

**TIGHT-PACKED INSIDE FOR EVERYONE -
ADVENTURE·THRILLS AND LOTS OF FUN!**

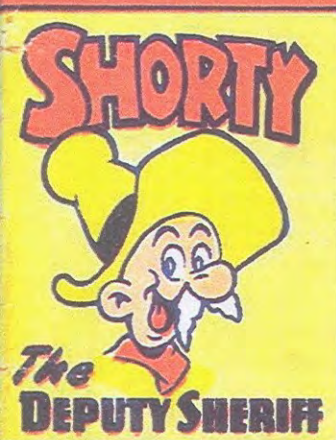
COMET

PRICE

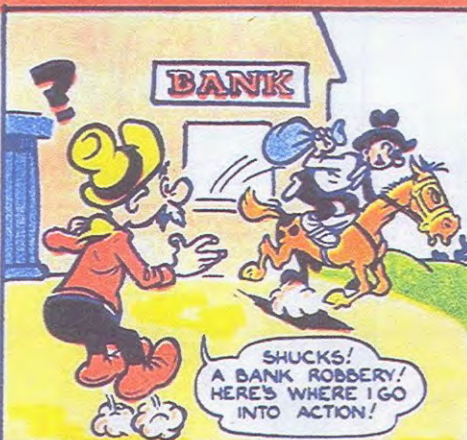
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**EVERY
MONDAY**

No. 199. May 10, 1952



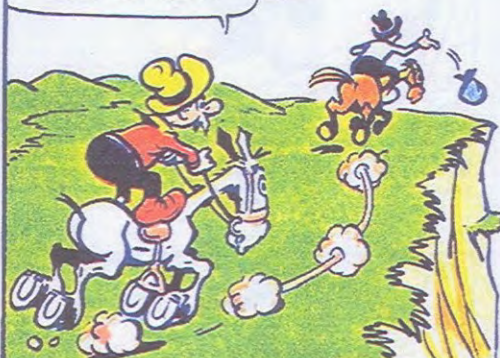
HE'S TOO FAR AWAY FOR ME TO CATCH, BUT THERE'S THE SWAG ON THAT LEDGE!



I'LL JUST SLIDE DOWN AND GET IT.



HE MUST KNOW I'M ON HIS TRAIL, HE'S THROWN THE SWAG OVER THE CLIFF!



OOPS! I'VE SLIPPED!



AW, SHUCKS! I'VE KNOCKED IT IN THE RIVER! HERE GOES!



GLUG, GLUG, GOT IT!



I COULDN'T CATCH THE GUY WHO ROBBED YOUR BANK, SIR, BUT I GOT YOUR CASH BACK!



HO, HO! THIS ISN'T CASH, SHORTY. IT'S JUST A COUPLE OF MOULDY CHEESE SANDWICHES THAT I FOUND IN A DRAWER AND ASKED ONE OF THE BOYS TO THROW AWAY!



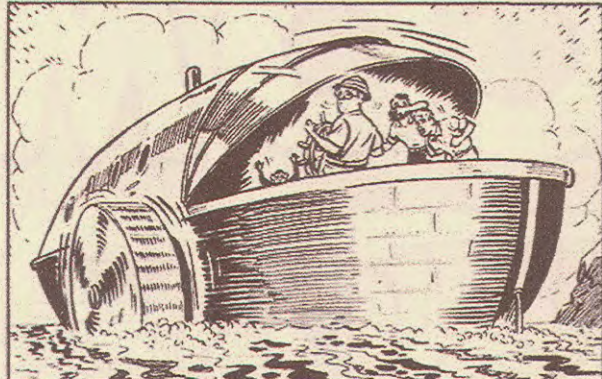
OUR CHUMS HAVE FOUND MANY STRANGE THINGS ON THE ISLAND OF SECRETS—

ISLAND OF SECRETS

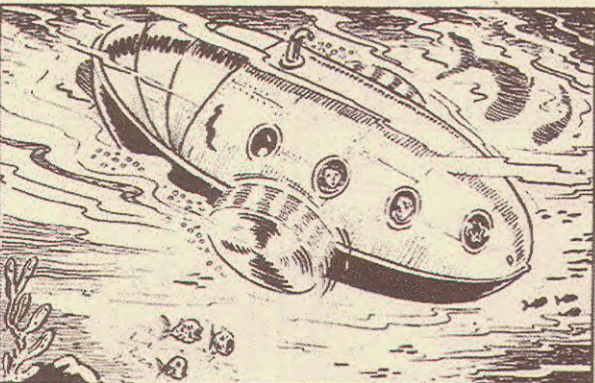
Nothing ever grows old—
people can live for centuries
in this queer place!



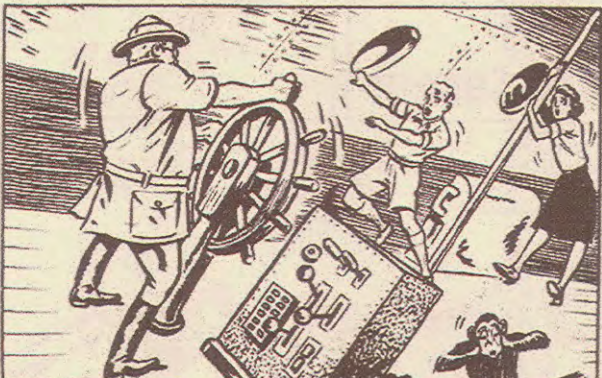
Peter and Ann and their uncle, Professor Jolly, had escaped from the two Swiss scientists, Von Tik and Von Tok, who lived in a remote valley on the Island of Secrets. "We are lucky to find this queer boat," said Peter as he gazed over the side. "I suppose those crazy scientists must have built it." The professor nodded. "I should think so, judging by all the control levers!" he answered.



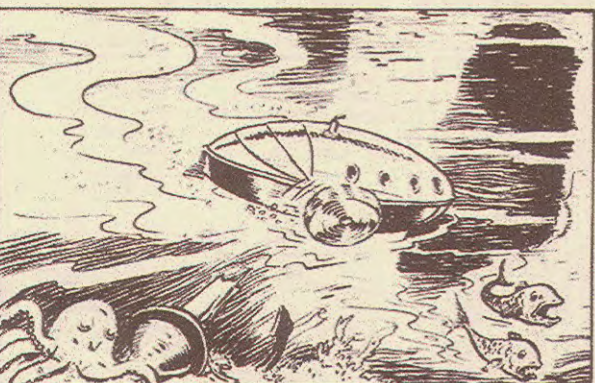
Just then Koko, the little monkey, caught hold of a lever to pull himself up. The lever moved down under his weight and at once there came a fierce whirr of machinery. "Look out! The boat's falling to bits!" cried Ann. But it wasn't! The curved roof over the forepart of the vessel was sliding back like a lid. "It's a trap!" Peter jerked out. "We'll be completely shut inside!"



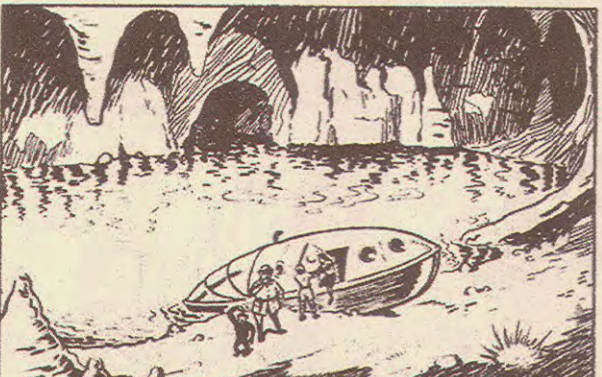
As the sliding roof clamped home, the ship gave a sudden lurch and plunged beneath the sea. Our chums were flung to the deck and for several seconds there was turmoil. Then Professor Jolly struggled up and snatched at the wheel. "We're not sinking—the ship has turned into a submarine!" he gasped hoarsely. Peter, Ann and Koko stumbled to the row of portholes and peered out.



They could see nothing but the shimmery green waters of the sea swirling before their eyes. Professor Jolly, his feet braced on the sloping deck, was struggling to get the sub on an even keel. "We've changed direction, I think," he panted, "and she won't answer to the wheel!" Peter swung round suddenly, his face pale. "I can see the base of the cliffs ahead!" he cried. "We're going to crash!"



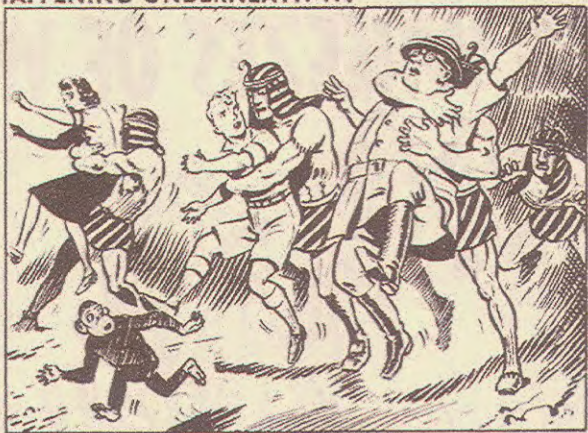
The submarine sped on. It seemed that nothing could save them from smashing into the submerged cliff-face. Then, at the last moment, Peter saw a great area of gloomy blackness against the white stone of the cliffs. "There's an opening ahead!" he cried. "Keep her steady, Uncle! I think we're heading straight for it!" A second later they were in the pitch darkness of an undersea cave.



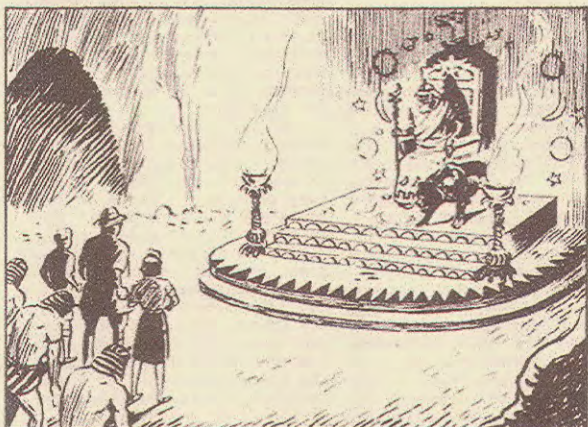
On ploughed the submarine, churning up the water as it drove through that flooded tunnel under the cliffs. At last they felt a harsh grating under the keel, and with an abrupt lurch the submarine stopped. "We're above sea-level—and we've run aground!" cried Peter, peering from a porthole. The professor opened a water-tight door and climbed out. They were in a great domed cavern!



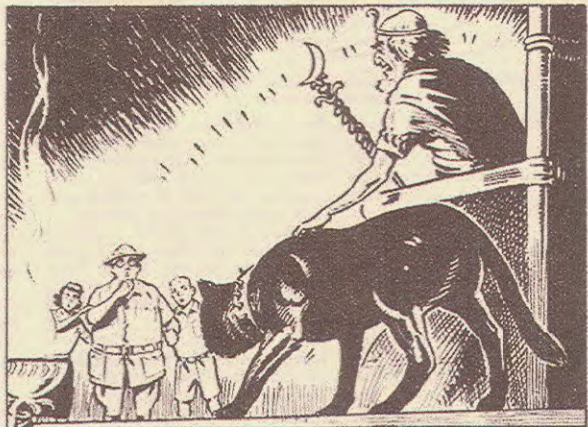
"We've come up right underneath the island!" muttered Professor Jolly. The submarine was so hard aground that they could not get it afloat again. "Let's see if there's a way out along one of these passages," Peter suggested. They set off, and were amazed to see a lighted lamp hanging from the rock roof. And then, behind them, a slab of stone pivoted aside to reveal some strange-looking men.



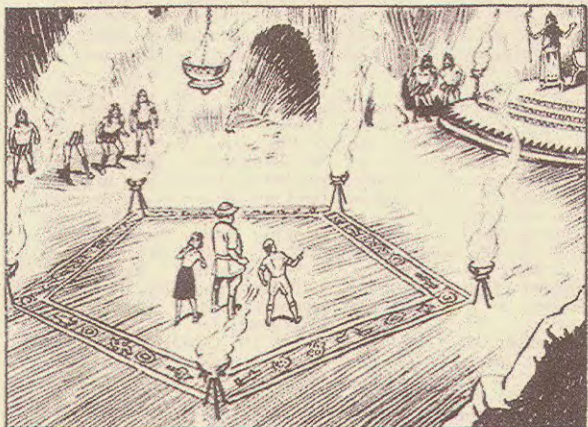
Our chums had no warning. Suddenly they were attacked from behind and seized in powerful arms. It was like a nightmare! Their attackers seemed like men, except that their faces were weird masks of polished stone with slits for the eyes and mouth. They looked like miniatures of the ancient Egyptian sphinx. The three explorers fought hard, but they were outnumbered. Koko scampered off with a squeak of fear.



