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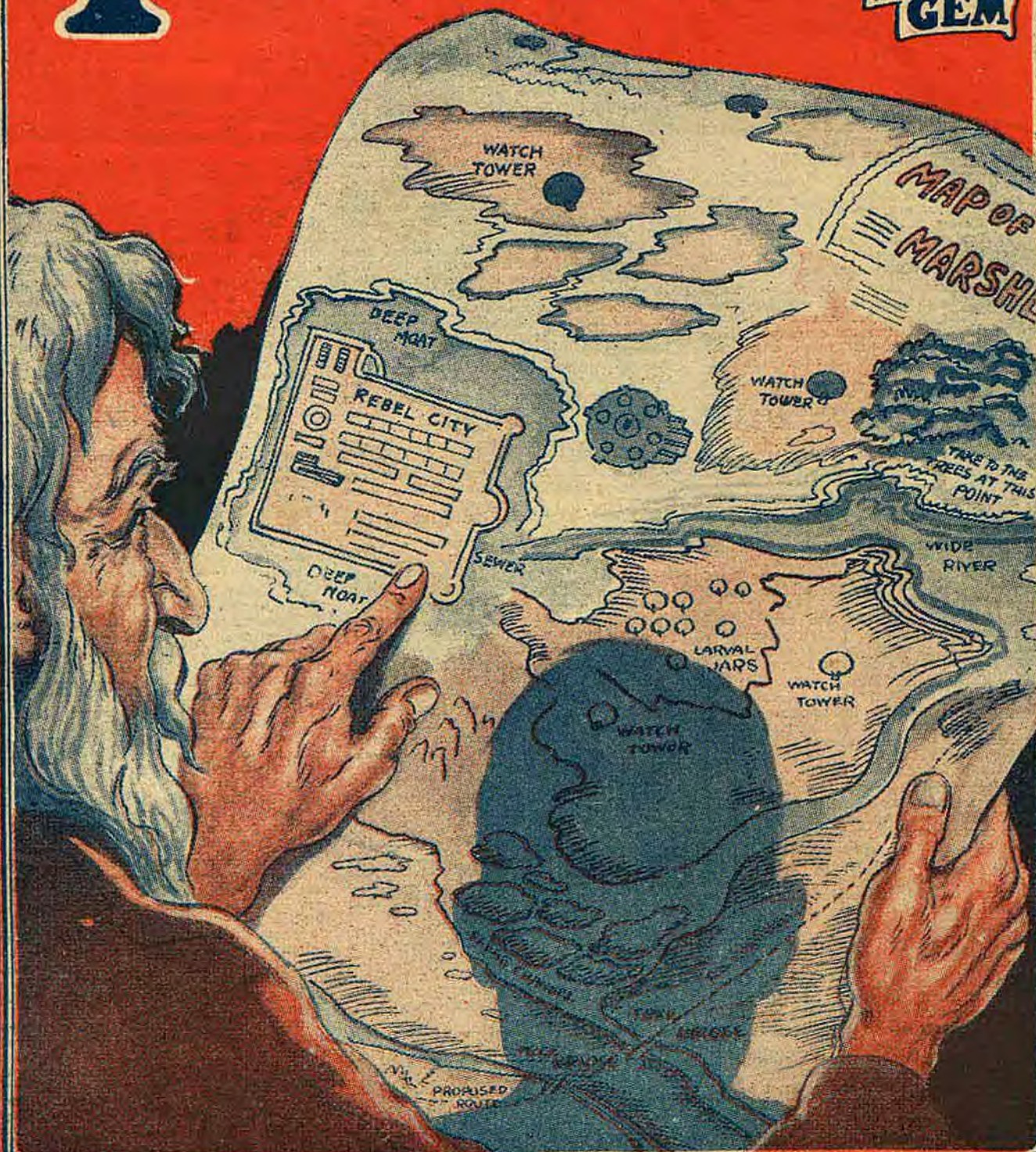
TRIUMPH 2^d
Every Tuesday

SCHOOL, AIR, DETECTIVE, FOOTBALL

**STORIES
INSIDE**

TRIUMPH

AND GEM



"GLIDING TO THE RESCUE!" DARE-DEVIL RUSE TO OUTWIT THE ENEMY

MAD CAREW'S DAWN PATROL



MAD CAREW CRASHES

THEY'RE both British planes, major. They look like S.E. 5's from the squadron at Tranville."

Mad Carew listened to the report from Tubby Hart, his adjutant, and scowled angrily skyward, where two planes were just visible in the haze beneath the cloud ceiling.

"Then what do they want to circle round here for?" he snapped in his true fire-eating style. "They'll fly round and round till they're dizzy, and then the confounded fools will probably think that we're a German drome and start dropping their bombs on us!"

The mechanics inside the operations-room, to whom Mad Carew had, a few minutes ago, been speaking his mind, exchanged delighted grins. It was a relief to hear the fighting major "letting off steam" at someone else—if only for a few minutes.

The grins faded as Mad Carew turned back into the open doorway.

"When I say I want a quick turn-out," he roared, "I'm talking to every man of you, from my leading mechanic down to the laziest darned idiot of the lot of you! When I dismiss you go back to your duties at the double! If I see a man loitering around this drome like a limp sack I'll flay the skin off his back! Dismiss!"

The mechanics solemnly and swiftly filed from the operations-room. But as soon as their backs were turned upon their fire-eating major broad grins appeared on their faces.

They all knew that Mad Carew's bark was worse than his bite. He worked everyone in the squadron like slaves, but not one of those men would have done anything else but grumble had he been transferred to any other squadron of the R.F.C. The squadron had a reputation in France to be envied.

The fact was that Mad Carew liked things done properly; he was always just and fair in everything he did. And the man he worked harder than anyone else was himself.

Mad Carew allowed the men to get fifty yards from the hut, and then he brought them all up dead, facing him, standing stiffly to attention, with a barked command that could have been heard far beyond the confines of the drome.

"Now let's see if you've got your wits about you!" he roared. "I want all planes out for inspection, in line, across the drome. I'll allow you five minutes. If there's a single plane out of alignment at the end of that time I'll have you back in the hut and make you wish you'd never joined the Flying Corps! Get to it!"

The mechanics leapt away as if their lives depended upon their speed.

Mad Carew stood with folded arms in the doorway of the operations-room, watching them with an expression of satisfaction on his face.

The mechanics were setting about their tasks

in a swift, efficient manner which proclaimed them to be perfectly trained in their work.

Plane after plane was pushed smoothly out of the hangars towards the centre of the flying field. Every man had his own job to do, and every man did it well.

Suddenly the look of satisfaction fled from Mad Carew's face, and he stared skyward with eyes ablaze with sudden anger and amazement.

A whining sound, growing with each second until it became a siren-like scream, filled the air. And then a twenty-pound Coopers' bomb landed upon the tarmac and exploded with a shattering roar.

"Blue thunder!" Mad Carew roared. "The howling idiots are bombing us!"

Before the words were out of his lips he was racing towards the signaller's hut.

"Get me Major Drake!" he bellowed.

The operator at the telephone got the call through in record time, but not before a second Coopers' bomb had dropped in a corner of the flying field, making a huge crater in the green grass.

Mad Carew leapt to the instrument, his face purple with rage.

"That you, Drake?" he roared. "There's two of our confounded pilots amusing themselves by dropping Coopers' on to my drome! If you don't call the howling idiots off I'll go up myself and— What's that?" he added, as a reply came over the phone. "None of your pilots in the air? Don't talk like a fool! There's two S.E. 5's dropping their eggs on to my flying field at this moment! You're the only S.E. 5 squadron on this part of the front. What's that?"

Mad Carew listened to the voice that came over the wire, and his eyes narrowed.

"Two of our S.E. 5's disappeared mysteriously at dawn this morning," Major Drake was saying. "We suspect that that German triplane squadron who've been making themselves a bit of a nuisance lately landed two pilots near our drome, and they crept in and stole them."

"Then why on earth didn't you report this to me?" Mad Carew roared. "Or didn't you think it important enough? Stolen planes are they? Right! We'll deal with 'em!"

He hurled the telephone receiver from him and leapt towards the door.

And then he stopped dead. The sky had become suddenly filled with the roar of a powerful aero engine diving on full throttle.

Next instant nine German Pfalz triplanes came screaming out of the clouds, and, led by the two British S.E. 5's, were diving straight at the drome.

There wasn't time to do anything. Less than thirty seconds later the air was filled with a heart-stilling chorus of whining bombs. Crump. crump. crump!

Eleven bombs exploded almost with one report about the flying field. Huge clouds of earth and jagged fragments of metal shrieked viciously through the air.

A bomb exploded not thirty yards from Mad

Carew; he was lifted up like a feather and hurled headlong to the ground. In a flash he was on his feet again.

The whole drome was now covered with a thin mist of pungent smoke, in which Mad Carew could see the shadowy figures of his pilots and mechanics rushing about, seemingly aimlessly.

Eleven more bombs crashed down into the field with a deafening roar; then the two stolen planes and the nine German triplanes formed into a diving line, and, pointing their noses down, raked the drome with a withering shower of machine-gun bullets.

Two of the Bad Lads—as the pilots of the squadron were nicknamed—leapt into the cockpits of the D.H. 9's. But almost instantly they both slumped over their controls, their bodies riddled with lead.

One plane burst into flames. Two of the hangars were burning furiously; the whole of the flying field was peppered with bomb-craters.

In a matter of minutes the triplanes had rendered it almost impossible for any of the squadron's planes to leave the ground. It would be impossible for them to get a clear take-off anywhere.

Mad Carew, his face ablaze with fury, swung upon his heels.

"Signaller, get through to Major Drake's squadron again!" he roared. "Tell 'em what's happened. We want their help!"

"Impossible, sir; the line's dead," the signaller reported. "The bombs have cut every line. Linsmen are going out at once."

"Then, by thunder, that settles it!" Mad Carew shouted fiercely.

Turning towards the centre of the flying field, he tore at racing-track speed towards the nearest Bristol Fighter. His eyes were ablaze with fury as he saw the damage which had been done by the German triplanes and the two stolen British planes.

There were mechanics lying about everywhere: some dead, many wounded.

Mad Carew reached the Bristol. With a swing of the propeller he started the engine roaring into life. Then he leapt into the cockpit and savagely thumbed open the throttle.

He was going to attempt what he knew was well-nigh impossible. He was going to try to take off from the crater-covered flying ground, with a fierce determination in his heart to settle accounts with the pilots of those two stolen planes.

The Bristol leapt forward with a powerful roar. Mad Carew swung it round into the wind and headed for a straight stretch of ground which, as far as he could see in the low-lying smoke, was free from bomb craters.

The Bristol roared forward for thirty yards, picking up speed. Then Mad Carew's eyes narrowed as he saw a row of gaping craters straight in front of his whirling propeller.

Desperately he drew back the joystick,

hoping against hope that he would be able to get the wheels off the ground in time; but he knew in his heart that he hadn't a ghost of a chance.

His landing-wheels dipped down into a deep crater; the Bristol's nose lurched forward, burying broken propeller blades deeply into the opposite rim of the crater.

Then the tail shot up, and the Bristol turned right over, with Mad Carew still in the cockpit, buried beneath the wreckage.

THE BOCUS PHONE CALL

MAD CAREW was unconscious when a party of mechanics carried him from out of the wreckage of the Bristol.

Tubby Hart, his face pale and anxious, supervised his being carried to his own hut. There he stood by, scarce daring to breathe, while the squadron doctor examined Carew.

The stolen S.E. 5's and the German triplanes had departed towards Germany, leaving the squadron looking as if it had been struck by a tornado.

In a sense they had escaped lightly. Two pilots and four mechanics had been killed. One officer—Mad Carew—and fifteen mechanics needed the doctor's attention.

It was a heavy enough casualty list, but with the drone so completely wrecked it seemed little short of miraculous that a single man had escaped alive.

The squadron's planes had suffered heavier damage. Three had been completely destroyed. Out of all the rest there was only about three which could be safely taken into the air without first having a complete overhaul.

The doctor examined Mad Carew carefully, and then looked up with a relieved expression on his face.

"He may have slight concussion," he said to Tubby Hart. "Otherwise he appears to have escaped almost miraculously from serious injury. We must keep him quietly in bed for a day or two."

"You'll do what?"

The words were snapped out with such vigour that the doctor and the adjutant leapt with surprise.

They turned and saw that Mad Carew's eyes were open, and his granite-like face contained an even more fire-eating expression than usual.

He had recovered consciousness just in time to hear the doctor's last words. To show his defiance of them he swung his legs from the bunk and rose, staggering a little, to his feet.

"But, major, you mustn't!" the doctor exclaimed. "You're not fit enough to—"

"When the thunder did I start taking orders from a confounded pill-roller?" Mad Carew roared. "Get out of here, doctor, before I open your medicine chest and ram every pill you've got down your throat! Not fit, indeed!"

Carew tottered weakly towards the door, his lips tightly compressed because of the agony from his many bruises.

At a glance he took in the whole situation, and his eyes narrowed.

"Sergeant-major!" he roared.

The sergeant-major came up at the double. "Get every available man filling in those bomb craters!" the fighting major barked. "I expect the landing ground to be fit for use in an hour's time."

IT was at times like this that the personnel of the Mad Major's squadron proved their worth. Every officer, N.C.O., and mechanic who had not been too badly wounded in the raid to either work a spade or push a wheelbarrow, set to work with a will.

But the man who worked harder than any was Mad Carew himself. He only ceased work when, an hour later, with the landing ground now ready for use, he was called away to speak to Major Drake on the repaired line to the other squadron.

"Have you phoned up to inquire after our health, Drake?" Carew growled into the mouthpiece. "We've had a nice time here—I don't think—and it's all thanks to you. If you'd warned me that you'd had two S.E. 5's stolen, I'd have had every one of my planes in

the air, and we'd have given those German triplanes a warm time."

"I'm extremely sorry, Major Carew!" came the reply over the wire. "We ourselves have suffered, too. That triplane squadron attacked us after they'd finished with you. They bombed my hangars mighty badly. I've only got one plane left that's fit to fly. Listen, Carew, the pilot of that plane followed the triplane squadron back home. He's found out where their drone is."

"That's good work!" Mad Carew rapped.

"I agree with you," was the reply. "If you like I'll send the pilot over. I'll tell him to circle above your drone till one of your planes joins him. Then he can guide your man and point out the drone to him. That will enable you to attack it with your bombers to-night."

"Good idea!" Mad Carew jerked.

A few minutes later he was walking swiftly from the orderly room.

He crossed over first to the hangars and instructed his chief engineer to put every available man into getting the bombers into condition again. Then he sent an orderly off to find Second-Lieutenants Adam Buller and his inseparable pal, Joe Lindsey.

These were two of the Bad Lads, and real tough nuts. They had been transferred from the Australian Expeditionary Force, and Mad Carew knew that he could rely on them implicitly.

They reported to him in the orderly-room, saluting and standing rigidly to attention.

"Buller and Lindsey," said Mad Carew, "a pilot of Major Drake's squadron has discovered the hidden drone that those confounded triplanes came from. An S.E. 5 will circle over this drone in a few minutes' time. I want you to be ready to take a Bristol up and go with it, to be shown where this German drone is."

The two Aussies' eyes gleamed. They looked on that raid by the triplanes as an insult to the squadron, and one that had to be wiped out with the least possible delay.

"Good-o, sir!" Buller exclaimed. "We'll give the dingoes something to remember."

"That's just what you're not to do!" Mad Carew snapped. "You're to obey orders. You're to find where this drone is, and then come straight back here and report. I rely on you not to engage any enemy aircraft unless absolutely unavoidable. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," the two Aussies replied, and, saluting smartly, they turned away.

A few minutes later the S.E. 5 circled overhead, and the Bristol, with Adam Buller at the joystick, rose to join it.

The two planes turned their noses towards the front line, and ere long they were lost to view in the low-drifting clouds.

IF Mad Carew had worked his squadron hard before, he now settled down to work them harder than ever.

It needed less than an hour to dusk, and he was determined to have every plane possible patched up and ready to fly away upon an attack upon the triplanes' drone as soon as the two Aussies returned.

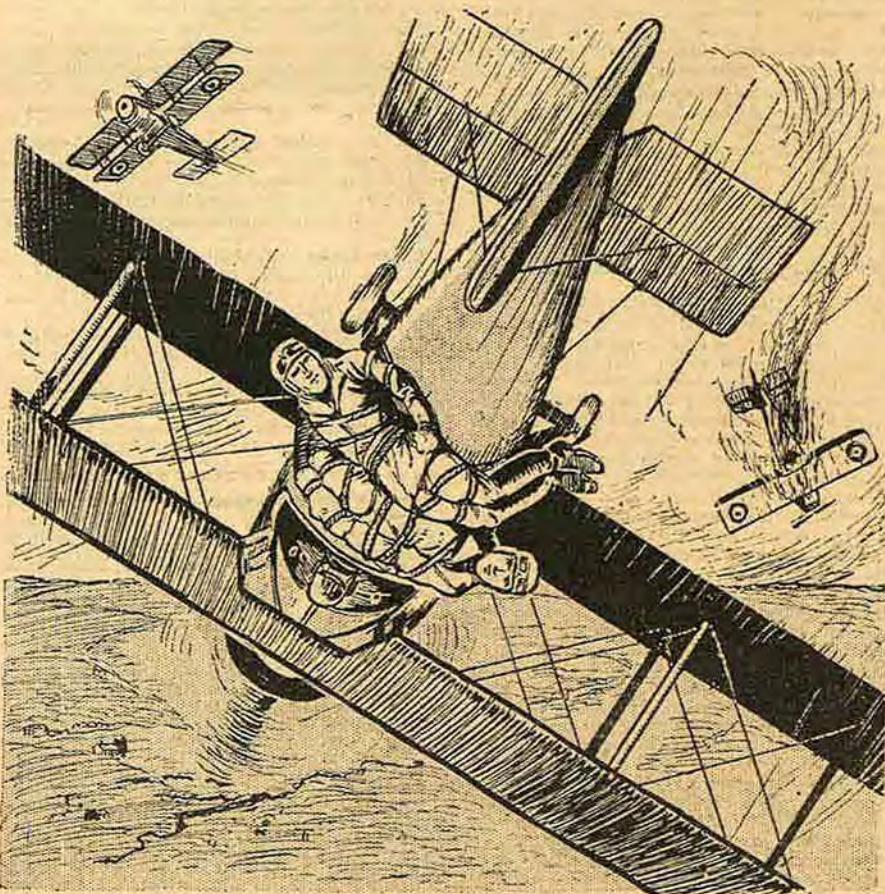
Mad Carew issued his orders, and then he went to his own quarters and donned a pair of overalls, intending to see about patching up a bullet-damaged engine himself.

