

DICK TURPIN'S EXCITING XMAS EXPLOITS

# Boys' 2-D Magazine

EVERY FRIDAY



HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN SHORT WAVE WIRELESS SET

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## WORKING MODELS YOU CAN MAKE DURING THE HOLIDAYS!

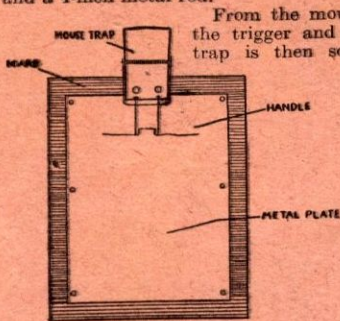
# OUR HANDYMAN'S PRIZE PAGE



The sender of each of the items on this page has been awarded a gold-nibbed fountain pen. If you know of a good gadget, describe it in 100 words and send it to the Editor. Boys' Magazine, 200, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

### A PAPER FILE.

For this you need a mousetrap, a piece of thin board (three-ply will do) about 8in. by 12in., a metal plate an inch or so smaller all round than the wood and a 4-inch metal rod.



From the mousetrap remove the trigger and jawtrap. The trap is then screwed on the three-ply as shown in the diagram, making sure that it is flush with the surface. Screw the metal plate to the board. Bend the steel rod in the centre (this can be done fairly

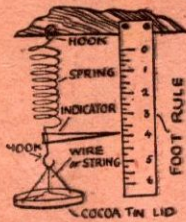
easily in a vice), then solder it to the end of the jaw. (See diagram.) The rod should extend two or three inches each side of the jaw, and will hold the papers more firmly besides serving as a handle.

A hole drilled in the board of the mousetrap can be made for hanging the file on a nail in the wall.

(Fountain pen to VICTOR AMES, East Hall Cottages, Boughton Monchelsea, near Maidenhed, Kent.)

### A SPRING BALANCE.

This simple balance is easily made, and is very useful for weighing small articles. Very little is needed—about 18 inches of No. 26 gauge steel piano wire, a cocoa-tin lid, a foot rule, and a piece of thick deal board. To make the spring (see illustration) bind the piano wire round a broom handle and bend each end into a hook. Screw one hook to the deal board; to the other



fix the cocoa-tin lid with three pieces of wire or string (see diagram). Just above the lower hook of the spring solder a triangular piece of tin to act as an indicator. Sew the footrule beside the spring so that the point of the indicator protrudes over the edge of it.

Make a scratch on the rule to mark the position of the indicator, then put  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. weights in the pan, each time marking the drop of the indicator on the rule.

(Fountain pen to D. LEVY, 5, Deanpark Crescent, Edinburgh, Scotland.)

### A CHEMICAL FLOWER BED.

You will require for this little contraption a small gold-fish bowl and some fine sand, sufficient to cover the bottom of the bowl to a depth of half an inch. From your local drug store you will also want two ounces of Copper Sulphate; a few small pieces of pure Zinc, about the size of postage stamps; enough Alum, broken into small fragments, to fill a tablespoon; a teaspoonful of crystals of Potassium Bichromate; a can of water glass; and a four-inch length of aluminium cut into half-inch pieces.

Scatter the materials indiscriminately over the sand in the bowl. Mix one part of the water glass with three parts of water, and pour the mixture slowly over the chemical-strewn sand.

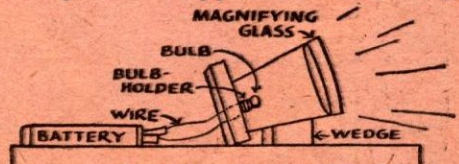


Set the bowl in a place where it will not be shaken or jarred. Soon you will notice queer, coloured growths appear, which in the course of a few days, will sprout into various plant-like shapes.

(Fountain pen to FRANK HILL, 217, Fawcett Road, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants.)

### A SEARCHLIGHT.

In addition to a small ice-cream pot (washed clean) an old torch bulb and lens, a piece of three-ply 2-ins. square, a couple of one-foot lengths of wire flex and a piece of  $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wood about 8ins. by 3ins., you will need to buy a bulb-holder (a famous sixpenny store sells them) and a battery. (The one described in B.M. 606, dated October 14, will do very well.) In the piece of three-ply drill two holes, through



which you can pass the two pieces of flex from the bulb-holder. Screw the holder to the three-ply and insert bulb in holder. Stick the small end of the ice-cream pot to the three-ply so that the bulb and holder are inside; then fit the lens in the wide end. Glue the pot to a small wedge attached to the base, as in diagram. Connect wires from bulb to battery and your searchlight is complete.

(Fountain pen to J. R. BERTRAM, 16, Churchfield Rd., East Acton, W.3.)

*(With which is incorporated "Pals.")*

THE TRICKS AND TRAPS OF  
THE LAUGHING HIGHWAYMAN.

Now for Thrills with the Man in the  
Mask and Ruffles One Snowy Xmas Eve.



**THE SKELETON IN THE COACH—**  
the Beginning of Dick Turpin's Most  
Amazing Xmas Exploit! The Rest  
is One Long Whirl of Shocks and  
Thrills Told in the Grand Long  
Complete Old-time Tale Below.

Vengeance is Mine.

"STAND and deliver!"  
The command cut like a whiplash through  
the snowy darkness; then, more peremptorily:  
"Your money or your life!"  
It was Christmas Eve.

A masked figure had spurred suddenly from a dark  
copse beside the Dover Road, a muscular hand gripped  
the bridle of the nearest horse and so brought the  
whole team to a slithering standstill. The rumpad  
now appeared to the coachman in the light of his  
lanthorn as a menacing form, enveloped in the steam  
from his horses' nostrils. He held a pair of serviceable  
horse pistols aligned on that portion of greatcoat  
directly over the coachman's heart.

So, muttering ineffectual curses the coachee sub-  
sided on his box and let the highwayman get on  
with it.

There were two more of these gentlemen of the  
road beside the one who had brought the coach to a

**OUT EVERY FRIDAY.**

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

stop. One, a tall, dandified figure, betrayed his calling only by the black mask he wore. This worthy called over his shoulder to his nearest companion: "Now for our Christmas dinner, Dick!" and opened the door of the coach. Next moment a startled yell came from Sixteen String Jack's lips as he got a clear view of the lamp-lit interior.

There were only two passengers. One, a dark-haired, handsome youth of some sixteen summers. But it was the other traveller that had caused Jack's pistol to drop from suddenly nerveless fingers to the snow. Clad in the plain, sombre garments of a country leech, he seemed harmless enough; but instead of a face, a fleshless skull grinned out at Sixteen String Jack—a skull on top of which was perched a three-cornered hat. The hands which it rested on its knees, were simply bones!

Indeed, the figure was not that of a man at all—but a grisly skeleton!

Sixteen String Jack did not hear the low chuckle that sounded from the other traveller, as he turned, trembling, to his leader, Dick Turpin.

"S'death, Jack! Ye're white as a sheet!" exclaimed the famous highwayman. "What ails ye, man? Ha' ye seen a ghost?"

"W-w-worse than that, cap'n!" quavered the dandy rumpad, and he moved aside to give his chief a view of the interior.

Even the iron nerves of Dick Turpin gave a jump at that blood-chilling sight; but as quickly he recovered himself, and his gay, infectious laughter rang out o'er the frozen highway.

"Ecod, sirrah!" he said smilingly to the boy in the coach. "'Tis a strange companion ye travel with!"

At sound of Dick's voice; at sight of that portion of his face visible beneath his black mask, the look of annoyance passed swiftly from the youngster's own visage. "Why, 'od rabbit me if it isn't Dick Turpin!" he exclaimed in evident pleasure. "Dost not remember me, Dick?"

"Nay is't—can it be—Gog an' magog! Tis young Jackie Dickon—son of my old friend, George Dickon, the apothecary. But"—his voice taking on a mock serious note—"why do ye use your father's anatomy piece to play tricks on honest highwaymen? Ye young jackanapes, Jack here ha' not got over his shock yet!"

Rather sheepishly Jack Dickon answered:

"'Twas indeed done to scare away an enemy—but not highwaymen. I planned it for Sir Silas Rood."

"Silas Rood, the magistrate. Gad, not a man to play tricks on, methinks!" exclaimed Dick. "Why did ye do it, Jack?"

"'Tis soon told—to one who stands for the King across the Water!"

"The King over the Water!" Dick caught his breath in hissing. A Jacobite, sworn to the cause of the Young Pretender, he knew instantly to whom young Dickon referred.

"Hist! Careful, lad," cautioned the highwayman. "What exactly are ye up to?"

"In a word, Dick, I am smuggling Sir Miles Mandering, who hath been discovered to be a Jacobite, out of the country. A smuggler's vessel anchors off Ettring Cove at midnight, an' I am taking Sir Miles on board."

"But where is Sir Miles," questioned Dick. "I don't see him in the coach."

The other's teeth flashed in a smile.

"Yet he is here, I warrant ye. Ho, Sir Miles! Speak for yourself!"

And to the hightobymen's amazement, a voice seemed to come from the skeleton itself: "Greetings, lads. A merry Christmas to ye!"

Before the highwaymen's puzzled eyes, the skeleton hands came down the broadened sleeves of the sombre jacket and human hands appeared. These had been tucked into the sleeves, grasping the skeleton's hands which finished abruptly at each wrist. And when these same flesh-and-blood hands removed the cravat at the neck of the skull and the highwaymen saw a pair of laughing brown eyes looking out at them, their astonishment was complete.

"'Fraid what our friend, Jackie, ha' told ye, gentlemen, is the truth," said Sir Miles Mandering. "Though, 'pon my soul, I don't yet know what first awakened Sir Silas's suspicions o' me. Gad knows he's always hated me. His estate adjoins mine, an' I know he would gi' much to merge the two, wi' himself as lord o' both! Mayhap, he thinks, the Hannoverian will apportion him my lands, an he can catch me!"

As though the last words were a signal, a number of shadowy figures loomed suddenly out of the whirling snowflakes.

In the lead was a clean-shaven, sinister-looking man, whose greatcoat could not entirely hide his thin, wolfish shoulders. The highwaymen knew this to be Sir Silas Rood—the very man from whom Jack Dickon and Sir Miles Mandering were fleeing.

His satellites were obviously serving him from his estate, one of them a horrible, mis-shapen dwarf.

And so suddenly had these enemies appeared, that young Dickon's subterfuge of hiding Sir Miles was unavailing. For Rood caught sight of the young Jacobite's face ere he could conceal it with the skull.

"S'death! We have the renegade! There he is—in the coach! Seize him—Why, what does this mean, sirrah?" The last words were addressed to Dick Turpin, who had suddenly spurred forward, full in Sir Silas Rood's path.

"Ten thousand pardons—if I interrupt a private feud," answered Dick calmly. "But ye behold in me a poor gentleman of the road who is out this bitter night to earn his Christmas dinner. In other words: Your purse, sirrah, or 'twill go hard wi' ye!"

For a moment Silas Rood was nonplussed at this sudden and unexpected turn of events. His men, too, had halted, irresolute. For Sixteen String Jack and Joe Button, the ex-coachman member of Dick's band, taking their cue from their leader, were menacing them with a pair of pistols.

Young Jack Dickon, quick to seize this unexpected opportunity, yelled stentoriously to the coachman to drive on. Nothing loth, that worthy whipped up his steeds and the coach hurtled away along the snowy highway.

As for Sir Silas, his naturally pale face was livid with chagrin and rage. Yet, such was the iron nerve of the man, he recovered his poise almost instantly.

"Pshaw!" he ground out. "Those fools can wait. They cannot so easily slip through my fingers. As for you, sirrah, here is my purse. Take it—and begone!" And, drawing it from his pocket, he flung it on the snow in front of Dick's feet.

Smiling, Dick Turpin bent to pick up the bulky leather bag—and on the instant Silas acted. With a swift movement he whipped his sword from its scabbard and made a deadly lunge at the stooping highwayman.

But he reckoned without the resource of the laughing highwayman. Dick was ready for that treacherous move. Like lightning he straightened and in the same movement his own sword leapt magically to his hand.

It caught the other's blade in a perfect parry, and a sideways flick set the sharp point against Sir Silas's wrist. That scoundrel dropped his weapon as though it were red-hot.

"Curse you for a cunning knave. I'll be revenged

for this!" he gritted. But the words died in his throat as Dick's own point was laid gently against his breast.

"Ye know I could kill ye, ye treacherous dog," breathed the highwayman. "And perhaps 'twould be better for the world an I did! So do not tempt me over hard, Silas Rood!"

Contemptuously then, Dick speared the purse on the end of his sword and gave a quick signal to Joe and Sixteen String Jack. In obedience, the pair elapped spurs to their horses and, ere the baronet's bodyguard could make a move, had melted into the trees beside the road.

Slowly, with black murder in his heart, Sir Silas Rood recovered his sword from where it had fallen, and raising an arm that dripped blood into the snow, shook his clenched fist in the direction of the vanished Dick Turpin.

"We'll meet again, I swear it!" he almost sobbed. "An when we do..."

room the highwaymen shared at the Half Moon Inn—awaiting the return of his more fortunate comrades with their Christmas dinner.

Suddenly one of the doors of the room was flung open and in marched a number of blue-coated figures. The Bow Street Runners—Dick Turpin & Co.'s deadliest foes! Tom Noddy, their leader, had sworn to bring the whole highwaymen band to Tyburn. But poor Tom had first to catch his men.

This time, however, it looked as though Bootles at least was cornered. At sight of the newcomers the black had made a grab at his blunderbuss, but before he could use the clumsy weapon, he was seized on all sides and his arms pinioned.

"Soho! Ye black rascal. I ha' ye at last!" grated Tom Noddy, triumphantly. "Where's that scoundrel Turpin an' the other two, hey? Answer me, ye imp o' Satan!"

Bootles rolled his eyes and adopted an air of injured innocence.



PIPPED BY A PUD.—Tom Noddy made a grab at the seated figure. The dressing-gown slipped off, to reveal a Christmas pudding and a chair instead of Bootles, the black rumpad.

Thus Dick Turpin succoured a friend and created an implacable enemy. And Sir Silas Rood was perhaps the foremost duellist of his day.

### A "Pudden Head" Trick.

"SNIFF! Sniff!" Bootles, the big black highwayman and the fourth member of Dick Turpin's band, had for once lost his accustomed jollity. And on no less a time than Christmas Eve. Truth was, the usually good-humoured black had but yesterday contracted a severe cold in the head. Now, swathed in a voluminous dressing-gown, he sat with boots and hose removed and his large feet in a steaming mustard bath. A big, red nightcap kept the draughts from his woolly pate.

On the table before him was a huge blunderbuss and a glass of hot toddy.

Thus Bootles the Black kept his lonely vigil in the

"Turpin, did ye say, sah?" he asked brightly. "Now ain't dat a pow'ful funny t'ing. I was jest saying to myself: dis chile mus' go 'long to Lunnun Town an' see if Turpin am dere, when yo' an' dese handsome gemmen came in. Yo! Yo! Yo! 'Scuse me laffin' gemmen, but 'tis indeed pow'ful funny!" "Ye lying rascal!" bellowed the choleric Bow Street chief. "Turpin's whereabouts, being as we've had hinfornation to prove same. Sink an' turn me, I—"

From the direction of the outer door of the inn, there came to Tom Noddy's sharp ears the sudden stamp of feet, cheerful voices, and once a hearty laugh. A laugh familiar enough to Tom, for in truth it had mocked him more than once, when he thought to have Dick in his grasp and the elusive highwayman had proved him sadly mistaken.

Though he had broken off his speech, however, Tom affected not to have heard. Into his cunning

brain had come a plan for nobbling the highwaymen. But first he must lull Bootles into a false sense of security.

"Well, well, my black friend," he said, trying to impart some warmth to his usually grating voice. "'Tis Christmas an' I doubt not ye'll want to go to Lunnon to see Turpin and the rest o' yer pals. Egad, then, an' likewise stap me, ye shall. I've sworn to capture all o' ye, so, one being no manner o' use, I'll wait till I can get ye all together. Gi' ye good-day, Bootles—an' a merry Christmas!"

And frowning away any inclination to ask questions on the part of his men, he led the way from the room. Once outside the main door, however, a startling change came over Tom Noddy. Instead of the kind-hearted man, imbued with Christmas spirit, he was once more the wolfish hunter of men.

"This way, animals," he hissed at his runners. "Methinks I'll ha' Turpin and his rascals in Newgate by the morn!"

He beckoned his men into a side-passage, which ran from the main door in the form of a hectagon. And inside the hectagon was the room in which they had left Bootles. In each side of that hectagon was a separate door communicating with the room. This was for easy egress when danger threatened the occupants. For the Half Moon Inn was built entirely for the convenience of smugglers!

At each of these doors Tom Noddy posted one of his men.

"When I gi' ye the signal, do ye fling open the door an' hold up Turpin and his villains wi' your pistols," Tom ordered. "Methinks they'll finish this Christmas dinner in Newgate gaol!"

Even as Tom finished speaking a noisy party came down the passage from the main entrance to the inn. They were Dick Turpin, Sixteen String Jack, the dandy, Joe Button, the ex-coachman member of the highwayman band, young Jackie Dickon, and Sir Miles Mandering.

"Heigho, Bootles, old comrade, we've found the price o' our Christmas dinner, and here's friends to share it wi' us!"

The runners heard Dick's voice as the newcomers entered the dining-room. A few minutes of laughing and chaffing; then Mine Host, bearing a huge turkey before him, came along the main passage from the kitchen. The hidden runners' mouths watered at the appetising aroma that floated towards them. They promised themselves a goodly sample of that succulent bird when their duty had been accomplished.

Tom allowed the highwaymen time to settle down to their Christmas feast. Then he gave the signal—a low, penetrating whistle.

Simultaneously, each of the Bow Street agents burst through the particular door at which he was stationed—and each pulled up on the threshold with a gasp.

The highwaymen had disappeared!

Of Dick and his comrades there was no sign. Except for Bootles. The figure of the black, in his voluminous dressing-gown and nightcap, was still there, bending over the festive board.

"Hold the black!" thundered Tom Noddy. "The rest of 'em can't be far away. We were watching every door."

He made a step forward to apprehend Bootles. The black rumpad made no move to escape. Indeed, he had not moved from his position at the table since the runners had entered.

And then Tom Noddy received another shock. He made a grab at Bootles's shoulder—and found himself clutching nothing more human than the back of a chair through the cloth of Bootles's dressing-gown. And a gasp of horror escaped his lips as the head of

the black, still with the red night-cap perched upon it, rolled startlingly on to the table!

It was a Christmas pudding!

Thus the whole plot became clear to poor Tom Noddy.

The highwaymen had rigged up the dummy of their black comrade with the aid of a Christmas pudding, a chair and Bootles's dressing-gown and nightcap. Something else caught Tom's eye. It was a large notice scrawled on the back of a calendar. It read:

*God rest ye merry Redbreasts,  
And a merry Christmas all!*

DICK TURPIN.

"Sink an' burn the rogues! They can't be far away. Search for them, fools. Don't stand there goggling like geese!" thundered Tom Noddy.

He himself led a rush to the likeliest hiding-place in the room—the chimney.

But only a shower of soot, apparently dislodged by the wind, came down and smothered Tom.

Coughing and choking, the now-half-demented Bow Street chief stood like a particularly portly lion at bay. His men searched every likely nook and cranny in the big room, but in each place drew a blank. Yet each of the doors had been guarded as Tom Noddy said. How, then, had the highwaymen escaped?

It was a mystery to the irascible leader of the Redbreasts. But the fact remained that the birds had flown. Even now they might be riding, chucking at their getaway, along the moonlit Dover Road.

Trailing soot at every step, Tom led his men from the inn parlour and out to the horses. He would fain have stayed at the inn, if not to enjoy a Christmas meal, at least to wash some of the soot off his blue jacket and red waistcoat. But the scent was hot, and Tom was more determined than ever to apprehend his enemy. So, with a harsh command to his men, he vaulted into the saddle and set spurs to his horse.

There were the marks of horses' hoofs leading away from the inn in the direction of Dover, and Tom did not doubt that they were the hoof-prints of Dick and his comrades.

They were! What Tom did not know was that Joe and Sixteen String Jack had deliberately made these prints before entering the inn with Jack Dickon and Sir Miles. It was a simple subterfuge to put any possible pursuers from Sir Silas Reed off the scent.