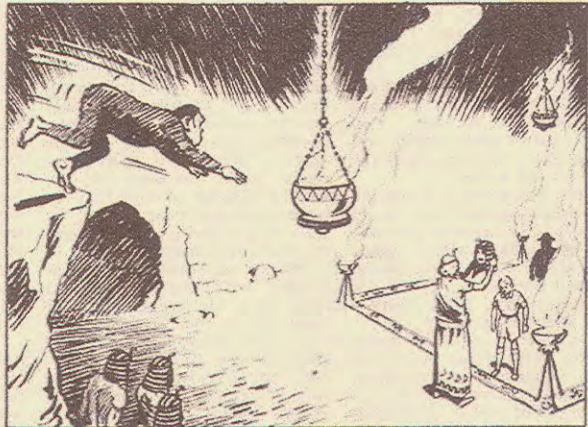
"What are they, Uncle?" Ann asked in a shaky voice as they were led away. Before Professor Jolly could answer they were brought into a great cavern and found themselves facing a dark, wild-eyed man on a richly carved throne. At his feet was a black panther. Burning braziers of incense gave off a strange perfume, and the walls and floor were carved with the mystic symbols of ancient magic!



The man on the throne spoke in a soft, hissing voice: "I am Eblis, master of magic, sorcerer to the Pharaohs who ruled Egypt five thousand years ago!" Eblis told how he had been sent with a company of men to mine rich jewels from the Island of Secrets. When an earthquake submerged the caves where they worked, Eblis ruled this land, and had used his magic arts to make the men his slaves.



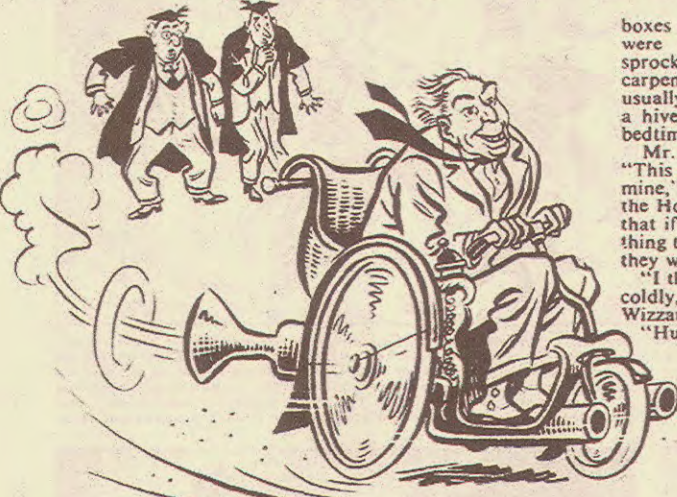
"By spells and charms I have made them obedient to my will!" cried Eblis. "See how they are imprisoned in their stone masks, in token of their slavery!" He rose from his throne. In one hand was a tall wand with carved serpents twined along its length. "You, too, shall become Sphinx-men!" he hissed. He began to chant in a strange tongue, and as he did so the incense fumes grew heavier.



Standing in the centre of a great pentagon, a symbol of magic, our chums felt themselves growing sleepy. The low, terrible chanting went on and the air grew heavy with menace. Eblis stood at one edge of the pentagon, a mask of stone in his hand. "Come!" he commanded. Unable to resist, Peter moved slowly forward. And then little Koko, crouched high up on the wall, leapt into action.

(Continued on page 20)

THE WHEEZES OF WILLIE WIZZARD



"Yippee!" yelled Doctor Smackenwhacker as he whizzed past the astonished masters.

ONE morning Jimmy Bash and Tommy Attaboy, pupils at Doctor Gandybar's School went into the den of Willie Wizzard, schoolboy inventor, and gasped in astonishment.

Standing in the middle of the den was an invalid chair. It was the usual kind, with two large wheels at the sides and a smaller wheel with a long handle at the front to guide it. It had come from the school hospital. But what was it doing in Willie Wizzard's den, behind the school boiler-house? And why were a pair of legs sticking out from beneath it?

"What on earth is this," asked Jimmy Bash.

The legs wriggled out from under the chair. They were followed by the wriggling body, then the shoulders, and lastly the large head, and bulging forehead of Willie Wizzard himself.

"This," he said, polishing his huge glasses, "is the Wizzard Jet-engined Arm-chair. You press a button and—whizz—off you go like a rocket. Read the notice on the table."

Jimmy picked up a magazine which was lying on the table. It was called *The Inventor* and was open at a page which read: **BIG PRIZES FOR SCHOOLBOYS. GRAND CONTEST. BUILD A WORKING MODEL OF A WHEEL-CHAIR AND WIN A PRIZE.**

"Aw, gee," said Tommy Attaboy, who came from the States, "that sounds exciting. What do you have to do?"

"I've told Mr. Halfspin about it," said Willie. "He thinks it's a great idea. He's going to ask all the boys to have a go."

Mr. Halfspin was the Fourth Form master, but he was in charge of the school, because

Dr. Gandybar, the Head, was away in London at a meeting of Headmasters. After school Mr. Halfspin called all the boys together in the Big Hall and told them about the contest.

"Boys," he called, rapping the table for silence. "I have here," he waved Willie Wizzard's magazine in the air—"a notice about a contest for clever schoolboys. This magazine offers a prize for the best working model wheel-chair built by a schoolboy. In about a week's time, an Inspector will call to examine the—er—models. Now I think all of you will want to enter this contest; and I think that this school can hold its own with all others. Does everyone agree?"

The roar that went up from the boys meant "yes." Mr. Halfspin beamed down on them. "I knew you'd like the idea," he said. "Boys who enter the competition will have the afternoons free from lessons all next week." This time the cheer nearly raised the roof. Mr. Halfspin rapped for silence again. "When Dr. Gandybar comes back," he went on, "he will be pleased to find that we have used our time wisely. So off you go, boys, and get busy on your inventions."

All the next week the school buzzed with excitement and resounded to the banging of hammers as the boys got busy with their chairs on wheels. It soon became evident that everybody couldn't build a different sort of chair all by himself, so groups were formed. Each group had its own invention, and jealously kept its ideas from the others. At morning lessons secret diagrams were passed from hand to hand, and whispered talks were held about the progress of the work. Soap

boxes were in great demand, so were bicycle chains, wheels, sprockets, and handlebars. The carpentry room, where the boys usually did their woodwork was a hive of industry right up to bedtime every night.

Mr. Halfspin was delighted. "This is a splendid idea of mine," he said to Mr. Wisket, the Housemaster. "I always say that if you give the boys something to do that they like doing, they will always do it."

"I thought," said Mr. Wisket coldly, "that it was Willie Wizzard's idea."

"Huh!" exclaimed Mr. Halfspin. "Wizzard is in my class, and let me tell you this—he lowered his voice—"half Wizzard's ideas are really mine first."

"Well," said Mr. Wisket doubtfully, "I hope Dr. Gandybar will like it."

"Of course he will," snapped Mr. Halfspin. "I've been in this school longer than you have. I know what I'm doing." He strolled off to the manual room.

"Boys," he said, "tomorrow is the great day. Dr. Gandybar comes back, and the competition judge arrives to select the best invention for the competition. You must all be ready."

Late that night when everyone should have been in bed bangs were still coming from the workshop as the boys hammered away at breakneck pace to finish their inventions. Willie Wizzard toiled beneath his invalid chair, while Tommy Attaboy handed him tools, and Jimmy Bash stood guard at the door.

Next morning Mr. Halfspin set off to meet Dr. Gandybar at the station. "Be ready for us coming back," he told the boys before he left. "Have all the vehicles lined up at the far end of the playground, for the judge will probably be on the same train."

Mr. Halfspin was waiting on the village station platform, among the milkcans, when the London train chuffed in. Out of a carriage stepped Dr. Gandybar, followed by a gentleman with long white hair, on top of which sat an old battered hat. He had great bushy eyebrows, a long horse-like face and long white false teeth. He was dressed in a shabby old tweed suit.

"Ah," said Dr. Gandybar, holding out his hand to Mr. Halfspin. "I'm so glad to get back. This is Mr. Smackenwhacker, the most famous Headmaster in England."

Mr. Halfspin had never heard of Mr. Smackenwhacker. He approached the great man timidly and held out his hand. "Glad to meet you, Mr. Smackenwhacker," he said.

"SmackenWHACKER!" shouted Mr. Smackenwhacker so loudly that the railway guard nearly swallowed his whistle, and the porter dropped a case of eggs on the Stationmaster's toe.

"Sorry—sir," blurted out Mr. Halfspin hastily. He started to look along the platform for anyone who might resemble an invention judge.

"Well," demanded Mr. Smackenwhacker, "What are you looking for?"

"Nothing—sir," said Mr. Halfspin who felt that the fierce Mr. Smackenwhacker might at any moment order him to bend over the milk cans for a caning. "I mean—I was looking for a taxi to take us to the school."

"A taxi!" roared the famous Headmaster. "It is only three miles. Which would you rather do: walk for an hour along the quiet country lanes in the clean fresh air, or sit for ten awful minutes in a stuffy taxi? Eh, Dr. Gandybar?"

"Sit for ten awful—I mean walk in the clean fresh air, of course," replied Dr. Gandybar. "Come let's go. We'd better keep close to the hedge or the buses will knock us down." So off they set along the dusty road.

"Mr. Smackenwhacker is a great believer in peace and quiet," explained Dr. Gandybar. "I've been telling him about my school. How it is all peace and quiet. How wisdom and learning go hand in hand, and the quiet thoughtful lads stroll together beneath the elm trees thinking lofty thoughts."

"Yes," said Mr. Smackenwhacker in a voice that sent the frightened rooks flying from the trees, and the rabbits scurrying to their holes. "I've no time for rush. I hate the hurry and bustle of modern life. Too much time spent on speed. Everybody dashing about in motor cars, or bicycles, or roller skates. I hate it."

"Oh none of that at my school," assured Dr. Gandybar. Then in a whisper he said out of the corner of his mouth to Mr. Halfspin: "Did you get my letter? I hope you told the boys to walk arm in arm beneath the trees looking as if they were thinking lofty thoughts, for that's how I hope to find them."

"What letter?" asked Mr. Halfspin unhappily. He hadn't received any letter, which wasn't surprising, for the letter was still in Dr. Gandybar's pocket. He had forgotten to post it. Dr. Gandybar whispered again: "If you've let anything go wrong I'll—"

"Stop mumbling," order Mr. Smackenwhacker. "I can't hear a word you say for these dratted buses. Aren't we nearly there yet?"

"Only another two and a half miles," said Mr. Halfspin

miserably; and he wished it were farther.

Meanwhile the school was in a ferment. The quiet playground looked like a miniature Trafalgar Square gone mad. High-powered wheel-chairs dashed in all directions. Most of them were driven by chains and pedals, but some of them were different. Charlie Summers had copied from a book a 1904 model of a horseless carriage driven by steam. It chuffed and chugged and rang a huge bell as it sped along at ten miles an hour. Another model was driven by water power. It carried a large tank from which a thin stream of water fell on to a blade that turned the wheels. But as the breeze blew the stream of water it missed the blade and poured down the driver's neck. Willie Wizzard's model didn't go at all. It was still in his den, and he was still under it.

"Come on, now boys," called Mr. Wisket. "Line up at the far corner of the playground. When Mr. Halfspun returns with Dr. Gandybar and the Inspector of Inventions I will shout 'go' and off you will dash, four times round the school building. Where's Wizzard? I wish Wizzard would hurry up."

Willie Wizzard was just pushing his invalid chair across the playground when the three masters entered the school gate. They all looked a bit footsore.

"Ah," exclaimed Mr. Smackenwhacker, spotting the chair. "How nice! Just what I wanted." He sank gratefully into the chair and smiled at Willie, whose face was covered with oil. "How

good of you, Dr. Gandybar, to provide your guests with a wheel-chair, and have it pushed by a quaint little negro boy. Well boy, let's be off."

Willie naturally thought that Mr. Smackenwhacker was the judge, so he pushed him to the far end of the playground where the other vehicles were lined up ready to start. Mr. Wisket was waiting impatiently. When he saw Mr. Smackenwhacker in the chair he approached with a smile. "Good morning, sir," he said. "We've been waiting for you." Mr. Smackenwhacker was so amazed at the line-up of queer contraptions that he was, for once, speechless. "Perhaps," added Mr. Wisket, seeing that the other made no move to quit the chair, "you'd like to try this chair yourself."