And then, as he emerged from his hut, he stopped dead, staring towards the entrance to the aerodrome with an expression of mingled surprise and concern on his face.

A motor-bike and sidecar was howling along the drive, and the passenger in the sidecar was Major Drake.

It was the man who, not ten minutes ago, had told him over the phone that the S.E. 5 was coming over to guide one of Carew's planes to the triplanes' drone, and Drake's squadron's drone was at Tranville, twenty-five miles away!

For Major Drake to have made the journey in a combination outfit in this short time was impossible.



Lashed to the top of the fuselage of the stolen Bristol were Adam Buller and Joe Lindsey! Mad Carew could not crash that plane without killing both the Aussies.

Drake stepped from the sidecar, and, surveying Mad Carew's overalls with evident disgust, strode towards him.

"Major Carew, I have come in person to to apologise!" he said in dignified tones. "I reported the theft of those two S.E.5's through the correct military channels, and I very greatly regret that the warning was not passed on to you, but, of course, I could not phone up everyone who might possibly be visited by those two stolen planes."

"One minute!" Mad Carew snapped. "Did you phone me up about ten minutes ago to tell me that you'd sent an S.E.5 over here?"

"Of course not!" Major Drake answered. "I have just told you that I decided to come over in person to see you."

But the fighting major wasn't listening to him. There was an expression of rage on his face.

"Then it was one of those stolen planes!" he rasped. "The other must have landed and one of the confounded Germans tapped the wire and imitated your voice. It was a ruse to steal one of my planes—and, by thunder, I've sent off two of my best men for them to either shoot down or take prisoner."

Mad Carew swung upon his heels and started racing towards a nearby hangar at cinder-track speed, with Major Drake staring after him with bewildered eyes.

"Sergeant-major!" Mad Carew roared. "A Bristol-Fighter out on the tarmac in double quick time! See it is fitted with guns—no time to test them. If it's not ready for me to take-off in two minutes, I'll reduce you to the ranks!"

AS he throttled down his motor in order to keep pace with the S.E.5, Adam Buller felt that he had only one complaint with life. He was glad that Major Carew had chosen him and Joe Lindsey for this job, but he was sorry that the fighting major had been so definite in his order that they were to do no fighting unless unavoidable.

Suddenly, when they were still about seven miles from the British lines, the S.E.5 banked sharply round and started dropping towards the carpet in a tight spiral.

"Hallo, what's wrong with that digger?" Buller exclaimed, swinging the Bristol round and peering down over the rim of his cockpit.

The hooded pilot of the S.E.5 was looking up towards him and pointing at his engine.

"Engine trouble?" Buller growled disgruntledly. "Ain't that just too rough?"

He circled round, losing altitude, wondering whether the pilot of the S.E.5 would be able to find a landing ground without crashing his plane.

Reaching a low altitude, the S.E.5 flattened out, and its pilot brought it safely to the ground in the centre of a large, open meadow.

"We'd better go down, too, Joe," Adam Buller shouted over his shoulder. "If their engine's conked out, I'll have to leave you behind and take one of those diggers to show me where this German drome is."

"That'd be just my rotten luck," Joe Lindsey bellowed. "Hallo, they're beckoning us down!"

The pilot and observer had both alighted from the S.E.5, and were beckoning to the pilot of the Bristol to come down to them.

Buller circled round once to get the direction of the wind, and then brought off a neat three-point landing, bringing the Bristol to a standstill with its wing-tip almost touching the S.E.5.

They leapt to the ground, to find the other two flyers examining their engine. The pilot turned towards them as they approached.

"A broken carburettor-feed," he said in perfect English. "I was lucky to get the old bus down."

The two Aussies moved forward to examine the engine, while the two victims of the supposed forced landing stepped back quietly behind them, and then, exchanging quick glances, each brought a heavy spanner from the pocket of his overalls.

"Why, there's nothing wrong here—" Adam Buller began, when the head of the spanner came down with cruel force upon the

back of his head, and he sprawled limply forward without a groan across the S.E.5's lower wing.

At the same moment Joe Lindsey dropped unconscious under a similar blow from the other German.

The pilot of the stolen British plane uttered a gruff laugh, and gazed down at the two unconscious Brits.

"Easier than I had hoped, mein herr," he said in guttural German. "Give me a hand with these two English fools, then get off at once in the S.E.5. At this rate all the British planes on this sector will soon belong to us!"

INTO THE ENEMY DROME

MAD CAREW piloted his Bristol with an unusual heavy hand as he howled at 10,000 feet on full throttle towards the front line.

This was proving a black day for his squadron. In the first place he had been caught napping, and the triplane raiders had gone back home chuckling with the knowledge that they had dealt Mad Carew's squadron a hard blow.

And now he had been caught by a clever trick, and had sent two of his best pilots either to their death or to a German prisoner-of-war camp.

Mad Carew was vigilantly searching the cloudy sky ahead, but he knew that the S.E.5 and the Bristol Fighter had a twelve minutes' start of him, and he didn't expect to see either of them. Besides, in half an hour's time it would be dark, and then his quest would be an even more hopeless one.

He was just telling himself that he hadn't a ghost of a chance of saving his two Aussie airmen when, far away in the distance, he saw an S.E.5 flying at a low altitude towards the lines.

He opened the throttle and pressed the Bristol's nose down into a screaming dive.

Suddenly he stiffened in his seat. He was close enough now to see that there was only one head protruding above the S.E.5's cockpit.

"One of the Germans has landed," he muttered. "Now why should—"

And then, a puzzled light in his eyes, Mad Carew saw the Bristol from his drome rising up from the ground almost immediately beneath him.

His foot kicked his rudder-bar, over went his joystick, and the Bristol slid from a wing-skid into a falling-leaf spin.

And then, as he dived towards the other Bristol, a fierce exclamation of rage left his lips.

Through the ring-sights of his gun he had seen something of an unusual nature lashed to the top of the fuselage of the Bristol, just behind the back cockpit—two figures.

He recognised them as Adam Buller and Joe Lindsey! They had been lashed at full length across the fuselage.

With a groan of dismay Mad Carew realised that one of the Germans was piloting the plane, and his guns were useless to him. He could not open fire at the Bristol without risk.



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HOW DO PALS—In this issue of the TRIUMPH you will find the fourth of our St. Jim's stories, and by now, I expect, you will have a very good idea how much you are going to like them.

I am looking forward to your letters about them. At the time I write this—so far ahead do we go to press—the FIRST one is not yet on sale.

It will be on sale on the Tuesday next, so I expect that during next week I shall have shoals of letters from you about it, and about the other new features that appeared in our January 6th issue.

Please remember at all times that the TRIUMPH is YOUR paper. It is always my endeavour to publish the stories YOU want. So if you have not written lately to criticise or praise any story, and would like to, please do so now.

Yours till the earth stops revolving,

THE EDITOR.

ing riddling his own two pilots with bullets. He could not crash the Bristol without killing both the Aussies.

Next moment, before Mad Carew could recover from his anger and surprise, the other Bristol banked and opened fire on the major's plane.

Mad Carew's hand leapt instinctively to his gun-trip, but he snatched it back again without firing a single shot, and, opening out his throttle, he lifted the Bristol's nose into a steep zoom.

For the first time in his career he was forced to run away from a single combat dog-fight.

He was able to throw the more heavily laden Bristol off his tail, but it filled him with a blind fury to think that he could do nothing to stop it from flying back towards Germany with Adam Buller and Joe Lindsey, helpless prisoners, lashed to its fuselage.

At 10,000 feet Mad Carew straightened out and gazed downwards.

And then his blood turned cold as he saw that the captured Bristol was flying straight towards a French Nieuport which was on long patrol work over the near-by French sector.

The French airman at the joystick of that plane would recognise the Bristol as a Britisher, and he would fall an easy victim to a swift attack.

With a snarl of rage Mad Carew saw white streaks of tracer bullets leap suddenly from the stolen Bristol's guns, and the French Nieuport, less than two hundred feet from it, lurched like a wounded bird and then started a mad dive earthward with fierce flames leaping around its crumpling wings.

The stolen Bristol immediately turned towards Germany and set off at full speed across the front line.

Mad Carew, in a terrible rage, sent his own Bristol screaming after it. He could not attack it because of his two captured pilots, but he might trace it to the enemy drome.

He had travelled some fifteen miles over German territory when five triplanes dived down out of the dark night clouds and hurled themselves upon him with blazing guns.

Mad Carew had to fight as never before for his life, while the captured plane continued on its way to the hidden drome of the triplanes.

And as he fought, hurling the Bristol madly about the sky, he saw three coloured lights—a red, a blue, and a green—float down through the sky from the direction in which the Bristol had disappeared.

Almost instantly powerful landing lights and searchlights illuminated a small circle of ground in the far distance. But they were too far away for Mad Carew to be able to more than roughly estimate the position of the hidden drome.

The fight with the triplanes lasted for fifteen hectic minutes. During that time Mad Carew's Vickers sent two enemy machines careering earthwards, enveloped in flames.

By skilful tactics the fighting major manoeuvred the fight gradually back towards the lines, and when finally half a dozen of the Bad Lads dived, in their repaired Bristols, out of the clouds to Carew's rescue, the pilots of the triplanes decided that they had had enough. They turned and fled.

Mad Carew brought his battle-battered plane down in a perfect landing in the centre of his drome, and then, calling for six of the most skilled plane builders in the squadron, he disappeared into one of the workshop hangars, and remained there hard at work till long after midnight.

When he at last emerged from the workshop, he was followed by the mechanics, pushing something in their midst out on to the tarmac.

The Bad Lads stared at it in amazement. In four hours Mad Carew and the six mechanics had built a complete motorless plane—a glider!

A silence of curiosity and expectancy settled over the mess as Mad Carew entered, and spread open a map on an empty table. With a quick sign he beckoned Tubby Hart to his side.

"Tubby, I estimate that the Germans triplane drome is somewhere within three miles

of this spot," he said. "I have discovered, too, that they keep the drone in darkness till a special sign of Very lights is fired. This combination of lights is one red, one blue, and one green. Is that clear?"

Tubby nodded.

"I gather, too, that if they hear an aeroplane approach, and the signal is not given," Mad Carew continued, "they will keep the drone in darkness, and send up their triplanes to investigate. Now, this is my scheme."

The Bad Lads moved eagerly forward.

"You, Tubby, in your Bristol," Mad Carew continued, "will tow me in the glider which I have made over to German territory. When you reach this spot you fire the signal. Then you cast me off, and head back for home."

"This gliding stunt is a long chance, but I think I can manage it. I've got to manage it. I mean to volplane around in the glider, and land somewhere near the landing lights. I'm not likely to be seen in the darkness."

"But, major," Tubby Hart gasped, "how are you going to get back?"

"Leave that to me," Mad Carew answered

entrance to it, but after half an hour's exploration he discovered a tree with outspread branches which allowed him to surmount the wall.

It was now close on two o'clock in the morning, and only an occasional sentry was awake inside the German drone.

Mad Carew spent the next two hours creeping from shadow to shadow, hoping to find the place where his two Aussie pilots were imprisoned, but his search proved fruitless.

Half an hour before dawn a bugle sounded shrilly, and German mechanics hastened out on to the tarmac and started wheeling the triplanes from the hangars.

Mad Carew's eyes narrowed as he recognised the three British planes among them.

Then a German officer came into view and walked towards the centre of the drone, flashing the beam of an electric torch in front of him.

Mad Carew started violently. The little circle of light came to rest upon the iron bars of a large cage. An armed sentry stood outside the locked door, while inside the cage Mad Carew saw Adam Buller and Joe Lindsey, glaring with angry eyes towards the approaching German.

uttering a sound and rolled over, completely knocked. Mad Carew bent over him and secured possession of the keys. Barely half a minute later he was unlocking the door of the cage.

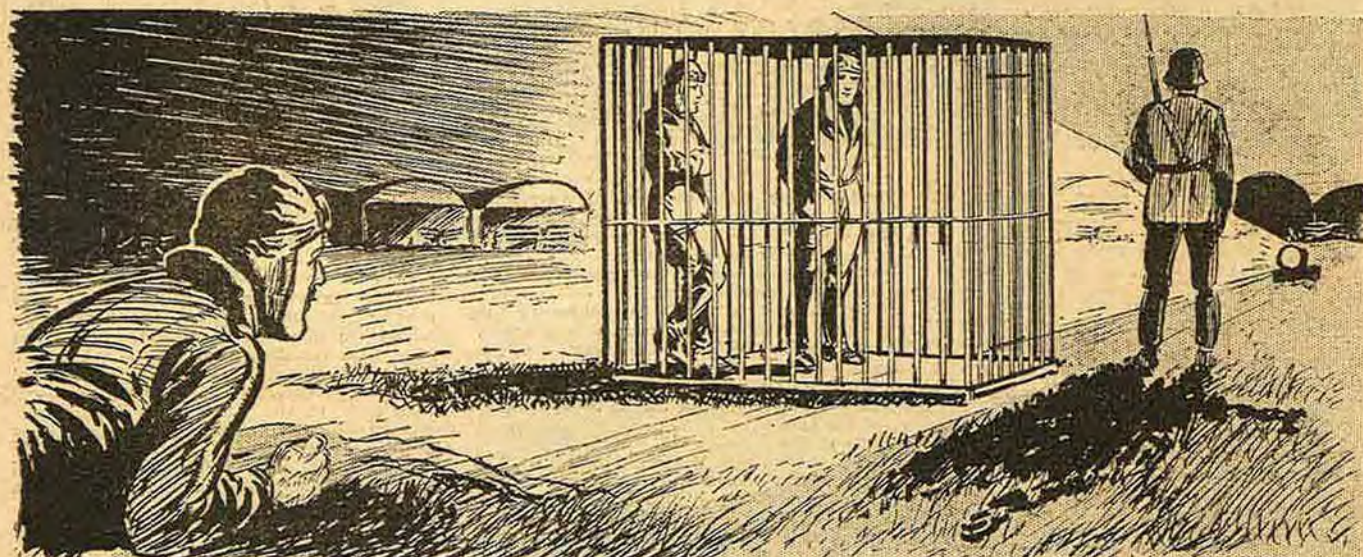
"Not a sound!" he hissed. "Take an S.E. 5 each; leave me the Bristol Fighter. They're all three out on the tarmac. If we get off without mishap, we'll come back and give this drone beans!"

Swiftly leaving the small floodlit area, the pitch darkness before dawn helped them to reach the tarmac unseen. With a grim nod of satisfaction, Mad Carew noticed that the engines of all three of the stolen British planes had been started up, and had been left to get warm.

The thunderous roar that echoed up from the tarmac drowned the noise the Britishers made as they dashed to the British planes, and, clambering up into the cockpits, they threw open the throttles.

Mad Carew, in the Bristol, was the first to leave the ground, but he was closely followed by the two S.E. 5's.

Hoarse, angry shouts echoed up from all sides as they soared into the air. Mad Carew's daring rescue of the two prisoners had taken the whole drone completely by surprise.



Stealthily Mad Carew crept forward. At all costs he meant to rescue the two prisoners in the cage, but first of all he had to overpower the German sentry.

grimly. "If you're ready, we'll start at once."

EVERYTHING went just as Mad Carew had planned. With the glider being towed, out of sight among the clouds, behind the Bristol, he crossed over the lines, perched on a frail seat in front of the outspread wing of his motorless plane.

At the arranged spot Tubby fired the signal lights.

Their luck was in—evidently some of the planes of the enemy squadron were out on night patrol. The landing lights flashed on at once.

The glider jerked convulsively, and Mad Carew knew that he had been cast off from the Bristol Fighter.

He unfastened the tow-rope from beneath his feet and allowed it to drop earthward. Then, skilfully manipulating the joystick of the glider, he brought it down out of the clouds, and, circling round and round, came at length to earth in a dark field just outside the enemy aerodrome.

When he landed the drone was in darkness once again; probably the Germans were wondering why the signal had been given and no plane had landed.

Mad Carew crept cautiously from the glider and approached the drone with the stealth of a Redskin.

He found that a lofty wall barred his

"I will explain why you have been put there," the German said harshly in broken English. "Last night, after your capture, a British plane came here and gave our secret signal. Then it flew away again. This makes it clear to me that the position of our secret drone is known to your friends."

"I am going to turn a floodlight on this cage, so if your friends come here to attack us they will see you here in the open, and they will know that they cannot drop their bombs or open fire with their machine-guns without killing you both. Perhaps they will go away to make other plans, and that will give us time to move our drone elsewhere."

The officer turned sharply towards the sentry.

"See that they do not escape!" he snapped. "You have the keys?"

The sentry nodded smartly.

It was all Mad Carew wanted to know. He watched the officer stride away across the dark landing ground, and then crept forward on hands and knees towards the floodlit cage with the stealth of an Indian scout. So noiselessly did he move over the ground that the first sound the two Aussies heard was when Mad Carew dashed suddenly round the corner of the cage and drove a pile-driver, straight left home to the point of the amazed sentry's jaw.

The German pitched to the ground without

And then the fighting major, his jaw grimly set, circled the nose of the Bristol round and pointed it earthward. The German triplane squadron was now going to get a taste of its own medicine!

Straight along the line of hangars Mad Carew flew, working the Bristol's bomb-toggles furiously. The two S.E. 5's followed close on his tail, their machine-guns rattling furiously.