### Paying Toll.

**C**OULD Tom Noddy have seen what was taking place back in the inn, his naturally prominent eyes might have fallen out altogether.

A first panel above the massive, old-fashioned mantelpiece swung open, then a laughing face appeared, and finally the full figure of Dick Turpin stepped out and jumped down to the sanded floor of the landlord's parlour. Dick was quickly followed by the rest of his highwayman band, Jack Dickon and Sir Miles Mandering.

"Stap me!" roared Dick, holding his sides. "I'd give a silver guinea to ha' seen poor old Tom's face when he found the birds had flown! 'Twas an uncommonly good idea o' yours, Jack, to hide in the secret chamber in the chimney."

"Yo! Yo! Yo!" roared Bootles. "An' fancy pore ole Tom mistooking dis niggab for a pudden an' a chair. Ise not such a pudden head as all dat!"

Indeed, the highwaymen had put the peculiarities of the old smugglers' inn to good service. The hide-out in the chimney had been designed by Mine Host, himself a smuggler. Like the extra doors to the parlour, it was to assist in a quick getaway when the smugglers were disturbed by the revenue officers.

"Well, ye can be assured, lads, that neither Tom

Noddy nor Silas Rood will disturb us for some time to come. So let us eat, drink an' be merry. There's plenty of time to enjoy our Christmas dinner ere we ride for Ettring Cove."

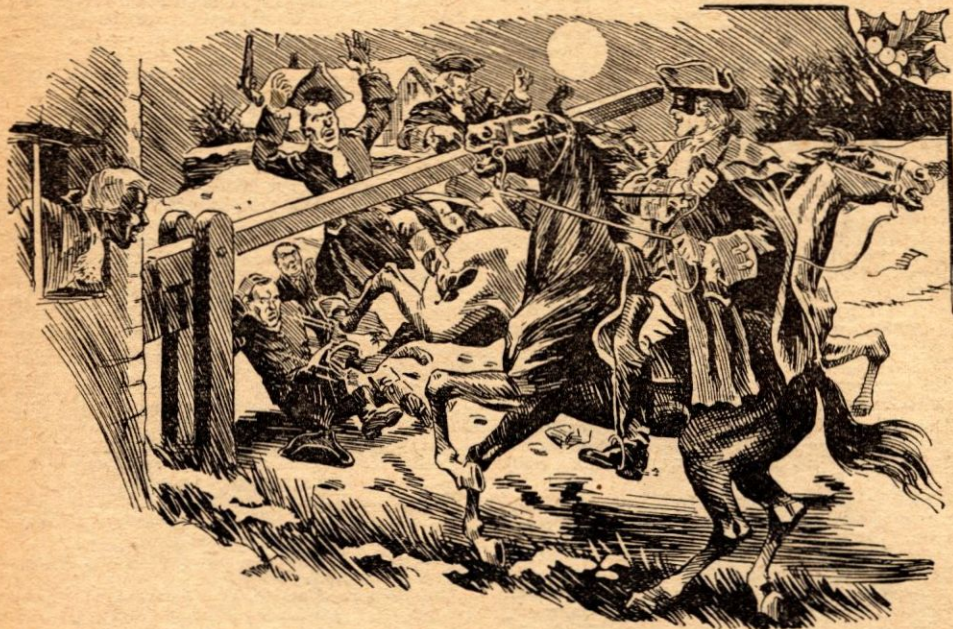
Soon the whole merry band were enjoying huge helpings of steaming boar's head, followed by heaped plates of Christmas pudding. Even Bootles forgot his indisposition and did full justice to the Yule-tide victuals, washing each mouthful down with huge draughts of the boniface's mulled ale.

It was not until all were replete and sitting back in their chairs around the great log fire that Dick Turpin again referred to the affair that had caused him and Sir Miles to join forces.

yo in sight!" chuckled Dick. "Well, he'll find the Sussex coast long enough if he doesn't know the exact spot chosen for the landing. 'Twill be like looking for a needle in a haystack to discover us in time!"

But even the astute highwayman was wanting in his calculations there. It occurred to nobody in that candle-lit room to glance out of the window. And so they did not see the saturnine face pressed to the mullioned panes. It was the face of Sir Silas Rood!

AS soon as Dick and his comrades had ridden away with his purse, the sinister magistrate had clapped spurs to his nag and led his men along



MORE HASTE, LESS SPEED.—The Runners were almost on Dick Turpin when Bootles lowered the toll bar. The Redbreasts, unable to stop, were swept off their horses.

"How did Silas come to hear of this attempt to flee the country?" he asked quietly.

Sir Miles Mandering shrugged elegant shoulders.

"Why, 'twere easy for one with such prying ways as Sir Silas," he answered almost bitterly. "Ye may know, Dick, there have been strenuous attempts lately, on the part of the government, to stamp out the Jacobites, and some of us were in hourly peril of betrayal. So it was decided that about a dozen of the ringleaders should flee to France until things settled down again. The manner of it was thus. A smuggling brig—the *Wayfarer*—was chartered to pick up each of the twelve at various places along the coast. And she was to call for me at Ettring Cove at twelve to-night. That scoundrel Silas, however, smelled a rat an' intercepted a postboy from the North, carrying a letter to me signifying that all was arranged. Fortunately, Ettring Cove was not mentioned. It simply said: *Show a lantern from cliff at midnight Christmas Eve.*"

"Egad, so that's why Sir Silas was fain to keep

the slippery road in an attempt to catch up with Sir Miles Mandering's coach. The effort was abortive, and when at last, weary and disgruntled, they had reached the red-lit windows of the Half Moon, it had been decided to give horses and men a much-needed meal and rest there before proceeding to the coast.

Sir Silas had demanded a private room, but passing the door of the bar his fox-like eyes had descried none other than Sir Miles' coachman, enjoying the contents of a large tankard in the chimney seat. Concealing his exultation he made covert inquiries of the inn-keeper and elicited the information that his young enemy was in the inn parlour. Unfortunately for the plotter he had only taken up his stance below the lattice of the inn parlour when Sir Miles had reached the end of his story, so he still did not know the exact landing place of the *Wayfarer*. But consoling himself with the thought that he had again got on the scent of his quarry, he decided to lie low until they left the inn and then follow them down to the coast.

At this point something that young Dickon let drop caused him to prick up his ears afresh. Raising a glass of ginger wine to his lips, the boy gave a toast: "To the *Wayfarer*—and a safe passage for its cargo of Jacobites!"

So there would be more than Sir Miles on board! Rood's black heart leapt at the thought. If only he could capture them all! Why, it would mean a dukedom at least!

The muffled thud of weary feet in the snow cut into his reflections, and turning from the window he saw Tom Noddy and the rest of the Bow Street Runners. They had returned from the wild goose chase on which Dick had sent them and, dismounting from their horses, were about to enter the inn. Tom Noddy had had enough for one night, and had decided to spend the night at the Half Moon. But Sir Silas had other plans. Here were just the reinforcements he needed, if he were to overcome the crew and passengers of the *Wayfarer*.

So, confronting Tom Noddy in the doorway he quickly told him the whole strange story. The chief of the Runners jumped at the opportunity thus presented to him and when Sir Silas told him that Dick Turpin was also involved he was all eagerness to proceed.

Concealing themselves in the inn, the whole party of self-styled avengers waited with what patience they could muster for the departure of their prey.

Eleven solemn notes had sounded from Mine Host's grandfather clock ere the highwaymen and the Jacobites made a move, and it was fifteen minutes past the hour when Sir Miles Mandering's coach and its escort clattered out of the inn-yard. Then, with hoofs and wheels strangely muffled as they swung on to the snow-covered highway, they whirled away on their six miles' journey to the coast.

Almost immediately it stopped snowing, and the moon came out to light their way. Past frozen mere and sleeping manso the cavalcade jogged, and merrily the miles slid by.

Dick Turpin was in rare good spirits; the nocturnal ride was certainly exhilarating after the stuffiness of the inn. Black Bess seemed to share his mood, too, for she galloped along in clinking style. But, suddenly a loose saddle-girth caused Dick to fall behind the rest of the party, and he dismounted to attend to it. For a brief space he was alone on the silent, snowy highway.

But as he straightened, after performing his task, he paused with one foot in the stirrup. From somewhere behind him had sounded the sudden whinny of a horse.

Ears straining through the night, Turpin listened tensely. Sure enough he heard the faint jingle of harness and the muffled *thud-a-thud-thud* of many horses' hoofs in the snow.

Pursuit! That was the first thought that struck into his brain. There could be no other reason for such a large body of mounted men at this late hour. He must warn those ahead. Swinging into the saddle without further ado, he whispered a word in the ear of his gallant mare that sent her forward like the wind.

At Dick's news, when he came level with them, the others re-doubled their speed. But the heavy coach was a serious handicap. From the rear, the sounds of pursuit grew louder and ever louder. Soon they must be overhauled.

And then, ahead of them a round stone building loomed up beside the road, and full across their path showed the stout length of a toll bar—cutting off their way!

The horses came to a slithering standstill and Dick hammered frantically on the toll-keeper's door.

"Open! Quickly, sirrah! Raise the bar! 'Tis

a matter o' life or death! A silver pound for your fastest work!"

A sleepy head was pushed through a slowly opened casement and the toll-house keeper peered out into the night. Sight of Dick's mask did not reassure him, and he was about to slam the window shut and let the rumpads cool their heels, when Bootles acted. The black vaulted clean from his horse through the closing casement and into the astounded fellow's bedroom.

Not pausing to offer explanations, the black highwayman leapt down the half-dozen stairs to the lower room, in which was the crude windlass that controlled the toll-bar.

A few lusty turns at the handle and the way was clear for the coach to continue its journey. The heavy vehicle lumbered into motion just as a sudden hullabaloo sounded and round a distant bend swept the pursuers. Sir Silas's reedy voice came clearly to Dick's ears.

"Steady, animals. Don't let 'em see ye! But don't lose 'em now!"

The hero-highwayman was waiting for Bootles, before rejoining those in front. But the problem now was to throw Sir Silas off the scent. It would be useless to attempt to embark Sir Miles on the *Wayfarer* with the villainous magistrate around.

A sudden idea came to Dick's fertile brain.

"So ho, Bootles!" he called softly. And when the black replied, Dick continued: "Sir Silas and Tom Noddy are coming along the road. They've discovered us. But I ha' a plan for holding them up well and truly. Listen! Wait until I give the signal, then lower the toll-bar half way. Leave the rest to me!"

*Clip-clop! Clip-clop!* Sir Silas and the runners came on apace. They would soon be atop of Dick Turpin. But the highwayman did not budge. Full in the lamplight that streamed from the upper window of the toll-house, he made a picturesque figure in mask and red greatcoat, as he sat motionless in the saddle of Black Bess.

Catching sight of him, Sir Silas raised the stock of his whip and gesticulated at the highwayman.

"At him!" he thundered. "Capture him—or ride him down!"

The Redbreasts and Sir Silas's servants were almost on him when Dick gave a low, penetrating whistle. Bootles heard the signal and immediately carried out Dick's previous order. The great arm of the toll-bar descended swiftly—then stopped.

The foremost of the pursuers rode full tilt into that bar, which jutted across the road at the height of the horses' heads. One after another the riders were swept from their saddles, while the nags galloped on. Those behind, in their efforts to avoid their fallen comrades slithered and fell all over the road. Soon around the toll-house was a scene of indescribable confusion, of kicking horses and cursing, struggling men.

Dick Turpin's mocking laughter rang out o'er the moonlit highway; then, calling to Bootles to follow, he clapped spurs to horse and rode chucking in the wake of the coach.

Unfortunately for Dick's plan, however, Sir Silas and the dwarf had not been unhorsed. Though, in truth, they were the only two of the pursuers who had not fallen.

"Zounds, Abnegall," snarled Sir Silas, at his evil-looking lieutenant. "We must not let those rumpads out of our sight or we'll lose the whole situation. Ride on. These fools can extricate themselves as best they may."

Tom Noddy was already on his feet, rubbing sundry bruises, and to him Sir Silas gave the order to wait for the rest of the Runners and his own servants



# A GREAT NEW THRILL-HERO COMES TO BOYS' MAGAZINE NEXT WEEK!



**LAUGHING LIGHTNING AND HIS LIONS** for Thrills, Drama, Excitement and Mystery. Read in next week's startling complete tale of the Big Cage of the amazing plot of Signor Petronelli, the man who stole the circus wizard's lions, and how the Laughing Lion Tamer fought a spectacular battle of wits with the circus crook. And here's another Big Story attraction: **The Invisible Submarine Positively Appears** in next week's All-Star Story Programme. Don't miss these Two Big Treats, Boys!

and then go straight to the coast via the road. He guessed that Dick and the Jacobite would leave the road somewhere ahead, to reach the spot on the cliffs at which the smugglers' ship was to land. But if he could stick to their trail he hoped to be able to signal his minions to the exact spot in time to intercept Sir Miles Mandering.

And this time Sir Silas was more cautious, so that even Dick's sharp ears never warned him that an implacable enemy still dogged his trail. When, within a mile of the coast, the road swung east and the coach was driven straight on—along a bridle-path—Dick Turpin and Bootles had caught up with the main cavalcade.

With a gloating smile, Sir Silas Rood watched until they were out of sight in the moonlight; then he, too, swung off after them.

The way now led beside a half-frozen stream—a stream that widened at almost every yard until eventually it flowed out into Ettring Cove. Soon

the coach had to be abandoned and, leaving their horses tethered to some convenient trees, Dick and the rest pushed on.

Silas and the dwarf were sure now that they were making for Ettring Cove. And, halting, Sir Silas produced his fob. He saw that it wanted fifteen minutes to midnight—when the smugglers' vessel would arrive in the cove. The problem was now how to summon Tom Noddy and his minions to the scene, for, of course, he and the dwarf would be little more than useless against Sir Miles Mandering's escort of highwaymen.

And then a plan came to Sir Silas. He knew every inch of the countryside hereabouts, and he remembered there was an alarm bell at the top of the cliffs at each side of the cove. If he tolled this it would warn the smugglers' vessel not to land; but on the other hand Tom Noddy would surely have the sense to hasten thither to investigate. And thus they would be able to capture Dick Turpin and Sir Miles

Mandering—the two men that, at the moment and after his many reverses at their hands, Sir Silas wanted most to destroy.

No sooner thought than it was put into execution. Pausing only while Abnegall, the dwarf, at his orders, went back to the coach for a lantern to light their way, Sir Silas set off for the lonely tower in which the alarm bell was housed.

As the pair left the road somewhere ahead, Dick Turpin clutched the arm of Sir Miles and pointed at the ill-concealed light of the lantern the dwarf carried.

"'Tis passing strange! No shepherd can be abroad at this time o' night," said the hero highwayman. "Do you go on to the cove, lads. I'll join ye after I've investigated that light!"

So Nemesis prepared the stage for Dick Turpin's last meeting with Sir Silas Rood . . .

### Dick Turpin's Christmas Trick!

"**A**LL right, animal. Light the way!" Sir Silas Rood grated the command at his mis-shapen henchman as, panting a little after his exertions, the plotter gained the top of the cliff. There before the pair was the squat bell tower, the door of which was always on the latch in case of emergency.

Abnegall opened the door and, holding the lantern above his head, made way for his master to enter. Sir Silas stalked into the yellow-lit darkness, prepared to grasp the rope that would signal death to the escaping Jacobite, and halted with a half-articulate cry. A cry in which sheer amazement mingled with anger.

For, swinging gaily on the bell-rope was—Dick Turpin! And the highwayman had a drawn sword in his hand. All unknown to Sir Silas, he had passed him and the dwarf during their upward climb and, realising their destination, had prepared this surprise. It had been easy to hang on the bell-rope without ringing the bell, for the great, bronze bell was "up," so that it would need a special swing to set it a-pealing.

"'Sdeath! We are undone!" ejaculated Silas Rood; then, seeing that Dick was alone, a cunning light came into his eyes—cunning that was quickly changed to a gloating malevolence.

"So at last we meet on level terms!" he snarled and whipped his sword from its sheath.

"Aye—on level terms, Sir Silas!" smiled Dick Turpin, catching the other's blade on his own. Then, with a swift movement he sliced through the rope above his head, so that the bell could not be tolled. And landing, lithe as a cat, on his feet, fell into an easy, perfectly balanced fencing stance.

So the two deadly enemies—the most famous duellist and the equally famous highwayman—faced each other. Against one wall the dwarf crouched, his lantern shedding a sickly light on the scene.

Steel rasped on steel, reflecting back the lantern's light in a series of dazzling flashes. And, with a speed that bewildered the single watcher, the swordsmen wielded their weapons.

Thrust! Parry! Thrust! Parry! So the duel waged white-hot. And after his first careless exchanges Silas Rood realised that here was an antagonist worthy of his steel.

His pale face, on which dissipation had left lines beyond his years, set in a white mask. His thin lips pursed in a cruel line. Truly he did not lack courage. But there was an evil venom in his thrusts that told of the burning hatred for the handsome highwayman that consumed him. All his wit, all his skill, was thrown into the scales to humble his enemy to the dust before he slew him.

And Dick Turpin? Well, he had looked into the eyes of death so often that the devil in Rood's eyes left him unmoved. A faint smile played about his lips; his face was slightly flushed with the healthy exertion. He fought in the cause of friendship, than which there is no better motive. And, sorely pressed as sometimes he was, he strove to disarm rather than to kill.

Sir Silas had been wont to whisper taunts at his adversaries in past combats. Many a man had met death with Sir Silas's mocking voice in his ears. But now he needed every ounce of his skill, all his attention, to hold off the other's weapon. Soon he was breathing rather heavily; then frankly panting. Gradually it was borne in on him that at last he had met his match. Dick Turpin, the despised highwayman, was the better man.

Came the end at last—a final, desperate thrust on which Silas staked his all, and Dick's riposte that took his point past the other's guard and through the elbow joint of his sword-arm. There was an ominous crack, and as Dick withdrew his steel, his rival's weapon clattered to the floor.

And Dick Turpin had Sir Silas Rood at his mercy. If he so willed it, the highwayman could have dispatched him. Had the positions been reversed, Silas Rood would certainly not have hesitated. But, villain as he was, Rood was a keen student of men. And he knew Dick would not kill him in cold blood. The thought stilled the awful fear that had been welling up in the plotter's heart, and deadly hatred again came uppermost in his mind.

For a moment he was beside himself with rage—yet through it gleamed another thought, like a ray of light in a dark room.

A chance! There was a faint chance of striking one last cruel blow. And on the thought Rood acted. Snatching the lantern with his undamaged hand from the trembling dwarf, he jumped through the open door into the night.

"The ship!" he screamed. "That at least shall be wrecked. Burn me, I'll sink her with all hands!"

In a flash Dick saw his fell purpose. He was rushing to the edge of the cliff, from thence to signal the *Wayfarer*—hurl her to her doom on the cruel rocks below. Her captain, unsuspecting of treachery, would think it was Sir Miles's signal, and so sail in to the wrecking.

Dick started in pursuit, but he had only taken a couple of steps forward when Abnegall jumped on him from behind and crashed a pistol barrel against the side of his head.

So Sir Silas was left unhampered to perform his foul work. It seemed that nothing could now prevent him . . .

He rushed to the brink of the cliff and uncovered the lantern. As he did so, the cliff edge on which he stood, crumbled beneath his feet. One terrible cry of fear and despair rang out in the night. Then Sir Silas Rood went pitching down, down to the very rocks on which he had schemed to lure the *Wayfarer*.

