THIS WEEK'S STORY SPECIALLY WRITTEN DURING THE AUTHOR'S AMERICAN TOUR!

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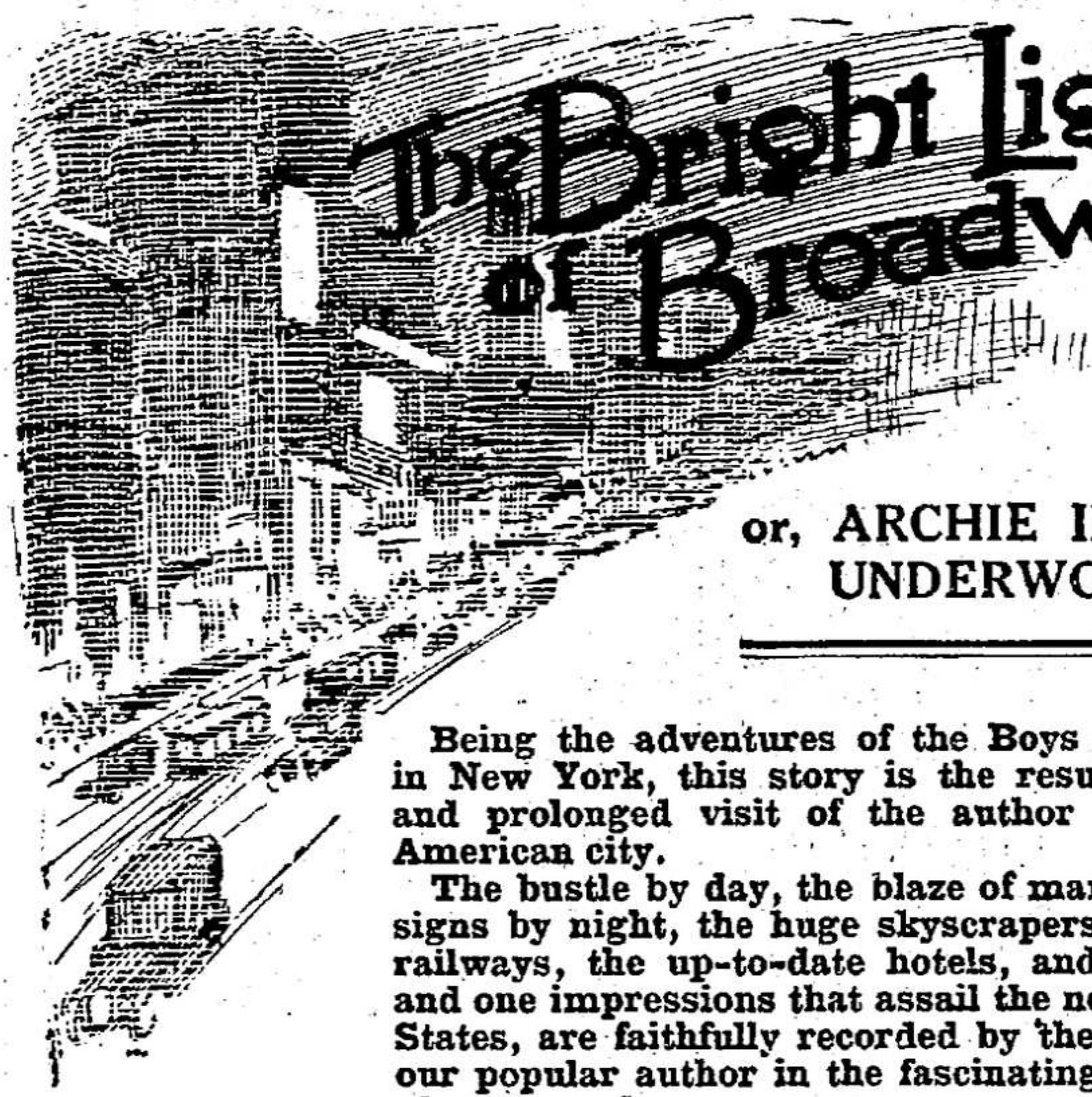
THE BRIGHT LIGHTS OF BROADWAY;

Or, Archie in the Underworld.

No. 425. EVERY WEDNESDAY. JULY 28, 1923.

Mr. Hawke and Mr. Roker knew that this boy was one of the St. Frank's crowd, and therefore connected with Nelson Lee. They acted with great speed. Before Archie could say another word, he was grasped firmly and literally bundled into the taxi.



The Bright Lights of Broadway!

or, ARCHIE IN THE UNDERWORLD.

Being the adventures of the Boys of St. Frank's in New York, this story is the result of a special and prolonged visit of the author to this great American city.

The bustle by day, the blaze of mammoth electric signs by night, the huge skyscrapers, the overhead railways, the up-to-date hotels, and the thousand and one impressions that assail the newcomer to the States, are faithfully recorded by the trained eye of our popular author in the fascinating story you are about to read.

THE EDITOR.

The Narrative Related Throughout by Nipper.

CHAPTER I.

THE HEROES OF THE HOUR!

"WE'RE in the papers!" said Reginald Pitt, with a grin.

"In the papers?" repeated De Valerie.

"In huge block type," chuckled Pitt. "I've just been reading a wonderful account of our terrible times at sea. Listen, O thou sinners! By the time we land in New York we shall be famous."

Several of the other juniors thought that Reggie was kidding—one of his favourite pastimes. But on this occasion the statement happened to be perfectly true.

The entire St. Frank's Remove was on board the giant trans-Atlantic liner, Lauretanic, and that famous vessel was just on the point of entering New York harbour.

The shores of New Jersey had already been sighted in the clear, sunny atmosphere of the July day. And before long the big ship would be slipping past Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty, and other well known landmarks.

Nearly all the fellows were on deck, eager for the new scenes and sights. They took a great interest in the high-funnelled tug-boats which fussed up and down on both sides—looking absurdly tiny in comparison to the Lauretanic.

I was not with the other chaps; I was talking seriously with Nelson Lee, who was, in a way, in full charge of the whole party. And the guv'nor was looking rather grim.

"Just think of it, sir!" I said, taking a deep breath. "The rotters have escaped at the eleventh hour—clean bunked! When you come to think of it, the thing was pretty smart."

Nelson Lee nodded.

"I agree, Nipper," he replied. "But our friends Mr. Hawke and Mr. Roker were warned. That much is certain, for

I have ascertained that a wireless message—obviously in code—was delivered to Hawke this morning."

"But how in the world——"

"It was quite easily managed, young 'un," interrupted Lee. "As you know, I wanted to have the two crooks placed in irons, but the captain was afraid of the scandal, and suggested that Hawke and Roker should be left alone until we reached port. In the meantime, the New York Police were informed, and they sent detectives on board with the pilot. In some way—graft, of course—Hawke's friends heard of the proposed coup, and wirelessed a warning. In addition a motor-boat was sent out for the especial purpose of whisking the rascals away."

"Well, it was jolly smart," I repeated. "And it looks to me as though they'll show you a clean pair of heels, guv'nor."

Nelson Lee regarded me amusedly.

"You are apparently losing your faith in me, Nipper," he smiled. "I do not wish to boast, but I will warrant you that I have those scoundrels under lock and key sooner or later."

"I knew it, sir," I grinned. "I only wanted to hear what you'd say."

I just dodged a well-directed punch, and strolled off, still thinking of the dramatic events which had been taking place during the past week. Any stranger looking at the St Frank's chaps on the deck would never have credited what they had recently been through.

Our trip to the United States, in fact, was a sheer accident.

When we had left British shores we had neve. dreamed of landing in America. And it was only by pure luck that we were on the Lauretanic. The whole Remove—with Willy Handforth of the Third Form thrown in as a kind of make-weight—had set off from the coast of Westmoreland on a joy trip in a wonderful submarine boat, the invention of a Mr. Holby Maxwell.

Well, without going into any long details, the submarine was unlucky enough to try conclusions with an ancient derelict—one of those terrors of the sea that lurk just beneath the surface, waiting for some luckless ship to be lured to disaster.

With the submarine in a sinking condition we had all sought refuge on the derelict itself. And on this scrap of flotsam we had drifted on the broad Atlantic, exposed to the wind and the weather and the burning sun.

For two days we had drifted, almost giving up hope of rescue. Hungry, thirsty, and desperate we had seen ship after ship on the horizon, but never one at close quarters.

And then, at last, late one night, the Lauretanic had swept along out of the surrounding darkness. Our signals had been seen, and we found ourselves transported into luxury and splendour. Our troubles were over, and after a long sleep, and plenty of food, we felt ourselves again.

But the great liner, instead of being homeward bound, was on her way to New York! So of course, to New York we had to go. Under no circumstances could the Lauretanic have altered her course.

The fellows were not at all sorry, and entered into the fun of the thing. They were a bit startled when they learned that we might not be allowed to land—for, after all, we had no passports or anything. But Nelson Lee with his usual ease, was "wangling" that part of the business. And now we knew definitely that everything was O.K.

And we should disembark within a a couple o. hours.

It need not be imagined that Nelson Lee had been idle since his arrival on the liner. He had dropped right into a detective case, and had handled it with all his famous skill.

Mr. Roger Sterling, London business man, had lost the title-deeds to some oil property in Los Angeles, California. These documents were all-important, for they were as good as actual ownership—and the property was reputed to be worth several millions of dollars. Until recently the land had been of no importance, but the discovery of oil had made all the difference.

It did not take Nelson Lee long to discover that two of the first-class passengers were the thieves. These gentlemen, known as Mr. Simon Hawke and Mr. Al Roker, were smooth-tongued fellows, pleasant and suave. They were expert card manipulaters, and at first I had thought them to be merely a pair of ordinary card sharpers.

But Nelson Lee knew better. These men were international crooks, and, in short, they had stolen Mr. Sterling's valuable papers. What was more to the point, they had succeeded in escaping with their booty. This was not the guv'nor's fault. If he had had his way, the rascals would have been in irons.

It wasn't like Nelson Lee to cry over spilt milk, however. He was determined to round up his men at the earliest possible moment. In the meantime, it seemed that the Remove was going to enjoy itself.

Edward Oswald Handforth came along the promenade deck, accompanied by his long-suffering chums, Church and McClure. They had recently been holding a little meeting in their cabin, below. Apparently this meeting had been somewhat stormy. Church's left ear looked puffed, and McClure's nose was decidedly red, and his lower lip was swollen.

"And don't let's have any more arguing," said Handforth tartly. "I'm not going to have you chaps dictating to me! When we get ashore I mean to buy real American clothes—breeches, open-neck red shirt, neckerchief, and wide-brimmed Stetson hat! I'm going to look like a real New Yorker.

Church sighed.

"But they don't wear that freak get-up in New York!" he declared. "You're dotty! People in New York wear just the same——"

"Are we going to start again?" demanded Handforth aggressively.

"No!" said Church, dodging with the adroitness of long practice.

"Then dry up!" said Handforth. "I know what I'm talking about."

His chums said no more. They were fed up with their self-willed leader, and his extraordinary ideas. It was impossible to tell him anything. He had his own opinions, and if Church and McClure dared to differ they were biffed. That was just Handforth's simple method of rule.

The trio joined the others, and found the conversation interesting.

"Heard the latest, Handy?" asked De Valerie. "We're all in the New York papers."

"Eh?" said Handforth. "In the papers? Well, so we ought to be! Haven't we been shipwrecked, and haven't we nearly died of thirst? But you're talking out of your hat!" he added. "How do you know we're in the papers?"

"Pitt's seen the account."

"Rot!" said Edward Oswald. "We ain't in New York yet—so how could Pitt have seen any newspapers? You can't kid me——"

"Here comes Bob Christine with the New York Daily Chronicle'," interrupted De Valerie. "The papers came on board at the same time as the pilot. Hi, Bob! Let's have a squint, old man!"

The leader of the College House juniors strolled over, grinning.

"We're famous!" he said cheerfully. "Even before we arrive, we're the giddy heroes of the hour!"

He held the newspaper in front of him, like a placard. And there, at the top of the page, in huge type, were the words:

"SHIPWRECKED ENGLISH COLLEGE BOYS DUE TO-DAY! WILL STOP OVER FOR HOLIDAY IN U.S., SAYS NELSON LEE, CELEBRATED DETECTIVE."

We grinned at the queerly-worded headlines. I was quite accustomed to American journalism, but many of the others weren't.

"There's a dotty way to put it," said Handforth, with a sniff. "I'll bet my name's mentioned somewhere. If it isn't there'll be a row."

"I suppose you'll go and biff the editor?" chuckled Pitt.

Handforth was disgusted with the reports when he discovered that his name was not even hinted at. In fact, there were no names at all, other than the guv'nor's The report was fairly long, but it gave no details—just a rough, general account of our rescue by the Lauretanic, and a promise that a full account would be published as soon as the reporters could get at the boys.

It seemed that the subject had been prominent for some days. We were arriving in New York to find ourselves famous. The story of the shipwreck and the rescue had stirred the popular imagination, and the American journalists were making the utmost out of the story—in the absence, probably, of anything more exciting.

And the "New York Daily Chronicle" was not the only paper that "starred" the Remove. Every famous New York journal that came on board featured the juniors on the front page.

It was quite clear, therefore, that we had been giving the American public some entertaining reading matter during the past few days. Ever since our rescue had been wirelessed to the different press agencies, the papers had "boosted" up the yarn.

In all probability, the London papers were busily discussing us, too. But I could hardly picture them making quite such a big display as the New York papers were doing.

The Americans always love to make the most of anything. In fact, according to the report in the "New York Chronicle," they made more than the most of this story. For there were all sorts of things recorded that had never happened!

And we were to find that our fame was even greater!

CHAPTER II.

TELLING THE TALE!

THE Statue of Liberty claimed our attention soon afterwards.

That great, imposing monument seemed to stand out from the water like some vast living figure, with arm upraised, bearing a flaming torch. As a matter of fact, this colossal statue is on Bedloe's Island. It was put up in the year 1886—a present from the people of France to the United States.

"We shall have to take a trip to that statue one day," remarked Tommy Watson. "I've heard that it's all hollow, and that you can go up to the top in a lift."

"Elevator," I corrected. "There's no such thing as a lift in the United States Tommy. They always call them elevators here."

"Blow what they call 'em," said Watson. "They're lifts, just the same."

All the juniors were crowding the rails, gazing out over the wide Hudson River, watching the moving panorama as we sped along towards our berth. The Lauretanic was now making good speed, having disposed of her mails.

For hours she had been disgorging the mail bags—men had been throwing them

down great canvas shoots, into the waiting mail boats—curious, tug-like craft that hugged the sides of the great liner.

A couple of launches had come alongside, too, and various people had been taken on board—Harbour officials, special visitors, and so forth.

And now we were on the very last lap.

Before long the famous skyline of New York came into sight—the skyline which the Americans make such a fuss of. We saw the lower end of Manhattan Island—which is, of course, New York City proper—the great financial centre of the huge American Metropolis.

The skyscrapers rose up in serried ranks, some much higher than others, towering above, gigantic efforts of architecture. Some, indeed, were almost beautiful, but many were positively ugly.

And that was one of the feature that struck the fellows more than anything else. Side by side with a handsome building there would be a ghastly abomination that was nothing more nor less than an eyesore on the landscape. And the fellows would notice this more and more as they stayed in New York.

There seemed to be no definite idea of beauty or picturesque design. It was utility every time. It didn't matter what a place looked like as long as it was of some use.

"Nothing much to look at," said Handforth critically. "I've been here before, so it's not new to me. These skyscrapers they make such a fuss of! Huh! We wouldn't own some of 'em in London!"

"What about the Woolworth building?" asked De Valerie. "There it is, look—towering above all the others."

"Oh, well, that's different, said Handforth. "I'll admit the Woolworth building is pretty decent. Nothing to write home to mother about, though."

"Absolutely not," said Archie Glenthorne. "These American chappies are dashed great on pushing the old earth up into the sky. I mean to say, they keep on going higher and higher, don't you know. One of these days they'll be living above the clouds altogether!"

Church pointed.

"What's that sign over there?" he asked, screwing up his eyes. "One of the words look to me like 'Frank,' but that's not likely. I can't quite——"

"My hat!" ejaculated McClure. "It is 'Frank'! No! It's—it's 'St. Frank's!' Surely that can't mean us?"

"St. Frank's!" repeated Handforth. "Don't talk rot!"

"It can't be," said De Valerie.

But all the juniors were now centring their attention upon the big sky sign. It was an enormous affair, fixed on a spidery

kind of frame, far above the top of a skyscraper.

This building was right on the river side, and nothing like so high as some of the bigger buildings beyond. At the same time, it was a pretty enormous place, and that sky sign was huge, too. The words were all brilliantly illuminated with electric lamps, and although it was broad daylight, they showed up distinctly and clearly.

"Yes, by Jove!" I said, after staring for a few moments. "McClure's right. The words are St. Frank's! That sign's about us! Look! We can read the whole thing now!"

"By George, so we can!"

"Well I'm jiggered!"

And the juniors, staring at the big sign, read the following words:

"BOYS OF ST. FRANK'S! WELCOME!"

This was certainly a most unexpected thing. To see the report of our adventures in the newspapers was not at all astonishing. Considering what we had been through, it would have been rather strange if the newspapers had not made a big item of the adventure.

But for the Americans to set up a huge sky-sign welcoming us to New York, was altogether beyond our expectations! And it not only took the boys by surprise, but most of the other people on board.

"That must be a private enterprise," said one of the passengers. "The New York Municipal Authorities would not have gone to that expense. I'm curious to know who's responsible."

I was speaking to Nelson Lee soon afterwards.

"You arrive in New York, boys, to find that you are celebrated more than you ever dreamed of," chuckled the guv'nor. "I must admit, however, that I am pleasantly surprised. In many ways I admire the great American nation. But I hardly expected them to extend such a welcome as this."

"It's jolly good of them, sir," I said warmly.

Nelson Lee left me almost at once, for a steward came up and said that he was required in the skipper's cabin.

I went back and joined the other fellows—to find that they were freshly excited. That sky sign had given them something to talk about, but now a new interest had cropped up.

"I say, Nipper—we've got reporters on board," said Tommy Watson eagerly.

"My dear chap, I've been expecting them for the past hour," I said calmly. "Before long they'll be buzzing round us like bees round a honey-pot. They'll want to hear all the facts of the shipwreck. They'll want to know all the details of our adventures on the derelict."

The other fellows were equally animated.

"Leave this to me!" said Handforth firmly. "You chaps don't need to say a word. When it comes to an interview, I'm the fellow to see these giddy reporters. I'll tell 'em everything, from A to Z."

I chuckled.

"Yes, and you'll tell 'em heaps of other things, too," I grinned. "I'm afraid you wouldn't be a trustworthy historian, old man. You're always liable to let your imagination run riot. I think we'll leave you out."

Handforth glared.

"You'd better think again!" he said tartly. "Why, you rotter, for two pins I'll dot you on the nose!"

"Peace, peace!" I said soothingly. "We don't want these reporters to come here and find us squabbling, I suppose? Look here, we'll put this thing to the vote. We don't want to have all sorts of conflicting stories, and odds and ends of information."

"Hear, hear," said Pitt. "The best way will be for one reliable chap to get all the reporters in a bunch, and give the details. Then there won't be any confusion or repetition."

"That's the idea," said Bob Christine. "And, in my opinion, there's only one fellow for that job—the skipper of the Remove."

"Nipper!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We vote for Nipper as the spokesman."

Nearly all the Remove fellows were there on deck, and there was an overwhelming majority in favour of me. Handforth looked round, slowly pushing up his sleeves. His face was red, and his jaw was thrust out. It seemed that trouble was coming.

But you could never tell with Handforth.

His expression changed, and he allowed his sleeves to resume their normal position. His jaw went back, and his face expressed withering scorn

"Oh, of course!" he said bitterly. "Of ecurse! I might have expected it! Nothing else but favouritism! It's always the same—I'm always barred out because of jealousy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You jolly well know I could deal with the reporters better than anybody else!" roared Handforth. "You—you miserable rotters! Do you think I care? Blow you! You can all go and eat coke!"

