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INSIDE**

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for Your Album

The **MODERN BOY**

EVERY SATURDAY.
Week Ending December 24th, 1932.

No. 255.
Vol. 10.

2^{d.}



**HOME FOR
CHRISTMAS!**

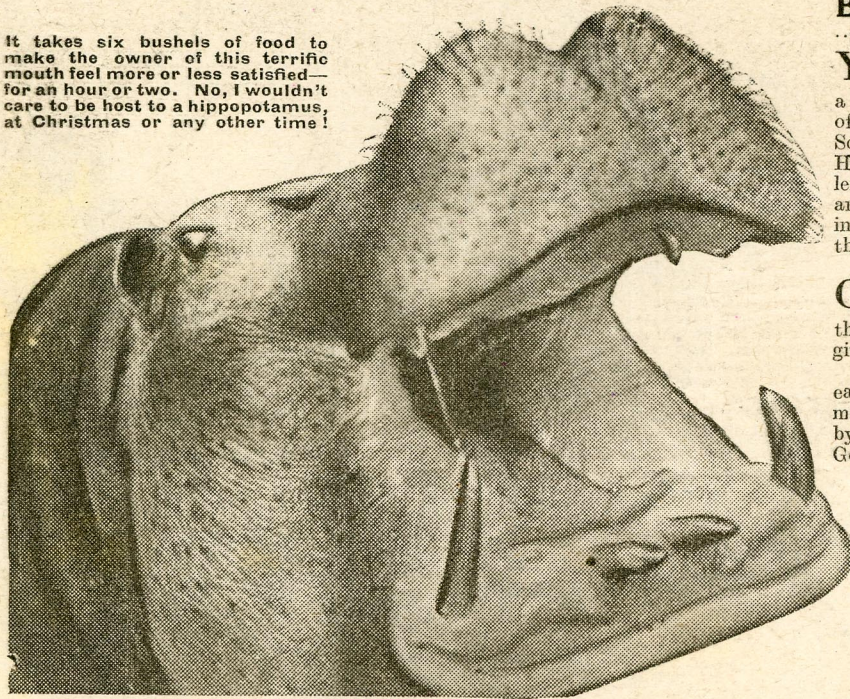
Our Pictorial News Pages

MOUTH LIKE A CELLAR "Fill It If You Can, Please!"

HERE'S a grand photo for your picture gallery—a hippopotamus feeling peckish and waiting for someone to pop a snack, such as a barrowload of mince pies, into his monstrous mouth. Peckishness must be a nasty feeling to a hippo, for he can eat about six bushels of food before he feels like hanging out the "Full Inside" notice board. You wouldn't want *him* to come to the Christmas feast, would you?

A NATIVE of Africa, Mr. Hippo spends his day sleeping on a mudbank, or hidden in the reeds of a stream with just his snout above water. At night he goes ashore in

It takes six bushels of food to make the owner of this terrific mouth feel more or less satisfied—for an hour or two. No, I wouldn't care to be host to a hippopotamus, at Christmas or any other time!



search of the grasses or roots on which he feeds, digging them up with those tusks you see.

The hippo ranks second to the elephant for bulk. But in spite of his size—he weighs about four tons, is 12 feet long, and stands about 5 feet high—he's an expert swimmer and can stay under water for as long as ten minutes at a time.

A PECULIARITY of the hippo's tusks is that they haven't roots, and they keep growing, so that there's no danger of him becoming toothless in his old age. The largest ones are 8 inches long, but his upper lip is so large that when the mouth is closed the tusks are hidden.

One hippo at the London Zoo gave his keeper something to think about when the keeper noticed that the animal's tusks were daily growing shorter. Keeping watch, the keeper found that the hippo was wearing them down by trying to bite chunks out of a concrete step. After that he was given a wooden ball to bite, and that cured him of his taste for concrete.

PEACEFUL PIRATES Caught in the Act!

WIRELESS is just about the cheapest form of entertainment there is. For ten shillings—the price of a licence permitting you to install a receiving set and listen to the B.B.C.'s programmes—you get a whole year's fun. Yet there are those who simply won't buy a licence.

There are reckoned to be about 2,000,000 unlicensed wireless sets at work in this country, and the Post Office, which collects the licence fees, has declared war on these Pirates of the Air. Special detector vans, like the one on the opposite page, have been sent touring round the country on a pirate-catching cruise.

THE vans are equipped with apparatus—you can see some of it in our photo—with which the skilled Post Office operators can locate a near-by wireless set that happens to be working. How it is done we don't know. A receiving set does not send out signals—it only picks them up; so how you can detect something that is dumb beats us!

But there it is. The Post Office say these pirate detector vans can do it, and certainly several pirates have been caught in the act and have had to pay dearly for their fun and no end of licences have been hurriedly taken out in towns visited by the vans. Guilty consciences!

CHEERS FOR THE PUDDING But Once it was Groans!

YOU'VE heard of the old custom of giving the Christmas pudding a lucky stir whilst it is being made, of course. At the Royal Caledonian Schools for boys and girls at Bushey, Hertfordshire, everyone in the school lends a hand at the pudding-stirring, and the puddings are then marched in state,—to the skirl of bagpipes—to the kitchens for cooking.

OUR photo on opposite page, shows the triumphal march of one of the puddings, while the fellows and girls give their future meal a cheer.

It's an interesting fact that the eating of Christmas pudding and mince pie was made illegal in Britain by the Puritan Commonwealth Government in 1644, and it seems that no government since that date has repealed that law!

UNUSUAL FLYERS

HUNDREDS of famous people have arrived by aeroplane at Croydon, the great Airport of London, but surely the most

famous of them all must be Santa Claus, whom you see in our photo arriving aboard an Imperial Airways plane. He was on his way to a big London store with a special cargo of toys for the Christmas bazaar when we "snapped" him.

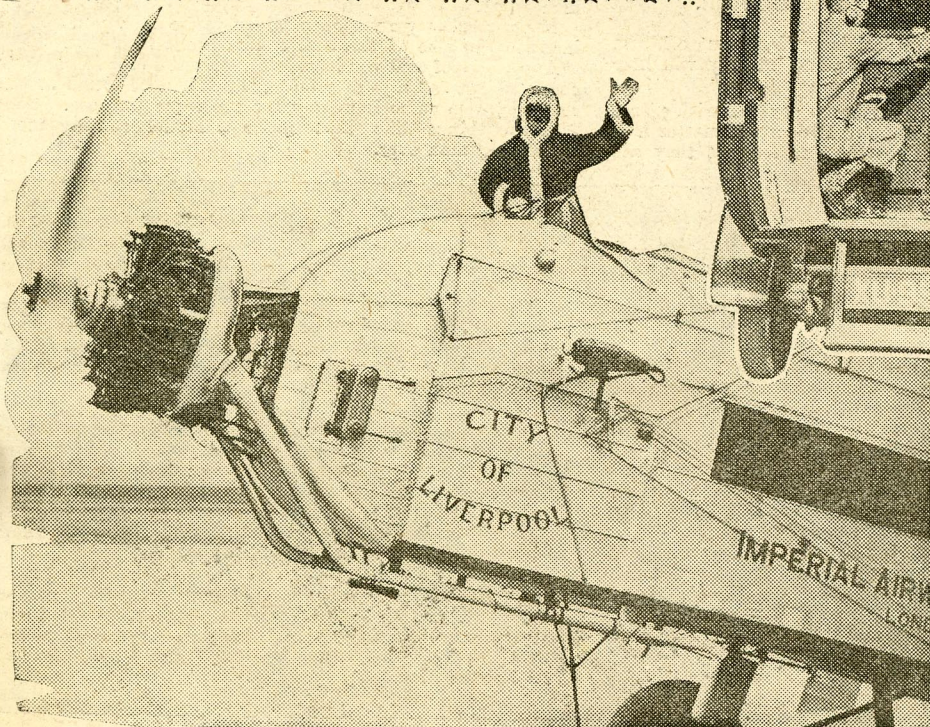
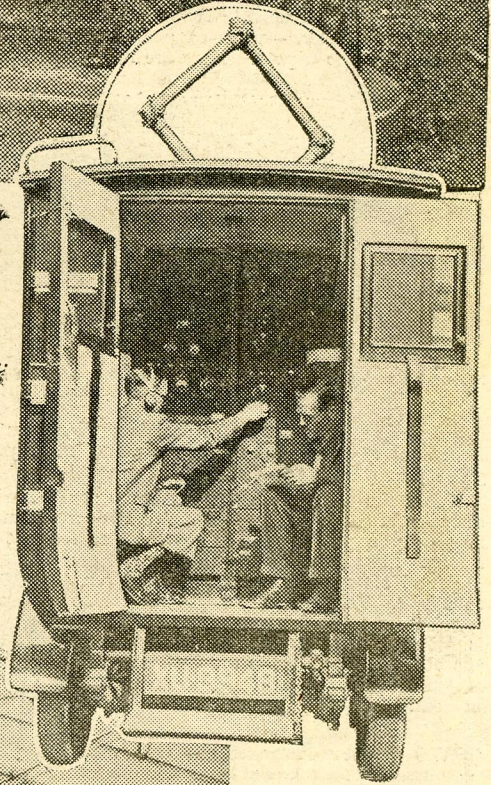
OLD Santa is not the most unusual Christmas passenger to travel in an Imperial Airways plane. That honour belongs to a fully-grown lion which was flown over from the Continent for a big Christmas circus. The lion was a very tame one, and when he was released at Croydon Aerodrome, at the end of the journey, he "shook paws" with the pilot who had brought him from the Continent.

HUNDREDS of Christmas puddings are sent overseas every year by Imperial Airways planes, besides many tons of special Christmas mail. Christmas Day itself is the one day in the whole year when no flying is done on the cross-Channel airways.



Count the smiles! Even one of the pipers is smiling—and it takes some doing to smile and play the bagpipes all at the same time. It's all in honour of the Christmas Pudding, and—suppose that young fellow **DROPPED IT!**

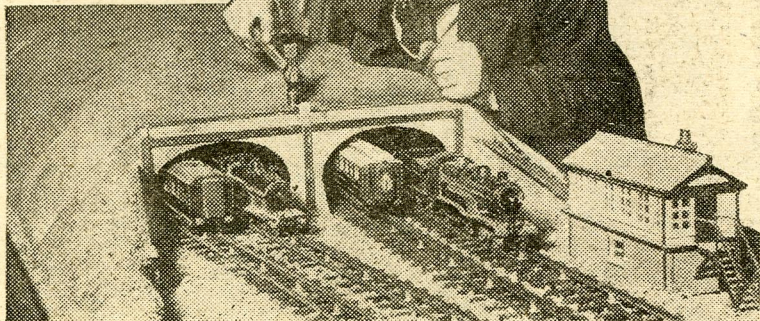
Right.—Here's a Post Office Wireless Detector Van at work in a street to discover wireless receiving set owners who haven't paid their licence. There's to be no free Merry Wireless Christmas for licence-dodging "pirates" this year!



Left.—How DOES he do it—show his merry old face in so many places at once? However, Father Christmas is as welcome at Croydon Aerodrome—where this photo was taken—as he is everywhere else. You can be sure there was tremendous excitement there when he stepped out of the big 'Imperial Airways' plane!

EXTRAS for YOUR XMAS MODEL RAILWAY

This fellow has made for himself a really topping model tunnel—and now he's just putting the finishing touches to it.



By HENRY GREENLY, A.I.Loco.E., who will answer any Model Railway queries Free, by Post, sent to the Editor of MODERN BOY

coal dust. Should the glue become hard before you can shake the coal dust on, make it sticky again by brushing hot water over it.

It will have to be laid aside for half an hour to let the glue harden before you can tackle another side, and you fill in the time by carrying on the same job with another box.

When the glue has set, a sharp tap on the underside of the box will remove

A MODEL railway without any of the "extras" you have set your heart upon this Christmas certainly looks—well, a bit bare. But all sorts of things—simple signal boxes, signals, wayside stations, tunnels, and so on—can be made at home. One of the easiest things to make to add to your model railway is a coal stack.

You've seen them—white-capped stacks of coal placed near railway loco depots. They are reserve supplies in case

surplus dust.

When all the sides, ends, and tops of the boxes have been completely covered with coal and coal dust, leave the stack overnight so that the glue sets quite firmly, then whiten the top edges with whitewash or white paint, as at Fig. 1.

The reason these coal stacks are whitened, as perhaps you know, is to prevent stealing. The removal of coal from the top of a real stack by the side of a proper railway would soon be discovered, owing to the breaking of the tell-tale white portions.

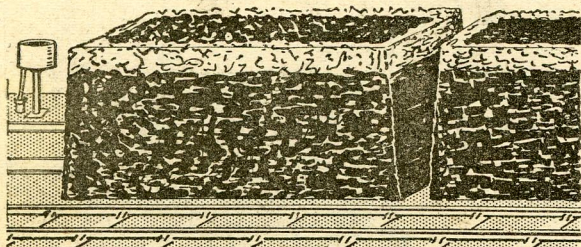
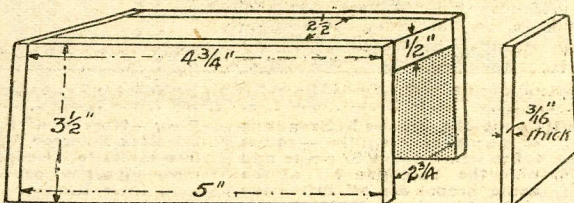


Fig. 1.—How the model coal-stacks look when finished. Note the tell-tale white band around the top. Sizes of the "box" are shown at Fig. 2, on the right.



the depot's regular supply of coal is suddenly cut off, and imitations of them added to your model railway will help give it a very real appearance.

You make them of bottomless boxes covered with pieces of coal and coal dust, as at Fig. 1. It does not matter how roughly you put the boxes together, so long as they are strong.

For a No. 0 gauge line, the sizes are given at Fig. 2. Thin wood, 3-16th in. thick, is used for the sides and ends; the top is 1/2 in. thick wood—fairly solid to nail the other parts on to. Note that the box is 1/4 in. smaller at the top than at the bottom.

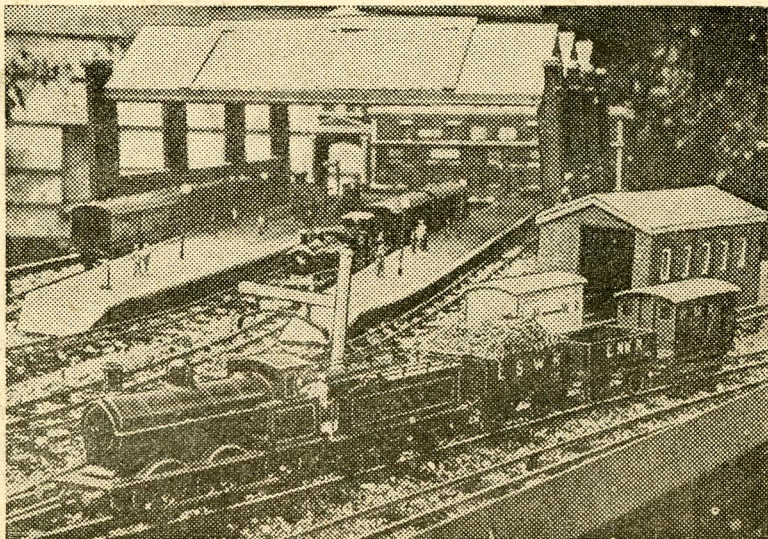
TWO of these coal stacks is the usual number for a model line. The boxes ready, you want to make them look like stacks of coal. Get bits of coal about the size of a marble, and some fine coal dust. Then cover one side of your box with glue and stick the coal and dust to it, keeping the bits of coal as close together and even as possible. Cover all bare places between the pieces of coal with

The best place for your miniature stacks is along the siding near the loco shed, and they should be placed about one inch apart.

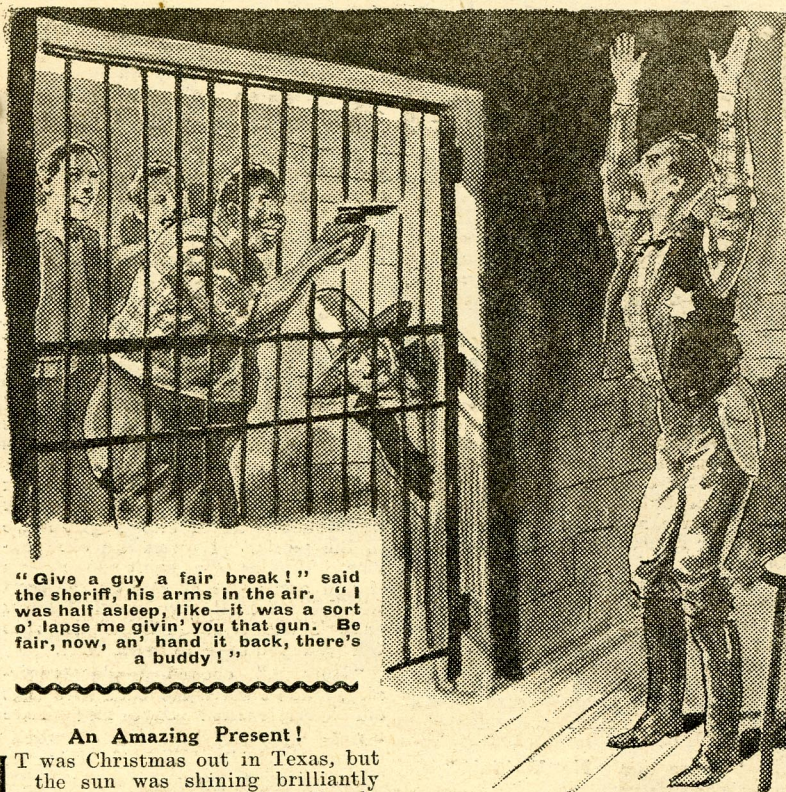
If your railway runs on a wider gauge line, you should increase the size of the coal stacks proportionately.

Any pieces of coal you have left over will do for filling your goods wagons. Chips of granite, which can be found at the roadside, also come in handy for the same purpose.

Little things like that make a model railway more interesting than ever.



We can't all hope to own a model railway as complete as this one, but the various bits of "scenery" are easily made if you set to with a will.



"Give a guy a fair break!" said the sheriff, his arms in the air. "I was half asleep, like—it was a sort o' lapse me givin' you that gun. Be fair, now, an' hand it back, there's a buddy!"

Run in as cattle-rustlers, the boys of the Crazy Cow Ranch look like spending all Christmas under the sheriff's thumb—until Mont, the Cheerful Nigger, demands the nut-crackers!

An Amazing Present!

IT was Christmas out in Texas, but the sun was shining brilliantly down on the Crazy Cow Ranch, and Horatio Hayweed and Ham Flynn, his foreman, were sunning themselves on the veranda of the ranch-house.

"Well, boss," Ham Flynn was saying, "now you've been paid that hundred head of cattle as was owed you, things is looking better. I guess a hundred head of cattle is a sight better'n five. Still, you can't hardly call the ranch well stocked, even now!"

"I know, Ham. But it's a start, isn't it? Some day the Crazy Cow Ranch will be the finest in Texas, I tell you. Catchem's Correspondence College of Cowpunching methods cannot fail, and am I not one of their students? Have faith, Ham. We shan't have a hundred cattle long!"

Ham Flynn cast a speculative eye towards the corral, where the hundred cattle under discussion were penned.

"I guess not, boss," he replied. "Half of 'em'll die on our hands before spring, if I'm not mistaken!"

"Oh, don't be gloomy, Ham!" Horatio retorted. "It's Christmas, you know!"

"Sorry, boss," said Ham. "I don't want to be no cold sponge, but I sorta feel fidgetty. There seems to be one a' them general conspiracies 'gainst you, boss, if you can figger what I mean. Everyone seems sorta set on ruinin' you an' gettin' you out of this ranch, an' it seems plumb queer—the place bein' the most gosh-awful dump I ever struck!"

"Boss, there's no use kiddin' yourself. This ranch'll never be any good as a ranch, Catchem's Correspondence College or not! An' yet it seems to me there's a hull lot of folks mighty eager to get you out of the way an' own it. Which is queer, I guess,

seem' the place was a derelict what anybody coulda had for the takin', before you was swindled into buyin' it. Mighty queer!"

There were many people eager to force Horatio to relinquish the Crazy Cow Ranch, for rumour had got around that there was gold-ore located beneath it! But the rumour had so far been kept from the ears of Horatio and his cowboys.

"Personally," Horatio ventured, "I think it is due to jealousy. They

like to point out, sorta respectful like, we ain't started applyin' those methods a' yours yet—we ain't had a chance, havin' no cattle until just now to apply 'em too!"

