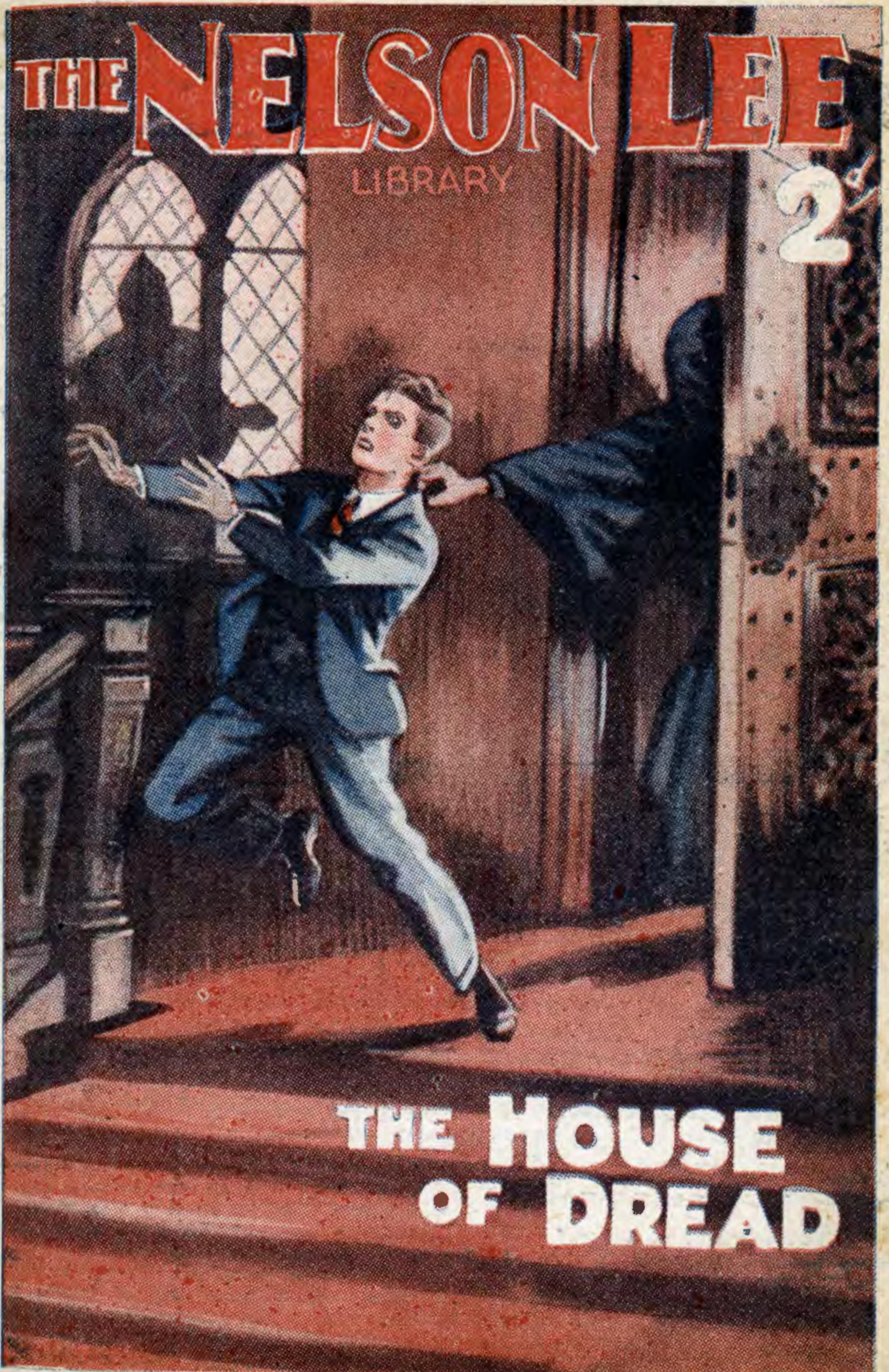


ANOTHER COMPLETE DETECTIVE-THRILLER INSIDE!

THE NELSON LEE

LIBRARY

2



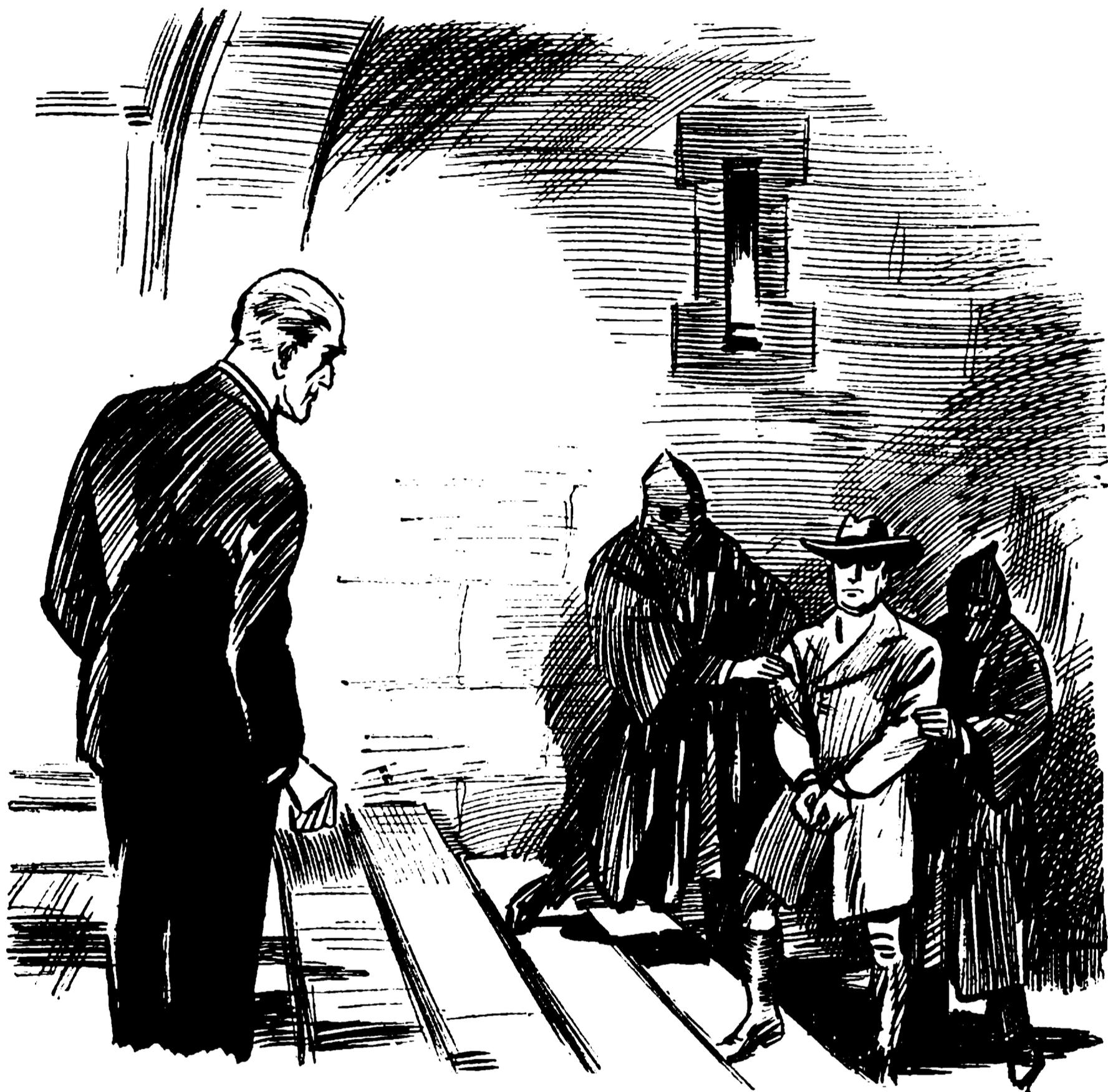
THE HOUSE OF DREAD

New Series No. 117.