Mad Carew turned, and this time screamed back, low over the ground, with both his guns spraying lead.

The hangars were now in flames; prone figures were stretched everywhere.

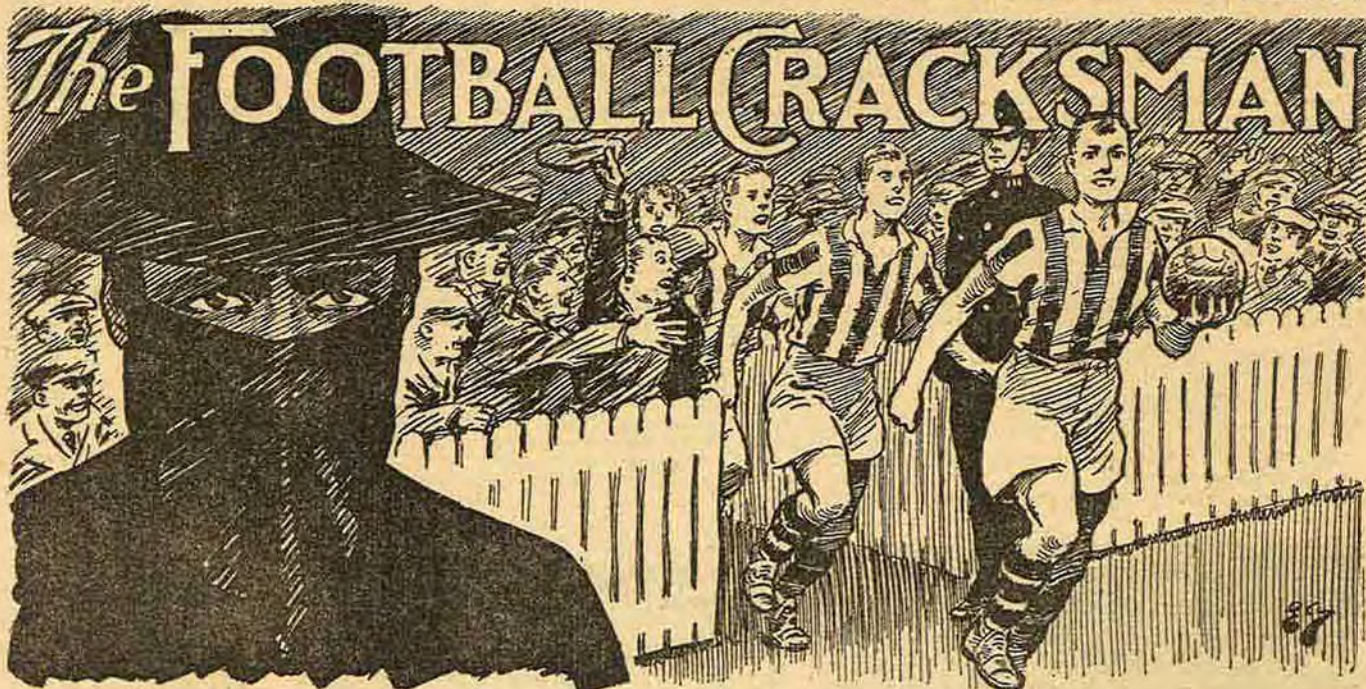
Every triplane was wrecked before any of the Germans could get them off the ground.

In a few minutes Mad Carew and the two Aussies, in their recaptured planes, had transformed the orderly drone into a scene of the utmost chaos. Then they turned and winged their way homeward, unscathed.

They had taught the Germans a lesson they wouldn't quickly forget.

Another grand SIX page story of Mad Carew and the Bad Lads next week. Tell your newsagent you will want next Tuesday's issue of the TRIUMPH. And how about your pals? Do they know they can get TRIUMPH every week by ordering it?

SOCCER STAR BY DAY—MYSTERY MAN BY NIGHT! WHAT WAS STEVE BRADSHAW'S SECRET?



"I CAN'T LET THE BOYS DOWN!"

A DRAMATIC scene was taking place in the middle of the pitch where Milton Rovers were lined up for their match against Forborough Athletic.

Steve Bradshaw, skipper and centre-forward of the Rovers, contemplated his foe, Inspector Collins, with a smile of mockery. The players crowded round, while the referee looked on in helpless exasperation.

A packed crowd of fans on the terraces, who had travelled from Milton to see the match, and especially to see their idol, Steve Bradshaw, in action, were booing and howling with an anger and impatience that increased every moment.

Hovering on the edge of the crowd, and looking scared out of his wits, was Sam Harris, the Rovers' trainer, and the only man who knew that, for secret reasons of his own, Steve had turned cracksman and was none other than the notorious Black Mask, whom the police were hunting for murder.

"We want to question you concerning the murder of Bethmann, the bookmaker, Bradshaw," rapped the inspector. "We know now that you're the Black Mask."

The inspector, whose sudden arrival on the field had delayed the starting of the match, was grimly triumphant. In his own mind he had been positive for some time that Steve was the Black Mask. But he had never been able to prove it. Steve had mockingly derided his efforts to collect evidence.

Even now Steve refused to betray the least sign of fear or anxiety. On the contrary, he was the most self-possessed man on the field.

He watched the inspector with a kind of amused tolerance, as if he were dealing with the tantrums of a small child, or with someone who wasn't quite right in the head.

It was true that Steve was the Black Mask, but he was not guilty of murder. He had been framed by a bunch of crooks who were out to ruin the Rovers, and even if he did tell the truth it was hardly likely that Inspector Collins would believe him.

"Better come quietly, Bradshaw," suggested Collins. "There's nothing to be gained by creating a fuss."

Steve sighed patiently.

"No one can say that I haven't done my best for you, inspector," he pointed out. "I've tried to stop you from making a fool of yourself, but for some reason you insist on believing that I'm a crook. But I'm afraid you're going to have a hard job proving it."

"I'll prove it just as soon as I take a plaster mould of your feet and compare it with the shoes you left behind on the scene of the murder!" the inspector snarled.

Fred Lockhart, the Rovers' goalie, uttered an indignant exclamation.

"Look here, this is a lot of nonsense!" he said hotly. "Of course Steve isn't a crook. No one in his senses would believe such a thing. If this is somebody's idea of a joke, it's a pretty poor one. And what's more, the crowd is going to start a riot if we don't soon begin the game."

Steve grinned lazily.

"Thanks for the testimonial, Fred," he said lightly. "But I'm afraid that the inspector doesn't agree with you. Once he gets an idea into his head he sticks to it like a limpet."

"What's all this talk about shoes, anyway?" asked the goalie. "It sounds like a lot of twaddle to me."

"I'll explain about the shoes," rapped the inspector. "I went to Bethmann's office in response to a telephone call that he had been murdered. To give himself time to get away the murderer played a trick on me. He put his shoes on the floor at the bottom of a curtain, to make me believe that he was hiding behind the curtain. The trick did work, up to a point. He got away. But he'd over-reached himself. He forgot that those shoes were a clue to his identity."

"And, of course, you are quite sure that they are my shoes?" asked Steve.

"Positive!" snapped Inspector Collins. "We've been checking up. We found out the size you wear. The brand you usually favour. Everything. And all the facts check."

"Marvellous!" exclaimed Steve in mock awe. "A million people wear shoes my size, and yet he has to pick on me!"

The commotion on the terraces increased in strength. Steve saw a number of police running along the touchline to deal with an angry crowd who were scaling the fence.

Steve grinned happily.

"I seem to have a few friends left, anyway," he chuckled. "Inspector, you have made these people very angry. They paid a bob each to see a good football match, and they're afraid that you're going to cheat them out of it. Unless you want to be tarred and feathered I'd advise you to take yourself off the field. I'll join you after the match."

The inspector looked at him with narrowed, suspicious eyes.

He hesitated. But he did not like the wolfish note in the howls of the indignant

crowd. He knew that he ran the risk of causing an unpleasant scene if he took Steve away from his fans. At the same time he wondered uncomfortably whether Steve had got some trick up his sleeve.

"You've got nothing to lose by waiting until the end of the match," urged Steve. "I'll be here on the field all the time. I can't run away. You can keep your eye on me all the time."

Still Collins continued to hesitate.

"As soon as the game is over I'll come with you to the police station, I give you my word," Steve promised.

"All right," growled the inspector. "I'll give you until after the match. But if this is a trick—"

"You have a nasty, suspicious mind," Steve told him lightly.

The inspector wheeled and tramped angrily towards the touchline, accompanied by his two detectives.

As they neared the fence they were greeted by a storm of catcalls and boos.

The referee's whistle shrilled and Steve set the ball rolling.

Steve might have been forgiven if he had played badly that afternoon. The knowledge that detectives were waiting for him immediately he left the field should have been enough to put the finest player off form.

Yet nothing of the kind happened. Steve was at his brilliant best. He was the most unruffled man on the field. Instead of upsetting him, his encounter with Inspector Collins seemed to have given him a keener zest and sparkle.

All through the first half he delighted the Rovers' fans with a dazzling exhibition. He never once put a wrong foot. He led the Rovers' forwards with a dash and speed that ran the overworked Athletic defence off its legs.

Five minutes from the start Steve went through like a thunderbolt and tested the Athletic's keeper with a zooming shot which he only just managed to tip over the bar.

Mark Poyser took the corner kick and lobbed the ball into the goal-mouth. The goalie charged through a mass of players in an effort to reach the ball. But Steve's head was there a split second before him to nod the ball into the net.

"Goal!"

"Good old Steve!"

The Rover fans went wild

No sooner had the game restarted than Steve was away again.

The Athletic's centre-half lunged at him. Steve checked himself and swerved. The centre-half skidded wildly, with legs spread wide, as he strove to change the direction of his rush.

Steve flicked the ball between his legs, ran round him and slogged the leather out to the left wing to send the Poyser brothers away in a combined movement which ended with Noel cannoning a well-placed centre past the clutching fingers of the diving goal-keeper.

"Another goal!"

"You're all over 'em, Rovers!"

"Keep it up, Steve boy!"

The Rovers' whirlwind style, inspired by Steve, had got their opponents groggy. In desperation the Athletic defenders packed their goal.

They managed to hold out until half-time, although their goal, time and again, had narrow escapes that made the fans yell.

As Steve ran off the field he was met at the mouth of the tunnel by Sam Harris.

The trainer, who was keeping back so that Inspector Collins shouldn't see him, had Steve's overcoat over his arm and a bag in his hand.

"Here, Steve!" he whispered. "Grab these and make a bolt for it!"

Steve looked at him with good-humoured surprise.

"I don't think I quite get the idea, Sammy," he declared.

"I've got a taxi waiting outside," whispered the trainer. "Don't hang about. You can change in the taxi. Collins won't realise that you're missing until the game starts again. That'll give you a good five minutes' lead. You'll have to make the best use that you can of your time."

Steve's eyes widened, sparkling with amusement.

"Why, Sammy, are you suggesting that I should run away in the middle of the game and leave the Rovers in the lurch?" he asked.

"Don't stand here arguing!" cried the trainer desperately. "You're wasting time."

Steve chuckled, and gave his agitated pal a playful punch in the chest.

"Thanks, Sammy. I appreciate what you're trying to do for me, but it just can't be done," he said.

"You mean you're not going?" gasped Sam.

"I can't let the boys down," argued Steve. "Besides, I gave Collins my word."

"You'll let yourself be pinched?" gasped the trainer. "Steve, you're crazy! I know you didn't do that murder! But you'll never make Collins believe it. He's got his knife in you, and—"

Steve shook his head sadly.

"You know what, Sammy?" he asked. "I've got a feeling that poor old Collins has got an awful shock coming his way before long."

ANYTHING TO OBLIGE

INSPECTOR COLLINS, sitting between his two assistants, watched the second half of the game with a dour, sombre expression. His eyes scarcely left Steve Bradshaw during the whole of the forty-five minutes.

He watched Steve go down the field in a brilliant solo run.

Steve swerved past the centre-half with dazzling footwork, met the headlong charge of a back with a solid shoulder, and bounced him to the turf, then raced goalwards.

The agitated goals danced about in between the sticks like a cat on hot coals. The excited Forborough fans yelled conflicting advice.

"Run out, Joey!"

"No; stop where you are!"

The goalie fell into a crouch, tugged aggressively at the peak of his cap, then slung himself forward in a full-length dive at Steve's feet.

Steve hooked the ball away from the goalie's

gloved fingers, and biffed it solidly into the net to put the Rovers three up.

The inspector scowled.

"I don't like the look of it," he muttered. "What's wrong, sir?" asked one of the detectives.

"Bradshaw," gritted the inspector. "He's playing like a man who's got no care in the world beyond football. How can any man act that way with the shadow of the gallows hanging over him?"

"You think he's got some sort of trick up his sleeve?" asked the other anxiously.

"It's beginning to look that way to me," growled the inspector. "And yet I can't imagine what he could possibly do."

The inspector continued to watch the field with an uneasy, worried frown. In his dealings with Steve he always had an unpleasant feeling of inferiority. It angered him, yet he couldn't get rid of it.

There was always a mocking light in Steve's eyes during his exchanges with the inspector, as if he was having some secret joke.

A great roar went up from the crowd as the referee's whistle signalled the end of the match. The Rovers had won easily by 4-0, a final goal having been popped in from the right wing a few minutes from time.

The Athletic's skipper ran across the field to shake hands with Steve, and the pair came off the field together.

Inspector Collins quietly left his seat and hurried to the dressing-room. He was determined not to let Steve out of his sight.

Steve grinned cheerily as he came in.

"Be with you in two ticks, inspector!" he said lightly, just as if they were going off for an evening's amusement together.

Inspector Collins clenched his teeth, and watched Steve with narrowed eyes. Steve didn't seem to be in the least bit worried. He was as cool as a cucumber. It was the inspector who was jumpy and nervous. The roles were reversed.

His bewilderment increased when Steve submitted quietly to walking between the two

detectives to a waiting car to be driven back to Milton.

On the trip back, Steve kept up a cheerful chatter of amiable conversation, which drew only answering grunts from his escort. Any ordinary man would have felt snubbed, but Steve's spirits remained undashed.

His bright chatter almost drove the inspector crazy, and Collins heaved a gusty sigh of relief when they reached the Milton police station.

He kept a tight hold on Steve's arm as they alighted from the car, fearing a last minute attempt at escape.

Steve made no attempt to get away.

They all went into the inspector's office. One of the detectives brought in the new notorious pair of shoes.

"Do you recognise these, Bradshaw?" snapped Collins.

Steve shrugged.

"How should I, now?" he asked blandly. "All black shoes look pretty much alike to me."

"They're your size," gritted Collins.

"Mine and thousands of other peoples'," beamed Steve.

"They're the brand you always favour, and the pattern," growled Collins.

"If you're going to arrest everyone who wears that type of shoe, you'll have to build an extension to your police station," Steve assured him lightly.

"They were bought in the shop that you always go to," the inspector insisted stubbornly.

"It's the biggest shop in Milton," Steve said airily. "They must have one or two other customers, besides me, or they would have gone out of business before now."

The inspector picked up one of the shoes, and stabbed a finger at it, as if he was about to deliver a lecture.

"You think you can bluff your way out of this, Bradshaw, just because the shoes are mass produced, and are all alike when they leave the factory. But listen to me, and I'll tell you something that will take that grin off



"Here, Steve," whispered the Rovers' trainer, holding out a coat and bag. "Grab these and make a bolt for it!" Steve looked at him with good-humoured surprise. "Why, Sammy," he exclaimed, "are you suggesting that I should run away and leave the Rovers in the lurch? No thanks, if the police want me I'll go to the station with them after the match."

your face. Admittedly, there are a lot of people walking about Milton in shoes of this size and pattern, but there is only one person who could have worn this particular shoe."

Steve made an elaborate pretence of stifling a bored yawn.

"You amaze me, inspector," he drawled. "Please go on!"

The inspector's face reddened with anger. "When a shoe is worn it gradually assumes a slightly different shape. The style of a man's walk the particular shape of his foot, gives each pair of shoes an individuality that can be detected by an expert," he stated grimly.

"Astonishing!" beamed Steve.

"I propose to take a plaster mould of your feet, and compare it with a mould made from the inside of those shoes," rapped the inspector. "Do you want to make any objections?"

"None at all, if it will give you any satisfaction," smiled Steve.

He shrugged cheerfully, and began to remove his shoes and stockings.

When the moulds had been taken away to be dried out, he looked inquiringly at Inspector Collins.

"Is that all?" he asked jauntily. "Or is there something else that I can do for you?"

"That's all, until I get a report on the shoes," snapped the inspector.

"Fine! Then I can go now?" asked Steve with bland curiosity.

"You can go home now!" snapped the inspector. "But take a tip from me, and don't try to leave the town, or you'll find yourself in trouble."

Steve picked up his hat and prepared to leave. At the door he paused and smiled mockingly at the inspector.

"I do hope I've been a help," he said jauntily. "Don't forget to phone me when you catch the Black Mask. I shall be interested about it."

After Steve had gone out Collins sat for some time at his desk, thoughtfully chewing his lip.

One of the detectives gave him a puzzled look, then jerked his head at the closed door. "Supposing he tries to skip town?" he asked.

"He won't run away," declared the inspector. "I think I know Bradshaw better than that by this time. Listen, I'll explain. We prove that those shoes belong to Bradshaw, and we are positive in our own minds that he is the Black Mask, the murderer of Bethmann. But what does that get us? Not a conviction in a court of law. The shoes will prove that Steve Bradshaw was in Bethmann's office on the night of the murder. But they do not prove that he was the hand that fired the fatal shot. They are a powerful piece of evidence, but we need more."

"And how does turning Bradshaw loose help us to get it?" asked the detective.

The inspector smiled grimly.

"I think I've succeeded in scaring Bradshaw pretty much," he said confidently. "He realises that he's on the spot. So, being the man he is, he'll try to pull off some fresh scheme. He'll try to trick us. And we'll be ready for him. We'll lay a trap. We're going to let him betray himself. Steve Bradshaw isn't the only smart man in this town."