"Try it?" asked Mr. Smackenwhacker. "Of course I'm going to try it. I'm an older man than you, Mr. Whatever-your-name-is. Do you expect me to give my wheel-chair up to you, eh?"

"Well," said Mr. Wisket, "if you will all get into line. When I say 'go'."

"Press the button on the arm, sir," whispered Willie to the famous Headmaster.

"Eh, what's that?" said Mr. Smackenwhacker. He pressed the button just as Mr. Wisket said 'go'.

There was a "whoof" and off shot Mr. Smackenwhacker at a steady twenty miles an hour, followed by a dozen queer contraptions. The steam engine chuffed and chugged, the water engine spluttered, bells rang,

boys yelled. Mr. Smackenwhacker, his long horse face filled with terror hung on for dear life, the unwilling leader in this queer race.

"This is dreadful, dreadful," wailed Dr. Gandybar. "Whose awful idea was this? Yours, Mr. Halfspun?"

"Oh, n-no," stammered Mr. Halfspun. "As a matter of fact it was first suggested by Willie Wizzard."

"I might have known it," said Dr. Gandybar as he watched the cars disappear round the school, with the most famous Headmaster in England in the lead. "Wizzard!" he called as the black-faced Willie appeared. "Will you please call at my study just before bedtime. I want to have a long talk with you. A long painful talk."

Just then the wild procession swept round the far side of the school on the second lap of the race. Mr. Smackenwhacker was still in the lead. He bore down on the Headmaster with a cry, and came so close he nearly cut off Dr. Gandybar's toes. "Yip-pee," he yelled as he whizzed past. The others gazed in astonishment. Mr. Smackenwhacker was enjoying it!

Away dashed the cars to the far end of the playground, skirting round the ancient elms where two soppy Sixth Formers were strolling arm in arm thinking lofty thoughts. When they picked themselves up, the thoughts they were thinking lofty weren't lofty at all.

Third time round Mr. Smackenwhacker had gained five yards. "Look," he cried as he

passed the speechless masters. "No hands." He spread out his arms to show how clever he was. Just at that moment a little man came in the school gates. He was dressed in a pin-striped suit, and a bowler hat. Under his arm he carried an important-looking brief case. Mr. Smackenwhacker probably saw him, but it was too late. There was a "whoomph" and the little man turned a complete somersault in the air. When the chair disappeared round the corner on its last lap the little man was lying across Mr. Smackenwhacker's knees. When they appeared again they were a struggling mass of arms and legs. The chair was cutting crazy capers on a zig-zag course, scattering boys, and wheel-chairs in all directions.

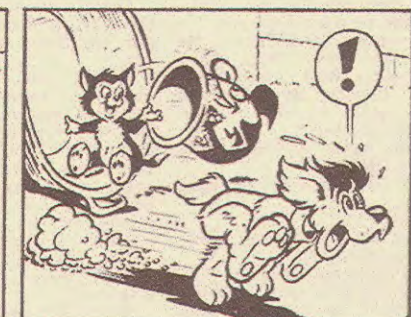
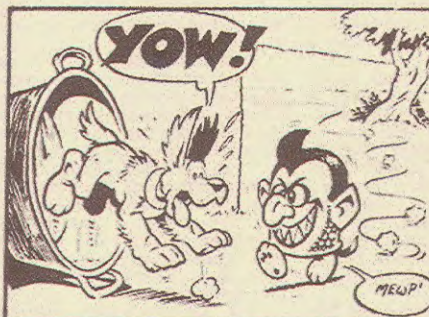
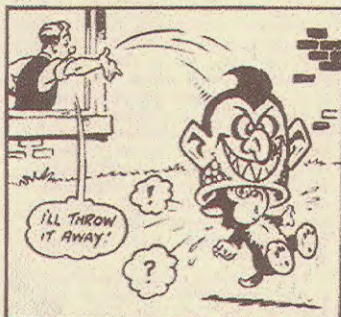
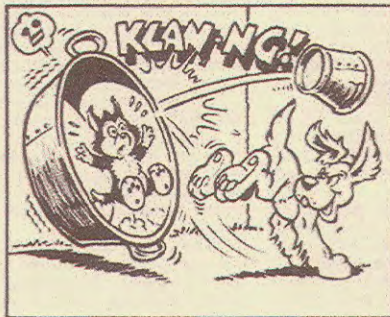
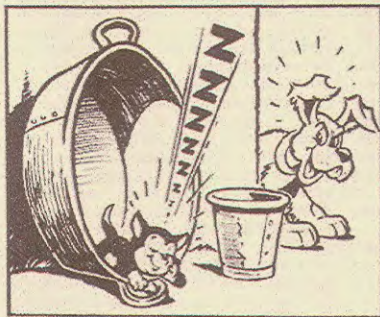
The school janitor, Charlie Chutes, chose that moment to come out of the boiler-house with a bag of soot.

Mr. Smackenwhacker didn't see him, and if he had it would have made no difference. The Wizzard chair was on its own by this time, for Mr. Smackenwhacker had completely lost control. The chair decided that it didn't like Charlie, and made straight at his legs. Dr. Gandybar couldn't bear to look. He covered his eyes. There was another "whoomph". When Dr. Gandybar dared to look again a mushroom-shaped column of soot was rising steadily in the air.

When it had cleared three black-faced figures sat peering over the up-turned chair.

(Continued on page 18)

SCAMP OUR HAPPY HOUND



The Mystery of the Ivory Mandarin

DETECTIVE-INSPECTOR HARLEY of Scotland Yard picked his way through Wan Chen's shop in Chinatown towards the old ivory merchant's private office at the back. He rapped on the door.

"Please to enter," came Wan Chen's sing-song voice, and went on as the policeman entered. "So! It is honourable inspector! Please to be seated. This worthless person's humble home at inspector's disposal!"

The detective smiled to himself. Wan Chen's "humble home" contained a king's ransom in treasures of ivory and precious jade. Wan Chen was a very rich man.

"I got your letter, Wan Chen," said Harley, coming straight to the point. "What do you want to see me about? Are you going to give yourself up for your crimes at long last?"

"Inspector make small joke," smiled Wan Chen blandly. "Wan Chen honest merchant. Besides that, Wan Chen too fat and old to climb drain-pipes!"

"You always left that part of it to others, you crafty old heathen. Scotland Yard knows well enough that you've been the brains behind some of the biggest robberies in London during the last twenty-five years—but proving it in a court of law is another matter. You've been too clever for us, Wan Chen."

"Inspector's compliment like boiled fish—must be swallowed with much care, or bones stick in throat," said Wan Chen gravely. "But inspector does unworthy Wan Chen too much honour. Wan Chen not master-mind. Has not inspector spent many precious hours following the doings of this unworthy person? Has not he come with many men to search humble home for stolen goods? And has not this worthless one always proved himself blameless of all crime?"

"All right—have it your own way." The inspector couldn't help grinning at the old Chinaman. "But one of these days, Wan Chen, you'll make a mistake, and then we'll get you."

"Never get Wan Chen!" He shook his head. "Wan Chen grow old. Wan Chen now depart from city of smoke and fog to return to land of honourable ancestors."

"You mean you're going back to China?"

Wan Chen bowed his head gravely.

"Yes!"

"Well—if you do go—we'll certainly miss you!"

Wan Chen bowed again. "Cut finger missed when cut get better!" he declared. "Wan Chen likewise miss inspector."



The Chinaman leaned sideways and lifted a cardboard box from the table beside him.

"Wan Chen have great favour to ask of Harley," he said gravely.

He lifted the lid and took from within something carved in ivory. It was a little figure of a mandarin upon a carved base, which evidently contained some mechanism, for Wan Chen was winding a key at the back.

"It is toy, made for Ming princess," he declared as he set it down. "See—works still perfect."

As he spoke the mechanism began to click softly, and the little figure moved on its stand as though it were running along, first facing one way and then the other. Its tiny feet moved up and down, although, of course, it remained fixed to its base all the while.

"Observe!" Wan Chen grinned. "Ivory mandarin like inspector on trail of Wan Chen. Run very fast, but always get nowhere!"

Inspector Harley picked up the little image. It was a beautiful piece of work, and probably of considerable value.

"You said something about a great favour just now. What do you want me to do?"

The old Chinaman grew very serious. He leaned across and put one hand upon Harley's arm.

"Want you to keep ivory mandarin safely. I have a daughter, Harley, as you know. She is a fine girl—she knows nothing of her unworthy father's shady past. One day, when I am gone, Lotus may need the ivory mandarin. Till then, you keep it safe for Wan Chen, yes?"

"But—why not just give it to her now, if you want her to have it, Wan Chen? Why give it to me?"

Wan Chen answered the last question first.

"Harley honourable man. Most honourable man Wan Chen know. Wan Chen does not want lovely daughter to have mandarin till after he is dead. Wan Chen old man, Harley."

"Very well, then," Harley replied. "I'll keep it for you. It will be safe enough at my home. I suppose it won't matter if my son Bob sees it?"

"Honourable son most welcome to see!" declared Wan Chen. "Little mandarin only tell his secrets to daughter Lotus!"

AS the inspector came out of Wan Chen's shop a little later he was watched. From the dusty upstairs window of an old wharf some distance down the street, a pair of powerful field-glasses were trained upon him.

The watcher was a powerfully built man, smartly dressed in a dark suit of "drape" cut. Without lowering the glasses, he spoke to a second man similarly clad, who sat upon an empty packing-case just behind him.

"That Scotland Yard dick has just come out of Wan Chen's, Slim," he said. "He's going towards the corner of the street."

Slim looked at his wrist watch, and then started writing on a flat pad.

"Eleven twenty-six . . ." he said as he wrote. "Detective-Inspector Harley left Wan Chen's—" Slim broke off writing and looked up. "Is he carrying anything, Ginger?"

"No," said Ginger, still watching through the glasses. "No—wait a minute, though—yes! Yes—he is. A little parcel—and he didn't have it with him when he arrived half an hour ago. You'd better write that down, Slim!"

"I'll say I had!" agreed Slim. "That's just the sort of

thing the boss wants to know about—that's why he's had us boys watching Wan Chen's place night and day for a fortnight now. If Wan Chen so much as sneezes, the boss wants to know about it!"

"Why'd you suppose we're doing this?"

"I dunno. I've heard stories about Wan Chen's treasure before now. Maybe that's what he's after."

"Wan Chen's treasure?"

"Yeah. The fat old Chin's been the biggest receiver of stolen property in London for years now, besides planning a lot of the big jewel robberies. Nobody knows what's become of most of the swag he's handled—the police have never been able to trace it. That's why a lot of folks reckon Wan Chen's got it all salted away somewhere."

"Cor!"

All this while Ginger had kept his field-glasses glued on the building down the street, not missing the slightest move. In other buildings in the district, too, he knew that there were other watchers, commanding all sides of Wan Chen's house. Even the side that overlooked the River Thames had its watcher.

At that moment a buzzer sounded softly from somewhere in the dingy half-ruined wharf behind them.

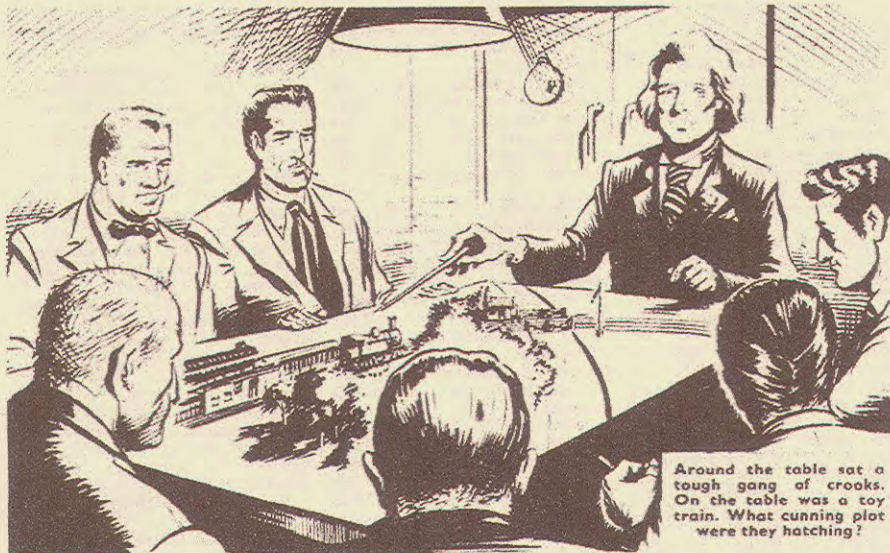
"That's the boss!" said Slim. "Come on—we're wanted."