OUT ON WEDNESDAY.

April 16th, 1932.

THE HOUSE



Professor Zingrave, the sinister, all-powerful leader of the ruthless Green Triangle League, has once again organised his evil forces in a campaign of vengeance against society at large and St. Frank's School in particular. And his opponent in this titanic battle of wits is Nelson Lee, the great detective!

CHAPTER 1.

The Man in Shirt-Sleeves!

"SOON be off, now, dad."

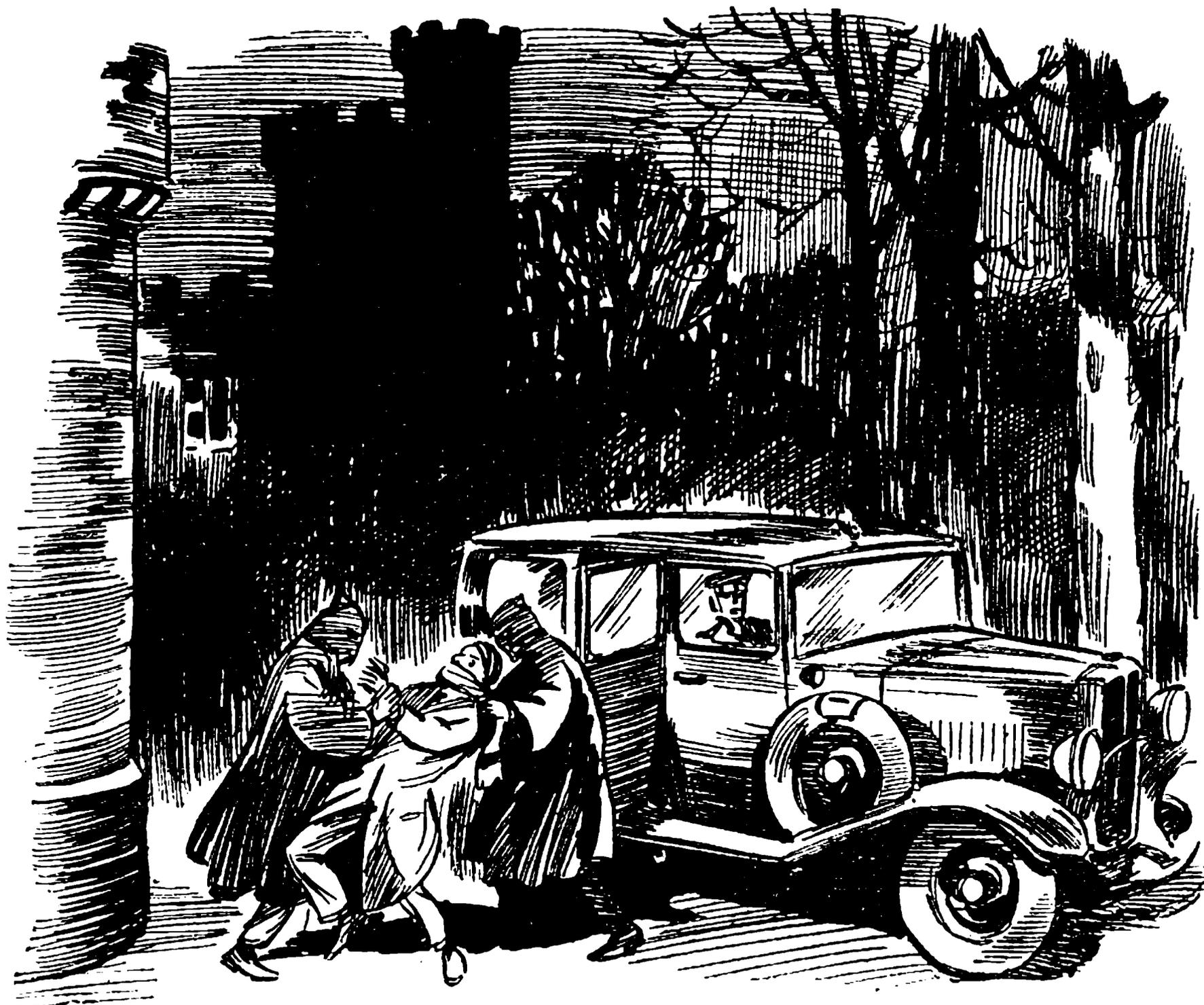
"Yes, son; within a few minutes."

The tall, bronzed man, with the unmistakable stamp of the outdoors in his square shoulders and resolute chin, was pacing leisurely alongside the train

with the curly-haired, bright-eyed youngster. Both had their overcoats tightly buttoned, for the evening was raw, and Southampton Docks are not exactly famed for their warmth.

The train looked like being crowded. There was a great deal of bustle and commotion. The great liner, which had brought all these people across the Atlantic, was not a hundred yards away, along-

OF DREAD!



side the dock, gleaming with lights from stem to stern. The Customs officers were still busy.

Not many of those passengers on the boat train recognised the tall, bronzed man, and the lithe youngster as the Earl of Edgemore and Viscount Bellton, his son. Yet it was not many weeks since their photographs had been in every newspaper.

But the nine days' wonder of the Edgemore treasure was almost forgotten now. The public's memory is short. The affair had been quite a sensation at the time, for Lord Edgemore, ruined in a great City crash, had not only re-established his fortunes through the discovery of that old Spanish treasure, but he was now far richer than he had ever been.

"Gee-whizz, dad, it was good to go back to the old ranch for a holiday—but it's good to be back, too," remarked the young viscount eagerly.

"Pining to go back to school, eh?" asked his father dryly. "That sounds good to me, son. I've wired your headmaster, saying that you'll be on the job again the day after to-morrow. I figured we'd both like a day in London."

Skeets wasn't so sure about it—he was known to everybody in the St. Frank's Remove as "Skeets"—and even now he could hardly make up his mind. He wasn't particularly interested in London. But he knew that his father had some business there. He was fond of school, and he wanted to see Nipper and Handforth and Travers and Potts and the rest of the old crowd—those chaps who had helped so staunchly to recover that centuries-buried treasure.

"Better be taking your seats, my lord."

They had turned just near the open door of the first-class compartment in which their baggage had been placed. The guard was fingering his watch.

"Say, how did you know who we were?" asked Skeets curiously.

The guard laughed.

"I haven't such a short memory, young gentleman, that I don't remember your photographs in the papers," he replied. "And when I see the labels on your baggage——"

"We plead guilty," smiled Lord Edgemore. "How much longer, guard?"

"Not more than three minutes, my lord."

"Time for one more turn down the platform, then, Skeets," said his lordship. "I hate being cooped up."

He had spent all his early life on a Canadian ranch—and Skeets had been born and brought up on that same ranch. It wasn't long since, in fact, that the earl had inherited the title and estates. But he had grown to love Edgemore Castle, and during this brief holiday in Canada he had discovered that all his interests were in England. Canada had not had the appeal he had expected.

They had almost reached the end of the train, and were on the point of turning, when a man, hatless, and in his shirt-sleeves, came dashing along from one of the dock offices. People got out of his way, staring, for he was red of face, and his eyes were full of feverish concern.

He suddenly came to a halt with an almost hopeless shrug as he saw the number of people who were crowding in and about the train.