"That's a point," murmured Horatio, looking thoughtful. "It never occurred to me that way before. I'm always talking about my new methods of cattle-ranching, and nobody knows what they are yet—in fact, I'm a little hazy about them myself, to be perfectly frank. I remember my postal lessons were always mentioning new methods, but what these methods were I seem to have missed. Probably the 'Westerner's Handbook' will jog my memory."

Ham's thoughts had suddenly switched to Josh Slade, a rich and unscrupulous cattle-rancher, who was their vowed enemy, and the most energetic of those anxious to evict Horatio before he—Horatio—discovered about the mythical gold seam.

"Anyhow," said the young owner of the Crazy Cow, with an air of bringing the whole discussion to a satisfactory head, "it's Christmas!"

"Ay, boss, you're right," agreed Ham. "An' they sez at Christmas all guys oughter be good mixers—enemies or not. So I guess if Slade was to walk in here now, we oughter say: 'How do, old-timer, have a walnut, an' let's all be—'"

Ham broke off and glared towards the gate of the ranch. Mechanically his fingers closed round the butt of his revolver.

"Gosh!" he hissed. "If it ain't the ornery rattlesnake hisself!"

Horatio followed Ham's gaze and,

Complete

The Christmas Spirit!

By S. HARGRAVE

realise that they have not the advantage of a Catchem's College of Cowpunching education, and hate the idea of my making a success of this place, which they all thought was hopeless."

"Well, boss," replied Ham, "I'd

The Christmas Spirit!

to his utter amazement, saw the subject of their remarks ride in and dismount before the ranch-house.

"Howdy, buddies!" said Slade, walking up to the veranda. "Merry Christmas!"

"Huh?" grunted Ham. "Didn't know the anniversary was sorta observed by the coyote family! What'chu want here, you greasy——"

"See here, boys!" Slade broke in, as he mounted the veranda, wearing a winning smile, and with his hand extended. "I come to bury the hatchet. I admit I bin a pretty mean bozo to you two guys in the past, an' I guess I'm sorry. Shake, won't you?"

"Say!" growled Ham Flynn, still glaring at him. "What's the big idea?"

"Shucks, Ham!" said Slade, with a smile. "Give a guy a break!"

"Ham, huh?" retorted the ranch foreman. "This here sudden affection krekms me kinder sideways, Joshua darlin', guess you better beat it fore my trigger finger trembles with the emotion!"

"Wait a minute, Ham," said Horatio. "There's no need to be rude. If Mr. Slade wants to discuss something, we might as well do it amicably."

"Boys"—Josh Slade hung his head and spoke in a convincing tremolo—"I'm a reformed character. I want to make good the harm I done you."

"Oh yeh?" growled Ham, definitely unimpressed.

"Y'see," went on Slade, "somethin's sorta come over me. I guess it's that Christmas spirit what I used to read about when I was a kid, and——"

Ham Flynn broke into a roar of laughter, and then exclaimed indignantly:

"He's lyin', boss. It's some gag to get round you!"

"You believe me, don'tcher?" Slade looked at Horatio with the face of a martyr.

"WELL—er—Mr. Slade——" said Horatio, finding the situation a trifle uncomfortable. "Anyhow, cheer up. I'm jolly glad, and all that, I must say. Have a walnut."

Horatio held out the paper bag of nuts that was beside them. But Slade shook his head and went on:

"I come here to make amends, an' to say I'm right sorry to have bin so low-down towards you guys——"

"That's quite all right," said Horatio. "No harm done, I'm sure—at least, not much. Perhaps a mincepie——"

"I want to give you a Christmas present to show how sorry I am," persisted the reformed Slade, "an' to sorta clear my guilty conscience like—two hundred head a' cattle, if you'll accept!"

"Why——" Horatio began. But Ham Flynn interrupted speedily.

"See here, you!" Ham rose to his feet, glaring into Slade's face so closely that their noses almost touched. "I guess you think me an' the boss was only born last Christmas Eve, huh? You'll give two

hundred head a' cattle away! Like Mexico, you will! An' then you'll bring along the sheriff and swear blue they bin rustled! But I guess that notion was ancient when Father Christmas himself was a boy! You won't put it over with us!"

Slade backed away involuntarily, and gave Horatio a heart-rending look.

"Now, now, Ham!" said Horatio hastily. "Er—umm—er—I must say it's rightfully sporting of you, Mr. Slade. But, you see, I can't accept the gift—much as I appreciate it, and all that——"

"But listen here!" said Slade, in a voice that seemed perhaps a trifle too eager. "I kinder thought you guys wouldn't believe me at first, an' so this here's what I suggest. I'll give you a bill of sale on the cattle—you know, a sorta note sayin' them cattle belongs to you legally—an' signed by me, an' if you like you can pay me a nominal sum—say a dollar or something trivial like, just to make it all square and legal."

"I knew you guys would doubt me—couldn't expect nuth'n else after the dirt I done you—but you can see now I'm on the level, can't you? I can't get round a bill of sale an' double-cross you, can I?"

"There Ain't No Writin'!"

HAM FLYNN looked puzzled. Was it possible that Slade really wished to make amends? It was almost unbelievable to the foreman of the Crazy Cow, knowing the man as he did. Yet he could see no possible loophole for crooked work in Slade's proposition.

"Thanks very much, Mr. Slade!" said the more credulous Horatio Hayweed. "But really I can't take advantage of your kindness——"

"Say, listen!" said Slade, the woe-begone expression returning to his face. "You must accept this gift! Tain't only for your sake, Horatio. Thinka me! If you don't take these cattle I shall be haunted by my guilty conscience. Help me start a new life! Don't kick a guy when he's down!"

"What disease have these here cattle got?" Ham Flynn blurted.

Slade looked reproachful, then sighed.

"They ain't got no disease, Ham. You worked on my Bar Z outfit yourself once. You know the Bar Z cattle is the best in all Texas!"

"Well," Horatio said, now thoroughly convinced that Slade was in earnest, "I'm perfectly certain you mean well. I can't doubt your generosity. You have convinced me that your offer is honest and above-board. But even so, I really can't——"

"Horatio!" said Slade, in a voice of agonised appeal. "For my sake!"

Horatio coughed uncomfortably. He didn't know quite what to do. Then he suggested:

"Why not give a big sum to a hospital, or something? That ought to ease your conscience."

"Listen!" replied Slade. "I ain't never done nuth'n to a hospital. It's you I want to make amends to,

And you've got to help me pull myself outter the ab—ab—— What's that bloomin' word?"

"Abyss?" suggested Ham.

"Yeh, outter the abyss of despair an' villain—! Horatio, I appeal to you!"

Horatio found Slade's plaintive expression almost unbearable. He turned away, then nearly jumped out of his riding-boots. Beyond the gates of the Crazy Cow was a herd of cattle, in the charge of a small body of cowpunchers.

"THAT'S my gift," Slade said.

"I told the boys to follow up with 'em. You must accept 'em! My guilty conscience won't let me leave here until you do!"

Horatio looked questioningly at his foreman. Ham scratched his head with a puzzled air, then said:

"Well, boss, you know the remark of Robespierre, the famous Greek philatelist: 'Never kick a gift horse in the pants.' I guess it's okay advice. Besides, he can't do nuth'n if you got a bill of sale on the herd like he sez he'll give you. I know enough about the rustlin' laws to tell you you're safe with that."

"Horatio," choked Slade tragically, "don't drive me back into that old horrible life! Save me! Take my gift!"

"All right," answered Horatio. "I—I accept your generous gift, Mr. Slade, and I must say I'm deeply grateful. I don't really know how to thank you!"

"Aw—can all the thanks!" answered Slade. "It's me as should thank you. Will you go an' see the cattle in, Ham? I'll draw up the bill of sale meanwhile."

"Okay!" grunted Ham Flynn, and went at once to superintend the herding of Slade's Christmas gift into the Crazy Cow corrals.

Slade produced a fountain pen and a piece of notepaper, and wrote upon it as follows:

"To all guys what wants to know. Horatio Hayweed, owner of Crazy Cow Ranch, Sierra County, State of Texas, has bought offen me two hundred head of beeves for the sum of one dollar, U.S. currency, and foresaid Horatio Hayweed is rightful owner of same.

(Signed) JOSHUA SLADE,
Owner Bar Z, Flyin Y, Double Bar, etc., etc.
Livin at Hacienda Guadolope, Nr. Yellow Dog, Sierra County, State of Texas."

Witnesses—

"Now," said Slade, after Horatio had inspected the document, "get your men, an' the hull bunch can sign where it sez 'witnesses.' That oughter make it satisfactory!"

As Slade spoke, Montmorency Higginbotham, the Crazy Cow's nigger cook, and Restful Ruben, its other "hand," appeared on the veranda.

"Ah shu' hopes yo'll excuse'm, boss!" muttered Mont. "But we jest sorta couldn't help listen'n, an'——"

"All right," grinned Horatio,

"But don't make a habit of it, will you? Sign here."

Mont and Rube borrowed Slade's fountain pen in turn and signed. Presently, when the cattle had been safely herded into the corrals, and Slade's men were riding away, Ham Flynn returned to the veranda and also signed the document. Then Horatio handed to Slade the formal dollar, and they shook hands all round.

"Well, boys, I guess my conscience feels a sight easier already!" Slade exclaimed. "I guess I'd better be get'n along now. So-long! I'll be seein' you later!"

As in a dream, Horatio watched his old enemy mount his horse and ride after his cowpunchers. He looked down at the bill of sale to reassure himself, then folded it, and stowed it away in his pocket carefully.

"I CAN hardly believe it!" Horatio said, after they had inspected Slade's gift of cattle. "You can't call the Crazy Cow understocked now, Ham!"



"I sure can't, boss! It's bin a mighty Happy Christmas for us, I guess! First getting those cattle M'Ginty owed you—an' now Slade coming all over remorseful an' givin' you them others! I guess when I bed down to-night I shall sure call it a day!"

The first shadows of twilight were just beginning to gather as they walked back to the ranch-house.

"But you can't go to bed yet, Ham," said Horatio. "It's Christmas, you know; we ought to sit up till midnight and then start telling ghost stories and things. Besides, I asked the sheriff if he would care to come over and spend the evening with us. Hallo, here he is!"

The sheriff was just then wheeling his horse into the gate of the Crazy Cow Ranch, but he was not alone.

There were a number of riders behind him.

"That's him," agreed Ham. "But I guess he don't seem kinder out a-visitin' by the look of him. That's a posse, if I ain't mistaken, an'—yes—Slade's with 'em!"

Horatio looked puzzled as they hurried over to meet the sheriff. They had not expected the return of the reformed Mr. Slade, nor, for that matter, the sheriff's men.

They saw Slade point towards the cattle he had pressed upon Horatio to accept that afternoon, and they heard him say:

"There they are, sheriff! You can see my Bar Z brand on 'em as plain as you like—that's proof enough that they're my cattle!"

The sheriff dismounted, strode over to Horatio, and exclaimed:

"Hayweed, I'm mighty sorry to

boss," he said to Horatio; "just show the sheriff that bill of sale!"

Horatio whipped the paper from his pocket and handed it to the sheriff.

"There you are, sheriff. Read that. I'm sure it'll convince you."

THE sheriff took the paper and looked at it with a puzzled expression. He turned the paper back to front, upside down, and then said: "Read what?"

"Why, the writing on it," Horatio replied.

"There ain't no writin' there." The sheriff handed him back the paper. "Look for yourself."

Horatio examined the paper in amazement. The sheriff's words were true. There was not a mark of any kind on the paper!

"But—but— Great Scott! What

"I'm sorry to have to call in my official capacity, Hayweed, instead of as your guest," declared the sheriff. "But you're accused of cattle-rustlin'—by Slade, here!"

on earth's happened? It's gone! Here, Ham—look!"

Nutcrackers Wanted!

HAM FLYNN snatched the paper from Horatio and glared at the blank sheet. For a second there was dead silence, then he looked at Slade, took in the grin that the crooked rancher could not restrain, and Ham's lips tightened into a grim line, and he muttered:

"You're a mighty clever guy, Josh Slade! Disappearing ink, huh!"

"Say!" Slade blustered. "You gonna do your duty, sheriff, or not? These dirty rustlers stole my cattle, an' I'm here to claim justice! I can't make head nor tail of these crazy wisecracks they're puttin' over—this stuff about disappearing ink!"

"Listen, sheriff!" said Horatio frantically. "This is a vile trick—a frame-up, as you call it! This man came to us this afternoon and pleaded with us to accept a Christmas gift from him—two hundred head of cattle that he is saying now we stole.

"We suspected a trick from the first, but he reassured us with a bill

have to call in my official capacity instead of as your guest. But you're accused of cattle rustlin'—by Slade, here!"

"Wh-why!" Horatio gaped open-mouthed. "He gave them to me this afternoon! Forced me to accept them as a gift to ease his guilty conscience!"

"Say!" snarled Slade, all his repentant-sinner air gone. "The guy's crazy! Them cattle's been thieved, as anyone can see! What's he talkin' about? Guilty conscience! I guess if there's any guilty conscience in this, it belongs to him!"

"You slimy rattlesnake!" hissed Ham Flynn through clenched teeth. "I knew all that boloney was fake this afternoon! But there's one thing you ain't reckoned on! Don't argue,

The Christmas Spirit!

of sale which he scribbled on this piece of paper and which all my men witnessed. That's the truth, sheriff! I swear it!"

"Course he swears it," sneered Slade. "So will the other guy—an' the two others in the ranch-house! They're all in the same gang, ain't they? Say, sheriff, how long you gonna stand listenin' to these jibberin' maniacs?"

"I've heard tell of this disappearin' ink stuff," the sheriff said, ignoring Slade. "Them smart crooks in the cities use it for signin' dud cheques an' things. But I'm right sorry, Hayweed; your story sounds a bit tall, an' I got to accept the obvious evidence until you can prove what you say is right!"

"G-g-good heavens!" groaned Horatio. "You going to lock us up?"

"'Fraid it's my duty," said the sheriff, in a friendly manner. "You're accused of rustlin', you know—an' the law is that you gotta be kept in the gaolhouse until you're proved innocent or—"

Horatio gave a shudder. The penalty for cattle-rustling in Texas is hanging!

AS others have discovered before Horatio Hayweed, gaol is not an ideal spot in which to spend a real old-fashioned Christmas. The cell—there was only one—in Sierra gaol was furnished with a moth-eaten truckle bed and nothing else.

The sheriff had kindly allowed Horatio Hayweed to remove himself and his staff in his ancient Ford car, Tilly, though the sheriff's men had been careful to ride before and behind the decrepit vehicle in case Horatio should take it into his head to scoot.

Also, in view of the fact that it

was Christmas night, the sheriff had permitted the Crazy Cowites to take to gaol with them a bag of nuts, after same had been carefully examined to see there were no arms concealed within.

But one swallow does not make a summer. Neither can it be said that one bag of nuts makes a Christmas. The gaiety within those cell walls was inclined to be forced.

The little cell in which they were locked was separated from the sheriff's quarters by a steel-barred door, through which the arm of the law could keep an eye on his prisoners. Incidentally, the prisoners were able to keep an eye on him, and this, at the moment, was exactly what Horatio Hayweed was doing.

Slade, who had accompanied the sheriff inside to see that the prisoners were safely under lock and key, was talking to the sheriff now, and Horatio could hear snatches of the conversation.

"Guess these guys oughter be made an example of, sheriff," Slade was saying. "There's bin too much rustlin' in these parts lately. Hope they get strung up!"

"That remains to be seen," grunted the sheriff, not at all friendly. "Here's the paper I told you about—sign here."

"What's it for?" asked Slade doubtfully.

"Call it an affidavit, they do," replied the sheriff. "It just sez you accuses the prisoners of rustlin', an' your reasons for doin' so."

"Didn't know there was anythin' like this to it," muttered Slade uneasily. "S'pose it's all right."

"Formality," the sheriff grunted, as Slade signed. "Here, lend me your pen. I gotta witness it."

Horatio heard no more, because at that stage Restful Ruben began to sing "It was Christmas on the

Prairie," and followed that up with "I Don't Want to Die with my Boots on!" two cowboy songs of rather morbid sentiment. By the time the mournful ditties had come to an end, Slade had taken leave of the sheriff and left the gaolhouse.

THE weary hours dragged by. The sheriff remained in the gaol, and alternately dozed and sympathised with Horatio. The bag of nuts dwindled away. Restful Ruben had long ago abandoned his singing and had fallen into a deep sleep. Ham Flynn was dozing, too. Not so Horatio, who was far too annoyed to sleep. His brain was busy trying to find a solution of their difficult situation.

Horatio did not relish being cut off in the flower of youth by being hanged for rustling, and he decided that somehow they must escape and remain hidden until they could find solid proof of their innocence. The great question was, how to escape?

It was true that Tilly, Horatio's battered car, was outside the gaol, but it might just as well have been outside the Great Wall of China for all the use it was. Moreover, although the sheriff was friendly, he was firm. There was no hope of getting round him.

Montmorency Higginbotham had been munching nuts steadily for an hour, and at last he came to the very last one—a walnut, and a very tough one! He awakened the sheriff and asked for nutcrackers.

"Ain't got none!" grunted the sheriff drowsily.

"Say!" Mont said in disgust. "Dis yar's de wust gaol Ah ever bin in! No service! Ah asks fo' a simple lil' article like nutcrackers an' yo' ain't got 'em. Ah'll shu' make a complaint!"

"Here," the sheriff said, anxious to silence him. "Smash 'em up with this." He took a heavy Colt revolver from the holster at his belt, and absent-mindedly passed it, butt-foremost, through the bars of the cell door.

"Thank'm," said Mont, grasping it with equal absent-mindedness. "An inferior substimate, but Ah guess it'll have to do." He held it by the barrel and proceeded to hammer the walnut until it cracked. Having finished with the makeshift hammer, he was about to pass it back to its owner, when he gave a convulsive start, as though comprehending the true nature of the implement for the first time.

"Say!" he blurted. "It's a gun! Sheriff, Ah's mighty obliged to you. Stick 'em up!"

The remark had the effect of rousing everybody very suddenly. Even the somnolent Restful Ruben awoke.

"See here," the sheriff protested, putting up his hands, "give a guy a fair break—I was half-asleep like, an' it was a sorta lapse, me givin' you that gun. Be fair now, an' hand it back, there's a buddy. I bin good to you guys."

"You have, indeed, sheriff," chipped in Horatio, "and I must say we appreciate it. Meanwhile, I hope

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you will continue your kindness towards us and hand over the keys of this cell. Keep the gun levelled, Mont. I hope our conduct doesn't seem ungrateful, sheriff, but you can't reasonably expect us to wait here and be hanged when we have a chance of escape!"

"Hayweed, I appeal to you," the sheriff demanded. "You're a decent guy, I guess; I've always thought so, anyhow—an' you'll all have a chance to prove your case at the trial—"

"Yeh!" said Ham Flynn. "In a Western court, too! I guess a sausage-roll in a bear-pit has more chance than we'll have!"

"Let's not have any unpleasantness, sheriff," Horatio said. "Please hand over the keys!"

The sheriff sighed, and did as requested. Presently the positions of gaoler and captives were reversed. The sheriff was behind the bars and the Crazy Cow boys were bidding him a hearty adieu on the side of freedom.

"Hope you'll excuse us, sheriff!"

hatchets is chained to a ring in de gaol walls!"

"You mean the back axle?" Horatio exclaimed. "What on earth—"

"Yeh!" said a sneering voice, that was not the property of any member of the Crazy Cow outfit. "He means the back axle! I'll trouble you guys to stick your arms high!"

They turned towards the voice and found themselves looking at Josh Slade's evil face and a brace of six-shooters.

"I guessed this would happen!" he grunted. "That sheriff seemed a sight too friendly with you for my likin', so I just took this little precaution. Get outter that fivver, all of you! Sharp about it!"

There was nothing for it but to obey. It is unwise to argue with a couple of Colt revolvers. Boiling with rage and disappointment, the Crazy Cow outfit marched back into the gaol, Slade stalking in the rear with his threatening guns.

"Whichever you guys got the keys

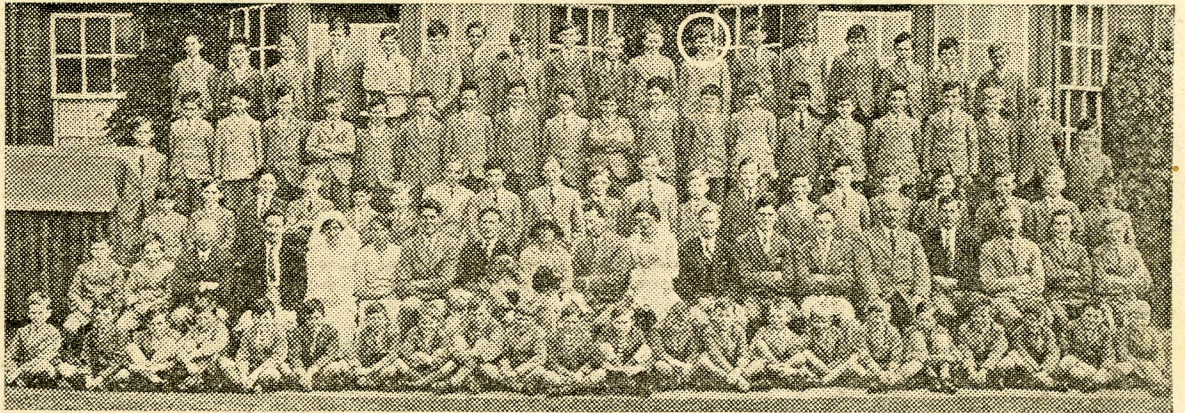
"What's true?" Slade demanded.