The two men got up, crossed the room and carefully picked their way down a flight of half-rotted wooden stairs. At the bottom they came into a huge room which had been the main store of this old warehouse. They followed one wall to the end, where stood a pair of battered and rusty iron doors. However, despite their decrepit looks, the doors slid freely and silently upon their runners as Ginger tugged them open.

Beyond them lay a narrow passage, at the end of which was a second pair of old doors. Ginger rapped on these with his knuckles—three times quickly, then a pause, and once more. Silently a small shutter in the door slid open. A pair of eyes looked out at them.

A second later the doors rolled smoothly back, and the two men stepped through into a big comfortable room, thick with the haze of cigarette smoke. Seated around the room were three or four other men, much of the same stamp as Slim and Ginger, while through another door at the other end of the room two more were making their entry.

In the centre of the room was a big table, and seated at the head of this was the boss. He was a tall elderly man with a



startling mane of pure white hair. He looked more like an actor or a distinguished artist, or a scientist, than the leader of a gang of desperate crooks. Of all the men present, not one knew his real name. The nickname which the underworld had given him many years ago was good enough, and still suited him perfectly. He was called "The Professor."

On the table in front of the Professor was a toy railway.

This strange man silently counted the men present. Then he began to speak, for all the world like a teacher taking a lesson.

"Please attend to me very carefully. The time has come to put my plans into action. We are going to seek a treasure, gentlemen—Wan Chen's treasure." There was a stir of interest as he spoke. "As you know, we have gone to some trouble to learn every detail of his daily life. That was so that I could plan how best to get what we want from him."

The Professor produced a photograph and laid it on the table for the others to see.

"Wan Chen has a daughter, Lotus. This is her picture. I want you to look at it carefully, especially you, Slim. Miss Lotus Chen, who knows nothing of her father's shady past, is a pupil at Midburn Abbey girls' school in Buckinghamshire. We are going to kidnap Miss Lotus tonight, and use her to force Wan Chen to hand over the secret of his treasure."

The Professor paused, and bending over the table, moved the toy train into its station.

"Imagine that this is Midburn station, and that this is the seven-forty train to London. Miss Lotus will be catching that train—Wan Chen has arranged for her to do so, so that she may visit him, for he is planning to leave this country. Since it is not a school holiday

tomorrow there will not be any of the other pupils travelling with her. You, Slim, will see to it that you, and *you* alone, get into the same compartment."

Slim nodded and picked up the photograph of the almond-eyed schoolgirl. The Professor moved the toy train along the track to a small level-crossing.

"Murphy, and you, Ginger, will be at the level-crossing here with a van. You will have a breakdown, right on the crossing, so that the train will be held up for a few minutes. Eglin and Dogan will be here, at the trackside, where there is a thick wood. Your job will be to take Miss Lotus from Slim, who will by this time have chloroformed her, so that she will not give any trouble. It will be best if you put out the lights in the compartment, Slim, so that you are not easily seen from outside. As soon as the girl is safely out, Murphy and Ginger will get their van started so that the train can go on its way. Then, following the road around here to the other side of the wood, they will be able to pick up Eglin, Dogan and Slim and Lotus, and bring them all back here."

The Professor grinned evilly. "Once Lotus is our prisoner, Wan Chen will do just as we wish. Lotus is the apple of his eye. Rather than have any harm come to her, he will hand over the secret of his treasure."

For a moment the white-haired old man seemed to forget that the others were present. There was a far-away look in his eyes as he spoke very softly.

"We will exchange the safety of his beloved Lotus for the secret of Wan Chen's treasure. Lotus for the Ivory Mandarin!"

LOTUS CHEN settled herself comfortably in the corner seat of the railway carriage and watched the platform of Midburn station slip back as

the train chugged away.

She took no notice of the tough-looking man who had got in with her, and was now sitting quietly at the other end of the compartment.

It never occurred to her that she might be in danger. She had never seen Slim before in her life. She knew nothing of her father's career of crime.

But Lotus was puzzled about her father, just the same. For the hundredth time she re-read

the strange letter she had received from him.

Lotus bent her head over the letter which she had taken from her coat pocket. It started by telling her of his plan to return to China. That was no surprise, for he had always planned to do so, and had often spoken about it. The startling part of the letter was the last part.

"After I am dead,"—said the letter—"there is something I want you to do. Go to Inspector Harley, of Scotland Yard, and tell him this—"

"Four steps there are which
tell you where..."

Then seek as deep as final
pair.

"This is something I do not wish to talk about with you," went on the letter—"because I do not wish our time together to be spoiled. But remember what I say."

There was more of the letter, but before Lotus could read it again, the train began to slow down with a grinding of brakes. Lotus pushed the letter into her pocket, and looked out at the darkened countryside. A hold-up at the level-crossing, she thought to herself, for she had often travelled on this line and knew it well.

Then she turned sharply, as a sound came from behind her.

Slim was on his feet, crossing the carriage towards her. In his hand was a pad of white cloth.

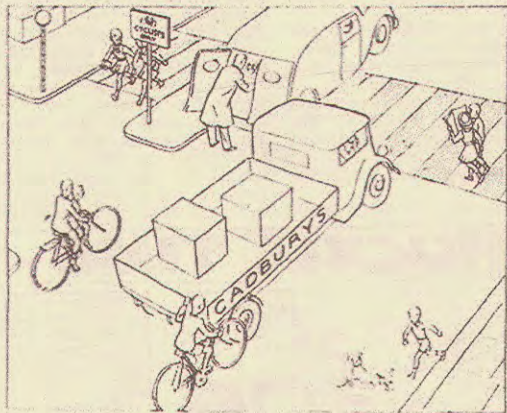
Before Lotus could move, the pad was clamped over her

(Continued on next page)

CADBURY'S PUZZLE CORNER No. 10

Do you know your Highway Code?

The people in this picture have forgotten their Highway Code. How many broken rules can you spot? Turn the page up for the answers.



When it comes to Cocoa and Chocolate, you'll make no mistake when you say 'Please . . .'

I want Cadburys!

THE RULES BEING REPEATED 1 Do not work in a cycle track—always use the pavement if there is one 2 Never hang on to a moving vehicle when you are cycling 3 Do not carry a passenger on the bar of your cycle 4 Cyclist should use cycle track where this is provided 5 Look out when you cross the road—even on a Zebra crossing 6 Cars should not park on a Zebra crossing 7 Don't let your dog run into the road— and cross on the crossing where there is one

This is not a competition and no prizes are offered—it's for your amusement only.

mouth and nostrils, and her shoulders were seized in a powerful grip. She tried to struggle and cry out, but the pad was soaked in chloroform, and as the fumes of the stuff got into her mouth she felt her head swimming.

Soon, Lotus went limp, put to sleep by the powerful dope. Slim dropped her back against the seat. Then he reached up and took the bulbs from the two lights.

A minute later the girl had been lifted quietly down to the trackside, and the train was chugging on its way.

Things were working out just the way that the professor had planned they should—so far.

NIGHT fell over Chinatown. Wan Chen sat quietly in his study, smoking a long slender pipe in the flickering light of a charcoal fire. He was listening for the knock at the barred door below that would announce the arrival of Lotus.

Suddenly a bell rang—his telephone bell.

Wan Chen laid down his pipe, and picked up the phone.

"Wan Chen here."

"Good evening," said a voice, "this is the Professor, Wan Chen!"

Wan Chen's yellow face paled suddenly in the fire-light.

"No—I'm not a ghost, Wan Chen!" continued the soft voice on the phone. "And I didn't die when the *Southern Star* sank twenty years ago. Now I've come back, Wan Chen!"

"What do you want?" Wan Chen gasped the words.

"I want the ivory mandarin—that's all, Wan Chen."

Wan Chen was getting over the first shock by now. He even managed to laugh softly as he answered.

"Like small child, old friend want moon!" said the Chinaman. "Why should Wan Chen give you ivory mandarin?"

"Because, if you don't you will never see Lotus again!" The Professor's voice was cold now. "Listen, Wan Chen..."

A girl's voice sounded on the phone.

"Father! I'm all right. Don't

let..."

The voice broke off. "You hear, Wan Chen?" it was the Professor speaking now. "I shall ring you at noon tomorrow for your answer. Good night!"

And the line went dead. Wan Chen stood for a moment with the phone in his hand. Then he returned to his cradle.

In the firelight his round face, usually so bland and smiling, grew devilish with rage.

Wan Chen sat down, thinking furiously. All his careful planning had come to nothing. The priceless treasure he had so cunningly hidden away for so many years was in danger of being snatched away. The Professor was the one man apart from himself who knew the secret of the ivory mandarin!

And that very morning, thinking its secret to be safe forever, he had given the mandarin to Inspector Harley.

Now he would have to make new plans—quickly.

"Old fox most dangerous when cornered!" he gritted softly. "And old fox know many tricks. Professor!"

Wan Chen made up his mind then. He knew what he must do.

From his carved chair, he picked up the down-stuffed cushions, and threw them onto the fire. The chair itself followed. Then he overturned the desk towards the already mounting blaze. There was no rage in his actions. He was quite calm.

He watched the flames spread and glow, until the rich silk curtains which covered the walls were on fire.

Then he quitted the room, and hurried down the stairs to the basement. In the cellar he sought and found a particular stone slab, into which was set an iron ring. He tugged it up to reveal a flight of damp stone steps, leading downwards.

Wan Chen hurried down the steps. From below came the lapping sound of water, where an underground river flowed. Centuries ago this river had flowed in the open, but as London had grown up around it, it had been roofed over and

forgotten. Wan Chen stepped into the small boat that was moored there.

Twenty minutes later, as he rowed out into the open water of the Thames, the bells of fire engines were clanging, and the night sky glowed red with the blaze of his burning house.

BOB HARLEY, fourteen and red-headed, faced his father across the supper table. Between them, just beside the pickle-jar, stood the ivory mandarin.

"Why do you think Wan Chen gave you this gadget, Dad?" Bob asked.

Inspector Harley shrugged. He had just finished telling Bob the story of that morning's happenings.

"Search me, Bob. Knowing the old rascal, I should think it's probably his idea of a joke—but he's the only one who can

enjoy it. You know, I've been on his track for over twenty years, on and off. Harley's Chinese puzzle, they call him at the yard. I've known for years that he's been handling tens of thousands of pounds worth of stolen property—but I've never been able to prove it. Not one scrap of the stuff that's gone through his hands has ever been traced—he must have a fortune in stolen property stowed away somewhere, but he's always been clever enough to keep his secret secure. And his business as an ivory merchant has always been fair, square and above-board. We've never been able to get a thing on him."

Bob grinned.

"I'll pick the case up where you leave off, Dad. It will give me something to look forward to when I leave the police cadet school and go into the force. But hasn't there ever been anything—any lead at all in the case?"

"We did think once that we might have something. Wan Chen used to have a partner—a chap we used to call 'the Professor'. They quarrelled—and we had hopes of getting information from him which would be Wan Chen's undoing. I still think he would have talked—if he'd had the chance."

"Why—what happened to him?"

"He was lost at sea when a tanker named the *Southern Star* sank with all hands on the way to Australia. So that was that."

"Bit of luck for old Wan Chen," said Bob. "But it all sounds a bit potty, if you ask me. If the old boy's got all this swag tucked away, it's not doing him much good. From what you've told me, he's wealthy enough, anyway. What's he keeping it for? Xmas?"

Inspector Harley grinned.

"That's a question I've often asked myself," he replied. "Of course, there's his daughter, Lotus. I know he plans great things for her. But—"

Bob's dad broke off. Out in the hall, the telephone rang.

"Here we go again!" he sighed. "A detective's job is never done!"

Bob went on with his supper. He was used to the phone ringing at all hours of the day and night to call his father to duty. But he sensed something unusual when the inspector returned, and snatched his jacket up off the chair-back.

"What's up?"

"It's Wan Chen! His house in Chinatown is blazing like a bonfire!"

"Gosh!"

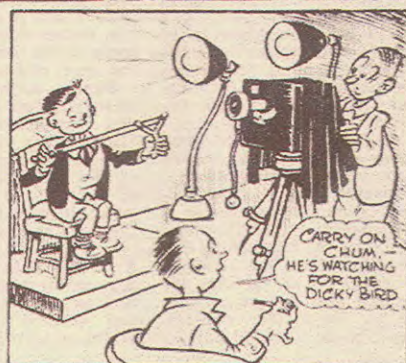
"And that's not all. No trace can be found of Wan Chen, so the local police tried to get in touch with his daughter, Lotus. It seems that she was on her way to London to see her father—but she has vanished into thin air and there are certain clues that point to kidnapping!"

"I wish I could come with you, Dad!"

"No can do, son!" Inspector Harley picked up the ivory mandarin, and looked at it thoughtfully. "You know—I've got a hunch that this little ivory image could tell us a whole lot, if only it could speak. There's some mystery behind all this—and the secret is hidden in the Ivory Mandarin!"