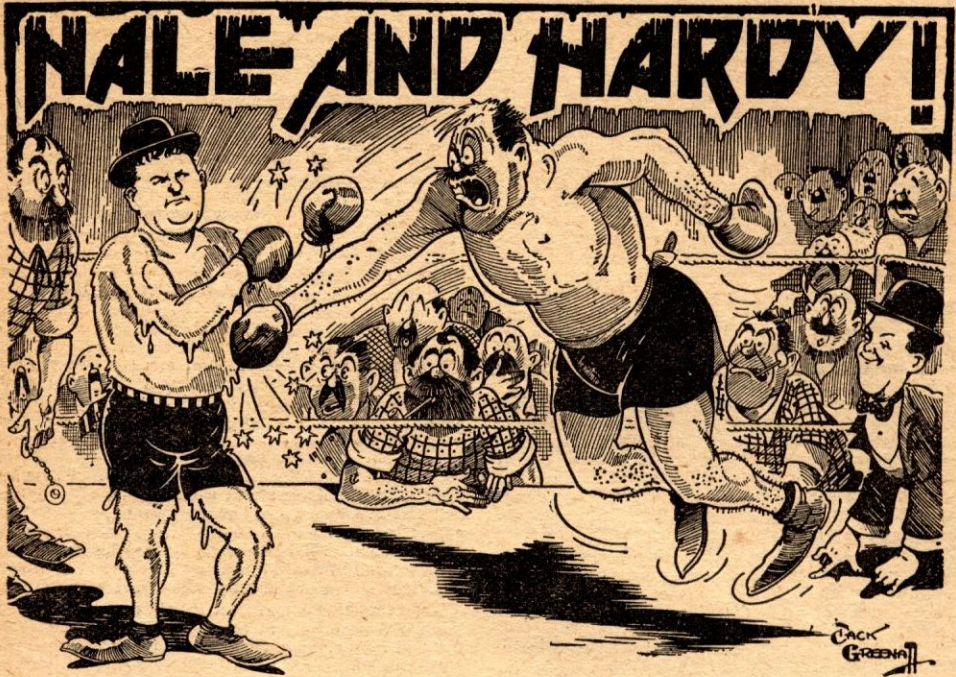
The dwarf, who was the only witness of the accident, stumbled fearfully away from the scene. Two minutes later Dick Turpin came to his senses with the sound of distant bells in his ears.

It was the merry peal from a neighbouring church, signalling the dawn of Christmas Day. Simultaneously a light flashed from the cove below out to sea, and immediately there came an answering light through the darkness.

The *Wayfarer* was riding into the cove bringing freedom to yet another fugitive on Christmas morn.

The boy who tames and trains lions is here next week, chaps. Look out for him in the greatest animal tale ever, entitled "Laughing Lightning of the Lions!"

THE LAUGHABLE DOINGS OF LAUREL AND HARDY. QUITE COMPLETE AND FUNNIER THAN THE FILMS. THIS WEEK: "CHAMP OF THE CAMP."



**MUCH OF A MUTTNESS!** That's Oliver Hardy as a Professional Pugilist. But when He was Forced to Fight the Toughest Guy in Lumberland His Stony Attitude brought him Victory.

### Smash 'Em Hardy.

OLIVER HARDY glared at his simple pal, Stan Laurel, who stood by the trackside rubbing his bruises and making helpless gestures. They had just been "bounced" from a passing train, where the brakeman had discovered them taking a free ride in an empty goods-van.

"You great big lump of—of—unconscious matter, you! Why in Heaven's name did you have to go and hang on to the alarm signal and stop the train?"

"Well, I—that is—I mean how was I know that I was straphanging on the alarm signal? I thought—"

"You thought! The faintest flicker of a thought has never passed through that lump of inert matter you call a head! Well—here we are, about forty miles from the nearest city, and somewhere in the lumber country! What're we going to do about it?"

A fleeting suggestion of intelligence flitted across Laurel's face.

"The lumber country is it? I suppose this is where people dump their rubbish and old clothes then? I was wondering how this old hat came to be here."

Laurel gazed at a battered bowler hat at his feet and kicked it thoughtfully.

"Here, gimme that," said Hardy, indignantly, seizing the hat. "It's mine!"

Hardy dabbed his bowler on his head, and glared round at the wild, desolate forest-land.

"Well, we'd better start walking," he snapped, "if we don't want to stay here for the rest of our days! Come on!"

The fat man strutted off at right angles to the track and Laurel followed him wearily. For half-an-hour they spoke not a word and by that time they had completely lost themselves amongst the great, towering trees. Still they kept on and presently they came to a wide, fast-running stream with a pile of newly-felled timber on its shores. Hardy's face lit up at the sight and he beamed round at Laurel.

"I have an idea! This stream's bound to lead somewhere. We'll make a raft and float downstream until we get back to civilisation."

Hardy trotted over to the pile of pine-logs, lifted one, heaved it with difficulty on his shoulder, and then staggered away with it to a clear space on the bank of the stream. He dumped it down, and then trotted back to repeat the process, laying the logs side by side raft-wise. He was returning for a third log, when he suddenly caught sight of Laurel blinking at him with interest, but not making the slightest attempt to help.

"Well!" grunted Hardy. "What d'you think you are—the sleeping beauty? Do you expect me to do all the work? Grab one of the logs and give me a hand!"

Laurel waved his hands helplessly and then commenced to struggle with one of the logs. Hardy planted his hands on his hips and tapped his foot

impatiently, as he watched his struggling pal. A second later, however, a gruff voice brought him swinging round nervously to confront a towering lumberjack who had approached unobserved. He was a tough-looking fellow, fully seven feet in height, and with the general aspect of a gorilla.

"Say, you guys gotter nerve steal'n our timber! 'S'ther big idea?"

"Ohhh-er," said Hardy nervously, in his most charming voice. "We're not stealing it, I assure you. Far be us from it—I mean—far be it from us—"

"Waal, I guess it looks mighty like it, an' I'm gonner sock you in the jaw jes' ter make sure!"

The big lumberman drew back a fist like a sledgehammer; Hardy backed away nervously. Meanwhile, Laurel had not noticed the coming of the tough and was still struggling to get a log on his shoulder, with his back to the other two. He succeeded at the identical moment that the lumberjack was preparing to strike, but that log was a bit too much for Laurel. He started to totter backwards under its weight, several yards of heavy pine-log projecting fore and aft.

The lumberjack's fist came hurtling at Hardy's head. The fat man ducked just in time to avoid the fist and also to dodge the end of Laurel's log. The tree trunk passed clean over his head and the end of it caught the bullying lumberjack squarely on the chin. Laurel dropped his log and lost his balance altogether, and Hardy looked up just in time to see the tough drop limply to the ground and lie still.

Hardy stood over him in a fighting attitude, under the impression that somehow or other he had knocked the tough out himself. Before he could say anything, a large crowd of astonished lumbermen strode into the clearing and gathered round.

"Say! Can you beat that?" shouted somebody. "Hard-fist Hank knocked out by that little fat chap!"

Hardy glanced at them from the corner of his eye. They were a tough-looking bunch, but that knock-out, however it had occurred, had impressed them. Hardy dropped his fighting attitude, gazed contemptuously at the prone Hank, and then cocked his hat at a tough-looking angle.

"Yeah, and I'll do the same to any chap—er—guy, I mean, that tries any funny business with me! Back in my hometown they called me Smash 'em Hardy," he added, with sudden inspiration. "I'm the reason why Tunney retired after he got the heavy-weight title—he was scared of me!"

Laurel frowned in a puzzled fashion. He picked himself up and tottered to Hardy.

"Funny, Oliver, I never knew you—"

"Shut up!" hissed Hardy. "I'm trying to impress 'em, you boob!"

"You ain't one o' them professional boxers?" said one man admiringly. "We're mighty keen on good scrappers in this camp, stranger. It's our only amusement!"

"Boxer!" echoed Hardy scornfully. "Why—they named Boxing Day after me!"

"Say," said a be-whiskered ruffian, stepping forward and thrusting out a horny palm, "I guess me an' the b'y's is shore glad ter know yer, Smash 'em Hardy. I'm Eb Salmons, foreman o' this here camp—mebbe he'd like to step over an' have a bite o' feed w' us!"

"A bite o' feed," echoed Hardy, "is just what we're needing—Oh—er—this—is my—er—referee. I always travel my own, y'know."

"Mighty queer notion," said Eb Salmons, looking at the unconscious Hank, who was being revived by his pals, and chuckling, "but I guess you shore gotten a punch on you."

Seeing that Hard-fist Hank was reviving, Hardy passed a broad hint that they might take their "bit o' feed" immediately. Eb Salmons took them both proudly by the arm and led them through the trees, followed by a crowd of admiring lumberjacks.

## The Late Christmas.

"GEE!" said Eb Salmons, when, later, Laurel and Hardy sat enjoying a meal in one of the log huts which were the lumbermen's quarters, "it do seem swell us hav'n a real champ boxer here! I'd shore like to see you an' Hard-fist Hank meet in the ring! He's champ of our camp an' bragged he'd pay any guy forty dollars what could lay him out—an' up to now he's never had to pay out!"

Hard-fist Hank, still a little battered and unsteady, had entered the shack at that moment and heard the remark. He glared fiercely at Laurel and Hardy and rubbed his jaw thoughtfully.

"Yeah!" he growled, "an' I still say it. What's more, I challenge this guy to a ten-round bout, an' I'll pay him forty dollars, if he can last out the ten rounds agin me! What you think o' that, buddy?"

"Oh-err," said Hardy sweetly. "It's—it's a fine idea but—er—I'm awfully busy y'know, and my referee here doesn't like me fighting out of office hours. Isn't that so, Laurel?"

"I don't mind," said Laurel simply. "You!—what're you kicking me in the shins for?"

"You see, you guys," sneered Hank, to his fellow lumberjacks, "he ain't so eager. Waal! My challenge stands. I'll meet any guy on Christmas Day for a ten-round contest and pay that guy forty bucks if he knocks me out or stays the ten rounds!"

The lumberjacks stared at Hardy eagerly. Hardy blinked thoughtfully at Hard-fist Hank.

"Did I hear you say Christmas Day?"

"Yeah," interrupted Eb; "we rigs up a proper ring and has a regular fight festival Christmas, stranger—done it for years, and after it's all over we make the winners the big guests at Christmas Dinner. It's an old custom of ours."

Hardy whispered surreptitiously to Laurel, "How long is it to next Christmas?"

"Eleven months and a couple of weeks."

"That's a nice long time," breathed Hardy. "We may be on the other side of the earth by then." He stood up and turned towards Hard-fist Hank boldly. "All right—I will meet you on Christmas Day for a ten-round bout!"

"O.K.!" grinned Hank. "Here, Eb, there's the forty-dollar stake—you better hold it! So long, champ—see you in the ring."

Hardy sat down again and finished his meal leisurely, watched by the admiring crowd of lumbermen.

"Shucks, Mr. Hardy," said Eb Salmons, "I guess it'll be an honour to have you stayin' with us a few days. I'll go fix you up a berth for the night."

Hardy thanked him, and when he had gone, whispered to Laurel, "We look like being treated well here for the next couple of days. You see what brains does for one, my lad!"

Presently Laurel and Hardy strode forth to view the camp. They discovered some men already fixing up a ring in another big shack.

"H'm," commented Hardy. "They certainly believe in making early preparations here. How long did you say it was till next Christmas?"

"Eleven months and two weeks," repeated Laurel. "We're not going to stay here all that time, are we?"

"We are certainly not," chuckled Hardy, with the comforting thought that he had all that time to put a few miles between himself and Hard-fist Hank.

They returned to Eb Salmons's big shack and found

the head lumberman busy hanging the place with Christmas decorations. Hardy looked puzzled and not a little uncomfortable.

"You certainly are preparing for Christmas early this year," he said.

"Oh, not so early, Mister Hardy," answered Eb. "I guess it's Christmas Eve to-day, ain't it?"

"Christmas Eve to-day!" howled Hardy. "Surely you've made a mistake. We spent Christmas in Chicago a fortnight ago. Look at your calendar."

"Shucks," grinned Eb. "We don't go much on calendars around here. When we want to know the date we jest works it out in our heads, an' we figured it was round about Christmas now."

"Wh-a-a-t! B-b-but you're about a fortnight late I tell you!" shrieked Hardy, as beads of perspiration stood out on his brow.

"Shucks, it don't make no never mind to us. We calls it Christmas Day to-morrow, an' as far as we're concerned it *is* Christmas Day to-morrow!"

"I-I've come over all queer. Give me a hand, Laurel."

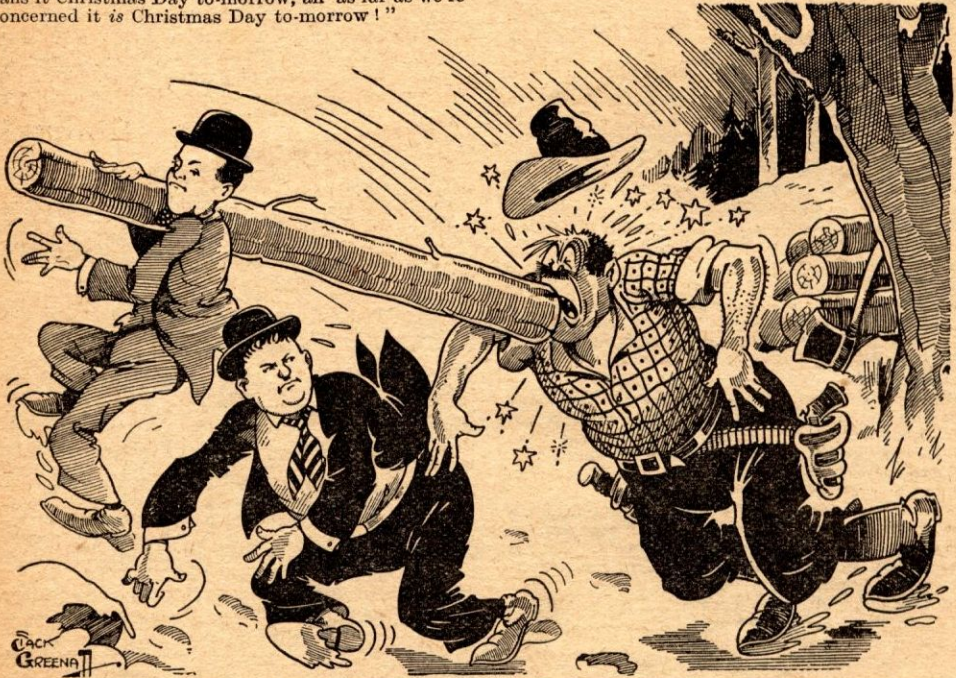
### A Concrete Matter.

"LAUREL," said Hardy, wiping a tear from his eye, "you'll think of me when I'm gone? You'll remember your old pal and all the good times we had together?"

"Yooooooooo!" wept Laurel, breaking down altogether and sobbing on Hardy's bare shoulder. "What 'am I to do without you? Oowwww!"

"We must be brave," gulped Hardy. "Perhaps it'll be over quickly. Come, strap on my gloves!"

At that moment Eb Salmons poked his head in at the door of the room and yelled, "Merry Christmas, boys. I shore guess we're gonner see a dandy fight! Everybody's that eager for you and Hank to get started, they can hardly wait. Go to it, lad, an,



**A(S)LOG FOR THE LOGGER.**—Hardy ducked, to avoid the lumberjack's fist. At that moment Laurel staggered back under the weight of his log, and the end of it thudded into the tough's face.

"B-b-b-but have I g-got to fight Hank t-t-t-to-morrow?" gasped Hardy.

"Shore, stranger. You knew that, didn't you? Gor! You muster thought us mutts if you thought we meant Christmas twelve-month!"

Hardy gulped and hung limply on to Laurel's shoulder.

"An' if you take my advice," Eb chatted on, as he arranged his paper chains and evergreen, "you wanter watch Hank mighty careful in the ring. He's gotten a head like a cannon-ball, an' a fav'rite trick o' his is to fall into a clinch and then slam his head up under the other guy's jaw when the ref ain't look'n. I'm jest mentionin' this as a friendly warnin'."

"Th-th-thanks," gulped the unhappy Hardy.

there's a mighty big turkey and plum puddin's an' mince pies an' all that wait'n for you when the fight's over. I'll be seeing you."

As the foreman's head disappeared Laurel looked at Hardy and patted him comfortingly on the shoulder. Hardy was ready stripped for the fight and waiting apprehensively for their turn to come. There had been no escape. The lumberjacks had sat up half the night celebrating Christmas Eve, and Laurel and Hardy had been unable to get away, try as they would. So here was poor Hardy, this alleged Christmas morning, waiting to meet his doom.

"There's only one way out," said Laurel. "I'm going to take a big stick and try and lay Hard-fist Hank out before you start."

"It's a tiny gleam of hope," gulped Hardy. "Do your best!"

Laurel had already provided himself with the necessary cudgel. He took it up now and left the room. He crept outside the shaft, avoiding the crowd, and walked along until he came to the window of Hank's dressing-room, on the other side of the building. He peered in to see Hard-fist Hank talking to his second and grinning in gleeful anticipation. Laurel sighed and saw that his project was hopeless.

Hank's second was plastering some pasty-looking material on the bruiser's hands which were already bandaged, ready for the gloves. Laurel looked further afield and detected a sack in a corner of the room with the words *Plaster of Paris* written largely upon it, and presently, having run out of paste, the second went over to the sack and scooped out a handful of white powder, dropped it into a can of water and mixed it up into a further supply of the paste he was dabbing on to Hank's hands.

"Now that," thought Laurel simply, "must be some sort of pain-killing ointment, I should think, to prevent him hurting his fists when he hits Hardy."

Innocent Stan Laurel, of course, had never heard of the foul trick of hardening the fists until they were like concrete!

"Maybe if I could get hold of some of it, it would help Oliver stand the punishment better?"

A chance came presently, for after plastering his hands and putting on the gloves, Hard-fist Hank and his second left the room to watch the boxing until his turn should come. Laurel sid open the window, grabbed the sack of plaster of Paris and heaved it outside.

He closed the window again and then went in search of water. He soon found a large bucketful. Then he tipped the whole contents of the sack into the bucket and stirred the white, sticky mass with his stick. At last, picking up the bucket, he returned to Hardy's dressing-room.

"Oliver, I've got some pain-killing lotion here. Just plaster this all over you and you'll not feel half his blows."

Hardy stared at the white mess in the bucket. "Are you sure? Anything that'll help me I'm willing to try."

"Certain. I saw Hard-fist Hank putting it on his hands. Come on. Let me plaster it all over you."

Hardy stood up and Laurel set to work. By the time he had finished, Hardy looked more like a snow-man than a boxer.

At that moment Eb Salmons poked his head in to tell them that they were ready for the great fight. He stared in wonder at Hardy.

"All right," said Hardy apologetically. "Just a little modern idea, y'know."

"Well, they're all ready, pards," said Eb, scratching his head in perplexity. "Hank is waitin' in the ring."

The plastered Hardy breathed a heavy sigh, and stepped forth from his dressing-room. His advent was greeted with cheering and wondering cries at his white and statuesque aspect.

Hardy climbed into the ring and was formally introduced by Eb Salmons, who was acting as referee. The cry "Seconds out! Time!" came. Hard-fist Hank sprang from his corner like an angry gorilla.

Hardy rose stiffly. He stretched out his hands in a sparring attitude with great difficulty. Hank danced about him for a few seconds, making preliminary dabs and fainty to test Hardy's mettle. All of a sudden he brought home a sledge-hammer right to Hardy's body. The crack of the blow could be heard all round the room, and a roar went up from the spectators. They expected Hardy to double up

immediately. But no. Hardy remained as steady as a rock.

Hank gave a howl and, tucking his right fist under his armpit, danced about the ring in agony.

A second or two later Hard-fist Hank recovered and rushed again with berserk fury, this time landing a terrific right swing on Hardy's head. It didn't even rock Hardy, but it nearly broke Hank's knuckles for him. He leapt away again howling with pain.

And in the centre of the ring Hardy stood like a statue of a boxer motionless and absolutely unmoved. The plaster had seized up altogether now and Hardy couldn't have moved had he wanted to.

The gong went for the finish of the first round. Hank staggered back to his seat, but Hardy remained where he stood as solid as the Rock of Gibraltar.

"Hey!" yelled Laurel. "Come out! First round's over."

No reply. Hardy remained as silent and motionless as a Greek statue. In desperation Laurel scrambled into the ring, picked up his statuesque pal with difficulty and lifted him bodily into his corner. But he couldn't make him sit down! Hardy wouldn't bend anywhere!

Meanwhile Hard-fist Hank was snarling at his second in his own corner.

"That guy's madder rock or sump'n! I tell yer, I can't hit him. It hurts too much!"

"Why not try the good old head butt," said the shifty second from behind his hand.

Hank grinned. "Guess I will!"

The gong went. Laurel hastily picked up his solidified pal and dumped him—in exactly the same attitude as he had assumed at the beginning of the first round—in the centre of the ring. Hard-fist Hank hovered round Hardy like a cat, looking for an opening. Suddenly he dashed into a clinch with the concrete-like lump of humanity in the centre of the ring. Hardy's attitude never varied in the slightest, not even when Hank ducked his head low down against Hardy's body. Then, with terrific force he brought it up smack under the chin of his opponent. Hard-fist Hank had laid out scores of good men with that foul. But this time something was wrong somewhere.