BLACK MASK'S CHALLENGE

WHEN Steve arrived at his lodgings he found Sam Harris already there. Sam looked at him anxiously.

"What happened?" he asked tensely.

"The inspector seems pretty confident that he is going to have me hanged," Steve remarked with relish.

Sam's jaw dropped with dismay.

"Gosh, I was hoping that you'd got a trick up your sleeve," he groaned. "Get a railway time-table. We'll catch the next train."

"Where to?" Steve asked mildly.

"Anywhere!" cried the trainer wildly.

Steve took him by the arm.

"Come here, Sammy," he said. "Let me show you something."

He led the trainer to the front window and pointed to a man lounging under a street lamp.

"One of Inspector Collins' sleuths," said Steve pleasantly. "And now come this way."

He steered the trainer to the bath-room at the back of the apartment, and pointed to the alley below. The shadowy figure of a man could be seen patrolling up and down below.

"Another of 'em," he said cheerily. "This place is being watched front and back. I can't move a yard without being spotted. I was trailed all the way home from the police station."

Sam looked at him in despair.

"You're cornered, Steve!" he gulped. "You might just as well be in goal! I can't understand why Collins let you come home!"

"I can," smiled Steve. "He hasn't got enough evidence. He wants me to do something reckless. He wants me to stick my head in a noose. It would be a shame to disappoint him."

He picked up the telephone.

Sam clawed at his arm.

"Steve, what are you going to do?" he choked.

With a gentle grin on his face, Steve dialed the number of police headquarters. As the telephone was on an automatic exchange, it would be impossible for the call to be traced back to him. The only way in which he could be bowled out was if the police had already had his own wire tapped, and he was gambling on the fact that Collins wouldn't yet have gone that far.

A familiar voice barked over the wire.

"Is that Inspector Collins?" Steve asked in a gruff voice.

"Speaking!" snapped the inspector.

"This is Black Mask!" said Steve grimly.

The inspector ripped out a yell.

"Bradshaw! What are you trying to pull now?"

"You seem to have got the name wrong," Steve contradicted. "I said 'Black Mask.' Tell me, inspector, have you yet had a report on those shoes?"

"No!" snarled the inspector.

"I'm afraid you're in for a painful shock, inspector," said Steve smoothly. "Those are not Steve Bradshaw's shoes. Before jumping at conclusions you should have tried all the other possibilities—Bethmann, for example."

"What are you driving at?" snarled the inspector.

"The dead man's feet would have repaid investigation, inspector," Steve went on. "Those shoes were a pair belonging to Bethmann."

"Bradshaw," yelled the inspector, "listen a moment!"

"I wish you wouldn't keep referring to me by that name!" said Steve in pained tones.

"You do Steve Bradshaw an injustice, inspector. Why do you insist on calling him the Black Mask when you haven't got a shred of evidence to prove it?"

"You can't pull the wool over my eyes!" snapped Collins.

"I'm giving you a chance to prove that you're wrong!" Steve said mockingly. "Some time to-night, between ten o'clock and midnight, I shall visit the Milton Museum. In the Pottery Room, in the showcase numbered 8b, there is a pair of somewhat ugly china dogs—antique, but not particularly valuable. I shall remove them. Good-bye, inspector!"

At the other end of the line Collins continued to shout and splutter into the phone until he realised that the line had gone dead.

Then he slammed down the receiver, and told his assistants what had happened.

"We've got him!" he declared. "He's walked into our trap! I knew that if we kept goading him long enough that reckless bravado of his would make him over-reach himself, and, by Jove, he's done it!"

He jumped to his feet and strode briskly up and down the room.

"Have a cordon of constables thrown round the museum, with orders to arrest anyone who tries to get through!" he rapped.

"He won't dare to attempt it," argued one of the detectives. "It's just a bluff."

"He's mad enough for anything," retorted Collins. "He thinks that, just because he's been lucky once or twice before, he can get away with anything. But this is where he trips up. For one thing, his house is watched. He can't move a yard without being shadowed."

"You mean Steve Bradshaw's house?" asked one of the men.

"Of course. Who else?" rapped Inspector Collins.

"Supposing that Bradshaw isn't the Black Mask, after all?"

"Tchah!" snorted the inspector contemptuously.

He grabbed up his hat.

"Have my car sent round at once!" he snapped. "I'm going down to the museum to superintend the thing myself. We can't take any chances on having a slip-up."

The inspector drove through the streets in grim silence.

High iron railings surrounded the museum, and between the railings and the building itself was a narrow strip of gardens of ornamental shrubs.

As the inspector's car pulled up a constable moved quickly from the shadow of the high gates.

"Anything to report?" demanded the inspector.

"No, sir. No sign of him yet," answered the constable.

"Good!" grunted the inspector. "Open these gates, and lock 'em again as soon as I'm inside!"

"Yessir. We've got men patrolling the shrubberies, sir," said the constable.

"Excellent!" grinned Inspector Collins happily.

He went through the gates, which clanged shut after him. At the entrance to the museum he was met by the worried-looking curator.

At Inspector Collins' request, he led the way through several galleries, and stopped in front of a showcase.

"These are the china dogs that criminal has threatened to steal," he said.

He indicated a pair of pop-eyed china dogs—black-and-white Dalmatian coach dogs.

Inspector Collins scowled at them.

"The museum bought them from the collection of the late Mr. Bradshaw when his property was sold up after his death," the curator volunteered.

Inspector Collins looked at him quickly.

"Bradshaw? You mean Steve Bradshaw's father?" he exclaimed. "By thunder, that makes it all very interesting!"

He got a chair, drew it up close to the showcase, and sat down.

"All right; you can leave me here," he said. "I'm going to sit here and keep my eyes on those dogs. If our Black Mask can elude the men who are watching his house, get through locked gates, dodge the cordon of police we've put round this place, and lift those two china dogs right from under my eyes, he'll have to be a magician!"

MEANWHILE, in his bed-room at his lodgings, Steve was carefully laying out the black clothes and hat, the mask, and the black cotton gloves which he wore during his exploits as the Black Mask.

Sam Harris hovered in the background, with a distracted expression on his face.

"Steve," he pleaded, "you're not crazy enough to try to go through with this thing!"

"Black Mask always keeps his word, Sammy!" smiled Steve recklessly.

"But you'll be walking into a trap, Steve," insisted the trainer. "Give it up, won't you? Collins will nab you dead to rights!"

"I'm going to lift those two china dogs, Sammy," vowed Steve light-heartedly, "and our dear old pal Collins will never even see them go!"

You know—I know—Black Mask will keep his promise! But how will he manage to do it? Don't on any account miss the fine instalment in next Tuesday's TRIUMPH. Don't forget to order your copy to-day.



DERICKSON DENE

IN

SABOTAGE AND WAR

SYNOPSIS

DERICKSON DENE INVENTOR, IS MAROONED ON AN UNKNOWN PLANET. ROLF, HIS MECHANIC, IS CAPTURED BY THE PEOPLE OF A REBEL CITY, WHO PERFORM AN OPERATION ON HIM THAT MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO LIVE LONG OUT OF WATER. DENE RESCUES ROLF AND THEY ESCAPE TO A LOG CABIN IN WHICH LIVES AN OLD HERMIT NAMED HALJ. HE IS ILL, AND ASKS ROLF TO GO INTO THE WOODS NEAR BY TO GATHER CERTAIN PLANTS AND HERBS. UNKNOWN TO ROLF, A SNAKE CREEPS INTO THE BASKET IN WHICH HE IS PLACING THE HERBS. BACK IN THE HERMIT'S HUT, ROLF OPENS THE BASKET AND THE SNAKE FLASHES OUT, STRIKING FOR DENE'S THROAT.



QUICKER THAN THE STRIKE OF THE KING SNAKE, HALJ THE HERMIT WHIPS A KNIFE FROM ITS CASE BY HIS BEDSIDE AND SENDS IT WHISTLING THROUGH THE AIR, SEVERING THE DEADLY REPTILE'S HEAD.

A DISTILLATION OF THE HERBS IN TIME CURES THE OLD HERMIT. HE IN TURN HELPS ROLF WITH DRUGS.

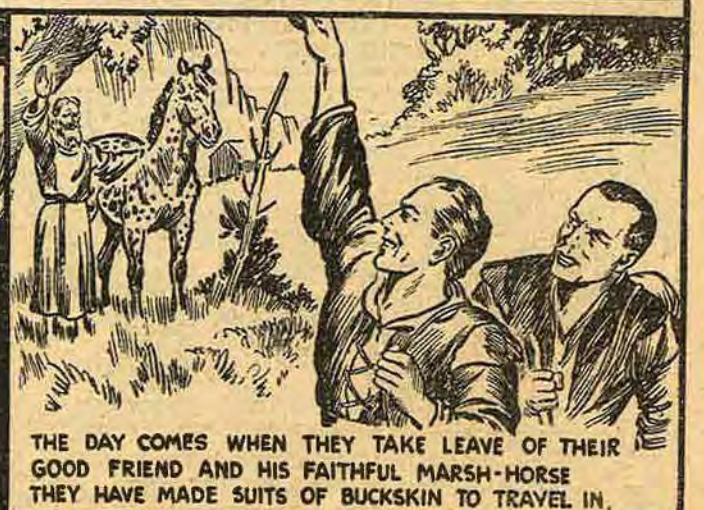
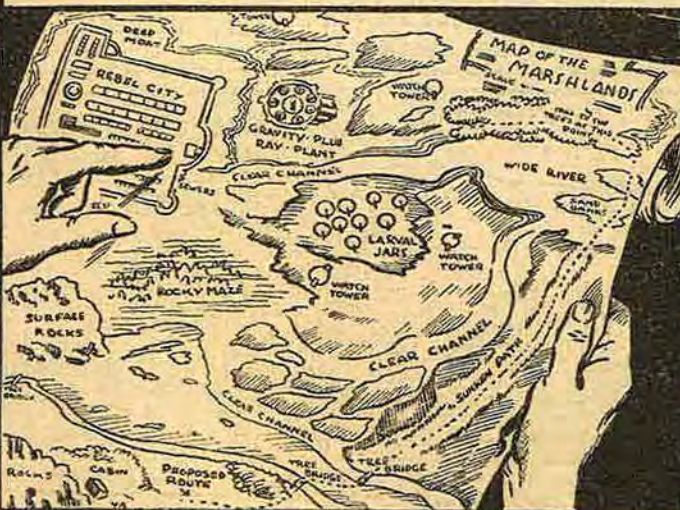
DENE SUGGESTS THAT HALJ SHOULD JOIN THEM IN THEIR ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE FROM REBEL TERRITORY

THANK YOU, MY SON, BUT THE YEARS I HAVE SPENT IN THIS VALLEY HAVE ENDEARED IT TO ME, AND WITH THE PRECAUTIONS I HAVE TAKEN AGAINST THE REBELS I HAVE A REASONABLE HOPE OF SPENDING THE YEARS THAT REMAIN TO ME IN PEACE



THIS GIFT, I PRAY YOU, ACCEPT IN TOKEN OF MY GRATITUDE. IT WILL HELP YOU TO RETURN TO YOUR FRIENDS

A MAP OF THE MARSHLANDS! HOW CAN I THANK YOU?



THE DAY COMES WHEN THEY TAKE LEAVE OF THEIR GOOD FRIEND AND HIS FAITHFUL MARSH-HORSE THEY HAVE MADE SUITS OF BUCKSKIN TO TRAVEL IN.



THEY FOLLOW THE SUNKEN PATH MARKED ON THE MAP BY THE HERMIT, BUT THE GOING IS DIFFICULT, FOR THE HOLLOW IS FILLED WITH BRAKES OF FERNS AND PALMS.



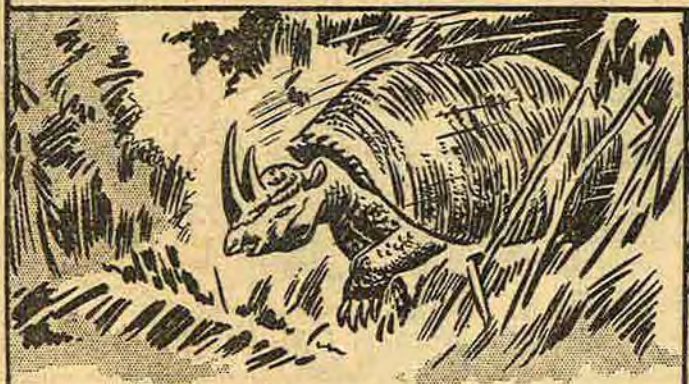
IN PLACES ROCKY BARRIERS BLOCK THE WAY AND THEY ARE FORCED TO NEGOTIATE DIFFICULT CLIMBS.



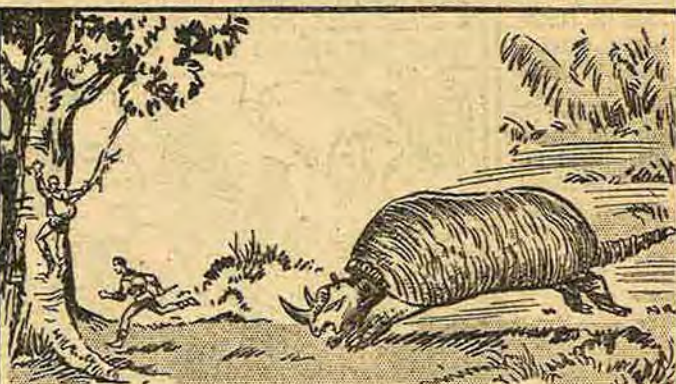
ONE OF THE TREE-BRIDGES HAS BECOME ROTTEN AND GIVES WAY UNDER THEIR WEIGHT. THEY MAKE A DESPERATE LEAP FOR SAFETY AND CHEAT THE SNAPPING CROCODILES.



SOME MILES FURTHER ON THEY ARE STARTLED BY A GREAT THRASHING IN THE UNDERGROWTH.



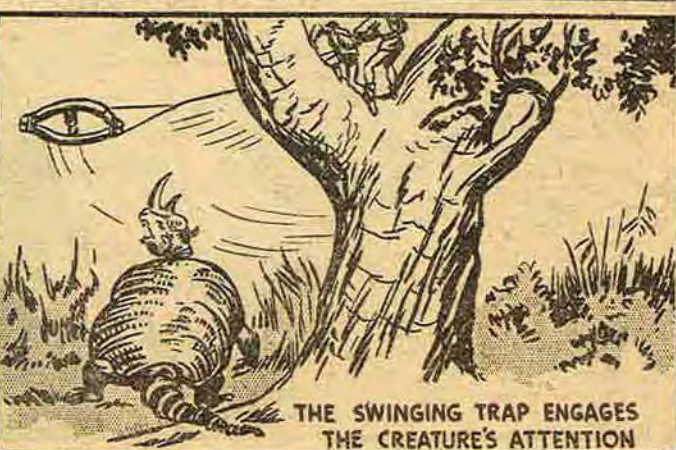
A SECOND LATER A HORNED GLYPTODON CHARGES FROM THE BRUSH.



AMAZED AT THE BRUTE'S SPEED, THEY DASH TO THE NEAREST TREE.



TREED BY THE GLYPTODON, THEY AT ONCE SET TO WORK TO CONTRIVE A TRAP FROM STOUT BRANCHES AND CREEPERS



THE SWINGING TRAP ENGAGES THE CREATURE'S ATTENTION



IT IS A SIMPLE MATTER TO CAST IT OVER THE BRUTE'S HEAD, THE TRIGGER IS KNOCKED OUT AND THE PLIABLE BRANCHES SNAP TIGHT.



WHILE THE BRUTE WRITHES IN THE ASPHYXIATING CLUTCH OF THE TRAP, DENE AND ROLF ESCAPE.



HURRY, IT WILL SOON FREE ITSELF!



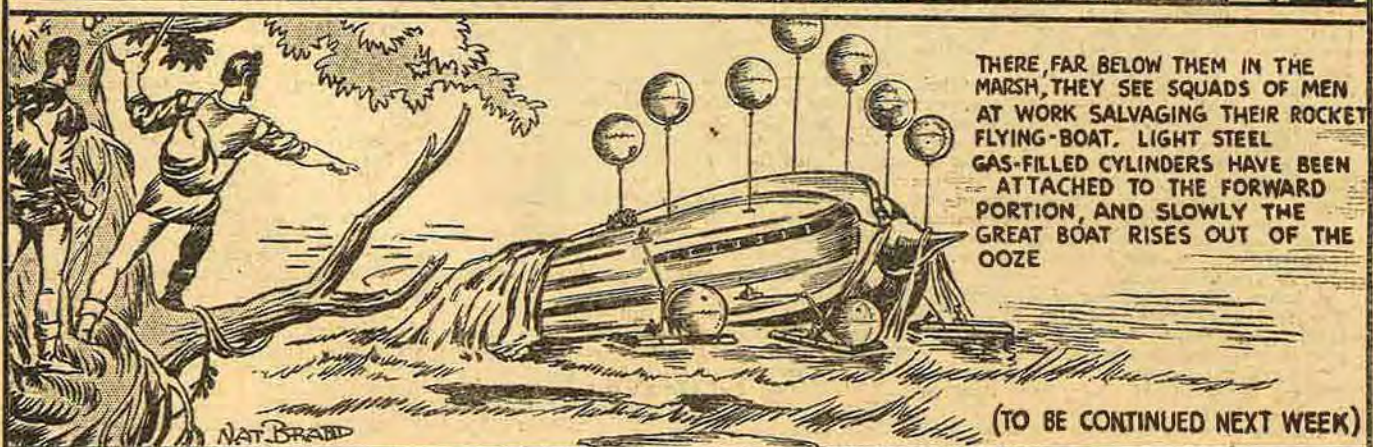
AFTER CROSSING THE SAND BANKS, HAVING WATCHED THE FREED ANIMAL TEAR OFF IN AN OPPOSITE DIRECTION, THEY CONSULT THE MAP AND NOTE THAT HALJ HAS RECOMMENDED TAKING TO THE TREES AT THIS POINT TO AVOID DETECTION.