Next week—The Professor strikes, and Bob Harley goes on a thrilling chase across London on the trail of the ivory mandarin!

CHUCKLE TIME - Some jokes to keep you laughing!



TOUGH TEX



OLD DAN BINKS WAS BEHIND WITH HIS RENT - AND HIS "SCREWMATICS" WERE SO BAD HE COULDN'T GET HIS SPUDS DUG READY FOR MARKET.

NOT TO WORRY, DAN - LEAVE IT TO TEX.



NOW DIGGING IS ONE OF THE THINGS I'M REALLY GOOD AT!



TEN MINUTES LATER.



ALL OF A SUDDEN SOMETHING SHOT OUT OF THE GROUND - AND SHOT TEX WITH IT.

YIPPEE! I'VE STRUCK OIL!



HM! IT OUGHT TO BE CORKED - BEFORE IT ALL GOES TO WASTE!



THIS OAK TREE WILL BE OAKY DOKE!



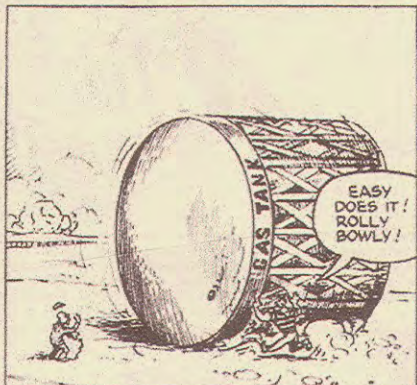
THAT'S CORKED IT TILL I CAN FIND SOMETHING TO STORE THE OIL IN!



SO TEX WENT TO THE VILLAGE...



NOW THERE'S A NICE BIG TANK! JUST THE JOB FOR THIS LITTLE JOB!



NEXTLY A CHUNK OF PIPE - THIS LAMP-POST SHOULD DO THE TRICK!



ALL WORKING FINE AND DANDY. YOU'RE RICH, DAN - YOU'VE GOT AN OIL-WELL OF YOUR VERY OWN!



SO DAN BINKS COULD PAY HIS RENT AFTER ALL.



Next week Tex invents some tooth-proof trousers! Don't miss the laughs!

COMET—May 10, 1952—9

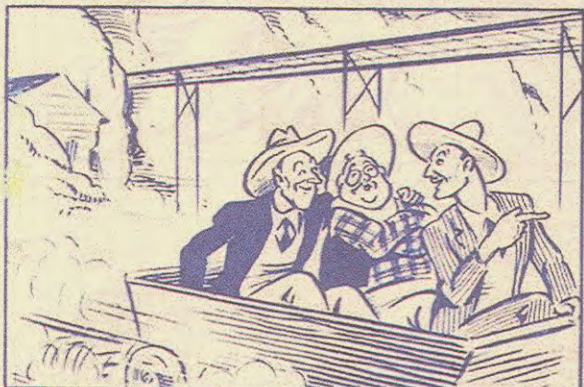
BILLY BUNTER OUT WEST



Back in England all the people who lived anywhere near Greyfriars School knew all about Billy Bunter, and were wise to all the tricks he got up to in his search for free grub. But now that the boys had come out West for a visit to Pinto Valley High School, Billy was getting up to all his old tricks again. The cowboy folk hadn't learned yet that Billy wasn't to be trusted where grub was concerned.



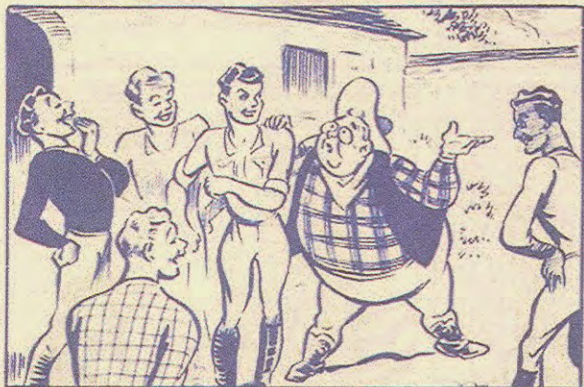
One day Billy went into Hobson's eating parlour and ordered himself a tasty meal. But when the time came for paying Billy had no money. "It's quite all right, though," he said grandly. "My rich uncle in England, Lord Vere de Vere Bunter—is sending me a cheque. I'll settle at the end of the week!" But two slick strangers were listening—and, to Bunter's delight, they offered to pay his bill.



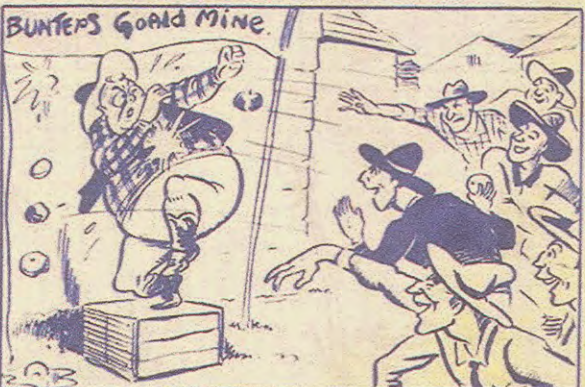
When the two strangers offered to lend Bunter some money—"just to tide him over," Bunter was overjoyed. Just the sort of people he had always wanted to meet. Actually, these two men were confidence tricksters who had heard that some of the British boys were very wealthy, and were out to try to swindle them. Bunter was very flattered when they asked him if he'd like to buy a gold mine.



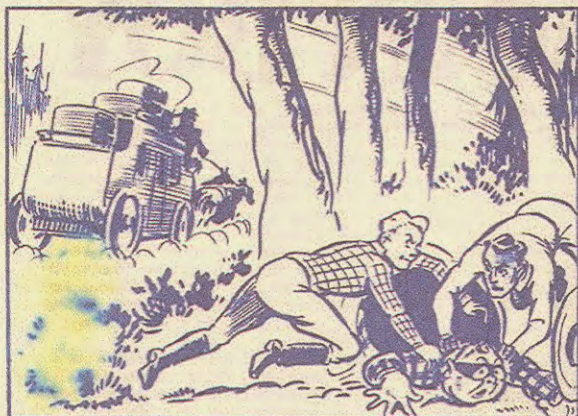
They took him along to see it. "Only ten thousand dollars!" they told him. They showed him a pile of glittering stuff which they said was gold dust out of the mine. Of course, it was nothing of the sort, but Bunter was very impressed. However, he didn't want them to know that he hadn't two pennies to rub together, and so he acted as though he bought gold mines every day of the week.



Well, Bunter saw all those piles of "gold dust" and they looked worth a lot more than ten thousand dollars to him. "What a couple of chumps they are!" thought Bunter to himself. So back he went to school, determined to raise the money. "I say, you chaps!" he squeaked, "if we all club together and raise ten thousand dollars, we'll all make a fortune!" But the other boys just roared with laughter.



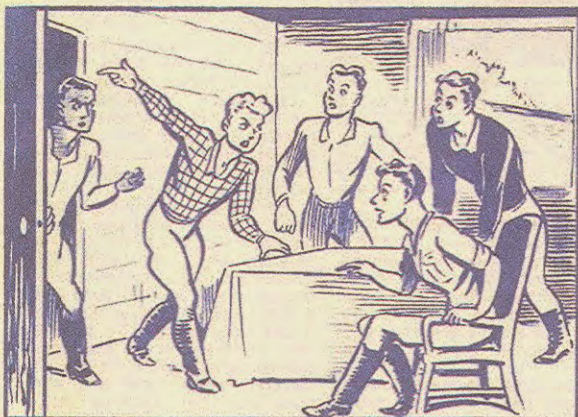
Bunter was cross. "Some fellows just don't appreciate a chap trying to do them a good turn!" he muttered. So down he went to the local cow-town to see if he could have better luck there. He set up a banner: "Invest here and make your fortune—Bunter's Gould Mine." But nobody wanted to invest so much as a cent. In fact, they thought Bunter was a trickster, and pelted him with rotten fruit.



The day wore on and still Bunter was no nearer to his ten thousand dollars. So he decided on desperate measures. He sneaked into the cow-hands' bunk-house while they were out and borrowed a pair of six-guns. Then he made a mask, and set out to hold up the stage-coach. "I'll pay back the money when my gold mine is working!" he told himself. But Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh had seen him.



Luckily for Bunter, they pounced on him before he got a chance to work his mad scheme. "What on earth are you up to?" cried Bob. "Beasts!" yelled Bunter. "Now I'll never be able to buy that gold mine!" "Gosh! The old fat walrus really means it!" gasped Bob. And then they got the whole story out of Bunter. "Corge on, Inky!" snapped Bob. "That mine wants looking into. I think it's a swizz!"



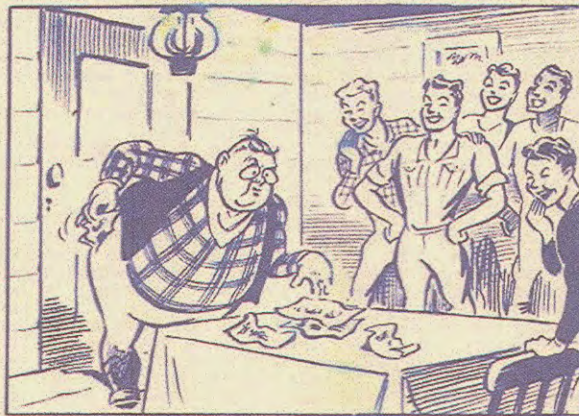
But there really was a gold mine, as they soon found when they rode out to the place. The mystery was deepening. Back they went to school and told Harry Wharton about it. Harry frowned. "I think we'd better tell Quelch about this!" he decided, "or Bunter may be getting himself into really serious trouble. After all—who'd try to sell a gold mine to a schoolboy. It all sounds jolly fishy to me!"



So they reported the whole matter. Mr. Quelch set out at once to investigate, and took Hank, an old prospector who lived near the school, along with him. "Doggone it!" snorted old Hank, when he saw the place. "That's the old Last Chance mine. Every speck o' gold was dug out o' there years ago. As for this here gold dust—it ain't worth a dime. Iron pyrites—that's what it is. Fools' gold, we call it!"



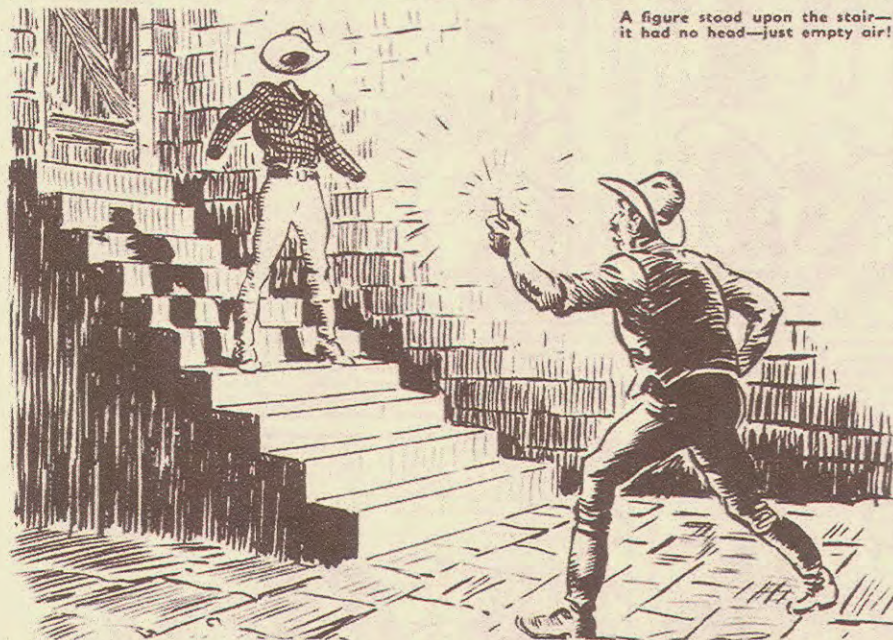
"Bunter, you miserable boy!" said Mr. Quelch when he returned, "you may consider yourself very lucky that you are not in serious trouble. Where can we find these tricksters?" "Pup-please sir," squeaked Bunter, "the beasts said they'd meet me in Mobson's parlour!" Mr. Quelch turned to the other boys. "You heard what Bunter said, lads. I think I may leave you to deal with these villains!"



And deal with them they did! They chased them out of town and made them wish they'd never seen Bunter. As for Billy, he never knows when he's well off. "Just think!" he groused, "if those beasts hadn't been so dishonest, I should be a millionaire now. As it is, all I've got is a mouldy five dollars!" "Never mind!" laughed Bob Cherry, "there's enough to buy us all doughnuts. Come on—it's your treat!"