Hank felt as though the skies had descended on him! His vision was shot with darting planets and various astral phenomena, his eyes assumed a cross-ways position, then his knees gave way and he passed peacefully into the arms of Morpheus. He had knocked himself out against Hardy's chin!

The referee went through the formality of counting ten. He then grabbed Hardy's arm as if to hoist it aloft to indicate the winner of the contest. But that was a bit too much for even a strong man like Eb Salmons.

As the lumbermen made the place ring with their roars and cheers Laurel climbed hastily into the ring, and begging assistance lifted the motionless Hardy out.

"He's always awful modest after a fight," said Laurel, hastily, by way of explanation.

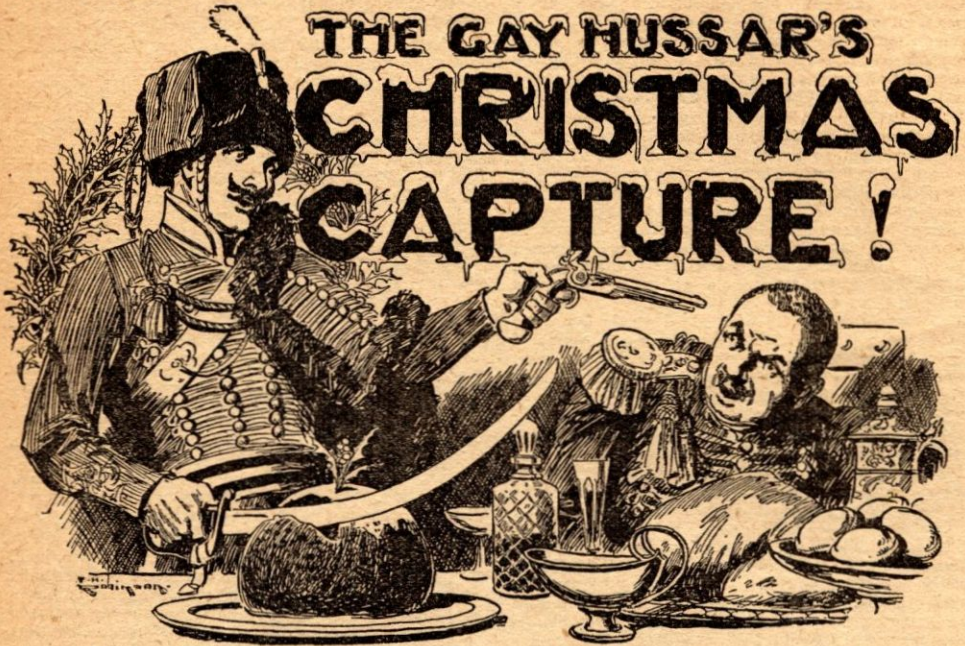
"Well," said Eb Salmons, "I hope he'll get more friendly at dinner."

When he got his solid partner into the dressing-room Laurel locked the door, found a hammer and chisel and set to work to dig him out of his plaster prison. After an exhausting hour Hardy was able to shake off the last of the plaster and sit up.

Some minutes later, Laurel and Hardy feasted, for the third time in a few weeks, upon turkey and plum-pudding.

**Ting-a-ling-a-ling! Coming next week! The Lads of the Old Fire Brigade! Sorry, chaps, it's just "Two False Alarms!" in other words, those two Mag. Film funsters, Laurel and Hardy.**

CAPTAIN LEFARGE, NAPOLEON'S DASHING AIDE-DE-CAMP, SALUTES YOU—IN A FLASHING XMAS ESCAPE THAT WILL HOLD YOU TENSE.



How Captain Lefarge was Escorted Through the Russian Lines to Safety—by a Russian General!

### The Lost Squadron.

DUSK had settled over the frozen waters of the River Vistula and the snow-mantled plains of the surrounding countryside. A wintry blast, that carried the breath of the ice-locked Baltic, was whistling over the length and breadth of Northern Europe.

It was Christmas of the year 1806, a year memorable for the clash of the legions of Napoleon Bonaparte and the fighting forces of the Imperial Tsar.

Thirty miles north of Warsaw, at that time under the heel of Russia, a squadron of French cavalry might have been seen wending their way over the cold wilderness. At their head rode one whose name was a by-word in the bivouacs of Napoleon's armies.

He was Captain André Lefarge, the Gay Gascon of the flashing sword—paramount as a soldier, unsurpassed for audacity and courage, and full of bravado.

Lefarge and his squadron of the 8th Hussars had travelled far in quest of supplies—food to bolster up the depleted commissariat of the French hosts. For the festive spirit of Christmas was temporarily ousting the grimmer spirit of war, and the troops were hoping for at least one enjoyable meal.

One squadron from every cavalry regiment in the French army had been sent out to quest for provender, and doubtless by now many of the detachments had returned well laden. But Lefarge and his comrades of the 8th had been despatched farther afield than any other party, and up to the present they had obtained practically nothing.

Thus it was in a somewhat gloomy silence that they plodded through the forlorn countryside.

The squadron was approaching a low ridge, when a small group of horsemen came clattering towards them along the icy road. These men were advance scouts of the little column, and as they drew rein before Lefarge one of them addressed the Gascon breathlessly.

"*Mon capitaine*," he gasped, "there are wagons beyond the ridge. They are travelling westward along a road that crosses the one that we are following, and they are under escort of two enemy troops of Horse."

Lefarge started at that. "Enemy troops of Horse?" he echoed. "*Sacré bleu!* The Russians are lying at Sokolov, forty miles east of here."

"That is what I thought, *mon capitaine*," the man replied. "But the others who were with me will bear me out. It looks like a supply column—*moving westward in the direction of our lines!*"

Lefarge was silent for a spell. Then a kind of sparkle dawned on his bold eyes, and he twisted the ends of his waxed moustache with a characteristic gesture.

"It is mystifying," he said, "but the fact remains that here is a chance for us to bring back our quota of provisions. Forward to the ridge, *mes braves*, and when we sight the foe let every man draw blade and follow me!"

There was a growl of assent from the whiskered veterans of the squadron, and next moment the troopers were on the move.

A quick trot took them to the crest of the promontory, and from there they espied the Russian

supply column—a string of wagons moving slowly along the western road, with two troops of fierce Cossacks in attendance.

Out flashed the sabre of Lefarge, and simultaneously a word of command came from his lips. With a ringing shout, the squadron of Hussars clapped spurs to flanks, and the rasp of swords mingled with the drumming of hoofs as the French cavaliers swept down the hillside, deploying as they charged.

"Follow Lefarge!" their captain roared, galloping to the fore on his famous horse, the Sarde. "A hundred golden pieces for the man who can race him to the foe!"

Confusion had suddenly spread throughout the hostile column. Wagons had been pulled abruptly to a standstill, and the escorting Cossacks were in disorder. Suddenly, above the tumult rose the hoarse, bellowing voice of a bearded hetman, their leader, and the half-savage warriors of the steppes quickly recovered themselves.

The French were still a hundred yards from the column when a blast of fire leapt from the groups of enemy horsemen. Down came steed and trooper, crashing to earth 'mid smothering snow, but Lefarge and the rest of his squadron thundered on.

The volley of musketry was succeeded by a crackling of pistols, and next moment the French clashed with the Russian troops.

Men and ponies were hurled to the ground. Others were borne back almost to the stationary column of wagons ere plunging horses could be made to stand firm.

The fight became concentrated along the northern fringe of the road, and the Cossacks made a desperate resistance. Here and there a sword, a lance or a pistol emptied a French saddle, but the Hussars were slashing to right and left, and their blades smote deep and true.

Lefarge was in the thick of it, and his sabre hissed in an arc of destruction. It swept aside a loaded pistol that was levelled at his breast, and in another rapid stroke it felled the man who wielded the weapon. A moment afterwards, that same blade was hacking in twain the lunging spear of a second foe.

A third Cossack loomed before the Gascon, and Lefarge recognised him as the bearded hetman. The Captain's sword clashed with the Russian's, and there was a fierce exchange of blows. Then down came the sabre of the Gay Hussar in a slicing cut, and the hetman's arm dropped limply to his side.

Infuriated, the tough warrior used his left hand to swing up the *natraika*, or whip, which was part of every Cossack's equipment, but with a lightning back-stroke Lefarge severed the thong from the stock.

"Keep that for your mount, you dog!" the Captain cried. "I'll teach you to use it on André Lefarge!"

The pressure of the fray carried them apart just then, and the Gascon found himself involved in a combat with another enemy. On every hand, however, the Cossacks were giving way. At last, with half their number dead or dying on the ground, they wheeled and spurred off among the scattering wagons, their angry hetman being borne along with them in the rout.

Bands of Lefarge's men galloped hotly in pursuit, but the Captain restrained those who were nearest to him and directed them to prevent the supply wagons from dispersing over the plain. The drivers of the vehicles had been forced to draw rein by the time that the rest of the Hussars returned from the chase of the fleeing enemy.

Lefarge now had one of the wagoners brought before him, and the Captain addressed him in very fair Russian.

"My friend," he observed, "you are going to take those supplies to the French lines with us, but first of all I should like to ask you a question. How comes it that you are so far from Sokolov, where the Russian army lies? You have missed your road, eh?"

The wagon-driver stared at him for a moment, and then gradually a leer spread about his mouth.

"You think we have missed the road, eh?" he said, with an evil grin. "But let me tell you it will be a miracle if you get these wagons to the French. For, by some means, you have got behind our lines."

"Behind your lines!" Lefarge reiterated sharply. "What do you mean, fellow? The Tsar's forces are at Sokolov, away to the east of here."

"They were at Sokolov," the wagoner retorted. "But twenty-four hours ago they broke camp and pushed westward to the neighbourhood of Poltusk."

### Russian Headquarters.

THE shock with which they discovered their position was one that staggered Lefarge's men, and awe was written on their faces as they looked at one another. The Gay Hussar alone remained perfectly composed.

"It would take more than an army of Russians to stop Lefarge," he said with spirited audacity. "We'll pierce our way through to the French lines yet, and we'll take a fat store of rations with us. Never fear, we'll find a way out of this dilemma. In the meantime, let every man load his horse with as much food as it can carry."

The troopers obeyed him, and sacks of grain, beef, and other provender were taken from the wagons. It was while these were being transferred to the backs of the cavalry mounts that someone came across a stock of Russian military cloaks. Reflecting that these would conceal their tall-tale uniforms, Lefarge commanded his men to don them, he himself being the first to select one.

The Gascon then ordered the Russian wagon-drivers to collect the wounded Cossacks, place them in the carts and go their way. This was done, and in the meantime the French took stock of their own casualties. They were far less heavy than the foe's had been, but a dozen had been slain and as many more severely injured.

When the Russian wagons were out of sight, Lefarge led his men across country in the direction of a vast expanse of forest. They entered this shortly afterwards, and rode for mile after mile through the utter darkness caused by the trees.

It was in the small hours of the morning that they called a halt in the heart of the immense tract of forest. They were preparing to snatch some rest in the shelter of a wooded hill, when several men, who had been detailed to scout around, discovered a narrow cavern.

"It would make a good resting-place for you, *mon capitaine*," one of them informed Lefarge. "And 'tis but right that you should have as good accommodation as is available in this accursed spot."

Lefarge repaired to the cave, and, one of the men having kindled a wood fire for him, he wrapped himself in his cloak and huddled close to the blaze. He was soon sound asleep.

It was daylight when he awoke again, and a glance at a fob-watch showed him that the hour was noon. A dense fog obscured the world outside the cave, but despite this, Lefarge could observe his shelter more clearly than he had done by the wavering glow of his fire.

Suddenly, he noticed something that held his interest. About ten paces from the entrance the construction of the cavern bore distinct traces of



man's handiwork, for the roof was bolstered up by thick beams.

It occurred to Lefarge that, with food in their possession, it might be wise for the whole squadron to occupy the tunnel as a hiding-place and await some favourable opportunity of rejoining the French army.

The plan depended upon the extent of the tunnel. could it hold a hundred-odd men and their horses ?

Lefarge picked up a glowing brand from the fire and blew it into flame. Then he began to make his way along the cavern. For a considerable distance he marched, and was beginning to tell himself that there was ample room for his squadron, when all at once the light of the burning torch showed him a wooden door.

He opened it, and immediately found himself in a wine cellar. *Sapristi!* He understood now. The tunnel must be linked with some manor house, and had been used by its owners in times of stress as a secret way of escape.



THE WHIP HAND.—The bearded Russian swung up his whip in his left hand, but with a lightning back-stroke Lefarge severed the thong from the stock.

It was at this moment that he heard voices above, and very softly he began to climb a flight of steps. They took him to another door. On reaching this, he gently turned a rusty key and opened it an inch or two.

He found himself looking into a sumptuous room, in which a table was groaning under the weight of choice viands. Decanters of wine met his eye, spotless napery, gleaming crystal and silver ware. In the middle of the table was a dish containing a large plum pudding, rich, dark and fruity, and there

was a huge turkey nearer at hand. The room itself was decorated with holly and coloured paper-chains, and was occupied by three men.

One of these men was an orderly, and he was attending to the needs of a bullet-headed officer of high rank, who sat alone at the head of the table. The third individual was a Cossack whose arm was in a sling, and with a start, Lefarge recognised him as the hetman, who had crossed swords with him the previous night.

The hetman stood facing the officer at the far end of the table, and he was talking in a voice that was hoarse with passion.

"A hundred Frenchmen harassing our supply columns *behind our lines*, General Moravitch!" he rasped. "The impudence of the thing. But I know this Lefarge. I saw him in action during the Austrian campaign of 1805."

General Moravitch, he of the bullet head, tore ravenously at a leg of turkey.

"Don't worry," he snarled. "I've already given orders concerning this enemy squadron. The fools will never pass our lines, and when this confounded fog clears I'll have three regiments of Imperial Dragoons scouring the countryside for them."

Listening attentively, Lefarge realised that he was in the headquarters of one of the Tsar's chief military advisers, and he conceived an audacious plan—a plan so astonishingly daring that none but the Gay Gascon would have dreamed of attempting it.

"One thing more, hetman," General Moravitch was saying. "When I send out those regiments to hound down this insolent Frenchman and his comrades, I'll instruct them to give no quarter, but to shoot them like so many rats . . ."

He got no farther. With sabre drawn Lefarge leapt pantherishly from concealment. One powerful blow with the flat of his blade and the General's orderly measured his length on the floor. Out came the pistol of the Cossack hetman, but he was smitten down ere he could draw trigger or utter a single cry. Next moment the Frenchman's blade was glittering above the bullet head of Moravitch.

"Not a move, not a sound," the Gascon hissed, "or I'll cut you in two."

The fearsome threat was enough for the Russian General. He sat transfixed in his chair, his mouth agape, his jaw sagging. Then all at once the voice of a sentry was heard outside the door.

"Are you all right, sir ?"

"Answer him," breathed Lefarge menacingly. "Tell him all is well."

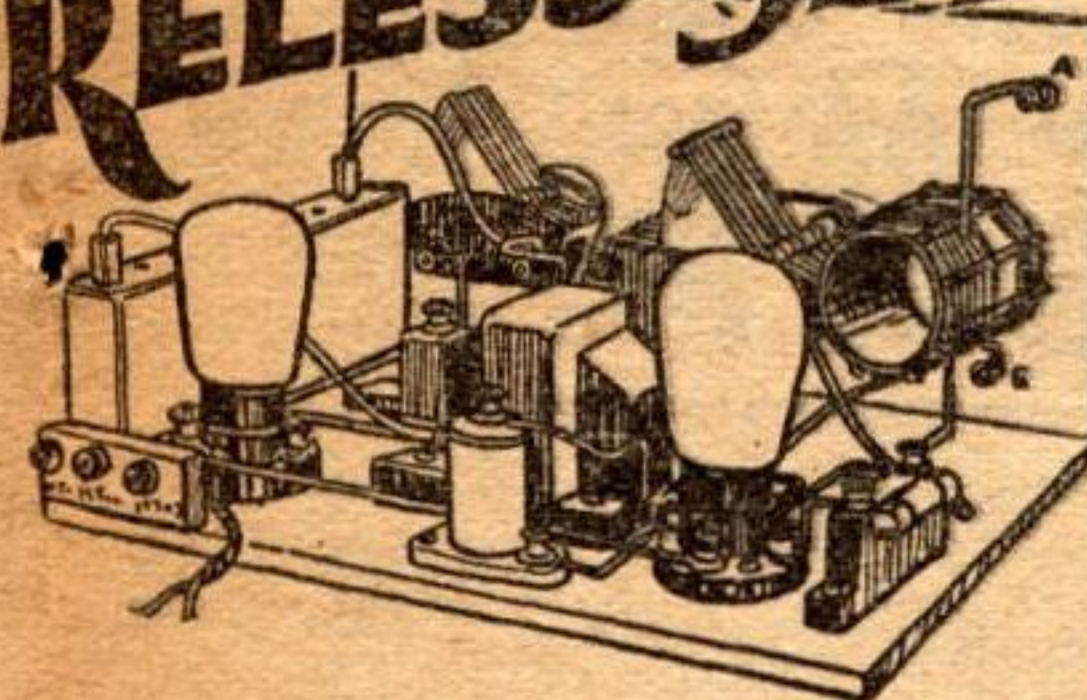
Moravitch obeyed him, and the Frenchman now drew a pistol. He held it before the General, and at the same time calmly cut himself a slice of Christmas

(Continued on page 36.)

**MAKE YOUR OWN WIRELESS SET!**  
 It's an Easy, Yet Fascinating, Task if You Follow the Simple Directions of the Mag.'s Radio Expert. Expensive? Not if You or a Friendly Grown-up already have some of the Parts. Below is the First of Three Articles giving Full Instructions. Look Out for No. 2 Next Week.

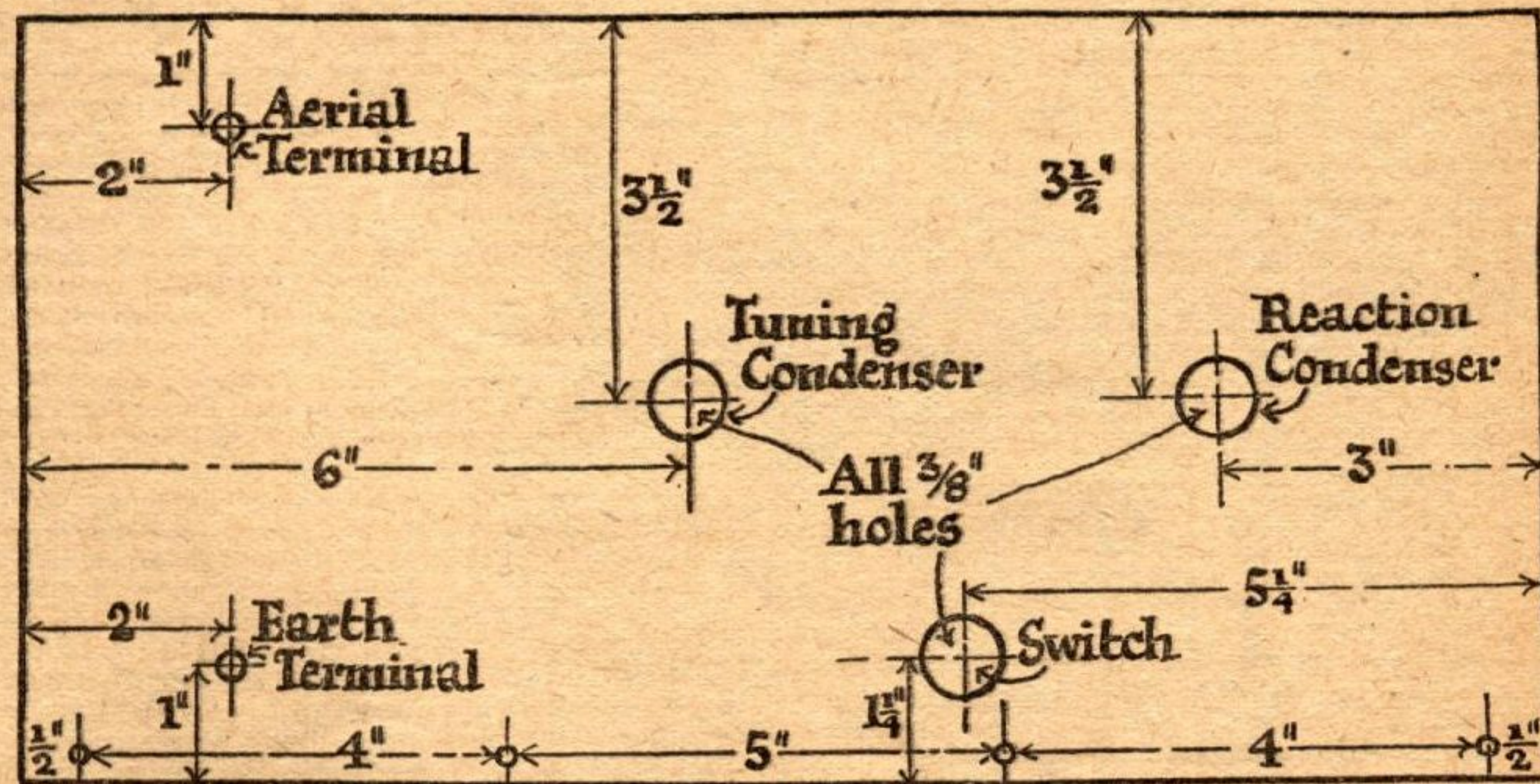


# MAKE THE B.M. Short-wave WIRELESS SET



- Two variable condensers, both .0003; but one of them can be "solid" di-electric, as these occupy much less room than the air-spaced kind.
- Two slow-motion dials; the slower the better.
- Two valve-holders for ordinary four-pin valves, any sort.
- One small high-frequency choke. If you have to buy it, get the best you can afford, as it's rather important.