And Handforth dug his hands deep into his trousers' pockets, and stalked off. He was highly indignant, but he tried to make everybody believe that he was only disgusted.

We all chuckled, and turned our attention to several alert-looking young gentlemen who now appeared, escorted by the lounge steward. The alert-looking young gentlemen were attired in narrow trousers, tight-fitting jackets, and soft collars. Some wore straw hats, others wore the ordinary soft felt type. And they descended upon us like a pack of wolves.

The reporters, in fact, had arrived.

There were representatives of newspapers,

press agencies, and goodness knows what else. All they required was a full and complete account of our adventures on the submarine, and the subsequent happenings on the water-logged old derelict.

Naturally, we felt somewhat that all this attention was being bestowed upon us. The juniors crowded round, and listened eagerly while I related a full and truthful account. Now and again one or two of the fellows would butt in and remind me of some little point that I had momentarily overlooked. And between us, with me doing most of the talking, we succeeded in giving the reporters what they termed a "snappy" story.

It was something that would naturally appeal to a public that had been fed upon sensation for years. A marvellous new submarine—a collision with a lurking derelict—danger of sinking, with the loss of all hands—the hasty desertion of the submarine boat for the derelict—the days of starvation and anxiety on that drifting hulk—and, finally, our rescue by the world famous liner, the Lauretanic. It was, indeed, a snappy story.

And now the reporters were absolutely surfeited with information. Until now the papers had been obliged to print just the briefest wireless dispatches. But now the reporters would be able to rush into their news editors with the full and complete details.

"Anything else?" I asked, as the alert young gentlemen began to close their notebooks.

"Nix!" said one of them briefly. "Say, kid, this story is just the cat's whiskers. I guess we'll have the whole of New York crazy before the evening. Gee! It's the niftiest yarn we've had since those three hundred miners were entombed way over in Pennsylvania."

"You said it!" remarked one of the other reporters. "This is sure some front-pager, I'll tell the world!"

And the reporters, highly satisfied, disappeared as rapidly as they had come—vanishing into various odd corners to write up their material—and fully determined to beat one another to their respective editorial offices as soon as they could land.

At first we had noticed a certain strain of amusement in their attitude. They had probably believed that we were a set of mere kids—and it is a fact that many Americans regard English people with a kind of amused tolerance. Yet, at the same time, these same Americans openly boast of their purely English ancestry. In their inmost hearts they sincerely admire anything English.

And the reporters had found that we weren't "dumb-bells," after all. A "dumb-bell," in the great American language, is a fellow who is so "dumb" that he can't say boo to a goose. Anybody shy or dull-witted is "dumb."

"Well, you did jolly well, my son," said Reggie Pitt approvingly. "You gave those chaps a true and accurate account of the whole giddy voyage. You didn't exaggerate in the least."

I grinned.

"They'll do all the exaggeration that's necessary," I chuckled. "By the time that stuff's printed we shan't recognise it. These Yankee reporters are wonders when it comes to imagination. They possess unlimited supplies"

There was somebody else with a vivid imagination, too—and he wasn't American. His name was Edward Oswald Handforth, and at the moment E.O.H. was enjoying himself immensely.

He was in his own cabin, along with two newspaper gentlemen he had lured there ten minutes earlier. Not to be done, Handforth had collared two of the New York reporters for himself.

And he was giving an account of the thrilling adventures.

"Got that?" he asked, as the reporters scribbled away. "Good! Lemme see, where was I?"

"You just handed out the dope where you all slid off the derelict, and fell plumb into a school of codfish," said one of the reporters. "Say, are you sure that's the right stuff? Do codfish go around in schools?"

Handforth glared.

"I ought to know!" he retorted. "I was there, wasn't I?"

"You sure were," said the reporter. "All right—go ahead."

"You want to hear the rest?"

"Sure!" said the newspaper man. "Shoot!"

"Eh?"

"Shoot! Let's have the rest of the dope!"

"Look here," said Handforth warmly. "What's all this rot about shooting and dope? This isn't a story about cocaine or criminals! There wasn't any shooting at all, and not a single one of us took dope!"

The American reporters grinned.

"Listen!" said one of them. "I guess you're new on this side. You don't get me right. Go right ahead—tell us the rest of the story."

"Oh, you want to hear some more?" asked Handforth. "Then why the dickens didn't you say so before, you ass? Well, after we escaped the codfish, we hauled ourselves on the derelict and attended to our wounds."

"Wounds?"

"Bites," said Handforth. "Some of the chaps were half eaten!"

"By codfish?" asked one of the reporters doubtfully.

"Yes, by codfish," repeated Handforth, with a glare. "Don't you believe me? Who knows best—you or me? And talking about bites, you ought to see our toes! Nibbled by rats!"

"Say, that'll make a good line," said the reporter. "So you had rats on board?"

"Thousands of 'em," said Handforth.

"The giddy ship was swarming with 'em!"

"I don't get you," put in the other reporter, looking over his notes. "Didn't you figure that the derelict was water-logged, and all underneath the surface? That's how I got you first, anyway."

"That's right," agreed Handy.

"Gee! Then I guess those animals must have been water-rats," grinned the reporter. "Sure you didn't dream about them?"

Handforth turned red.

"If you're going to act the ox, I'll finish," he said stiffly. "I did have a few dreams, I'll admit, and I may have got one or two of 'em mixed up, but I know what I'm talking about."

The reporters soothed him with soft words, and Handforth continued his highly imaginative story to the very end. It was quite correct that he gave a full account of all the adventures—but he had added large numbers of trimmings. And the American reporters rather admired Handforth; he was one of their own kind; he was a fellow after their own heart.

But the good people of New York seemed to be in for a story that would rival that of the celebrated De Rougemont!

CHAPTER III.

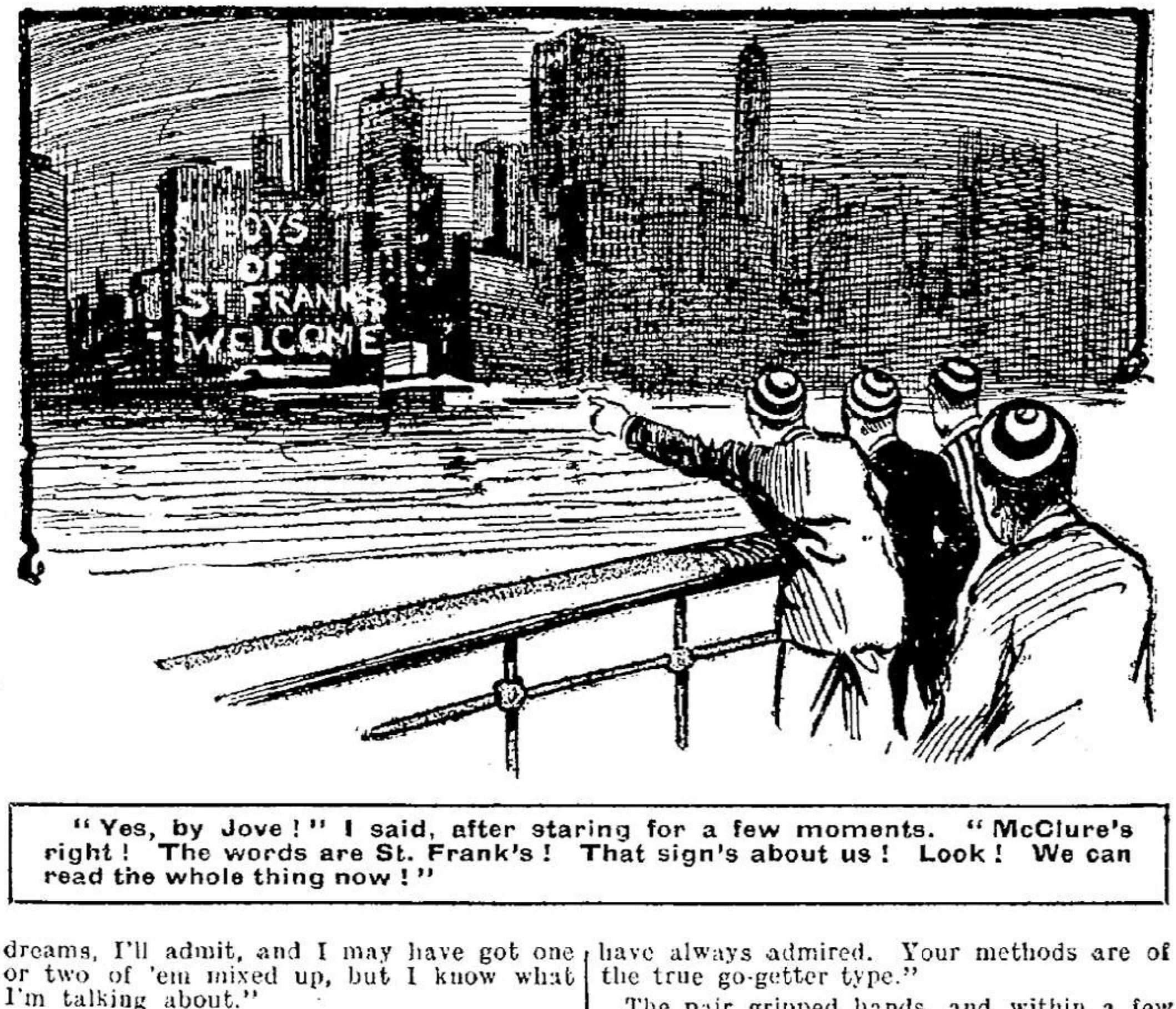
SOMETHING LIKE HOSPITALITY!

MR. HENRY P. McDOUGALL was a tall, powerfully built man with grizzled hair and beard. He had a big, mobile face, and twinkling eyes set under bushy brows.

"This is a pleasure I had hardly hoped for, Mr. Lee," he said cordially. "For several years I have had a notion that I would like to meet you. You are a man I have always admired. Your methods are of the true go-getter type."

The pair gripped hands, and within a few moments they were sitting in lounge chairs, smoking their cigars and chatting as though they had known one another for years.

It was Captain Manning who had introduced Mr. McDougall to Nelson Lee. The latter had heard of Mr. McDougall on many an occasion. He was a man of very great importance in New York—an American millionaire who owned whole streets of skyscrapers, tramway systems in various States, and coal mines and iron foundries, and all sorts of other things.



"Yes, by Jove!" I said, after staring for a few moments. "McClure's right! The words are St. Frank's! That sign's about us! Look! We can read the whole thing now!"

He was, in short, a celebrated character in finance, with complete control of several hundreds of millions of dollars. As his name indicated, he was of Scottish descent—but he was 100 per cent. American.

And in New York he had a rather eccentric reputation. For one thing, in addition to his palatial mansion on Fifth Avenue, he owned a complete home on the top of a skyscraper—one of the giant buildings near the lower end of Manhatten Island, and just on that point known as the Battery.

This riverside house of Mr. McDougall's was well known to most New Yorkers. It had been specially constructed in the form of a great bungalow, with many reception-rooms, and many bed-rooms. It was reputed to contain some rather wonderful electrical contrivances, and was popularly supposed to be a kind of paradise. McDougall retired there occasionally when he required relaxation. This skyscraper home was really a kind of hobby. It was expensive, but Mr. McDougall could afford it.

"Well, Mr. Lee, I expect you wonder why I sought out this interview?" asked the millionaire, after a short chat on general subjects. "Of course, you quite understand that I came on board for the particular purpose of seeing you."

"Yes, that is what I was told by Captain Manning," replied Nelson Lee. "I am quite honcured, Mr. McDougall——"

"No, no!" interrupted the other. "You don't quite get me, sir My desire for seeing you before you actually landed was to extend you my hospitality—for what little that is worth. Not only yourself, but all these boys who are under your control. In short, I would like you all to be my guests during your stay in New York."

Nelson Lee was pleasantly surprised.

"This is most unexpected, Mr. McDougall—and most gratifying," he said. "Needless to say, I am quite delighted, and all I can do is to thank you heartily for your——"

"My dear sir, my motive is entirely selfish," smiled the millionaire. "Anything unusual attracts me. I have the reputation for being eccentric, and perhaps that reputation is well deserved. The ordinary things of life have ceased to interest me. I require something just a little out of the common—although, let me add, I do not seek entertainment of a lurid kind."

"There is no necessity to assure me of that fact," smiled Lee.

Indeed, the famous detective had seldom seen a healthier looking man than this tall, grizzled millionaire. His very presence breathed wholesomeness—he was obviously a clean-liver through and through. There was something refreshing in his very presence.

"Yes, sir, I always go for something just a little out of the ordinary," repeated Mr. McDougall, his eyes twinkling. "And youth appeals to me particularly. Perhaps that is because I am growing old. I am a bachelor, and have never known the joys of home life. So I take quite a large amount of interest in the young—and boys especially. That is why I want all your youngsters to honour my roof by living underneath it whilst in New York."

"The boys, I am sure, will be overjoyed beyond measure," said Nelson Lee. "And at the same time I thank you heartily on my own behalf. But let me assure you, Mr. McDougall, that these youngsters are liable to get into trouble——"

"All the better—all the better!" chuckled Mr. McDougall. "Indeed, that makes the whole matter have a greater appeal. Yes, sir! Boys amuse me—their tricks and pranks amuse me. And I have made full arrangements for my skyscraper home to be placed at your entire disposal."

"Your generosity is almost embarrassing, Mr. McDougall."

"Nonsense!" said the millionaire. "As a matter of fact, I thought the boys would like the idea. It struck me that life on the top of a skyscraper would appeal to them more than staying in an ordinary hotel. You understand—it is something quite out of the ordinary, and which would not come their way under normal circumstances. At present I am living on Fifth Avenue, and the skyscraper home is deserted. Why shouldn't these youngsters have the benefit? Don't you think it's rather a good idea?"

"I think it is a most generous idea," said Nelson Lee.

"My dear Mr. Lee, you must let me convince you once again," said the millionaire. "I have taken a kind of childish delight in making my preparations. I have caused whole gangs of workpeople to be busy during these last few days preparing extra rooms, putting up sufficient beds, and a hundred-and-one other things. I have engaged a staff of servants, cooks, waiters, and everything necessary for the comfort of the boys. And if you had turned down my invitation, I should have been intensely disappointed. I only ask one privilege—that of visiting the youngsters for once in a while, and enjoying their society. Furthermore, I am planning one or two treats for them—parties, and so forth."

"Well, to be quite frank, Mr. McDougall, I am at a loss for words to express my keen appreciation," said Nelson Lee. "Am I right in assuming that you are responsible for the erection of the sky-sign we saw a short time ago?"

Mr. McDougall chuckled.

"Just a little whim," he smiled. "Yes, sir, it was I who arranged that. And why not? Boys of St Frank's—welcome! And, truly, they are welcome. They have suffered a great deal since leaving English shores—shipwreck, adrift on a derelict, and so forth. There is something in that story which appeals to the imagination. And I want the boys to receive a fitting ovation on this side of the water. It is my suggestion that you should all drive direct to the bungalow home after landing."

"I can safely assure you, Mr. McDougall, that the boys will be your guests during their stay in New York City," said Nelson Lee. "As for myself, I am not quite so sure. Much as I should like to stay under your roof, I am afraid it will be impracticable."

The millionaire looked greatly concerned.

"But, my dear Mr. Lee——"

"Business will take me elsewhere," interrupted Lee. "I am engaged upon a rather important case, and my movements will be uncertain. If I am compelled to leave the City, it may only be for a short time, however, and then I shall undoubtedly take advantage of your hospitality."

"Business, of course, must come first," said Mr. McDougall.

"This invitation of yours has lifted quite a load off my mind," went on Nelson Lee. "For I know that the boys will be in excellent hands—well looked after and cared for."

As a matter of fact, Nelson Lee was overjoyed. He would be able to leave the entire Remove in Mr. McDougall's care. He would be able to pursue his investigations without worrying in the slightest degree.

The one problem that had been exercising his mind was now solved. And very soon afterwards Nelson Lee called the entire Remove together, and acquainted the boys of the facts.

And then, of course, there was fresh excitement.

The great liner was just on the point of going into her berth. A whole army of tugs had swarmed round like so many ants—pushing at one end, and pulling at the other, and it seemed that their puny efforts would be hopeless against the mighty bulk of the Lauretanic.

But, gradually, yard by yard, the enormous vessel was being edged into her appointed place in the docks—a truly wonderful feat, and one requiring great skill on the part of all concerned.

The Remove had been watching the operations with great interest; and now there was the added thrill of the coming landing. There would soon be the bustle of the great city—new phases of life, and unfamiliar pictures.

All the fellows had been wondering at which hotel they would stay, whether it would be the Astor, or the Biltmore, or the Plaza, or the Waldorf Astoria, or the Ritz Carlton.

But, no—they were not to stay at a hotel at all. They were to be the guests of one of New York's most prominent millionaires—they were to be located in a wonderful home on the very top of a skyscraper. This, indeed, was better than any of the juniors had hoped for.

"It's—it's almost too good to be true," said Tommy Watson. "Just fancy! All of us the guests of a millionaire! And we shall live in a marvellous house on the top of a skyscraper!"

"Begad! It sounds like a romance, it does, really," said Montie.

"And we shall be people of importance, too," declared De Valerie. "Guests of a millionaire, with our names in all the papers, we shall be known wherever we go!"

Handforth nodded.

"Well, that's as it should be," he said. "After all, we're famous, ain't we? Who hasn't heard of St. Frank's?"

"Millions of people," grinned Pitt.

"Rot!" said Handforth. "St. Frank's College is even better known than Eton or Harrow!"

"It ought to be," chuckled Bob Christine. "What with petticoat rule last term, and the barring-out, St. Frank's ought to be famous all over the giddy world. Well, we're being heralded into New York all right. I don't think the people will fail to recognise us."

"Absolutely not," said Archie Glenthrone. "I mean to say, conquering heroes—what? Shipwrecked mariners, and all that kind of rot! The fact is, laddies, fame may be somewhat embarrassing. We shall be required to dash about here and dash about there, hither and thither, and so forth. Dinners, parties, and all that kind of thing."

"Good! Just what we want!" said Church.

"What? Oh, rather! Absolutely," said Archie. "What-ho! At the same time, old grape-fruit, it will require considerable quantities of the good old energy. I mean to say, the gay life taxes one's tissues, don't you know!"

"Never mind about the tissues, Archie," grinned Pitt. "We're going to have a good time, and I think that Mr. McDougall is one of the best."

"Hear, hear!"

"A real sportsman!"

"Rather!"

The juniors were enthusiastic, and when Mr. McDougall appeared on deck soon afterwards he was accorded three hearty cheers. He acknowledged them with a genial smile, and then went among the fellows, chatting and laughing. He was like a big overgrown boy himself.

By this time we were actually in our allotted berth.

The enormous liner was next to the quay, and her gangways were already lowered. The passengers were crowding off. And very soon we left, too. Nelson Lee had made everything easy for us.

We had no trouble with the authorities, or with the Customs officials. In a big crowd we crossed the gangway, and found ourselves in a very busy place. It was all covered, like a vast railway station.

There were porters everywhere, many of them coloured, and smooth-voiced gentlemen who declared that their hotels were the best in the whole city. There were Customs officers as plentiful as flies, and passengers hurrying this way and that, chasing after baggage and trunks and so forth.

It was hot, too.

The July day was sunny, and New York was sweltering. Not that the juniors minded much. They could stand a little heat. And everything was so novel and interesting, that perspiration didn't matter.

At last we got outside.

We found ourselves in a drab, dingy-looking neighbourhood, somewhere in the vicinity of Fourteenth Street—right down town, as they call it in New York, in the dock area.

But there were plenty of taxi-cabs—most of them of that distinctive yellow colour that are to be seen by the thousand in the streets of New York. These cabs are, indeed, labelled "Yellow Taxi," or "Checker Cab"—these latter being characterised by a band of chees-board-like squares round the top of the body.

Nelson Lee had told us to look after ourselves, and we did so.

The guv'nor had gone off with Mr. McDougall, and had promised to see us later. We had the millionaire's address, and we intended going straight to our new home. So we made a bee-line for the taxis.

All sorts of people were crowding round the dock entrance, and we were recognised at once. We could see the loungers pointing us out, and we were the centre of all eyes. Most of the fellows enjoyed it.