"The disappearing ink!" the sheriff shouted. "You signed the affidavit with your fountpen—an' so did I—an' both signatures have gone—dried off! Hayweed's story is true!"

"You're crazy!" faltered Slade, turning pale. "I dunno what you're talkin' about!"

"You don't, huh?" said the sheriff. "Well, I'll just enlighten you! You're an all-fired clever guy, I guess, but you're careless! It sorta slipped your memory that that pen of yours was still filled with the disappearing ink dope—an' you went an' signed this paper with it, too! Hayweed wasn't lyin' about that bill of sale!"

"No!" chipped in Horatio. "I wasn't! He wrote out the bill of sale with that same fountain-pen and we all signed with it! Careless of him, sheriff, to forget to change the ink in his pen before signing your document, as you say. But jolly lucky for us!"



ONE GUINEA has been awarded to M. A. Nicholson, of Braxted, The King's Gap, Hoylake, Cheshire, for this photo of pupils of THE LEAS SCHOOL, HOYLAK. Nicholson is sitting tenth from the right, in the bottom row

FIVE SHILLINGS will be sent to the OWNER of the RINGED HEAD if he will send his full name and address, vouched for by M. A. Nicholson, in envelope marked "Claim," to the Editor, MODERN BOY

Horatio apologised. "But there was no other way. Come on, boys. Let's make for the car, and scoot!"

THE four hurried from the gaol, and while Horatio hastily spun the starting handle of the ramshackle old car, the others clambered in. Luckily Tilly's engine started immediately. Horatio leapt into the driving seat beside Ham Flynn.

"Make for the hills, boss!" Ham advised. "I guess until we get this affair cleared up we're as good as out-laws!"

"Anything's better than that awful gaol!" said Horatio, and slammed the car in gear. There was a terrific scrunching of wheels, clouds of dust, and Tilly rocked and strained violently back and forth, but progress towards the hills and liberty was nil.

"Boss!" shouted Mont, gazing over the back of the car. "De back

a' that cell, open 'it!" he commanded.

The command was obeyed, and the sheriff emerged, looking a trifle sheepish.

"I'm obliged to you, Slade!" he murmured. "They took me unawares, an'—"

"I guess you're a mighty smart sheriff!" said Slade sarcastically. "But as a citizen of this here burg, I demand they be properly guarded! They're dangerous characters, an' if the sheriff—"

"Aw—can it!" the sheriff growled. "I'm the sheriff, not you. Mebbe you can do my job better'n I can myself, but while I wear the star, I'm—"

The sheriff broke off and scowled down at a piece of paper on his desk, which had just caught his eye.

"Say—this is mighty queer!" he murmured; then suddenly glared up at Slade. "So it's true!" he roared.

Josh Slade backed hastily towards the door.

"All right, Slade," the sheriff said. "You needn't bolt! I don't think I can get anything' on you for tryin' to frame Hayweed an' his boys—which is a pity! But if you take my advice you won't try an' reclaim them cattle you dumped on his ranch, otherwise I—"

"Gerrrr!" snorted Slade, stalking out of the gaol and slamming the heavy door behind him. The on-lookers had a feeling that the sheriff's advice had duly impressed Mr. Slade. At any rate he never did attempt to reclaim the two hundred head of cattle that had been his Christmas gift to Horatio Hayweed!

Next Friday's MODERN BOY (on sale a day earlier than usual) contains another rattling yarn of the Crazy Cow Ranch boys!

Just My Foolin'

HELLO, everybody! Are you fond of dates? Not the edible variety, but the kind they put in history books. Here's a few to be going on with—all of them more or less Christmasy.

A.D. 1.—The first Christmas presents were given, consisting of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

A.D. 100.—Ancient Britons created the symbol of a mystic plant with white berries—the mistletoe. While this plant was held on high by an acolyte, Bottlenose Ben, the Druid Priest, kissed Blubberan Sperm, the Prince of Whales.

A.D. 200.—A person named Jack won the beanstalk first prize at a local flower show. The prize was a goose reputed to lay golden eggs, but all Jack ever got from it was I.O.U.'s.

A.D. 300.—The all-important time! Away at a small village in Russia was born a boy whom his parents, doubtless for the best reasons, called Nicholas. In due course he became Bishop of Myra, in Russia, and was so generous to the poor that they canonised him as Saint Nicholas—or, in Russian—Santa Claus.

A.D. 400.—Somebody thought of a joke for Cinderella. "She can't get her foot into the crystal slipper!" became "No, she couldn't get her foot into the Crystal Palace!" If you see Cinderella at the Panto this year, you will most certainly hear this solemn and ancient chestnut.

A.D. 500.—Turkeys invented by a Swedish musician named Gobl.

A.D. 700.—St. George invented the game of Snapdragon. (Yes, I know he really lived in the year 300 and something, but I've already filled that up with Santa Claus.)

A.D. 800.—Alfred the Great invented mince pies (well done).

A.D. 1100.—Christmas pudding, stuffed dates, and indigestion invented by a firm of patent medicine specialists.

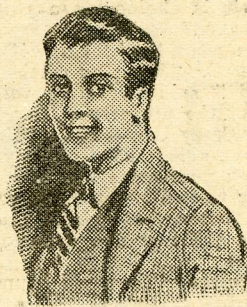
A.D. 1600.—Christmas crackers invented by a man named Pawkes, who was not permitted to give a public display of his invention at the House of Commons.

I've missed out a few centuries here and there, I know; but you can fill 'em in yourself—or go without.

TALKING of dreams—we weren't, but that's an unimportant detail—reminds me of a young friend of mine, John James MacWhirter Inversluaschentuch Coffdrop—his godfathers gave him this name, and they'll live just as long as it takes young John to save up for a revolver—who had a rotten experience on Boxing Night.

It seems that he had been to a pantomime and— But wait a bit, I can explain it much better in rhyme.

WHEN Johnny went to the pantomime
He had a really topping time,
Then went to bed with aching head
And soon began to snore;
And objects strange and weird
Before his sight appeared.
He found that he was in a clime



By The OLD BOY



He never had seen before.
And Oh! Oh! OH!—He had such a
horrible dream,
A grim and serious, very mysterious,
Dreary, dreadful dream!

A GIANT weighing thirty stone
Was standing on his funny-bone,
And prodding him in manner grim
With agonizing zest;
A goose with joyful shout
Had pecked his tonsils out;
While dates and figs did country jigs
All up and down his chest.
And Oh! Oh! OH!—He shivered at that
dream.
That grim and serious, very mysterious,
Dreary, dreadful dream!

AND then, before his staring eyes,
A large battalion of mince pies
Arrived on foot in column of route,
And stood themselves at ease;
The order came "Go on!"
They flung themselves at John:
The wretched lad cried "Kamerad!"
But still they did not cease.
And Oh! Oh! OH!—He shouted in his dream;
That grim and serious, very mysterious,
Dreary, dreadful dream!

THIS is the lesson of my tale:
At Christmastide you must not fail
To exercise a certain wit
Precaution what you eat;
A pudding and a score
Of mince pies—don't have more—
This is enough, with other stuff,
To do yourself a treat.
Or, Oh! Oh! OH!—you'll have such a horrible dream!
A grim and serious, very mysterious,
Dreary, dreadful dream!

HERE'S something to keep you occupied during the Christmas holiday. Take an ordinary pack of fifty-two cards, lay out on the table a "hand" of thirteen, and then find out how many different orders of thirteen cards you can make with your pack.

Mind, I don't mean how many different hands only, but in how many different orders you can put your thirteen cards. Would you care to try it if you have a half-hour to spare?

WELL, I've worked it out in figures for you. The answer is 4,952,776,817,211,239,680,000 different ways. It took me the whole afternoon to work that out, and I've had figures on the brain ever since.

How would you repeat the number in words? Let us see. The number is not quite raised as high as the fourth power, which means that we must start off in trillions.

Here we go:
Four thousand,
nine hundred
and fifty-two trillion, seven hundred and seventy-six thousand, eight hundred and seventeen billion, two hundred and eleven thousand, two hundred and thirty-nine million, six hundred and eighty thousand nett. No reduction on taking a quantity. And now excuse me while I go out and get something for a sore throat!



A giant weighing thirty stone . . .

A THRILLING EPISODE FROM—

Bring 'Em Back Alive!

FRANK BUCK that amazing wild-animal trapper and dealer whose exciting film-picture, "Bring 'Em Back Alive!" is now showing at the cinemas, tells you how he had a merry-go-round with one of his captives aboard a ship, and how his own career nearly came to a sudden end! **Complete**

A Screaming Cyclone!

I HAD just left Calcutta aboard the s.s. Granite State with a big shipment of animals and birds. On the way down the Hooghly River we stopped at Budge-Budge, an oil station just below Calcutta, to discharge a cargo of oil. The gang-ladder was just about to be pulled up when a native came tearing up in a small motor-lorry—borrowed or stolen—with a crated leopard on it.

Before anyone could stop him, he was on deck making all sorts of wild noises and gestures and demanding to see me.

Breathlessly the native told me that he had heard I was in the market for another leopard. He had one in the lorry below—the finest leopard in India—and if I didn't buy it I was making the mistake of my life.

I got hold of the mate, and he was good enough to give me a few minutes' grace before pulling up the gang-ladder, so that I could inspect the animal that the excited native had in the cage on the lorry.

I went ashore, made a hasty examination, saw that the animal was a first-rate specimen, and negotiated a quick deal. Lines were thrown over the side and made fast around the cage, and the latest addition to my floating menagerie was hoisted over the side by hand.

My new "cat" was a full-grown male spotted leopard in perfect condition. He was a savage demon, raising a rumpus with his snarling and growling whenever I went near him;

Scraping or playing? It's difficult to tell from this photograph—but there's no doubt about the scrapping in this real-life thriller of Frank Buck's! Imagine yourself in his place—chasing one of these big, savage "jungle cats" around a ship's deck, and then cornering it—and winning the tussle!

and when Lal, my native assistant, attempted to pass a few hunks of perfectly good beef into the cage he lunged against the bars with a roar that resounded from the poop deck to the forecastle head in his attempt to get at the boy.

I saw at once that it would never do to keep this screaming cyclone near my better behaved "cats." The others, leopards and tigers, were a fairly manageable lot, but with this villain to lead a rebellion there was much likelihood that the work I had done on all those other jungle tabbies would be undone.

I therefore stowed his cage on the iron deck right down against the rail at the ship's side, a fair distance from the rest of my collection which had been loaded on the tops of No. 1 and No. 2 hatches, where they were protected against the weather by a heavy tarpaulin flung tent-fashion over the cargo booms.

"A little spray won't hurt him," said the skipper. "That's all he's in for. We won't take any green seas over the forward deck out here at this season." We had left the typhoon area in and about the China Sea far

behind us by this time, and were somewhere out in mid-Pacific.

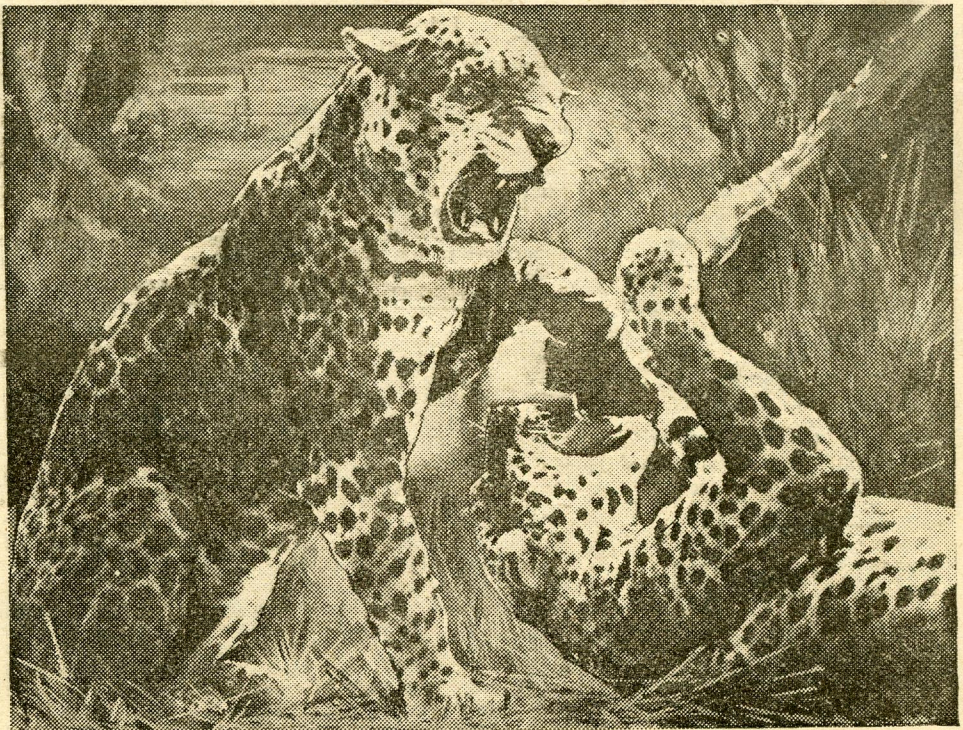
ABOUT five-thirty next morning there was a furious pounding on my door. I stumbled out of bed in the semi-darkness, and, opening the door and blinking, I discovered the third officer there. Pale and trembling, he looked like a man who had been having a bad dream.

"Your leopard's loose!" he gasped.

"My leopard's loose?" I yelled. Feverishly I tumbled into my clothes, firing questions at the third officer in the process. He told me that vicious seas breaking over the forward deck with a sudden rush had sent the cage on a ten-foot spin and turned it upside down.

But the officer on watch evidently thought that a leopard in a cage bottom-side up was as safe as a leopard right-side up, as long as he was still inside his cage.

All went well until later, when another tremendous sea came smashing over the upturned cage, pounding it amidships and completing the damage by dropping tons of water on



Bring 'Em Back Alive!

the top-side bottom, which was never meant to be as strong as the real top.

The roof of the cage was gone. The bewildered leopard scampered out, mixed a few growls with the roaring of the sea, and pattered down the iron deck to think things over among some oil barrels lashed around the mast and against the bulk-head.

I had heard enough—more than enough! The passengers were still abed. There was one thing that had to be done immediately—the mid-section of the ship, the part occupied by the passengers, would have to be cut off from the foredeck and promenade deck.

In a few minutes my "boy" Lal arrived, struggling to throw some clothes over himself as he entered on the run. I gave him some hasty commands. His principal task was to take a few dozen revolver bullets I tossed at him and pull out the lead noses with a pair of pliers. Then he was to stuff wadding into the empty ends to hold the powder in. He had done the same sort of job for me before.

I left on a hurried visit to the captain's quarters. He sportingly agreed to give me a chance to catch my leopard alive. I had to make a promise to shoot to kill if the escaped animal became a menace to passengers or crew, though there was small likelihood of danger to passengers, whose section of the vessel was quickly shut up, preventing access to open deck space. The crew could be warned to keep out of the way.

"But remember, Buck," the captain said, "I reserve the right to step in whenever I see fit and order the animal to be killed. I can't let this leopard chase go on for ever. The minute I decide you've had a fair chance to catch it, you'll have to submit to my decision.

"You know enough about the sea

to realise I can't let this sort of thing interfere with efficient operation of my ship. Go ahead. But don't take any unnecessary chances. No leopard is worth it. Good luck!"

Teeth and Claws Bared!

I RETURNED to my cabin, where Lal had completed his task. I didn't realise until he started questioning me that I had failed to tell him why I had routed him out of bed. Pushing him out of the door as I grabbed my rifle, I told him that the new leopard was loose.

We made straight for the iron deck. I wanted to get in among those oil barrels and gradually work my way back to the spot where the leopard had taken refuge. How near I should get to the savage beast would depend upon his behaviour. But before making any definite decision or plans about taking him alive I had to find out just how his new-found liberty was affecting his morale.

If he proved as ferocious loose on the deck as he had been while in the cage, then, of course, he must be shot immediately. While I felt pretty certain that he would be more scared than vicious, my first job was to make sure of this.

Lal was carrying my revolver, which he had loaded with the blank cartridges. He also had with him, in addition to a further supply of blanks, a round of perfect revolver bullets ready for use.

With the boy at my side I began to crawl in among the barrels. I was prepared to shoot to kill. We crept up closer and closer. I raised my rifle for action, getting a bead on the leopard not more than fifteen feet away. My finger was on the trigger. I had no desire to shoot, but I was prepared to pull the trigger if he gave any signs of springing at me.

I crept a few inches closer. All the leopard did was snarl and bare his claws, and once or twice make a movement as if he were going to jump up on top of the barrels to get away from me. Everything in his manner indicated that the thought uppermost in his mind was escape.

Of course, he would fight unto death if attacked; but my guess was that here was a badly worried leopard. In surroundings that were more familiar to him, where he would be surer of himself, he might have forced the fight, lashing out with his vicious claws and ripping open everything in sight with his cruel teeth. But my experience told me that here was an animal that considered himself at a disadvantage.

"We can take him alive, Lal!" I whispered. Dragging Lal along by the arm, I crawled out, leaving the leopard where he was, and made for the steps leading from the iron cargo deck up to the ship's main promenade deck, where the officers' mess-room was located.

I looked the ground over carefully, and decided that it would be possible to drive the leopard up the steps and into the mess-room.

With Lal's assistance I hauled the empty cage—now repaired by the ship's carpenter—up the steps to a space near the door of the mess-room. Leaving the door open, I had all other means of reaching the room closed.

Then I went after my leopard, revolver in hand. It was loaded with blanks, but I don't mind saying that I wasn't taking any chances. I saw to it that Lal was by my side with my loaded rifle, ready to hand it to me any second—or to blaze away himself if there was not sufficient time to hand me the weapon.

Again Lal and I were among the oil barrels facing the enemy. The leopard, at a loss to know what to do, was approximately where we had left him. My mind was made up. There was nothing for me to do but to chase him from the position he had taken up among these barrels, get him to scamper up those steps leading into the mess-room, drive him into this chamber, and then slap the open cage against the door and drive him into that.

Lal and I took up a position where I could fire at the leopard at an angle that would drive him out on the open deck. I raised my pistol and blazed away. The big, spotted cat, in a series of great leaps—and even if he isn't leaping at you there is something terrifying about those tremendous and seemingly effortless jumps—made for the open deck.

ROUND and round he went, Lal and I in pursuit. After circling the iron deck half a dozen times I blazed away at the animal three or four times, when we were about ten yards from the steps leading to the promenade deck, where the officers' mess-room was. Instead of scampering up the steps, as I hoped he would, the animal stopped in his tracks and whirled around.

Teeth and claws bared, he faced me, ready to spring. I let him quiet down. We stood facing each other this way for a full minute. I could not afford to back away, any more than I could afford to advance. The animal started to relax. His lips began to close over his teeth. His claws were receding. This was a good time to shoot!

I let him have another blank, the fire bursting close enough to his eyes to frighten him. He turned and ran. I thought I had him cornered so that he couldn't help colliding with the steps, but he swung wide as he ran, and passed my objective. Round he went for two more circuits, making such speed I thought he would lap me.

He would have done so in a few more rounds, for by now he was desperate for a means of escape, and he had dropped his halting manner of running. As he completed his second circuit he was not many yards behind me. Swinging round, I advanced and opened fire. The suddenness of my attack was too much for him. At a loss what to do, he swung around and started going in the other direction.

THIS ISSUE

contains 6 Super
Picture - Stamps for
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Next Friday's **MODERN
BOY**—on Sale One Day
Earlier than Usual

FURTHER SETS

of Stamps are Given
also with This Week's
RANGER and **MAGNET**

DON'T MISS THEM!

As he went around the turn, I heard an agonised shriek. The leopard had almost collided with a Chinese boy carrying two buckets of water! What the boy was doing on deck I didn't know. I thought everyone had been warned to keep off.

The buckets went careening crazily down the deck, the water splashing in all directions. The boy scrambled to his feet, frightened out of his wits. Madly he tore for the bulkhead doorway, from which he had recently emerged. The leopard, as scared as the boy, ran uncertainly for the same door, neither of them quite sure what it was all about.