"THIS programme is being radiated by the British Empire Broadcasting Station at Daventry; by GSG-G for Greeting—on a wavelength of 16.86 metres; and GSE-E for Empire—on a wavelength of 25.28 metres."  
 You'll have heard this announcement often enough lately, but have you ever tried to pick 'em up? Well, here we are, ready to show you how it's done. But, first of all, a few words of warning. If you're going all out for the best winter's listening you ever had, don't rush it; your results won't come up to expectations with slipshod work.  
 An absolutely perfect earth is one thing you must have, and for this purpose a water-tap is as good as



you can get, so long as you don't have to use a very long lead to get at it. An old biscuit-tin, with the earth-lead well fixed to a clean part (soldering is best) and buried about 3 feet deep in damp soil, is jolly good, too.  
 Not many of the parts can be home-made; but the most interesting part of all, the coil, can be, and so we'll show you how. You can exercise your bright ideas on the cabinet if you like, or you can leave the set open. Remember, though, that, like everything else, a wireless set works best if it's kept clean and free of dust and so on.  
 As wonderful results can be had on two valves, we shall describe the two-valver only; the expert will have no difficulty in adapting it for three if he wants stronger signals on the distant stations.  
 Now for a list of all the components you'll want; if you are already a radio man, no doubt many of them are to hand in the spare-parts kit.

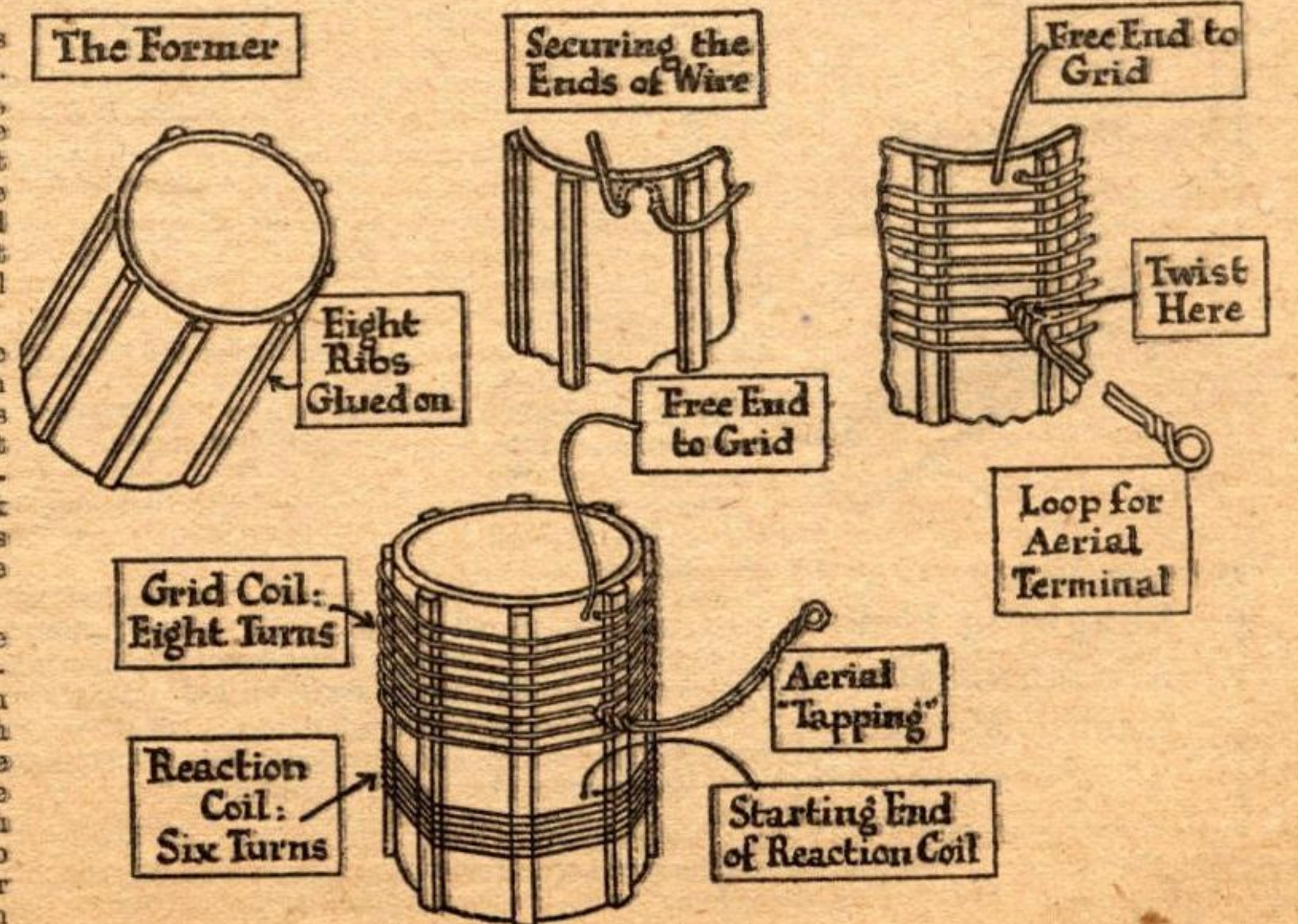
- One low-frequency transformer; about 3½ to 1—5 to 1 won't matter if you've got it on hand.
  - Two fixed condensers, .0001 and .0003.
  - One grid-leak, 3 megohms, together with two clips; these ought to be thrown in.
  - One switch for the accumulator lead; this can be the simplest possible type with two points.
- We haven't mentioned the coil, because, as we said before, we're going to make it ourselves. In addition, you'll want a detector valve; choose your own fancy here, but remember that the best always give years of unflinching service. The other one calls for a power valve, of the super-power class, or, if you can go to it, a pentode. Our own particular choice is a super-power valve made by —; no, we mustn't tell you, but it's the name most famous in all radio!  
 For a baseboard, a nice dry box end, about 14 inches by 10 inches, is quite all right. See it's dry, though.

**DON'T MISS THE GREAT THINGS ON THE WAY FOR ALL OF YOU, CHUMS!**

The front panel we made from a thick piece of three-ply wood—the sort they use for tea-chests. This must be cut to 7 inches by 14 inches. Don't fix it to the baseboard until you've bored all the holes according to the diagram shown here. If you haven't got a drill, a bradawl and penknife will work the job. The diagram gives all the dimensions, set them out on your panel and then carefully cut the large holes with the small blade of your knife, having first bored a small central hole with the bradawl. Trim up any rough edges with a round file—a useful addition to your kit.  
 While we're talking about kit, here's a few necessary items!  
 Small screwdriver, small tenon saw, bradawl, round file, and round-nosed pliers. All these, with your penknife (keep it sharp), are really necessary, and the set can be built up without any others. To fix down the separate parts on the baseboard of our set we used 24 small ¼-inch brass screws, size number 4; and five terminal screws.  
 Having cut the holes in your front panel, give it a coat of stain; we did ours with vandyke brown out of the paint-box—a small tube of water-colour does it easy. Polish it up, when it's dry, with brown shoe-polish, and you'll get quite a nice graining effect.  
 Now you can fix up the two variable condensers on the inside—which you don't have to polish; the main tuning condenser is in the middle of the panel. Then the switch, and the two terminals, aerial and earth. Don't attach any connecting wires; they come last of all.  
 Now then, wireless men, it's the coil next. The job isn't difficult, but it will need a little patience. You'll want a piece of postal tube or something round like that, only it must not have any metal on it!  
 Your tube should be about 2½ inches in diameter and 3½ inches long. Now you must glue eight evenly-spaced strips of thick cardboard lengthways on the outside. See the sketch.

The wire used is bare copper, one-thirty-secondth of an inch diameter. About ¼ inch from the top of the coil "former," bore two small holes, ¼ inch apart. Then bore two more exactly similar holes 1¼ inches from the top, but on the opposite side. Two more, ½ inch further along on the same side as the first, and then another two, ½ inch further still, on the opposite side again.  
 Got the wire handy? Draw about 4 inches through one of the top holes and loop it round through the other. The diagram shows the trick.  
 Now wind six complete turns on, keeping them tight. When you have made six, you must draw out a loop of 8 inches, making a twist as shown, and then wind on two more turns. Cut off the wire, allowing a couple of inches spare, and secure the end through the two holes just as you did the top end.  
 Each turn must be spaced ½ inch clear of its neighbour; you can only make sure of this by keeping each turn tight. Once it's right, you can secure them with a spot of glue where they bear on the ribs. This coil is the "grid" portion, and is most important.  
 It is better to use insulated wire—cotton-covered will do—for the "reaction" coil. This goes on next and consists of six turns wound on in just the same way as the grid coil, only there is no drawn-out loop as in the grid coil. Wind on in the same direction, but allow 9 inches spare at the top end and 10 inches at the bottom. It's a good plan to separate each turn from its neighbour by running the back of a table knife round, so pushing them slightly apart.  
 Well, that's our coil, and it can now be neatly glued on to the panel, midway between the aerial and earth terminals. Reaction end is to be next the panel. You can secure the loop drawn out from the grid coil on to the aerial terminal—at the back of panel, of course. Then the 2-inch length at the bottom of the grid coil goes on to the earth terminal; but you'll have one or two more wires to hitch on to this terminal, so don't tighten up yet. The longer free end of the reaction coil can be secured to the fixed vanes of the smaller variable condenser, marked H, by means of the terminal provided. Make sure it's the fixed vanes.

The rest of the B.M. Short Wave Set will be described in the next two numbers of the Mag. Wait until these parts have appeared before starting to make up the Set.



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## THRILLS! DRAMA! EXCITEMENT IN THE SNOWBOUND LUMBERLANDS



Laughing Dan  
McGrew, the  
Sleuth of the  
Snows.

## A Grand 'Tec Yarn of the Big Woods.

## Poison Meat.

THE wolves! They were closing in. Like grey wraiths they loomed on the immense pile of logs on the cliff-side. And Ranger Dan watched them with flashing eyes like green specks.

"Shore does look like the end," he muttered desperately.

The Forest Ranger was hanging, trussed like a fowl, from the end of a log, with a sheer drop of twenty feet to the frozen river below. The pine log jutted out over the cliffside, its end on the bank weighted securely in position by a huge heap of logs.

Some of the great timber wolves came bounding out on the long log, and Ranger Dan felt the hair stand up on his head. He raised his voice, till the cold, silent forest rang with his hoarse shouts.

"Gerroff! Pull yewr stakes, yew brutes!"

But the giant timber wolves were driven mad with hunger. They came again, slinking fearfully, bellies flattened to the log.

One of the biggest of the wolves jerked savagely at the great side of bacon lashed beneath the log, tearing a great strip of it off. Ranger Dan, hooked beneath, swung like a pendulum.

This was the death his enemy had planned for him. It was ghastly in its malignant cunning. The brutes could not quite reach the Ranger. But they would soon tear through the side of bacon, to which the bound Ranger was hooked by a metal spit, and he would drop.

"Diabolical ain't no word for it," gritted Ranger Dan as the famished, yelping wolves tore at the side of bacon and he was jerked violently about.

Suddenly the first of the wolves who had gulped down a hunk of the bacon, gave a convulsive gulp, stiffened and plunged from the end of the log in a headlong fall to death.

It made Ranger Dan's spino prickle. He had heard no shot, the wolf had not been pushed to its doom, yet the creature had plunged from the log, stretched stiff in death.

Suddenly realization came to the huge Ranger. Poison! His enemy had somehow injected poison in the meat! A deadly poison to kill off the wolves as they ate.

There was pandemonium immediately above his head, other wolves pitching lifeless off the log, only to make room for more of the snapping, clawing brutes.

But Ranger Dan was staring at the wood pile, high above him on the cliff edge. He could make a great, ghostly shape, crouched atop of the logs, head sunk beneath its forepaws, eyes blazing.

"White Lobo!" the Ranger gritted.

The white wolf, leader of the pack, had become a legend in the Big Woods for cunning and ferocity. But would the great wolf-dog fall into this trap with its bait of poisoned meat?

"Gosh, it's coming!" the Ranger breathed suddenly.

The great white wolf leapt down from the log pile, shouldering aside the yelping pack. Belly stretched, it stalked out on the log, its great wolf head

out-thrust. And the Ranger could see round its neck the brass-studded collar and leather satchel—the leather satchel containing jewels worth a king's ransom. The stolen Raveling rubies! Sard Caig wanted them, and had laid this trap to poison White Lobo in order to get them.

And Ranger Dan knew that in the leather wallet was a confession that would send Sard Caig to prison for a long stretch as the master mind behind the robbery. That was why the Ranger was after the jewels, too.

All his instincts revolted against this trap set for this magnificent dog of the wilds, however. For at one time it had been a trained police dog. It had wandered away from the Canadian North West Police Post and become all wolf, leader of the pack. But the instincts and training of its old life still remained with the splendid white husky dog.

And as the great white husky crept forward on the log, the Ranger put his faith in the animal to the test again.

"Back, Carlos! Back!" he barked.

But, indeed, he had no need for the warning. White Lobo shot back like a bullet as his instinct told him the bacon was uneatable.

The white wolf hound cannoned into some of the yelping, ravening pack, and he growled deeply. Then, as his glowering red eyes took in Ranger Dan hanging helpless over the drop, a marked and different expression came into those eyes.

The next second White Lobo turned, snapping at the flank of one of the monstrous timber wolves, and the brute retreated with a startled yelp. White Lobo drove into another one, and his fangs ripped and tore the shoulder open. Then the fight started.

"Gosh take it, that big white fella's a-trying ter drive th' pack off!" cried Ranger Dan, his rugged face lighting.

It might not be on the Ranger's behalf that White Lobo was fighting off the pack, but there was a chance for Dan now—a fighting chance.

For a few moments there was howling bedlam. The white wolf-dog was buried amidst the pack of slashing, ripping wolves. Then he sprang clear. Leaping upon a great gaunt brute who had challenged him for supremacy. White Lobo broke its neck with a quick flash of teeth and a jerk. Another brute it tossed lifeless in the snow.

And the rest of the pack slunk away from this mighty, dominant leader, fighting and tearing amongst themselves over the remains of the dead wolves.

White Lobo glowered at them with red eyes. But he was hurt. One of his legs was terribly bitten, and with a last deep-throated howl he turned away.

Ranger Dan's heart sank. "B'glory, here they come again," he breathed, as he saw the wolves sinking forward, snarling and fighting for the lead.

The next moment the brutes were tugging again at the bacon, and great strips were torn off it. The rugged Ranger had no fear of death, but he was grateful that these brutes would not get him. He at least would plunge down to death on the logs that strewed the river bed below.

### To Save His Pal.

THE big bluff Ranger's thoughts were for his pal, Jim Hazel.

"Kinda leaving him in th' lurch," he gritted, "going out like this."

Jim Hazel had gone back to the lumber camp the previous night, to try to make peace with the

crew of loggers. The men had been turned against him by Sard Caig.

But Ranger Dan didn't know that Jim Hazel had fought and overthrown Carl Zimler, the immense, bearded ruffian of the woods. In fact, he had knocked him out so thoroughly that the youngster believed he had killed the giant.

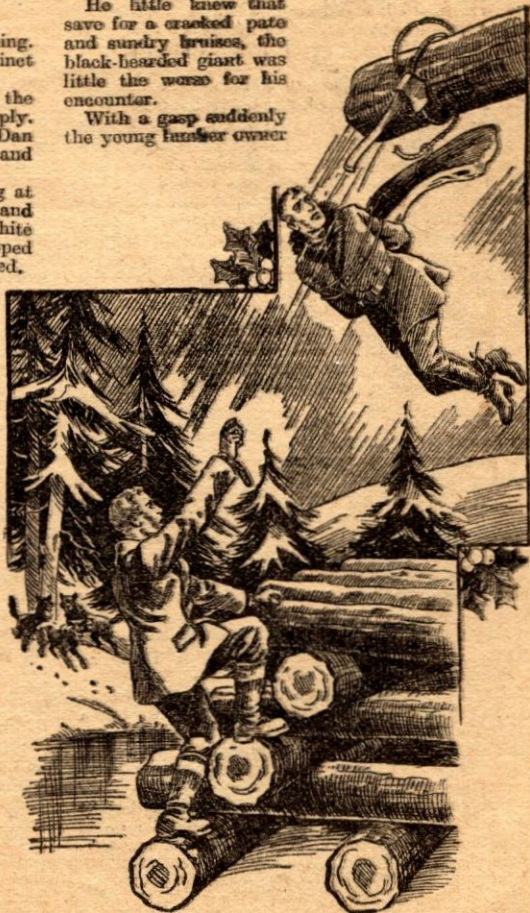
And Jim Hazel was wandering in the woods, uneasy and fearful. There were steel handcuffs on the lad's wrists, for he had been arrested after the fight with Zimler by a U.S. Ranger. The youngster did not suspect that it was a fake Ranger, even though he had knocked the man's hat off in the struggle and seen Ranger Dan McGrow's name inside the Stetson.

It made him think that something had happened to Dan, however, and his uneasiness about his chum grew into a lunatic that something was dreadfully amiss.

"Wish I could find him," he choked. "Reekin Ranger Dan'd give me a fair hearing—about Zimler!"

He little knew that save for a cracked pate and sundry bruises, the black-bearded giant was little the worse for his encounter.

With a gasp suddenly the young lumber owner



SAVING HIS BACON.—As Jim Hazel's axe sliced through the rope, Dan dropped. He was saved from the wolves.

crouched down behind a fallen log. Before him in a clearing in the cold white woods were some of his own lumberjacks at work. They were skidding the logs—that is to say, moving them on ice sleds and on horse-drawn drays to the river.

The picturesque scene meant that Sard Caig had got control of his timber.

And Jim could not come into the open to protest because he thought he had killed Carl Zimler.

He retreated through the glades of the forest, until he came to the river. And as he made his way cautiously up the frozen waterway, he came upon a significant sign of his enemy's amazing cunning.

It was a dam—built of logs—a mighty affair of strong buttresses slanted upstream, with a large gate at present lowered.

Behind that gate was what seemed like a great expanse of ice. But the young lumberman knew it was only thinly frozen over. It was, in fact, a tremendous head of water, and once the gates of the dam were raised it could be loosed into the shallow river bed, and even now, in the height of winter, it would sweep the logs down to join the main branch of the Great Snake River.

"Sard Caig seemed pretty certain of getting me out of the way," Jim gritted, "to build that dam—"

A little higher up he came upon a log shanty, and entering he found it strewn with axes and other lumbering gear, which included a small circular saw worked by a treadle. There was also a pair of powerful binoculars in a case, no doubt belonging to Sard Caig. Jim Hazel took them out of their case in his manacled hands, and going outside proceeded to spy out the land.

Suddenly a fearful cry escaped him, while the colour drained from his face.

"It can't be!" he gasped.

He saw the winding river bed taking on swiftly steeper slopes on either side, until at about a mile distant it ran like a great gash through high canyon walls. Near that point the canyon turned sharply, and was lost to view.