"Excuse me, sir," he said breathlessly, as he caught hold of an elderly man. "Do you happen to know where I can find Lord Edgemore? He's somewhere on this train——"

"I am Lord Edgemore," said the earl quickly, overhearing the words, and stepping forward, with Skeets.

"Well, that's amazingly lucky, sir!" said the man in shirt-sleeves. "I was afraid I shouldn't get hold of you in time."

"But what's the trouble?" asked Lord Edgemore, in surprise.

The man glanced round at the other passengers who were watching and listening inquisitively—whilst pretending to be indifferent.

"Do you mind coming just a little way down here, sir—I mean, my lord?" asked the man.

"But the train is just off——"

"I'll only take a minute," said the stranger.

They went aside, where there was more privacy.

"I don't want to give you too much of a shock, my lord—but Edgemore Castle

is on fire," said the man breathlessly.

"What!" ejaculated his lordship, aghast.

"Our home!" panted Skeets, in horror. "On fire!"

"I was told to get hold of you if I could——"

"But—but how do you know this?" demanded the earl, grasping the man's shirt-sleeve.

"I'm a clerk in the railway office, my lord," replied the man. "Five minutes ago we had a telephone message from the Edgemore postmaster. He said you had come in on this boat, and might be found on the train. I took the liberty of 'phoning to a garage for a car, in case you'd need it."

"That was very thoughtful of you," said Lord Edgemore gratefully. "Good Heavens! This is appalling news, Skeets! Did the postmaster give you any details?" He went on, looking at the man.

"Only a few, my lord—he said a straw stack had caught fire near by—the wind unexpectedly carried a lot of flaming straw on to the castle, and the west wing is so badly alight that there's a danger that the whole castle will become involved."

"Oh, dad!" said Skeets. "How awful!"

They hurried away, their thoughts only of their home. The car from the hiring company was waiting, and Lord Edgemore only paused to slip a pound note into the protesting clerk's hand. The car driver, in smart uniform, needed no instructions.

"It's all right, my lord," he said, touching his cap. "Born and bred in this part of the country. I know the road like a book."

"Get us there as fast as you can," said the earl anxiously.

They leapt in, and the car shot off into the maze of roads in dockland.

And meanwhile the guard of the boat train was a sorely puzzled man. It was nearly time for the train to start; porters were slamming doors, and a railway inspector came up to the one door which still stood open—the guard beside it.

"Is anything wrong here?" asked the inspector sharply.

"Two passengers missing—that's all," said the guard.

"You'll have to go without them."

"They're Lord Edgemore and his son, Viscount Bellton," said the guard, looking anxiously up and down. "Can't understand it. They were here two or three minutes ago."

"Oh!" said the inspector.

The identity of the two missing passengers made a difference—but not much.

The train could not be held back for more than a few seconds. A quietly-dressed, middle-aged man joined the two puzzled officials.

"What's delaying you?" he asked.

They told him; he was one of the railway detectives, and he immediately looked keen.

"Tall man—bronzed?" he asked. "A young fellow of about fifteen with him?"

"Yes," said the guard. "If you know where they are——"

"Saw them, not two minutes ago, dash into a car and drive away," said the railway detective. "They must have changed their plans—and suddenly, too."

So the boat train went off to London, carrying the baggage of Lord Edgemore and his son, and the railway detective, making his report in the ordinary way, dismissed the matter from his mind.

And from that moment the Earl of Edgemore and Viscount Bellton vanished!

CHAPTER 2.

An Amazing Reception!

THE car, a powerful limousine, gained high speed as soon as the lighted streets of Southampton had been left behind.

"Gee, dad, this is terrible!" said Skeets, breaking a long silence. "What are we going to do? Supposing the castle's burned right down——"

"No good supposing, son," interrupted his father. "We must wait."

He leaned forward and tapped against the glass which divided them from the driver. The man half glanced round.

"Faster!" shouted the earl.

"Doing fifty-five, sir," came the reply.

"Fifty-five!" muttered Lord Edgemore. "It feels like fifteen! How far is it, Skeets? We ought to do it in well under the hour, oughtn't we?"

"I guess so, dad."

"I can't believe it," went on the earl huskily. "Just when things were breaking so good, too. If only we had driven straight home, as soon as we landed! But it's no good talking like that."

"We left all our bags and things in that train," said Skeets, recalling the fact for the first time.

"Heavens, boy, what does that matter?" asked his father impatiently.

"Sorry, dad," muttered Skeets.

He could well understand his father's tense anxiety. Edgemore Castle ablaze! It was a terrible thought, and Lord Edgemore was all the more concerned because he had left the castle empty—absolutely empty, without even a caretaker.

He was bitterly regretting his action now. But he had always been a man of simple habits, and after inheriting the castle he had made no attempt to open up a big household.

He hadn't thought it necessary to leave anybody in charge when he and Skeets had gone off for their brief holiday. Because of that folly the castle might now be in ruins. If there had been somebody on the premises, prompt measures might have been taken.

The earl thought of these things until he was dizzy. If there had been somebody on the premises, the fire might have been got under control at once; if there had been somebody there to give the alarm——

"If this, and if that!" snapped the earl suddenly. "It's no good thinking that way! I'm to blame, Skeets, for locking the castle up. Why doesn't this fool of a man drive faster? The road's clear, isn't it?"

Skeets glanced at the blurred hedges, as the limousine tore along the black highway, with blazing headlamps, at over sixty.

"Gee! I feel the same way as you do, dad," said the boy. "But I guess we're hitting up sixty-five."

The earl sat back, and pursed his lips.

"What's the difference, anyway?" he said, taking a firmer grip of himself. "We can't do anything, Skeets. If the old place is well alight, we can only stand and see it burn."

"Maybe it's not so bad, after all, dad," said Skeets. "Shucks! We're slowing down, aren't we?"

They were passing through a small town, where the street lamps gleamed brightly. It seemed ages before they were out in the open country again, and humming along at full speed.

They spoke little now; each was busy with his own thoughts—and his own imagination. It was a trying ordeal.

They found themselves passing through another town, and Skeets suddenly yelled.

"Gosh! I know this main street! We're in Caistowe!"

His father peered through the windows, and nodded.

"Good!" he said, his eyes gleaming. "You're right, son! It's Caistowe. I was expecting to hit Bannington, but the driver has evidently come along the coast road. We ought to be there within ten minutes now."

Fast as the car went, it seemed a long time before the occupants saw the faint lights of Bellton village. Skeets was expecting that the car would go straight

past St. Frank's, but the driver turned into the Bannington road.