As he neared the doorway, the boy saw a rope hanging from a boom above his head. He grabbed the rope and scrambled up it like a monkey

"Are You Crazy?"

I TOOK advantage of the animal's confusion, coming up on him suddenly, as he stood still after a few hesitant movements beneath the boy swinging on the rope. The chambers of my gun refilled with blanks, I blazed away again, and this time succeeded in manoeuvring the leopard to a position in front of the steps that led to the deck above. Another series of shots sent him scampering up, and the first stage of my task was over.

In the meantime, the passengers—there were about eighty of them—had awakened. The news of the leopard chase had spread, and the passengers rushed for the glass-enclosed upper deck above the mess-room to take in the show—or as much as they could see.

The leopard made circuit after circuit of the promenade deck, Lal and I in pursuit. Every other lap or so, he would suddenly swing around and face us, teeth and claws bared as before, and ready for action. Again we would stand motionless and give him a chance to quiet down.

Once, after his teeth and claws relaxed to normal and we thought he was calming down, the cries of passengers startled him and he poised himself for a leap, his eyes distorted with rage and fear.

I told Lal to blaze away with the pistol, and again the animal turned and ran. And now I made up my mind to get that leopard, dead or alive, without wasting any more time and energy.

Fortunately my spotted fugitive was tiring, too. Weary of the chase, he would hesitate before the open door of the mess-room and scamper round the deck again, without much assurance—not quite certain whether he had anything to lose by going in. Finally, seeing that there was no other place to go, he entered. I banged the door shut, and the second stage of the job was finished.

Lal and I, after a few moments of well-earned rest, removed the bars from one end of the repaired and reinforced cage and shoved it smack against the door frame, first hastily opening the mess-room door.

We took the precaution of blocking in the open space above the cage

With a group of husky sailors holding the cage firmly against the door I decided on the next move. Going into a hallway from the other side of the deck opening into the mess-room, I lowered a dumb-waiter window (through which the mess-boy on duty passed food when a meal was being served) and, with a long bamboo pole, tried to prod the leopard into the box

My spotted foe would snarl his opinion of these tactics, two or three times grabbing the end of the pole between his teeth and biting off a piece. He'd spit out the bamboo and look up at me in a rage, all the bitterness in his heart reflected in his cruel glare.

which I securely tied to the end of the lasso. Next I filled my revolver with honest-to-goodness lead-nosed bullets. Then, gun in belt and lasso in hand, I started climbing through the dumb-waiter window. I heard one of the petty officers yelling: "What's the matter, man? Are you crazy?"

I was too busy to answer. As a matter of fact, I was quite sane. I was doing the only thing that could be done with the facilities at hand to get that leopard into his cage. Before swinging over the window I threw the end of the rope through the bars of the cage to the sailors outside.

"When I tell you fellows to pull," I instructed, "pull for all you're worth."

THIS WEEK'S PICTURE-STAMPS!

THE strange-looking ship shown in the first of this week's set of Picture-Stamps is an oil tanker built specially for the job of carrying vast quantities of crude oil. Some of them can carry more than four thousand tons. They are fitted with powerful pumps for loading and unloading their cargo, besides special air pumps to prevent the poisonous gases given off from the oil from accumulating.

THE ocean-going tramp steamer, shown in the other ship stamp, rarely exceeds 10,000 tons. The most modern ones have one big hold running the whole length of the ship, and carry their own unloading gear in the form of huge derricks, which take the place of masts. Some have as many as six of these derricks, and can unload 3,000 tons of cargo in less than five hours.

WITH long body and very short legs, the Skye Terrier is hot stuff at digging out the weazel and the fox from their earth. He is also an excellent ratler. In addition to scrapping underground, the Skye Terrier doesn't hesitate to attack sea-otters. A cheery little fellow—and game as can be.

RUNNING on a 15-inch gauge line from Hythe to Dymchurch, in Kent, the 25 foot long, 5 foot high loco shown in another of this week's Pictures weighs over eight tons, and is modelled on the crack locos of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It can do thirty miles an hour with a full miniature passenger-carrying train. Its tender will hold 200 gallons of water. This Romney, Hythe, and Dymchurch miniature railway has other engines, five of them modelled on the Flying Scotsman, and two smaller ones.

GETTING a good grip on your opponent's extended hand is essential if you are going to bring off the "Shake Hands" trick. Grasp him firmly and spin round into the position shown in the picture, at the same time jerking him forward with all your strength. In this position, a quick twist on his wrist will send him sprawling.

LIVING in the African desert, the Tuareg horsemen make their living by raiding Arab caravans. No Tuareg under the age of 18 may wear the traditional four feet long, double-bladed sword, and until he is twenty-two he is not allowed to wear the veil which is worn day and night by every full-fledged Tuareg warrior. The Tuaregs also carry small daggers bound to their left forearms with leather rings.

Six Super-Stamps Also with This Week's RANGER and the MAGNET.

6 MORE PICTURE-STAMPS NEXT WEEK!

After twenty minutes of this he decided to mock what he must have considered a feeble effort to get him into the cage, by stretching out on the floor and ignoring me after he was convinced there was nothing to fear from that pole which he had already chewed to pieces.

PERHAPS he was taking advantage of a lull in the battle to get a rest. At any rate, he made it clear that it would take more than a bamboo pole to get him inside that cage. The stubborn beast was beginning to annoy me. It was time to show him who was boss! I sent Lal to my cabin for my lasso.

Then I had one of the sailors bring me a long piece of ship's rope,

The mess-room was about seven feet wide and fifteen feet long. A stationary dining table with clamped-down chairs practically filled the room, leaving just enough space between the chairs and the wall for the officers to pass along to their places at the table. It was an easy step from the dumb-waiter window on to the table.

With the loop end of the lasso in my hand, ready for action, I advanced slowly towards the leopard which was crouched down by the foot of the table at the other end of the small room.

As I made my cautious approach the animal let out a throaty snarl, one of those ugly low ones that give you the creeps till you get used to hearing them, and suddenly reared up

Bring 'Em Back Alive!

with his forepaws on the other end of the table.

Again I resorted to the simple expedient that has saved me from being clawed any number of times. Standing motionless, I gave the animal a chance to calm down. This he did, slipping his paws off the table and edging back to where he was when I entered.

The only sound that came from him was a faint growl, suggestive of muttering, making it seem as if the creature was talking to himself. Now that the animal was fairly quiet I started once more for his end of the room, working my way across the table towards him in tiny steps.

He lay there cowering, his teeth bared. I kept steadily working up to him, getting my rope ready as I advanced. With a quick movement as I neared the other end of the table I sent a loop around the animal's neck, taking up the noose's slack in a flash as I yelled, "Pull!" with every ounce of lung power I possessed.

"Pull Like Billy-ho!"

THE men responded beautifully, giving a great yank that started the roped leopard sliding towards the door. As he was

dragged along he let out a series of spine-chilling snarls, struggling to dig into the floor with his claws, and, when he saw this availed him nothing, striking out with his paws in a desperate effort to get a grip on a table leg or one of the stationary chairs he was being tugged past.

With a final great yank, the men pulled the growling and struggling beast till they could drag him no farther. In order to get the animal into the cage he would have to be pulled around a corner of the door-jamb, as he was at right angles to the cage-opening towards which he was being dragged. A trial tug, to see if this miracle could be accomplished, availed nothing.

He had braced his back against the chair nearest the door and he couldn't be budged. All the men could do now was to keep him wedged in by holding the rope taut, which they did. It was impossible for the animal to move backward, and it was equally impossible for the men at the rope to drag him forward another inch.

For several seconds we remained deadlocked, the animal making a perfect bedlam of the mess-room with his cries of rage. The rope around his neck was uncomfortably tight—much tighter than I wanted it to be, but there was no other way to hold him—and he gave voice to the murder in his heart in as terrible a solo as I've ever heard from a cornered animal.

Hastily I reviewed in my mind possible ways of getting that leopard the rest of the distance to the cage, his head now being only about a foot from the opening. I shouted my simple plan to the men outside.

"And when I swing him round," was my final command, "pull like billy-ho!" Then I proceeded to put my scheme into effect, the only course that could possibly save the situation.

Jumping off the table I quickly grabbed the animal by a kicking back leg and squared him around so that the men could pull him straight through the door. Considering that it was my first experience at swinging a leopard around a bend by a back leg, I did a good job!

THE men at the rope did an even better job. The second I surprised the animal with my attack from the rear that placed him directly in front of the open cage he had been so stubbornly resisting, they gave a tremendous yank that sent the spotted beast catapulting headlong through the opening, as though he were on the wrong end of a tug-of-war with an army of elephants working the other end of the rope.

All I heard from the leopard was a strangled gasp as he went whizzing through the opening into the cage. Lal, who was now on top of the box, did a speedy job of dropping the bars that made the animal a prisoner again. With two sailors to assist him in the operation, it was over in a jiffy.

As I mopped the perspiration off my forehead, thinking that my task was over, I was alarmed by the laboured breathing that came from the cage. Running around and peering inside, I saw that the animal was choking. For some strange reason that I never could fathom the slip-knot around the neck had not loosened when the sailors at my order slackened their hold on the rope!

Something had to be done immediately. I grabbed the end of the rope and sent the slack twirling through the bars, hoping this would result in slacking the noose. It didn't.

A GAIN I rallied my sailors. I commanded them to grab the end of the rope and jerk the animal forward to the bars. I was no longer interested in the creature from the standpoint of its value. All that the situation meant to me at this moment was that here was an animal threatened by strangulation. And I meant to save that pesky leopard's life if I got clawed up in the process.

I got out a heavy pocket knife I always carry. The agonised breathing of the choking beast rattled me as much as anything ever had in all my experience, and I found myself fumbling with the knife in my feverish efforts to open up the biggest blade, with a powerful cutting edge of over four inches.

I got the blade open as the men dragged the animal to the bars with a powerful pull. All I saw in front of me was a couple of hundred pounds of tortured leopard as I reached in and slipped the knife under the rope, quickly cutting it through.

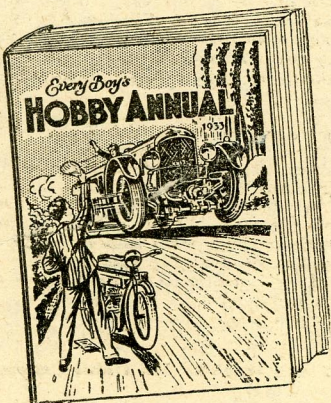
I RONICALLY enough, now that this animal was caged, I was in greater danger in my dealings with him than at any time since I set out to capture him. I took my chances when I stuck my hand into the cage to slit that noose, but this was as nothing compared to the danger I was in during the fraction of a second that elapsed between the time I restored him to normal breathing with a great slash of my knife and the withdrawal of my hand.

He seemed to come alive again instantaneously, making a terrible lunge for me, one paw just reaching the right shoulder and ripping my leather jacket wide open. Fortunately I ducked as I frantically backed away, or that vicious paw would have dug down into my shoulder and held me fast while the other paw, reaching out through the iron bars, got in its deadly work at my throat.

That was one of the narrowest escapes I've ever had, and I don't want another such close shave.

Five weeks later the troublesome creature, considerably tamed though not exactly what you'd call docile, wound up at the Lincoln Park Zoo, in Chicago, and that was that!

DON'T miss Frank Buck's next real-life Thriller in Friday's MODERN BOY—on sale a day earlier than usual. Make a note of that!



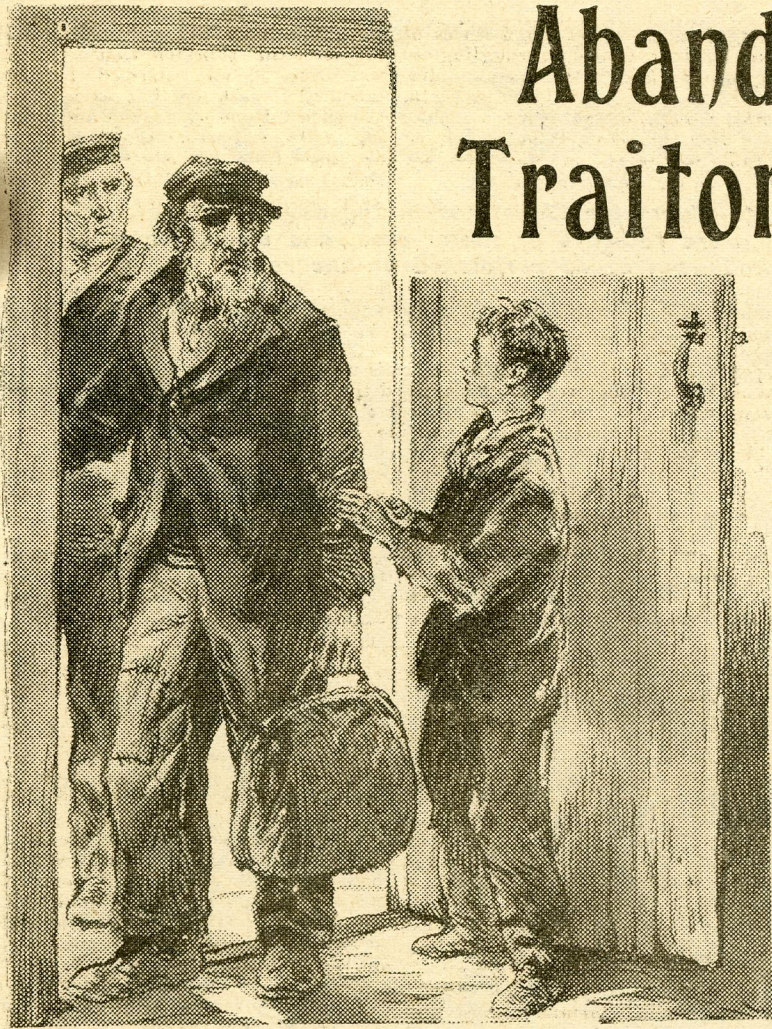
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Abandoned on Traitor's Rock!



"Oh, please, please take me with you!" I implored, seizing Amos Scrobie by the arm. "Take me as far as the mainland with you. I promise I won't be any trouble!"

The Deserter.

TWICE since the war between England and Germany had broken out I, young Peter, had tried to get word through to the British authorities about what was going on at Traitor's Rock. But each time I had failed, and for my pains I had received so cruel and merciless a thrashing from Amos Scrobie, with whom I lived alone on that barren island, that for days on end I had scarce been able to move.

I never gave up hope, however, that some day something would happen to enable me to get a message through to the British. But the weeks passed, dragging slowly and wearily into months. And the only strangers who ever came to Traitor's Rock were the grim and taciturn German U-boat men, sea-booted and leather-jacketed.

It was always under cover of night that they came, these men from the sea. A brief hour they would spend ashore whilst their boats were being refuelled from the great drums of fuel stored in Devil's Cave—thanks to traitor Scrobie! Then they would turn back into the night, and some we would never see again at Traitor's Rock.

For out there on the storm-tossed waters and in the eternal half-light of the silent depths lurked constant and deadly peril; peril in the shape of bombs, mines, nets, and barrages set to trap and blow to oblivion the marauding U-boats of Germany.

One night, when U 322, under the command of Captain Wulf, had called for fuel and gone again, there came a knock at our door, and into the kitchen where Amos Scrobie and I were seated there walked a German sailor.

Amos Scrobie, who was seated at the table with a tin mug of tea and a hunk of bread and cheese in front of him, raised his head and stared at the intruder in astonishment, and demanded:

"Where've you come from?"

The seaman, a great, burly fellow, kicked the door shut behind him.

"I'm from the U-boat which has just sailed," he announced.

"Do you mean you've been left behind?" demanded Amos. "Missed the boat?"

The man sauntered forward and seated himself on the edge of the littered table.

Peter, the twelve-year-old companion of traitor Scrobie on the bleak and lonely Hebrides island, has an Adventure the like of which had never entered his wildest dreams—and witnesses the torpedoing of the great liner Lusitania!

Complete by

Geo. E. Rochester

"Yes, I've missed the boat," he said. "And, what's more, I've missed it on purpose."

"D'you mean to say," exclaimed Amos incredulously, "that you've deserted?"

"You've hit the nail right on the head, mate!" the man grinned. "Yes, I've deserted."

"Then I wouldn't be in your shoes!" exclaimed Amos. "Not for anything, I wouldn't! You know what'll happen to you? The first U-boat that comes here'll take you back to Germany, where you'll be tried by a naval court martial and taken out and shot!"

"You're wrong, mate," the man said. "I won't be shot."

"Oh, and how's that?" demanded Amos, staring.

"Because by the time the next U-boat comes I'll be gone," replied the man. "And if I don't happen to be gone—then you'll hide me!"

"Hide you?" exclaimed Amos. "I certainly will not. What," he went on, in virtuous indignation, "me hide a deserter? Not likely! What do you take me for? I'm an honest man, I am!"

"If you will listen to what I've got to say—"

"I WON'T listen to anything you've got to say!" announced Amos, his voice rising truculently. "I'm no German, but I'm working for the Germans, and I know where my duty lies, even if you don't. You're going back to Germany aboard the next U-boat what comes here—and that's that!"

"If you'll only shut your mouth—"

"I won't shut my mouth! You're a coward and a deserter, and a disgrace to your country! I'm ashamed of you! You're—you're contamination, that's what you are! And wanting me to help you! The nerve of it! I wouldn't help you—not even

(Continued on page 18)

Home for Christmas

What it meant to go Home for Christmas in the days of stage-coach travel, before there were railways or motor-cars, and when gentry of the Dick Turpin breed performed on the roads!

"DON'T bag all the straw, Smith minor! And you don't want all that rug, do you?" Tomkins, of the Fifth, gives a lordly sniff, and calmly appropriates an armful of young Smith's straw and adds it carefully to the generous bundle already tucked around his own feet and legs—and "borrows" about two-thirds of the unfortunate youngster's thick rug.

Others are scrambling for odd blades of straw, and Smith minor's plaintive bleat of protest is completely lost in the cry that goes up from the cheery guard of the stage-coach.

"Now, then, young gen'lemen—time we were off!" he shouts. "Ready, Bill?" His mate, the coachman, gives a nod, cracks his whip, makes horsey noises with his lips, and the half-dozed restive horses are plunging forward and the stage-coach is rattling

Himself, he is used to the biting wind, by night and day, and so is his friend the coachman—both of them wrapped in several capes and coats and a tremendous muffler apiece. But Smith minor and the domincering Tomkins of the Fifth cannot be expected to see *much* fun in this comfortless ride. And if they do manage to keep a little warmth in their feet and legs with the straw which the coach proprietors have kindly provided—both for inside passengers and out—well and good.

If they can't—well, there will be a change of horses presently, at one of the big coaching inns, and then they will have a chance to stamp about and thaw themselves, and perhaps warm their insides with a steaming-hot drink.



Are you looking forward to snowballing and skating this Christmas? Well, the sort of thing in this old print has happened once—and it might happen again! It shows a Frost Fair on the Thames, when that river was frozen completely over in 1814.

over the cobble-stones—leaving the old school behind. The boys have broken-up, and now it's Home for Christmas!

HO, and what's all this? Well, we have gone back a bit in Time, to the days before there were railways or motor-cars or motor-bikes or motor-coaches—to the Good Old Days when highwaymen on horses took the place of motor-bandits, and you travelled everywhere by lumbering old stage-coach.

The coachman has given a look to his blunderbuss and the guard has seen to his. And now for the next few hours the coachman's attention will be riveted on keeping his horses at full speed. The guard enlivens the proceedings every now and then by giving a cheerful toot on his long coach-horn, and shouting a wish that his outside passengers are not yet frozen *quite* stiff!

Sitting a-top of the coach in their bottle-green suits and tasselled caps, and with red noses, the boys can only hope that the postillion—the fellow astride one of the leading horses—won't be frozen stiff before the end of the first stage is reached, for they know that such a thing has often happened. Uncomfortable they are, his is a far worse plight, for he has no protection at all.

PRESENTLY the first stage is really completed, and the stiff, outside passengers get down the ladder which the guard props up for them. The stop is just long enough for the waiting ostlers and stablemen to change the horses. Then it's "Take your seats, young gen'lemen!" and, with a lively fanfare on the long coach-horn, they are off again—the same old tussle for more straw and a bit more rug to wrap round your knees in progress for some minutes.

In due course the boys will be set down near their own homes, and the agonies of travel by stage-coach through terrific weather will be temporarily forgotten in the immense joys of being Home again for Christmas!



Were schoolboys smaller and snowballs larger once upon a time? This picture leads us to believe so! They've a beauty in the lower right corner, and doubtless they would like to hurl it at the stage-coach passengers!