The Remove, in fact, was feeling considerably flattered. Some of the fellows had been in New York before, but on that occasion they had been quite unknown. Nobody had taken any particular notice of them, and they were merely treated as ordinary tourists, and without any particular honour.

But this time it was different.

New York knew St. Frank's thoroughly now. The newspapers had been so busily discussing our adventures that it was hardly possible for any of the inhabitants of the great city to be in ignorance of our coming.

New York was quite keen upon seeing the Remove. And New York saw the Remove, too—for a brief spell, anyway. For we chartered about a dozen yellow taxicabs, and started off in style for Mr. McDougall's skyscraper home.

CHAPTER IV.

SOMEWHAT STARTLING!

"HERE we are!" I said crisply. "Pile out, you chaps!"

The procession of taxi-cabs came to a stop, one after the other. We had just driven round a kind of green, park-like space near the Battery, right down near the river, against South Ferry.

Here it was comparatively quiet.

There was only the noise of the trams—or trolley cars, as they are called in America. The New York trams are different to ours, having no upper deck, and being entirely enclosed fore and aft, so that the driver and conductor are perfectly protected in all weather conditions. In midsummer there are numbers of perfectly open cars in the streets, however—cars without any sides, but just seats running crosswise in rows.

There was also the noise of the Elevated Railroad—which at this point formed a kind of terminal, or a loop round the very bottom of Manhattan Island. From here the "L" Roads—as they are called—branch northwards in all directions—the 6th Avenue line, the 9th Avenue line, and the East Side tracks. And, of course, the subways, underneath the streets, went in the same directions.

Therefore, although this was a comparatively quiet spot, there was, nevertheless, a considerable amount of noise. I give this as an indication of what other parts of New York are like. When it comes to real, determined din, New York can beat London into fits

Our taxicabs had stopped in front of a huge building—a great, imposing structure that reared its coping-stone fully eighteen storeys above the level of the pavement.

It was a very high building, but by no means as large as many other skyscrapers in New York. But it was quite high enough for the most exacting person. And the juniors crowded out of the taxis, gazing at the place with much interest.

"And do you mean to say we've got to go to the top of this giddy building?" asked Handforth indignantly. "My hat! There must be thousands of stairs to climb! It's all very well to be hospitable, but it's a bit thick when a fellow has to go a mile into the sky every time he wants to go to bed!"

"It'll bring some of Fatty Little's blubber down," remarked Hubbard.

"My dear fatheads, don't you understand that these buildings have four or five express lifts?" asked Reggie Pitt. "They shoot up to the top in a few moments, and you don't even know that you're off the ground level."

The argument didn't proceed for long, however, for I was bundling the fellows into the imposing-looking entrance. On the other side of the street crowds of people were collecting, watching us.

And I suppose we really were an uncommon-looking sight in the streets of New York City—dozens of English schoolboys, attired in flannels, with caps and straw hats all adorned with the famous St. Frank's colours and badge. You don't see badges of that kind on the College boys in America.

We were all glad enough to get inside, for during our first hour in New York we were feeling rather strange. Indeed, some of the juniors were inclined to be embarrassed by the attention that was being bestowed upon them.

So we went into the great building in a huge crowd. Nelson Lee had left me to look after the fellows, knowing that I was fully capable of the task. He and Mr.

McDougall had felt that we should be more at ease if we went alone.

The building itself was devoted mainly to great offices—shipping companies, mining concerns, and so forth. Business people of all types were constantly passing to and fro, in and out.

And this sudden invasion of English schoolboys caused a bit of a sensation, more particularly as everybody knew our history. Work in the offices was completely suspended for a period. Clerks, office-boys, pretty stenographers, heads of departments, and others, came out to have a look at us. And the huge entrance-hall was quite blocked for a time.

"Well, here we are!" said Handforth, feeling that it was up to him to say something. "We're jolly glad to be in New York, and we're pleased to meet you!"

"Hear, hear!" chorused the Remove.

"Gee! Ain't they cute?" remarked one of the young ladies, shifting her gum from one side of her mouth to the other.

"I'll say so!" responded one of her companions.

All sorts of other remarks were passed concerning us, and there was a feeling of good fellowship in the air. We often hear, in England, that English people are not treated very cordially in New York. But this experience of ours was giving the lie direct to that absurd rumour.

Several of the big elevators were placed at our disposal, and almost at once we were being whisked upwards at express speed. The sensation was rather peculiar at first, for these fast-moving elevators are quite different to the lifts in London. They shoot up at quite a giddy speed, and during the first second one has a terrific feeling just beneath the belt.

And when the juniors were just accustomed to the motion, the car came to a halt. We were at the eighteenth floor—at the top of the skyscraper. We piled out of the lift, and found ourselves in a big, wide corridor with a stone floor. Just a little way from us there stood a short stairway, leading up to the actual roof. And a coloured man stood there, grinning.

He was attired in a sedate kind of butler's uniform of dark blue material, and I knew at once that he was Mr. McDougall's butler.

"Honahed to welcome you, young gennelmen," said the darkie, revealing two wonderful sets of pearly teeth. "Come right along in. I guess de boss has fixed up everything good."

"Thanks, Cherryblossom!" said Handforth, airily.

"Yo' welcome, sah!"

The black butler stood aside, still smiling, and we all proceeded to march up the steps. The other elevators were coming up now, bringing the rest of the fellows. They were all curious to see what this skyscraper home would be like.

Having mounted the stairs, we came to a kind of bower of green creepers, with sweet-scented flowers. Emerging, we found ourselves in a glorious garden, with soft, velvety lawns, brilliant flowerbeds, and numerous nooks and corners, cool and shady. Here and there a fountain sprayed deliciously, and a short distance away a miniature waterfall was bubbling and hissing over a kind of rockery.

"My only hat!" said Tommy Watson blankly.

"We—we can't be on the giddy roof!" declared Handforth. "What rot! Who's been trying to spoof us?"

I had heard of roof-gardens, particularly in connection with New York, but this place was not one of those so-called gardens—but a real one. It covered the entire flat roof of the skyscraper—which was an extensive one.

And there, right in the middle of the garden, stood the millionaire's bungalow.

It was one of the most picturesque buildings I have ever seen—a quaint, low house, designed in the old English style, with overhanging roof, gables, and dormer windows. Creepers were climbing over the walls, and most of the casement windows were open, revealing light, airy rooms.

But this dream-bungalow was set in the midst of a glorious garden hundreds of feet above the sea level! Mr. McDougall was not the only millionaire who had a home on the top of a skycraper, but I am certain that none of the others could possibly compare with this.

It was almost impossible to realise that one was so far up, for the garden was entirely surrounded by a high wall—which was, in short, the parapet. This wall was covered on the inside with green painted trelliswork, and upon this trelliswork grew rambler-roses and other creepers.

The effect was pretty in the extreme, and one could not realise that the ground was an awful distance below.

"A bit better than a hotel, eh?" I said cheerfully. "Well, I must say that Mr. McDougall's a brick. We never expected a treat like this."

"Absolutely not!" said Archie Glenthorne. "In other words, absolutely not! I mean to say, this dashed place is dashed priceless! Flowers and fountains, and this and that! Makes a cove feel bally well at home, if you know what I mean. More like England than American, what?"

"It's—it's amazing," said Church.

"And what an artist Mr. McDougall must be!" said McClure admiringly.

Handforth sniffed.

"Artist?" he repeated. "Blessed if I can see any sign of it! I expect he paid all sorts of people to build this place for him, and shove up the fountains and all the rest of it. When you've got money you can do anything!"

"Money talks!" said Solomon Levi, nodding. "Believe me, the more money a chap has the louder it talks, too!"

"Well, of course, you're an expert," grinned Pitt. "Being a member of a famous financial race, you ought to know what you're talking about. But why go into arguments about Mr. McDougall's home! It's not nice."

"Dear old lad, I was about to make the same dashed remark," observed Archie. "I mean to say, frightfully bad form to discuss the affairs of one's host. Not the thing at all. In the very best circles it's not done."

"Then dry up, all of you," said Pitt.

Handforth was the only one who didn't dry up. He was like Tennyson's famous Brook, which went on for ever. But as nobody took any notice of him, it didn't matter much.

Inside the skyscraper home, we found everything perfectly charming and refined. There was nothing particularly lavish or gorgeous about the furniture. It was good, solid stuff, but there was a total absence of garish display. There was an air of good taste throughout the entire home.

The fact which struck us most of all upon entering was the delightful coolness of the air. Outside it was sweltering, boiling hot—for New York, in July, is not exactly an icy region. But inside Mr. McDougall's bungalow, the temperature, was as cool as a fairy glen.

The reason for this was not obvious at first, but I discovered it later. In every room and corridor there were hidden electric fans, so contrived that they wafted waves of ice-cool ozone throughout the apartments. Thus, on the very hottest day, the bungalow could be made perfectly cool.

There were bedrooms galore—plenty of room for the entire Remove. Most of the servants were coloured, and they knew their business, too. A meal was waiting for us—a simple, but ample repast, consisting of cold meats, salads, iced lemonade, and other drinks.

Fatty Little could hardly wait to indulge. Indeed, we found him well into the second course by the time we took our seats at the tables.

All this was so very different to what we had expected. We had looked forward to a hotel life, in stuffy, heated rooms, and with all the noise and bustle of the city around us.

But here it was peaceful and quiet. Now and again we could hear a low murmur of the traffic from below, but only at intervals. And sometimes we could hear the hoarse hooting of steamers on the river.

We had finished the meal, and were discussing plans, when Reggie Pitt came in with a newspaper.

"Just take a squint at this, you chaps," he chuckled. "By jingo! These New York reporters are living wonders!"

"Let's have a look," I said. "They've soon got the story out, anyway."

Lots of juniors crowded round while we gazed at the newspaper. I was rather amused at first, for the headlines were of a sensational type, and my name was prominently displayed. "A detailed account of the English College boys' hair-raising adventures, told by Nipper, Nelson Lee's famous young assistant." That's the line it had under the glaring heading.

I opened my eyes wide as I glanced down the column. The article concerning the Remove's adventures filled practically half the front page, and there were many photographs, too. But it was somewhat difficult to recognise any particular features.

"Well, I don't think much of these photos," said De Valerie. "Maybe it's because they've got them out so quickly—but I can't recognise anybody!"

"I can see Handforth in that main group," said Church.

"Where?" demanded De Valerie. "What? That chap? But he doesn't look a bit like Handy——"

"I'm not going by his face—I'm looking at his fists!" said Church.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Handforth glared.

"You—you funny idiots!" he hooted. "Why, if you say that I look like that ——By George! I believe it is meant to be me, though! I'll jolly well go and biff that editor!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

I looked round, flushed and indignant.

"If there's any biffing to be done, I'm the man for the job!" I said warmly. "Great Scott! They've added heaps and heaps of absolute rot to what I told them! Pure fairy tales!"

"How do you mean?"

"Why, they reckon that we were caught in a terrible storm, and nearly washed off the derelict!" I said. "Then we fell into a school of codfish, and were bitten!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Three of the fellows developed insanity!" I went on. "That's what it says here, anyhow. They went raving mad, and we had to tie them down. Their tongues were lolling out from want of water, and when the Lauretanic came up, their lives were only just saved by a hair's breadth!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's not all!" I went on hotly. "In this account, I'm supposed to have rescued six or seven fellows from a shark! They happened to fall in, and then there was a fearful fight with a shark! And at last I stabbed it with a pocket knife!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Those reporters must have imagined a good bit!" grinned Pitt.

Handforth turned rather red.

"The idiots!" he declared. "I didn't say a pocket-knife—I told them I used a big clasp-knife. Besides—it was me who killed the shark, not Nipper!"

We stared at Handforth blankly.

"You killed the shark?" I repeated.

"Yes!"

"What shark?"

"Well, not exactly a shark," admitted Handforth. "I didn't exactly say a shark, either. I told those reporters that I stabbed a fish with my clasp-knife——"

"You—you dummy!" roared Pitt. "It was only a mackerel!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, rot!" said Handforth uncomfortably. "It was a big fish, anyhow. And I never said that three or four chaps went dotty. All I told the reporters was that some of the fellows went off their rockers with thirst!"

I looked at him grimly.

"You told the reporters this?" I asked.

"Yes."

"But I thought I was the spokesman?" I went on "I thought I was chosen to relate the adventures?"

"You don't think I was going to be left out of it, do you?" snorted Handforth. "I took two of the reporters aside, and gave them a full account of our adventures——"

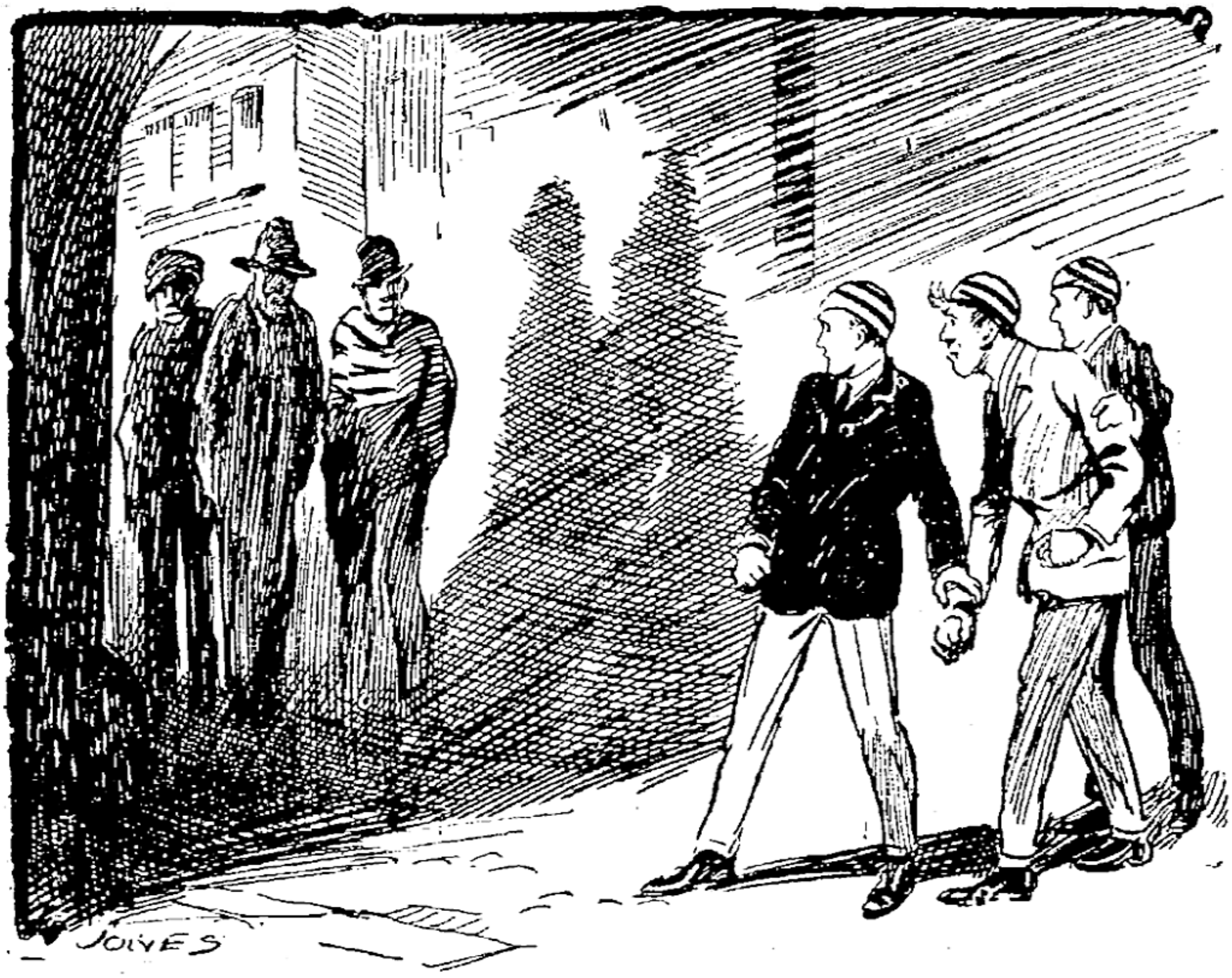
"You—you prize lunatic!" I ejaculated hotly. "Look what you've done! All this piffle has been published under my name."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm going to have a row with that editor!" said Handforth grimly. "I tell the whole yarn, and get no credit for it——"

"You're welcome to any credit!" I snorted. "If you don't see that editor, I will! I mean to have this thing put right in the next edition!"

Handforth grunted, and read the account with interest. But even he was somewhat startled when he read of the staggering adventures that we had supposedly passed through. Throughout the whole account there was a stratum of truth. In the main the story was an accurate account of what had taken place—but in the details there



And Handforth got a bit of a shook when he noticed that three figures had appeared in the path some little distance ahead. They were rather big figures, too, and they were standing right across the alley.

were wild and woolly additions. A good many of these were Handforth's own inventions, but the enterprising reporters had added picturesque touches here and there.

And the result was staggering.

"By George!" said Handforth, at last. "I didn't tell the chaps to put all this in! What rot! If the New York people can swallow this, they can swallow anything! I'll go and see that editor, and if he doesn't print an apology, I'll biff him on the nose."

Reggie Pitt chuckled.

"You'll have a good few noses to biff, my lad!" he said calmly. "That same report with various subtractions and additions, has appeared in practically all the New York evening papers. By the morning, they'll be greatly enlarged and added to! Better leave it alone, and take it as a joke!"

And this, indeed, was our only course.

But there was no question about St. Frank's being boosted. With all the newspapers talking about us, we were more famous than ever. And when we appeared in public we should be known to all and sundry.

And if we had provided New York with a good story and a good laugh, it was equally certain that New York was going to provide us with something in return.

That evening we burst upon Broadway—and Broadway knew all about it!

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT WHITE WAY!

NELSON LEE regarded us all with twinkling eyes.

"Well, boys, I'm going to trust you to uphold the good name of St. Frank's here in New York," he said pleasantly. "I'm sure that I can rely on you to keep out of mischief, and to enjoy yourselves innocently."

"Rather, sir."

"We'll be good, sir."

"You must remember that you are in a strange country," continued Lee. "I won't say a foreign country, although technically it is so. But it seems to me that the United States is very British in atmosphere and tone, and the visit of you boys may well help to create a better feeling of understanding, and to strengthen the ties between the two great nations."

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll do our best, sir!"

"Therefore, remember to look with kindly eyes upon anything that does not quite meet with your approval," warned Nelson Lee. "Many things in New York are different from London. You may not like them. If this is the case, do not express your opinions too bluntly or too harshly. Remember that we are all guests here, and that criticism of any kind is in bad taste."

"We'll remember, sir."

"I want you, Handforth, to heed my words in particular," said Lee.

"Me, sir?" said Handforth, staring.

"Yes, my boy, you."

"But—but why pick on me, sir?"

"Because you're extremely blunt in speech young man," replied Nelson Lee, with a smile. "I do not doubt your good intentions for a moment, but other people may. And I must impress upon you the necessity of keeping calm. I may be extremely busy during the next two or three days, and so it is quite likely that you boys will see but little of me. If so, enjoy yourselves and be ready to obey my instructions when I return."

"Yes, sir."

"Keep out of mischief, and always remember that you are strangers in a strange land. You must uphold the honour of the old school——"

"Hurrah!"

"Leave it to us, sir!"

"All right—I will," smiled Nelson Lee. "Indeed, I am afraid this little chat of mine is becoming a lecture. So I will conclude, only adding that I hope you will thoroughly enjoy yourselves."

"Thank you, sir."

Nelson Lee took his departure at once, leaving the Remove in sole command of the bungalow—except, of course, for the servants. Mr. McDougall had not shown up at all. This was extremely considerate of him. The millionaire reckoned that we should be more at ease if we were left to ourselves to begin with.

Before long a big move was made.

The Remove, in short, descended upon Broadway. That is, they arrived in that section of the world-famous thoroughfare which is known as the "White Light District."