Poor Bunter! We bet it hurt him to pay up for once! Don't miss the fun and chuckles next week!

MICK THE MOON BOY



A figure stood upon the stair—
it had no head—just empty air!

"It looks as though we're going to have a quiet night for once, so what about bed?" said Mick the Moon Boy.

"Yeah, I can sure do with some shut-eye," agreed his twelve-year-old pal Hank Luckner, yawning. "C'mon, let's get the supper things washed up, then we'll hit the hay!"

Mick, a handsome sixteen-year-old boy was Sheriff of the tough little township of Indian Bend and Hank was his deputy. But not a soul in the world except Hank knew that Mick was not an ordinary boy but was from the Moon.

Mick had landed on the Earth in a Flying Saucer which had crashed near a lonely little shack where Hank had lived with his grown-up sister and Grandma in the Arkansas hills.

The two boys had chummed up and by a queer series of events Mick had become sheriff of Indian Bend. For he looked exactly like an Earth boy except for his eyes, which were a strange, luminous green in colour. They were big as well, and almond-shaped and always reminded Hank of the eyes of a mountain lion or of one of the other big cats.

"Yeah, it'll be mighty nice to have a peaceful night an' git some real good sleep," said Hank, as he and Mick washed up the supper dishes in the little kitchen-living room behind the sheriff's office. "Reckon we haven't had much since you started in to clean-up this town."

Abruptly he broke off as there came a sudden thunderous

knocking at the outer door of the office. Mick looked at him and laughed.

"Did you say a peaceful night?" he said. "That banging on the door sounds to me like trouble."

He threw aside the cloth with which he'd been drying the dishes and went across the office and unfastened and opened the outer door. Standing there was a man whom Mick recognised as Ben Hogan, a white-haired old-timer who had once been a prospector, but who now lived by himself in a little cabin at the end of the town.

"I've bin robbed!" burst out Ben breathlessly. "Some low-down skunk broke into mah cabin tonight when I was out an' he's hooked ev'ry bit o' mah gold. I've jus' found out an' I've come straight to you!"

"All right, Ben, come in!" said Mick.

Hank had switched on the light in the little office. Ben strode in, his chest heaving, for he'd been running. His faded blue eyes were furious. Mick closed the door and turned to him. "Let's have the story!" he said.

"It's easy told," said Ben, his voice trembling. "I went out for an hour to see o' Jake Peters like I do most ev'ry night. He's sick an' bed-ridden, as maybe you know. When I got back the door o' mah cabin had bin busted in an' the whole place was upside down and mah gold gone. I had it hid under a floorboard."

"Was it gold coins?" asked Mick.

"Nossir, it was gold dust," replied the old-timer. "I had it in three small tins hid under a floorboard. Folks might reckon I'm kinda old-fashioned, but I don't trust them banks not no-how. I've always kept mah gold at home. I figgered it was safer."

Mick could have pointed out that old Ben knew now that it wasn't safer, but he didn't. What he said was:

"Do you suspect anybody, Ben?"

"No, I don't," confessed Ben. "Cept that it must hev bin somebody what knowed I had the gold in the cabin. But jus' how they knowed that I can't think. I ain't never talked about it."

"No, but do you ever change any of this gold dust for money?" asked Mick.

"Yessir, now an' agin I take some of it along to the bank an' git dollars for it," said Ben.

"Then you've either been watched, or somebody at the bank has talked," said Mick. "That's quite plain. And you must have been watched tonight, as well. The thief—or thieves—must have watched you go along to Jake Peter's cabin and then broken in. You were away about an hour, you say?"

"Yeah, no more'n an hour," said Ben. "They worked mighty fast, them skunks."

"Righto, we'll go along and have a look at your cabin," said Mick.

He and Hank put on their hats and set off with Ben for the cabin. No one but Hank knew that beneath his check

shirt and pants Mick was wearing, as he always did, the tightly-fitting, one-piece green suit of flexible metal in which he had arrived from the Moon.

They reached the little cabin and a sorry mess it was in. Drawers had been pulled out and their contents strewn about the floor. Even the food cupboard had been ransacked and tins, flour, bread, bacon and other eatables flung on to the floor.

An old-fashioned sofa and the one easy chair which old Ben possessed had been ripped open and the stuffing pulled out and flung on to the floor by the robber in his search for the gold.

Near the stove a floorboard had been pulled up and thrown aside, revealing a now empty cavity. When he had surveyed the scene with his strange green eyes, Mick said:

"He didn't have to hunt for the gold, Ben. He knew where you had it hidden all right."

"Howcome?" demanded the old man. "If he knowed that whaffor he went through the drawers an' cupboard and ripped open the sofa an' chair like what he's done?"

"That was just a blind," said Mick. "There's only one floorboard torn up and that's the one beneath which the gold was hidden. I don't know how many boards you have in the floor and I'm not going to count 'em, but it certainly wasn't by chance that the thief hit on the right one straight away. If he'd been cleverer—or if he'd had the time—he'd have torn up more than one floorboard instead of just shifting the right one."

"I git you," said Ben, scratching his head. "An' you're right, o' course. The skunk must've knowed jus' where I had the tins hid."

"Which could narrow the search for him down to visitors you've had at the cabin," said Mick. "Do you have many visitors, Ben?"

"Not many," said Ben. "An' them what I do have are pards o' mine. They ain't took the dust. I'll stake mah life on that."

"Name them, anyway," said Mick.

Ben did so reluctantly, naming three or four men of about his own age whom both Mick and Hank knew to be decent, honest citizens. It seemed to Hank that Mick wasn't really listening to the names. The Moon Boy was strolling slowly about the cabin, his hands in his pockets.

"Okay, Ben, it wasn't any of the men you've named," he said when the old man had finished. "It was a much younger man, I'd say."

"How'd you figger that out?" demanded Ben. "That it's a younger feller?"

"I've just got a hunch, that's

HE KNOWS WHO TO LOOK FOR AFTER JUST ONE LOOK AROUND THE SHACK!

all," said Mick. "Have you had any younger man visit you than your old-timer pals?"

"No, not that I can remember," said Ben, wrinkling his brown, lined face in thought. "Nossir, I can't think of one."

"It doesn't matter," said Mick. "You get the place set to rights and I'll go and pick up the thief."

"D'you mean you know who he is?" demanded Ben, staring.

"No, I don't know who he is, but it's not going to take me long to find him," said Mick.

"I'll get him, Ben, and I'll get your gold dust, as well!"

Leaving the old man to clean up the mess in the cabin, he and Hank set off back along Main Street, Mick strolling leisurely along as though he had nothing on his mind at all.

"You gotta clue?" demanded Hank.

"I have and a very good one, too," chuckled Mick. He halted outside the Dead Dog Saloon. "I'm going in here," he said. "You get along to the office and wait for me there."

"You reckon the robber's in there?" demanded Hank, as the Moon Boy moved towards the swing doors of the saloon.

"He might be," said Mick. "He's as likely to be in here as anywhere."

"Yeah, but what clue have you got?" demanded Hank in a guarded voice.

"I'll tell you that later," laughed Mick. "Now you get along to the office."

His twelve-year-old deputy trudged obediently away in the direction of the office and Mick strolled into the saloon. It was a big, garishly-lighted place and had been one of the toughest spots in town before he and Hank had started cleaning up the place.

The place was crowded, but when Mick strolled in there was a sudden silence and every eye was turned on him.

"Evening, folks!" he said pleasantly.

Some of the better citizens returned his greeting. Others, including the gamblers and gunmen, scowled at him. They didn't like this boy sheriff. He was too hot for them and they were heartily wishing that he and his skinny little kid of a deputy would get out of Indian Bend altogether.

As Mick strolled to the crowded bar counter, Fats Greek, the big, fat owner of the joint, stared at him suspiciously with cold little eyes.

"You wanting anything?" he demanded.

"No, I'm just taking a look round," said Mick pleasantly.

Fats Greek scowled. He couldn't stop the boy sheriff taking a look round. As upholder of the law in Indian Bend, Mick was quite entitled to take a look round whenever he wanted to. But Fats Greek simply hated him, for Mick had already run some of the scoundrel's best customers out of town. The gamblers had returned to

their card playing, but they continued to keep wary and hostile eyes on Mick as he moved slowly along the crowded bar, pausing now and again for a word with the better folk in the place who liked him and admired him.

He halted at length at a card table where four men were playing. Their names were Faro Pete, Jake Waters, Dave the Dude and Ike Hatt. They were four of the most notorious gamblers in Indian Bend and always played for high stakes.

Faro Pete, a thin, swarthy-faced man, looked up and scowled across the table at Mick as the Moon Boy halted behind Dave the Dude's chair.

"Ain't it past your bedtime?" he sneered.

"It is," agreed Mick pleasantly, "but you gents keep me up."

"There ain't no need," said Faro Pete harshly. "So on your way!"

He gathered up the five cards which Dave the Dude had just dealt him. As he examined them, the backs of the cards to everyone but himself, Mick said pleasantly:

"Two aces, a Queen, a Jack and the ten of hearts."

With an oath, Faro Pete flung down his cards and leapt to his feet.

"How in thunder did you know that?" he snarled.

The other three players and the onlookers gathered around the table were staring at Mick in blank astonishment, for it had been absolutely impossible for the Moon Boy to have seen the faces of the cards.

"How didja know, cuss you?" shouted Faro Pete, his face twisted with fury.

"Perhaps I guessed," said Mick, smiling. "I'm a pretty good guesser."

He nodded and moved away. The gamblers and the spectators stared after him.

"Times are when I think that sassy kid ain't hardly human!" snarled Faro Pete. "How in thunder could he see my cards when he was standin' there right across the table from me?"

But that was a question none could answer. They did not know that the secret of mind reading had been discovered ages ago on the Moon and that it had been a most simple thing for Mick to read Faro Pete's mind as the gambler concentrated on his cards and thought to himself just what he held in his hand—two aces, a Queen, a Jack and the ten of hearts.

Leaving the whole bunch of them glaring after him, Mick strolled out of the saloon and along Main Street to the office where Hank was waiting for him.

"Well, I've spotted the thief," he said, beginning to strip off his shirt and pants. "At least, I'm almost certain I have. I'm going to check up on it."

"But who is he and how did you find him?" cried Hank, as Mick stood revealed in his skin-

tight, one-piece green suit of flexible metal.

"I'll tell you that later," chuckled Mick, strapping a little oblong green box on his chest and then pulling on a tightly-fitting green helmet made of the same material as his suit. "At the moment this is where I do the disappearing act."

He touched a tiny button on the box he had fixed to his chest. As he did so he suddenly and completely vanished. Hank wasn't a bit surprised. He had seen the Moon Boy do this before and he knew that the power to make oneself invisible was just another of the amazing scientific marvels long ago discovered by the Moon Men.

"Are you still around?" he demanded.

The only answer was the opening and closing of the outer door and he knew that the Moon Boy had gone. Returning along Main Street to the Dead Dog Saloon, the invisible Mick slipped in through the swing doors. The scene was the same as when he had left it except that the place was less crowded now, for the hour was late.

Faro Pete, Dave the Dude and the other two gamblers were still sitting playing cards. Mick watched from a corner until the game broke up and the four men rose from the table.

Mick the moon-boy was close behind Dave the Dude as he came out of the bar-room. He watched him closely as he stood thinking for a moment in the hall-way. Then Dave turned, and rather to Mick's surprise, made for the cellars of the Dead Dog Saloon, instead of going upstairs to his room.

Mick followed close behind the gambler as he went downstairs. He saw him strike a match and light a candle. Then he stooped down, and lifted out a loose block in the wall. From a hollow space behind he brought out three small, rusted tins.

Mick grinned to himself, and then got busy. One by one, he drew his clothes, which he had carried tucked inside his green metal suit, on to his invisible body, all without making a sound. Then he took a deep breath, and spoke in a hollow voice:

"Ben Hogan's Gold!"

Dave spun around, and gasped. There, on the stairs, was a figure without head or hands! Then he gasped again, for the figure pulled off his hat, and then his shirt, and then his trousers, until finally there was nothing left but the sound of a mocking laugh.

The Gambler was terrified.

"I'm coming for you, Dave!" said Mick's hollow voice.

In that same instant something like the kick of a mule hit the petrified gambler such a smash under the jaw that it lifted him clean off his feet and sent him with a crash to the floor, knocked out to the wide.

It was Mick who had hit him.

for the slimy-built Moon Boy had steel-like strength in his limbs and muscles. What was more his clenched fist, which had smashed to the gambler's jaw, was gloved in the green flexible metal of which his suit and helmet were made.