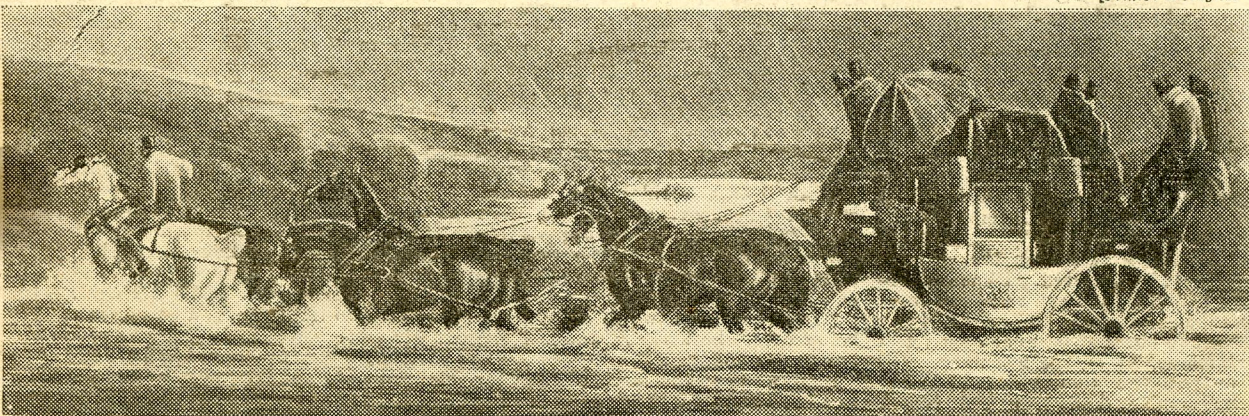
where the old word "turnpike" came from. We still grumble about certain toll-gates along the roads now, though these are becoming fewer in number each year.

AS the stage-coach routes became longer and more numerous, people began to look forward to a spot of travel—instead of viewing it with natural alarm. And then, just when things were progressing nicely, along came the railways—and the decline of stage-coaches set in. And now the railways, in turn, are grumbling, because the great motor-coaches are taking much of their business away. But the motor-coaches, doing anything up to forty or more miles an hour, have come to stay—until we *all* travel by air, and then there will be only baggage and merchandise for the railways and motor-coaches to share between them.

Already there are schoolboys who have earned the envy of their fellows by travelling home by plane. The Christmas is coming when that will be the usual mode of travel, and we shall think a railway or motor-coach or even motor-car ride as funny and old-fashioned as a journey in the old stage-coach which rattled our forefathers' bones over the stones!

The postillion—the fellow with the leading horses—wonders what the passengers in and on the coach have to grumble about. He could do a spot of grumbling himself—if he wasn't too busy fighting his horses and the flood!

[Prints: Rischgitz.]



Abandoned on Traitor's Rock!

(Continued from page 15)

if you was to go down on your bended knees and ask me with tears in your eyes. No, I wouldn't help you if you was to offer me a hundred pounds in English gold. Not even if you was to offer me a thousand, I wouldn't!"

"I was going to offer you two thousand," said the deserter calmly.

"Eh?" Amos ejaculated. "What's that? What did you say?"

"I said," grinned the other, "that I was going to offer you two thousand pounds to help me."

"Here, I don't want any lies!" began Amos blusteringly. "I'm not a fool—"

"You are a fool!" cut in the deserter. "If you weren't a fool you wouldn't be doing a dangerous job like running this fuelling base for us U-boat men. And I'm a fool for ever having volunteered for service with the U-boats, instead of staying safe in Kiel with the Fleet." Getting off the table, he strolled to the fire and stood there with his back to it.

"Now, you listen to me, Amos Scobie!" he went on. "You know who's in command of that boat I've just deserted from?"

"Yes—Captain Wulf," replied Amos. "And he's about the worst-tempered man what comes here, let me tell you. What he'll say when he finds you're not in the boat I don't dare think!"

"Then don't trouble to think," retorted the other. "Anyway, it's nothing to what he'll say when he finds out what I've deserted for. And that brings me back to this two thousand pounds I was talking about."

"You said just now that Captain Wulf is the worst-tempered man who comes here. Well, I'll tell you something else about him. He's one of the cleverest, as well."

"Meaning?" demanded Amos.

"**M**EANING," replied the other, "that he's got the sense to make what he can out of his job over and above his pay. Three days ago, in the Atlantic, off the Irish coast, we stopped a big merchantman bound for Liverpool from New York. She had two boxes of bullion aboard, each containing five thousand pounds' worth of gold, and before sinking her Captain Wulf had the boxes brought aboard the U-boat."

"Did he, indeed?" exclaimed Amos.

"Yes, he did, and, knowing that if he took them with him to Wilhelmshaven he would have to give them up to the naval authorities, he put them ashore shortly after dusk to-night on an island not a hundred miles from here. I know what his idea is. He's going back to collect them when the war is over!"

"And that," went on the seaman, "is why I've deserted. I know where that island is, and you've got the boat to take me there. We'll go and get these two boxes of bullion, then you'll put me ashore on the mainland. I'll give you two thousand pounds for your trouble, and then I'll vanish

with the eight thousand pounds that's left."

"Where is the island?" demanded Amos, in a trembling voice.

"Oh, yes, I'm likely to tell you, aren't I?" jeered the other. "You lend me your boat, and I'll take you there. Then, when we've got the bullion, we'll make for the mainland. Is it a bargain?"

"Yes, if you'll go halves," said Amos promptly.

"I certainly won't!" retorted the deserter. "I'll give you two thousand pounds, and not a ha'penny more. It's easy money, otherwise I wouldn't be so free with it. Well, do you stand in with me or don't you?"

"Three thousand?" suggested Amos.

"Two thousand, you rat!" roared the seaman. "Two thousand—and if you don't like it, I'll wring your scraggy neck and take your boat myself!"

"As a matter of fact," he went on, calming down suddenly, "that's what I thought of doing in the first place—wringing your neck. But I'm a patriot, even if I have left the service, and I know this fuelling has got to be run by somebody

"**A**NOTHER thing, if you're in this business to the tune of two thousand pounds, you won't ever dare open your mouth to tell Captain Wulf or anybody else anything about it. For your own sake you'll have to keep your mouth shut. Well, is it a bargain?"

"Yes, of course it is," agreed Amos. "You don't think I'm going to lose a chance of getting hold of two thousand pounds, do you? I'm not that daft!"

"Then shake!" said the seaman, and held out a great horny hand, which Amos shook.

"Oh, and there is just another thing," he went on, lifting his jersey to disclose a leather belt, into which was thrust a sheath-knife. "I'm a bit of a useful hand at using this, so don't forget yourself and try any funny business!"

"I'm not likely to," said Amos, eyeing the knife. "I'm not that sort. What I say I mean. I'm a man of my word, I am."

"Well, you'd better be!" grunted the other. He turned away towards the fire again. "We'll get off first thing in the morning and pick this bullion up!" Abruptly he broke off, his head inclined in listening attitude as the tread of heavily-booted feet could be heard approaching the door. "Who's that?" he demanded sharply.

"I don't know!" exclaimed Amos. "It's the U-boat men—must be! Get upstairs, you fool!"

With quick strides the seaman crossed the floor, and as he went swiftly and silently up our rickety staircase, which led to the two rat-runs of bed-rooms above, Amos Scobie turned to me.

"You say one word about him being here," he hissed, "and I'll flog the life out of you!"

Next moment the latch of the door rattled, and as the door swung

violently open Captain Wulf and a petty officer strode into the kitchen.

Near to Tears.

"**W**HAT, back again, captain?" said Amos, rising. "Nothing's amiss, I hope?"

"Yes, something is amiss," replied Captain Wulf harshly. "A torpedo-boat named Hans Kugel is missing from my boat. Have you seen anything of him?"

"Me? No, I haven't seen anything of him," replied Amos. "Haven't seen anything of him at all."

Captain Wulf looked at him intently, then turned to his petty officer, and ordered:

"Have a look upstairs!" "I tell you he's not here!" exclaimed Amos agitatedly. "You're just wasting your time—"

"*Be quiet!*" Amos relapsed into uneasy silence, and I, who knew him well, saw that he was in a dreadful state of fear as the petty officer mounted the dark and narrow staircase to the bed-rooms above. We heard the petty officer moving about. Then, much to my astonishment, and to Amos' as well, he came down alone and reported:

"He is not upstairs, sir."

"Very good!" replied Captain Wulf. "He has either fallen overboard, or has deserted and is hiding on the island. I cannot wait here until dawn, but if you find him, Scobie, you will hand him over to the commander of the next U-boat to call here."

"Yes, certainly I will," assented Amos loudly. "I know where my duty lies, captain."

"I hope you do!" retorted Captain Wulf. "Good-night!"

With that he strode from the kitchen and out into the night, followed by the petty officer.

"Don't even bother to close the door!" snarled Amos, going and closing it himself. "But where in heck that Kugel's got to beats me. Phew, it was a close shave!"

He passed the back of a trembling hand across his brow. Then, quitting the kitchen, he went shambling up the rickety staircase in search of his partner, who had so mysteriously disappeared. A few minutes later he came down again, a look of utter bewilderment on his cadaverous face.

"He's not up there at all!" he announced. "He's not in the house. Where in thunder can he have got to?"

"Perhaps he got out of the window and dropped to the ground when he heard the petty officer coming upstairs?" I suggested.

"I thought of that myself," snarled Amos; "but the windows are closed, so he couldn't have gone that way."

This, indeed, was a mystery! It was solved about an hour later when our front door opened and the missing deserter, Hans Kugel, stepped into the kitchen, a broad grin on his face.

"Well, they've gone!" he exclaimed. "I've just been lying on top of the cliffs watching them go."

"Yes, but how did you get out of the bed-room?" demanded Amos.

"Through the window," replied the other. "When I had climbed out I hung on to the sash and closed the window behind me." He tapped himself on the side of his forehead with a finger. "That's where you want it!"

"Ay, and that's where you've got it," said Amos admiringly. "Well, what about having a bite of supper and talking over this trip to get the gold? We'll have the door locked this time, though. Brat," he said to me, "get Mr. Kugel some supper and then get down to the beach in case another U-boat comes!"

I prepared some supper for Hans Kugel. Then, struggling into the old oilskins which had been given me by a U-boat captain, I took our signalling-lamp down from its hook behind the door and went down to the beach.

It was always necessary for either Amos or me to be on duty, in case a U-boat coming to Traitor's Rock to refuel signalled from out there across the darkened waters. The

was as great a robber as was Hans Kugel.

My vigil ended with the dawn, and on returning to the kitchen I was surprised to find that neither Amos nor his guest had turned in. They were sitting smoking in front of the fire, and as I hung up the signalling-lamp behind the door Amos said to me:

"We're setting off as soon as it's properly light, so you'd better get down to the cove and make my boat ready. If you want any food you can shove some bread in your pocket, because you're coming with us. If I left you here alone and an English patrol-boat happened to come, you'd tell them all about the fuelling. I know you, you whelp. You'd betray us as soon as look at us!"

Cutting myself a hunk of bread, I slipped it into my pocket, and going down to the cove where Amos' old, tub-like boat was moored, I commenced to tidy it up and make it ready for the trip.

It was whilst I was thus engaged that Amos and Hans Kugel came down to the beach together. That they were highly pleased with themselves

"I know which cave it is in, all right," Hans Kugel laughed, "because I was the man who carried it in!"

"And you're going to be the one to carry it out again, eh?" squealed Amos delightedly. "He, he, he! Sink me, it's the funniest thing I've heard for a long time, blowed if it isn't!"

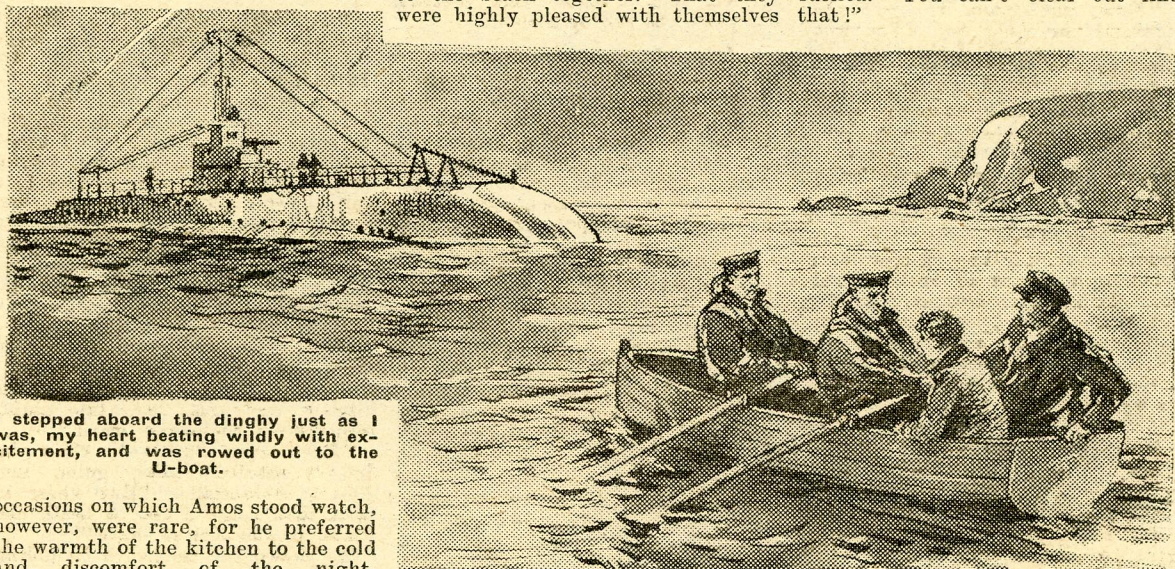
He laid the course for Ruish, and I could see that he was turning something over in his mind.

"LISTEN!" he said suddenly to Kugel, who was sprawled beside him, smoking. "I've been thinking. Where are you going when I put you ashore on the mainland?"

"What do you want to know that for?" demanded Kugel suspiciously.

"Because I've a good mind to go with you," replied Amos. "With two thousand pounds in my pocket, I needn't stay at the fuelling base any longer. I'll be independent."

"Yes, but who's going to look after the boats if you are not there?" demanded Kugel. "They've got to be fuelled. You can't clear out like that!"



I stepped aboard the dinghy just as I was, my heart beating wildly with excitement, and was rowed out to the U-boat.

occasions on which Amos stood watch, however, were rare, for he preferred the warmth of the kitchen to the cold and discomfort of the night-enshrouded beach.

Sometimes, when he knew that I must either have sleep or be of no use on the morrow to do the hundred and one jobs which he could always find for me about our miserable homestead, he would come down and surlily relieve me for an hour or two.

BUT generally I looked to spending the long night hours alone, and on this particular night, wrapping my oilskins closer about me, I settled down on the beach with my back against the foot of the precipitous cliffs which towered up above me into the darkness. And I fell to thinking of the nefarious pact which Amos Scrobie had made with the deserter from Captain Wulf's U-boat.

I had not told Captain Wulf that the deserter for whom he was looking was actually above stairs, for in view of Amos Scrobie's threat I did not dare. And another thing. By keeping the bullion for himself, as he had intended to do, Captain Wulf

was evident, for I heard Amos laugh. And if it was a shrill and unpleasant sound it at least gave token that for once he was in a good humour.

Casting off the moorings, I poled the boat inshore and they both clambered aboard. Hans Kugel settled himself amidships, his arm on the long-handled tiller, whilst Amos Scrobie busied himself with the heavy and cumbersome sail.

There was a fresh breeze that morning, and with sail set we were soon standing away from the island.

"Well, which is the island?" demanded Amos, settling himself in the sternsheets and taking the tiller. "Which is the island where the bullion is?"

"The Isle of Ruish," replied his companion.

"Ruish, eh?" chuckled Amos. "Well, Captain Wulf couldn't have chosen a better place to put the stuff. There's plenty of caves there. I suppose you know which cave it's in?"

"Huh, you're a fine one to talk about clearing out, I must say!" sneered Amos. "What about you clearing out of U 322 last night, eh?"

"That was different!" protested Kugel.

"Well, different or not," replied Amos, "you give me my share of the bullion, and if you want me to come with you I'll come. If you don't, I'll go off somewhere by myself." His voice rose wrathfully. "You must think I'm a fool if you think I'm going to stay at the base, risking my life, when I've got all that money in my pockets. No, I've made up my mind. I'm going to clear out, and I'll go with you if you like, and if you don't like I'll go by myself."

"I wouldn't mind having you with me," Kugel said slowly. "I can talk English all right, otherwise I doubt if I'd ever have had the nerve to go in for this. But you know England better than I do, and I might find it easier to get out of the country if I had you with me."

Abandoned on Traitor's Rock!

"What exactly were you proposing to do?" inquired Amos.

"Well, my idea was to keep two or three hundred pounds' worth of the bullion and bury the rest somewhere, where I could come and get it when the war is over," replied Kugel. "Then I was going to make for the Clyde, and stow away aboard some ship outward bound for America."

"You come with me, and you won't have to stow away," said Amos. "You'll get a job as a seaman, because I know a lodging-house in Glasgow where we can buy, for the right price, sailors' discharge books. You know," he nudged Kugel with a bony elbow, "books of coves what have been robbed!"

"H'm!" said Kugel thoughtfully. "It sounds all right."

"It is all right," declared Amos confidently. "Well, now, what do you say? Do we go together, or do we separate?"

"We'll go together," said Kugel, and for the second time since they had met this precious pair clasped hands. Well, when I heard Amos say that he was going to leave the base and go away to America, I wondered what was going to happen to me. So timidly I put the question to him.

"You?" he sneered. "You can stay at Black Gull Farm. You don't think we're going to take you with us, do you?"

"I thought you might," I answered quaveringly, for the thought of remaining alone at Black Gull Farm brought me near to tears.

Still—Silent—Deserted!

"WHAT?" exclaimed Amos. "D'you think we're going trapezing about the country with a brat like you hanging about our heels? Why, you'd go up to the very first policeman you saw and point your skinny little finger at me and say: 'Please, sir, that man there is Amos Scrobie, and he has been running a fuelling base for German submarines.' That's the sort of thing you'd do. I know you. No, my lad, you can stay at Black Gull Farm and run the base!"

"Yes, but what if he tells Captain Wulf or any of the other U-boat captains where we've gone?" protested Kugel.

"Well, what if he does?" demanded Amos. "They won't be able to do anything about it, will they? We'll have vanished completely by then, and they'll never find us. It's either leave him there at Black Gull Farm or slit his throat for him. I don't mind which, but it's got to be one or the other."

"We're certainly not going to kill him," said Kugel, "so you can put that idea right out of your head. I'm not over particular—I've knocked around too much for that—but I draw the line at murder."

"Well, we'll leave him at the base, then," said Amos. "Hallo, yonder's Ruish—right ahead, see?" He jabbed with the short stump of his blackened

clay pipe towards where the dark and precipitous cliffs of Ruish were merging into view from out the mist-enshrouded horizon.

Another half-hour and he let the sail down with a run as, reaching the island, we surged in alongside a sort of natural jetty of shelving rock.

"The boy'll look after the boat," he said. "Come on, you and me'll get the gold." He was all of a shake with eagerness as he clambered ashore, followed by Hans Kugel. "Which way?" he demanded. "Which way?"

"Along here," replied Kugel, setting off along the smooth and uneven rock.

REMAINING in the boat, I watched the figures of the two men until they had vanished round a corner of the cliff. In my mind I can see them now as plainly as I did that morning when they went to steal the bullion which Captain Wulf himself had stolen—the big German seaman walking with long stride and rolling gait; Amos Scrobie, scraggy and slovenly, his reefer jacket flapping untidily open, shambling along by his side.

I did not have to wait long before they reappeared, carrying between them a heavy, metal-bound box. Reaching the boat, they deposited the box carefully in the stern.

"Well, that's number one," said Amos jovially. "Come on, let's get the other one." Away they went again, to reappear carrying a similar box.

"And now for the mainland, eh?" said Kugel when, with the two bullion boxes safely aboard, we were standing away from the island.

"No, I must go back to Black Gull Farm first," said Amos. "I've got some belongings there, little knick-knacks, you know, what I want to pick up. And, anyway, we've got to take the brat back, haven't we?"

"Ay, I forgot about that," grunted his companion. So we laid our course for Traitor's Rock and, handing over the tiller to his companion, Amos sat himself on one of the bullion boxes and made me sit on the other.

"It's not every man," he informed me, squatting there and puffing at his blackened clay, "what can say that he's sat on five thousand pounds worth of gold! That'll be something for you to brag about, brat, when you're a man. Only folks won't believe you, that'll be the trouble!"

It was past midday when we reached Traitor's Rock and ran into the little sandy cove where Amos kept his boat.

"Don't moor her," he told me. "Just take the anchor rope up the beach. We'll be wanting her shortly."