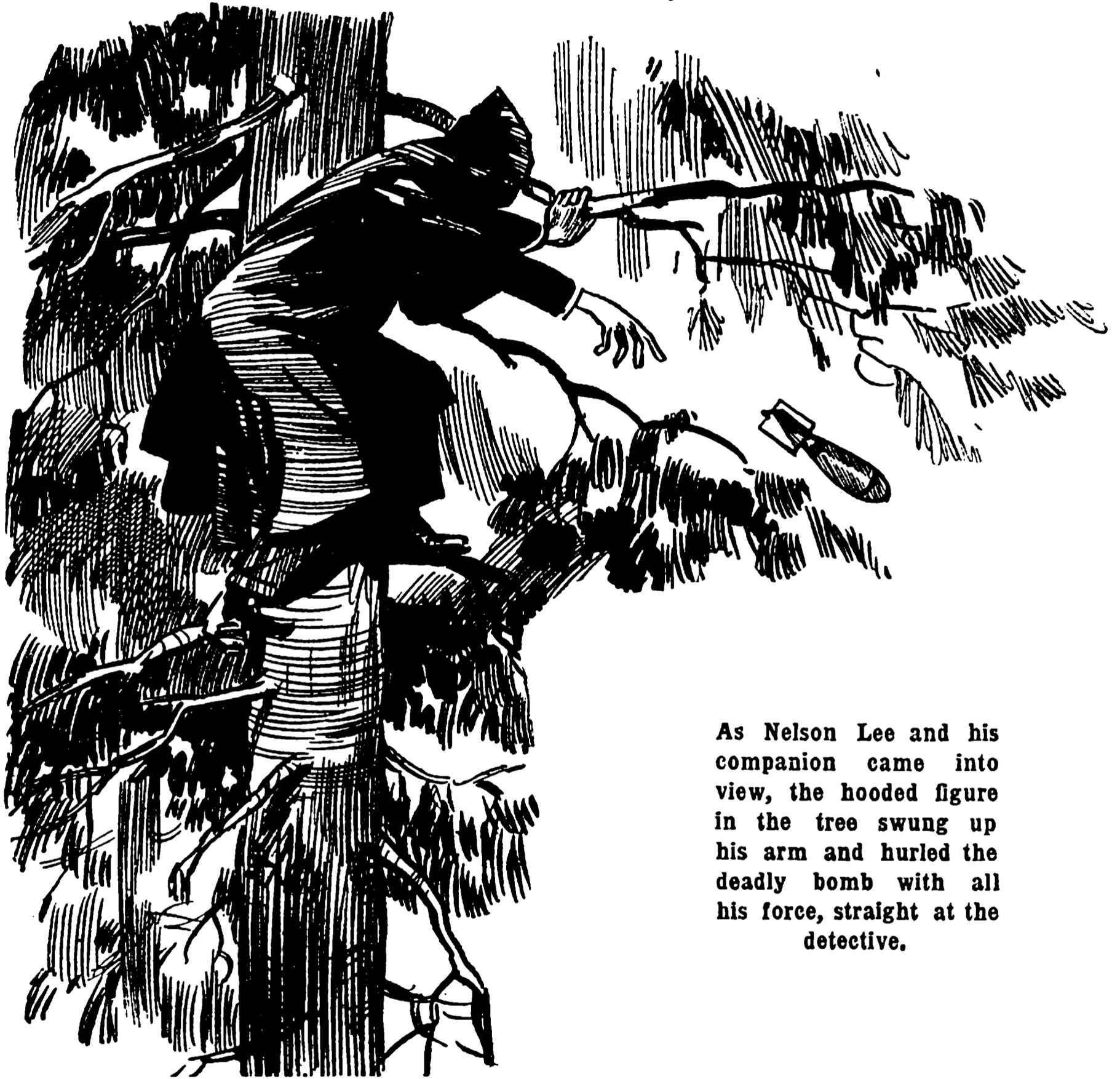
"What's the idiot doing?" asked Lord Edgemore sharply. "He's going the wrong way! Hey, driver! I thought you said you knew——"

"It's all right, sir!" shouted the driver. "Just as quick this way."

It wasn't as quick, but it was no time

here, Skeets. Guess we'll come in sight of it soon."

By now, however, they had arrived at Edgemore Park itself, and the car suddenly turned through a narrow gateway, which led into a little-used drive. There was another drive, leading to the more important road, and this was the one in ordinary use.



As Nelson Lee and his companion came into view, the hooded figure in the tree swung up his arm and hurled the deadly bomb with all his force, straight at the detective.

for arguing. The car was obliged to take a tiny by-road, where the banks were so close together that there was scarcely room enough for the car to pass. And now Skeets and his father were staring out eagerly and anxiously into the darkness. They were drawing near, and they were expecting to see a lurid glow in the sky—an ominous, ruddy reflection.

"I can't see anything, dad," muttered Skeets, after a while.

"Neither can I," said his lordship. "Perhaps they've got the fire under control— But there are a lot of trees about

"That's funny," said the earl frowning.

"What is, dad?"

"I've never known those gates to be open before," said his lordship. "I thought they were locked and chained. Who could have opened them? Nobody knew that we were coming by car—and it's strange, too, that this driver should be so certain of his way."

"Look, dad," said Skeets breathlessly. "There's the castle! Gee! They must have put the fire out! There's not even a light showing now."

Black against the skyline, the turrets

and battlements of Edgemore Castle showed clearly. There was no indication that the famous old pile was on fire—or ever had been on fire.

And, for the first time, Lord Edgemore became suddenly suspicious. The mystery of that unlocked gate had set him thinking.

"Son, there's something funny about this," he said sharply. "Look! The castle's just as we left it."

Skeets stared in bewilderment—and untold relief. They were on the main drive now, and the car was slowing down. There was no excited crowd, as Skeets had expected—no fire-engine. Every window of the castle was inky black.

The car stopped, and with a wrench Lord Edgemore opened the door and sprang out.

As he did so four hooded men closed round him.

CHAPTER 3.

The Man in the Library!

"**W**HAT in the name of——" began the amazed earl.

Two of the hooded figures seized him from behind; his hands were suddenly jerked forward and held together.

Click-click!

His lordship, almost stupefied, caught a



glimpse of the shining steel handcuffs which had been snapped over his wrists. Skeets, leaping out of the car, found himself seized by two hooded men.

"Say, is everybody crazy?" gasped the boy, in bewilderment. "Dad! What does this mean?"

"It means, son, that we've fallen into a trap of some kind," said the earl grimly. "That tale of the castle being on fire was a fake. These bright gentlemen set a trap for us, and I was fool enough to walk into it!"

Skeets' relief at finding the castle unharmed was completely overwhelmed by his consternation at this fresh turn.

While they stood there the limousine, with only the sidelights showing, moved off. And for the first time Lord Edgemore realised that he had never seen the driver's face. Father and son were left alone on the windy drive, surrounded by those hooded figures.

"You will come inside," said one of the captors briefly.

"Look here, you scoundrels——" began Skeets.

"Keep that boy quiet," interrupted one of the men.

A muffer was whipped round Skeets' face, and drawn tight.

"If you hurt that boy——" began Lord Edgemore.

"We shall not hurt him," said the voice. "If you are sensible, Lord Edgemore, you will come inside quietly. A full explanation will then be given to you."

The earl, although burning with inward rage, remained outwardly calm. In a moment he had realised the futility of making a struggle. Handcuffed as he was, and surrounded by these hooded men, he was at a hopeless disadvantage.

"Very well," he said curtly.

At least, he could remain dignified during this unwarrantable outrage.

They all went up the wide steps, and, to the bewilderment of Skeets and his father, the door was opened by a highly-respectable man, who was evidently a butler. Three candles were burning on a side table, and in the flickering light the butler bowed deferentially.

"This way, my lord," he said, and there was only a trace of mocking irony in his voice.

With stately tread he moved down the hall. The earl followed. Skeets made a bolt out of the door, only to be dragged back by a claw-like hand into the hall. The great door closed, and the prisoners heard the bolts shooting home. The muffer was then drawn across Skeets' face again to prevent him crying out.

The butler reached the library door and flung it open.

"The Earl of Edgemore and Viscount Bellton," he announced gravely.

The whole thing was getting fantastic. Skeets and his father were led into the library, and the muffler was now taken from Skeets' face. They found themselves in familiar surroundings; soft lights were glowing on the big desk, and on the fine old mantelpiece. A quiet, elderly man, with a scholarly face, and wearing glasses, was standing on the hearthrug, with his back to the blazing fire.

"You may go," said this man, addressing the hooded captors, in a soft, silky voice.

The men left without a word, closing the door behind them.