"Ranger Dan! The wolves!" the young lumber boss jerked out, aghast.

He saw the U.S. Ranger hanging from the log that overhung the canyon wall. And the wolves—scores of them, fighting furiously in the snow around; others crowding out on that log-pole and snapping down at the Ranger. It was a sight to make the blood freeze in Jim Hazel's veins.

"I—I've got to do something!" he muttered.

Yet it was more than a mile to the spot where the wolves were making their gruesome feast, and Jim had no weapon save an axe. What could he do?

Suddenly a wild inspiration flashed into his brain. There was a chance—just a chance—

That turn of the river between its steep banks provided just the spot that was likely to be a "Bugaboo" to lumbermen driving the logs down-river. At that point, if any, they were likely to jam up, forming a confusion of logs that would rapidly mount higher and higher.

"I'll jam those logs," gritted Jim Hazel desperately, his blue eyes flaring. But would he do it before the wolves tore through the side of bacon?

### The Log Jam.

HIS face white with fear, Jim Hazel ran to the shanty. He made straight for the circular saw and set it going, working at the treadle as fast as his feet would go. And against the sharp, whirling teeth, he held the connecting chain of his manacles.

Seconds counted now, and Jim treadled furiously. At last the steel link was shorn through and Jim's

hands were free, though his wrists were still encircled with steel.

A few moments later, he came dashing out, with the caulked shoes of a riverman on his feet, an axe strapped at his waist, and in his hands a trimmed sapling, twelve feet long.

Out on the thin ice he ran, his spiked shoes chinking out little bits. He could not say how far the ice would bear his weight. He had to risk that.

Presently he stopped and chopped a hole. In it he inserted the sapling, round the end of which, like a mop, were bound sticks of dynamite. They were in oiled paper, but a fuse was jammed in one of the cartridges.

Bending, he lit the fuse, and as it smoked and fizzed, the youngster ran over the ice for the dam gate.

He had scarcely leapt up on to the platform of logs where the gate of the dam was worked than the explosion lifted with a harsh, sullen roar.

Jim Hazel bent his back to the falling storm. Ice crashed round him, the water boiled in a flood round the dam, but he held stubbornly to a foothold, while turning the handle by which the great log gate was lifted.

And then the river's roar changed. As it was released in a mighty stream its loud *hooraa* seemed a sustained cheer at the prospect of release.

And then came the song of the logs. First a brutish rumbling, a *boom boom* as they roused like giants from sleep. Then a wild *clacking*, mingled with the roar of waters. In a few moments the river was a moving carpet of madly rushing logs.

Jim raced along the bank, with a peavey pole now in his hands. All along that bank were great stacks of sawn logs secured by chains. At each stack he paused only to throw off the chains, then to insert his peavey, and tug at the key log beneath.

In each case it brought the mighty stack of logs to collapse, rolling and shooting into the river with a sound like thunder.

"Looks like there'll be enough to jam," the youngster panted at last.

He raced down the bank, with his long peavey pole held across his chest like a balancing pole as he leapt from one moving log to another. A single false step would have meant a slip, a foot crushed between the grinding, crashing logs, and then the fall into this awful millrace that would grind him to pulp in no time.

But Jim Hazel was a riverman. He poised confidently on one big log, body slightly bent to balance himself as he was swept down the river.

And then, suddenly, Jim Hazel saw ahead of him the jam.

It was overwhelming. A veritable mountain of logs, tumbling, heaving, piling on top of one another. The river bore them on so that they rose, as if given life, striving each to get on top of the other.

"Gosh!" exclaimed Jim as he gazed on that vast and terrible juggernaut of destruction.

He was being borne down on it arrow-swift. Unless he looked to himself with all a lumberjack's craft, it was certain destruction.

But Jim's eyes rose above the jam. Sheer above the inextricable tangle of bristling formidable logs that filled the canyon to a height of almost twenty feet.

His teeth clicked together. Ranger Dan still hung there, bait for the wolves. Even the crashing thunder of the logs had not driven them away altogether.

"I've got to get to him," gritted Jim.

The next moment he was on the jam, and with the current boiling through the timbers he was scaling the very face of the mass of timber—climbing

like a squirrel in a cage. Log after log moved under his spiked shoes, but he was on another. And now he was climbing the firmer logs higher up with the aid of both hands and feet.

Breathlessly he reached the summit of the jam, and a cry was wrenched from his throat at what he saw.

A wolf had sprung down from the log at Ranger Dan, and was grappling at his chest. The brute was just about to lunge with fangs snapping, when Jim hurled his axe.

It cleft sheer through the rope holding the side of

### Cold Killer.

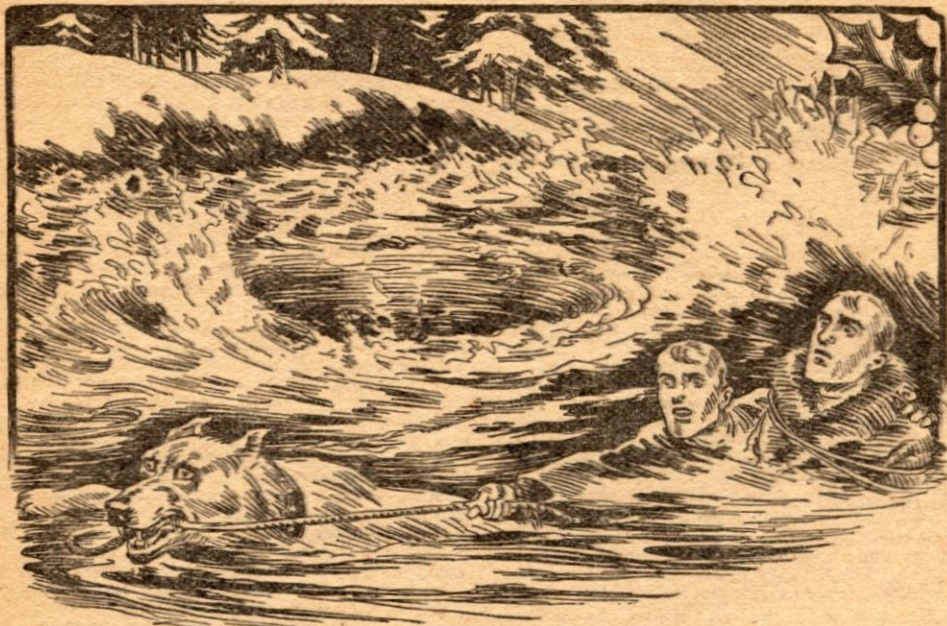
THE Ranger's face changed expression, however, as he saw the steel handcuffs on his fair-haired chum's wrists.

True, Jim Hazel had severed the connecting chain, but he had not been able to rid himself completely of those bracelets of Government pattern.

Ranger Dan's face darkened and his green eyes glinted.

"Wal, say; what in tarnation's th' meaning of this?" he broke out.

Jim paled a little. The trouble on his mind came



DRAGGED FROM DEATH.—Desperately, Jim hung on to the rope as White Lobo swam powerfully away from the sucking, deadly whirlpool.

bacon—what remained of it. And with a cry Ranger Dan fell. But that fall of only a few feet saved his life. The Ranger and the wolf went in a fierce, scrambling struggle as Jim Hazel rushed in. He seized up the sharp, double-bitted axe, which had fallen again to the logs, and with a single blow dashed out the brains of the crazed brute as it made again to lunge at Ranger Dan.

The rest of the wolves slunk back, snarling, and disappeared like wraiths as Jim whirled the axe over his shoulder.

Their brute sense told them that here was a foe not to be trifled with, and they had no stomach for the fight.

Very quickly then Jim Hazel severed his chum's bonds with the axe. As Ranger Dan sprang erect on the mountain of logs piled between the canyon walls, his rugged face was lighted by a great grin. And he seized his pal's hand.

"Yew do things in style, Jim, son," he exploded admiringly. "Dern it, yew moved a mountain thet time. And like I said, Old Man McGrew's son ain't forgettin'."

back to worry him, and the fair-haired youngster trembled as he blurted out his tale.

"I—I've killed a man; Carl Zimler it was, but it was in fair fight," he faltered. "Honestly, it was an accident—"

Ranger Dan scowled more than ever as he listened. Really he was in sympathy with his pal, but with his hands clenched and lean jaw jutting he did not look like it.

For he was trying to think. And the elusive memory was tricking him. Carl Zimler as a matter of fact had been bending over him only two hours before, snarling threats: therefore Jim couldn't have killed him.

But Ranger Dan had been hazy at the time, his mind dimmed with pain, and he had been through a lot since. Something there was in the back of his mind about Zimler: if he could have brought it to light he would have saved his pal a great deal of worry and trouble.

Of course the fair-haired youngster could not read Ranger Dan's thoughts. The rugged Ranger looked as if he meant to enforce the Law and arrest him.

"Honest, Dan, he simply fell and hit his head on an axe. He threw the axe first—"

"Huh!" grunted the big fellow. "Yew say it was Vickers fr'm headquarters arrested yew. That guy's here in the Big Woods, eh? He'll take yew in, Jim, and bust the whole works. He's so dumb he thinks a corkscrew's th' shortest distance between two points."

As he said this Ranger Dan produced the key of the handcuffs, and unlocked the steel bracelets round Jim's wrists, pocketing them.

"I reck'n we've gotta go in hiding till I can ketch that White Lobo," he said, his rare grin lighting up his rugged face like the sun emerging from behind clouds. "It's yew and me—agin the Law, if need be—until we c'n git that paper convicting Sard Caig, th' Big Boss."

Ranger Dan knew that only this absolute proof would serve to complete their case. They had got to get the goods on him, or his power would crush them both.

They had evidence of that only a moment or two later.

Jim Hazel was telling Ranger Dan about the logs, and how this cut had to be at the mills by the first of the month, to clear the mortgage on his timber tract.

It looked as if this jam would hold things up, especially if he had to go in hiding. Then Sard Caig would foreclose on the mortgage and get his timber.

"We've gotta find a way round that, Jim," said Ranger Dan, gravely. "Iity yew was mixed up in Zimler going out. Th' Law oughta hanged him—"

Suddenly there was an interruption that made them both wheel round sharply on the logs.

"Surrender in the name of the Law," barked a harsh voice.

There on the river bank not fifty yards distant was the pseudo Ranger—in reality Mike Pease, city gunman and one of Sard Caig's gang. It happened that he resembled Vickers from headquarters, and he knew it. He was squatted with one leg on either side of a formidable machine-gun, and he wore Dan's Stetson hat and badge, together with other parts of a forest Ranger's uniform.

What startled Ranger Dan and Jim, however, was that he waited for no response to his command, but immediately began to work the machine-gun.

*Brrrrt—brrrrt!—brrrrt!* it stuttered viciously, and lead flew in a hail ploughing into the logs all around them.

"Down!" hissed Ranger Dan, and threw himself full length on the logs, his lean face working furiously. "By the big toe of St. Peter, that guy is shooting to kill!"

Jim Hazel was quick to follow his chum's example, for he too sensed deadly menace in those probing bullets.

Death reached out for them—and seemed to relent, however. Not that the rivet-hammer clamour of the machine-gun ceased, but a mound of logs between made the marksman's aim difficult.

*Brrrrt! Brrrrt! Brrrrt!* Ranger Dan and Jim Hazel pulled themselves full length over the logs, both conscious of a fiery thrill that was too much like fear to be enjoyable. But the edge of the log jam was very near now. The logs jutted and bristled beneath them in irregular steps.

"Down yew go," hissed Ranger Dan. "Jim, son; I'm gonna git that fella good and hard for this, I—"

He was interrupted by a shout of fury from above, easily to be recognised as Sard Caig's voice.

"Missed—damn yew! Curse yewr mangy hide, yewr scared of the job. Got cold feet."

The machine gunner mumbled something as Sard Caig rushed forward to grab the weapon from him.

The Big Shot of the Woods was not squeamish about taking the life of Ranger Dan and his pal. It needed cold nerve to get away with it, that was all. With the heavy machine-gun he rushed up to the edge of the jam, and tilting the squat ugly muzzle down, he prepared to squeeze the trigger.

But the gun did not even start its murderous stuttering, the cartridge belt did not even once quiver or jump.

Something else did. It came with the speed of an express train, a great white ghostly shape with red eyes glaring. It was White Lobo, the great wolf dog.

*Crash!* He lunged sideways, with one of his terrific shoulder charges. He weighed a hundred and eighty pounds, that great white husky. And the impact sent the machine-gun clattering down over the edge of the log jam and wrenched a cry from the pitilessly cold Sard Caig.

Well it might be, for the great wolf dog was about to lunge at his throat. Quicker than a lynx, he was. But quicker came the sharp commanding voice of Ranger Dan climbing down the long jam.

"Carlos—Carlos!"

With a suddenness that bewildered the senses, the great white wolf dog jumped over the edge, leaping down from log to log. Over the heads of the two the great hound shot, quivering, and with a mighty splash entered the live flood that was pouring like a mill race through the logs.

"Rec'n we'd better go after that dog!" panted Ranger Dan, his breath coming like steam on the icy air.

Neither of them fancied immersion in that icy cold water, therefore Ranger Dan and Jim pried logs loose from the jam, and mounting the sawn trunks were whirled down river.

But as Ranger Dan suspected, Sard Caig was intent on preventing their escape.

*Crack! Crack! Crack!* The gang of human forest wolves were firing with rifles and revolvers, the while they hastily descended the log jam.

Ranger Dan realised that he and Jim riding the logs were offering easy targets for the gunmen of the Big Woods. Suddenly he bit back a cry as he felt the burn of a bullet in his left arm.

The shock of it upset his balance and he rolled off the log into the icy-cold water.

At that moment White Lobo swimming strongly in the icy waters ahead, looked round. There was such a look of intelligence on that great wolf head, that Jim Hazel on a sudden inspiration unwound the coil of rope he carried, and cast it over the flood to White Lobo.

The wolf dog caught the end between his strong white teeth.

The next moment Jim Hazel dived, coming to the surface again beside his Ranger pal, who was temporarily stunned.

*Crack! Crack!* He glanced behind. Some of Sard Caig's lumber ruffians were following on logs. But they stood less chance now of finding a target in the water, for the next moment Ranger Dan, supported by Jim Hazel, who gripped the other end of the rope was swept round a bend between the high rocky walls of the canyon.

They felt the pull of mighty waters, but stronger even than that was the pull of White Lobo in the other direction. Once again Carlos looked round. What was in his mind? Where was the wild dog of the woods taking them.

Even bigger thrills in next week's smashing chapters of this mighty Tale of Terror in the frozen Big Woods. Don't miss next week's gripping incidents, chaps.

QUITE THE CREEPIEST, EERIEST YARN IN THIS WEEK'S BUNCH OF CHRISTMAS TALES—AND TOO GOOD TO MISS.



More Mysteries of the Castle of Red Candles.

### Christmas Greetings.

SNOW was falling heavily, and the grey light of Christmas Day filtered through the two, slit-like windows of a high turret in Meremore Castle. In every direction, as far as the eye could see, stretched the empty, snowbound Yorkshire Wolds.

Within the turret-room, with its walls of four-foot-thick stone, Jimmy Lattimer and Peter Kipps were chained to heavy oaken beds. They did not even know that it was Christmas Day; they had awakened, fresh and hungry, to find themselves prisoners of the Grim Marquis.

"It's like a nightmare, Peter!" said Jimmy, gazing at the heavy iron manacles which encircled his wrist. "What really *did* happen last night?"

"Jehosophat!" Peter had raised himself as far as the short chain would allow, so that he could take a peep through the nearest narrow window. "There's been tons of snow, Jimmy! It's as thick as the dickens. Real Christmas weather." He sank on the bed again, and said in answer to Jimmy's question, "We were on your motor-bike, on the way to your people's place, for Christmas. Then we got into a storm, the bike skidded, and you fell into the moat of Meremore Castle."

"Yes, I know," nodded Jimmy, frowning. "But it's all so vague. I remember the crimson candles, and the red lights everywhere—and that awful man in evening dress."

Peter grinned, for his sense of humour never deserted him for long.

"The Grim Marquis!" he agreed. "A run bird, if ever I saw one! Remember how he put us in a cage and sent us down a terrific well—into a vast underground cavern? Then we managed to escape, jumped the moat, and got away."

"Only to be recaptured within half-a-mile," groaned Jimmy Lattimer, "and dragged back to this prison."

At that moment heavy footsteps sounded; then came the grating of a key in the massive lock. In stalked an enormous man with hairy, muscular arms, wearing a leather apron and mask.

"You are awake," he said gruffly. "I tell the master."

"Hold on," said Jimmy, as the man was about to back out. "Why are we being kept here like this? Tell your master we want to get home for Christmas."

A slow, cunning smile came into the man's face.

"To-day, it is Christmas," he said. "You sleep for five days."

With that the giant torturer, for this the boys knew him to be, left the turret-room and locked the door after him.

To his chum's amazement, Peter Kipps burst into a long chuckle of merriment. Jimmy stared at him, and found his companion sitting up in bed, hugging his thin knees with his long, wiry arms.



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"If you think it's a joke to be bottled up in this rotten old castle—"

"Hold your horses, old son," interrupted Peter. "We're hungry, aren't we? And it's Christmas Day. Ten-to-one that torturer fellow will soon come back with our Christmas dinner—although I wouldn't guarantee that he'll bring turkey and plum pudding."

"Supposing he does?" asked Jimmy. "We can't do anything. We're chained to the beds—"

"And I've just discovered that the beds, although heavy, are not clamped to the floor," said Peter coolly. "If we work hard, I believe we can get one of the beds upended."

Jimmy was out of bed in a flash. Both he and his chum were fully dressed, for they had been placed upon their beds just as they had fallen into their stupor. Each boy had an iron manacle round his right wrist, and a stout chain, about a yard in length, was securely fixed to the solid oak upright at the head of the bed.

Jimmy, alone, could not have moved his heavy bed, but with Peter's help he managed to shove it along by inches, until Peter could come no farther, owing to the limits of his chain. Then Jimmy reached across and the second bed was moved, inch by inch in the same way. The boys strained every muscle in their efforts, for every minute they expected to be interrupted.

At last they got one of the beds in such a position that it was practically alongside the deeply sunken door. The next move was to get the bed on its end. This was the most ticklish task of all, for the chains hampered the boys, and it was necessary to drag the second bed with them, too. Finally, the bed stood on its end, with the head to the floor, so that Jimmy was able to crouch down beside it, the yard of chain allowing him plenty of movement.

"Well, we're all set!" said Peter happily. "One touch and the bed topples over—and it's heavy."

They waited—in a fever of impatience. An hour slipped by—then another hour. Gradually the light faded, until darkness came, and the captives' high spirits drooped. They became cold and stiff, and even Peter's good humour showed signs of deserting him.

"It's no good—the Marquis means to starve us to death!" grunted Jimmy. "My hat! What a fine Christmas!"

"Easy, old man" murmured Peter. "Somebody's coming at last!"

They listened. Faintly, they heard the footsteps of a man ascending a stone stairway. They came nearer and nearer . . . A key grated in the lock, and the boys held themselves tense, ready for instant action.

The door swung open, and the red, ruddy glow of a lantern swept through the opening. The same giant, hairy guard entered, unsuspecting. Then the thing happened.

Jimmy and Peter heaved, and the solid oaken bed, toppling over, crashed right across the front of the doorway, falling with tremendous force on the torturer.

The giant guard was felled to the floor, and the red glowing lamp went flying. Fortunately it did not

go out. The torturer lay still, smashed, unconscious, pinned down by the great weight of the bed.

"It worked!" whispered Jimmy exultantly.

"Of course it worked," said Peter. "Can you reach his pockets? I'm too far away."

But Jimmy, fearful lest the crash should have been heard, was already frantically searching the unconscious man's pockets.

"Here's a key!" he whispered breathlessly. "Perhaps this is the one."

With trembling fingers Jimmy placed the small, queerly shaped key in the lock of the heavy manacle, and at the first turn there was a low, grating click. In a moment the manacle was off, and Jimmy Lattimer was free.

"I'll have a slice of that," said Peter.

Click! His own manacle dropped away, and with scarcely a look at the unconscious guard, they passed out through the open doorway.

## The Chamber Of Fire.

**B**EFORE them was a stone stairway, straight and narrow and steep. Jimmy led the way, and he kept his eyes open constantly for any window which might provide a means of exit.

But there were no windows—not even slits. At length, below them, the boys caught a gleam of ruddy, reflected light. Into their faces, too, came an unexpected wave of scorching air. Their nostrils and throats were tickled by a harsh, acrid vapour.

