They would be burned alive before hundreds of spectators!

"Heavens!" muttered Falcon Swift, under his gag. "I hope to Heaven Chick does not realise the position."

With almost superhuman strength he strained at his bonds. His agony was excruciating; the cords cut deeply into his skin, drawing blood.

Hissssssss-h! As the last sparks of a great flight of rockets faded away, a shadowy figure approached the "waterfall." A light glowed for a moment, then the waterfall itself sprang into life. At the farther end, not three yards from Falcon Swift, the glaring, white sparks commenced falling in an intensely thick molten shower. They fell densely, glowing, hissing, spluttering into the damp pit.

The Firework Plot.

SNAP-SNAP! If Falcon Swift had revealed amazing strength before, he now displayed the might of a Goliath. As the shower fell in searing masses upon him, the Sporting Sleuth burst the last of his bonds.

He seized Chick Conway, dragged him up, and with one agile leap, he was free of the pit.

Shouts of horror arose. They had been seen. The men who were manipulating the fireworks came rushing up. Falcon Swift's clothing was a-fire, but he scarcely knew it.

"Quick—this way, sir!" panted one of the men in great alarm.

"Take the boy!" said Falcon Swift, who had just forced the gag from his mouth.

Chick was dragged back by the men—in the full glare of the great waterfall. Falcon Swift himself, knowing that his life still depended upon swift action, ran like a hare. He had remembered that not fifty yards away there was a great ornamental pond. He ran—a flaming torch.

As the fire reached his skin, he plunged into the icy water. He was scorched badly in one or two places; but, owing to his marvellous presence of mind, he had escaped serious injury.

"Great Heaven!" exclaimed Lord Orme, who was amongst his guests, with Prince Ishti by his side. "What has happened? Surely that man was Mr. Swift?"

"I believe so," said the Prince evenly.

He showed no sign of the fierce rage which burned within him. Falcon Swift was alive—saved! He would talk! It was time to go.

"See!" said the Prince, pointing. "There are my own rockets, Lord Orme. You will like them."

Lord Orme gazed upwards at the bursting display of marvellous rockets, and Prince Ishti quietly slipped away.

Falcon Swift had seen the rockets, too.

There were six of them in the one flight, and after the many colours had spent themselves, it could be seen that gleaming stars were hovering in the sky—held up there by specially constructed parachutes, which had opened out when the rockets had burst. There were four blood-red stars, and two green stars.

"Boss!" panted Chick, who had been freed, and who now came staggering up. "Are you hurt? You were on fire—"

"Never mind!" rapped out the Monocled Manhunter. He pointed to the sky. "Do you see?"

"They're only rockets!" said Chick, staring.

"Don't you understand, laddie?" said the Sporting Sleuth, as he gritted his teeth. "Look at the two green stars—floating away on the wind! They are the Prince's rockets."

"But—but—"

"Don't you remember that those rockets were in the Treasure House all night?" went on Falcon Swift. "And there go the stars, floating away—out of Orme Park! The emeralds are up there, laddie."

Then Chick Conway understood—and he, like Falcon Swift, was staggered by the ingenuity of this ruse.

"Come!" exclaimed Falcon Swift, forgetting his burns and his tattered raiment.

To Lord Orme's amazement, and to the bewilderment of the other guests, Falcon Swift and Chick went racing across the park. They reached the detective's Hispano-Suiza, which was still parked near the drive. Falcon Swift leapt behind the wheel, and stubbed the engine to life. Then he sent the great car careering across the open park.

"Watch the green stars, Chick!" ordered Falcon Swift. "The others don't matter."

As they went tearing along, bumping and swaying, the stars dropped lower and lower. They came to the ground a few moments before Falcon Swift and Chick arrived on the spot. And from the surrounding darkness figures dashed forward—the Brown Men.

Falcon Swift leapt from the driving-seat; he dashed back, and he was the first to pick up the little parachutes.

Then the thugs were upon him, fighting with knives, their greasy bodies impossible to hold.

This time Falcon Swift was prepared, however. He used his fists as he alone knew how.

Thud—crash—thud! The thugs were unaccustomed to such fighting as this. One after the other they went down, knocked clean out. There was no finer boxer in the world than Falcon Swift, and during those tense moments he thoroughly enjoyed himself.

A few moments later other cars came racing up, and one of them contained Lord Orme. Falcon Swift's first action was to place the Eyes of Mahnee into his lordship's hands.

"But—but this is amazing, Mr. Swift!" gasped his lordship.

"No, Lord Orme—I was on the right track all the time," said the Monocled Manhunter quietly. "It will come as a shock for you to know that Prince Ishti was the thief. Here are some of his men."

But Prince Ishti had vanished! Later, he heard that the Prince had sneaked like a thief out of England, and he was never likely to return!

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