Broadway, let me explain, is one of the longest streets in the whole of New York—not a big open space, like, for example, Hammersmith Broadway, in London. In the United States the word "Broadway" has a different significance. It generally means a long street (not always broad) containing shops and business houses, theatres and cinemas.

New York's Broadway stretches from the bottom of Manhattan Island right up-town as far as Van Cortlandt Park, and farther—indeed, it is actually a part of the main highway from New York to Albany. So you see Broadway is a thoroughfare miles and miles in length.

Far down town, in the business section, Broadway resembles a canyon, with giant skyscrapers on either side, and with endless traffic on the actual roadway. Here the famous street seems absurdly narrow.

Up-town in the vicinity of Times Square, where the celebrated 42nd Street crosses Broadway—and where, also 7th Avenue

(Continued on page 15.)

BEGIN THIS THRILLING NEW NELSON LEE SERIAL TODAY!

No. 34. PRESENTED WITH "THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY." July 28, 1923.

THE SILVER DWARF

In this amazingly clever detective story, NELSON LEE is matched against the brains and subtle skill of Professor Mark Rymer, an exceedingly dangerous type of intellectual criminal—inhuman, crafty, resourceful and daring.

FOR NEW READERS.

If the rascally cousin of the late Lord Easington, Professor Mark Rymer, can destroy certain documents hidden inside the silver effigy, known as the Silver Dwarf, he will inherit his cousin's title and wealth. There is a son living by a secret marriage of the late peer, evidence of which is contained in the documents aforementioned. So far, the Silver Dwarf has eluded the clutching fingers of the unscrupulous professor. Nelson Lee, who is determined to frustrate Rymer's evil designs, is also in quest of the effigy. Owing to a fire at the late peer's house, the effigy is lost. The quest takes Lee and Rymer to Paris, and from there to Spain. But the professor is detained by the Paris police for twenty-four hours. After which he learns that the effigy has been sold to a Spanish nobleman, and that Leo has already set off for Spain. Rymer follows, and succeeds in getting the statuette. Then, on a lonely road, Lee confronts the professor, but the latter declares that he has thrown away the Silver Dwarf, and that it will never be found.

(Now read on.)

THE PROFESSOR RECEIVES AN UNPLEASANT SHOCK.

THE Rock of Gibraltar is connected with the mainland of Spain by a narrow neck of land about a mile in length and three-quarters of a mile in width. This narrow strip of land is known as the "neutral ground," and neither the British nor the Spaniards may erect any houses or build any fortifications upon it.

At one end are the gates of Gibraltar, which are closed every night at seven o'clock, and opened every morning at three. At the other end is a long row of iron railings, about eight or ten feet in height, pierced by a single gate. These railings, which stretch right across the isthmus, represent the Spanish frontier, and behind them is the frontier town of Linea.

After leaving Nelson Lee, Mark Rymer walked on to Linea, and engaged a bed at one of the hotels. He knew that the gates of Gibraltar would be closed, or he would have continued his journey to that place straight away. As this was impossible, he determined to spend the night in Linea.

and proceed to Gibraltar the following morning.

It was in a very contented frame of mind that he went to bed, for he firmly believed that he had spoken the truth when he had prophesied to Nelson Lee that neither he nor any other human being would ever see the Silver Dwarf again. In fact, so sure was he of this, that he went to sleep in the happy conviction that all that now remained for him to do was to go to Gibraltar next day, to return to England by the first available boat, and to take his place, without any further trouble, as the undisputed heir to the Easington title and estates.

In order to explain his grounds for this comforting belief, it is necessary to go back to the moment when he heard Don Jose and Nelson Lee pull up outside the Taberna de los Montes. Previous to that, as the reader knows, he had hypnotised the landlord, and secured the Silver Dwarf. When he heard the landlord's wife give a flat contradiction to her husband's statement, he knew that his cunning plot had failed; and with lightning-like rapidity he had opened the window and taken to his heels.

When he realised that Nelson Lee was overhauling him, he cast about for some method of destroying the Silver Dwarf, in order to prevent it falling into his pursuer's hands. Whilst he was still racking his brain for the best plan to adopt, he came to the bridge that spans the river which runs down from San Roque to the sea.

By that time it was so dark that although Nelson Lee was less than fifty yards behind him, he knew that the detective would be unable to see what he did.

Without slackening speed, therefore, he tossed the Silver Dwarf into the river, and then continued to run for another mile and a half, when he suddenly pulled up and waited for Nelson Lee in the manner already described.

Next morning he was in Gibraltar shortly after seven o'clock. Being in need of money—for he had left all his baggage at Algeciras, to which place he had no desire to return—he first made his way to the house of a Jewish moneylender named Solomon Barnascone.

He had had dealings with Barnascone before—for this was by no means the first time he had been to Gibraltar—and he had every confidence that the Jew would advance him a sufficient sum of money to pay for his passage back to England.

Upon reaching Barnascone's house, he was informed that the Jew was out, but was expected back at any moment. He waited, and at half-past seven the Jew returned.

"I'm sorry to have kept you waiting," said Barnascone, when greetings had been exchanged. "It isn't often that I'm out at such an early hour, but this morning I've been down to the Waterport to see old Benzaquen off to Tangier by the seven o'clock boat. You know Isaac Benzaquen, of course?"

The professor shook his head.

"Really!" said Barnascone. "I thought everybody who had ever been in Gibraltar knew old Benzaquen. He keeps a curiosity shop in Tangier, near the French Legation."

"Indeed!" said the professor, who was not at all interested.

"Such a lucky man!" continued Barnascone, with an envious sigh. "The luckiest man I ever met. He had been staying at San Roque for a day or two, and at daybreak this morning he started out to come to Gibraltar. About a mile and a half before he came to Linea he overtook a ragged little urchin, who was carrying a small silver statuette."

"A what?" roared the professor, leaping to his feet as though he had been shot.

"A silver statuette, fashioned to represent a dwarf," said Barnascone. "The lad had found it in the dried-up bed of the river, and was taking it home. Benzaquen stopped him, patted him on the head, and wheedled him into selling him the thing for twenty centimos! Fancy that! Twenty centimos—twopence in your English money—for a solid silver statuette! Did you ever hear of such luck in your life? Why, I offered Benzaquen a hundred pesetas for the thing myself, and he simply laughed at me! But—— What—what's the matter?"

Mark Rymer's face had suddenly grown purple with rage, and his features were twitching in a convulsive and spasmodic fashion that was positively alarming. For a second or two he stood, absolutely speechless with rage and chagrin. Then, his pent-up feelings found vent in a torrent of blasphemous imprecations.

His cunning ruse had failed. His dream of security had been shattered at a single blow. Owing to the scarcity of rain, the river between San Roque and the sea—which was little more than a fair-sized brook at the best of times—had been gradually dwindling, and at last had dried up altogether.

Partly owing to his haste, and partly to the darkness, Mark Rymer had not observed this fact; and now he learned that, instead of dropping the Silver Dwarf into several feet of water, he had merely tossed it on to a shelving mudbank, from which it had been rescued by the ragged urchin who had sold it to Isaac Benzaquen.

"I must follow Benzaquen at once!" he exclaimed, when his fury had somewhat abated. "That silver statuette is mine! It was I who dropped it into the river-bed. When does the next boat for Tangier sail?"

"At seven o'clock on Thursday morning," replied Barnascone.

It was then Tuesday. Mark Rymer ground his teeth. In the intervening two days Nelson Lee might learn what had become

of the Silver Dwarf, and in that case he would be certain to cross to Tangier by the first available boat.

"Is there no way of getting to Tangier before Thursday?" asked the professor.

"No," replied the Jew. "The boats only sail on three days a week—Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday."

"But I seem to remember that when I was here before there were two boats running between Gibraltar and Tangier—an English boat and a Spanish boat."

"True—but they both sail on the same days—the English boat at seven o'clock, the Spanish boat at eleven."

"Then why can't I catch the Spanish boat this morning? It is not eight o'clock yet."

"She does not sail to-day. The sea is too rough."

"But the English boat has sailed."

"Ah! But the English are the children of the sea, and care nothing for rough weather!"

For a moment or two the professor paced the room in agitated silence. Then he suddenly came to a halt in front of the Jew.

"I came here this morning," he said, "to borrow fifty pounds. My intention was to return to England by the next boat. What you have just told me, however, has completely upset my plans. I must go to Tangier on Thursday, interview Benzaquen, and buy back that silver statuette."

"But he may not have it then," said the Jew. "He may have sold it."

"Exactly!" said Mark Rymer. "That is what I fear. If that has happened, I shall have to follow the statuette until I find it. For that purpose I shall need money. Will you lend me five hundred pounds?"

"On the same terms as before?"

"Yes."

"I will."

"Good! Now comes another question. Would you like to earn another five hundred for yourself?"

The Jew's eyes sparkled.

"Need you ask?" he muttered. "There's nothing in the world I wouldn't do for five hundred pounds!"

"Then come with me," said the professor, taking up his hat. "We will go for a stroll in the Alameda. I have something to say to you which is best said where there is no fear of our being overheard."

They adjourned to the Alameda Gardens, which are Gibraltar's nearest approach to a public park. For nearly half an hour they promenaded to and fro, the professor expounding his plans. Then Barnascone nodded his head.

"Yes," he said. "There's a house in Engineer Lane which will exactly suit your purpose."

"And you can find a man to personate Benzaquen?"

"Oh, yes! There'll be no difficulty about that."

The professor said something in a low voice, and Barnascone resolutely shook his head.

"No, no!" he said emphatically. "I draw the line at that!"

"Well, will you guarantee to keep him under lock and key until you hear from me that I have found the statuette?"

"Yes, I'll undertake to do that."

A few minutes later they parted; and, as Mark Rymer made his way to the European quarter of the town in search of a suitable hotel, he muttered softly to himself:

"Tit for tat—a Roland for an Oliver! He caused me to be detained in Paris twenty-four hours, and now I'll pay him back in his own coin."

TRICKED AND TRAPPED.

"HE has just been fooling me! He concealed the Silver Dwarf in one of those outbuildings in the stable yard, and then he ran away for the purpose of luring me off on a false scent. His intention, no doubt, is to return in the middle of the night and quietly remove it."

Such was the thought which had suddenly flashed into Nelson Lee's mind when Mark Rymer turned on his heel and left him.

To put his theory to the test, the detective returned to the Taberna de los Montes, and made a thorough search not only of the outbuildings, but of every room in the tavern as well. Needless to say, the search was a vain one.

"I'm afraid the professor spoke the truth," said Don Jose, who had waited at the tavern for the detective's return. "You will never see the Silver Dwarf again, I fear."

"I'm not beaten yet," replied Nelson Lee. "It's quite evident the professor took it with him from this place. It is equally certain that he hadn't it when I overtook him. Therefore, he must have thrown it away, or hidden it somewhere, while I was pursuing him."

"What will you do now?"

"As soon as it is light I shall start to explore the route we traversed this evening, and shall make inquiries at every house and tavern along the road."

The detective was as good as his word. He declined Don Jose's invitation to spend the night at Torre Esperanza, but engaged a bed at the tavern, and remained there until daybreak. He then set to work to go over the ground which he and Mark Rymer had traversed the night before; but once again his search proved labour in vain, for by the time he reached the spot where his rival had thrown the Silver Dwarf away, the "ragged little urchin" had picked it up and marched off with it.

Weary and dispirited, the detective returned to the tavern for dinner. He had just finished his meal when news was brought that

a peasant named Pedro Gonzalez wished to see him.

"Are you the Englishman who is seeking for the silver figure of a dwarf?" asked the peasant, when Nelson Lee appeared.

"I am," said the detective eagerly. "Do you know anything about it?"

"Yes, senor," said the man. "My son discovered it in the bed of the river; but the stupid little fellow sold it for a paltry twenty centimos to a Jew named Isaac Benzaquen, who keeps a curio shop in Tangier."

"And where is this Benzaquen now?" asked Nelson Lee.

"I know not, senor," said the man. "He was on his way to Gibraltar when he plundered my son of the silver mannikin."

To Gibraltar! That was enough for Nelson Lee. Having rewarded the peasant for his information, he paid his bill at the tavern, mounted his horse, and rode post-haste to the famous rock.

Almost the first man he saw after riding through the gates was a swarthy-looking Jew. As a matter of fact, the Jew had been loitering just inside the gates since nine o'clock in the morning, waiting for his arrival!

"Pardon me," said Nelson Lee, dismounting, and courteously raising his hat. "I am in search of one of your fellow-countrymen, a man named Isaac Benzaquen. Do you happen to know him?"

"Slightly!" said the Jew, with a peculiar smile.

"Then perhaps you can tell me whether he is still in Gibraltar, or whether he has left for Tangier?"

"He is in Gibraltar," said the Jew, still smiling.

"Where can I find him?"

"Here!"

The detective stared at him in amazement.

"Is it possible?" he gasped. "Are you Isaac Benzaquen?"

"I am," said the Jew.

"You are the man who bought a silver statuette from a boy on the Linea road?"

The Jew started. He was playing his part magnificently.

"Yes," he said quickly. "Do not tell me that the lad has stolen it!"

"No; he found it right enough," said Nelson Lee. "Is it still in your possession?"

"Yes."

"Will you sell it to me?"

"For how much?" asked the Jew craftily.

"For any sum you like to name!" said the detective. "Where is it?"

"At the house where I am staying."

"Where is that?"

"In Engineer Lane."

"Then let us go there at once! We can discuss the question of price on the way."

The Jew agreed, and conducted his unsuspecting victim to a large, square, flat-roofed house at the top of Engineer Lane, which is a steep and narrow street, leading to the upper part of the town.

Green-barred shutters covered all the windows facing the street; but as the sun was shining with unwonted brilliancy, this fact gave rise to no suspicion on the part of Nelson Lee.

With a great show of politeness the Jew threw open the door, and motioned him to enter.

The detective complied; but no sooner had he stepped across the threshold than the Jew sprang after him, closed the door, and whipped out a revolver.

"Not a word, as you value your life!" he hissed, levelling his weapon at the detective's head.

Even as he spoke, two other men sprang out of an adjoining room, and covered Nelson Lee with their revolvers, whilst an instant later the smiling face of Mark Rymer appeared through a door at the end of the passage.

"Good-evening, Mr. Nelson Lee!" he said, peering and blinking and rubbing his hands. "I'm afraid my friends have somewhat startled you! But don't be alarmed. We are not going to harm you. We are only going to provide you with free board and lodging until I have been across to Tangier and secured the Silver Dwarf!"

The detective shrugged his shoulders, and turned to the Jew who had lured him to the house.

"You were lying, I suppose," he said, "when you told me you were Isaac Benzaquen?"

The Jew grinned and complacently stroked his beard with his left hand, whilst his right still held his revolver in a line with Nelson Lee's head.

"Yes; I was lying," he said calmly. "Isaac Benzaquen left for Tangier at seven o'clock this morning!"

"And I was actually in Gibraltar at the time he left!" broke in Mark Rymer. "Can you conceive of anything more exasperating? But the fates have been against me to-day. I miss old Benzaquen and the Silver Dwarf by a quarter of an hour. I decided to follow him by the Spanish boat, which leaves at eleven, but was told that it wasn't sailing to-day on account of the rough weather. For the same reason I couldn't hire a private boat, and when I went to the telegraph-office—intending to wire to Benzaquen to keep the Silver Dwarf until I arrived—I was informed that the submarine cable between Gibraltar and Tangier had broken down, and that, consequently, my message could not be accepted. I knew, of course, that it wouldn't be long before you picked up the scent, and, consequently, I had no alternative but to arrange this little scheme for preventing you getting ahead of me. You played a very similar trick on me in Paris, so that really, you know, you have no right to complain."

"I have not complained yet!" said Nelson Lee curtly. "How long do you propose to keep me here?"

"Not a moment longer than is absolutely necessary, I assure you," said the professor, softly rubbing his long, thin hands. "It is impossible for me to proceed to Tangier before Thursday morning, and, if the sea continues rough, it may not be possible for me to leave until Saturday. Needless to say, I shall leave by the first boat that sails, whenever that may be, and the moment I have secured the Silver Dwarf I shall wire to my friends here to set you at liberty forthwith."

Rymer signed to his three confederates,

The deerhound uttered a low, fierce growl, and launched himself at the detective's throat. Quick as thought, the latter leaped aside, and at the same time pressed the trigger of the revolver.

and in less time, almost than it takes to tell, the detective was thrown down and pinioned hand and foot. When his pockets had been rifled of their contents, he was dragged into a room at the back of the house. In the centre of the floor was a wooden trapdoor, which was promptly unbolted, and opened to its widest extent. A coil of rope was then produced, and one end knotted round the detective's waist. His arms and legs were then unbound, and he was lowered into a noisome underground vault. A couple of rugs were thrown down after him, then the trapdoor was closed, and he was left to his own reflections.

AT THE CURIO SHOP.

NEXT day was Wednesday, and the sea was even rougher than on Tuesday. On Thursday it was so rough that even the captain of the English steamer refused to put to sea, and Mark Rymer had perforce to resign himself to the prospect of remaining in Gibraltar until Saturday. To add to his exasperation, the rough state of the sea prevented any attempt being made to repair the submarine cable, so that he could not wire to Isaac Benzaquen instructing him to keep the Silver Dwarf until he arrived.

On Friday afternoon, however, the storm began to abate, and at half-past six on Saturday morning the welcome news was brought to the professor that the captain of the English boat had resolved to make the trip.

Half an hour after receiving this news, Mark Rymer was on board, and shortly before eleven o'clock the same morning he was standing on the wooden pier at Tangier.

His bag having been "passed" by the Customs officer, he handed it to a brown-faced Moorish boy, and bade him lead the way to Maclean's Hotel.

Upon reaching the hotel, he dismissed the boy, and sought an interview with the proprietor

"Do you happen to know a Jew named Isaac Benzaquen?" he asked, after engaging a bedroom and a private sitting-room.

"Oh, yes!" said the proprietor, with a smile. "Everybody in Tangier knows old Benzaquen."

"He keeps a curiosity shop, I believe?"

"Yes."

"Is it far from here?"

"Oh, no; a quarter of an hour's walk at most. The shop is close beside the French Legation. You can't miss it. Anybody will point it out to you—that is, of course, if you can speak Arabic."

The professor smiled. He was one of the finest Arabic scholars in Europe.

"I think I know enough to make myself understood," he said. "Send my bag up to my room, and expect me back to lunch."

He left the hotel, and twenty minutes later entered Benzaquen's shop—a low, dark room, open to the street, and packed from floor to ceiling with antique Moorish furniture, richly chased swords and daggers, embroidered slippers, specimens of native pottery, curious old lamps and braziers, and real and imitation jewellery.

The only occupant of the shop was a slim-built, sharp-featured Jew, about nineteen or twenty years of age.

"I desire to speak with Isaac Benzaquen," said the professor, in Arabic.

The young Jew shook his head.

"My father is away from home," he said. "He is at Kelelin."

"Where's that?" asked the professor.

"About fifty miles from here, in the direction of Tetuan."

"When did he go?"

"On Tuesday night."

"When do you expect him back?"

"Perhaps to-night, perhaps on Monday; I cannot say."

The professor pondered for a moment.

"Maybe you can tell me what I want to know," he said. "Your father was at San Roque on Tuesday morning?"

"Yes."

"Between San Roque and Gibraltar he overtook a ragged little urchin, who was carrying a small silver statuette, fashioned in the form of a dwarf?"

A startled look sprang into the young Jew's face; but it vanished almost instantly, and gave place to an expression of sullen obstinacy.

"I do not know; I cannot say," replied the Jew.

The professor glowered at him and then considered for a moment.

"Suppose your father returns to-night," he said, "what time will he arrive?"

"If he is not here by sunset, he will not be here until Monday," said the Jew.

"Very well," said the professor, "I will call again to-night shortly after sunset. If your father returns before I come, tell him that I have been, and say to him that he is not to part with that silver statuette until I have seen him."

A curious smile flitted across the young Jew's face, but he merely nodded his head, and promised to obey. A moment later the professor was on his way back to Maclean's Hotel.

NELSON LEE FINDS A WAY OUT.