The stairs took a turn near the bottom and, suddenly, Jimmy and Peter made a discovery which filled them with dismay.

The stairs led straight on to a narrow balcony—and this balcony was near the ceiling of a great stone chamber, which might indeed have formerly been the actual torture chamber of Meremore Castle.

"Great Scott!" muttered Jimmy, agast.

Even Peter failed to grin. There was something grotesque and fantastic about the spectacle they were witnessing. The chamber below was bare of furniture, but in the centre of the paved stone floor there was a cup-like depression some eight feet in diameter, with raised stone sides. This was filled with a seething, boiling mass of lurid fire, and flames leapt up halfway to the arched roof.

Standing by, a sinister figure, was the Marquis of Meremore, looking even more demon-like in the flickering light of the fire. Nearer the central fire were four of the castle's strange servants; enormous men, bare to the waist, their faces concealed by great gauze-like masks, to protect them from the heat. But most significant of all were the two cages which stood some way back from the fire, one on either side.

It was possible to see right through the cages. They were square in section, and the bars ran right across their tops. Each one contained a narrow camp bed, a small table, and a chair. The door of each cage stood wide open. On each table stood an earthenware jug and a loaf of bread.

"All is well, master?"

The voice came up surprisingly clearly to the boys. They saw that another man had joined the Marquis of Meremore; a thin, wizened man dressed in sombre black. He stood rubbing his bony hands together, and the ruddy light flickered and glowed upon his lantern-jawed face.

"The preparations are complete, Ivan, and our young guests will soon be down," came the Marquis's cultured voice. "Here, in these cages, they will partake of their Christmas feast." A chuckle, grim and ominous, came from him. "And here they will remain for seven days and seven nights."

"And then, master?"

"Then they will be ready for their life's work in

the Great Cavern" replied the Grim Marquis. "During those seven days they will grow accustomed to the heat, to the fumes, to the redness of the fire. This will be their initiation."

Jimmy shuddered. The cages, as he had suspected, were in readiness for Peter and himself. If they were to escape from this castle of mystery, they must act now.

Jimmy was looking about him carefully, and his spirits sank. The balcony ran the full length of the wall, and after Jimmy had crept cautiously along he found there was a continuation of the narrow stone stairway. It led straight downwards—right into the Fire Chamber itself! The stairway on the other side did exactly the same thing.

"We're done, Peter," muttered Jimmy hoarsely, as he rejoined his chum. "There's no escape."

As he spoke, his eyes caught the gleam of a great old sword which hung from two hooks on the balcony wall. But his attention was attracted at that moment by the hard voice of the Marquis.

"Sergius has been gone a long time," he said impatiently, gazing up at the balcony. "I told him to bring— By heaven! What is this, Ivan? Look up there!"

He pointed a long, lean finger upwards—straight

"Not yet," flashed Jimmy.

And in his voice there was a note of exultant hope.

### Sword Of Liberty.

THEN it was that Peter Kipps saw something which he had previously missed. Jimmy Lattimer was handling a coil of stout rope—and to the end of the rope he had secured the heavy medieval sword, which he had silently removed from the hooks on the wall.

That rope he had taken from Sergius, the torturer, when he had found the precious key.

"Here—grab hold of this end!" panted Jimmy. "Now stand clear—everything depends upon my aim."

From both staircases came the grim sounds of the enemy. The Marquis and his men were approaching rapidly. From two sides they were converging upon the boys, and it seemed, indeed, that there could be no escape.

But with all his strength Jimmy hurled the great sword; he flung it outwards, aiming the blade at a great hook which projected from the central beam, running right across the hall.



A DOSE OF DOZE MIXTURE.—Jimmy and Peter heaved and the big oaken bed toppled over, crashing on top of the torturer who stepped into the room.

at the boys. He had seen them! Before they had had time to dodge out of sight behind the balcony rail he had glimpsed their two faces.

"What madness has Sergius committed?" shouted the Man with Crimson Eyes. "But wait! The boys cannot escape! To the left stairway, Ivan, and take two of the men with you. The young hounds are trapped!"

He himself dashed with two other men to the opposite stairway. And so they came dashing up.

"Well, we're for it," said Peter resignedly.

Clang! His aim, mercifully, was dead accurate. The sword blade, caught securely in the hook, and having gone for ever half its length, it jammed.

"Grab hold!" yelled Jimmy. "They're here!! Split seconds were of value now. The Marquis of Meremore and his men had reached the balcony, and at full tilt they were racing towards the boys.

Peter grabbed as Jimmy had directed. Then, as the Grim Marquis reached towards Jimmy, the two boys leaped. Over the low balcony wall they went swinging far into space.

A scream of rage arose from the Man with the Crimson Eyes.

"A thousand curses!" he stormed with the violence of a fiend. "They have cheated us!"

Across the room swooped the boys, swinging like a great pendulum. A breathless second... *Swoooooosh!* Right through the leaping flames they swung... Hair and eyebrows scorched... half blinded, half choked...

"Drop!" yelled Jimmy suddenly.

Blindly, Peter obeyed. They had got the end of the rope's swing, and Jimmy had seen, almost below, the deep enclosure of a casement window. There were seats there, cushioned seats...

*Thud-thud!* Together the boys landed—among the cushioned seats. At the extremity of the swing the drop was comparatively small, but, even so, they were bruised and battered by the fall.

"Through the window, Peter!" shouted Jimmy, scrambling to his feet. "They're coming from all directions."

The Marquis and his men had already clattered down the stairs and were racing across the room. To be caught now would mean horrible tortures... death even...

*Craaaaash!* In unison, Jimmy and Peter went hurtling through the glass of the window. It was their quickest method of escape. They were through before any of the men could reach them.

The boys expected to find, outside, that deadly moat filled with moving, sucking mud. But they were hoping that it would now be filled with snow—and perhaps half-frozen—thus they would have a chance—

But there was no moat!

They tumbled headlong into a great snowdrift in an enclosed courtyard, and when they poked themselves up there seemed to be no escape. Snow was falling heavily, yet there was not complete darkness.

Madly the boys ran, dashing through the thick snow. And this time they ran blindly—expecting at every second to encounter further enemies.

"Look!" gasped Jimmy exultantly.

They had turned a corner, and there in front of them was another courtyard—the outer courtyard of Meremore Castle. In that one glance the boys saw that the great drawbridge was in the "down" position. The gates stood wide open under the massive stone arch. And there, standing in the

courtyard, was a big closed car! This car, no doubt, belonged to the Marquis, who was bent on undertaking a journey after he had seen the boys securely caged.

"Come on!" bellowed Jimmy. "It's our only chance."

As they reached the car they heard the confused sounds of pursuit. Men were racing after them. They wrenched at the doors, leapt in, and Jimmy, who had a good knowledge of cars, found the self-starter in a flash.

*Zurrrrrrrr!* The engine sprang into life, and at a touch of a switch the headlights came on. With a crashing of gears the car leapt forward like a live thing.

Then, as it went hurtling through the gateway, the drawbridge sprang to life, too! It commenced rising!

It was obvious that the drawbridge was not operated by clumsy, medieval machinery, for it rose with such rapidity that the fugitive car had no chance of getting away.

Up the machine went, its driving wheels skidding madly in the snow; it slewed round, while the drawbridge became steeper and steeper. Then, with a crashing, slumping commotion, the great car toppled over on its side, and it jammed in the stone gateway. The drawbridge, continuing to rise, crushed the car like an eggshell. There came the shrieking of tortured metal, the bursting of glass.

Giant guards forced open the warped doors, thus Jimmy and Peter were lifted out and held prisoners. The Marquis of Meremore came through the driving snow, and his grim face, with its pallor of death, was dreadful to look upon.

"So!" he said in a low voice. "You have them! It is well! Take them—and see that they are placed in the cages at once. They have sealed their own fate—from this moment they will be my slaves, and they will never see daylight again!"

Thus, in spite of their valiant efforts, the unfortunate chums were taken back into that sinister castle of a thousand mysteries.

Look out for a baffling mystery of the Deep next week when Captain Scar of the "Scavenger" brings to book the Crook of the Whaling Grounds.

**NEXT WEEK—OUR FIRST NUMBER OF 1934.**

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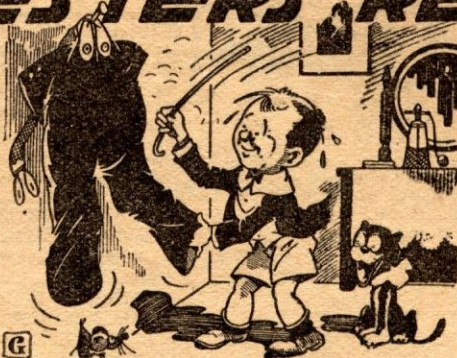
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# THE JESTER'S REALM

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



Revenge is sweet!

(Football to HUGH SHERIDAN, 905, Albert Street, Hastings, H.B., New Zealand.)

## HARDLY.

OLD GENT (to convict in cell): Why are you looking so gloomy?

CONVICT: My brother died in the workhouse!

OLD GENT: Well, that's nothing!

CONVICT: It is! He's the only one who let the family down.

(Fountain pen to HUGH MAGUIRE, 96, Cyprus Street, Stretford, Manchester.)

## CURIOSITY.

Willie saw some dynamite, Didn't understand it quite. Curiosity, never pays—

'Twas raining Willie seven days.

(Fountain pen to P. ASPLIN, Milking Nook Farm, Ginton, Peterborough.)

## COPPERS.

TRAMP: Can ye spare a couple of coppers, guv'nor?

GRUMPY GENT: I'm not a police station!

(Fountain pen to GEOFFREY GEORGE HILL, 34, Calthorpe Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 15.)

## HIS MEAT.

MR. BROWN (applying for lion-tamer's job): Once I went into a cage with a lion, that had not been fed for a month!

MANAGER: Good, you'll do!

MR. BROWN: But that lion was dead!

(Fountain pen to J. DAVEY, 36, King Street, Gillingham, Kent.)

## THE REASON.

SAMBO: Pete! Pete! Wake up!

PETE: I can't, I ain't asleep!

(Fountain pen to GEOFFREY SADD, 23, Nordelph Corner, Hardingham, Norwich.)

## OBVIOUS.

BINKS: I can't decide whether to go to a palmist or to a mind-reader.

JINKS: Go to a palmist—it's obvious that you have a palm.

(Fountain pen to JOHN KINEALY, 32, Stanley Street, Wallasey.)

## LONGER.

CUSTOMER: What's the idea of raising the price of a shave these hard times?

BARBER: These depression she makes the faces longer!

(Fountain pen to ERIC COLE, 7, Tovy Place, Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts.)

## DIRTY.

TEACHER: Your face is very dirty, Tommy!

TOMMY: Yes, sir. I didn't bother to wash it this morning as I thought it was going to be foggy!

(Fountain pen to FRANK BROWN, Mill End, Audley, Stoke-on-Trent.)

## S-S-S-SORRY!

THEATRE ATTENDANT: Now then, mister! Stop hissing at the show, or I'll turn you out!

STUTTERER: Excuse me, s-s-s-sir, but I was just

## JOKE COUPON.

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

Boys' Magazine, 30/12/33.

s-s-saying to my friend, how s-s-s-s-superb the s-s-s-s-singing was!

(Fountain pen to FRANK DAVIS 13, Hasted Road, Charlton, S.E.7.)

## THE (D)RHINE.

A teacher was instructing her pupils in geography.

"And where," he asked, "does the Rhine go?"

A little Cockney's hand shot up instantly "Please, sir, down the drine!"

(Fountain pen to ERIC LANDER, "Keneric" Hawkevell Chase, Hockley, Essex.)

## BURNT OFFERING.

POST: And do you think that I should put more fire into my verses?

EDITOR: Oh, no! Quite the reverse!

(Fountain pen to C. WELLINGS, Wendover, Arbuthnot Lane, Bealey, Kent.)

## WHAT STEPS.

JACK: Uncle, I wish to ask you a question?

UNCLE: What is it, my boy?

JACK: If a boy is a lad, and the lad has a stepfather, is the lad a step-ladder?

(Fountain pen to RONALD MYNETT, 143, Mount Avenue, Gt. Houghton, Nr. Barnsley, Yorks.)



Short-sighted Pilot: Gosh! I'm blown if I thought I'd be bothered with pedestrians up here!

(Football to R. H. BARKER, 44, Lattice Avenue, Ipswich, Suffolk.)

## JOHN HUNTER'S GIGANTIC TALE OF PREHISTORIC MONSTERS.

# THE MENACE OF THE MONSTERS

Tremendous Thrills with Professor Laban Twick, the Scientist Who Never Smiled; Bigshot Bruce, Adventurer; Harry Langham and Pongo his Comical Pal—Not Forgetting Boomer of Boomer's Mammoth Circus.

## An Invasion of Terror.

**TERROR**, chaos, death rode high in Britain on that memorable night when Professor Laban Twick's giant mystery ship had piled up on the South Coast. He and his companions—Bigshot Bruce, the greatest of all big-game hunters; the Professor's nephew, Harry Langham; and "Pongo" Mansfield—had watched its vast cargo of prehistoric monsters swim ashore.

The most fearful invasion ever conceived had started. The Menace of the Monsters had come.

To Bigshot Bruce fell the problem of wiping out the mighty invaders, and Harry and Pongo accompanied him, helping when they could. But their task was made difficult, almost hopeless indeed, by the fact that the monsters had become widely separated, appearing only when they made swift, destructive raids on the big towns.

## The Monster's March.

**O**N Bruce's advice, all authorities all over the country had been warned of the dangers attendant on the increasing cold. Country children no longer went to school. Travellers avoided road journeys and went by train. A careful check had been kept on the number of monsters that had escaped on England's southern shore, and until that number was entirely accounted for, the peril might manifest itself at any place between Land's End and John o' Groats.

The thing that Bruce wanted to find and slay as soon as possible was the great tyrannosaur. He knew that this was the king demon of all those monstrous creatures that the wreck had let loose on the land.

But it was impossible to locate it. Now and again, at great distances, cattle would disappear, in ones, twos, and any number up to half-a-dozen. The tyrannosaur was feeding. But for some reason or other it plainly travelled at night, and nobody living saw it.

The triceratops was another beast that Bruce wanted to locate but had failed, so far, to find. The second of the sabre-toothed tigers had been discovered and killed by a number of daring West-country farmers who, gun-armed, had hunted the beast down. One of them had lost his life, but the others had so riddled the creature with shot that, though it broke loose from their cordon *via* the gap created by the death of that one, it was afterwards discovered lying across the Exeter road, dead.

A serpent had been found in the Llanberis district of North Wales. How it had reached Snowdonia nobody knew; but Snowdon itself had killed it . . . with cold. The Professor was no longer fearful, in fact, regarding these giant serpents. He pointed out that in the Place of Mists they had lived among the

crag and high rocks, and they would naturally seek similar places in Britain.

But these spots, in winter, were bitterly cold, and the serpent tribe are among the first to feel the effects of such exposure.

This particular one was found coiled in death half-way up Snowdon. A blizzard had swept the mountain, and it was reckoned that the snake had tried to get down to lower land, but the merciless elements had killed what man might have found difficulty in killing.

The remainder of the mammoths had also been located, and one of them had been taken alive by Bruce. This was effected in Lincolnshire, where Bruce constructed a gigantic elephant trap and lured the creatures into it.

Thus the beasts had been thinned down, but there still remained a great number of them abroad, and these were the most dangerous of them. A stegosaur attacked a small country inn one night. It literally broke the thing up, going through it as a war tank will go through brick walls; only more so. Men lost their lives and terror shrieked through that district for days. But the stegosaur vanished.

At sea, the two brontosaurus made fitful appearances. They were seen by a torpedo boat up off the Firth of Forth, swimming south, keeping together. The torpedo boat chased and tried to shell or torpedo them, but a sea mist saved them.

Bruce declared that only the eliminating processes were over as yet. The great battle had still to be joined. The vaster beasts, the most deadly dangerous of them, had still to be tackled. And they could not yet be found.

And so at last came the first invasion of the greater beasts that could be directly traced to the cold.

Everybody in Britain has heard of the Crystal Palace. It stands on the heights of Norwood, above southern London, and is a vast erection of glass and steel which, in its day, was regarded as one of the wonders of the capital.

An exhibition was held there. It was a display of weapons of all kinds, from the earliest stone axes down to examples of the modern gun-maker's art. There were swords, daggers, scimitars, crossbows, lances, battleaxes, tomahawks, knobkerries, and every other conceivable instrument of destruction that the mind of man has devised.

Naturally, the boys wanted to see it, and the Professor, who was also very interested from a distinctly scientific standpoint, took them down one evening after dark. The show was open until nine o'clock at night. Bruce was away on one of his hunting expeditions which had so often proved fruitless. This one, in fact, did also prove fruitless.

There were not a great many people at the Exhibition. It served to attract only folk who might be interested in such things. So the boys and the Professor had plenty of leisure in which to examine the various exhibits. The Professor was just the

man to go with, for he was able to give them a lot of interesting data concerning what they were seeing.

The mighty structure of glass was closed against the cold wind, and so sounds from outside did not penetrate it. Thus the few idling and curious observers, the people in charge and the Professor and the boys, heard nothing of the pandemonium in Upper Norwood, saw nothing of the dreadful destruction of life and property along the near-by main road, and knew nothing of the deliberate smashing of the outer wall.

Across the grounds, up the great flight of steps, a monster moved. Above it towered the great, domed and glittering roof of the strangest place man ever thought of building—a place of glass. And above that reared the round towers which can be seen for so many miles—also of glass and steel.

Within the main hall a mighty crash sounded. Horrified watchers outside saw one of the towers reel. It came down in smashing thunder, pushed over by a vast body that brushed against it and passed on—a body that simply walked into the Crystal Palace as a tank might have entered a body that bent and broke the steelwork, scattered the glass, and wrought ruin wherever it trod.

Above the screams and cries the Professor's voice lifted.

"It's a triceratops!"

The thing was starving. It had gone hungry for days. It needed food. It broke in to feed. . . .

### The Man Thing.

**A**BOVE the crash of glass and the rending of steel-

work sounded the sudden quick and rather high-pitched snarl which was typical of the triceratops. People were running madly from the tremendous hall, running for every door and exit, seeking to get out ere the ponderous death could swing itself mercilessly.

It had been arranged that, while the exhibition was in progress, recitals should be given on the magnificent organ, and one such recital was on at this moment.

Now the organist—why, he afterwards confessed, he never knew—suddenly opened out the stops of his

gigantic and marvellous instrument and gave it full power.

The organ literally roared, and continued to roar, so that the noise of it drowned the cry of the triceratops and shook the roof and walls, making the floor itself tremble.

The beast came to a sudden and abrupt standstill. Here was a voice mightier than any it had ever heard in the Place of Mists. The triceratops swung its head this way and that, until it realised whence the tremendous voice came and it charged.

In front of the organ, as everybody knows, there is a great bank of seats. The triceratops tried to climb this bank. It got halfway up and all collapsed under its weight, so that it came down, savage and kicking, scrambling and snarling, while still the organ notes swept in thunder across its massive head.

By this time the whole place was cleared. The diversion created by the organist had enabled every living soul to gain safety; every living soul, that is, except the Professor. And, naturally, the two boys stayed with him.

Pengo said: "You ought to get away, sir. You really should."

"Don't talk nonsense, my boy," replied the Professor. "This is a very unusual demonstration and worth watching. Did you observe how the creature's legs levered, as it lifted itself on that bank of seats? A most curious muscular and bone formation, don't you think?"

As neither Harry nor Pengo had observed anything about the triceratops except that it was something to



**PRIMITIVE POWER.**—There was a sudden rush of firemen and policemen and the primitive Man instantly swung himself up among the girders.



get away from as quickly and as far as possible, they made no comment.

And then occurred the uttermost sensation of that amazing adventure.

Something slid into the hall from its far end. It should be stated that, by chance, the electric light circuits had been unimpaired, and such lights as were not broken still flared and cast white light on everything.

Outside, incidentally, telephones were going, police were hurrying, and fire engines were racing.

The boys, staring, saw that shadowy something which slid furtively into the hall, and they cried aloud. Their cries drew the attention of the Professor from the maddened triceratops and brought his eyes literally bulging from his head.