THEY ARE, BY THIS TIME, NEARING THE GRAVITY-PLUS RAY PLANT, AND THEY ARE GLAD THEY HAVE KEPT TO THE PATH THE HERMIT SUGGESTED. THERE IS CERTAINLY LESS CHANCE OF BEING SPOTTED AMONGST THE DENSE FOLIAGE BY THE WATCH-TOWER TELESCOPES



LOOK!



THERE, FAR BELOW THEM IN THE MARSH, THEY SEE SQUADS OF MEN AT WORK SALVAGING THEIR ROCKET FLYING-BEAT. LIGHT STEEL GAS-FILLED CYLINDERS HAVE BEEN ATTACHED TO THE FORWARD PORTION, AND SLOWLY THE GREAT BOAT RISES OUT OF THE OOZE

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

NAT BRADB

READ THIS SMASHING YARN AND ENJOY THE THRILLS OF A MAN-HUNT BY NIGHT WITH—

JACK MURRAY ACE RIVER COP



THE HOUSE OF DEATH

EASY, Silent! If you drop that packet overboard there's one thousand pounds gone to the bottom of the Thames!

A harsh, guttural voice rasped out the words. Then there was silence again over the black waterway between the crane-festered wharves.

"Jove, Ken! What the blazes is happening?"

Jack Murray, big-shot river cop, grunted the words to Ken Sharpe, his assistant.

Their police launch, on night patrol down-river, was nosing its way through the black-out close to the north bank. Both cops wore a pair of headphones attached to an instrument called a radioscope.

Without this gadget they would never have heard that guttural voice. Its secret was a special microphone which amplified conversation or any other sound up to half a mile away so that it could be plainly heard.

By means of a telescopic sighting device, only sounds coming from one particular spot were picked up. Everything else was cut out.

A second later the guttural voice rasped out again:

"All set, Silent? Good! Well, don't forget there's some stuff to come back. And don't be too curious. No one comes back alive from the House of Death if he finds out too much! Any man who discovers the identity of Phantom-face is dead meat! Remember No. 1, No. 6, and No. 10? They went into the House of Death, and were never heard of again! Ah, just a moment! Von Reinhardt wants a word with you."

"Shucks!" ejaculated Ken. "Phantom-face, alias the Spy in Grey, the Nazi master-spy the British Secret Service has been hunting for ever since war broke out!"

"Yes," grunted Jack. "It's said that he's the master-mind behind dozens of leakages of vital information. The Home Office know the Nazis have got the information from messages sent by British Secret Service men in Germany, but the mystery is how it ever got to the Nazis. Who is Phantom-face? Where is the House of Death? Two questions nobody can answer. 'Sh-sh-sh! Someone with a German accent is speaking now. It must be Von Reinhardt.'"

A harsh voice grated out of the blackness. The radioscope dials told the cops that it came from a cargo-boat which was an indistinct blur against the river skyline.

"Here's the docket!" said the voice. "Hurry off now! If you're late Phantom-face'll strafe the lot of us!"

The sound of the spy's boat grinding along

the side of the ship came to the cops, and a second later Ken exclaimed:

"Heck, Jack, there she is!"

A black smudge was streaking over the water. It had cut out from the cargo-boat and was swerving wildly across the fairway. Then it tore off down the river.

Jack's foot stabbed down on the accelerator. "We're goin' after him!" he snapped. "We're gonna find the House of Death and unmask Phantom-face!"

With a roar, the police launch shot forward, sheets of spray flying from her bows.

Ken strained his ears into the headphones, and presently he let out an exclamation:

"Jack, I reckon he's cutting into the bank!"

Both cops listened intently.

"He's slowing down," muttered Jack.

"Yes, he's making for the north bank."

Stealthily the police launch nosed her way along close to the shore, rapidly overhauling the spy's boat. No lights showed from the river banks on either side. London was, of course, completely blacked out.

"There she is!" Ken grunted suddenly.

The spy's boat was making its way across the river, and, as it did so, something else caught Ken's attention.

"Jumping rattlesnakes!" he cried. "There you are! That's the House of Death! It looks like it, too, by gosh!"

The cops stared at the sinister outline of the Nazi spy's headquarters, silhouetted black against the river skyline. The building was practically round in shape, and there were three tall chimney-stacks within a few feet of each other in the centre of the roof.

The spy's boat was now moving slowly closer to the sinister building. Through the headphones the cops heard him making fast. Then came his stealthy footsteps as he crept over the landing-stage and on towards the house.

Suddenly the footsteps ceased, and though Jack and Ken strained their ears into the headphones, they could hear nothing which might give them a clue as to what was happening.

"Something darned fishy has befallen our friend Silent!" muttered Jack.

For another few moments they waited. Then Jack's grip tightened on the wheel.

"Come on!" he snapped. "Let's go and see what is up."

Jack gave the launch just enough power to keep her moving, and when they were within fifty yards of the House of Death he cut off the engine.

The launch had enough way to carry her silently to the shore. Grrr, grrr! Her nose bumped the rotted piles of the wooden jetty.

A minute later the cops crept ashore. "Blazes, Ken!" Jack muttered. "Gonna be a bit of a job getting into this place!"

Ken saw what his pal meant. Surrounding the House of Death was a fence of close-mesh steel wire about twelve feet high. Ken looked farther along it, and then grabbed Jack's arm.

"Heck!" he gasped, "look at that!"

Jack followed his pal's pointing finger, and a gasp escaped him. Silent, the Nazi spy, was looting over the top of the wire fence. The cops were experienced enough to know at a glance that the man was dead.

Jack ran forward and flashed his torch on the man's face, and paled as he stared at the terribly distorted features.

"The fence is electrified!" Jack snapped. "Phantom-face has rigged his headquarters in regular Nazi style. Stand clear. I'll soon fetch this dead man down!"

He whipped a length of rubber rope from his pocket. He always carried it with him; and it had often come in handy.

Swiftly making a noose, he whirled it through the air. It settled over the spy's head. Jack gave a tug, and the dead man crashed to the ground.

"I suppose we'd better get him down to the morg," muttered Ken, "and give the boys the location of the House of Death."

"Not so quickly," answered Jack. "Phantom-face'll be on his guard if this man Silent doesn't turn up on time. The odds are he'll have made a getaway down-river by the time we got the place surrounded. Now we're so close we'd better have a look in this House of Death."

Ken rubbed his chin thoughtfully for a moment.

"O.K., Jack!" he said. "But how?"

"Off with his coat!" Jack replied. "I'll impersonate him! With the coat collar turned up and the cap pulled down over my face, the Grey Spy won't know the difference! There's the identification docket and the package of papers for credentials."

"But how are you gonna get over the fence?" questioned Ken.

"I'll show you in a sec!" answered Jack. "Where's his coat?"

Ken helped him on with the coat. With a muffer round his mouth, and the seaman's peaked cap pulled down over his eyes, hardly any of his face showed.

"Now," he muttered, as he shoved the identification docket into his pocket. "The next job is the fence. Well, I've got rubber boots on. Come on, bend down. I'm going to stand on your shoulders and then spring over the fence!"

Ken bent down and Jack climbed on to

his shoulders. The cop poised himself carefully, and then leapt up into the air with all his strength.

Blinding blue sparks flashed and crackled up at his body. His toe had caught the top of the fence! His leg went numb. Hands clutching wildly, he crashed to the ground on the opposite side, toppling head over heels.

For a moment he lay still. Then he crawled slowly to his feet. His shoulder was bruised, but he could walk on his leg, which had been burnt slightly through his rubber boots.

"Back in a few minutes, Ken!" he whispered, then turned and made his way through the darkness towards the House of Death. He reached a half-open door, pushed against it, and crept inside.

From what he could make out he was in a sort of vestibule. He dare not use his torch. Silently he crept forward.

Suddenly there was a click, and the cop stiffened. A second later a blinding light flashed on, and he blinked helplessly in the glare.

THE SEVENTH SIGNAL

"STICK 'em up!" snarled a guttural voice. It came from a kind of desk which ran the length of one side of the room.

Jack swivelled round. A heavy-jowled tough was pointing an automatic at him. He was dressed in the black shirt and jack boots of a Nazi storm trooper.

Phantom-face evidently felt so safe in his hide-out that he allowed his followers to dress as they would at home in Germany.

Jack slowly raised his hands, his brain working at lightning speed.

"It's all right, you fool!" he muttered. "I want to see Phantom-face with a package of papers!"

He had taken the precaution of having the identification docket ready in his hand, and now he flung it on the desk.

"There you are. Now put that gun away." The Nazi examined the docket closely. Evidently he was satisfied, for he lowered his gun and put it down on the desk.

"You've been here before, haven't you?" he said. "Well, you'd better go up. You know the way, don't you? I remember you now, by your muffer."

"And I remember you," said Jack quickly. "You'd better turn that current off, though; there's another of the boys from the ship coming up here with some more stuff in a few minutes."

"Doesn't he know the secret way through the fence, then?" queried the Nazi.

"No; he's a fresh man," Jack answered.

"All right."

The Nazi turned to a switchboard. There was a click, and the current was cut off. Jack would now have a better chance of escaping if he was unmasked and had to cut and run for it.

"I'll ring up and tell Phantom-face you're here," granted the German.

He reached for the internal phone and spoke swiftly in German to the Master Spy. Then he replaced the receiver and turned to Jack again.

"I've got to see the package before you go up!" he said.

Jack pulled the papers out of his pocket and laid them on the desk. The Nazi glanced at the envelope. Then something about Jack's sleeve caught his attention, and he looked hard into the cop's face.

In a flash Jack realised what was wrong. The German had noticed the blue serge sleeve of Jack's police jacket.

"You're an impostor!" the Nazi shouted.

He turned like lightning, and made a dive for the switchboard to give the alarm. But quick as he was, Jack moved quicker. His fist swung up between the storm trooper and the board.

Thwack!

The man's own momentum, combined with the force of Jack's punch, sent him crashing to the floor, out for the count.

Jack gazed at his inert form. What next? Suddenly a stealthy sound came to his ears,

and his eyes swept swiftly round the room. Again the sound came, and this time Jack located it.

Someone's almost silent footfall just outside the door!

Jack snapped off the light, then quickly fished out the automatic from the unconscious storm trooper's pocket. Gripping it firmly, he crept towards the door.

Then a sigh of relief escaped him as he dimly made out Ken's burly form.

"Come inside—quick!" he whispered. He hurriedly told Ken what had happened. "You found the secret way through the fence?"

"I'll say! I thought I'd better come and see what was happening!"

"Good man!" grunted Jack.

He paused. What was the next move?

Then he had it.

"Quick!" he exclaimed. "Put that storm trooper's clothes on, then I'll tie him up. You're gonna be the doorman for a few minutes. I'm going up aloft to have palava with the Phantom. I'll get the run of the place for one thing—and, what's more important, I'll see his face, and be able to give a description of him if he gets away this time."

Ken rigged himself out in the Nazi's black shirt and jack boots, and Jack quickly trussed up the doorman.

"Right-ho!" muttered Jack, at length. "Keep your eye on that switchboard, and try to find out what all those gadgets are for. I'm going to see Phantom-face now."

Jack found the staircase and went quickly up them, snapping on his torch. It was safe to use it now, as Phantom-face knew he was coming. He tried several doors, but the rooms were empty.

He got to the third floor. A corridor led towards a great heavy oak door. Jack made his way up to it, and was within a couple of yards of it when it silently swung open.

The cop stepped forward, but another great door confronted him. It was about five feet behind the first. He took another step, and again the same thing happened. The second door opened noiselessly.

But this time there was no further barrier. Facing him from behind a great mahogany desk was Phantom-face, the Nazi master spy.

He was tall and lean, and had the most repulsive features Jack had ever seen. His vivid eyes flashed as his thin, cruel lips parted in a supercilious snarl.

"Where do you think you've been, Silent?" he grated. "Think I've got all night to waste? Come on, hand over the stuff! There's some to go back to the ship. It must be got out of England without a second's delay!"

Jack advanced slowly towards the Nazi, a bold plan forming in his mind.

The envelope the Nazi was holding out to him obviously contained information of vital importance. Could he get possession of it and also keep the packet of papers he had already got?

Ten to one these documents would yield enough clues to enable the Secret Service to track down the cream of Germany's spies in England.

"Come on, come on! We haven't got all night!" spat the Nazi irritably.

But Jack was coming quickly enough! He leapt at the spy chief. A second later he had torn the envelope from the surprised German's grasp and was rushing for the door.

He wasn't worrying about scaring Phantom-face into making a getaway now he knew the lay of the House of Death and would recognise Phantom-face again.

Once he and Ken got back to their launch they could get word to the station and have the building surrounded and the ship boarded in a few minutes.

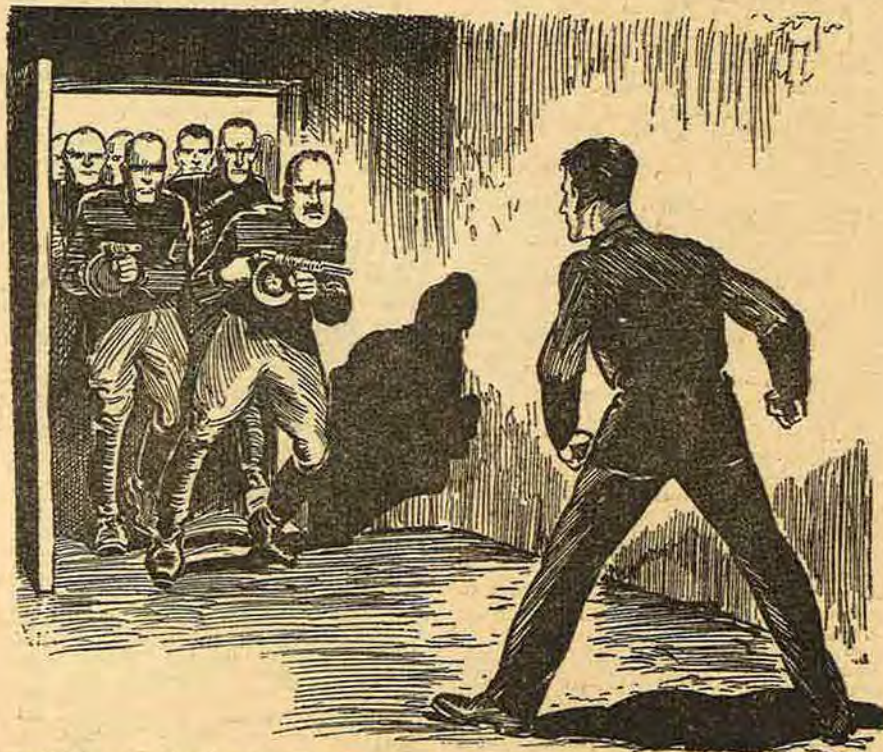
For a moment Phantom-face was too astounded by Jack's sudden move to do anything. Then he recovered from his amazement.

He saw that Jack was in the corridor between the two great heavy oaken doors, and his foot came down on a hidden button underneath his desk.

The next instant Jack felt the floor moving under him. He flung out his arms wildly, but he felt himself hurtling towards the side of the corridor, where he crashed to the floor.

It was still moving beneath him. The section between the two great doors was disappearing beneath the wall of the corridor!

There was a click and the wall opened, and the moving floor carried the cop through it.



Suddenly a door in the underground cell swung open, and Jack saw a crowd of men, each armed with a sub-machine gun, flood into the room, their fierce gazes and their weapons fixed on him.

He was being carried on an endless band. He was now in pitch blackness. He felt himself going downwards. Wheels grated. It was like riding on an escalator without steps. The endless band was running on bogies, which in turn ran on two rails at either side.

Suddenly it took a sharp plunge downwards, and Jack clutched wildly for support. But the smooth floor gave him no chance of getting the slightest hold.

The band tilted down still farther. He lost his balance. Head over heels he went crashing downwards on the rapidly moving band.

Suddenly he sensed an obstacle in front of him and flung up his hands. A second later he hurtled through some swing doors, landing with a thud in the middle of a pile of rubbish.

Apart from a few bruises, he was unhurt, and he gave a grunt of relief. At any rate, he was off that infernal cakewalk!

He switched on his torch. Could he get back again through those swing doors if Phantom-face cut off the power driving the chute? He shone the beam on the doors, and even as he did so they swung to.

The cop was imprisoned, and the torch showed him he was in a stone cellar, concreted like a dungeon.

He heard a slight sound behind him and swung round, every sense alert.

A strip of light showed at the bottom of a concealed door at the far end of the cellar.

A second later the door slid back, an overhead light flashed on, and nearly a dozen black-shirted storm troopers piled into the cellar. They were evidently Phantom-face's bodyguard, and were all armed with sub-machine-guns.

"Hands up!" growled the leader.

Although he still had the doorman's automatic, Jack saw that it would be sudden death to try to shoot it out.

He raised his hands, and as he did so the storm troopers moved to one side, and Phantom-face strode into the cellar.

"Tie him up!" he snapped.

A dozen hands seized Jack. The automatic, the two vital envelopes, and the identity docket were seized, and Jack was soon crisscrossed up so that he could scarcely breathe.

They laid him on the stone floor, and Phantom-face stared down at him, murder flaming from his cold blue eyes.

"So you're an English policeman, are you?" he snarled. "Well, no Englishman sees my face and lives!"

He turned to his bodyguard.

"Bring him down to the bottom!" he rasped. Jack was grabbed by the shoulders and feet, carried out of the door the Nazis had come through, down some steps. The smell of stagnant water came up to him. Where was he being taken? What fiendish fate had they in store for him?

They soon reached the bottom of the steps, where a breath of foul air assailed the cop's nostrils. The white beams of the Nazis' torches showed him that he was in an underground tunnel. He glanced downwards.

"Curious?" purred Phantom-face. "This is the River of Death. It was a disused sewer until we took it in hand!"

Jack saw that he was being carried along a ledge about three feet wide. The rest of the space in the tunnel was taken up by a slowly flowing underground river.

"It is—er—smelly, but very useful," the Nazi went on again. "Twenty men have died in this stream, as you are going to die to-night!"