I did as I was bid, then followed the pair of them up to our miserable dwelling, where Amos produced an old carpet bag into which he began to pack his scant belongings.

"I'm going away!" he chuckled. "I can hardly believe it. Fourteen years I've been here, all told. Ay, fourteen years come next month. And now I'm going away!"

"What brought you here, mate?" inquired the seaman curiously. "What's made you live here all alone like this?"

"I knifed a man once," Amos grinned, "and the police got nasty and come after me. So I settled out here, and here I've been ever since."

So that was why Amos Scrobie had cut himself off from the world! He was a fugitive from justice. I had never known it before, though goodness knows I might have guessed it.

"Well, I'm ready," he announced, closing his old carpet bag and picking it up. Then, taking a good stare round the kitchen, he went on: "To think I'll never see this place again! Week in, week out, summer and winter, I've bided here. Just me and the brat, and now I'm going away, never to come back. It's—it's unbelievable!"

"Oh, please, please, take me with you!" I cried, seizing him by the arm, for it was dreadful to think of being left alone on the island. "Don't leave me here alone. Take me as far as the mainland with you. I promise I won't be any trouble!"

"You're staying here!" he snarled, and freed his arm from my grasp. "And if you don't stop snivelling I'll land you a clout what'll give you something to remember me by!" I shrank away from him. Turning to Hans Kugel, he said:

"Come on, let's be off!" Quitting the kitchen, they set off for the beach. Choking back my tears, I followed slowly and miserably in their wake, and watched them clamber aboard the boat, hoist the sail, and stand away for the mainland.

With the realisation that they had really abandoned me, I felt so utterly and dreadfully alone that I flung myself face downwards on the turf, and with my head pillowed on my arms I sobbed unrestrainedly.

If only they had taken me as far as the mainland! That was all I had wanted. I could have fended for myself—somehow. But instead they had left me here alone with no one for companion save the wheeling gulls.

There was not a soul in the world who cared a jot about me—not a soul who cared what happened to me. I think that in that hour, young as I was, I plumbed the very depths of misery and despair.

GETTING to my feet, I made my way to the highest point on the eastward cliffs, and saw the brown sail of Amos' boat just a speck in the distance. I watched it until it had completely vanished, then slowly I turned my steps in the direction of Black Gull Farm.

How still, how silent, how absolutely deserted seemed the big, stone-floored kitchen as I entered. An old pipe of Amos' was still on the mantelshelf, together with a short, twisted length of plug tobacco. And because ever since I could remember I had seen him either seated there in his chair near the fire, or moving about the place somewhere, I could not even now realise that he had gone for good, and that Black

Gull Farm would never see him again.

However, my first awful feeling of loneliness was passing, and I was beginning to feel glad that he had gone. For from now on, unless he returned, there would be no more thrashings or beatings for me.

I occupied myself until dusk was deepening into night by washing up the accumulation of dirty dishes and tidying the kitchen. Then, taking the signalling-lamp down from its hook behind the door, I went down to the beach to keep watch for any U-boat which might come.

Now that Amos had gone I could, of course, have remained indoors and let any U-boat requiring fuel fend for itself. But there was nothing to be gained by that policy, for its captain would make a landing sooner or later, and I would merely get into trouble for not having been on duty on the beach.

SO settling myself down with my back against the cliff, I waited on watch, and at long last the slow passing of the hours was broken by the sudden blood-red glow of a light on the night-enshrouded waters. Three times the light shone out, and, knowing that it was a German U-boat, I hastily lighted my lantern and, getting to my feet, sent back the answering signal.

Presently, standing by the water's edge, I heard the faint creak of oars, and made out the dim shape of a U-boat's dinghy approaching through the darkness.

As the bows of the dinghy touched the beach, a tall man, wearing a peaked cap, gold-braided reefer jacket, and blue serge trousers thrust into knee-high sea boots, rose from his seat in the sternsheets and stepped ashore.

"Hallo, Peter!" he greeted me. And I recognised him as the stern-visaged Captain Ludwig von Ruthven, who commanded U 290. "You on duty as usual? Scrobie is in bed, I suppose?"

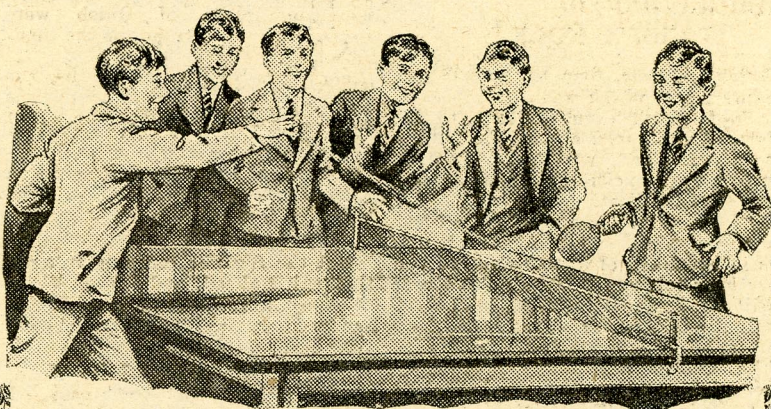
"No, sir," I answered. "He has left the island."

"You mean he has gone to the mainland for stores?" exclaimed Captain von Ruthven sharply.

"No, sir; he has gone for good," I answered. "He has cleared out!" And then into his astonished ears I poured the whole story of Amos Scrobie's and Hans Kugel's desertion, and I would rather have told it to Captain Ludwig von Ruthven than to any other of the U-boat captains who came to Traitor's Rock. For, enemy of England though he was, Captain von Ruthven was a kindly and courageous man.

There were, I know, U-boat captains who were guilty of cruel and inhuman acts which angered the whole civilised world, and which can never be justified. But there were others, and Captain von Ruthven was one, who, until the War ended in bitter defeat for Germany, fought a clean and honourable fight for their country and their country's flag.

Captain von Ruthven heard my story out without comment; but I saw his expression become more



CHRISTMAS CRICKET —ON THE TABLE!

LET me introduce you to the game of ping-cricket. It's about the simplest and one of the finest indoor games I have come across for many a long day. All you need is an ordinary table, the longer the better; a ping-pong bat; a ping-pong net, and a ping-pong ball. The net is placed across the table about 18 inches from one end. Until you become proficient in bowling, it is perhaps better to allow even more space, but this can be worked out to your satisfaction as you go along.

The batsman, armed with an ordinary ping-pong bat, takes his place at the end of the table nearest to the net. The bowler stands at the other end with an ordinary ping-pong ball. Then the game begins. The bowler must lob the ball with his hands over the net to bounce on the table the other side of the net. Should he land the ball full-pitch over the table, a run is counted to the batsman.

IF the ball is bowled into the net, the batsman counts a run. The batsman scores a run every time he hits the ball over the net on to the table. If it hits the table and goes on to the floor, he scores three runs.

The batsman is out (1) if he misses the ball after it has hit the table first when bowled correctly; (2) if he hits the ball into the net; (3) if he is caught; or (4) if he hits the ball off the table before it has hit the table.

The fieldsmen stand round and can catch the batsman over the table if the opportunity occurs, but the catch must be as in ordinary cricket and not first bounce. Overs should be six balls, and to make the game really interesting, everyone should bowl in turn even if they do send every ball into the net! The ideal team consists of not more than six a side.

IT is tremendous fun, and whereas no little skill is required to make a big score or to bowl without giving away too many runs, an average player can put up some sort of a show. Fielding is often hilarious. Until you try a game like this, you have no idea how elusive a ping-pong ball can be. It slips out of the hands, jumps from one fieldsmen to another, and has a most tantalising knack of rolling on to the floor for three runs when least expected. Try ping-cricket next time you have some pals in. If you don't vote it first-rate fun, I shall be very surprised!

grim, and when I had concluded he said:

"The arm of the German Secret Service is long, and no effort will be spared to have these scoundrels caught and brought to Germany for punishment! As for Captain Wulf—" He broke off, his brow puckered in thought. Then, wheeling abruptly, he ordered the men in the dinghy to return to the submarine and instruct his second-in-command to proceed with the fuelling.

IT was a long job fuelling U 290 that night, for the only means of conveying the drums of fuel to the U-boat was aboard the dinghy instead of, as in the past, aboard Amos' old, tub-like boat. But at length the fuelling was completed, and Captain von Ruthven came to where I was standing on the beach.

"Peter," he said, "I cannot leave you here alone. For one thing, it is quite possible that Amos Scrobie will tell the English about this base. He is quite capable of betraying us, and until we find out whether he has done so or not, it will, I am afraid, be necessary to abandon fuelling here. I intend, therefore, taking you back to Germany with me."

"And what will happen to me there, sir?" I inquired.

"I am afraid I cannot tell you that, lad!" he laughed, and laid his hand on my shoulder. "It will be a matter for someone other than me to deal with. But you can rest assured that you will not be unkindly treated. Now, is there anything you want to bring away with you?"

"No, sir, nothing," I answered. For indeed there wasn't. All I possessed in the world were the clothes

Abandoned on Traitor's Rock!

I was wearing and a grand knife which had been given me by a U-boat captain and which was in my pocket.

So I didn't even go back to the farm, but stepped aboard the dinghy as I was, and, my heart beating wildly with excitement, I was rowed out to the U-boat.

"I have a rendezvous off Cape Clear with Captain Walther Schwiieger, who is in command of U 20," Captain von Ruthven told me. "Captain Schwiieger will be homeward bound, and as I will be at sea for another ten days or more, I will put you aboard with him, and he will take you to Wilhelmshaven."

Captain Walther Schwiieger! Thus for the first time I heard the name of that U-boat commander who earned for himself the loathing of the whole civilised world, outside the frontiers of Germany, for the perpetration of one of the blackest crimes ever committed on the high seas—a dreadful crime which I myself was fated to witness.

Torpedo of Death!

I HAD been in a U-boat before, when I had cruised in the Atlantic aboard U 310, so there was nothing entirely new to me in the strange world of the submarine, nor did the medley and tangle of voice-lines, pipe-lines, wheels, gauges, and pumps down in the control-room fill me with the same amazement which they had done the first time that I had seen them.

It was three days after leaving Traitor's Rock that at dawn on a calm and misty morning we came to surface at a spot about twenty miles due west of Cape Clear. As we lay drifting gently on the long, rolling swell, keeping a sharp look-out, the mist slowly lifted, and there, a mile or more away, lay the long, steel hull and grey conning-tower of U 20.

Our Diesel engines were started up, and slowly we approached her until we lay alongside. From the tower of U 290, Captain von Ruthven spoke to Captain Schwiieger in the tower of U 20. Then he turned to me and held out his hand.

"Good-bye, Peter," he said, "and good luck. Maybe I will see you in Wilhelmshaven."

A few moments later I was standing in the conning-tower of U 20. That was on the morning of that fateful day in the history of the Great War, May 7th, 1915. After farewells and good wishes had been exchanged with U 290, the Diesel engines of U 20 were started up, and we began to surge forward through the placid sea, bound for Wilhelmshaven.

But the fog was creeping in again, thickening ahead, and it soon became so dense that in case he should be rammed by a destroyer or patrol vessel, Captain Schwiieger gave the order to submerge, and the boat was taken down to ten fathoms.

All morning we cruised at that depth, the thick fog which was shrouding the surface of the water making it unnecessary for Captain Schwiieger to cruise at periscope depth, as he could have seen nothing.

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when, plainly audible above the hum of our electric motors, we heard right above us the sound of powerful propellers. Captain Schwiieger at once gave the order to rise to five fathoms, and when the periscope was above water he looked through it and turned to one of his officers.

"A British armoured cruiser!" he announced. "She is going too fast for us to get a shot at her."

"You can see her clearly?" asked the officer.

"Yes," replied Schwiieger; "the fog is lifting. Blue sky is beginning to show." Stepping back from the periscope, he gave the order to rise to the surface, and there sounded through the boat the hiss of compressed air forcing the water out of the ballast tanks. Then slowly the grey conning-tower of U 20 rose from out the sea, and for a few minutes we cruised on the surface.

Then suddenly there was great excitement in the boat. For above the horizon had appeared the smoke-stacks and masts of a large liner. Instantly Captain Schwiieger gave the order to submerge again, and with all hatches closed U 20 slid swiftly from view beneath the sea.

The liner was apparently steaming the zigzag sort of course which all merchantmen adopted during those days of peril on the seas, for I heard Captain Schwiieger, standing tense and rigid at the periscope, suddenly say to one of his officers that she was changing her course, and that there was no hope of getting near enough to fire a torpedo at her.

Next minute, however, with an exclamation of triumph, he said that she was changing her course again, and if she held this new line of steaming the U-boat would be able to get a dead shot at her.

HE gave the command for full speed ahead, and we drove forward to take up position. Then, turning from the periscope, he ordered the electric motors to be stopped. And as we lay there in the depths, waiting for our prey, a deathly stillness settled on our boat. Every man was standing tense and rigid at his post. Then, stridently through the silence, rang Captain Schwiieger's voice:

"Bow torpedo—fire!"

To us, listening with straining ears down there in the depths, there came the sound of an explosion, followed a moment later by another explosion, much greater in volume.

"We've got her!" shouted Schwiieger. He wheeled on the petty officer. "Have a look at closer range!" he ordered.

The petty officer leapt to the periscope.

"She has a heavy list to starboard," he reported, "and is sinking fast. She is almost enveloped in smoke. If it would only clear I could read her name. There is great confusion aboard, and—*Mein geist, she is the Lusitania!*"

The last words came in a hoarse shout, and, jumping to the periscope, Captain Schwiieger thrust the man aside and peered into the lens.

For a whole minute he looked at that mighty vessel sinking with almost unbelievable rapidity. Looked at the dreadful panic aboard the overcrowded life-boats, some hanging in hopeless confusion from their davits. Looked at the men and women running frantically up and down her decks and jumping into the sea. Looked at the whole dreadful havoc which his bronze-nosed torpedo had caused.

Then, with horror in his eyes, he turned away.

"Take the boat down to ten fathoms," he said hoarsely. "Take her down and lay our course for home!"

And silently we slid away from where, a few minutes later, that great liner, the Lusitania, plunged beneath the seething waters to her doom, bringing death by drowning to 1,198 of the men, women, and children aboard her!

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Who Sails With Me?

By

MAURICE EVERARD

THE STORY SO FAR

FRANK GREVILLE and Dick Waters, apprenticed to Seth Harrison, of Port Loo, Cornwall, learning that their master and a mysterious Sir Godfrey are plotting their deaths, sail with their friend, Fair Humphrey, an ex-pirate known as Cutlass Joe, aboard the *Prince of Fowey*, commanded by the rebel Duke of Monmouth (a grandson of King Charles II), who is known as the Master, to the Spanish Main.

Leaving the Duke of Monmouth, the boys and Joe find on Black Rock Island, in the Caribbean Sea, treasure hidden long years before by the notorious pirate, William Avery. Jose Samuda and his pirate gang arrive aboard the *Black Eagle*, and Joe and the boys capture the ship whilst Samuda and the majority of his men are ashore.

Jarvis, the mate, throws in his lot with Joe, and negro slaves are released from the hold to help man the ship and defend it against Samuda. But at the moment of attack volcanoes erupt, and Samuda and his men surrender. Everything ashore is burning; a hurricane blows the *Black Eagle* out to sea, and red-hot stones from the volcanoes rain on the deck, setting it alight.

"To Our Merry Selves!"

A GRIM race with death began in earnest. As the sails bellied out and tautened, and the wind blew with hurricane force, the big ship began to gain way, and soon was wallowing heavily in the big seas.

Fortunate, indeed, was it that so many of the negroes had been freed. These, working desperately under the guidance of Frank and the mate, brought every available cask of water on deck, and, forming a continuous human chain round the ship, passed the filled leather jacks and bombards from hand to hand and attacked each spot whenever a fresh conflagration broke out.



The deck was piled nearly two feet deep with powder from the volcanoes, and the nigger crew shovelled the hot ash deposit overboard.

Never again could any of them desire to live through such a dreadful experience. From below came howls and wails of negroes still locked in their pens, while the enraged prisoners added to the general outcry with threats and imprecations.

Although scarce an hour had elapsed since the first eruption, the island, now dropping fast behind, presented a scene of unspeakable desolation.

The three hills—or, rather, what was left of them—still erupted, the glow from successive explosions making as light as day the impenetrable blackness in which the world around was wrapped.

On the ship itself, Joe and the two 'prentices with their improvised crew worked like demons. As the leagues flew from under the heaving keel, the rain of red-hot lava gradually diminished, but every now and then hazardous tasks had to be performed in extinguishing patches of burning sail.

The deck itself was piled nearly two feet deep with hot, greyish powder, but among this the nigger crew worked bare-footed, with little apparent concern, shovelling the hot deposit over the side in great clouds, to prevent the charred deck beneath from bursting into flame once more.

Towards high noon the worst of

their difficulties were in hand. With the decks cleared and damped down with water, it was possible to shorten sail and run more evenly before the storm.

The sky, too, was lightening as the dark masses of sulphurous laden clouds were left farther and farther behind, and soon the island with its still-belching volcanoes was but a reddish glare low down on the horizon.

WHEN the three dead negroes, killed in the encounter with the pirates, had been consigned to the waves, and the hurts of the rest attended to, Joe bade the mate count the rest and serve them out with adequate provisions.

Then, dividing them into watches and assigning a duty to each, he left Jarvis in charge, and withdrew, with Dick and Frank, to the main cabin.

Here, for the first time in many days, they settled themselves to a square meal.

"A pretty nice lot we look, to be sure!" said Frank, glancing round at his companions. "Each of us bandaged up like a mummy, our faces as black as pitch, and Joe's old beard looking like a rag of singed tapestry."

"If this is treasure-seeking, I'm not sure we weren't better off scribing and eiphering for Seth Harrison in Port Loo!"

Who Sails With Me?

"Never you mind, lad!" laughed Joe, lifting his grimed face over a flagon of wine. "We haven't done so bad. Three boxes of jewels and gold enough to set the King of England's eyes sparkling, a good fighting ship under us, and a gang of blacks which, licked into shape, won't make too bad a working crew!"

"Now, Master Dick, what was your great idea in me taking the pirates aboard? For my part, I'd as lief send the whole lot down to Davy Jones' locker."

"Well, Joe, it strikes me like this." Dick looked up from his platter piled with salted pork. "If ever we have the luck to get back to England with all that gold and silver plate, a few points will want a lot of explaining."

"To begin with, Frank and I are indentured apprentices who have broken our bond. For that we are liable to be imprisoned and branded. Then, by joining the Duke of Monmouth, we were more or less party to a rebellion."

"Next, we sailed on the Prince o' Fowey as privateers with no licence, and for that bit o' business we are liable, if brought to trial, to swing at Execution Dock. We've got to think of some way of getting pardon for us all."

"Shoving a gang of cutthroat buccaneers in the hold of this ship doesn't help much!" Joe growled. "We'll be short o' water and grub very soon, and with extra mouths to feed we're making a hard pallet for ourselves to lie on."

"Wait!" said Dick. "I haven't finished. You said, Joe, when first his name cropped up, that this Samuda fellow was one o' the worst pirates on the Man."

"With a price on his head by every governor between Bridgetown and Port o' Spain!" agreed Joe.

"Very well!" Dick propped his elbows on the table. "Then, by capturing him, we've done the English Government good service. Our country is now at peace with



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THE EDITOR



both France and Spain. At least, 'twere so when we left England. The Crown at such times doesn't encourage privateering against friendly nations.

"By laying Samuda by the heels we've done our country signal service. I suggest we hand the fellow over to the Governor of the British Colonies and possessions in North America, and ask pardon and safe passage home for ourselves in return for our services to King and country!"

Joe pondered a long minute. Then a slow smile spread across his face.

"Lad, you're a genius!" he cried, slapping Dick on the shoulder. "We'll try it. And, what's more to the point, if we can hunt out a governor of one of the islands with sticky hands—"

"Sticky hands! What are they?" questioned Frank.

"Hands that gold will cling to! Find a governor who doesn't mind taking over a bagful or two of doubloons on the quiet—say, like Lord Faversham, who got his fists on Cap'n Kidd's money. Then we'll get the slate wiped clean, get out of this treasure-hunting game, and set a clear course for the Old Country."

"Boys, fill up your flagons and drink a toast—to pirate Avery, dead and gone, to old Bill's money and what we've got of it, to our merry selves and a safe return to England! So!"

He emptied his vessel at a draught. "A long farewell to Black Rock Island," he went on, "and the treasure that still lies buried there!"



The Fighting Demon!

SCARCE three days' sail from Black Rock Island the weather changed for the better, and the Eagle, with her well-treated negro crew, sailed smoothly under a full spread of canvas into the sheltered waters of the Caribbean.