IT was characteristic of Nelson Lee that as soon as he found himself alone he set to work to take stock of his surroundings, with a view to evolving some plan of escape. As already described, his captors had rifled his pockets, and had taken possession of his revolver, his knife, his money, and all his papers. The only things they had left him were his cigarette-case, his watch and chain, and a small silver matchbox, in which were, perhaps, a score of wax vestas.

Having wound up his watch, and glanced at the time—it was six o'clock—he struck a match and proceeded to make a preliminary survey of the vault into which he had been lowered. It was fully thirty feet deep, and the only means of entering or leaving it was the small trapdoor in the roof. The walls were constructed of large blocks of rough-hewn stone, which nothing less than dynamite would have sufficed to demolish. The floor was of earth, firmly beaten down, and almost as hard as concrete. The roof was formed by the wooden floor of the room above.

Having taken in these details, he struck a second match, and explored the vault more carefully. The result of this second examination was slightly more encouraging. In one of the walls there had evidently been a door in former times—a door that had afterwards been built up—for a portion of the wall, about seven feet high and three feet broad, was composed of stones which were different in shape and distinctly newer-looking than the rest.

"Hallo! What have we here?" muttered Nelson Lee, when his eyes first fell on this well-defined patch. "This looks hopeful! The fact that there has once been a door here proves that there is something more than solid earth on the other side of this wall. Probably there's another underground cellar. Good! The floor of this vault is of earth. If I burrow down to the bottom of the wall, and under the wall, and up through the floor of the vault on the other side, there's a sporting chance that I may find a way of escape. At any rate, I'll try the experiment."

He dug his heel into the earthen floor, and loosened some of the soil. Then he went down on his knees, and began to scrape away the earth with his hands. As already described, the soil had been firmly beaten down, and was almost as hard as concrete. At the end of two hours' unremitting toil he had scooped out a hole no bigger than his head.

At eight o'clock the sound of footsteps in the room above warned him to desist. He hastily flung one of the rugs over the hole

He had made, and lay down on the other. Scarcely had he done so when the trapdoor opened, and a face appeared. It was the face of the Jew who had lured him to the house, and who had been deputed by Solomon Barnascone to act as gaoler.

"Feeding-time," said the Jew, with a coarse laugh.

He attached a basket to a long, thin cord, and lowered it into the vault. Inside the basket was a thick slice of stale bread and a mug of cocoa.

"Five minutes allowed for refreshments," said the Jew. "Hurry up!"

He squatted down by the side of the open trapdoor, and pulled out his watch. The detective removed the bread and the cocoa from the basket, and proceeded to make short work of them. At the end of the five minutes the Jew replaced his watch in his pocket and rose to his feet.

"Time's up!" he said. "Put the mug back in the basket."

The detective obeyed, and the Jew hauled up the basket.

He closed the trapdoor, and a moment later his footsteps died away.

For three more hours the detective burrowed in the hard earth floor, removing the soil with his hands, and piling it up in a heap in the farthest corner of the vault, where it was invisible from the trapdoor. Then he struck a match, gazed at his bleeding lacerated fingers, gazed at the shallow excavation he had made, and ruefully shook his head.

"It would take me a week at this rate!" he muttered disconsolately. "In fact, I couldn't do it in a week. My fingers wouldn't last out. They would be bare to the bone at the end of the second day. If only I had a knife, or even——" He paused as a sudden idea occurred to him. "The very thing!" he exclaimed. "A plate would be better, but a mug will serve."

He lit a cigarette, and curled himself up between the rugs. Ten minutes later the half-smoked cigarette dropped from his lips, and he was sound asleep.

Next day was Wednesday. He awoke at six, and had an hour's burrowing before his gaoler appeared. As before, the Jew lowered a basket into the vault; but on this occation, to Nelson Lee's delight, the basket contained a plate of oatmeal-porridge, a leaden spoon, and a bottle of milk. As before, also, the Jew pulled out his watch, and sat down by the side of the open trapdoor.

"Time's up!" he said, at the end of the five minutes.

The detective drained the last of the milk, and replaced the empty bottle in the basket. He picked up the plate, and was about to put it in the basket, when it slipped out of his hand, and fell to the ground, where it broke into half a dozen pieces.

"Clumsy fool!" growled the Jew. "You shall have your food on a wooden trencher in future. Pick up those broken pieces, and put them in the basket."

The detective quietly covered one of the largest pieces with his foot, but picked up the rest, and tossed them into the basket.

The Jew hauled up the basket, banged the trapdoor down, and bolted it. The detective waited for ten minutes, to make sure that his gaoler did not intend to return, then he snatched up the piece of the broken plate which he had covered with his foot, and resumed his excavations.

Thanks to the aid of this somewhat novel implement his progress was now considerably accelerated. Even so, however, his task was sufficiently tedious; and when he abandoned it for the night he had not yet reached the bottom of the foundations of the wall.

On Thursday morning he resumed his task, and by midday he had delved down to the bottom of the wall. By night he had burrowed a tunnel under the wall, and was ready to begin working upwards the following day. By Friday night he had made such substantial progress that he lulled himself to sleep with the comforting thought that three hours' work on Saturday morning would see his task accomplished.

"I must start work not later than three o'clock to-morrow morning," he soliloquised, as he turned in for the night. "With decent luck I ought to be through by six o'clock, which will give me ample time, if all goes well, to catch the seven o'clock boat to Tangier. If I miss the seven o'clock boat, I must catch the eleven o'clock."

It was one of Nelson Lee's peculiarities that he could always wake at any given hour by making up his mind to do so the night before. He said to himself when he went to sleep on Friday night that he must wake at three o'clock on Saturday morning; and at three o'clock, almost to the very minute, he awoke.

Armed with his primitive implement, he crawled into the subterranean tunnel he had made, and attacked the layer of soil, which, as he fully believed separated him from the adjoining vault or cellar. For three solid hours he worked without cessation; and then, just as he was expecting every moment to break through, his eager fingers came in contact with the under surface of a thick slab of stone.

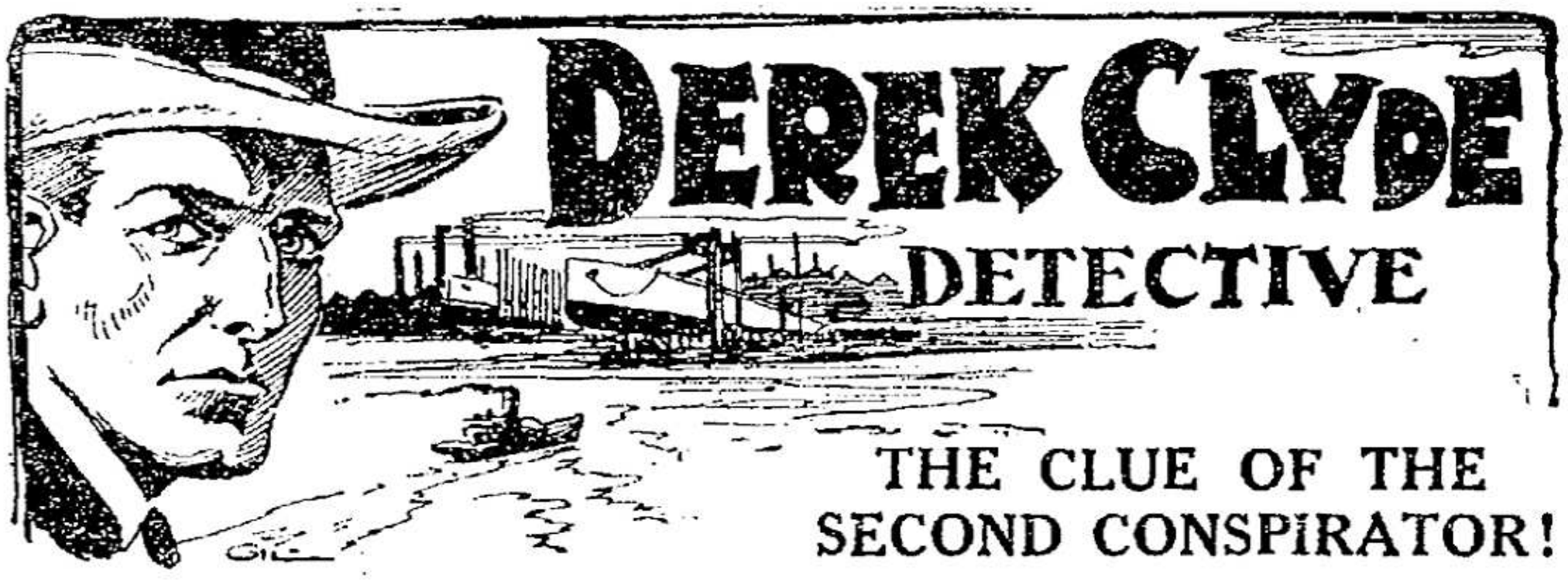
"A stone-flagged floor!" he groaned. "This is more than I bargained for. I must scrape away the soil from under this flag until I find where it joins its neighbours, and then I must try to heave it up. One thing is certain, however—I can't catch the seven o'clock boat now."

He toiled on for another hour; then he crawled back to his prison-cell, and covered up the entrance to his tunnel with one of the rugs A few moments later his gaoler appeared with his breakfast.

ANOTHER LONG INSTALMENT OF THIS GRIPPING YARN WILL APPEAR NEXT WEEK.

OUR DETECTIVE STORY SECTION

GRAND NEW COMPLETE TALES OF THE FAMOUS SCOTS DETECTIVE!



DEREK CLYDE
DETECTIVE

THE CLUE OF THE SECOND CONSPIRATOR!

LORD LOSSIE'S STORY.

IT was pouring rain, and a gale of wind was blowing, as Derek Clyde mounted the stairs of the big building in St. Vincent Place, with water dripping from his cap and mackintosh. He let himself into his flat with a latchkey, and the rattling of windows, and the strident humming of chimney-cowls muffled what little noise he made as he stepped across the hall to the door of his consulting-room. He noticed a glimmer of light beneath it, and supposed that somebody had called during his absence, and had waited for him.

"Lord Lossie!" he exclaimed in surprise.

"Good evening, Mr. Clyde!" responded the young man. "Forgive me for intruding at this hour. The fact is, I am in serious trouble and I have come to you for some advice and assistance."

"Delighted to do what I can, Lord Lossie," said the detective. "What is the trouble?"

"It concerns some important correspondence, private and political and of a confidential nature, belonging to my father, the Earl of Barleven, who was Ambassador at Washington a year or two ago.

"My father sent me to the States to bring this correspondence back to England. All went well until I arrived at New York. Here I made the acquaintance of Frank Ruysdale, a jolly sort of chap, but rather wild. He was engaged to a girl named Miss Blanche Mortimer. They were both staying at my hotel in New York. I can remember that Ruysdale was in my bed-room when I was packing my bag, in which I had put my father's letters. It was not until I was out at sea on the Aurania that I opened my bag and discovered that the letters had been stolen and replaced by blank paper. I have since learned that Ruysdale left New York four days later on the Kenilworth for Liverpool.

"If those letters get in someone else's hands, it will mean ruin for my father, and I shall never be able to face him again. I am beginning to suspect that Ruysdale had something to do with it and that the letters have got into the hands of blackmailers."

Such was the tale to which Clyde listened, and he was more startled by it than his expression showed. He fully realised how serious the matter was.

"I have crossed the Atlantic on both of the vessels you have mentioned," he said. "The speed of the Kenilworth is about the same as that of the Aurania, and it should reach Liverpool in three days from now, if you landed at Southampton this morning. By the way, do you think that the young woman, Blanche Mortimer, was concerned in the plot to steal the letters?"

"Yes, I strongly believe that she was," Lord Lossie replied. "I shouldn't wonder if she put Ruysdale up to it."

"Have you any reason for that suspicion?" Clyde asked.

"Only that she seemed to be much interested when I spoke of the letters."

"Was this man, Ruysdale aware of the nature of them?"

"He was, unfortunately. I blurted out a lot about the letters at dinner that evening."

"What do you suppose Ruysdale intends to do with them? With what object is he bringing them to England?"

"Either he will go to my father and demand an exorbitant sum of money, or he will call on the writers of the letters, and blackmail them one by one. He will do one or the other, and the result will be the same to me. Good Heavens, the thought of the scandals there would be if the contents of those letters were to be made public is enough to drive me mad! And I will be the greatest sufferer.

"It will mean utter ruin to me. My father will never forgive me, I am sure. The estate is not entailed, and he will disinherit me, turn me adrift without any money. And there will be an end of my engagement. I was to have been married to Gladys, the daughter of the Duke of Ballater. And now, can you be surprised, Mr. Clyde, that I am nearly worried out of my mind?"

The young lord's voice faltered. He rose from the chair and paced the floor, his

features twitching with anguish. Clyde did not utter a word of reproach. He was very sorry for the poor fellow He lit his pipe, and smoked in silence for a short interval while he considered the distressing situation. Lord Lossie was watching him eagerly.

"Have you no encouragement to give me?" he said. "Can't you get me out of this awful mess?"

"There should be a way out from the information I have had from you," Clyde replied. "But the man, Ruysdale, may not be bringing the stolen letters with him. Perhaps he was shrewd enough to send them ahead by post."

"I doubt it, sir. It could not have occurred to him that my friend Gretton might have got on his track. Will you arrest him at Liverpool if the letters should be in his possession?"

"I am not sure that I will. It would depend on circumstances. I will do all that is possible, however, and I trust I shall succeed. Leave it to me."

Clyde paused and offered his hand to the youth. "Go straight home and say nothing to any person of this ugly affair," he bade. "You can hope for the best. It is very likely that the letters will be restored to you before your father comes back from Paris, and that you will not get into trouble. The thief will be powerless to do any harm, no matter how vindictive he may be. Good-night," he added. "You will hear from me before long. And meanwhile don't give way to despair."

BLUFF.

IT was shortly before sunset, three days after the visit of Lord Lossie to Clyde's chambers in Glasgow, that the big liner Kenilworth came up the Mersey, and was towed alongside of the Princess Landing-Stage. The gangway was presently lowered, and at once, before anybody had descended, two men, who had been waiting on the stage, mounted the deck. They were Clyde and Inspector Murdoch, the latter in plain clothes.

Without a moment's delay they sought for the captain of the vessel, and when they had spoken a few words to him he indicated to them a passenger who was standing within three or four yards. He was a tall, lean young man, well-dressed, with dark hair and clean-shaven features. He had a steamer-rug on his arm, and a kit-bag in his hand. Murdoch and the detective stepped over to him.

"Mr. Frank Ruysdale, I believe," Clyde said quietly.

"That is quite right, sir," the man as calmly replied. "Ruysdale is my name."

"Come aside with us, please. We wish to talk with you."

"You are under a misapprehension, I think. You are both strangers. What business can you have with me?"

"We want the bundle of letters belonging to the Earl of Barleven, which you stole from his son, Lord Lossie, at the Waldorf Hotel in New York."

Frank Ruysdale stared in blank amazement. "Good heavens, what nonsense!" he exclaimed indignantly. "You must be mad! How dare you accuse me of being a thief?"

"Denials will be useless," Clyde declared. "The letters are in your possession, I am sure."

"I can swear that they are not, sir. You have made a most stupid mistake. I met Lord Lossie in New York, and I knew that he had the letters. He mentioned them to me. But I can assure you that I did not rob him of them."

"You stole them by a trick. You substituted a dummy parcel for the original one."

"It is a lie. A ridiculous lie."

"Then what has brought you to England, Mr. Ruysdale?"

"A private matter, that does not in the least concern you. I hope you are satisfied, gentlemen."

The man shrugged his shoulders as he spoke, and laughed mockingly. Whether or not his assertions were true, he betrayed no signs of fear. His coolness was apparently not feigned. Murdoch and the detective felt rather uneasy.

"You will let us search you, I trust," said Clyde.

"With pleasure," Frank Ruysdale assented. "Under the circumstances, I have no objection in submitting to that indignation."

He was led across the deck, to a spot that was comparatively deserted, and he stood there quietly, with a sneer on his lips, while he was overhauled from head to foot by Clyde, who was far from confident of success. The man had nothing in his pockets except a watch, a considerable sum of money, and a bunch of keys.

Having finished with him, Clyde opened the bag, and found that, with one exception, it contained only articles of clothing. From the bottom of it he drew a thin pad of American telegraph forms. He gave a slight start as he glanced at it closely, and at once, with a careless nod, put it back.

"No letters, Murdoch," he said. "We have made a mistake."

"I told you that you had," Frank Ruysdale scornfully replied. "I hope you are satisfied now, gentlemen."

"Yes, quite satisfied," Clyde murmured. "I must apologise to you, sir, for putting you to this trouble and inconvenience. I deeply regret it."

There was no more to be said. Baffled and disappointed, Murdoch and the detective left the vessel and descended to the landing-stage, jostled by the departing passengers. In silence they went on to the city, and bent their steps to the railway station. The inspector supposed that they were returning to Glasgow, but when they reached the terminus Clyde paused at the entrance.

"I will leave you to go home alone," he said.

"What do you mean?" Murdoch asked in surprise. "The affair is at an end."

"Oh, no, it isn't," Clyde answered with a smile. "It is very far from being at an end. On the contrary, it has just begun."

"You are talking nonsense. Why are you staying behind in Liverpool?"

"I don't propose to remain here. I am going to London."

"To London? What on earth for, Clyde?"

"To recover the stolen letters. That is my object."

"You really expect to do that?" exclaimed the inspector.

"Yes, I am confident that I shall," Clyde replied.

"But that fellow Ruysdale hasn't got the letters."

"No, he hasn't. Somebody else has them, though. The final act of this little drama will be played in Scotland, I strongly believe, and you shall be in at the finish. You will hear from me in a few days, or I will put in an appearance in Glasgow. That's all. Good-night."

"Wait a moment, Clyde. I noticed that you looked rather sharply at the pad of telegraph-forms you took from Frank Ruysdale's bag."

"I did, and I got an important clue from the top one."

"There was no writing on it."

"Not exactly. But a telegram had been written over it, doubtless in America, and torn off. And the pencil, which was driven with a good bit of force, left the impression of a single legible word on the under sheet. Only one word, yet it was enough to convince me that I shall recover the stolen letters."

"What was it?"

"I will tell you when I see you again. And that will be before very long."

And with that Clyde strode away, leaving the inspector in a state of utter stupefaction.

THE WOMAN.

AT eight o'clock one evening, several days after the arrival of the Kenilworth at Liverpool, the steamer Minnesota, from Philadelphia to the Thames, was docked at Tilbury. Amongst the first of the passengers to leave the vessel was a slim and graceful young woman who was thickly veiled, and carried a small bag.

She had hardly more than descended the gangway when a clean-shaven man approached her, whispered to her briefly, and slipped off. Swift and wary though the act was, it had been noticed by an individual who had been waiting on the quay. The man was Derek Clyde, disguised by a false beard and moustache and a pair of spectacles.

He glided after the woman, saw the man join her again, and shadowed them to the railway station. He travelled up to Fenchurch Street with them in the same train, and from there he followed them to the Cafe Roma in Greek Street, Soho.

Here the couple seated themselves at a table in a far corner, and it was very shortly afterwards that the disguised detective sat down at a vacant table near by, with his back towards the two, and waited in the hope of learning something of an interesting nature.

He was not to be disappointed. A conversation was soon started behind him. It was in whispers at first, and was inaudible to him; but presently the speakers slightly raised their voices, and his keen ears caught every word that was said.

"Why are you in such a hurry?" the woman asked of her companion. "I should like to see some of the sights of London to-morrow. I have never been here before."

"You will have a chance to see everything, and enjoy yourself, and spend as much money in the shops as you please," the man replied, "after we have pulled the game off. I want to get it over and done with as quickly as possible, because I am afraid of that detective."

"Do you think he shadowed you from Liverpool, Frank?"

"No, I am sure he didn't. I was too careful for that. But I am afraid of him all the same, Blanche, though I don't know why. It is my nerves, I daresay. We are playing for a big stake."

"Well, I'll leave it to you," Blanche Mortimer said. "When do we go North?"

"I have arranged that," Frank Ruysdale answered. "We'll catch an early train in the morning at King's Cross, travel to Edinburgh, and go straight on to Perth. And at Perth we'll hire a cab, and drive to Lossie Towers, which is a distance of three or four miles. I have looked it all up."