"You will forgive me, Lord Edgemore, for this unusual procedure," said the man before the fire. "In case you have any idea of violence, I should like to remind you that the shutters of this room are tightly closed, and that my men are within call. I must apologise for the handcuffs, but I can assure you they will soon be removed."

Lord Edgemore swallowed hard.

"Upon my word, sir, you have a nerve!" he said, his eyes blazing. "No, no, Skeets—leave this to me! Who are you, sir? And what is the meaning of this extraordinary outrage?"

"Allow me to introduce myself," said the stranger smoothly. "I am Professor Cyrus Zingrave."

"What!" shouted Lord Edgemore, aghast.

"Gee! I recognise him now, dad!" panted Skeets excitedly. "But he looks so different—and those shaded lights fooled me. It is Zingrave!"

"You appear surprised?" said the professor gently. "But then, of course, you are at a disadvantage. Having only stepped off your liner this evening, you are, naturally, unacquainted with the rather unusual events which have been taking place during the past few days."

"You will be good enough to explain!" said the earl harshly. "What are you doing in my house, Professor Zingrave?"

"That is easily answered," said the other. "I have decided to make Edgemore Castle my own home."

"Are you mad?" ejaculated his lordship.

"Not mad—clever," said Zingrave, in that silky voice of his. "Yes, my dear sir—brilliantly clever. Allow me to give you a few more details. When you left England I was a prisoner, was I not? The police, owing largely to the efforts of our mutual friend, Mr. Nelson Lee, had made

a big capture. I seem to remember making an attempt to rob you of the Edgemore treasure."

Skeets and his father listened with growing stupefaction. Professor Zingrave's audacity took their breath away. It was perfectly true that they knew nothing of the strange happenings of the past few days, for the liner was not a large one, and had issued no news bulletin.

"It is all very simple," said Zingrave, smiling. "If you will be good enough to seat yourselves, I will give you the details."

They seated themselves—not because they felt called upon to accept the invitation of this amazing intruder, but because they were both feeling more than a trifle groggy.

CHAPTER 4.

Professor Zingrave Explains!

PROFESSOR CYRUS ZINGRAVE was looking highly amused; he seemed to be thoroughly enjoying the comedy.

"After I have given you a few words of explanation," he said, "you will know that there is really nothing very strange in the situation."

"Nothing very strange!" echoed Lord Edgemore angrily. "You infernal ruffian! You appropriate my home, and you kidnap me and my son——"

"Not a bad idea, getting one of my agents to tell you that the castle was on fire, eh?" interrupted the professor, his eyes twinkling. "Simplicity has always been the keynote of my enterprises. Complicated plans are tiresome—and far more likely to go wrong. The car driver, you will realise, was another of my agents."

"What do you mean—agents?" demanded the earl.

"I mean, Lord Edgemore, that the League of the Green Triangle has recommenced its operations—'nefarious' operations, as the newspapers will doubtlessly call them," said the professor. "But let me tell you just how I came to be here. I escaped from the—er—hounds of justice by means of an aeroplane, and the world at large now believes that I went to my death in a blazing plunge into the Channel. A neat little trick. Actually, I came to Edgemore Castle."

"You came openly?" asked Skeets, almost in awe.

"Well, hardly," admitted Professor Zingrave. "I came up the river in the darkness; I entered the castle silently, like a shadow. But I am not alone here, as you already know. And I have taken the liberty of engaging a butler for you, Lord

Edgemore. Blanc. Quite an efficient fellow, Blanc. You'll like him."

The intruder's coolness was exasperating beyond measure. Only with the greatest difficulty did Lord Edgemore contain himself.

"Let me understand this correctly," he said, speaking with forced calm. "You are Professor Zingrave, the man who should be serving penal servitude?"

"Correct," murmured Zingrave.

"You are the leader of the League of the Green Triangle?"

"The High Lord," nodded the professor apologetically. "A high-sounding title, but it is somewhat impressive—especially to our lower grade members."

"Upon my soul!" gasped the earl. "You bewilder me with your audacity."

"I rather thought I should," said Zingrave pleasantly.

"You escaped from the police, you staged a fake 'death,' and then you came to my castle." went on the earl, his coolness evaporating under the influence of

"You—you have it arranged!" spluttered the earl. "Why, you confounded rogue, your conceit has blinded you to even the obvious. Don't you think the police will search for me? Don't you think they'll trace that car——"

"Let them trace it." interrupted the professor. "What matters? If people come here, they will find you in residence, Lord Edgemore—and you, of course, will pooh-pooh any sensational stories that may have got about."

"You're out of your mind," shouted the earl. "I'll be no party to your villainy. I shall take steps to hand you over——"

"The discussion is becoming tiresome," put in Zingrave softly. "We can gain nothing by prolonging this interview."

He rang the bell, and the door opened and one of the hooded men entered.

"Take the boy." said Zingrave briefly.

"No, you don't!" shouted Skeets, leaping up. "Dad! You're not going to let these men——"

But the men had already reached him,

A Tale of A Grim Man-Hunt off the Shores of Alaska

"The Secret of Salcoth Island!"

IT'S A "NELSON LEE" DETECTIVE-THRILLER

And it appears in Next Week's Issue.

his rapidly-rising fury. "On the top of that, you trick me and my son here——"

"Unknown to a soul," murmured the professor.

"You trick us here, and now you virtually hold us prisoners," continued Lord Edgemore hotly. "Good heavens, man, what do you hope to gain? Do you expect to extort money from me?"

"My dear sir!" protested Zingrave. "Surely that is somewhat crude? I am charmed with this old castle, and it really seemed to me that it would make an excellent haven of refuge. You will admit, Lord Edgemore, that the police would never think of looking for me under this roof—especially now that you are in residence?"

"Are you mad?" shouted the earl hoarsely. "Do you expect me to shelter you? Do you think for one moment that I will allow you to stay here?"

The amazing master-criminal nodded.

"I shall stay here, I shall enjoy the hospitality of your roof, and you will be discreet enough to make no mention of the matter," he said. "Oh, yes, Lord Edgemore, I have everything arranged."

and were dragging him back.

"Let my son go!" shouted Lord Edgemore, in alarm and fury. "If you dare to harm a hair of his head——"

"My dear sir, control yourself," said Professor Zingrave. "Your son is not going to be harmed. Neither are you. The boy is only being taken out of the library for a few minutes."

He waved his hand, and before Lord Edgemore could interfere, Skeets was dragged out, and the door closed. Never in his life had the earl felt so helpless. Those handcuffs made it impossible for him to take any definite action.

"You'll gain nothing by this insanity!" said his lordship fiercely. "For the moment, Professor Zingrave, you have the upper hand——"

He broke off, a choking cry in his throat. For Professor Cyrus Zingrave was advancing upon him, and a subtle change had come over the master-crook. On his face there was an expression of indescribable concentration.

He came nearer and nearer, and the light in his eyes was unearthly.

CHAPTER 5.

The Stranger Within the Gates!

"WELL, nothing's happened!" said Edward Oswald Handforth, of the St. Frank's Remove, in a disappointed tone.

He was coming downstairs, in the Ancient House, with Church and McClure, his faithful chums. A few fellows were already in the lobby, some of them reading letters which they had just taken out of the rack.

"What's the grouch, dear old fellow?" asked Vivian Travers. "You sound peeved. Don't tell me that you got out of bed on the wrong side?"

"Oh, don't take any notice of him," said Church, before Handforth could speak. "He's growling because there weren't a few bomb explosions during the night, or sinister figures lurking about, leaving green triangle signs all over the place."

"Poor old Handy," drawled Travers. "Hard lines!"

"You silly, lopsided chunks of imbecility!" said Handforth picturesquely. "It's nothing to be funny about. Don't you know that Mr. Lee might be murdered at any minute?"