It was the work of a few moments for him to gag and truss the knocked-out gambler hand and foot. He picked up the three tins of gold dust, which had fallen to the floor, and shoved them back out of sight behind the stone. He did not trouble to examine the tins. He knew what was in them and that was Ben Hogan's gold dust.

Leaving Dave the Dude lying trussed and gagged on the floor, Mick quitted the cellar and locked the door behind him. Silently and invisibly he went swiftly upstairs and out into the night again.

"We've got him!" he said to Hank, when he had reached the sheriff's office. "Come on, we'll go and pick him up officially!"

"Yeah, but who is he and where is he?" cried Hank, as Mick made himself visible again and commenced to pull on his shirt, pants and boots over his one-piece suit. "Why don't you tell me?"

"Because I haven't had time yet," chuckled Mick. "Come on, let's go!"

Back to the saloon he went, Hank with him. But this time Mick was the visible and lawful sheriff of Indian Bend.

"You again!" growled Fats Greek, as the boy sheriff and his young deputy strode in. "You oughter come and live here. What'd you want this time?"

"Dave the Dude!" replied Mick pleasantly. "I want him for robbery along at Ben Hogan's cabin tonight."

"You're clean crazy!" shouted Fats Greek. "Dave ain't been outa here all night!"

"Don't you try to protect him by lying, or I'll run you in too," said Mick.

He went downstairs followed by Hank and a crowd of excited patrons of the joint. And there was Dave the Dude lying trussed and gagged as Mick had left him, but he had come round by now and was writhing and squirming in his bonds.

"Old Ben will identify these tins," said Mick, pulling them out from behind the stone. "Dave stole them from Ben's cabin tonight and now I'm taking him along to the lock-up."

He did too and not one of the frantic gambler's friends dare raise a finger to help the prisoner, for his guilt was plain.

"But how did you get on to him?" demanded Hank, when he and Mick were alone and the prisoner was in the cells.

"Quite easily!" chuckled Mick. "You know that we Moon folks have sight and hearing as keen as any of your jungle animals. Keener, in fact. We also have the sense of smell most highly developed. Along

(Continued on page 18)

KIT CARSON TAKES THE WAR PATH!

THE MOHAWK AND THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS ARE ON THE WARPATH. KIT CARSON HAS A SECRET LETTER, WHICH HE MUST CARRY FROM FORT FRIENDLY TO FORT FOREMOST, THROUGH COUNTRY WHICH TEEMS WITH HOSTILE BRAVES. ACCOMPANIED BY POSSUM, HIS INDIAN FRIEND, HE SHOOTS THE RAPIDS OF THE BLACK ADDER RIVER. BUT ENEMY INDIANS, LED BY DUCLOS, A RASCALLY HALF-BREED TRADER, ARE ON HIS TRAIL.

POSSUM KNOWS ONLY WAY TO CLEAR ROCKS!

I GET IT NOW, I THOUGHT YOU WERE CRAZY WHEN YOU STARTED THAT HIGH DIVE!

MADE IT, BY GOLLY! AND HERE COMES THAT WAR-CANOE, HOT ON OUR TRAIL!

EET THEY CAN SHOOT ZE RAPIDS, WE CAN! FOLLOW! WE NEAKY CATCH ZEM!

BUT THE BRAVES DON'T KNOW THE SECRET OF HOW TO SHOOT THE BLACK-ADDER RAPIDS!

AAAAGH!

AIEE! WE SMASH! HELP!

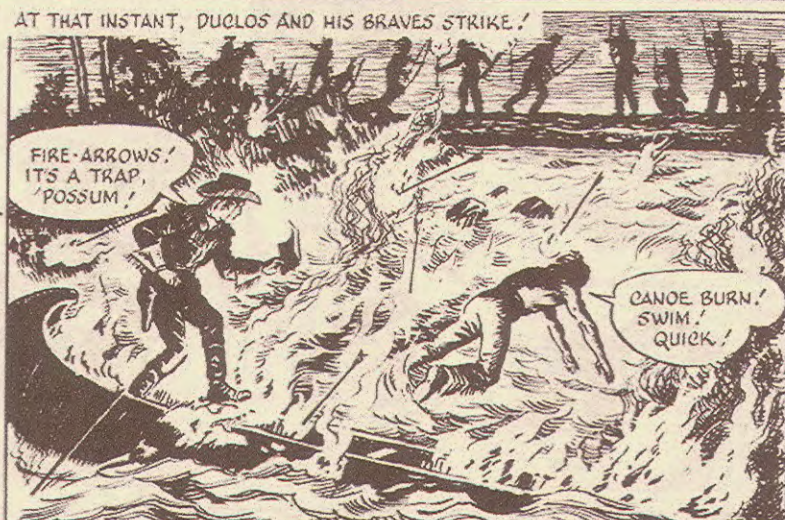
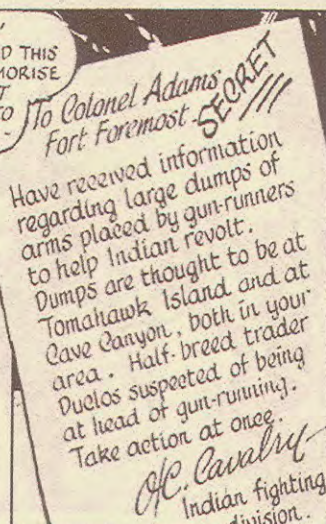
DUCLOS BATTLES HIS WAY TO THE SHORE --

SAFE! BUT WAIT TILL I -- GET MY HANDS ON KIT CARSON -- HE WEEL WEESH HE HAD NEVER BEEN BORN!

QUEEK! CARSON MUST BE STOPPED! LAY A TRAP FOR ZEM FURTHER DOWN-RIVER!

WE GO! YOU TAKE THIS HORSE!

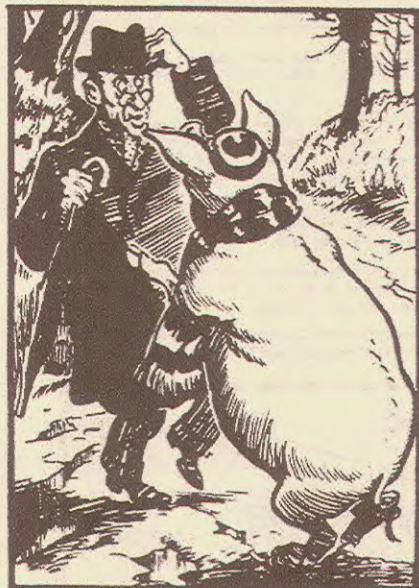
BUT CAN HE GET OUT OF THE TRAP ON TOMAHAWK ISLAND?





Next week--The secret of Tomahawk Island!

DR. GRUNTER'S ZOO SCHOOL



The shock dad got was very big. It seemed his son was now a pig!

MR. TWEEDS MEETS HIS SON

"HERE'S a pretty kettle of fish!" cried Dr. Grunter, the polar bear, furiously. It was early morning, and the doctor had just opened his mail. "Why, what's happened now?" cried Mr. Dripp, the turtle, in alarm.

"The father of that wretched boy Tweeds has just written to me to say that he's coming here today to see him!" roared Dr. Grunter. "If he comes he'll see that we've all been changed into birds and animals, and goodness knows what will happen!"

Dr. Grunter hadn't always been a polar bear. Nor had Mr. Dripp always been a turtle. Only a short time ago they had been two ordinary schoolmasters in charge of a party of boys who had come to Meadowsweet Farm to help Farmer Whipstraw.

But one morning the whole lot of them had eaten something for breakfast which had given them the most awful tummy aches. So Dr. Grunter had sent for Doctor Dozey, the village doctor.

Now Doctor Dozey was so absent-minded that instead of giving Dr. Grunter and the rest of the party a dose of medicine, he got the bottles mixed up and gave them a dose of a wonderful liquid which he had invented for changing people into birds and animals. In a flash, the whole bunch of them had been changed into the strangest collection of birds and animals you ever saw.

The fat and pompous Dr. Grunter had been changed into a savage-looking polar bear,

whilst the skinny Mr. Dripp had been changed into a mournful-looking turtle.

"Ever since the day that blundering idiot Dozey changed us all into animals I have insisted upon the whole thing being kept a dead secret," snarled Dr. Grunter. "I have forbidden any boy to mention it in his letters home. If anything leaks out, not only will we be the laughing stock of every school in the country, but there will be the most terrible trouble with the boys' parents. And now this wretched Mr. Tweeds says he is coming down to see his son."

"Can't you head him off—send him a telegram or something?" suggested Mr. Dripp.

"No, I can't!" snarled Dr. Grunter. "He's on his way here now, according to his letter. He says he is leaving town on the nine-thirty train, arriving here at midday. It's half-past ten now!"

"Oh dear, that's bad!" said Mr. Dripp helplessly.

"It's worse than that!" snarled Dr. Grunter.

Grinding his great long yellow fangs with mingled rage and perplexity, he took a turn up the floor of the hut in which he and Mr. Dripp were talking. Then suddenly he wheeled on Mr. Dripp again.

"I've got it!" he burst out. "I know what we'll do. We'll take every boy off into the woods for the day. I'll tell that intelligent farmhand, Alf, who drives the tractor, to keep a lookout for Mr. Tweeds. When he arrives at the farm, Alf will tell him that we've gone off on a ramble and won't be back until tomorrow."

"But what if Mr. Tweeds decides to wait until tomorrow?" inquired Mr. Dripp. "I mean, what if he decides to stay all night at the farmhouse or somewhere?"

Dr. Grunter gnashed his great yellow fangs with fury.

"We'll have to risk that!" he snarled. "I'll arrange with Alf to keep in touch with me and to let me know what this wretched man Tweeds's movements are. Now go and tell the boys to get ready to move off into the woods. They had better

take enough food with them for a good meal. Basil Bulstrode the elephant, Horace Hake the donkey, Clarence Cribb the camel, and Harold Hopper the hippopotamus, can carry most of the stuff. Tell Bulstrode to call here and collect a hamper of raw fish for me!"

"Very well," said Mr. Dripp, and waddled away on his hind legs to carry out his orders.

The boys—or, rather the animals—didn't at all mind having a day in the woods. All that is, except Tubby Tweeds, who had been changed into a pig. For when Mr. Dripp told him to get ready, Tubby cried: "I can't go, sir. My father's coming to see me today!"

"Your—your father?" stammered Mr. Dripp. "How do you know?"

"Because he's jolly well written and told me so!" cried Tubby. "He's arriving on the midday train!"

"That's just why we are going off into the woods, Tweeds," explained Mr. Dripp, thinking that he had better make a clean breast of it. "As you know, Dr. Grunter is determined to keep what has happened to us a dead secret until Doctor Dozey can find something to change us all back again into our proper selves. Now get ready to go!"

"Shan't!" thought Tubby as Mr. Dripp shuffled away.

Waiting until Mr. Dripp had gone into another hut, Tubby sneaked out of his own and scuttled away towards the hedge as fast as ever his fat little legs could carry him.

He was going to see his Poppa in spite of old Grunter and silly old Dripp, he told himself. Poppa would engage a good doctor. Poppa would do something. Poppa wouldn't let him stay as a great fat pig until that fat-headed old Dozey could find some stuff to change them all into their proper selves.

But Tubby was too fly to go to the station to meet Poppa. If old Grunter missed him from the camp, as he was almost bound to do, he might go charging along to the station in search of him. So Tubby decided that he would lurk in the hedge somewhere along the road and wait for Poppa to come along.

Meanwhile, Mr. Tweeds was being borne towards his destination. He was a plump, mild-mannered little gentleman. He hadn't been very well lately. His doctor said that he had been working too hard and that it had brought on what people call a nervous breakdown.

Mr. Tweeds reckoned that the doctor was most likely right. He had been imagining all sorts of queer things lately. For instance, one day he had been quite certain that his head clerk was making faces at him,

which was silly, because his head clerk had worked for him for twenty years and wouldn't dream of such a thing.

Anyway, Mr. Tweeds had been forced to take a holiday from the office, and he was beginning to feel better already. He fancied that a day in the country would do him good, and that was why he was coming to see Tubby—or William, as that fat youth was fondly known to the family.

The train drew up at a little wayside halt a mile and a half from Meadowsweet Farm and Mr. Tweeds alighted. Having given up his ticket and inquired the way to the farm, he set off along the quiet country road.

"Ah, delightful—delightful!" he murmured, sniffing the clean sweet air of the countryside. "I feel a lot better already. No more of those silly foolish fancies bothering me—"

Abruptly he broke off, halting dead in his tracks and staring pop-eyed at a big fat pig which had suddenly stepped from the hedge, walking on its hind legs.

"Hallo, father!" said the pig, with what was undoubtedly meant as a smile of greeting.