He turned to his men.

"Right! Heave him in!" he spat.

Jack set his teeth as he felt himself being swung backwards towards the wall, then forward over the foul-smelling water!

In that instant there was a shrill shriek from just over the cop's head. It came from a powerful electric siren. The Nazis stood transfixed, too surprised to let go of the cop's body. Phantom-face paled and his hands trembled.

"The seventh signal!" he quavered. "That means the police! Ulrich at the door has given the alarm! Quick, you fools! The launch! She's down the sewer there! It's our only chance of escape!"

SCUTTLE THE NAZIS

BRAVE only when protected by a dozen or two S.S. men, the Nazi's nerve completely failed him at the mere thought of a cold morning walk to face the avenging rifles of a British firing-squad.

A moment later he was running along the narrow pathway to his boat. For months he had had a dozen men deepening and widening and camouflaging the entrance, so that his launch could be kept ready for an instant getaway.

The rest of the Nazis did not waste any time. They let go of Jack as if he were a red-hot poker, and tore after Phantom-face.

The cop crashed down. Fortunately, they had not been holding him right over the sewer when the alarm had sounded. The lower part of his body splashed into the water, his shoulders hit the path.

Frantically he tried to stop himself slipping completely under water.

But in that instant he felt himself gripped by the collar. A strong arm hauled him to the surface, and a torch flashed in his face.

"Nearly finished you that time!" said a familiar voice.

It was Ken.

Jack gasped.

"How the deuce did you find me down here, Ken?" he asked.

"I've been following you with the radioscope. I heard you up in Phantom-face's room, then I lost you. Next thing I got was the Nazis threatening to drown you. There was a lever on the switchboard with a particularly distinctive sign over it. I guessed it must be a special signal of some sort, so I lugged the switch over. Then I heard the Nazis beating it, and I hurried down like blazes to get you out!"

"Smart work, Ken! You certainly saved my bacon that time! But now we've got to catch 'em. Come on, back to the launch. At all costs we must prevent the vital information they've got leaving the country."

The cops were soon back on the river, and with the help of Ken's radioscope, it was not long before they got on the trail of the Nazi's boat. Mile after mile they chased her, and at length she cut in to the stern of a ship.

Remaining some distance away, the pals picked up the sounds of the Nazis going

aboard. Jack studied the black silhouette of the ship.

"Jove!" he cried. "That's not the boat Silent came from! She had two funnels—this tub's only got one. Look, she's on the move again, with the launch in tow. They're not wasting any time. I suppose Phantom-face is running from the few score of police boats he thinks are chasing him!"

"Say, we'd better head back for the station and give the alarm now, hadn't we?" muttered Ken.

"No good if we did," grunted Jack. "We can't give the inspector any description of the ship, except that she's got one funnel. We don't know her name or her nationality. Our best plan is to try to get a line on them by means of the radioscope. Then perhaps we could give the station enough information to be fairly sure of getting the right ship."

For some minutes the cops followed the boat without getting anything more than the normal sounds of a ship on the move. Then suddenly Jack let out an exclamation.

"Jove, I've got something!" he cried. "I've got the skipper's cabin. There's a deuce of an argument going on. Tune in same as me."

Phantom-face was talking. He had got a grip of himself again, and was speaking in his usual bullying manner, evidently to the captain.

"You may be in charge of the ship, Herr Thessen," he snarled, "but unless you do as I say, you will be sent to a concentration camp when we reach Hamburg! You must stop when we get abreast of the Cuxhaven. As you know, she is sailing under the American flag, and her name has been changed to Talbotville. I'm going across to her in the launch. Her captain has a packet of vital plans which I left with him for safe keeping in the event of a raid on the House of Death. We—"

"But the police!" the skipper cut in. "If we stop we'll be wasting twenty minutes at least."

"Police or no police, we must stop, Captain Thessen!" grated Phantom-face. "I cannot go without that packet of papers!"

"But—"

Phantom-face cut him short with a furious roar of rage.

"Either you put in," he raved, "or I'll have you clamped in irons. Your first mate will take control of this ship, and you will be put in a concentration camp the moment we reach Germany. I—a Gestapo man—can promise you that!"

"I'll stop!" muttered the skipper.

Out on the river the cops, their ears glued to the headphones, were listening intently. How were they going to prevent Phantom-face escaping with the vital plans?

By the time they had given the alarm the ship would have collected the papers from the Talbotville, the vessel Silent had come from, and would be miles down-river.

Even if steps were immediately taken to stop all shipping leaving the estuary, the Nazis' ship would probably evade the patrol boats and get to sea. The cops had no description of her—not even her name.

She slowed down as she approached the Talbotville, and came to a stop within twenty-five yards of the other boat. As she did so Jack let out an exclamation, and smote his fist on his palm.

"I've got it, Ken!" he cried. "Wait until they've gone over to the other ship. The tough crowd'll go with Phantom-face. You take the launch close in to the side of this ship, and let me get aboard. If I can get into the wheelhouse I'll hold the ship. You can go off in the launch and get the boys down quick."

Ken grunted his disapproval. He didn't like the idea of leaving Jack alone to put his daring plan into operation.

But Jack was determined.

"There they go!" he cried. The launch, filled with the Nazis, was making its way across to the other ship.

"The other boat hasn't got steam up," muttered Jack. "Come on!"

(Concluded on back page.)

Pepys Series

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AGAIN!

THIS WEEK:
LEVISON'S DOUBLE

IN THE HUT ON THE MOOR

"GWEAT Scott!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy uttered that exclamation quite suddenly.

That afternoon was a half-holiday at St. Jim's, and for once Arthur Augustus had left the regular footer match to the tender mercies of Tom Merry & Co.—though with some inward misgivings as to the result.

Arthur Augustus had been busy that afternoon. The swell of St. Jim's had received a remittance by morning post, and had felt the necessity of doing some urgent shopping.

His purchases made at Rylcombe, he had started for home, satisfied with his afternoon's activity.

Then it had come on to rain, and Arthur Augustus' satisfaction had been diminished. He had his coat on, fortunately, so his elegant clobber was quite safe; but he hadn't his umbrella, so his shining topper was exposed to the fury of the elements. And Arthur Augustus promptly looked round for shelter.

He was taking a short cut home across a corner of Wayland Moor. He remembered an old shepherd's hut on the moor.

He reached it in a few minutes, and, as he entered the dilapidated little building, he uttered a surprised exclamation, and stopped dead on the threshold.

The shepherd's hut was not unoccupied. There were three persons in the hut, seated on broken old beams round an upturned bucket which served the purpose of a card-table.

One of them was a fat, red-faced man whom Arthur Augustus recognised as a book-maker, named Banks. Another was a dingy-looking young man with watery eyes and flabby features, and a general air of dilapidation.

D'Arcy had seen him before—he was employed in Wayland. His name was Stubbs, and he honoured a local estate agent's office with his valuable services. But it was the third of the trio upon whom the astonished eyes of Arthur Augustus were fixed.

That individual was a boy dressed in light brown clothes and a cloth cap with no distinctive badge on it. But his face was perfectly well known to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Levison, bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus jammed his monocle more tightly into his eye, and regarded the youth in grey with special attention.

Was it Ernest Levison of the Fourth Form of St. Jim's, or Levison's double?

The features were exactly Levison's—there was no doubt about that; and Ernest Levison had strongly marked features that were not easily mistaken. His nose was a little prominent, and inclined to be aquiline. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy could almost have sworn to that nose.

The youth looked a little stouter than Levison, that was all. Yes; now that D'Arcy observed him closely, he did look stouter

than the black sheep of the Fourth—of thicker build altogether.

The three card-players, after a stare at Arthur Augustus, went on with their game quite regardless of his presence.

"Bai Jove! Is it you, Levison?" D'Arcy exclaimed.

"Your deal, Smith!" said Mr. Banks.

The junior in brown took the cards and shuffled them.

"I say, you—" said D'Arcy, giving the youth who had been addressed as Smith a prod in the back. "You're Levison, surely!"

The junior looked up, still shuffling the cards.

"Hallo! Who are you?" he asked.

"Bai Jove! I know your voice, too, Levison. You are perfectly well aware who I am."

"Don't know you from Adam," said the junior. "You're something like the dummy in Mr. Wigg's window in Rylcombe."

"You wude fellah! Your name is not Smith. You are Levison!"

"Oh, don't be funny!"

"You have p'obably changed your clothes outside the school," said Arthur Augustus.

The junior laughed.

"Yes; this is grand weather for changing one's clothes out of doors," he remarked.

"I am quite sure that you're Levison."

"Don't jaw, then; you're interrupting the game."

"Look here," said Mr. Banks, looking round, "you wasn't asked to come in 'ere, Mister D'Arcy—"

"I came in out of the wain."

"Well, if you can't keep your 'ead shut you'll go out into the rain again," said Mr. Banks. "Mind your own business, and don't worry my friend Smith."

"His name is not Smith. He is Levison of the Fourth."

"Which he is something like Mister Levison," admitted Mr. Banks, with a grin. "I noticed it myself. I know Mister Levison, but this 'ere young gentleman is 'Erbert Smith."

"Wats!"

"Oh, get on with the game!" said Mr. Stubbs. "Never mind that tailor's dummy."

"Well, let 'im keep 'is 'ead shut!" growled Mr. Banks. "He ain't wanted 'ere!"

"I wufuse to keep my head shut!"

With a snort of wrath Mr. Banks leaped to his feet, and Mr. Stubbs followed his example. The junior in brown threw himself at Arthur Augustus, and the two men promptly went to his aid. Three pairs of hands grasped Arthur Augustus at the same moment.

"Kick 'im out!" roared Mr. Banks.

"Bai Jove! Welease me, you wottahs!" gasped Arthur Augustus, as he was propelled violently towards the door. "I will thrash you all one aftah anothah! Gweat Scott! Yawooh!"

Bump! Splash!

Right through the doorway the elegant form of Arthur Augustus went hurtling, and he landed in a puddle.

"Haw, haw, haw!" roared Mr. Banks, as D'Arcy rolled in the rain and mud.

"Oh ewikey!"

"Haw, haw, haw!"

Arthur Augustus leaped up like a jack-in-the-box. For once he forgot his clothes. He charged back into the doorway of the hut like an infuriated rhinoceros. But there were three against him, and he had no chance. Promptly he was collared again and hurled forth, and again he reposed in the puddle.

This time he lay gasping for breath, and the three gamblers returned to their game, chuckling.

LEVISON AT HOME

"Oh ewikey!"

Arthur Augustus sat up dazedly.

He had been pommelled pretty severely, and hurled forth with a heavy bump, and he was dizzy and breathless. But he realised that he was sitting in two inches of water and an inch of mud, and he scrambled to his feet.

He cast a dismayed glance down at his coat and trousers. They were simply smothered with mud. And his elegant topper had sailed away, and was reposing in another puddle.

Arthur Augustus collected it up sorrowfully, and shook some of the wet and mud from it. He did not charge into the hut again. The swell of St. Jim's was as brave as a lion, but he realised that he had no chance against three at a time.

The rain had stopped falling, and evidently the three in the hut decided not to carry on with their game, for they came through the door and bade each other loud farewells.

Mr. Banks and Mr. Stubbs started off by the footpath towards Wayland, and the junior in brown made his way across the moor, towards the wood, through which a footpath led to the lane near St. Jim's. The direction he was taking was another proof that he was really Levison. He ignored the swell of the Fourth as he passed him.

Arthur Augustus looked after him and hesitated. To prove that the fellow was Levison he had only to follow him, see him change his clothes, and run him down as far as the school.

He was justified in shadowing the cad of the Fourth in order to prove his deception. Of course, he had no intention of sneaking on the subject. But for the satisfaction of himself, D'Arcy felt an irresistible desire to discover whether the lad in brown was Levison or not.

So Arthur Augustus cautiously followed on the track of the junior in brown.

The rain commenced to drizzle again, but D'Arcy hardly noticed it in his concentration to keep his quarry in sight.

The junior in brown did not look back. If it

was Levison, he seemed to be unusually simple and unsuspicious. Levison of the Fourth might have been expected to be very wary, and to keep his eyes very wide open.

But evidently the fellow in brown was not on his guard at all, for he did not glance back once, and did not even hear, apparently, the occasional squeal of the amateur detective's shoes in the puddles on the moor.

About twenty yards ahead of the swell of St. Jim's he entered the footpath through the wood and disappeared among the trees.

Arthur Augustus broke into a run. He was quite sure that the junior in brown did not suspect that he was shadowed. But if Levison scooted through the wood the track would be lost.

D'Arcy ran in among the trees. It was a narrow footpath, a mere track winding among the trees, still almost leafless, but some of them showing the first green of spring.

The junior in brown had vanished.

Arthur Augustus ran down the footpath at the risk of overtaking the shadowed junior and putting him on his guard.

But the junior had gone. Evidently he had taken to the trees on one side or other of the footpath, and the thickets and brambles hid him from sight.

Arthur Augustus halted, breathing hard.

He had shadowed the boy so carefully that he was sure that he had not been suspected. He did not think, therefore, that Levison was purposely dodging him. Doubtless Levison had cut off to some secluded spot where he was to change his clothes before returning to St. Jim's.

"Bothah!" muttered Arthur Augustus. "I have lost him. But it doesn't matter. I'll return to St. Jim's, and be there before he is in his study all afternoon."

Arthur Augustus hurried off towards the school.

From Wayland Moor to St. Jim's was a good long walk, and the swell of the school was very nearly breathless when he arrived at the gates, having run part of the way, and walked the rest as fast as he could.

If the black sheep of the Fourth had stayed in the wood to change his clothes, however quick he was he could hardly have reached the school ahead of D'Arcy. D'Arcy was much more fit than Levison, and a quicker and better walker, and he had not lost an instant.

He came in breathlessly at the gates as dusk was falling. He paused a moment at Taggles' lodge to speak to the porter.

"Taggles, deah boy!"

"Allo!" said Taggles.

"Have you seen Levison come in?"

"Which I ain't," said Taggles. "Ain't seed 'im go out, neither, for that matter."

"Very good!"

Arthur Augustus hurried on. A voice hailed him from the tuckshop.

"Here he is. Come and have a ginger-pop, Gussy!"

"Sowwy, Blake, I can't stop!"

"Fathead! We've beaten the New House!"

shouted Blake. "Talbot kicked the winning goal. Come and celebrate with us!"

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus stopped then. "You have weally won the match without me in the team, deah boys?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, easier than usual," answered Tom Merry. "Take a little walk every time we play a House match, old chap, and we shall knock the New House sky-high."

"Weally, Tom Merry—"

"We're celebrating!" called out Talbot.

"Come and have a ginger-pop, Gussy!"

"I am in wathah a huwvy. I have stwuck a wathah wemarkable mystery," said Arthur Augustus. "I am not quite suah whethah or not Levison has a double."

"A double?" said Tom Merry, in surprise.

"What are you getting at? I say, what are you doing with all that mud over your clothes?"

D'Arcy explained.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the juniors, thinking

D'Arcy, who was easily fooled, had been deceived again.

Arthur Augustus took no notice of their "wude" laughter.

"I have huwried back to make suah of bein' in befoah the boundah gets back," he said. "I am goin' to his study now. When he sneaks in by the back way I shall be waitin' for him there."

"Good!" said Blake. "We'll come with you."

Quite a crowd of juniors accompanied D'Arcy into the School House and up to the Fourth Form passage. Arthur Augustus explained more fully to them as they went his adventure on Wayland Moor.

"Heah we are, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, as they reached Levison's study. "Now we'll just see that he isn't there, and— Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus had opened the study door. The study was not empty. There were two juniors there—Blenkinsop and Levison!

The crowd of fellows in the passage gasped. "Levison! My hat! Then D'Arcy must have seen his double!"

TRIAL BY JURY

LEVISON glanced round carelessly, and Arthur Augustus' eyes almost devoured him.

Levison was dressed in the school blazer suit, as usual. Arthur Augustus looked at Levison's shoes. There was no mud on them—none of the mud that must have been left on the shoes of the fellow in grey, after his tramp on the moor. Merely a few stains such as he might have picked up in the quadrangle of St. Jim's.

"Bai Jove!"

"Levison!"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Levison.

The black sheep of the Fourth had a chess-board on his knees, and a newspaper cutting in his hand. He was apparently working out a chess problem. He seemed surprised by that sudden visit of so many juniors.

"Dear me!" said Blenkinsop. "What is the matter?"

"Levison, how on earth did you get in without bein' seen?"

Levison looked surprised.

"What are you driving at?" he inquired.

Arthur Augustus looked nonplussed.

"I thought I saw you on Wayland Moor," he said.

"Well, I haven't been on Wayland Moor," said Levison lazily.

"You were playin' cards with Mr. Banks and that fellah Stubbs of Wayland."

"Anything else?"

"And you all three piled on me and clucked me out of the shepherd's hut into the wain when I stowed to take you home," exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Oh, pile it on!"

"And I followed you across the moor as fah as the wood."

"Keep it up!"

"You disappeared in the wood, and I know vewy well that you went somewhah to change your clothes."

"Hear, hear!"

"And then, somehow or othah, you got in ahead of me," said Arthur Augustus, breathing hard through his aristocratic nose.

"Bravo!"

"And I'm goin' to give you a fearful thwashin', you wottah!" shouted the swell of St. Jim's, utterly exasperated by Levison's humorous reception of his accusation.

"Hold on!" said Tom Merry, catching the excited swell of the Fourth by the arm as he was rushing to the attack.

"I wufuse to hold on, Tom Merry."

"Hold hard," said Talbot of the Shell.

"Let's have this out before you begin punchin' noses, Gussy."

"Oh, let him begin!" said Levison coolly.

"Let's have this out," said Blake. "I'm blessed if I quite believe in that double."

"Weally, I eithah saw Levison or his double, bai Jove!"

"Blessed if I see that it's any business of you fellows," yawned Levison. "Gussy has

been dreamin' dreams, but it's none of your business."

"It is our business if you or any associates chucked Gussy into the mud," said Tom Merry.