The grins vanished, and the juniors looked troubled.

"Something in that," admitted Travers soberly. "Still, we needn't worry," he added, brightening up. "Mr. Lee is capable of taking care of himself."

"The sooner he gets out of the school, the better!" said Bernard Forrest bluntly.

Handforth swung round on him.

"Look here, you cad——"

"Oh don't trot out any of that stuff!" interrupted Forrest sourly. "I'm not the only fellow in the school who thinks that Lee ought to go. Tons of chaps agree with me. It's hard lines on the man, of course, but these Green Triangle gunmen are after him, and he ought to have more sense than to endanger all sorts of other people."

Handforth snorted and stalked out into the early morning sunshine. And it was significant that most of the other fellows were silent. There was, indeed, a growing feeling in the school that Mr. Nelson Lee, the celebrated detective-headmaster, should take a holiday.

Everybody in St. Frank's was talking about the infamous League of the Green Triangle. There had been a bomb outrage, and Nelson Lee had come within an ace of destruction. Following this, a great rocket had gone off near the school, sending a blazing green triangle into the sky. Everybody knew that that rocket had been timed to go off after Lee's death,

so that nobody would be in doubt as to the reason for the outrage. Only Lee's quick wittedness had saved him.

Then, later on that same eventful day, news had come that Professor Cyrus Zingrave, the chief of the Green Triangle confederation, had escaped from his guards. Then Zingrave himself, stunting in an aeroplane with green triangles painted on the wings, had appeared over the school.

As if that wasn't enough sensation, news had soon followed that the 'plane, carrying Zingrave with it, had fallen in flames in the Channel. Officially, Zingrave was dead.

But St. Frank's was still breathless with excitement over those startling events; and it was generally felt that Nelson Lee was still in danger.

Nipper was more concerned, naturally, than any of the other fellows. For Nipper regarded Nelson Lee as a son regards his father. Out in the Triangle Nipper and his two bosom chums—Tregellis-West and Watson—unconsciously joined forces with Handforth & Co. And a moment later Travers and Potts and Cresswell, of Study H, strengthened the group. And then Willy Handforth and Chubby Heath and Juicy Lemon, of the Third, drifted up.

"Anything fresh?" asked Willy eagerly.

"No," murmured Nipper. "Go easy, you kids; not too much talking out here."

Significant glances passed round. Clearly, there was some special bond of union between these nine Removites and three fags.

They were all glad that Nelson Lee hove in sight just then—Lee, as brisk and alert and cheery as ever. His smile, as he paused near the boys, did not conceal the troubled light in his eyes.

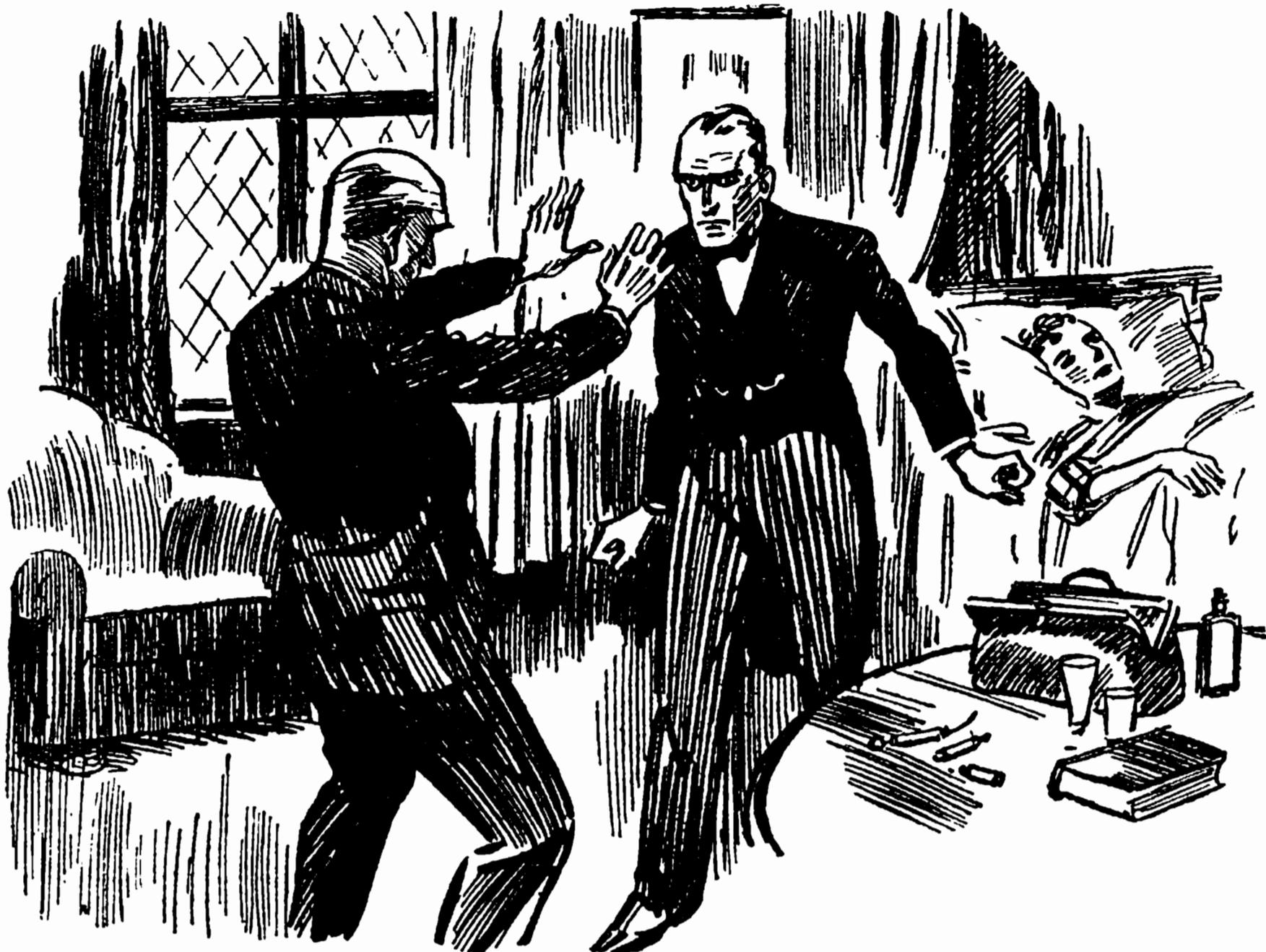
"Any news, gov'nor?" asked Nipper, as they all doffed their caps with an eager "Good morning, sir."

"None," replied Lee briefly.

"He means about Skeets sir——" began Handforth.

"I quite appreciate that," interrupted Lee, nodding. "I'm sorry to tell you that no trace has been found of Lord Edgemore and his son. I have been in telephonic communication with Scotland Yard this morning—and with the local police, too. They know nothing of any value."

The boys were silent; they were glad of this opportunity of having a few words with their popular headmaster. He had taken them into his confidence the previous night; he had told them that "Skeets" Bellton, their schoolfellow, had vanished, together with his father, the Earl of Edgemore. And, knowing all they



Slowly, menacingly, the doctor moved towards Zingrave, his blazing eyes numbing the will-power of the master-crook. Zingrave crouched back like a trapped animal. "Get away! Get away!" he screamed. "Take your eyes away!"

did, it was clear to them that the pair had been kidnapped by the Green Triangle agents.

"Lord Edgemore and his son were at a disadvantage," said Lee thoughtfully. "They only arrived from Canada last night; their liner docked at Southampton after dark, and it is probable that they knew nothing of the day's sensational events."