A Man Thing—one could only just call it that—had made its appearance. Had it stood up straight it would probably have been eight feet tall. As it was, it shambled, stooping forward. It was covered with longish red hair, and from beneath the shock of such hair, red eyes gleamed furtively. Its arms were so long that they reached to below its crooked knees. Thus it had something of the semblance of a big ape, or gorilla; though the semblance was contradicted by the fact that indubitably its feet were feet and not extra hands; great flat feet, with broken down insteps, splayed feet larger than any human foot ever was.

Round about its body it had tied in cumbersome fashion the thickly woolled hides of two sheep. Normally, that creature went without clothing at all. But the cold of an English winter had forced it to take the covering of the food it slew and protect itself against the winds.

The Professor gasped two words—"Prehistoric Man!" Then he mumbled things, which the boys did not understand and, really, hardly heard.

For here was one of the forefathers of all mankind stepped straight out of the endless corridors of long lost time, come from the mighty blacknesses that lie across the world's beginnings.

The Man Thing was moving. It seemed to have little fear of the enraged triceratops, which was now making an awful mess of itself and the organ.

It had plunged headfirst into the lower part of the organ and it had torn a lot of the pipes. Through these torn pipes, driven by relentless electrical power, the wind roared and leapt, striking at the triceratops and somewhat bewildering it.

The Man Thing trod forward carefully. It happened upon a great smashed case of ancient weapons. It stood still and a hand as big as a York ham closed over a wooden haft. It held up that wooden haft and turned it slowly. Attached to the wooden haft, worked to the deadly sharpness of chilled steel, was a flat flint.

The Professor said "The perfect picture. Man finding his first weapon of offence. It is most distressing that I haven't a camera with me."

The din was now indescribable. The triceratops, however, was coming by its undoing. It had simply burrowed and bored and smashed right under the organ into the massive, girdered steel work that supported the enormous weight above, and it got jammed.

The more the thing tried to bore forward, the more tightly did it wedge itself, until even its massive ribs threatened to cave in and crack under the terrific pressure.

The Man Thing was uttering curious sounds. He kept turning the stone weapon over and over in his hand.

There was a sudden rush from outside. Some intrepid policemen and firemen had come on the scene.

They saw the Man Thing and with a yell they made for him. His action was at once swift and protective. He leapt like an ape upwards, got a hold of a section of down-hanging and twisted steel with one hand, hauled himself up and gibbered furtively, swinging his stone axe with the other.

Somebody cried: "Has anyone got a gun?"

That the giant, half-formed man, appreciated danger was evident, for when a rifle was produced he tried to climb. It was just instinct, which made

him realise that a weapon was being brought against him.

The firemen, meanwhile, were busy. Every fire station in the country had been supplied with great containers of deadly gas and the necessary projection apparatus, that the threat of the monsters might be met effectively.

With gas-masks on, the firemen were rapidly preparing to sink the triceratops into unconsciousness.

The rifleman levelled his weapon and the Professor rushed forward. He got in front of the man, waving his arms.

"I am Professor Laban Twick. I forbid. . ."

There was a shout. Here was the man who had loosed this terror on the land. The whole crowd—for lots of civilians had come up once they knew the gas was to be used—was hostile.

The boys went to the Professor's side and stood by him, while he spoke feverishly.

The rifle was lowered. The Professor turned and made gestures in the direction of the Man Thing. The only response was a quick chatter and a shake of the stone-headed club.

The fire chief cried: "I want this hall cleared. We're loosing the gas. Everybody without a gas-mask will retreat to the grounds and keep as far as possible from this place."

The Professor's eyes were imploring. His gestures were more and more friendly. If the Man Thing did not respond he would be shot or gassed, and the Professor did not want that.

The snarling chatter checked. The dulled, unintelligent red eyes peered at the Professor from beneath their shaggy brows. Then they swept over the crowd. The chatter was resumed; then checked again.

Indecision was plain to all.

The police were moving people off. Soon, the Professor and the boys, lingering as long as possible, were left, with the police taking their arms and trying to force them out generally, while the Professor still implored his Prehistoric Man.

This creature made a sudden decision. It dropped from the girder. Instinctively the police swung on it, as on a deadly foe, and the revolvers with which they had been served before starting made their appearance.

But the Professor, who did not, as has already been seen, know the meaning of fear, instantly flung himself between them and the Man Thing, and held out an empty hand.

Now the empty hand has always been the sign manual of friendship. Our English handshake originated in the offering of the empty right hand—the fighting hand—to show that no weapon was unsheathed and held ready to strike.

The Man Thing shambled and stood. Then it muttered—not the high-pitched, chattering snarl it had loosed when hanging from the girder, but a low, more satisfied voicing.

The Professor was bold. He stepped right up to it. One smash of that stone headed axe, one clawing of those taloned hands, and his frail body would have been beaten down in death.

He pointed and turned towards the opening in the wall. The police and firemen now made no effort to interfere with him.

The shambling beast cocked its horribly human head to one side. The Professor spoke gently, soothingly. Of course, the thing had no idea of what he said, but his voice was reassuring.

It shambled along beside him, towering over him. He ventured to put his hand round the empty left hand of his captive.

The Professor had won.

The gas was loosed, and the triceratops duly dealt with. That is a minor phase of this strange episode.

The thing that mattered was that the Professor got the Man Thing back to his strange old house at Wimbledon and he got Bruce there to see him. On his way he bought four dead and skinned rabbits and gave them to his specimen, who ate them raw. The giving of food was important. It made for trust.

The Man Thing was, at first, afraid of the great fire the Professor had had kindled. Then it realised that this crackling terror was under some kind of control and was not able to ravage mightily, as it had sometimes done in the Place of Mists.

It crouched by the fire, and ceased to shiver. Now and again it mumbled like a big contented dog. Its eyes never left the Professor's face.

"Well," said Bruce, "how the dickens did he get here, anyhow? Professor, you'll sit on Herr Waldheim after this."

The Professor rubbed his hands gleefully. "You may remember that when we were at the Place of Mists I theorised more than once that I thought I detected traces of very elemental human habitation?"

Bruce nodded.

"I was right," added the Professor. "And I can only conclude that this man, who appears to be possessed of a certain remarkable intelligence and original daring, swam out to the ship to investigate

of that dark and sinister era, when the world slowly formed itself as we now know it. Here were the seeds of human life struggling upwards, the beginning of Man.

### Destroyers Of The Deep.

**T**HERE now must be recorded an adventure in which none of our heroes took part, but which is worthy of record.

It concerns, first of all, the fishing trawler, *Ann Elizabeth*. She had been out for some days on the fishing grounds of the North Sea. Heavy weather had been encountered, and the little *Ann Elizabeth* had got separated from the rest of the fleet. She had been forced to lay into the weather for about sixteen hours, and, having received an awful battering, she was now plugging for home through the long rollers left by the storm.

On her bridge, his eyes red-rimmed from lack of sleep, his body huddled down to the collar in a big blue coat, her skipper stood. The steersman was near him, great hands on the brass-rimmed wheel. The needle was flickering under the glass and the telegraph was rammed over at Full Ahead. The *Ann Elizabeth* was making harbour.

Suddenly the skipper stiffened. Away to port something had lifted. He saw a great neck, towering high, set with a demon's head.



**THE OCEAN TERROR TORPEDOED**—From the destroyer's side streaked a torpedo. Smacked into the brontosaurus it sped, exploding with a thunderous roar and mighty flames.

"It's the blooming sea-serpent!" he gasped; and could hardly believe his eyes.

The brontosaurus saw the ship and made towards it. The *Ann Elizabeth's* engines were whipped up to extra pressure, and her stout hull quivered under their pounding.

But the result of that horrid chase would never have been in doubt save for one thing.

To starboard, through the smother, a lean, grey shape showed. The skipper saw it and cried out with relief. He saw the squat smokestacks, now used only for oil exhaust, the narrow, vicious sheer, the out-away, low, grey hull and the big, white number on the prow.

"It's a destroyer!" he gasped. "Hard a-starboard, Sam."

Sam put her over. The trawler came round, heeling, taking big water over her rail, and she

it. When he got on board, secretly of course, we sailed, and, afraid, he stowed away. On a ship of such vast size this would be easy for him to do; and he would be able to secure scraps of raw meat whenever he wished from the masses of food prepared for the animals. Of course, he swam ashore when we were wrecked, and he has been lurking in hiding ever since."

The Man Thing chattered away near the fire, his red eyes roving, and the boys drew a little closer together.

Here, somehow, more than in the grotesque monsters themselves, seemed to be pictured the whole



lumbered on towards where the warship raced and slashed, half submerged, through the running seas.

There was no need for signalling. The destroyer's look-out had seen the monster. She came up at thirty knots, and she passed the *Ann Elizabeth* in a wide-flung boil of wake that stretched across the tortured sea in a mighty, spreading fan of foam.

The brontosaurus spotted her. She was coming nearer to him. He forgot the *Ann Elizabeth*. Here was another and closer victim in this spiteful grey thing that lanced at incredible speed across his domain.

On the warship everything was being done Navy fashion; sharp, curt orders, slick obedience, coolness, precision. Something went overside, like a large and leaping fish. Across the heaving grey water a thin white trail fled, straight as a chalk line drawn on a board with the aid of a ruler.

Impact, and thunderous explosion, white water and grey, flame and smoke, leaping high; and the brontosaurus, torn and smashed threshing this way and that, as a battleship sinking charge of explosive bit into him and slew him.

The skipper of the *Ann Elizabeth* wiped his brow with a trembling hand.

"If it hadn't been for that warship, Sam," he said, "you and me and the rest of us would have been goners."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Sam stoically, and waited for more steering directions.

The destroyer was coming round like a circling racehorse after a win. She slashed past the spot where the brontosaurus had taken its death blow, and ran alongside the *Ann Elizabeth*. The skipper of that sturdy little ship jerked loud-voiced thanks through a megaphone. The radio at the destroyer's masthead was crackling, and away in Whitehall the Admiralty was learning what had taken place.

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## Panic in the Pool.

**I**N a way, the Man Thing was a problem. He was, of course, more animal than man, according to our idea of things, and he had been used to living in the open air, finding shelter in caverns and woodlands when shelter was necessary, hunting down his prey like a beast, tearing it with hands and teeth when caught.

He was obviously grateful to the Professor. He would follow him about, being some distance behind him, and when the Professor turned round, he would come to a standstill and shift from one tremendous, crooked leg to the other.

His brain was quite alert, slightly more appreciative than the brain of a good dog, and possessed of that quality which has lifted man above the brute beast—imagination, the power of seeing things as they might be, reasoning, what you care to call it. For instance, though, of course, there was no bond of language between them, he began to understand certain things the Professor desired him to do. He learned that the hissing noise, which his descendants made and spelt y-e-s, indicated that he was allowed to do something, and that the sharp, quick sound, which they spelt n-o, withheld permission.

And he grew stouter, looked stronger, more fit, as food and shelter brought him back to the normal. He was, indeed, a great powerful brute, capable of killing any living man with his bare hands.

Then, one night, he vanished. Where he went nobody then knew; but they came down in the morning and found the outhouse which was his den smashed open. The Man Thing had struck the night trail. Naked as he normally lived, he had stepped out into that bitter, mid-winter night; and he had carried with him his stone-headed club.

They had news of him. That night, three sheep were slain in Surrey. He was striking south. The heads of the sheep had been smashed by a single

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blow of some instrument. Their pelts had been torn off. Cold had driven the Man Thing to seek clothing. Garbed in thick wool, he now roamed free.

Then they had further news of him. He was seen by a shepherd on the South Downs, between Brighton and Worthing, and just east of Chantonbury Ring. He boldly raided a flock of sheep, killed several, skinned two of them and wastefully gnawed at the hot bodies like a beast.

The Professor and the boys were up and doing, and Bruce, by the biggest stroke of luck in the world for everybody concerned, decided to come with them; for in the great south coast town of Brighton and Hove, with their joint populations of a quarter of a million, with their luxurious hotels and wide and splendid waterfront, they were destined to have one of the most terrific adventures of all.

The Professor drove them down in his car, Bruce's machine being in dock with a cracked piston. The Professor's car was a brand-new one. He had bought it only a week earlier, going into a great showroom and saying: "I want a motor-car, please, a blue one. I think blue is so unobtrusive." Just as though he were buying a hat. The result of this was a forty-fifty Phantom, and a journey which would have made the designers of the world's greatest car weep.

The big Rolls was capable of speeds which some more showy and so-called sports models could not imitate. The Professor did not seem to be aware of this; for sometimes, in absent-minded fashion, he put his foot flat down, and the mighty engine simply slung them over the road, until they made him lift his toes.

Also he seemed to have a fixed idea that the middle of the road was reserved for him. Fortunately, the Brighton road is wide, and he had no smashes.

So they ran past the Aquarium and sought quarters at one of the palatial hotels on the waterfront.

If you take a look at a map of Brighton and Hove and the adjoining towns of Portslade, Southwick, and Shoreham—they are really all one great town in these days—you will see that Shoreham Harbour is a long lagoon of salt water that runs parallel with the sea behind a great dyke of shingle, and that its entrance is actually between Shoreham and Southwick, though nearer to Shoreham.

The harbour entrance is picturesque and quaint,

despite the fact that Bungalow Town reaches to one side of it, and a good deal of small shipping uses the anchorage. A great power works stands on it, and the storage tanks of petrol companies. With the definite movement of industry southwards, this harbour is increasingly busy. At its Hove end it is separated from one of the finest children's play-pools in Great Britain, a great stretch of ornamental water whereon children can go for trips in little boats, and with a smaller stretch on which model yachts can be sailed. Beyond this again the famous Hove Lawns begin and stretch to that point where the great town ceases to be Hove and is called Brighton.

The four adventurers had just about finished their lunch, and the Professor was indulging in the unwonted luxury of a cigarette, while Bruce was filling his pipe, when pandemonium outside caused them to get to their feet. They rushed to the windows of the hotel.

The wide sea-front was filled with people streaming eastwards—away from the butt end of Shoreham Harbour, and a wild cry told them that the monsters had come.

Out they went. Traffic had surged in the direction of the two big piers and Kemp Town.

Bruce and the Professor and boys, by dint of keeping close to the shop-fronts, managed to work their way westward along the front in the face of the hurrying and frightened crowds; for Brighton has no "season" like other seaside resorts. It is always full.

So they saw what had occasioned all the outcry. In the great children's pool, surrounded by fragments of smashed boats, a mighty creature lifted a snake-like neck, on which was a comparatively small head. Its tail flayed this way and that, and one stroke of that tail would have knocked a loaded pantechicon sideways like a toy.

"It's a plesiosaur!" gasped the Professor. "It has come from the sea!"

He was right. But something else was coming from the east, one of the most terrible things that has ever breathed. And of its coming there is much to tell.

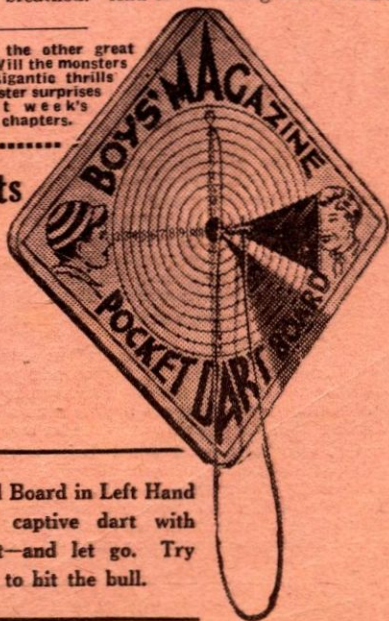
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## THE GAY HUSSAR'S CHRISTMAS CAPTURE!

(Continued from page 17.)

pudding with his sabre. Then, while he munched this, he addressed the Russian in drawling accents.

"So you were to have us shot like so many rats, *hein?*" he observed. "Well, on the contrary, you are going to provide us with safe conduct to our own lines, General. But first of all you will bind and gag the hetman and your orderly."

As a tactician, Moravitch was an excellent General, but he had forgotten how to be a brave soldier. Lefarge knew this and traded on it, and he did not trade in vain, for his threatening mien utterly quelled the Russian.

In a minute or two Moravitch had bound and gagged his orderly and the hetman with strips from one or two table napkins. Lefarge then ordered him to don hat and greatcoat, and, this being done, he marched him down into the collars and through to the tunnel.

### Safe Conduct.

THE soldiers of the Eighth Squadron were mounted near the entrance of the cavern in the forest.

The fog enveloped them, a damp, dense shroud that limited the view to a mere half-dozen paces. The troopers were ready for the march, and at their head Lefarge was in the saddle of the *Sarde*.

Just in front of the *Gay Gascon* was General Moravitch, seated truculently on the horse of an unfortunate Hussar, who had died of wounds that morning.

"Now, General," said Lefarge, "I have given you your instructions, and under cover of my cloak my pistol is covering your back. Need I mention that at the slightest sign of treachery I will put a ball between your shoulders? *Pardieu! ça va sans dire*—it goes without saying."

The column started to move, travelling at a rapid pace, and in spite of the fog Lefarge had a good idea of his bearings. Soon they were out of the wood, and, striking an open road, they pushed on in a westerly direction.

Presently they began to fall in with marching regiments, but they galloped by and excited little comment. The Russian General sang dumb, terrified by the hidden pistol that was trained on his back. The cloaks of the Hussars concealed their uniforms and the sacks of food they were carrying, and the mists swallowed the company ere any of the enemy troops could remark on the wounded riders.

On spurred the squadron, and soon enough they were riding along an empty road again. All at once a Russian challenge rang out, and next second an enemy picket showed up in front of them.

The Hussars drew rein, and a young officer moved towards Moravitch.

"Ah, I did not know it was you, sir," he exclaimed, on recognising the General. "A thousand pardons. But—er—may I suggest that it is dangerous to go forward if that is your purpose? This is an advance position, and French patrols cannot be far away."

*Sapristi!* that was good news, Lefarge thought inwardly, and then moved close to Moravitch, pushing the concealed pistol against his ribs.

The General addressed the officer in charge of the picket, making a statement that Lefarge had compelled him to rehearse, ere setting out from the forest cavern.

"I intend to make a reconnaissance, Lieutenant. Have no fear, you can see I possess a strong escort."

The squadron pressed forward, and now they began to cross more elevated ground. The mist was not so dense here, and it was not long before one could see two or three hundred yards. Suddenly the galloping Hussars heard a commotion in their rear, and as they looked back they saw a large force of Russian horsemen sweeping in pursuit, with a Cossack hetman in the van!

Lefarge's daring plot had been discovered!

There came the ugly crackle of musketry, and the drumming of many thousands of hoofs sounded in the ears of the fugitives like a distant thunder-roll. But the Hussars and their captive had a fair start, and they kept their lead until they saw moving forms ahead of them.

Sixty seconds later a brigade of French cavalry was in full view, and with a shout Lefarge and his men threw off their cloaks. An answering roar went up from the horsemen in front, and in another half-minute the Hussars were amidst the protecting ranks, whence volley after volley of carbine-fire was poured into the oncoming Russians.

\* \* \* \* \*

CAPTAIN ANDRE LEFARGE stood before Napoleon Bonaparte in the latter's magnificent headquarters. Short, stocky, aggressive, with olive skin and dark, piercing eyes, the Emperor of the French looked at the tall Hussar inquiringly.

"Sire," the Captain observed, "I have to report the capture of upwards of a hundred sacks of enemy provisions. I have also to report that I bring you a Christmas gift from beyond the enemy's lines."

"*Quoi?* A Christmas gift?"

The door of the Emperor's apartment was opened at that instant, and, under escort of two troopers, a bullet-headed Russian stumbled into the room in a towering rage.

"My gift to you, sire," murmured Lefarge, indicating the newcomer.

"This is not an act of war!" shouted the Russian. "It is an abduction! I am General Moravitch, and I insist on being returned to my command!"

Napoleon started—glanced at Lefarge, and then back at the enemy general.

"Moravitch, eh?" he murmured. "Well, my friend, I regret any indignity you may have suffered, but you are a prisoner for all that, and I am afraid I cannot return you to the Tsar until your country and mine are at peace again."

Expostulating, snarling savagely and spitting venom with every word, Moravitch was removed from the apartment, and when the door had closed behind him the Emperor turned to the *Gay Hussar*.

"Lefarge," he declared, "I have said it often before, but I say it once again—you are a man in a million."

The *Gascon* fingered the ends of his waxed moustache.

"*Pardieu*, sire, I am thoroughly in agreement with you on that point," he mused. "I often wonder how you and France would fare without me . . ."

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