"And what of the letters, Frank? Hadn't we better leave them behind in London, at a railway cloak-room?"

"No, I won't trust them out of my keeping. I'll take them with me, but of course, I'll assure the noble earl that they are not in my personal possession, so that he will be the more willing to make a bargain. I won't give him an opportunity of playing any tricks with me. By jove, Blanche, I'll bleed him to a stiff tune! Twenty-thousand pounds at least. He will be easy to deal with. He would part with half of his fortune rather than let me sell those letters to the persons who——"

The man broke off to light a cigar, and when the conversation was resumed it was in whispers. Clyde had learned quite enough. Elated by his success, knowing that he had the game in his own hands, he paid his bill, and strolled out of the cafe.

He walked down to Charing Cross, and despatched two telegrams, one to Inspector Murdoch at Glasgow, and the other to Lord Lossie at Lossie Towers. Then he drove up to his club in Piccadilly, where he had his supper and spent the rest of the evening.

And before he went to bed he gave instructions that he should be called at a very early hour in the morning.

CLYDE SCORES.

ABOUT nine o'clock on the following night a closed cab that had come from Perth stopped in a lonely road within a few yards of the broad gateway that led to the stately residence of the Earl of Barleven. There were two persons in the cab, but only one got out of it. Frank Ruysdale spoke briefly to his companion, and then, passing on, he entered the gateway, and walked up the winding drive to the dwelling. He rang the bell, and the door was opened by a servant in livery, who gazed at him in mild surprise.

"I wish to see the Earl of Barleven," said the visitor. "Is he at home?"

"Yes, sir, he is," the servant replied. "What name shall I say?"

"It doesn't matter about my name. Tell your master that my business is urgent and private."

"Very good, sir. Will you, please, wait a moment."

The servant disappeared, and speedily returned. He announced that the earl would see the gentleman, and Frank Ruysdale followed him along the hall and into a luxuriously-furnished library. The servant went out at once, leaving him there alone. And after a short interval a door that led to an adjoining apartment was opened, and a slim, fair youth stepped into the library. The American stared at him in consternation, drawing a deep breath.

"You—you here, Lossie!" he stammered. "It—it is your father I want to see!"

"You will have to see me instead," Lord Lossie said fiercely. "I know what your business is, you infamous scoundrel, thief, and blackmailer. But you won't get a penny in this house, be assured."

"I will have nothing to do with you," Frank Ruysdale hotly declared. "I insist on seeing the earl."

"You will see him, perhaps, after you have given me the letters you stole from me in New York. You will hardly have the audacity to deny the theft."

"Never mind about that, Lossie. As for the letters, do you imagine that I would

With a fierce threat on his lips, the American pulled out a revolver, when Derek Clyde and Inspector Murdoch sprang at him from behind a heavy curtain.

have been fool enough to bring them with me? I didn't."

"That's a lie, Ruysdale. Hand them over and avoid trouble. Be quick about it."

As the young lord spoke he moved nearer to the American, who stepped back a little, his eyes glittering dangerously, and reached for his hip. He had a revolver in his pocket, but as he was in the act of pulling it out, with a threat from his lips, Derek Clyde and Inspector Murdoch sprang at him from behind a heavy curtain at one side of the room, and the next instant he was in their clutches, and the weapon was wrenched from his grasp.

"Neatly trapped, you scoundrel!" exclaimed Clyde.

There was a brief struggle, and a desperate one. Frank Ruysdale fought hard to escape, and at length, exhausted by his efforts, he yielded to his assailants, and they flung him into a chair. He sat there limply, pale and trembling, while Clyde stood by him with the revolver in his hand.

Lord Lossie and the inspector hastened from the library, and when they came back a few moments later they were accompanied by two plain-clothes constables, who were leading Blanche Mortimer between them. They had been hiding in the vicinity of the dwelling, had seen the cab arrive, and had arrested the woman after her companion had left her. A small bag was attached to Blanche Mortimer's belt. Clyde opened it, and took from it a bulky parcel sealed with red wax.

"Here you are, Lossie," he said.

The youth snatched the parcel eagerly. "Thank Heaven!" he cried. "The stolen letters! I'll never forget what I owe to you, Mr. Clyde! Never, as long as I live!"

The sound of wheels had been heard a moment before, and now a bell pealed loudly. There were voices and footsteps in the hall.

"It—it must be my father!" gasped the young lord, turning ghastly white. "He has returned unexpectedly from Paris. Oh, what is to be done?"

He had no more than spoken when the door was thrown open, and the Earl of Barleven strode into the room. He gazed around him in bewilderment.

"Mr. Clyde!" he exclaimed. "And a police-inspector! Who are these people? What are they doing here? Eric, what on earth does all this mean?"

Concealment was impossible. The truth had to be told. Clyde briefly related the whole story, and when he had finished he pleaded for the penitent youth. The earl was silent for a few seconds. Then the hot wrath faded from his eyes, and he turned to his son.

"You have had a bitter lesson, Eric," he said. "You disobeyed me, and the consequences might have been appalling. But as all has ended well, and I think you have suffered enough, I shall forgive you. What of these villains, Clyde," he added. "I don't want to have them arrested. I am most anxious to avoid a scandal."

Clyde shrugged his shoulders. "We shall have to let them go, much to my regret," he replied.

A word was enough for Frank Ruysdale and the woman. They slunk from the room, and out of the house, thankful to have got off so easily. Clyde went to the outer door with them, and when he had seen them walk down the drive, and get into the waiting cab, he returned to the library.

"And now what of these letters, my lord?" he said. "You must not run any risk of their being stolen again."

"I will see to that," declared the Earl of Barleven. "I will take the best of care of them."

"You can't be sure that they will be safe anywhere. If I were in your place I should not keep them."

"They will be of historical interest and value some day, Clyde. But—but what do you think I ought to do?"

"I will leave that to your judgment and discretion, my lord."

The earl wavered for a moment, and yielded to a sudden impulse. He tossed the sealed parcel into the fire that was burning in the grate, and the little group stood silently watching them until they had been consumed to ashes in the flames.

"It is a wise thing you have done, my lord," said Clyde. "A very wise thing. As for those two scoundrels, their evil designs have been baffled, and they are powerless to do any harm."

He paused, and nodded to the inspector. "Come, let us be off," he bade. "I want to get back to Glasgow to-night. Our work is finished, and happily finished. And, by the way, Murdoch," he added, "Minnesota was the word that was visible to me on the telegraph form. That gave me the clue. I should have been stupid indeed had I not suspected that the stolen letters were in the possession of Frank Ruysdale's accomplice, Blanche Mortimer, and that he had sent her a message instructing her to sail by the steamer Minnesota, and join him in London."

THE END.

The Further Adventures of DEREK CLYDE will appear next week in another thrilling complete story, entitled :—

"CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP!"

(Continued from page 14.)

cuts diagonally over—one may find scores of theatres within easy reach. In this quarter the theatres rub shoulders, so to speak, jostling against one another, and each striving for the greater publicity by means of dazzling electric signs.

Down every side street—from 42nd, where the amous Ziegfeld Follies are situated—to 50th the blazing electric signs wink and twinkle at you as you walk along Broadway. Central Park cuts New York in two after 59th Street, so there are no more important theatres.

But Times Square is the dead centre.

Standing here, one may look north and south and at any time during the evening the light is as strong, almost, as at noonday. On every building there are millions of electric lights, of all colours and designs. When one sees Broadway for the first time, one's breath is almost taken away But it is surprising how soon one gets accustomed to the "bright lights," and almost fails to observe them. They are there—just a part and parcel of New York's theatre section. One ceases to wonder.

Many of the Remove juniors had seen Broadway before—but only on a brief visit, which had been undertaken during an adventure which I have described elsewhere. But even these juniors, including myself, were intensely interested to see Broadway again.

As for all the others—those who had never been to New York before—the sight was rather a staggering one.

"I'm not going to suggest that New York is better than London. In fact, my own private opinion is that no city in the world can compare to dear smoky, foggy old London (which isn't so smoky and foggy as many people try to make out, after all). But New York is so absolutely different from London that a stranger is quite enchanted at first.

Later on, after the novelty has worn off, the stranger begins to find that New York can supply quite a respectable amount of dirt and fog when it likes—particularly in the winter time. I have been in a New York fog which would probably take first prize against one of London's own particulars And as for blacks and smuts, the least said the better. Both in London and New York one meets with these minor troubles—and, indeed, in every great city.

But when it comes to electric signs—why New York has London beaten to a cocked ha.. One day, perhaps, London will make itself just as hideous, but let's hope that day is a long way off. When I say 'hideous," I don't mean at night-time. The effect at night is dazzling and fairylike. But in the daytime one sees the gaunt, skeleton work of the electric signs on almost every building, standing out against the skyline like ugly, half-finished girder structures. They absolutely mar the whole of Broadway during the light of day.

It was not very late in the evening when we started out from Battery Park—close against which our bungalow home was situated. I didn't see any reason why we should waste a lot of money on taxi-cabs, and so we went by tramcar. Nelson Lee had provided all the fellows with a liberal amount of pocket-money to spend, but it wouldn't go very far if we went about riding in taxis. In New York one may ride as far as one likes, in any direction, for a five cent fare—either on the street car or the subway. On the motor-'buses one pays ten cents.

Our best course was to take a street car. So we walked a short distance from Battery Park to the lower end of the Broadway, and besieged the first tram that arrived—this being the 'erminus. The tram was therefore quite empty, and we absolutely filled it.

There are several street car systems in New York—the largest, I think, being the Third Avenue System, which runs cars out to the most distant points. But the Broadway cars are owned by another company, and they are long, green, low-built vehicles that look like gigantic insects crawling along.

One enters in the middle of the car, both ends being entirely closed. And it is the custom to drop a nickel—five cents—into a little box just inside the door. You don't receive a ticket, as in London.

Both the driver and the conductor of the car were highly amused at the invasion, and we soon started off in fine style. Handforth, naturally, was arguing. He was still demanding to know why he hadn't received his ticket. In vain I pointed out that he wouldn't get one.

"It's all rot!" declared Handforth. "Supposing the inspector comes?"

"There aren't any inspectors——"

"Then there ought to be!" said Handy obstinately. "Why, anybody could travel without paying in a rush! I'm blessed if I can understand these giddy New York methods! And who ever saw such a dotty car as this?"

I didn't continue the argument, but allowed Handforth to thrash it out with Church and McClure. And as we progressed, we kept our eyes upon the various interesting points as we followed Broadway's diagonal course over New York.

Past Union Square and Madison Square and then Herald Square, until we came to Forty-Second Street. These cross-roads are about the busiest in the whole of New York, and just now, in middle evening, they were very congested.

The brilliant roadways were filled with street cars, taxi-cabs, and private automobiles—hundreds and hundreds of them. All the way along the route people had been staring at our car, for nobody failed to recognise the English schoolboys who had been so much in the newspapers of late.

And when we tumbled out of the car at Forty-Second Street, the crowds gathered round, and became almost embarrassing. And there were a good few of us, too—for the whole Remove had come along on this jaunt.

Although it was not quite dark yet every electric sign was blazing with its greatest power. It was just at the time when the theatres were beginning to fill, and, consequently, the roads and the pavements were almost packed to suffocation. Our arrival on the scene did not help matters.

The crowds were quite good-natured—most of the people greeting us with grins or smiles, or joking sallies. And it was only natural that the Remove should become somewhat disintegrated.

Handforth of Co., of course, clung together—they were always bound by invisible strings. Sir Montie Tregellis-West and Tommy Watson and I found ourselves with Reggie Pitt and Archie Glenthorne and Fatty Little. Fullwood and Co. had become separated with Merrell and one or two others of the same set.

Thus, five minutes after we had alighted from the street car, we were dotted up and down Broadway, on both sides of the street.

Any New Yorker arriving in Times Square at that particular moment would have seen nothing but St. Frank's juniors in every direction.

Handforth was inclined to be impatient.

"There seems to be something wrong with the giddy traffic," he said, glaring. "I've never known such rotten regulations in all my life! It's a pity these policemen can't control things better!"

"Don't be silly!" said Church. "You know very well that everything's opposite in New York——"

"Eh?" said Handforth. "What do you mean—opposite? Come on, let's get across the road while there's a chance!"

It appeared to Handforth that the road was quite clear, and he stepped off the pavement with his back to an oncoming taxi-cab. Church and McClure gave simultaneous gasps, and just managed to drag their leader back in the nick of time. Even as it was, one of the taxi's wings slightly scraped against Handforth.

"You—you rotter!" howled Handy. "You nearly knocked me down!"

"Keep out of the road!" roared the taxi-man.

"Why, you—you——"

"Dumb-bell!" interrupted the taxi-man, as he drove on.

"Dumb-bell!" repeated Handforth. "What's the ass talking about? I've a good mind to complain to the police for that! He might have killed me!"

"Oh, you—you duffer!" gasped Church. "It was your own fault!"

"My own fault!"

"Yes, of course! You know jolly well that all the traffic keeps to the right in New York—instead of keeping to the left, as in England. Didn't Mr. Lee particularly warn us to be careful?"

Handforth blinked.

"My hat! So he did!" he exclaimed. "I'd forgotten that. Oh, well, it's a rotten system!"

"I expect the Americans say the same about our rules when they come to London," grinned McClure. "Come on; there's a chance now. But be careful!"

They crossed Forty-Second Street, and found themselves on the island where the tall Times Building stands. Walking round this, they were in Times Square itself, and in a zone of comparative safety—for here, in the centre, there was no danger of being run over.

And the juniors were able to take a full look at the wonderful electric signs.

Handforth didn't seem to think they were anything particularly marvellous. Edward Oswald never gave much attention to scenery. He was about the most intensely practical fellow in the whole of St. Frank's.

They wandered about for a bit, and then came face to face with another bunch of Removites—Armstrong and his chums. And it so happened that another party of us arrived at the same time.

"Oh, here you are!" said Handforth.

"Yes, and it's a wonder you're still alive!" I said severely. "I thought you were going to get run over by that taxi-cab."

"Don't talk to me about that!" growled Handforth. "I'm not supposed to know anything about these dotty traffic regulations, am I? What's the matter with Fatty? What's he getting excited about?"

Fatty Little was not only excited, but indignant.

"These rotters won't come into a restaurant," he said warmly. "We've been hours without grub, and I'm starving! Great bloaters! And these giddy cafes are simply packed with wonderful grub! I've never seen such food! If you won't jolly well come, I'll go alone!"

"Oh, let's humour him," said Handforth. "I'm a bit peckish myself. We'll go in!"

"Good-egg!" said Fatty.

Several others agreed, and walking along a short distance we came to one of those brilliantly illuminated and decorated establishments which are known in American as cafeterias.

As far as I know, we haven't got a cafeteria in London, and I grinned to myself as I could foresee trouble coming along.

Fatty Little and Handforth and the others apparently thought the place was just an ordinary restaurant. It certainly looked like one in every particular—from the outside.

But a cafeteria is different from a cafe. There is no service—no waiters or waitresses. One goes in, and selects one's food from a long, wide counter which extends down the whole side of the establishment. On this counter, which frequently has three

or four glass shelves, every kind of food imaginable is set out. You simply help yourself to what you want, put it all on a tray, and a gentleman at the end gives you a ticket and punches it in a certain section—showing just how much your bill amounts to. The ticket is about the same size as a tram ticket, and is punched in the same manner. You pay as you leave the place, at the end of your meal.

Of course, there are plenty of the ordinary restaurants in New York—hundreds and thousands of them, in fact. But there are also large numbers of these cafeterias. They are very excellent when one requires quick service—when one has just a few minutes to snatch a meal. And the food is generally of the finest quality. Generally, bread-and-butter ad lib are thrown in free of charge, to say nothing of iced water. The first thing one gets in a New York cafe or cafeteria is a glass of iced water. If you go to a soda fountain, for a mere ice-cream, the inevitable glass of ice water is shoved in front of you as a preliminary—even in the bitterest weather of winter.

Handforth and Co. and the others marched into the cafeteria, and proceeded to sit down. A gentleman behind a little desk at the entrance looked up, and elevated his eyebrows.

"Tickets!" he said briefly.

The juniors took no notice of him, failing to understand. And they sat there at the tables, wondering how long it would be before a waiter came along.

As it happened, the place was fairly empty, but the few people who were eating looked on with keen amusement. They knew who we were, and they could easily guess what the trouble was.

I thought it time to show my superior knowledge.

I had come in last, and I took my ticket from the cashier, and walked down the long counter, and helped myself to a square metal tray. On this tray I placed some cold ham, salad, rolls and butter, and called for a cup of coffee. My ticket was then punched at the figure thirty-five—which meant that my bill came to thirty-five cents—roughly eighteenpence.

I helped myself to a knife and a fork and spoon from a big container on the counter, and went to a table. The other juniors eyed me wonderingly as I sat down.

"My hat!" said Handforth. "He's got his already! Helped himself, too! What's the idea? Where are all the waiters?"

I grinned as I helped myself to sugar.

"This is a cafeteria, my lads," I explained. "Go and get your tickets, and you can help yourselves to what you like."

"What!" gasped Fatty. "Great cocoanuts!"

In a moment he had grabbed his ticket from the grinning cashier, and Handforth and Co. and the others followed his example. Fatty appeared to have the idea that he could take just what he pleased, and didn't trouble himself about how much the bill came to.

One tray was not sufficient for him. He filled two, and one ticket wasn't sufficient either—for, generally, these tickets only indicate amounts up to a dollar. And Fatty's bill came to nearly a dollar and a half.

Handforth was rather keen upon hot sausages. He saw somebody else carrying a plate of them away, and took a fancy to the dish.

"I'll have some of those saveloys!" he said to the white-coated attendant behind the counter.

"How?" said the latter.

"How!" repeated Handforth. "Why, cooked hot, of course!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The attendant grinned.

"You don't get me, son," he said. "What is it you want?"

"Saveloys!"

"Maybe you mean Frankfurters?" said the man good-naturedly. "These things?" he added, indicating a whole dish of smoked sausages.

"Of course," said Handforth. "They're saveloys, ain't they? Not particularly classy, I know, but they look good. You can get 'em at the coffee stalls in London. Gimme three or four of 'em with some mashed potatoes."

Handforth's order was filled, and he soon came to a table near by, and attacked the steaming Frankfurters—a type of smoked sausage very popular in New York, and, of course, of German origin. They generally contain much garlic.

Handforth cut a section of one off, and put it in his mouth. For a moment or two he chewed in silence, and then looked at Church and McClure, who had just sat down thoroughly armed with club sandwiches and coffee.

"Not so bad," said Handforth. "Bit of a rummy taste, you know. Can't quite make out what it is, but it doesn't taste like the grub we have in England."

Church shook his head.

"You always ought to be careful of sausages," he said warningly. "You never know what they put in these things. Bags of mystery—that's what they are. I'm sticking to a straightforward sandwich."

"Same here," said McClure.

"There's no more risk in eating a sausage here than eating a sausage in England," said Handforth tartly. "And you chaps have scoffed plenty of 'em in Study D. So don't be so jolly wise!"

Two men were sitting at the next table, and they looked across at Handforth, smiling. They were partaking of the same delicacy.

"These Frankfurters are sure good, ain't they?" said one of the men.

"Oh, boy! I'll say they are!" remarked the other gentleman. "Nothing like hot dogs when you're hungry—eh, kid?"

Handforth started.

"Hot which?" he said, with a peculiar note in his voice.

"Hot dogs!" said the man.

Handforth allowed his fork to drop with a crash. A strange gulp came into his throat and his face turned pale. He gazed at his plate in a fascinated kind of stare.

"Dogs!" he said huskily. "Hot dogs! Do—do you mean to say that these things are hot dogs?"

"Sure, they are!" replied one of the men. "Maybe you're kind of new out here, young 'un. We always eat hot dogs in New York."

Handforth rose to his feet unsteadily.

"I—I knew there was something queer about 'em!" he gasped. "My hat! That accounts for the flavour! Great pip! Fancy people eating dog! I've heard they make sausages out of cats and dogs, but I'm blessed if I thought they did it openly! Dog sausages! Oh, my goodness!"