"But there's nothing proved against Levison," said Talbot of the Shell. "Give him a chance."

"Every chap is entitled to a chance," said Monty Lowther. "Come into the study, all of you, and shut the door. We don't want any prefects nosing into this."

The juniors crowded in, and the door was closed.

"We'll deal with the prisoner at the bar ourselves," said Blake. "We know he's a bit of a rotter, and if this is a stunt to enable him to play the goat to the limit, we ought to jolly well put a stop to it. If the chap's got a double it ought to be established."

"It's only fair," said Talbot.

"Yaas, but—"

"We'll have it all out," said Monty Lowther. "Levison is entitled to a fair trial. Are you willing to appear before the Court, Levison?"

"Oh rats!" answered Levison.

"If the prisoner at the bar refuses to plead before the Court, he must be adjudged guilty of dressing himself up for purposes likely to bring discredit on St. Jim's, and punished."

"Hear, hear!"

"Oh, I don't mind!" said Levison, with a laugh. "As a matter of fact, I'd be glad to have it thrashed out. A double might get me into serious trouble some day. I might be accused any and every day of doing things I haven't done."

"We'll give Levison a fair trial," said Monty Lowther. "This is the judge's seat, and I'm the judge." He sat on the table.

"Now, prisoner at the bar—"

"Adsum!" grinned Levison.

"I suppose we'd better accuse you of having played the giddy goat on Wayland Moor with two beastly blackguards. Guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty, my lord!"

"The witness may now speak!"

"Weally, Lowther—"

"But you must not make a speech. Cut the cackle and come to the horses. You declare that you saw Levison at the shepherd's hut on Wayland Moor, don't you?"

"Yaas, wathah! Him or his double, bai Jove!"

"We'll presume he hasn't got a double, first of all. How was he dressed?"

"In bwown."

"Did you address him as Levison?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Did he admit that his name was Levison?"

"No. He pretended to be his double."

"Did he state his name?"

"He said his name was Herbert Smith."

"You state that you followed the prisoner at the bar home?"

"Yaas; and lost him in the wood."

"What did you do then?"

"I huwried like anythin' to get back to the school befoah the wotten boundah!"

"And did you arrive at the school first?"

"Apparwently not, as we found Levison in this study. He must have wun like anythin' to get home first."

"Is that all your evidence, witness?"

"Yaas, exceptin' that I am going to give him a fearful thwashin'!"

"Fathead! That isn't evidence!"

"I wefuse to be called a fathead, Lowthah, and I considah—"

"What you consider is not evidence!"

"I considah that—"

"Remove that witness!"

"You uttah ass! I considah— Leggo! Blake, if you dwag at my yah like that I shall stwike you. Talbot, I should be sowwy to have to thwash you, but I shall do so unless you wesease my other arm immediately."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fearful boundahs! Wesease me! I considah— Leggo! Yow-ow!"

The witness was dumped into the armchair and held there, gasping, by several pairs of hands, and the prisoner at the bar was called upon for his defence.

NOT GUILTY

MONTY LOWTHER regarded the prisoner at the bar with a severe glance. He had placed a duster on his head in imitation of a judge's wig, in order to lend additional solemnity to the judicial proceedings.

Levison did not seem to take the proceedings solemnly, however. He was grinning. There were also smiles from the jury. The judge looked round with a portentous frown.

"Silence in court! This is not a place for ribald merriment. In court the public are allowed to laugh only when the judge makes a joke! Then the clerk of the court gives a regular signal. I have not made any jokes yet. Silence!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Another disturbance like that, and I will have the court cleared. The court shall be clear even if the case is not! There, you can laugh now. That is humour from the bench. Laughter in court! Good! Silence! Prisoner at the bar!"

"Hullo!"

"You do not say 'hallo!' to a judge. You say, 'Yes, my lord.'"

"Rabbits!" said Levison.

"Ahem! Do you plead guilty to playing the giddy goat under the cires stated by the witness D'Arcy?"

"No, my lord."

"What explanation have you to offer?"

"I beg to submit the well-known fact that the witness D'Arcy is practically dotty, and at least three-quarters off his rocker."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you uttah wottah! Lemme gewwup!"

"Keep that witness quiet. The Court authorises the jury to sit on the head of the witness if he will not keep quiet!"

"Gwooooooh!"

"The prisoner's statement with regard to the mental condition of the witness cannot be admitted," said the judge. "Prisoner at the bar, where were you this afternoon?"

"I've been taking a stroll," said Levison.

"I've been round the lanes towards Abbotsford."

"Wats!"

"Keep that witness quiet!"

"Gwooh!"

"I beg to point out that the witness D'Arcy, although off his rocker, has exonerated me by his own evidence," submitted the prisoner at the bar. "He states that he followed an unknown person in brown from the hut on the moor."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I beg the Court's permission to cross-examine the witness."

"Go it—I mean, you may proceed!"

"The witness followed this person in brown to the wood and missed him there. I ask whether the person in brown was likely to have known he was being followed?"

"Wathah not."

"Then if the person in brown did not know he was being followed, and if he belonged to this school, he would have come straight on, and you would have followed him here."

"Ya-a-as. I pwesume so."

"Rubbish!" exclaimed Blake. "If it was Levison you can jolly well bet that he knew he was being followed."

"Weally, Blake—"

"And you dodged into the wood because you knew it, Levison!"

"So we find the prisoner guilty!" said Herries.

"Hold on!" said the prisoner. "I'm not finished yet!"

"Buck up, then! It's tea-time, and we've got to find you guilty before tea!" said Herries.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I object to the presence of that juror in the box," said Levison. "He's prejudiced."

"Quite right," said the judge. "Herries will stand aside. This Court dispenses with his services as a jurymen."

"Look here—"

"Silence in court! If you have anything more to say, prisoner, buck up, as we're getting hungry—I mean, it is nearly time for the Court to adjourn!"

"D'Arcy states that he came directly back to the school."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Did you dawdle on the way?"

"Certainly not! I was quite hard most of the way in ordah to get in first."

"While the fellow in brown was changing his clothes somewhere, if he was the person you suspect?"

"Yaas, of course."

"In that case, you had the start of him?"

"Of course I did!"

"And you are a better runner than I am?"

"I should jolly well say so!" said Arthur Augustus, with a sniff. "I would wun you off your silly legs any day!"

"Very well. You had the start of the person who had to change his clothes, you are a faster runner than he is, and yet when you

There was silence in court. "Well," said the judge, after a pause, "has the witness D'Arcy anything more to say?"

"Bai Jove!"

"That is not evidence."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gweat Scott!"

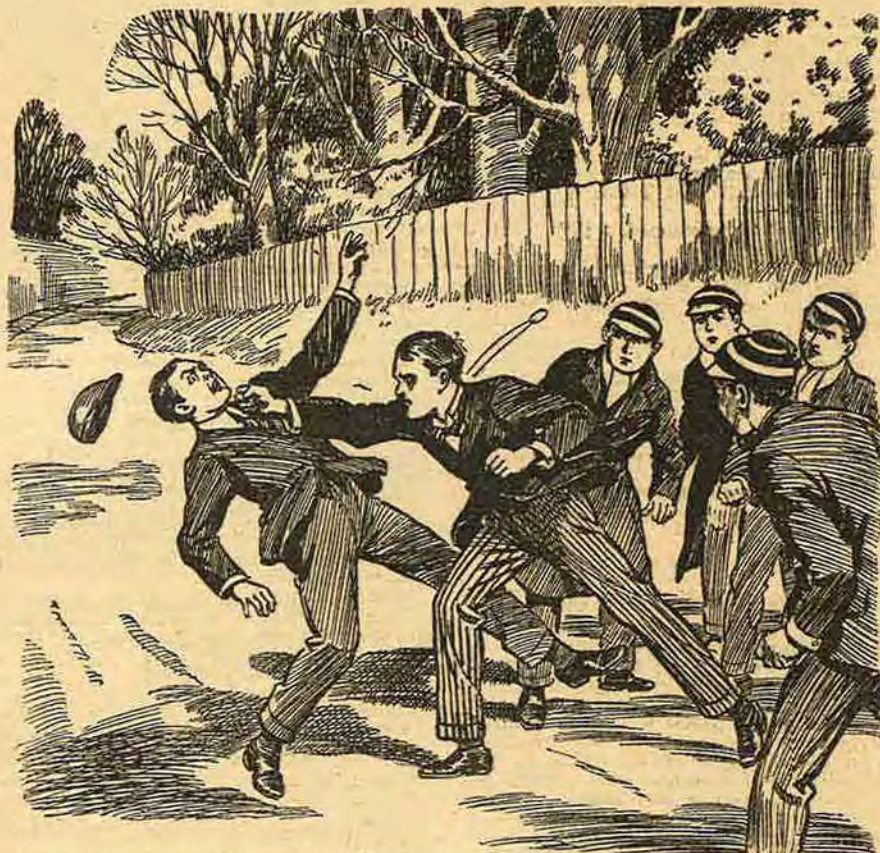
"Neither is that evidence."

Laughter in court.

"The case, therefore, goes to the jury to decide," said Lowther. "I suggest to the jury that Levison has proved his case, as it is impossible for him to be in two places at once. Remarkable as it seems, Levison has a double—or, at least, there is a chap like him; like enough to deceive an ass like Gussy in the daylight."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"



Gussy sparred, and then suddenly his fist struck the youth in the brown suit in his left eye. Gussy meant to mark the lad who was Levison's double.

arrive at the school you find me in my study doing chess problems. I submit that the witness D'Arcy's own evidence proves that I could not be the person he followed into the wood."

"Bai Jove!"

"I also call Blenkinsop, here present, as a witness that I had been in this study a considerable time before D'Arcy arrived with you fellows."

"Wats!"

"The witness Blenkinsop may speak. Buck up, Blenky!"

"Oh, certainly!" said Blenkinsop, in his mild way. "Levison had certainly been in the study ten minutes when you fellows came in."

"Bai Jove! Ten minutes?"

"Yes; perhaps more."

"Oh, Gweat Scott!"

"I had been in the library before then," said Levison. "But, as I was alone there, I will leave that out. I leave my case to the Court."

"If I were the fellow in brown, D'Arcy had the start of me. I had to change my clothes, get ahead of a faster runner than myself, and arrive ten minutes before him. I submit to the Court that that is impossible."

"Hold on!" said Herries.

"You are not on the jury! Shut up!"

"Then I'm a witness," roared Herries, "and I've got a suggestion to make. Suppose the sotter had his bike with him? Then he could have done it."

"Bai Jove! That's weally a valuable suggestion, Hewwies! Of course, he had his bike in the wood."

The opinion of the jury veered round again. For the moment it had seemed impossible that Ernest Levison could have been the fellow in grey. But if he had had his bike in the wood, that put quite another complexion on the matter.

"What have you to say, prisoner at the bar?" demanded the judge.

"Only that a dozen fellows know that I sold my bike the other day," said Levison calmly.

"That's so," said Manner. "I know Levison hasn't a bike now, anyway."

"Bai Jove, yaas!"

"True, O King!" said Jack Blake. "I know where he sold it—at Hanney's, in Wayland."

"That settles it," said the judge. "Herries, you are a more rotten witness than you are a

jurymen! You are simply no good in a court of law; and if there wasn't any better witnesses and jurymen than you, nobody would ever be found guilty! The Court hereby censures the witness Herries!"

"Oh rats!" said the witness Herries. "Gentlemen of the jury, guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty!" said the gentlemen of the jury with one voice.

"Prisoner at the bar, you are discharged. The Court sentences the witness D'Arcy to three bumps on the study carpet for keeping us late for our tea with his ridiculous accusations against a respectable—ahem!—person."

"Hear, hear!"

"Bai Jove! I was only—Weally, let go! I ordah you to welease me at once! I utterlay wufuse to be bumped! I—Yawwoh! Ow!"

"Bump, bump, bump!"

"Gentlemen, the Court has now finished business, and adjourns for tea. The prisoner leaves the court without a stain on his character, though I am sorry to see that there are dust-stains now on the seat of D'Arcy's trousers. The court is now adjourned, and I'm jolly hungry!" said the judge, jumping off the table. "Let's go and get some tea, for goodness' sake!"

The legal proceedings closed amid howls of laughter from the court.

"One moment!" said Talbot of the Shell. "I—"

"You want to be bumped, too?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No," said Talbot, laughing. "I was going to point out that, now it is proved that Levison has a double, we should all be ready to speak up for him if he should be accused of doing anything his double may have done. That's only cricket."

"Good for you!" said Tom Merry. "If at any time you're wrongfully accused, Levison, call on us, and we'll walk up like one man and speak up for you."

"Hear, hear!" said Blake.

"O.K.!" said Levison. "And now get out of my study, you duffers!"

And the Court broke up and dispersed for tea.

TWO LOVELY BLACK EYES

THE news that Levison had a double outside the school who was a bit of a blackguard soon spread through St. Jim's. It was not long before it reached the ears of the prefects, and even the masters heard of it.

There was a universal feeling of sympathy for Levison. It was, it was felt, hard luck on the Fourth Former to resemble so closely a chap who was often seen in the neighbourhood of the school, keeping very dubious company indeed.

Master Herbert Smith's proceedings, in fact, became quite a minor scandal. He was often seen by St. Jim's fellows in the company of Mr. Banks and Mr. Stubbs.

Tom Merry & Co., and Blake & Co., were keeping a sharp look-out for Master Smith. In their opinion, he was a young waster who wanted a sharp lesson, and they were eager and anxious to administer it.

But though they caught sight of his brown clad figure in the distance once or twice, Herbert Smith seemed to have an uncanny knack of avoiding them.

The encounter the St. Jim's juniors were looking for did not come until one damp Saturday evening when they were returning from the village of Rylcombe.

It had been too wet for footer that afternoon, and they had all decided to visit the local cinema.

Tea at a confectioner's followed, with the result that they started back to school rather late.

"Put it on, chaps," said Tom Merry, looking at his watch with the aid of a small electric torch, for it was pitch dark. "If we're late for locking-up we shall get lines."

"Let's trot," said Jack Blake; and the seven juniors broke into a steady trot. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy took the lead, and gradually increased the pace.

"Wan like anythin', deah boys!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Put it on!" gasped Tom Merry.

The seven juniors were speeding up the dark lane as if they were on the cinder path.

Ting-a-ling-a-ling! Buzz!

It was the clanging of a bicycle bell close behind them in the dark. The juniors looked round hastily.

"Some wottah widin' without a light!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly.

"Get aside!" said Tom Merry.

The juniors had almost reached the cross-roads, where a shaded lamp shed a dim light over the four turnings, glimmering over a signboard. They all looked indignantly at the cyclist as he swept up without a light.

Tom Merry uttered a sharp exclamation.

The figure wore a brown suit.

"Levison's double!"

"Bai Jove!"

There was no doubt about it. The cyclist, as he came pedalling on, came into the radius of the road lamp, and the juniors all saw the brown clothes, and the aquiline face that was so like Levison's.

"Stop!" yelled Blake. "We want a word with you!"

The cyclist did not stop. Though the juniors were all round his machine, he made a desperate effort to pedal on at full speed, and so desperate was it that he almost succeeded.

Blake and Herries reeled away from the bike as it crashed on them, and yelled, and a back-handed blow from the cyclist sent Arthur Augustus staggering, with the "claret" oozing from his noble nose.

A flying pedal caught Digby on the shin, and he hopped and roared, and Manners was bumped over, and fell.

Angered by the rough treatment of their friends, Tom Merry and Monty Lowther both grabbed the rider, and, in spite of his fierce effort, secured such a firm hold of him that he could not break away.

His machine curled round, and he was dragged off into the road, and the bicycle rolled in the dust.

The junior in brown struggled fiercely. But the other fellows were quickly all round him again, excepting Digby, who was nursing his shin, and groaning.

"Got the fellah!" gasped Arthur Augustus, holding his damaged nose with one hand, and the prisoner's ear with the other. "Hold him, tight, deah boys!"

"We've got him!"

The junior in brown panted.

"Let me go! I don't know you! My name is Herbert Smith! How dare you stop me on the road! If you want to rob me, I—"

"We don't want to wot you, you wottah!"

"Let me go!"

"What's the hurry, Smith?" smiled Tom Merry.

"I—I've got to get home."

"Wubbish! Stand wound in a wing, deah boys, while I give him a fearful thwashin'!"

"Rats!" said Tom Merry. "Leave him to me!"

"Wubbish! He has the cheek to be exactly like a fellow in my Form. Besides, he tweated me with gwoss diswespect last week. Thwee of the bwutes chucked me out in the wain and spoiled my clobber. This cad gave me a fearful knock while the othah bwutes were holdin' me! I am goin' to thwash him!"

"Look here, I'm not going to fight you!" exclaimed the junior in brown, savagely.

"Wats! You laid hands on me when there were thwee of you, and you are a disgustin' blackguard, and you wequire a lesson!"

"Buck up!" said Manners.

The juniors had formed a ring round the two, and there was no escape for Master Herbert Smith, if that was his name. He cast a hunted look round, but every way of escape was barred.

"I won't fight!"

"Wats! I'm goin' to give you a black eye, for a vevy particular weason! I am sowwy if it is disagweeable to you, but I've just had a vevy bwight ideah. Since the Form twial, I have been thinkin', and I still believe you are Levison, and if I black your eye, and if

when we get back to school Levison hasn't a black eye, I'll owe Levison an apology—"

"And what will you owe this fellow?" asked Tom Merry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly idiot!"

"The wottah has the cheek to have a voice just like Levison's, too," said Arthur Augustus, in wonder.

"My name's not Levison. My name's Herbert Smith!" growled the lad in brown.

"Then let me black your eye!"

"Why should I?"

"To prove you're not Levison."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No, I won't fight you."

"Bai Jove! I wegard you as a funk!"

"Let me go!"

"What's to be done, deah boys? I can't hit a fellow who won't put up his hands. I wegard it as bad form on his part, when I've told him stwaight that I have a particular weason for wantin' to give him a black eye."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"All serene!" said Blake. "More ways than one of killing a cat. We'll cut off some of his front hair with my penknife. That will settle it just as well. Better, in fact."