Of Cutlass Joe the boys had seen but little recently, since the handling of the ship, the secure custody of the prisoners, and the making good of the damage done by the eruption of the volcanoes had made no slight demands on all of them.

On the morning of the fourth day, however, Jarvis, the mate, promising well under his new master, brought a message to Frank and Dick—who were busy overhauling the diminished and damaged contents of the armoury—that the captain desired word with them.

"Sounds as if Joe is beginning to fancy himself a bit!" laughed Frank, as, with Dick beside him, they came up from below and walked across the main deck towards the high-castled poop, whither Jarvis had directed them. "He's very much master of the vessel this last day or so!"

They were not, however, quite prepared for the extent to which the ex-buccaneer was about to prove the truth of Greville's words.

On climbing the steep stairs to the poop, the first thing that caught their eye was a large awning of crimson

velvet edged with tassels of gold braid, and supported by draped posts lashed to the rails.

In the shade of this, a huge hammock piled high with cushions had been slung. And therein reclined a figure at sight of which their eyes bulged in astonishment. Their first impression was that some magic hand had transported them into the realms of the Arabian Nights.

On three sides of the awning, beautiful hangings of silk brocade, flaming with silver and gold work, swayed and bellied in the warm, soft wind.

Above the reclining figure, which was garbed in a long coat of velvet, with snow-white lace cravat, puffed sleeves, and baggy breeches of the same rich material, a huge fan of flaming peacock's feathers swung lazily to and fro.

ON Cutlass Joe's tawny head, from a wide-brimmed hat drooped a scarlet plume to his shoulders, and from the depth of his huge red beard a long-stemmed pipe protruded. When he clapped his hands as a sign to the nigger attendant to cease working the improvised fan, the newcomers noticed that his fingers were almost completely covered with flashing rings.

"Sir Harry Morgan come to life after the sack of Panama!" laughed Dick, who remembered a picture of such a figure in the pages of an old book—"Esquemeling's Exploits of the Buccaneers and Marooners of America."

"A personage of greater import than that titled braggart," replied Joe seriously. "Be seated, my bonny bucks," he added, pointing to the huge piles of cushions. "Now, tell me true, isn't this better than roughing it on Black Rock Island?"

"To be sure," agreed Frank. "But where did you get the stuff, and what's the notion behind all this show of splendour?"

"Henceforth, my lads, we are gentlemen of quality," was Joe's crisp announcement. "No longer a horny-handed fisherman and a couple of despised 'prentice lads! As to where the stuff came from—well, we have taken over Samuda's vessel as a prize, and I found all these fal-lals stowed away in chests below."

"Besides which, we have a goodly share of Bill Avery's treasure safely hid in the hold—plate and jewels worth a million golden guineas."

"Such wealth is ours that, can we but hold on to a portion of it, we shall be rich for life. It is to deal with that matter that I sent for ye."

"Now, list you both, and I'll tell you what I've discovered these last two days aboard this vessel. Be seated, pray"—motioning them to the piled up cushions. "It is meet everything we do in future be done in comfort and stylish mode. We be no longer poor adventurers, but folk of quality—not to obey, but to command."

"'Twould seem to me this fellow here has gone weevilly in the head," said Dick, glancing anxiously at his cousin. "For the life of me I know not what he's driving at."

"Preparing of ye for the parts we have to play!" continued Joe good-naturedly. "The situation, as it stands, might be somewhat difficult. Behind the three of us—me especially—lie some dark and troublous pages of history. Aforetime I was a pirate—and, without pardon, I'm a pirate still.

"You two be 'prentice lads, indenture-broken, run away from your master, and, in law, liable to be prisoned for a felony. More, it must by this time be well known in England that we joined up with the Duke of Mounmouth and his rebel band, and sailed with him beneath the Jolly Roger.

"All of which might well prove awkward to three folk of quality, returning to the Old Country laden with jewels and golden plate. 'Twould indeed be a scurvy trick to find our treasure confiscated and ourselves standing to trial in the Old Bailey!

"So I must needs, for the sake of all of us, find some way out. And to that end, I have, these two days past, given much heed to several members of Samuda's gang."

"How they can aid I cannot see." Frank shook his head dubiously. "What good can be got out of them?"

"There be two," answered Cutlass Joe, "more well disposed than the rest, willing, in exchange for freedom at the first port we touch, to put us wise on certain matters. They have told me, for instance, that this Samuda is the most dangerous pirate the Caribbeans have known these thirty years, and that in every possession of the British Crown a big price stands upon his head. Well!" Joe chuckled as he watched his fragrant tobacco smoke drifting on the warm air.

"WE have his head to bargain with. That is one thing. The next is, the name of the man best suited to treat with for our pardon."

"I agree that's important!" Frank said. "We must find someone who can be trusted."

"I've found him." Joe stroked his tawny beard with the mouthpiece of his pipe. "A villan as deep-dyed as myself only he bears a gentle name and is of high import in the islands. Sir James Treadwell he is called.

"Once he was a lawyer of great repute in the Old Country. Now, because he lent the King big sums of money which his Majesty does not want to repay, he has been made Governor of Grenada, whither he elected to be sent to give himself an opportunity to recover his lost fortune."

"In what way?" Dick looked puzzled.

"By the sale of slaves, for one thing," replied Joe. "By the issue of letters of marque, whereby gentlemen of the Black Flag, having planked down to his Excellency a goodly number of moldores, doubloons, and the like, can get from him a charter to sail the Western seas to plunder Frenchies and Dons and Dutch merchantmen. Of their booty a share goes to the British Crown, a bigger

share into Master Treadwell's pockets, and the rest the ruffians keep for themselves.

"So, to cut the yarn short, 'tis to St. Georges, in Grenada, that we are now bound, to make our peace with Governor Treadwell."

"But supposing he'll have naught of us?" said Dick.

"Trust his Excellency!" Joe cackled derisively. "He cannot help himself. To begin with, he must needs hand over five thousand English pounds in return for Samuda. The honour of the capture goes to him, and maybe will secure him a higher title.

"This good work done, we suggest to Sir James that, being well disposed towards him, he might like to earn not a measly five thousand but many, many thousands more if, on listening to our story, he can see his way to let our past be bygones, and to send us back to England not only free but honourable men!"

"Joe, you are the most unscrupulous old rascal that ever sailed the Seven Seas!" said Frank. "And you think this scheme of yours will succeed?"

"On the Spanish Main," declared Joe airily, "money succeeds where everything else fails. We shall win through on this deal, or my name isn't—"

Crack! The sound of a shot and a stifled scream followed by a chorus of yells below them interrupted Joe. Then another whip-like report, followed by a third and a fourth.

Joe tumbled from his hammock as though he had been shot. Following the 'prentice lads to the poop rail he was in time to see a score of half-naked blacks streaming up.

Making towards them, blood streaming from his shoulder, was the faithful Snowball. He stumbled at the foot of the stairway and would have fallen had not Frank supported him.

"Massa! Dem pirates hab broken loose and am raising trouble," he groaned. "Dey hab got into de armoury and am takum de pistols—"

JOE waited to hear no more. With Dick and Frank at his heels, he dashed for the cabin, to emerge a moment later with his terrible cutlass.

"Help yourself to barkers and find Jarvis. You know where I'll be," he yelled, and brushing past them took the stairs at a leap. Before the boys could recover from their astonishment he had vanished in the direction of the lazarette.

A few stray shots were heard, followed by much noise, before Dick and Frank pushed their way through the press of frightened blacks and plunged into the depths of the ship. By the roar of Joe's deep voice they worked their way past some of the prisoners—Samuda among them—still safely locked in the cages, and came at length to the open door beyond which the armoury lay, dimly lit by a swinging lantern.

The scene that met them was



Cutlass Joe, stripped to the waist, was fighting like a demon and shouting snatches of old pirate songs.

Who Sails With Me?

terrible to behold. Cutlass Joe was fighting like a demon. Gone from his gleaming head was the wide-brimmed hat with its drooping plume; from his shoulders, too, the gorgeous velvet coat had been torn in ribbons, and there he was, stripped to the waist, wielding his flashing weapon.

The Law of the Sea!

A DOZEN flint-locks snapped around him, filling the place with acrid fumes stabbed by tongues of bluish fire. But no harm came to him. He drove forward at the rabble, now with a thrust, then slashing. And as he fought, he sang snatches of pirate songs he had sung in the old Port Royal days of long ago.

A Dutchman slipped below his guard and tried to bury six inches of steel in Joe's breast. Joe caught the blade on the curved edge of his own weapon, turned it, and drove the point upwards through the rascal's throat. Then a sudden hush fell upon the escaped pirates. They threw their arms down and made a dash for the companion.

"Shoot every one who tries to get away!" cried Joe, swinging round instantly. "Ah, Jarvis, a little late, but just in time! Take each man and clap him in irons. You, Dick, send a dozen niggers down to clear up the mess. The sharks can have a fine feed.

"Frank"—tapping the elder 'prentice lad on the shoulder—"this after-

noon, the fellows who planned this escape and mutiny will be brought before me on the quarter-deck for trial and sentence. Sir James Treadwell is going to be saved quite a lot of work!"

Never had trouble aboard a ship of old time been more drastically repressed by the courage of a single man, and never was justice so swiftly meted out.

When, three days later, the Black Eagle put into the tiny harbour of St. George's, six dark forms swung from the yardarms—silent witness to an age-old law of the sea.

For Dick and Frank it was good to look upon such a scene of homeliness as the island presented when the Black Eagle, with furled sails, dropped anchor in the quiet waters of the Carrenage.

Upon the quayside, and stretching the whole length of the shore front as far as Bay Town, the entire population of St. George's, both white and coloured, had gathered to witness the arrival of the storm-tossed vessel, from whose peak flattered the red-and-white flag of the patron saint after whom the island capital was named.

To Dick had been entrusted the duty of carrying a letter from the Black Eagle's new captain, humbly presenting the latter's respects and praying for an interview with his Excellency the Governor.

Late in the afternoon the answer was received. A somewhat dilapidated coach with much gilding and coats of arms, drawn by four gaily caparisoned horses, and driven by a dusky coachman with postilion and outriders, arrived to carry the captain, in splendid borrowed attire, to the Government House on the far side of the market square.

To quote in detail all that transpired at that long interview between Cutlass Joe and his Excellency would perhaps be scarcely fair to the former's veracity or the latter's honesty. But the consequences were simple and satisfactory enough. Joe narrated them three days later to Frank and Dick, after much transference of human and other material from the vessel to the shore.

"I told Sir James just as much as I thought wise to reveal," Joe explained that evening, when the three of them were gathered in Samuda's old cabin. "For the capture and delivery of Samuda to the Government authority, we receive full quittance of the consequences of any irregularities we may have committed on the High Seas from the time we left England, eleven months ago.

"In addition, we get the Government reward of five thousand pounds, payable in London, at Whitehall, on presentation of certain documents with which his Excellency has supplied me."

"And what does that gentleman get in return for such generous concessions?" asked Frank.

"Ah!" Joe crooked a horny forefinger round his nose. "Now we come to the unofficial details of the business, never to be disclosed outside ourselves. At the trial of the

pirates, we are to be represented as gallant gentlemen, who have rid the High Seas of the greatest scourge in recent years.

"Such glowing praise—if a trifle overstepping the mark—will stand us in good stead when we set foot in England. For this little privilege, I have handed over to his Excellency the equivalent of sixty thousand pounds in jewels and gold plate."

"The old villain!" exclaimed Dick. "He asked a lot."

"I agree," replied Joe. "But I realised we were in his hands. I had to tell him all about the treasure—how we came by it, and the rest of the story. He advised me, when we got to London, to make a full statement to the Treasury. They will doubtless claim a third as treasure trove, but there is still plenty left for us all."

"And when do we sail for home?" asked Frank.

"About a month from now," was the reply. "At the moment, a convoy is being formed at Nassau. This will sail south, putting in at Havana, Port Antonio, Kingston, and other places, gathering ships as it goes. There will be four frigates with the convoy, so we shall be well protected.

"Sir James has promised, with the time and means at his command, to fit me out with a reliable crew. All the slaves are to be set free and found masters on the island. Only one will remain with us—Snowball, who begged to come back with us to England."

"And Jarvis?" asked Dick.

"I am taking him, too," replied Joe. "And should I buy a vessel of my own to go a-privatereering with, Jarvis will sail with me as first mate."

The late afternoon was drawing to a close by the time the discussion was ended, and the short twilight was beginning to drape a purple mantle over the glories of St. George's.

They went on deck and watched the last of the sunset behind the wooded heights of St. Paul. As lights began to peep out behind the windows of the quaint white-walled houses, and from the church tower the curfew bell sent out its warning, they seemed to feel something of the spirit of Old England calling—the desire to set the Black Eagle's bows to the open sea, and to know that every sea-mile that slipped from under her keel was bringing them nearer Home!

Explanations Demanded!

ONE solitary note struck the hour from the deep-throated bell that these two hundred years past had sent its warning note far out over the waters of Deadman's Bay, from the parish church of St. Martin, at Port Loo. One o'clock!

As the vibrant tone was lost in the faint whine of the night wind about the clustered gables of the old houses, three stealthy figures halted in the shadow of an overhanging porch, and, drawing their cloaks about them, watched a solitary beam of light streaming from the house opposite.

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"One o'clock! A year ago this very night," said one of them. "Dost call to mind, lad, what happened as that selfsame bell as was striking?"

"Ay! That do I!" Dick Waters replied, keeping his glance fixed on the lighted window. "This selfsame hour, twelve months agone, you and I were shinning down the rope-ladder from that gable top to seek Fair Humphrey's aid!"

The man behind them laughed, too, and said:

"Tis good to hear that old name again, lads! Henceforth, Fair Humphrey I must be. Cutlass Joe is dead—until he puts to sea again, master of his own vessel in foreign parts. And there 'twill be quite safe to be called again by the bad old name of Port Royal days.

"The last of the serving-men has gone to bed. The figure ye see there, moving behind the lighted curtains, can be none other than Seth Harrison himself. Now, if ye would have word and fair reckoning with him, the time has come.

"Stay you here, back in the shadow. I will summon him to the door. I'll wager the old demon is still poring over his accounts and checking the takings in his moneybags!"

HE walked across the cobbled roadway, and, not pausing to tug at the iron bell-pull, he sent a stone rattling through one of the tiny panes. The tinkle of the falling glass was followed by the creaking of the latticed window. A night-capped head was thrust out.

"Who seeks admission at such an hour?" called a rasping voice. "No honest man, I trow. Begone, before I summon the watch!"

"Tis me, Master Harrison—an old friend, forsooth. Fair Humphrey of Talland, back from his wanderings and come to bring good news to ye!"

"A murrain on ye—naught but a piratical fisherman!" said Harrison. "I want no word with ye, now or at any time."

Joe looked up, and his blue eyes twinkled mischievously.

"I sought to find thee alone, at this hour past midnight," he said. "I have words for no other ears but yours, master. Dost recall the two prentice lads that Sir Godfrey was so anxious you should rid him of? Well, believe it or not, I have news that will set your ears a-tingle!"

The window slammed, and the watchers outside heard slipped feet on the oaken stairs; then the rasping of chain and lock and bolt as the heavy fastenings were undone. The door swung back, and from the lantern that Harrison carried a pathway of light streamed across the roadway, revealing the waiting forms of Greville and Waters.

With a quick step Fair Humphrey planked his immense bulk in the entrance, and, pushing Harrison against the wall, held the door wide.

"Come on, my merry varlets!" he cried. "We have the old villain to ourselves at last! Sink me, but I warrant we make him talk! So,

(Continued on next page)

A Plug-In Coil One Valve Wireless Set

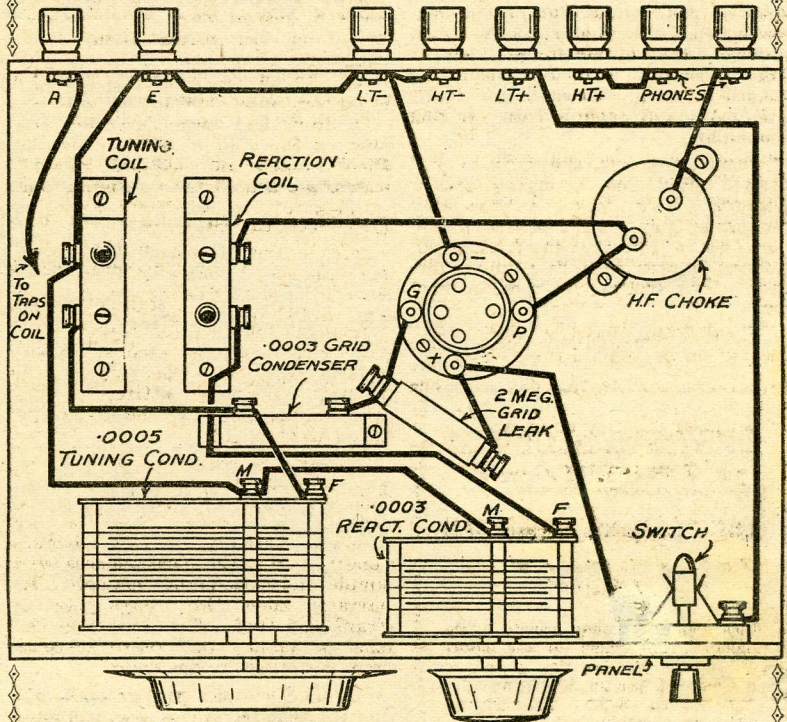
Send your Wireless Troubles to MODERN BOY'S Wireless Expert—He will answer FREE, by POST, all Wireless Queries sent in by readers

YOU don't care about winding your own coils? Then here is a one-valver using standard plug-in coils, several makes of which are obtainable. To cut down cost, two solid dielectric variable condensers are used. They are much cheaper than the air-dielectric type, and thoroughly efficient, too.

Here is your shopping list: One .0005 solid dielectric tuning condenser; one .0003 solid dielectric reaction condenser; one .0003 grid condenser; one 2 megohm grid leak; two coil holders; one valve holder; one H.F. choke; wooden panel and baseboard each 8 in. by 6 in.; ebonite terminal strip 8 in. by 1½ in.; six ordinary and two telephone terminals; one on-off switch; insulated wire for wiring-up, and flex wire for battery leads.

The coils required are a No. 50 X and a No. 35 for the medium-wave band, and Nos. 200 X and 100 for the long-wave band.

The diagram shows the layout and wiring of the set. The coil holders are placed 1½ in. apart, with the plug side of the tuning-coil holder opposite



the pin side of the reaction-coil holder. Wire-up with thick insulated wire, removing the insulation where wires hook under terminals.

Use one of the special 2-volt detector valves known as an H.L. This will need a 2-volt accumulator and a 60-volt high-tension battery to work it.

WHEN you are ready to try the set, plug in the Nos. 50 and 35 coils, and clip the flex aerial lead to the tapping point on the coil which is farthest from the terminal strip. This tapping gives greatest volume and the other greatest selectivity.

Switch on and slowly rotate the tuning dial until you hear signals on the National wavelength from the local B.E.C. twin-wave station. Further on you will hear the Regional signals from this station.

To make the signals louder, rotate the reaction dial very slowly, stopping when you hear a rushing sound in the phones. Never go beyond this point.

If you find that the two programmes overlap, transfer the aerial lead to the other tapping on the tuning coil.

You should be able to tune in plenty of foreigners any evening on the 250-550 metre waveband, and on the long-wave band Daventry, Radio-Paris, and Eiffel Tower will be heard any time they are working.

The number of foreign stations you will be able to tune in largely depends on your skill in your handling the tuning controls. The great thing is to tune slowly.

Who Sails With Me?

Master Harrison"—closing and barring the heavy portal as the 'prentice lads stepped inside—"lead the way to your private office, where we can speak in comfort.

"I am sorry if I led you to think the lads were dead and gone, as you so devoutly wished. They are here in the flesh, back from foreign parts, and you must needs listen to what they have to say!"

In the dim light an ashen but defiant figure faced them.

"I have naught to say, except that with the morrow the watch shall be summoned and these young ruffians, as well as yourself, be handed over to the law!" declared Harrison.

"Have they forgotten? They were indentured to me—bound to service for five more years.

"They broke their bond—and with you they joined a rebel band, led by one who called himself Duke Monmouth's son, and set out to plunder vessels on the high seas, and with the money thus obtained, planned to return home to spread sedition and rebellion through the land!"

"As to that," snapped Joe, setting his huge hands on the other's shoulders and pushing him up the stairs and along the passageway to the lighted room, "you have your facts all mixed up, and mostly wrong.

"We know all that is to be known about that strange figure, the Master, true grandson of Charles the Merry Monarch—how he essayed with great treasure to return to England and claim the crown, and how the Algerine pirates took him and his followers captive, so that to this day they one and all languish in captivity in the Kashbah of the Dey of Algiers.