Handforth gave another gulp, and suddenly turned red.

"It's—it's an outrage!" he roared, picking up two of the sausages from his plate. "By George! I'm going to stuff these down the giddy proprietor's throat! I'll biff him until he can't see straight! Hot dogs! I shall be sick for a week after this!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The whole cafeteria was howling with laughter. I leapt at Handforth before he could put his threat into execution.

"Hold on!" I gasped. "Don't be so hasty you ass! It's only a name; they're called hot dogs here. They're made of beef ——"

"What!"

"Beef!" I repeated. "They're Frankfurter sausages—called hot dogs in slang. You chump! You didn't think they were made of real dogs, did you?"

Handforth sat down limply.

"I'm fed up!" he said sourly. "They're all mad here! They run the traffic the wrong way about, they have trams with the doors in the middle instead of the end, they give you beef sausages and call them dog sausages!"

"Never mind!" I grinned. "Eat 'em up!"

"I couldn't eat another mouthful if you paid me a thousand quid!" said Handforth. "I'll never touch another sausage in my life! My hat! Hot dogs!"

Handforth gulped his ice water down, and staggered out into the fresh air.

CHAPTER VI.

CHINA TOWN!

"HERE you are—just starting off! Come along on this trip, boys — straight through to China Town! Now's your opportunity!"

We paused, and gazed with interest at the loud-voiced gentleman who had thus addressed us. We had emerged from the cafeteria—about twenty of us, including Handforth, who was now feeling slightly better.

We were on Broadway, and for some little time we had been standing there, looking at the dazzling electric signs. There were so many of them that we hardly knew which to admire the most. And now the gentleman with the large voice claimed our attention.

He was standing just in front of a motor-coach—a curious kind of char-a-banc with a glass roof. It was not a particularly impressive affair, and there was a big label on it, announcing to all and sundry that it was about to start for Chinatown, the fare being the modest sum of one dollar per passenger.

According to the gentleman with the voice, he was perfectly willing to take the whole crowd of us for one dollar each—a great sacrifice on his part—but, seeing that we were strangers in New York, he was willing to strike a wonderful bargain, and take us all at a ridculously low price.

"Rats!" said Handforth. "A dollar is the usual fare."

"You bet it's the usual fare," agreed the gentleman briskly. "But we'll give you an extra ride; we'll take you around and give you a swell time. Step right in, and take your seats. All aboard! We're just going! Come on, boys—don't hesitate! Last trip to-night!"

Reggie Pitt chuckled.

"Shall we chance it?" he asked, turning to a few of the others.

"Might as well," said Jack Grey.

Church looked at McClure, and McClure looked at Church. They winked. They both wanted to go, but to make any statement to that effect would be fatal. They turned to Handforth.

"Oh, I don't know!" said Church indifferently. "What's the good of going to Chinatown? That's down in the low quarter! That's where the crooks and gunmen congregate! Haven't you read about it in detective stories? We don't want to go to Chinatown!"

Handforth's eyes gleamed.

"By George!" he said. "Don't we? Why, that's the very place I'm keen on exploring! For all you know, we may hit upon a mystery! I've always wanted to see Chinatown and the Bowery! We'll go!"

"Dotty idea!" grumbled McClure. "Oh, all right!"

They silently shook hands behind Handforth's back, and again winked at one another. Other fellows were keen upon the trip, too, and in a short time the motor-coach was over half full. An interested crowd of New Yorkers stood by, looking on as though they were being provided with some extra special entertainment. There was almost an obstruction in the traffic.

And so, without waiting for any more customers, the coach moved off, and was soon lumbering down Broadway into the quieter

region down-town—in the direction of Madison Square.

The vehicle continued on its way down Broadway, until finally it turned into Canal Street. Right down in this section the streets were quite dimly lighted in comparison to the region round Times Square.

And the juniors were not at all impressed by the condition of the roads. The coach bumped up and down until they were shaken this way and that. And along Canal Street everything looked dingy and dirty and singularly drab.

"Well, this is a nice place to bring us to!" said Jack Grey. "It's worse than Whitechapel Road!"

"My hat! I should say it is!" breathed Pitt. "Whitechapel Road is a magnificent thoroughfare compared with this! I must say I'm not partcularly struck with this part of New York City!"

And the further they went the less they liked the look of it. When they arrived at that famous street known as the Bowery, they found themselves in a dirty, smelly neighbourhood, with plenty of Chinamen and foreigners of every description lounging about.

Many of these gentry appeared to prefer the dark corners. They stood about in doorways, talking in low voices, or back in little alleyways. The Elevated Railroad ran overhead at this point, and helped to make the whole scene dreary and forbidding.

The coach did not proceed much further, but drew up alongside one of the curbs, and the driver alighted, and invited us to do likewise. He then declared that he was going to take us on a tour of inspection down the narrow and tortuous side-streets.

We were now in the oldest quarter of New York City—and, by all appearances, the dirtiest. We were in the heart of the East Side, where, not many years ago, it was deadly dangerous to be. For then the whole neighbourhood was teeming with toughs and gunmen of the worst description. Even to-day it is a pretty dangerous neighbourhood at night.

I had come along with the other fellows because I was keen upon seeing Chinatown again, for I had visited the Bowery and other parts of this district with Nelson Lee on former occasions. There was no danger about this trip, for we were being conducted—and we should stick to the safe streets.

The fellows noticed some of the inhabitants standing at the street corners, or in the doorways, regarding the explorers with a half-cynical, half-amused kind of smile. They were accustomed to these trippers.

We went down Mott Street—famous in Chinatown—much interested in the queer little Chinese eating-houses and other establishments. For all we knew, there were opium dens within a stone's throw of us, and other sinks of iniquity within equally easy reach.

But we saw only the surface—just a glimpse of the outside. And although it was fairly interesting, the juniors were not filled with wild enthusiasm. The romance of Chinatown is mainly to be found in reading highly-coloured fiction. The actual place itself is nothing but a dim, dingy, smelly place at the best. There was nothing at all romantic in this locality.

"Say, I'm the guy what put the pep in pepper!"

Handforth and Co. brought up the rear of the "slumming party"—as they sometimes call these little affairs out there. And Handforth pretended to be greatly interested. He had always had such big ideas about the Bowery and Chinatown, the East Side of New York. He didn't like to admit, even to himself, that the romance was something of an illusion.

"Of course, we're only seeing a tiny bit of it," he said, as if in excuse. "This isn't a proper trip to Chinatown at all. To see it properly we ought to come down here dis-

guised as toughs, and explore all the back alleys!"

Now this, as a matter of fact, was absolutely true. But Church and McClure didn't quite agree.

"We don't want to spend any more time down here," said Church. "I'm fed up with the place: I shall be glad to get back among the bright lights. It's depressing down here; it gives you the pip!"

"The creeps as well," said McClure.

"Never mind about that; we want to have a closer look," declared Handforth, pausing in his stride. "For example, look down this alley. See those queer little lights? I'll bet there's an opium-den near there—or one of those cellars of the underworld that we see in the pictures!"

"Oh, come on," said Church.

It was rather a foolish thing for him to urge Handforth in that way, for the leader of Study D was a contrary kind of fellow. He immediately decided to go down that alley.

And he went. Only for a moment did Church and McClure hesitate. They followed him into that forbidding passage—not because they wanted to explore it, but they thought it highly necessary that Handforth should be escorted.

"For goodness sake, Handy, come back!" urged McClure. "That man particularly warned us about wandering off. There's no telling what might happen down one of these rotten alleys——"

"I didn't ask you to come!" said Handforth tartly.

Church and McClure thought about dashing away to fetch some of the others, but in order to do that they would be compelled to leave Handforth by himself. And, after all, perhaps they were needlessly alarmed. It wasn't late in the evening, and no doubt there would be no danger.

So they stuck to their leader.

And by the time they were missed from the main party it was impossible to tell what had become of them. The man who was in charge instituted a kind of search, but it was impossible to locate the famous trio.

This was not so difficult to understand, because Handforth had led his chums down alley after alley, and passage after passage, until they were all hopelessly lost. Of course, Handforth declared that he knew exactly where he was, and that he could get back into the main street just whenever he wanted.

"Well, you're smarter than I am, that's all!" growled Church.

"I know that!" said Handforth promptly.

"We're lost—there's no getting away from it," went on Church. "And the further we get the worse it gets! We were fatheads to leave the others——"

"Don't worry; leave it to me and you'll be all right," interrupted Handforth. "I know what I'm doing, and it won't be long before we strike the main road. Then it'll only take us two minutes to locate the others."

But even Handforth did not speak with his usual confidence. Every time he turned a corner he hoped to see a big thoroughfare near by. But this was not the case. The juniors had wandered right down into the oldest part of the city, where the streets were not formed in the usual American style, criss-cross fashion. Here everything was old and dilapidated—and dark.

And Handforth got a bit of a shock when he noticed that three figures had appeared in the path some little distance ahead. They were rather big figures, too, and they were standing right across the alley.

There was a light at the far end, but it only shed a dim glow just here. And the juniors could merely see that the three figures were those of burly, foreign-looking men, shabbily attired, and with coarse, unshaven faces.

"You've gotta da dolla for poor man?" inquired one of the strangers, making a grab at Church's sleeve.

"Leggo!" said Church hastily.

"Best come across!" said one of the others gruffly. "Hand out yer money, kiddoes! We've got you where we want you!"

Handforth pushed back his sleeves.

"What's this—a hold-up?" he asked fiercely.

"You betta it's a hold-up!" said the Italian gentleman. "We wanta see your mon'! You trya da mank' bizaness and we swipa da jaw!"

"By George!" said Handforth. "If there's any jaw swiping to be done, I'm the man! You—you giddy pirates! You highwaymen! Come on, you chaps—slosh 'em! We're not going to be robbed!"

Biff!

Handforth was a swift worker. He lunged out, and his fist caught the gentleman from Italy squarely in the mouth. The victim staggered back, howling.

"Me killa you!" he gasped painfully. "You breaka da teeth! Ow! You gotta da fist lika da hammer!"

He recovered himself rapidly, and fairly flew at Handforth. And by this time Church and McClure were having a warm fight. The other two ruffians had rushed in, and the affair began to look serious.

Handforth and Co. put up a fine defence, and they knew a great deal about boxing, and used all their skill. But against this brute force they had no real chance. Handforth was doing the work for three, but the position was bad.

Church went down, practically winded, and he lay on the ground moaning. McClure yelled for help, but Handforth was still pegging away. Two of the men were upon him, and it would only be a matter of minutes before he went down, too.

Biff! Crash! Slosh!

Handforth hit hard and often, but his powerful lunges seemed to have no real

effect. These toughs were as hard as nails, and could take any amount of punishment without noticing it.

And just as the fight was at its thickest, just when the juniors were on the point of going under, a fourth gentleman appeared upon the scene. He came round the corner into the alleyway, and stood looking on.

Church, on the ground, caught sight of the newcomer.

"Help!" he gasped. "These—these brutes are killing us!"

"Take that!" hooted Handforth. "You greasy Italian worm! I'll jolly well bash you into the middle of next week!"

The gentleman up the alley grinned.

"Attaboy!" he observed. "You'se got de right spirit, kiddo! Good gosh! You'se sure knockin' heck outer dem guys!"

He came up closer, and it could now be seen that he was attired in peculiarly tight-fitting trousers of a loud check design, yellow shoes with big, knobby toecaps, and a striped sweater. Upon his head rested a huge check cap. His face was rugged—a big, coarse, bruiser-like face with little eyes set close together. His jaw protruded enormously. But, somehow, there was an expression of good nature about this East Side tough.

"You'se de English kids, ain't you'se?" he asked, joining the fray. "Leave it to me, bo'! I'll teach dese mutts what a real fist is like! I'll sure moider de wop! Him'n me ain't what you'se call pales!"

The stranger went about his work easily. But once he started the effect was remarkable. He gave two terrific swipes which completely knocked out two of the toughs. One blow for each was enough. They lay groaning on the ground, loosing all interest in the proceedings. The third man bolted.

"Gee! I guess dey ain't got no more grit dan a sissy! You'se all feelin' good now?"

"Thanks!" said Handforth breathlessly. "By George! Those rotters nearly did us in! This seems to be a rotten neighbourhood!"

"Let's get out of it!" muttered Church, staggering to his feet.

As a matter of fact, the juniors were not very much impressed with the man who had come to their rescue. He seemed quite capable of robbing them on his own account. A tougher looking specimen it would be impossible to imagine. But the newcomer was smiling genially.

"What you'se doin' around here, anyways?" he asked. "I'd sure hoid you was in town. Say, you'se de guys what got ship wrecked, ain't you'se?"

"Yes," said Handforth. "We came out here in one of those motor-coach things, to see Chinatown. We were just doing a bit of exploring, when those rotters stopped us and demanded money. The confounded rogues!"

The man in the sweater laughed.

"Holy smoke! Ain't you'se dumb?" he remarked, with a chuckle. "Say, kiddo, dis locality is sure full of hoboes like dem ginks. Guess I'll take pity on you'se an' show you de way back. I ain't de kinder guy to take advantage of kids like you'se. And, say, you was sure fightin' good. Dinty Todd always admires a guy wid pluck!"

"Who's Dinty Todd?" asked Handforth.

"Dat's me," replied the stranger. "I'll say dat I'm some guy around this quarter. Yup, sir! De cops kinder figger dat I'm some tough boid! Say, when you'se toined into dis alley you'se hit de right spot! I'm figgerin' you'se loined a heap about li'l old New Yoik! Say, I'm de guy what put de pep in pepper!"

Handforth & Co. regarded Mr. Todd in astonishment. He was certainly a somewhat remarkable individual. And there was no question about his friendliness towards the boys.

"It's jolly good of you, Mr. Todd, to help us——"

"Aw, cut out de fancy words!" interrupted Dinty. "An' listen! If you'se call me Mr. Todd I ain't responsible for what my left mitt might do! Guess I'm Dinty—get me? Dat's my handle, kiddoes!"

"Well, Mr. Dinty——"

"Holy gee!" gasped Mr. Todd. "You'se puttin' de mister on to Dinty now! Say, you'se just as dumb as dey make 'em! If you'se don't call me just plain Dinty you'se best look out for a sock in de eye! Well, let's go! We'll take a toin around de next block, and den we'se in de Bowery!"

Handforth & Co. were astonished to find how quickly they were in the well populated thoroughfares. They thanked Mr. Todd profusely for his good services—and for his genuine honesty in seeing them out of a tight corner without demanding recompense.

But Dinty insisted upon seeing them all the way home. This New York tough, common though he was, had apparently taken a real fancy to the juniors. And, bubbling with good spirits, he declared that he would see them all the way home.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LOST SHEEP!

ARCHIE GLENTHORNE adjusted his monocle, and looked round with concern.

"It appears, dear old grape-fruit, that we are some isolated from the rest of the jolly old lads!" he observed. "I am dashed if I know how it happened, but there you are! I mean to say, we're bally well lost!"

"Oh, never mind," said Fatty Little. "We know the way back, so we needn't worry."

"Ahem! Absolutely!" said Archie. "Of course, you may know the way, old dear, but I must confess that the old brain is rather dormant. In other words, in a somewhat comatose condish!"

"That's usual," said Fatty. "The main fault with you, Archie, is that you don't eat enough! Chaps who eat a lot have ripping brains. Look at me, for example! I eat pretty well, and my brain's always bulging with intelligence!"

"Well, dear old lad, it may sound frightfully vain, but perhaps you're right," observed Archie. "Some frightful rotter suggested that my top floor is unfurnished, but that was a dashed insinuash! But to get down to solid facts, and all that sort of rot! How, to be exact, do we get back?"

"Subway!" said Fatty briefly.

"Ah, yes!" said Archie, looking round in a vague kind of way. "The jolly old subway, what? I've heard of it. One of those poisonous things underneath the old street, as it were. You walk for miles and miles ——"

"No, you chump!" said Fatty Little. "In London a subway is just a passage from one underground station to another, or something like that. But the subway in New York is the name of the underground electric railway. We've just got to take tickets for Battery Park, and we're there."

"Good lad!" said Archie. "Lead the way. The hour is getting somewhat late, and the old tissues are crying aloud for recuperative measures. In other words, 'tis time for Archie to slip beneath the good old linen! The snowy white sheets, what? By gad! The thought is priceless!"

"Rats!" said Fatty. "We've got to have supper yet!"

Archie staggered. He and Fatty Little had wandered about Broadway for some little time—quite alone. They didn't exactly know how they had got isolated from the rest of the Remove—but the fact remains that they were quite to themselves.

And as the hour was getting late, Archie wanted to get home. He was filled wtih amazement that Fatty Little should still be thinking of food—for Fatty had been eating the whole evening.

However, there was nothing for it but to agree. They went into a restaurant, and Archie sat fascinated while the fat junior consumed dish after dish—welsh rarebit, macaroni a la Italienne, fish and French fried potatoes, and goodness knows what else.

Then they emerged, with Fatty only just able to walk. They made a bee line for the nearest subway station—which happened to be at 34th Street, or the Broadway Subway—not the Interborough Subway, the line they had used earlier.

But the juniors did not know there were two separate and distinct subways just here. They went down the stairs, and there was some little confusion while they attempted to get their tickets.

One doesn't get a ticket in New York. It is simply necessary to put a nickel into a slot at the barrier, and then you go through on to the platform. There are no tickets to bother with at all.

This system has many advantages—but chiefly for those who know the ropes. To a perfect stranger, the scheme is apt to be disconcerting. For there are no ticket collectors, and apparently no porters. Thus, once you are on the platform, there is nobody to question regarding trains.

Almost as soon as Archie and Fatty were on the platform a train came roaring in. There was no distinctive sign on it to say where it was going to. True, there were little boards just inside the side windows, but the juniors did not notice these. They stepped into the train, and were whisked away.

The New York Subway is very much like the London Underground—except for the fact that it is rather drab and by no means as attractive. The service, however, is quite wonderful.

Archie and Fatty sat there greatly interested in their fellow passengers—many of whom were coloured. One sees a great many niggers in New York. And the other passengers were equally interested in Archie and Fatty.

The two juniors were also keen upon the activities of the guard. This gentleman opened the doors at each stopping place by means of push buttons. He then spoke into a kind of telephone mouthpiece. As a direct result of this, a curiously unearthly sound proceeded from two phonograph horns fixed to the roof of the carriage.

Under no circumstances could one possibly mistake this sound for a decipherable language. The guard was actually calling out the names of the stations, and telling all and sundry to watch the doors, and also what the name of the next station was. But one requires to be in New York many months before this performance can be thoroughly appreciated.

Consequently, Archie and Fatty were in complete ignorance as to their whereabouts. They knew that it was a fairly long trip to their destination—ten or fifteen minutes, at least. But they overlooked the fact that they were on an express train.

Consequently, when they finally made an inquiry of the guard, they were informed that they were now in Brooklyn. This didn't signify much to them beyond the fact that it was not the district they wanted at all.

A genial stranger came to the rescue, and told them that they had gone well past their destination—they ought to have got out at South Ferry. They had gone from Manhattan Island completely, and were now on the other side of the river. Their only

course was to get out, and go back by another train.

So the two juniors hastily stepped out of the train, and found themselves upon a deserted platform. The train sped away, and left them entirely alone.

"Well, that, as it were, is somewhat foul," observed Archie. "It appears, dear old melon, that we're in a dashed nasty predic!"

"Rats!" said Fatty. "We've only got to get on the other platform, and take the next train back. As a matter of fact, I'm glad—because we might be able to get a bite somewhere. I'm feeling peckish!"

"Gadzooks!" gasped Archie. "Imposs, laddie!"

"Must be the train!" explained Fatty. "Somehow, whenever I ride in a train, it always gives me an appetite."

Archie was too astonished to make any reply.

And he and Fatty Little walked along the platform until they came to some turnstiles. It was obviously necessary to go through these in order to get to the other platform. Probably there was a tunnel which led beneath the tracks. Once through the turnstiles, however, they could find nothing but stairs leading upwards. And they found themselves in the street.

"We've gone wrong somewhere," said Fatty. "Better go down again, and get on the right platform."