"Hear, hear!"

"Yaas," said Arthur Augustus, with a nod. "Pewwaps you're right, Blake. Cut off plenty of his hair. It's just like Levison's hair, too."

"Stop it!" yelled the boy in brown. "I—I won't have it! I—"

"You can't help it, my son," grinned Lowther.

"Keep that knife away! I—I'll fight that silly idiot, if you like!" panted the junior in brown.

"Oh, all right; take your choice!" said Blake, closing his penknife. "I'm not much of a barber, anyway."

"Put up your hands, you wottah! I warn you that I am goin' to give you a fearful thwashin'!"

"It's understood you let me go if I fight this chap!" exclaimed the junior in brown, with a hurried glance down the dark lane as if he feared pursuit.

"Honour bright!" said Tom Merry.

"Without cutting my hair, or anything?"

"That's understood."

"Then I'm ready."

And the junior in brown rushed to the attack before Arthur Augustus, who was always deliberate in his movements, had time to put up his hands. His fist crashed into D'Arcy's eye, and the swell of St. Jim's went down with a heavy bump.

"Oh! Gwooh!"

"Here, fair play!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"D'Arcy wasn't ready!"

"Oh, my eye! Bai Jove! Why, I'll make wibbons of the wottah!" gasped Arthur Augustus, scrambling to his feet. "I wegard that as a foul blow! Howevah, I'm weady now!"

This time it was Arthur Augustus who rushed to the attack. One of his eyes was closed, but the other was glittering with the light of battle. The junior in brown met his attack savagely, but there was no resisting the swell of St. Jim's, whose blood was at boiling-point. He knocked Master Herbert Smith right and left.

After a couple of minutes hammer and tongs, Arthur Augustus' right came home in the young blackguard's left eye, and Master Smith went down as if he had been shot.

He lay gasping on the ground, and the warlike Gussy pranced round him, calling on him to come on.

"Had enough?" demanded Blake.

"Yes! Oh, my eye!" groaned the junior in brown.

"Wats!" snorted Arthur Augustus. "I'm not finished yet."

"Yes, you are," grinned Blake. "If he doesn't have a prize black eye after that whack, I'm a Dutchman!"

The junior in brown staggered to his feet. He clutched at his bicycle, threw himself into the saddle, and rode away without a word, but at a breathless speed.

"Kin on!" said Blake.

The juniors hurried on their way. Arthur

Augustus caressed his eye tenderly. There was no doubt that he, as well as Levison's double, would have a beautiful black eye on the morrow.

The cyclist had vanished before them on the dark road, and they did not see him again.

But they covered the ground very quickly, and reached the school wall. The gates were shut now owing to their delay. They climbed over the wall and dropped into the quadrangle. Then they strolled into the School House with an easy air, as if they had just come in from a sprint round the quad.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY

TALBOT of the Shell looked into Tom Merry & Co.'s study a few minutes later. He found that trio of worthy youths working hard at their prep.

"Nearly finished!" asked Talbot, with a smile.

"Shan't get finished at all!" said Manners. "Yaas, wathah; not shall I, you know," chimed in Arthur Augustus' voice at the door. "Look at my eye, deah boys!"

"Behold, it is black but comely!" grinned Monty Lowther.

"I haven't done my pwep," said Arthur Augustus. "I shall get into a wov with old Latham in the mornin'. Tha doesn't mattah so much as that I shall have a howwid black eye. It will look disgwaceful."

"Go and get a beefsteak from the House matron," said Talbot.

"Bai Jove, that's a wippin' ideah!" Arthur Augustus hurried away to the housekeeper's room. Mrs. Mimms looked at him severely when he made his request.

"I hope you haven't been fighting with Ernest Levison," she said.

"Wathah not," said Arthur Augustus. "Can I have a beefsteak?"

"I am sorry, I have none," said the House matron. "I had to tell Levison the same." "Levison?" ejaculated Arthur Augustus, jumping almost clear of the floor. "You—you don't mean to say that Levison has a black eye, ma'am?"

"A dreadful black eye—worse than yours," said Mrs. Mimms. "That is what made me think you had been fighting. Deary me, what ever is the matter?"

Arthur Augustus looked as if he were going to faint for a moment. Then he pulled himself together.

"You are quite suah that Levison has a black eye?" he said dazedly.

"Certainly."

"Which eye, ma'am?" said Arthur Augustus. He remembered very clearly plugging Levison's double in the left eye.

"The left, Master D'Arcy!"

"Oh, gweat Scott! The awful spoofah!"

"Master D'Arcy—"

"Sowwy, Mrs. Mimms. I weally beg your pardon, but that spoofin' wascal—Where is he?"

"He has gone to bed."

"Oh, all sewene! All wight! I'm afraid I made a little mistake in my statement just now, ma'am, and it was Levison I was fighting with, aftah all. Sowwy you haven't a beefsteak. Good-night, Mrs. Mimms!"

And Arthur Augustus hurried away in a state of suppressed excitement and exasperation. It was bed-time now, and Arthur Augustus just caught Tom Merry & Co. as they came away from their study, and their unfinished prep.

"You fellows come along to our dorm aftah lights-out," he whispered.

"Anything on?"

"Yaas, wathah! Make it ten o'clock, so that we shall be safe from prefects. Don't fail; it's awfully important."

"A feed?" asked Tom Merry & Co. together.

"Wats! No!"

"Then what's on?" demanded Tom Merry.

"The twial and punishment of a disgustin' spoofah," said Arthur Augustus sternly.

"I have made a shockin' disgwevy."

"Well?"

"Levison's got a black eye."

"My only hat!"

And as the prefects came along to shepherd the juniors off to bed, nothing more could be said just then. But the chums of the Shell did not forget that appointment in the Fourth Form dormitory.

"NOW then, turn in!" said Kildare.

The Fourth Formers turned in. Levison was already in bed when the rest of the fellows arrived in the dormitory. Apparently he was asleep. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had not said a word yet to any but Tom Merry & Co. But his noble brow was very stern.

His ripping idea had worked!

Kildare turned out the lights and retired from the dormitory. There was the usual chatter from bed to bed, but Arthur Augustus did not join in. He wanted the prefect on duty to be quite clear before proceedings were started.

Not a sound came from Levison. D'Arcy did not believe that he was asleep. Having failed to obtain a beefsteak, Levison had no means of curing his black eye. It would show up plainly enough on the morrow.

The cad of the Fourth was probably thinking it over as he lay feigning slumber, trying to devise some scheme for accounting for it. Possibly he would get up before rising-bell and contrive a fall downstairs to account for the black eye.

By going to bed before the others he had succeeded in keeping it secret for that evening—or so he believed.

And that gave him a respite—time to plan a "dodge." For he did not want it known that the precious story that he had a double was all spoof.

Without that cunning invention, certain little games Levison had planned would be too risky to be kept up.

D'Arcy could guess the thoughts that were in the mind of the cad of the Fourth. But he gave no sign. It was not till the buzz of voices was dying away, and the juniors set-

ting down to sleep, that the swell of St. Jim's chimed in.

"Pway don't go to sleep yet, deah boys,"

"Why not?" yawned Blake. "I'm sleepy."

"Wait till ten o'clock, deah boy."

"What on earth for?"

"The Shell fellows are comin' in."

"My hat! What are they coming for?"

"To see justice done," said Arthur Augustus mysteriously.

Blake sat up in bed in astonishment and peered through the gloom at his chum.

"Are you off your tucker?" he demanded.

"No, Levison has a black eye."

"What!"

There was a gasp from Levison's bed.

"And we're goin' to see justice done," said Arthur Augustus. "It's all wight—there goes ten o'clock."

"Here we are—here we are—here we are again!" sang a whispering voice, recognisable as Monty Lowther's.

Tom Merry & Co. came quietly in and closed the dormitory door after them.

A match flickered out, and Blake lighted a candle-end. Herries lighted another. All the juniors were sitting up in bed now, excepting Levison.

He lay trembling. D'Arcy's unexpected revelation had completely knocked his plans on the head. The game was up now, with a vengeance.

The chums of Study No. 6 jumped out of bed.

"Levison!" said Blake in an ominous voice. "Shore!"

"He's asleep," chuckled Tom Merry. "I'll try the water-jug."

Levison sat up in bed.

"What do you want?" he growled.

"We want you, my pippin," said Blake.

"Get out of bed."

"I won't!"

Bump! Levison rolled out of bed, propelled by energetic shoves. He picked himself up, gritting his teeth. In the candle-light his black eye was only too prominent.

"Touch me, and I'll yell for the prefects!" he said.

(Continued on page 20.)

CUTHBERT'S PRIZE CORNER

If you want to win a useful prize, send ONE joke, or riddle, on a postcard, to "Cuthbert," The TRIUMPH, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Add your name and address and the names of the two stories you like best now running in the TRIUMPH.

HIS REASON.

Teacher (during exams): "Hopkins, that is the second time I have seen you look at Jones' papers."

Hopkins: "Yes, miss. You see, he doesn't write very plainly."

(Useful prize to Peter Way, Rosemere, Walton Road, Pannal, Harrogate.)

THIS IS A LEG-PULL.

A lady went into a store, bought a book, and said:

"Don't bother to wrap it up."

She walked away, but hadn't got far when the manager came up to her.

"You stole that book, because everything that is bought here is wrapped up."

He locked the lady in a room while he went to fetch a policeman. She started to climb out of the window, and was half-way through when the manager came back and started to pull her leg—just as I am pulling yours.

(Special prize to R. Clarke, Lynsted, Park Road, Goldalming.)

HIS POSITION.

Grandpa: "How are you getting on at school, my boy?"

Tommy: "Fine, grandpa! Centre-forward in the footer team; right-back in lessons!"

(Useful prize to K. Pook, Cheddington, Paulsgrove, Cosham, Hants.)

HIS LUCK DIDN'T LAST!

Jones: "Do you realise, Smith, that you've been digging a hole in the back of my coal cellar?"

Smith: "Good gracious! And I've been telling myself how lucky I was to have a coal-mine in my garden!"

(Useful prize to A. C. Fairweather, 378, Oakleigh Road, Whetstone, N.20.)

GETTING HIS OWN BACK.

An American was taking a sight-seeing ride through London on a bus.

"What's that place over there?" he asked the conductor presently.

"Why," answered the conductor, "that's the Tower of London!"

"Is that so?" said the American. "Well, reckon we build places like that in a week in America."

A little later they were passing St. Paul's Cathedral.

"And what's this place?" the American wanted to know.

The conductor was ready for him this time.

"Couldn't tell you, mister," he replied; "it wasn't there when I passed this morning."

(Useful prize to "TRIUMPH Reader," 5, Leamington Villas, Longhurst Road, Lewisham, S.E.13.)

TWO FAVOURITE STORIES MUST BE NAMED



(Continued from previous page.)

"Good!" replied Lowther. "We'll be glad to see them here. They'll be glad to hear about a certain Herbert Smith, whose real name is Levison."

"Yess, wathah!" Levison panted. He was fairly caught. He dared not call the prefects on the scene. He cast a hunted look round the dormitory. All eyes were upon him.

"Faith, and what's the matter?" asked Reilly. "What has Levison done?"

"Taken us all in!" said Blake. "Invented a person who doesn't exist so that he can play the giddy ox. And now he's going to pay the piper!"

"But what in thunder—" began Lumley-Lumley.

"Listen, and I will a tale unfold!" said Tom Merry. "Gussy had a brilliant idea; you know what brilliant ideas Gussy has—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "We ran into Levison's double in the lane this evening, and Gussy decided to give him a black eye as a conclusive proof that Levison's double wasn't Levison. Well, Gussy gave him a black eye. He gave Gussy one, too, but that doesn't matter."

"Bai Jove! Doesn't it?" "Order in court! Gussy gave Levison's double a black eye, and Levison's got it!"

"My hat!" said Hammond. "Then there isn't a double!"

"There is not! Levison has been lying all along the line. Now he's going to have another Form trial, and he's going to be proved to be his own double. Gather round!"

All the juniors were out of bed by this time. They gathered round Levison. The black bruise round his eye showed up on his white face.

"We've got no time to waste, or some nosy prefect will see the light and come nosing in," said Blake. "But we'll be fair. We're going to treat Levison fairly before we slaughter him. Have you got anything to say, Levison?"

"I-I got this black eye—er—falling downstairs," said Levison with trembling lips.

"That might have passed in the morning," said Tom Merry, "though I don't know about even that. But it won't wash now. You are the fellow we met on the road who pretended he was your double."

"I-I wasn't! I haven't been out!" muttered Levison desperately. "I—I'm telling the truth. I-I fell downstairs and knocked my eye on the banisters."

"When?" "About eight o'clock."

"Whoppers!" said Lumley-Lumley. "I was talking to Hammond at the foot of the stairs when eight o'clock struck, and you jolly well didn't fall down then!"

"No need for him to trot out any more lies," said Blake briskly. "Now, Levison, we'll give you a chance to make a clean breast of it. You're not going to run a dual exist-

once that will only end in your bringing disgrace to your House. You're going to be stopped now. You can confess, and we'll punish you; or else you can go to a House-master. I give you my word that if you don't own up we'll take you before Mr. Carrington."

That was enough for Levison. "I—I-I don't mind owning up," he stammered. "It—it was a lark."

"You've not got a double?" "No."

"Then why did you say you had?" demanded Blake.

"Well, it occurred to me that a—fellow with a double could do things rather safely, you know, so—"

"Yes, we know the sort of things you mean!" snapped Herries. "But how did you get back in time the day Gussy spotted you?"

Levison grinned faintly. "On my bike," he answered.

"But you sold your bike," exclaimed Lumley-Lumley.

"You see, I was hard-up," said Levison, "and—I wanted a bit of a fling. I sold my bike to Hanney's for seven pounds. Then I bought a secondhand old crock for a pound. It wasn't worth much, you see, but it was good enough to ride on, and it didn't matter if it was left in the open at night—it was an old crock. I've kept it in the wood. Then—"

then, with the rest of the money, I had a bit of a fling. I bought that brown suit and used to wear it over my own clothes. It made me look stouter, and—and it was less trouble to change. The bike's in a thicket not a hundred yards from the school now. It was really only a joke."

"Nuff said," said Tom Merry. "As a judge—"

"Hold on!" said Blake. "I'm judge!"

"Rats!"

"Look here—"

"Order!" said Monty Lowther. "We don't want the prefects here. Go it together, and see if you can keep in time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, as judge," said Tom Merry firmly, "I sentence Levison to be shown up to the Housemaster if he ever tells another whopper about having a double."

"As judge," said Blake, "I endorse the sentence of my respected colleague on the bench, and sentence you to be bumped, rolled, ragged, whacked, punched and made to run the gauntlet of the whole dormitory."

"Hear, hear!"

"I won't—yarrroooh!"

The sentence was executed promptly. On second thoughts, the bumping was omitted, as that would probably have brought prefects to the dormitory.

The blackguard of the Fourth was rolled, ragged, pommelled and ducked in his own washstand basin. Then he was given a sound slipping, stretched across his bed face downwards, and with Blake wielding the slipper.

Levison's lesson was severe, but it did him good, and nothing more was heard again at St. Jim's of Levison's double.

Did you guess, till the end of the story, whether Levison had a double or not? I wasn't sure.

Another fine St. Jim's tale next week. Tell your newsgroup you will want next Tuesday's issue. And how about your pals? Do they know they can get TRIUMPH every week by ordering it?



(Continued from page 14.)

Ken cut off the engine, and the police boat moved silently to the side of the ship. Jack crept aboard, and Ken pushed off again. He let the boat drift for some distance, then switched on the engine and headed for the station.

Jack stole silently up to the window of the wheelhouse. Half a dozen men were inside, all heavily armed.

Jack saw he was booked for sudden death if he tried any rough stuff here. How could he delay the ship?

Then one of the men glanced out of the window. Jack ducked down like lightning, but the German had seen him.

He let out a wild yell, and the Nazis turned as one man and rushed out to the top of the steps.

Jack sprang down to the deck and raced along towards the stern. The Germans tore after him in a bunch, letting out fierce cries. They took aim as they ran.

Crack, crack, crack!

Red spurts of flame jabbed from their guns. Bullets spattered the deck at the cop's heels. He reached the top of the companion-way and leapt down into the blackness as the woodwork splintered all round him. Down into the bowels of the ship he raced, the Nazis thundering after him.

The roar of Phantom-face's launch told him that spy chief was coming back in a hurry to see what the shooting was about. The cop realised that the chase could have only one end.

Still, he might as well give them a run for their money. The best he could expect when they caught him was a bullet.

Then his foot struck something and he had a brain-wave.

"Blazes!" he ejaculated. "I'll scuffle the curs, and we'll go to the bottom together!"

With Jack to think was to act. Frantically he lugged open the sea-cocks, and soon had the river pouring into the ship.

A shriek of terror went up from the Nazis when they saw the water surging towards the boilers.

Like madmen they raced back to the deck. Phantom-face, who had just come below, led the way.

Then Jack heard a roar from up-river, and his heart gave a leap. No mistaking the sound of those engines. The police boats were racing to stop Phantom-face escaping. They soon surrounded the rapidly sinking ship.

Fortunately, she was in a shallow spot, and as she went aground with a lurch, the Nazis waved their hands above their heads in surrender.

Jack came up to the deck again, where the cops were busy securing the Germans. The inspector saw him and came over.

"Magnificent!" he cried. "Thanks to you, Murray, the mystery of the House of Death has at last been solved, and the menace of the Grey Spy removed. Phantom-face will soon be on his way to another house—the House of Justice. He'll find that just as fatal to him as his hide-out was to his victims!"

Wasn't that yarn packed full of thrills, chums? Lumme, Jack Murray does bump into things, doesn't he? And he'll be with you again soon, but next week you'll meet Dr. Justice, a super-sleuth in a thrilling story entitled: "Death Over the Wire."

Tell your newsgroup to-day that you will want next Tuesday's issue of the TRIUMPH.

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