"But don't the police know how Skeets and his pater disappeared, sir?" asked Handforth.

"They only know that the pair had prepared to go to London by the ordinary boat train," replied Nelson Lee. "It appears that a man in shirt sleeves approached them, and they immediately hurried to a waiting car, and were driven away."

"By George! Kidnapped!"

"So it seems, Handforth," agreed Lee. "That car has not been traced—neither has the man in shirt-sleeves. I have every reason to suspect foul play—and you boys know why."

"Rather, sir," they chorused.

They found that Nelson Lee was looking

beyond them, and an expression of concentration had come into his eyes. They turned, and saw that a stranger had come within the gates.

He was a tall, well-built man, respectably dressed, and he had the indefinable stamp of an upper servant.

CHAPTER 6.

The Surprising Letter!

"**W**HO'S that funny-looking merchant" asked Handforth suspiciously.

"I think he's all right, dear old fellow," murmured Travers. "I can't see any green triangles printed on his forehead."

"Fathead!"

The others grinned. But Nelson Lee wasn't smiling. In the peculiar circumstances, he was suspicious of every stranger.

The visitor had got into conversation with Josh Cuttle, the head porter, who had evidently inquired of his business. Cuttle was now looking round, and pointing to-

wards Big Arch. But suddenly he caught sight of Nelson Lee with the boys, and he lowered his hand and spoke again to the stranger.

"Stroll unconcernedly into the gymnasium, boys," said Lee, in a low voice.

They obeyed without question, but their hearts were thumping. They had seen that the stranger was approaching Lee. And they knew, instinctively, why Lee had told them to go into the gym. He was suspicious of danger.

"Mr. Lee, sir?" said the visitor respectfully.

Lee nodded. Not even Nipper guessed that Lee's right hand, thrust so carelessly into his pocket, gripped the butt of an automatic.

"Brought a note from the castle, sir," said the man, offering an expensive-looking sealed envelope.

The boys, who were crowding in the doorway, heard everything—and they were freshly animated. There were other fellows strolling in the Triangle, or standing about in groups; but they took little or no notice. All this meant nothing to them.

"From Edgemore Castle?" said Lee quietly. "I don't think I've seen you before."

"No, sir; I'm new there."

"In what capacity?"

"Butler, sir," replied the man, with quiet dignity. "Blane is my name, sir—Thomas Blane."

Lee glanced at the envelope, but he did not turn a hair. Yet the superscription was startling enough; for it was in Lord Edgemore's handwriting.

"Who sent you with this?" asked Lee.

"His lordship, sir."

"Oh?" said Nelson Lee. "Lord Edgemore is in residence, then?"

"Yes, sir; arrived from Canada last night."

It was all very commonplace to anybody who happened to catch a scrap of this conversation. But Nipper and his companions, in the gymnasium doorway, were mildly staggered. What could it mean? If Lord Edgemore and Skeets had been kidnapped, as Lee supposed, how could he be in residence at Edgemore Castle?

"Wait, Blane," said Lee suddenly. "There may be an answer."

"Yes, sir," said the butler, deferentially retreating.

Nelson Lee strode straight into the gymnasium.

"Close the door, Nipper," he said briefly.

The juniors had sense enough not to question him. He was turning over that

letter, and when, at last, he opened it, he did so with caution. But there was no trickery in it. It was a perfectly ordinary sheet of notepaper which he took out.

"Upon my word," murmured Lee, frowning.

"May we know what it says, sir?" asked Nipper breathlessly.

Lee handed it over, and Nipper was not the only one who read the brief lines; other fellows craned over his shoulder, forgetful of their manners.

It was quite a brief note, written and signed by Lord Edgemore, and it stated that Skeets had suddenly been taken ill after their arrival in England, and would not be able to attend school for some little time.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Handforth blankly.

It was the ordinary-ness of the note which was its most startling feature. It was the kind of note anybody might have sent if his son had been taken ill.

But Nelson Lee and these twelve St. Frank's juniors were not so ignorant of the true state of affairs as Professor Cyrus Zingrave fondly imagined! And this note filled them all with doubt and suspicion.

Zingrave laboured under the delusion that he had fooled everybody, even including Nelson Lee, with his fake "death." But Lee had not believed in it from the first.

And it so happened that Willy Handforth, the previous evening, had been testing his latest "invention" on the river. It was a diving-suit—quite an ingenious contraption, and to the astonishment of Chubby Heath and Juicy Lemon it had worked.

But in the middle of the experiment, whilst Willy was under water, his lines had been fouled by a mysterious motor-boat which had glided silently up the river. Willy had been dragged along, and with characteristic shrewdness he had suspected something fishy, and had followed a man who had got out of the motor-boat and had walked across the park to Edgemore Castle. And Willy had recognised Professor Cyrus Zingrave as the latter had entered the castle by a side door!

The three fags had taken Nipper and Handforth and the other Removites into their confidence; they had all seen Nelson Lee about it, only to discover that Lee already knew the facts. For Lee himself had been on the prowl, and he already knew as much as the boys.

But the significant thing was that Professor Zingrave was secretly within Edge-

more Castle! And at that very time Lord Edgemore and Skeets had vanished from the docks at Southampton. Putting two and two together, it was palpably obvious that they had been kidnapped by the Green Triangle—and Zingrave was planning some nefarious scheme in connection with the castle.

Yet here was Blane, the new butler, calmly arriving with a very ordinary note from the earl! If Lee and the boys had known nothing of Zingrave's presence, that note would have aroused no suspicion.

But, as things were, Lee, at least, was convinced that there was something radically wrong.

"I'm going to the castle," he said abruptly.

"But, gov'nor," muttered Nipper, clutching his arm. "It may be a trap!"

"Possibly."

"There'll be danger——"

"All the more reason that I should find out what it is without delay," interrupted Lee gruffly. "But my eyes are open. And that, I think, gives me the advantage."

CHAPTER 7.

The Sign of the Green Triangle!

THE detective, glancing at the note again, felt certain that it was not a forgery. Yet the handwriting was not quite so steady as Lord Edgemore's customary "fist." It occurred to Lee that the letter had been written under compulsion.

For it was incredible that Lord Edgemore could be at the castle as a free agent—whilst he and Skeets were posted as "missing," with the police of the whole country on the look-out for them! The thing was fantastic.

"If you go over to the castle, gov'nor, we want to go with you," said Nipper eagerly.

"Yes, rather, sir!"

"Skeets is our pal, sir," said Travers.

"You may come—but at a safe distance," replied Lee, after a moment's thought. "It will seem quite natural for you boys to visit the castle to inquire after your schoolfellow. But you cannot come with me."

"You mean, something might happen on the way?" asked Nipper quickly.

"I shall be very surprised if something doesn't," replied Lee grimly.

And he displayed a little slip of white pasteboard, in the centre of which was printed a vivid green triangle.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Handforth,

staring. "Where did that come from, sir?"

"I just found it in my pocket."

"But, gov'nor, how——"

"I think I know, Nipper," interrupted Lee briskly. "Now, no more questions. Don't attempt to follow until I am well out of sight. If nothing has happened by the time I get to the castle, you may knock at the front door in the ordinary way."

Without another word he strode out of the gym, leaving the boys bubbling with excitement—and even bewilderment. Nipper was hot with fear for his beloved gov'nor safety.

Lee himself was as cool as ice. He regarded that slip of pasteboard as a challenge. It had not been in his pocket when he had left his house.

Only for one moment had Blane, the Edgemore butler, been actually by his side. Yet Blane, by some trick of sleight of hand, must have dropped that card into his pocket.

Lee had already read Blane's character. Notwithstanding his air of respectability, he was a crook. He was, in short, a Green Triangle agent.