Mr. Tweeds's mouth opened, but no words came.

"Don't you know me, father?" said the pig, advancing towards him on its hind legs. "I'm your son, Willie!"

With a strangled howl, Mr. Tweeds turned and fled. Cramming his hat firmly down on his head, he ran as he had never run in his life before. So much for thinking he had rid himself of his horrid fancies. He was worse—very much worse. For had he not just imagined that a big fat pig had said good morning to him and said that it was his son William?

To make matters worse, the horrid phantom was rushing along in pursuit of him. The horrified Mr. Tweeds could hear it bawling:

"Stop, father! Hi, father! I'm Willie, father! Stop, father!"

But Mr. Tweeds didn't stop. He redoubled his pace instead. He could see an up-train to town clanking into the wayside halt. Could he catch it? He must! He must get back to town and see his doctor immediately. Breathlessly he rushed through the barrier and hurled himself into the nearest compartment just as the train was moving out. And as he collapsed on the seat he heard—oh, how he heard—that dreadful pig bawl: "Well, that's a dirty trick, father!"

Then the train gathered speed, bearing the trembling Mr. Tweeds safely away from the scene of his very great fright. Next week: The "donkey-school-boy" does a real donkey a good turn! Don't miss the merry adventures he has!

OUR ENGINE-SPOTTERS CLUB

HERE'S your C.E.S.C. page again with another long list of Club numbers. Look and see if yours—the one that's printed on the back page of your Club Album—is among them. If it is, there's a fine present waiting for you!

196,782	52,174	121,851	17,931	88,952
46,731	182,919	867	187,118	90,642
7,437	44,773	62,811	178,114	132,845
112,621	67,119	79,565	20,964	162,349
82,734	152,849	194,896	128,471	1,643
150,621	12,941	64,199	160,675	110,608
113,622	108,096	186,575	14,141	135,955
39,414	126,859	125,956	72,962	92,934
93,663	69,563	25,919	191,561	140,615
23,463	159,914	146,757	48,941	56,895
130,186	42,813	164,962	18,669	78,916
37,952	28,815	32,835	176,184	115,768
161,620	119,126	154,849	138,861	63,962
144,693	77,137	84,946	50,984	41,921
58,915	56,181	165,176	174,986	156,914
106,005	198,155	103,176	97,653	71,142
16,974	60,199	168,567	166,918	129,672
123,851	74,918	30,919	117,983	27,915
157,116	189,164	99,932	100,864	7,680
7,161	10,866	163,918	5,157	47,835

**ARE YOU A
NEW READER?**

Then Here's How to join the
C.E.S.C.

If you have not yet joined our grand new Club, all you have to do is write to us on a piece of paper saying, "Please make me a member of the C.E.S.C.," adding your full name and address. Then pin two 2¢ stamps to the paper and enclose it in an envelope and post to the Club address (given above). The Engine Spotters' Album with your Club number printed on it and lots of interesting things inside will then be sent to you post free. Once you're a member, you too can watch our Club Corner and, of course, watch for your number to appear.

MICK THE MOON BOY

at the cabin tonight I smelt a faint flowery sort of scent. It was much too weak for you and Ben to smell, but it had been left by the robber, which showed me that he either used scent or hair oil."

"Which is why you told old Ben that you reckoned it was a young man who'd done the job?" cut in Hank.

"Exactly!" agreed Mick. "Old timers don't use that sort of stuff. So all I had to do was to find a man with the smell of that particular scent about him and the chances were that he was the thief. I checked up on a few toughs in the saloon before I came to Dave the Dude. He was using a hair oil with the very same scent that I'd smelt in the cabin. After that it was easy. I just trailed him and, like all crooks, he couldn't help gloating over his loot. I watched him pull it out from behind the stone. I had him then, of course."

"I'll say you had!" said Hank admiringly. "Gosh snakes, I gotta hand it to you, Mick, you're a real wonder!"

Don't miss the fun and thrills
next week.

THE WHEEZES OF WILLIE WIZZARD (Continued from page 5)

"Hoi!" shouted Mr. Smack-enwhacker to Dr. Gandybar. "You want to get some zebra crossings around here." He struggled to his feet, and helped the Janitor and the Judge. "Oops-a-daisy," he said as he yanked them upright.

"Outrageous!" cried the Judge, struggling with his hat.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Mr. Smackenwhacker. "I haven't enjoyed myself so much since Grandad gave me a ride in his horseless carriage in 1895. Allow me to help you, sir." He went to the aid of the struggling Inspector. He tried to jerk his hat up, but as it wouldn't budge he pressed it down. The Inspector's head went clean through, and the hat sat on his shoulders.

"Who invented this wonderful machine; and how does it work?" asked Mr. Smack-whacker, setting the chair upright again.

"I invented it," said Willie Wizzard, coming forward timidly. It's the Wizzard Jet-engined Arm-chair. You press

"Wonderful," exclaimed the

Well, did you spot it? If so, then this is what to do:

First choose the present you would like from the following:

A Cowboy Belt and Holster, Box Game, Charm-Bracelet, Wrist Compass, Jack-Knife, Autograph Album, Ball-point Pen, or a Water Pistol.

Then write the name of the present chosen in the space marked "For Official Use" in your Album. Next, on a piece of paper, name the character, story or picture story you like best in COMET—and add a few words saying *why*. Pop both piece of paper and Album in an envelope and post to the Club address:

COMET E.S. Club, 5 Carmelite Street, London E.C.4 (Comp.)
—to arrive not later than Friday, May 16th.

Before posting don't forget to make sure that your full name and address are filled in on the Membership page of the Album. Then stamp the envelope with a 24d. stamp and post at once!

(N.B.—No claims received after the Closing Date or for wrong numbers or without the Club Album enclosed will be recognised.)

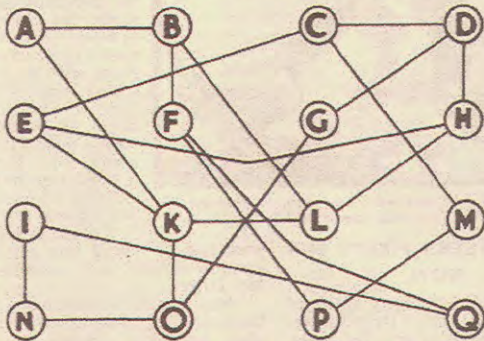
CLUB CORNER

RAILWAY QUIZ No. 5

In a certain part of England there were 16 towns which were joined together by a rather unusual railway. Here is a map of these towns and the railways.

A traveller was told to visit each of these towns, starting at A and ending at Q. He had to go to all 16 towns, but to save unnecessary expense he could only go to each town once. There are three ways that he could have done this. Can you find them all?

Solution at foot of page.



little judge, dropping on his hands and knees to have a proper look. Mr. Smackenwhacker did the same. They looked at the fan and at the narrow jet-exhaust. "Marvelous!" they both exclaimed.

"This invention will certainly win a prize," declared the judge. "We must get it away to London at once, so that it can take part in the finals," he added.

"What do you mean?" demanded Mr. Smackenwhacke, still on his hands and knees, and looking like a big black dog. "This is my chair. It was given to me as a present by the school as soon as I arrived. It is the very thing I need to carry me round my vast playground!"

"Just a minute," put in Dr. Gandybar, whose corns were still smarting as a result of the long walk from the station. "It is *my* chair, out of *my* hospital, and made by one of *my* boys. I want it to carry *me* round the vast playground of *this* school. Besides Willie would like me to have it. Wouldn't you, Willie?"

"Well, sir—1—" began Willie.
 "Wouldn't you?" demanded
 Dr. Gandybar, with an ugly

could have been one of these three:
 SOLUTION TO PUZZLE: His route
 A-B-F-P-M-C-E-K-L-H-D-G-O-N-I-Q
 A-K-E-C-M-P-F-B-L-H-D-G-O-N-I-Q
 A-K-L-B-F-P-M-C-E-H-D-G-O-N-I-Q

gleam in his eye. "Perhaps we should talk it over—in my study."

"Oh no," said Willie hastily. "You may have it, Dr. Gandybar. I can make another for the competition."

"Thank you," said Dr. Gandybar, sinking gratefully into the chair. "I shall now proceed to the school entrance. You others may follow me at your leisure—on foot."

He pressed the button and the "swoosh" from the exhaust blew Mr. Smackenwhacker's false teeth halfway down his throat. The Inspector, with his hat brim dangling round his neck, patted the choking Headmaster on the back.

"Oh dear," sighed Mr. Half-spun, looking longingly after the departing chair. "My poor feet hurt. I wish I had one of those chairs. He'll be at the school entrance in no time. Look at the speed he's going."

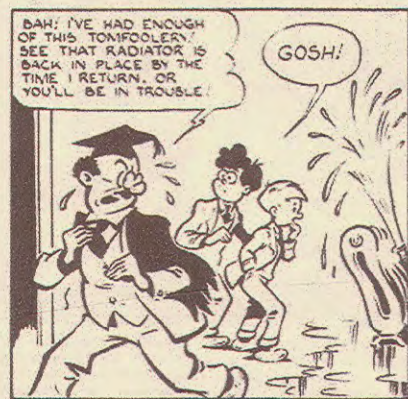
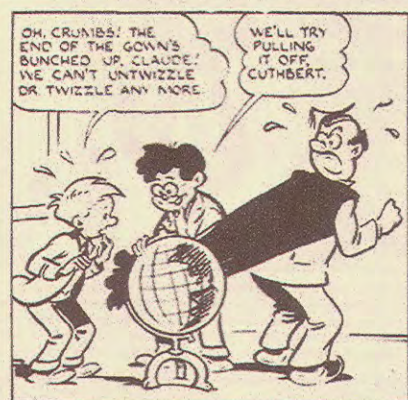
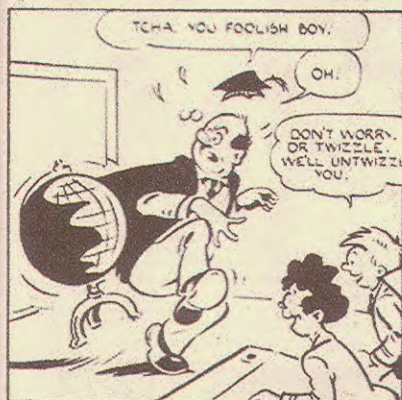
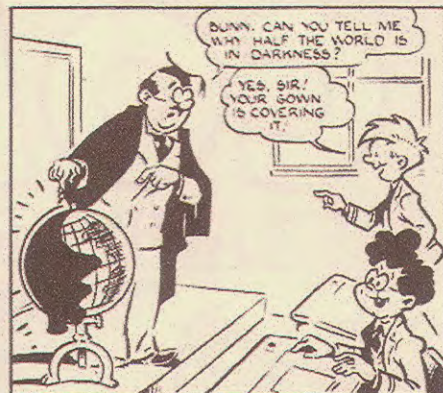
For a moment Mr. Halfspun stood in silence, then suddenly a thought struck him. He turned to Willie. "I say, Willie," he said, "how does he stop?"

"He doesn't," said Willie, "at least I don't think so. You see, I forgot to invent a brake."

Watch for more fun next week
when Willie invents a machine
for laying the table.

THE ADVENTURES OF

CLAUDE AND CUTHBERT THE TWO NEW BOYS



COMET

ISLAND OF SECRETS

PRICE
3^D
EVERY
MONDAY

CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 3

More



The cavern was lit by a great bowl of strange liquid from which flickered coloured flames. Koko's paws clutched at the lower edge of the bowl and he swung forward. As Koko swept across the cavern the bowl tilted and the flaming liquid poured out. Eblis gave a sudden screech of rage, breaking the spell he had cast over the adventurers.



In a flaming mass, the liquid fell through the air and struck one of the braziers. The sorcerer cringed back as a great spurt of flame and smoke leapt up in a swelling cloud. Koko released his hold and sprang down into Professor Jolly's arms. "Wh-what's happened?" Peter gasped dazedly, blinking round through the thickening smoke.



Professor Jolly had pulled himself together. "Run for it!" he shouted. "Quick! Head for the passage over there!" Still half-stunned, Peter and Ann began to run through the blinding smoke-clouds. The grim figures of the Sphinx-men were blundering forward with groping arms. The voice of Eblis rose above the turmoil as he shrieked furious commands.



Ducking under the arms of the Sphinx-men, the three runaways went racing along a corridor. Glancing back, Professor Jolly saw their pursuers emerging from the smoke. Ahead lay a flight of steps leading up into the vast, gaping mouth of an enormous idol. Ann's steps faltered. "Keep going!" urged the professor. "We'll risk what lies beyond!"

What does lie beyond? Be sure to read next week's thrill-packed instalment!

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