"But we do not know how and for what purpose the two 'prentice lads became indentured to you, nor why Jake Bradshaw, a year ago, this very night, in this selfsame room, offered

three thousand golden pounds on behalf of Sir Godfrey Someone—other to secure their death!"

"'Tis a lie!" said Harrison. "I know not the name of Jake Bradshaw, nor of any Sir Godfrey!"

Frank no Longer!

FOR answer Fair Humphrey slowly followed the cowering figure to the end of the room, and, with panther-like suddenness, gripped his immense hands about the other's throat and banged the rascal's head against the panelled wall.

"Seth Harrison," he hissed, "I would think as little of squeezing the breath out of your body as I would of squelching a centipede under my foot! We are here for business, and our terms are this. Unless you tell us all you know—the whole truth and

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DON'T MISS THIS GREAT TREAT!

nothing but the truth—when daylight comes you will be found with your neck broken on the cobbles, thirty feet below!

"Now, listen! We seek not money, for my friends have plenty, but truth and justice. For this we will deal generously with you—pardon your fault and leave you free. But truth we will have at any price. Now, what is it to be?"

Harrison sank down into the nearest chair, and, resting his head in his hands, thought for some time. When at last he spoke his voice was scarcely a whisper:

"Yes, I will speak! 'Tis perhaps as well you have found me now. I am an old man, who ere long must face my Maker. Better that I die, when my time comes, with my face turned to the light, than be cast into outer darkness. But you have promised—"

Before such abject terror Frank Greville's heart softened.

"We seek only to know the secret of our birth—Dick's and mine," Frank said. "Who we are, and what our rightful place in the world should be. As to the past—when you have truly spoken it shall be forgotten, and you shall have forgiveness."

"Then sit ye down," Harrison said. "You, Dick, as the younger, shall be by me. Come, hold the hand of a bad old man who should have fathered ye, though ye be no flesh or blood o' mine. Perhaps"—his voice trembled weakly—"tis not too late to make some amend, though for a hard man like me 'tis not easy to come quickly by way of repentance. Fear—dread of that man—is bringing me to this. I would not speak did I not fear death."

Frank laid a reassuring hand on the bowed shoulder and said:

"Master, we have bargained to forget the wrong. Only tell us what meant you that night when you plotted with Jake Bradshaw to make an end of Dick and me."

"There is little to tell." The other raised his haggard eyes. "Love of money—greed of gold—was my master. For gold I took you both as children, hid you away from what rightly was your own. And for gold, more than once I sought your death."

"'Tis indeed a terrible admission!" murmured Frank.

"Ay! But ye have forced it from me. I have gone too far to draw back. Where was I? Ah, I recall! You, as two children, were brought to me, to be hid away that no one should know of you."

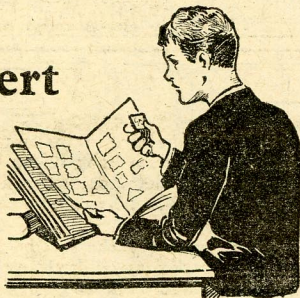
(Continued on opposite page)

Our Stamp Expert Says—

THE word "Judicial" overprinted on a stamp shows that it has been used to pay a court fee and not for postage. The stamp is not, therefore, a real postage stamp; but if you have any other Fiscal stamps in your album you should include it with them.

THE chief difference between the originals and the reprint Persian Coronation stamps of 1915 lies in the paper and the gum. In the originals the paper has a creamy appearance and the gum is very faintly tinged with rose, but the reprints are on dead-white paper and the gum is white.

IF you come across a pair of stamps still joined together you should on no account separate them, as pairs are always likely to be more valuable than single specimens. It



is really best to leave them on their original envelope and mount them in your album just as they are.

YOU are under no obligation to buy all the stamps sent to you when you write to a stamp dealer for approval sheets. You choose the ones you want and send the rest back with a postal order to pay for those you have taken.

BOTH the Swiss Disarmament issues and the Australian Sydney Harbour Bridge stamps may be expected to rise in value as time goes on, but the rise will be a very gradual one on account of the relatively large numbers printed.

A HOLE punched through a German stamp usually indicates that it was originally stuck on a telegram and thus defaced to prevent its being used again. Such stamps were afterwards sold to stamp dealers.

A FEW years ago the Italian Government contracted with certain commercial firms—Singers Sewing Machines amongst them—to print their advertisements side by side with various postage stamps. Such stamps, with advertisements attached, are fairly common, but are slightly more valuable than those from which the advertisement has been cut.

"Then—who are we?" asked Dick. Harrison looked from one to the other. Then very slowly he said:

"You are brothers! And your name is Polruan. You, Francis Greville Polruan, the elder, and you, Richard Waters Polruan, the younger by a year and a day.

"Your place of birth was far from here—in the north of Cornwall, where your mother and your father both died; and you were left in the care of your father's younger brother, Godfrey Polruan."

"Ah," exclaimed Frank, "the Sir Godfrey that Jake Bradshaw spoke of!"

"No!" The old man shook his head. "There is no Sir Godfrey truly. The title is yours, Frank, as your late father's eldest son. Now you see the reason of all this duplicity and wrong-doing. With this ancient baronetcy go by law the hall and lands of Polruan, with its rent roll, amounting to some thousands yearly.

"It would, in the event of your death, and Dick's, pass to Sir Godfrey,

the next heir. As your guardian, during the minority of both of you, he had control of the estate and of the income of it. You, Frank, came of age when you were eighteen—nearly a year ago.

"Sir Godfrey knew of this, and fearing lest by accident you might discover your identity, he set his accomplice, Jake Bradshaw, to urge me to lose no time in bringing you both to a speedy end!"

Frank was silent a minute. Then he set both hands upon the old man's shoulders, and bent a kindly glance upon him.

"Master," he said, "'tis a sorry tale, but out of evil good can come. Life for you is nearing the end. We would not wish to harm you in your last years."

Harrison looked up; a faded smile came to his wan face, and he replied:

"Sir Francis, you have shown the spirit of a true Polruan! I beg forgiveness of you all—of you, Master Richard—of you, Fair Humphrey! So—give me your hand!"

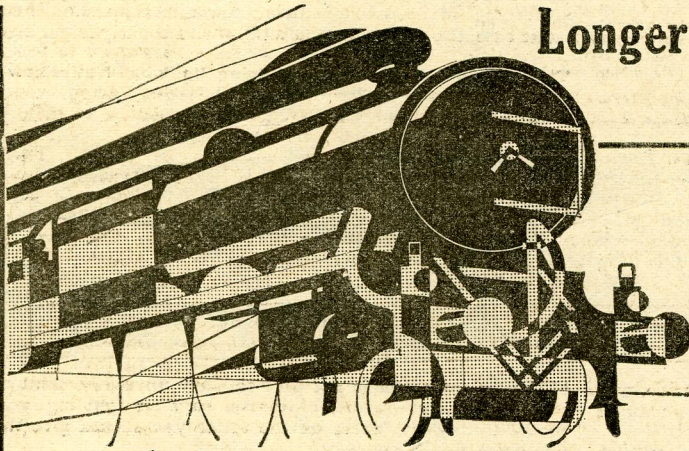
"Ah, good Seth," replied Fair Humphrey. "And it shall be a lighter touch than I fastened on ye scarce an hour since. Well, here's my hand on it! And to you, Sir Francis—Frank no longer—and to you, Master Richard! Zounds, how great the news, and how pleasing strange! Too late the hour grows to tell Master Harrison of our wide travels and our strange adventures.

"And yet"—toying thoughtfully with his tawny beard—"I do not know. There is a tidy cellar here, I know. Come now, master, give me the lantern, and I will lead the way to your store of goodly wine. Let us break a bottle, and over it live the past year again.

"And then, when our thoughts go back to a spread of canvas, to my ship at sea, I'll put the question—with no fear of your answer: 'Come, lads, I must go West again to the Spanish Main. Who sails with me? Who sails with me?'"

THE END.

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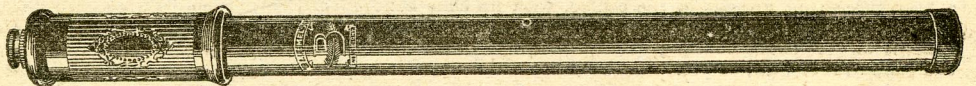
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HOW TO TEST YOUR NEW MODEL PLANE

The Expert who conducts this regular feature will answer Free, through the Post, any Air queries that any reader cares to send to the Editor

HERE is a simple gadget, easily made, with which you can test a model plane without having first to risk damaging it in trial flights—especially useful if yours happens to be a home-made plane. With it you can find out whether the model is correctly balanced so that the tail rises when the elastic motor is released, and how long the tail stays up during the motor's run.

By finding out these two things you will know how the model will actually behave in flight—whether it will take-off properly, or whether it is going to fly level or “stall”—that is, lose flying speed and drop to the ground during a flight.

The tester consists of a wooden platform and two pieces of tin—one at the end, to hold the model's tail; and another piece, which is adjustable, against which the landing wheels press. The photo shows a model being put “through its paces” on this novel tester, and the constructional details are shown in the diagrams.

THE materials you want are a piece of thin wood, 12 in. long by 4 in. wide, and two pieces of tin, one 5 in. long by 3 in. wide, and the other 6 in. long by 2 in. wide. The pieces of tin can be cut from an old cocoa tin and carefully flattened.

Sandpaper the wood until it is perfectly smooth, so that the adjustable piece of tin will slide along it. Then cut the 5 in. piece of tin to the shape shown at Fig. 3, bend the two prongs forward as shown by the dotted lines, then bend over

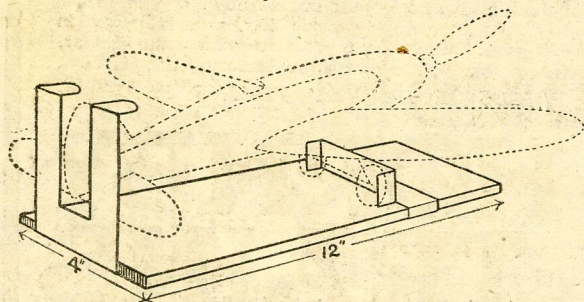


Fig. 1.—The completed tester with (dotted outline) the model in position ready for the test.

the bottom portion to form a flange, and nail this to the underside of the platform.

Cut the second piece of tin as at Fig. 2, so that you have a 3 in. piece bent upright in the centre, with its ends bent at right angles to form lugs. Bend the main ends over and slide it on to the wooden platform. Fig. 1 shows the completed tester with, in dotted outline, a model in position ready for a test.

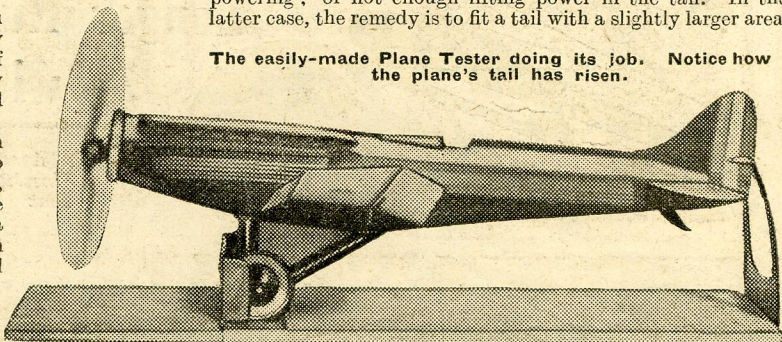
To use it, put the model plane on the platform of the tester and slide the adjustable undercarriage-rest backwards until it presses against the plane's wheels, then wind up the model's motor and let go.

IF the tail comes up immediately and presses against the lugs at the top of the rear fitting during four-fifths of the motor's run, it shows that the model is well balanced and the position of the undercarriage is good.

If the tail comes up but quickly drops down again, it is a sign that the model will lose flying speed and drop to the ground during a flight. The trouble is probably due to bad balancing. Look to see whether the elevators are up and consequently tending to drag the tail down. If they are, bend them level and test again.

Should the elevators be all right, then under-powering is the cause, and a stronger elastic motor should be fitted.

When the tail fails to come up, the fault may be due to one of three things—undercarriage too far forward; under-powering; or not enough lifting power in the tail. In the latter case, the remedy is to fit a tail with a slightly larger area.



The easily-made Plane Tester doing its job. Notice how the plane's tail has risen.

THIS plane tester is not able to show up every fault in a model aeroplane, of course, so after putting your model through its paces on the tester you should give it a few trial flights.

First of all, launch your model fairly vigorously with its motor unwound, to see if the plane is gliding properly. Make any adjustments necessary to get the model in good gliding trim, then wind the motor to about three-quarters the maximum number of turns and launch it on its first powered flight.

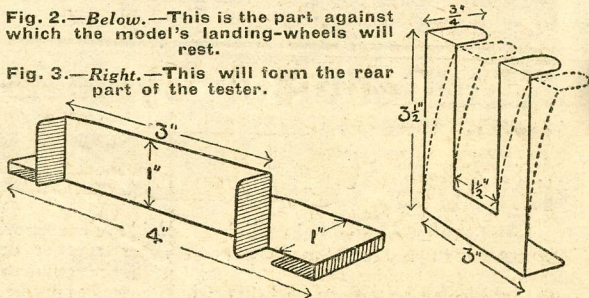
In launching, tilt its nose ever so slightly downwards to assist the plane in getting under way, when it should begin to climb steadily. Never launch a plane with its nose inclined upwards, or it will stall and crash.

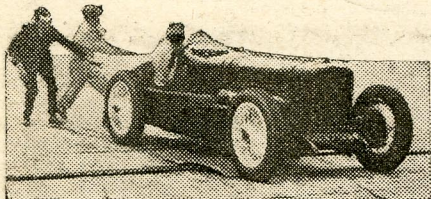
Watch your plane carefully on its test-flights. If it climbs and then stalls, either the mainplane is too far forward or the tail-plane is set at the wrong angle. When these faults are only slight, the plane flies on an up-and-down course.

Several faults may cause a model plane to turn in flight—the rudder may be twisted to one side, the wing or fuselage may be warped crooked, the motor may be over-powered, or the mainplane may not be quite at right angles to the fuselage.

Fig. 2.—Below.—This is the part against which the model's landing-wheels will rest.

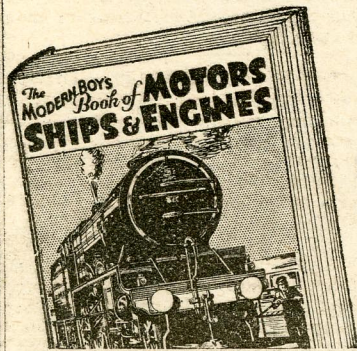
Fig. 3.—Right.—This will form the rear part of the tester.





A Good Send-off!

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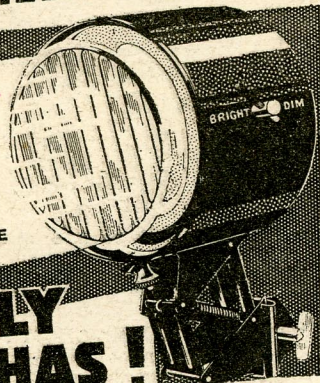
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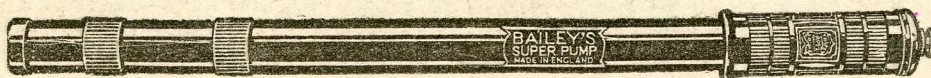
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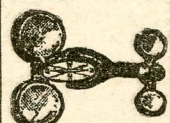
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The Editor Talks

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All letters must bear the full name and address of the writer

THANK YOU, Mr. GHOST!—I have met the most obliging and courteous ghost that ever was! The other night I was staying with friends in a very old house—full of rambling passages and corridors, with bed-rooms dotted about here and there. There was no electric light, and I went to bed with a guttering candle, in a room which seemed to me to be about a quarter-mile from the next inhabited room. No one had mentioned ghosts, but I had a bad attack of the “creeps” before I had been in that room twenty seconds.

“Silly ass!” I said to myself, undressed, snuggled into bed, and went straight to sleep—after blowing out the candle and placing a box of matches carefully within immediate reach on the small bedside table.

SUDDENLY I broke out into a cold sweat. There was someone or something in the room that had no right to be there. For several seconds I lay wondering what I should see if I lighted my candle. With an heroic effort I stretched out my arm, very slowly and cautiously, to the bedside table—and the box of matches was placed in my hand!

CAN You Beat It?—Well, I think that’s about the shortest ghost story you’ve ever read. I’m sorry to have to add that the fit of shivering which immediately seized me woke me up. I had been dreaming all the time.

If you have a queer story that can be condensed into as few words I would like to hear it! The ghost season is “in” now, with Christmas only a few days ahead. If you hear a good one, pass it on!

GIDDY Goats.—From ghosts to goats is an easy—and cheerful—transition. One of the famous Nature-photographers who has contributed largely to the NEW ZOO ANNUAL (a GRAND present that would make for you!) treated me last week to a day at the London Zoo. We were attracted to an uproarious crowd around the goats’ enclosure, and my friend—who has very sharp elbows—quickly found us both front places.

The shrieks of mirth were caused by the antics of the goats, who were scrambling for corn as it was being shot to them out of an automatic machine. You put a penny in the slot, and the corn hurtles out. The goats do the rest.

BUT that’s not all you get for your money. When your penny drops in, a motor-horn, electrically operated, sets up a terrific din. The goats have quickly learned to recognise that hubbub as the call to a feed.

You should see those fifty goats legging it like billy-ho from all the distant corners of their enclosure at the very first “honk”! They used to run just as rapidly in the opposite direction until they got to know what the noise meant. Now you’ve only got to make a noise

NEXT FRIDAY!

On account of the
Christmas Holiday
the next issue of

MODERN BOY

will be on sale a day
earlier than usual—

NEXT FRIDAY DECEMBER 23rd.

Get YOUR copy THEN!

like a penny for the whole crowd of them to brace their muscles in instant readiness to get off the mark!

NO Luck!—Did you ever hear of the fellow who had a most wonderful mascot—a black cat which, he declared, was always bringing him Good Luck? He fell over it one night, in the dark, and broke his leg. He’s been looking for that black cat ever since. But I think you’d have a job to beat this story of “luck.”

A man some time ago was sitting in a friend’s car. He hadn’t the foggiest notion of driving, and when his friend stopped the car and got out to speak to someone, the car ran backwards until it fetched up with a bump. Then the following happened: He, the passenger, was summoned for driving without due care and attention, not having a driving licence, not having a policy to cover

third-party insurance, and for driving backwards!

THE Danes of Danehouse are coming **NEXT WEEK!**—This is an absolutely topping School-and-Football story—exciting—adventurous—and funny, by JOHN BERESFORD. The first chapters appear in next week’s MODERN BOY. That issue will be on sale on Friday instead of on the Saturday—Saturday being Christmas Eve, of course. Please make a note of that!

TWO-GUN Spike is a specially funny story of Horatio Haywood, and with its appearance next Friday this present series of the adventures of the Correspondence-Course Cowboy comes to an end.

Its place will be taken by a series of Air-Adventure stories by FLYING-OFFICER W. E. JOHNS! Start the New Year well by reading the first of them. I’ll tell you something more about this extra-special new feature in next week’s Chat.

GREY SHADOW Comes Back!—Those of you who remember that amazing British Secret Service agent, Captain Guy Ellis, known to the Germans during the Great War as the “Grey Shadow”—and feared by them—will give three cheers on learning that he is coming back to the pages of MODERN BOY, Next Friday!

Young Peter, of Traitor’s Rock, meets Grey Shadow in most astonishing circumstances, and between them they do risky and invaluable work for the Empire. That story, by Geo. E. Rochester, is one of next Friday’s extra-specials.

CHIPS the Bully.—The ship’s carpenter was a great husky, bullying fellow, and had things all his own way—until Frank Buck, of “Bring ‘Em Back Alive” fame, enlisted his help in handling an orang-utan. Then Chips the Bully went all limp, as Frank Buck himself will tell you, in next Friday’s MODERN BOY. This is another thrilling story in our great BRING ‘EM BACK ALIVE series.

SPECIAL Christmas Features, which I haven’t space to mention here, will delight you in that same issue. There will also be a special chat about the Second Australia-England Test Match.

WHERE Are Your Stamps?—Do you collect postage stamps? Where are they—knocking about all over the place? Get the new edition of that popular shilling “Atlas” stamp album, fourth edition, just out. It has a very bright and attractive pictorial cover, and you can have binding in either chocolate, red, green, blue, or violet. Messrs. Stanley Gibbons have brought this Album right up to date. It is illustrated with 400 full-size stamp illustrations, and has been enlarged to hold 3,750 stamps. A jolly good shillings-worth that I am sure you will be glad to hear about!

SEE YOU AGAIN NEXT FRIDAY!

The EDITOR