"Dear old boy, absolutely not!" said Archie firmly. "I moan to say, these bally subways are frightfully confusing, don't you know. If we go down there again we shall probably be spirited away to Philadelphia or some frightful place like that."

"But, you chump, we must go back," said Fatty. "Didn't that chap tell us we're in Brooklyn? We're on the other side of the river, and we're not going to swim over!"

"I have heard," said Archie, "that there are some rather priceless bridges, laddie. Possibly we can seize some passing taxi, and prevail upon the driver to take us home. One never knows. Some of these gentlemen have kind hearts. And a taxi, don't you know, is a dashed lot better than the subway."

"But it'll cost two or three dollars," protested Fatty. "And we can go back on the subway for ten cents."

Archie waved his hand.

"Expense," he said, "is no object!"

Archie produced a bundle of dollar bills, and held it out for Fatty Little's inspection. Then the pair commenced walking down the quiet street in the hope of finding a taxi cab.

They didn't know exactly what part of Brooklyn this was, but it seemed very quiet and dingy. The streets were fairly well lighted, and here and there a cigar store was open—to say nothing of the ubiquitous eating house. These places are to be found every hundred yards in every quarter of New York.

Can You Work This Out?

A spy was caught writing a cypher message. When approached, he hastily put away his watch. The cypher he was writing necessitated a key. Nothing was found in the watch, yet it contained the key of the cypher. What could it have been?

The "Detective Magazine" is offering £250 in prizes for the solution of this little problem, and eleven others equally fascinating. See the announcement in the number now on sale, price 7d.

Brooklyn, of course, is merely a suburb—but there is a vast difference between Manhattan and Brooklyn. Fatty Little and Archie Glenthorne were like two lost sheep. Having lost sight of the subway station, they didn't exactly know which way to turn.

But the road, apparently, was a main one, and quite a few automobiles were passing to and fro. But taxis appeared to be conspicuous by their absence. This generally is the case when one is particularly anxious to hire one.

Archie successfully steered Fatty Little past two or three of the restaurants—urging that the hour was late, and they had to get home. Besides, Archie pointed out that there would probably be plenty of food at Mr. McDougall's place.

But at last Fatty succumbed.

They were just passing an extra brilliant looking eating house which was labelled "Bakery and Lunch." It seemed that lunch was still being served, although the hour was so far advanced. And Fatty paused, and sniffed the air hungrily.

"My hat!" he said, licking his lips. "Chicken! Can't you smell it? And fried potatoes! Come on, Archie—we've simply got to go in here and have a snack! It won't take us more than ten minutes."

"My dear old chappie, absolutely not," said Archie. "Why, great goodness! You've been doing nothing else but eat ever since you came out. Kindly put the thought of food aside, old dear—— I mean to say, that's rather poisonous!" he added plaintively.

For Fatty Little, taking no notice of Archie's remarks, marched straight into the restaurant, and sat down at one of the tables. Archie remained outside, gazing through the glass door.

He shuddered.

Archie had rather a refined taste when it came to feeding. He was not faddy, or anything like that, but he certainly did like

nice surroundings and snowy white linen upon the table. And this place was not exactly a replica of the Piccadilly Grill.

The tables were wooden topped, enamelled white—stained, marked, and most uninviting. The food itself seemed fairly decent, but Archie couldn't bring himself to the point of risking it. Moreover, he wasn't at all hungry.

He heard a buzzing just near by, and turned. But his heart gave a little jump as he saw the familiar yellow body of a taxi-cab. It had come into sight from round a corner, and was pulling up on the other side of the road, about a hundred yards further on—a particularly quiet spot where everything was dim.

The taxi came to a halt, and two men alighted.

"Gadzooks," murmured Archie. "This, as it were, is a piece of luck. These blighters are just dismissing the old taxi, and I will seize it. I mean to say, this is where I do a bit of dashing about."

Archie ran across the road, and whizzed up to the standing taxi as fast as his elegant legs would carry him. He came face to face with the two gentlemen who had just got out of the cab. One of them was in conversation with the driver. They turned, and looked sharply at Archie as he hurried up.

"Pray pardon me intruding, old beans!" said Archie politely. "But it so happens that I'm frightfully keen upon getting hold of this taxi. If you chappies have done with it——"

"Well I'm hanged!" muttered one of the men. "See who this kid is?"

"Yes, confound him!" said the other.

Archie gazed at the men with fresh interest, his ear quickly noticing the English speech. And the men looked familiar, too. He knew them—he had seen them before.

"Why, this is somewhat ripping!" he observed. "It appears that I have met you somewhere—— Gadzooks!"

Archie paused, and stared at the men with even greater interest.

"Why, dash it, you're those blighters who jumped off the boat!" he declared. "You're the frightful scoundrels——"

"Hold his mouth!" commanded one of the men harshly.

Archie stepped back hastily, his heart beating rather more rapidly than usual. There was nothing of the coward about him, and he was by no means afraid. But he was rather thrilled at the thought that he should come across these badly wanted men.

They were Mr. Simon Hawke and Mr. Al Roker—the men whom Nelson Lee was trying to locate—the men who had robbed one of the Lauretanic's passengers of valuable papers—the men who had made such a sensational escape from the liner!

And the recognition was mutual.

Mr. Hawke and Mr Roker knew this boy was one of the St. Frank's crowd—and therefore connected with Nelson Lee. They acted with great speed. Before Archie could say another word, he was grasped firmly and literally bundled into the taxi.

"Drive on!" snapped Hawke.

"Where?" asked the driver.

"Anywhere—I'll explain later!"

With a hand over Archie's mouth, he could not make any outcry. He struggled fiercely, but it was useless. These two men had pitched him into the cab before he realised their intentions.

And now the cab gave a violent jerk, and shot away—carrying Archie inside—a firm prisoner in the hands of the enemy!

CHAPTER VIII.

ARCHIE IN THE UNDERWORLD!

ARCHIE had a reputation of being a bit of a duffer—and, indeed, he generally lived up to this reputation. But when it came to an emergency, he was able to prove that his wits were as keen as most others—and very often a great deal keener.

A prisoner in the hands of Mr. Hawke and Mr. Roker, he kept his head. He did not get into a panic, and struggle. After the first moment or two he knew that he had no chance of escape. So he desisted, and became quite limp. His only hope was that Fatty Little had seen him being pushed into the taxi. But this was a rather forlorn hope, for Fatty had been paying great attention to the menu at the crucial time.

Archie was quite keen enough to understand why he had been captured.

These men were not only wanted by Nelson Lee, but by the police as well. And if Archie was allowed to go free, he would probably go to the nearest telephone, and tell what he had seen. And that would mean a whole lot of inquiries—with the possible result that the police would immediately get on the trail.

It was safer, therefore, to deal drastically with the elegant junior.

"Infernal nuisance, that boy butting in just now!" snapped Mr. Roker. "What the thunder can we do with him, anyway?"

"Oh, we'll find a place for him," declared Hawke. "We shall be well away from New York before long, and I'll see that the boy's looked after until we're gone. Nothing better than this could have happened, Al."

"How do you make that out?"

"Why, as soon as this kid's missed there'll be a search for him," said Mr. Hawke.

"That doesn't seem very splendid to me."

"That's because you don't think," retorted Hawke. "Lee will be anxious—and he'll give his attention to the search for the boy instead of to us. He can't do two things at once, can he?"

"Gosh, you're right!" said Mr. Roker. "But we shall have to be careful that the kid doesn't lead Lee on to our trail."

"No fear of that," said Hawke. "Leave it to me, and we'll make capital out of this accidental meeting. I can't understand

what the boy was doing down here, in Brooklyn."

"Well, what are we going to do with him?"

"Take him to Pete Blaney's place."

Archie found that he was free to talk now. He was sitting between the two men, held on both sides, and there was no fear of his causing trouble by crying out. His voice would never be heard above the noise of the taxi.

In a short time the taxi came to a halt. Without Archie knowing it, the river had been crossed, the taxi going over the Williamsburg Bridge. Once on Manhattan Island again, the vehicle was soon in the toughest section of the East Side.

It is not at all uncommon to see a taxi-cab there, and no notice was taken when the vehicle pulled up against a low doorway. Indeed, there appeared to be only one or two people about, and these merely looked on with languid interest. Archie was quickly hustled out of the taxicab.

He was whisked across the pavement, and into the doorway, closely escorted by Mr. Roker. Incidents of this kind were not likely to arouse comment in such a neighbourhood.

Archie found himself in a dark, gloomy passage. There was a musty smell of stale tobacco-smoke about the place, mingled with all kinds of other noisome odours.

At the end of the passage Mr. Roker brought him to a halt. And there they waited until Hawke arrived. The latter went on in advance, and spoke to two men in the gloom, further down the passage.

And immediately afterwards Archie was led down some dim stairs. He had an idea that he was being taken into a cellar, and he vaguely wondered how the adventure would end.

At the bottom of the stairs there was a low corridor, with several doors opening on either side. And the whole place reeked with the smell of cigar smoke and spirit fumes.

Archie was pushed into a small room almost before he knew it.

Against the wooden partition on one side of his prison there stood a big packing-case on end. The top of it was fairly clean, and certainly it was better up there than in any other part of the room. There would be no fear of the rats crawling over his feet, at all events.

So, with one clean leap, Archie reached the top of the case, and sat there. His head was now only a few inches below the slit near the ceiling. Tobacco smoke came wafting through.

"What-ho!" murmured Archie. "I mean to say, why not?"

Instead of sitting, he now twisted round and knelt down on the box. This raised his face a foot higher, and he was able to see over the partition. Not that the result was at all edifying. He gazed into another room—much larger than the place he occupied.

And immediately afterwards Archie was led down some dim stairs. He had an idea that he was being taken into a cellar, and he vaguely wondered how the adventure would end.

Electric lights were burning, and there was a table. Mr. Hawke and Mr. Roker sat there, talking together. Two other men, looking like prize fighters, were chatting together in the open doorway. Mr. Hawke and Mr. Roker were both partaking of liquor.

"Never mind the kid now," said Hawke. "He's safe enough for the present."

"Only next door, you know, and this partition isn't very thick," pointed out Mr. Roker. "He might hear——"

"Let him hear!" interrupted Hawke. "We're not going to talk anything important, anyway. Besides, you're wrong. The kid couldn't hear anything on this side."

Archie smiled to himself, for he could hear the words perfectly clearly.

"We've got to realise that we've got no time for playing about," continued Hawke. "I've already made our reservations—Grand Central to Chicago, and Santa Fe to Los Angeles."

"Oh," said Roker. "That's good! Where did you get the tickets?"

"Consolidated," replied Hawke. "We leave on Saturday, and that'll land us in Los Angeles next Wednesday. Now, what

we've got to do is to see Schultz as quickly as possible—but we can't do it openly. We've got to lie low while we're in New York. Of course, I used false names when I booked the tickets."

"You bet you did," replied Roker. "I'm not sure that it's wise for us to go by train, old man. I think we ought to get out of New York either by water or by road. In my opinion, it was darned risky coming here at all."

"Nonsense!" said Hawke. "There's not such a hue and cry as you seem to think. The New York police aren't doing much. We've only got Lee against us—and he's completely off the track. With regard to that kid, we'll get Pete to take him away down the river to-night. Pete's got a good place down there where the boy will never be found."

"Good."

"Absolutely not!" murmured Archie. "I should describe it as being dashed bad! It'll be somewhat frightful if I'm taken away down the bally old river. I shall have to try to escape!"

But Archie knew, all the time, that escape was quite out of the question.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RESCUE PARTY!

FATTY LITTLE looked round anxiously. "I wonder what's become of the fathead?" he muttered. "Fancy going off like that—just because I was having a snack! I knew he was an ass, but I didn't think he'd be so jolly dotty as that."

Fatty had just emerged from he "bakery and lunch," and, truth to tell he was feeling very reluctant to exert himself in any way. He had been feeding all the evening, and this last snack was just about the last straw. He felt that it was a great idea to go home by taxicab. Exercise of any sort was not favourable to Fatty just now.

Although Fatty told himself that there was nothing to worry about, he did worry. He didn't like Archie disappearing in that fashion. It seemed to him that there was something very fishy about it.

And his chief anxiety was to get home as quickly as possible. If Archie had obtained a taxi, he would certainly be home long before Fatty could get there. But, somehow, the plump junior could not quite convince himself that Archie had found a taxi. If he had done so, he would surely have come back for Fatty.

Once or twice Fatty Little hesitated.

He told himself he ought to go back, and search about the streets. Probably, Archie was still wandering about near by, and would continue to hover in the same vicinity. There's nothing worse than two fellows losing sight of one another, and not knowing what the other has done.

In the end, Fatty did return. He spent nearly half an hour mooching about, but in all this time he saw nothing whatever of Archie—which, under the circumstances, was not at all surprising. Indeed, Fatty searched for so long that he almost became hungry again, and even thought of patronising, the "bakery and lunch" once more.

But his keen desire to find Archie was even greater than his appetite. At last a kind of panic seized him. Glenthorne had gone, and was certainly not coming back. And perhaps Fatty would find himself stranded in Brooklyn—there might be no train back to New York.

Fatty didn't know that trains ran all night, and there was no fear of him being stranded. He arrived at the subway station, and was lucky enough to get a train almost at once. And, curiously enough, he got a train that took him straight away to South Ferry without any mistakes. Fatty felt almost happy as he skirted Battery Park and came within sight of the McDougall building.

Even the elevator was still running, and in next to no time Fatty was whisked away up to the topmost story. And he was just about to hurry up the short steps which took him to the roof when several juniors appeared.

"Hallo!" said Reggie Pitt. "Here's one of 'em!"

"About time, too!" I exclaimed severely. "You blessed glutton! I bet you've been gorging yourself—Anything wrong, Fatty?" I ended up, as I noticed the anxious look in his eyes.

"Yes!" gasped Fatty. "Where's Archie?"

"We thought he was with you," I replied. "Christine saw you go off with Archie on Broadway. You went down 45th Street, I believe——"

"Yes, I know," interrupted Fatty. "Hasn't Archie come in?"

"No."

"Great frankfurters!" moaned Fatty. "Then—then something's happened!"

"What do you mean—something's happened?"

"Oh, I don't know," groaned the fat junior. "All this worry is making me hungry again! I—I think I need a few sandwiches to buck me up! I'll be able to tell you then——"

"You'll tell us now!" I interrupted grimly.

"You see, we got lost," said Fatty. "We got on the subway to come home, and went to Brooklyn. I was jolly hungry, and went into a restaurant——"

"I was expecting that bit to come in," I interrupted. "But don't be so long winded—let's get the truth—what's happened to Archie?"

Fatty Little didn't know. He explained how he had come out of the restaurant to discover that Archie had completely disappeared. And he told us how he had searched in vain.

"I thought he'd got a taxicab, and had come home," concluded Fatty. "Goodness knows what's happened to him!"

"I know what's happened to him," I interrupted. "The silly ass has got lost! It's easy enough to get lost in this city, let me tell you. Well, the only thing we can do is to wait a bit, and then go out in search of 'em."

"Them?" repeated Fatty.

"My dear chap, you needn't think that Archie's the only one that's lost," I said. "We've got to have a different system about going out, or we shall get into trouble with the guv'nor. Look how late it is—and Handforth and Co. haven't turned up yet."

"They lost, too?"

"Blessed if I know," I replied. "We missed 'em in Chinatown. Looked everywhere too. We couldn't find a single sign of the beggars. Fullwood isn't in yet, and there are two or three others, too."

And the hour was getting late.

We didn't wait very much longer. When it was nearly midnight, we decided that some sort of action had to be taken. And we set out in a big party—deciding, first of all, to go off towards Chinatown to look for Handforth and Co.

We had come away from that quarter believing that the trio of Study D would be home before us. But we had not seen them, and had given them a fair time to turn up.

And now the only course was to go and search.

In the meantime, of course, Archie Glenthorne was having a most unhappy experience. And Handforth and Co., having made friends with Mr. Dinty Todd, were having a little adventure, too. They had not come immediately home as they had at first intended.

But everything came out all right in the long run.

. . . . . .

Not only was Archie Glenthorne rescued, but we had quite a lot of excitement with Messrs. Hawke and Roker. And Handforth and Co. were largely instrumental in assisting—with the help of Mr. Todd.

So, for the moment, I can say no more—because there isn't room. But we were destined to pass through a good many startling adventures in New York—to say nothing of the prospect of going off across country to far California!

THE END.

GREAT COMPETITION FOR CRICKET LOVERS!

First Prize £100! Second Prize £50! Third Prize £30!
And 120 Prizes of £1 each!

CAN YOU FORECAST HOW THE COUNTIES ARE GOING TO FINISH UP?

We offer the above splendid Prizes to the reader who is clever enough to send us a list showing exactly in what order the seventeen first-class County Cricket Clubs will stand at the end of the season.

For your guidance we publish the order in which each of the clubs stood last year, which was as follows:

1. Yorkshire.
2. Nottinghamshire.
3. Surrey.
4. Kent.
5. Lancashire.
6. Hampshire.
7. Middlesex.
8. Essex.
9. Sussex.
10. Somerset.
11. Derbyshire.
12. Warwickshire.
13. Gloucestershire.
14. Leicestershire.
15. Northamptonshire.
16. Glamorgan.
17. Worcestershire.

What you have to do is to fill in on the coupon on this page your forecast of the order in which the counties will finish up. To the reader who does this correctly we shall award a prize of £100, and the other prizes in the order of the correctness of the forecasts.

In the case of ties any or all of the prizes will be added together and divided, but the full amount of £300 will be awarded.

All forecasts must be submitted on coupons taken from this journal or from one of the other publications taking part in this contest.

You may send as many coupon forecasts as you like.

They must all be addressed to "Cricket Competition," Gough House, Gough Square, E.C.4, and must reach that address not later than Thursday, August 16th.

You may send in your forecasts at once if you like; but none will be considered after August 16th.

The decision of the Editor in all matters concerning this competition must be accepted as final and binding, and entries will only be admitted on that understanding.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with "Football Favourite," "Sports Budget," "Magnet," "Young Britain," "Champion," "Boys' Realm," "Boys' Friend," "Popular," "Pluck," "Union Jack," "Rocket," "Boys' Cinema," and "Gem," and readers of these journals are invited to compete.

I forecast that the Counties will finish the season in this order:

No. 1	No. 10
No. 2	No. 11
No. 3	No. 12
No. 4	No. 13
No. 5	No. 14
No. 6	No. 15
No. 7	No. 16
No. 8	No. 17
No. 9	

I enter "Cricket" Competition in accordance with the rules as announced, and agree to abide by the published decision.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Closing date, August 16th, 1923. N.L.

Editorial Announcement.

My dear Readers,

Having read and enjoyed the above narrative of the juniors' adventures in New York, you can now talk to your friends about that wonderful Amurrican city as though you had actually been there yourselves. I myself can almost feel the peculiar sensation of being shot skywards in one of those terrible lifts—I beg your pardon, elevators—and I believe I could even find my way to 42nd Street or Madison Square from the description in the story. The cafeteria idea, where you help yourself to refreshments, might be appreciated in some of our City restaurants—especially in the middle of the day. Also think what a boon it would be to be able to travel anywhere on the tubes or trams without worrying about tickets, as they do in New York.

OFF TO LOS ANGELES!

In next week's story, "A THREE THOUSAND-MILE RACE!", our adventurers leave New York on a thrilling train journey right across the American Continent. They are off to Los Angeles, California, the home of the film-producing world. Here Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, and Doug. have their studios. The glorious sunshine and delightful scenery of the country around here is well suited for film-making.

Few people realise that this journey across the United States is as far as from England to America. Some train journey!

THE GREAT CRICKET COMPETITION.

I hope you are all having a try for our Great Cricket Competition. Remember, that entrance coupons are also available in "The Boys' Realm" and "The Union Jack Library."

THE EDITOR.

Printed and Published every Wednesday by the Proprietors, The Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd. The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Subscription Rates: Inland and Abroad, 11/- per annum; 5/6 for six months. Sole Agents for South Africa: The Central News Agency, Limited. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Limited; and for Canada: The Imperial News Co. (Canada), Limited.