And Nelson Lee, with characteristic promptness, had formulated a plan.

"There is no written reply, Blane," said Lee cheerily, as he approached the man. "I have decided to run over to Edgemore Castle and see your master personally."

"Very good, sir," said Blane, with a slight bow. "Shall I inform his lordship when he may expect the car?"

"I shall not trouble about the car, Blane; I shall walk."

"Very good, sir."

"With you," said Lee, lighting a cigarette.

Nobody would have guessed that he was watching the man as a cat watches a mouse. And Blane's start was unmistakable. But he pulled himself together with admirable quickness, though he could not conceal the sudden pallor which had stricken his face.

"With—with me, sir?" he stammered.

"Yes, Blane—it is a pleasant morning for a walk."

Lee spoke genially; he had learned all he wanted to know, and he was satisfied. Blane's sudden pallor had a significance—for Lee—which was as clearly visible as an open book.

"I—I'm sorry, sir," said the man, failing to conceal the unsteadiness in his voice. "It's an honour, I'm sure, sir, but I'm on my bicycle. It's just outside the gates, sir."

"Never mind your bicycle, my friend," said Lee breezily. "I like a companion when I walk."

"But I'm going down into the village, sir—on an errand for his lordship," said Blane hastily.

"That can wait," laughed Lee. "Come along."

He took Blane's arm, and walked him through the gateway. Mr. Josh Cuttle sniffed audibly. He didn't hold with this familiarity with servants. But there! There was no telling what people would do these days!

Blane, outside the gateway, tried to disengage himself. It was perfectly true that he had a bicycle propped against the wall.

"You will have your little joke, sir," he said, with a short laugh. "I'd take it as a great privilege to walk back to

the castle with you, sir, but his lordship will be very angry if I don't send the— the telegram."

"Oh, it's a telegram, is it?" said Lee pleasantly. "Very urgent?"

"Very, sir."

"Strange that his lordship should send you to the village with a telegram before the post office is open," remarked Lee.

The man's jaw dropped.

"I've got other things to do first, sir——" he began.

"They can all wait," smiled Lee. "Upon my word, Blane, I'm disappointed in you. You don't look at all unsociable. Come along."

"No, sir," panted the man, now hoarse. "I tell you I can't walk with you, sir."

"And I tell you, Blane, that you will walk with me," said Nelson Lee deliberately.

A Book-length Yarn for 4d. ONLY!

KING, of the ISLANDS

His name's Ken King, but from the Solomon Islands to the Marquesas they call him King, of the Islands—the finest skipper and staunchest comrade in the South Seas. Cool, fearless, and a holy terror in a scrap, the boy trader's a match even for men like Bully Samson, his ruthless enemy, and every one of his amazing adventures among the tropic islands of the Pacific will make you hold your breath. Get this splendid yarn now!



Ask for No. 331 of the

BOYS' FRIEND Library

Now on Sale at all Newsdealers

- - - 4d.

And there was such a world of determination in his voice that Blane gave in.

Now that the die was cast the man walked willingly enough, and Lee pretended not to notice his agitation.

"Glorious morning, Blane," said Lee brightly.

"Yes, sir—lovely."

"We're having quite a pleasant spring."

"Yes, sir."

"They say that we shall have a phenomenal summer this year," continued Lee. "About time, too; we've had precious few real summers of late years."

He chatted as though he hadn't a care in the world; yet never in his career had Nelson Lee been more dangerous.

CHAPTER 8.

Nelson Lee's Mistake!

NELSON LEE had known, from the moment he told Blane that he would accompany him back to the castle, that a murderous ambush had been prepared for him.

Lee had suspected—and Blane's behaviour had clinched matters.

Lee had figured it all out rapidly in his mind. Blane had no instructions to go to the village; he was to have cycled straight back to the castle after having delivered that note. His master was not Lord Edgemore—but Professor Zingrave.

And Zingrave, of course, had expected that Lee would pay a personal visit to the castle, in consequence of that note. The note had been deliberately brief, leaving Lee without any essential facts.

This set the detective thinking again. And the more he thought, the more he was convinced that Lord Edgemore had penned those lines under compulsion. Nelson Lee would not be allowed to get to the castle—he would die long before he got there. That was the programme. They wouldn't dare to make an attempt on his life at the castle itself.

"When did your master arrive, Blane?" asked Lee, conversationally.

"Last night, sir, rather late."

"Unexpected, wasn't it?"

"No, sir. I—I mean, yes, sir," panted the man. "If—if you don't mind, Mr. Lee, I'd rather not answer any questions. His lordship is very particular."

"You don't know him, Blane," laughed Lee. "Your master and I are very great friends, and unless his trip to Canada has changed him a lot, he is one of the easiest-going men under the sun."

Blane suddenly halted, and he was shaking visibly.

"I—I don't think I'll come any farther, sir," he said thickly. "I've just remembered that I've got to meet somebody in the village—"

"Nonsense, Blane!" said Lee. "Anybody might think you that you were afraid to walk with me—"

"No, sir," gasped the butler. "Of course not, sir."

But he was afraid—he was terrified. His eyes were blazing with fear. They walked on again, and now Blane was perspiring pitifully.

And as Nelson Lee's outward geniality increased, his inward grimness increased pro rata.

The whole thing was crystal clear.

They had expected Lee to go in his car, and they had set an ambush.

Somewhere along that lane, lurking behind the hedge, a man was waiting—with what?—a high-explosive bomb?

Clearly, a bomb was the best method to employ. A gunman could not have been certain enough of his aim to definitely kill a man at the wheel of a moving car. In additional proof of Lee's theory Blane's behaviour was sufficient. For Blane would have been in no fear of a hidden sniper; rather would he have eagerly consented to accompany Lee, knowing that he himself would be safe. For no self-respecting sniper would have such a bad aim as to miss Lee, and hit one of his own kind.

But a bomb was different.

Blane was deadly afraid because if the bomb was thrown at Lee, it would destroy Blane, too. There would be no escaping from it. Blane's increasing terror, therefore, was understandable.

Nelson Lee was contemptuous; he set the man down as an arrant coward. He was only frightened because he knew of the ambush. But Lee felt that he was in no danger so long as he remained affectionately by Blane's side.

And it was there that Lee made a big mistake.

Lee believed that the man in the ambush would not hurl his bomb and deliberately kill his own colleague. But Thomas Blane knew differently!

Blane was one of the old-timers—he had served the Green Triangle in its former days. And he knew the methods of Professor Zingrave as well as any man. He knew that he would be sacrificed without compunction—if only Lee went with him! His own life would mean nothing. He was a unit—a cipher. All the better, in fact, if he was blown to smithereens, too, since his death would make the whole affair

more logical. The police, when they came to investigate the tragedy, would never associate the Green Triangle agents with Edgemore Castle—since the very butler from Edgemore Castle was a victim.

No; the police would assume that a Green Triangle agent had been lurking about on the off-chance, and that he had hurled his bomb to kill Lee.

Exactly how right Blane was can be proved by taking a look at the man who was hidden high up in a dense fir tree which bordered the lane two hundred yards ahead. It was a lonely spot—a little bend where the road dipped, and where there were dense trees on either side.

That Green Triangle agent, perched so high, knew that he would get some of the shock of the explosion—but he was in no danger. Now, as he looked at the approaching figures, he recognised them. And not for one second did he hesitate. He took from an inner pocket a gleaming, torpedo-shaped object with little flanges at the rear. It was far more effective than a Mills bomb; yet, like one of those deadly hand grenades, it was fitted with a safety pin.

The man prepared to remove that pin. He was sweating nearly as much as Blane himself. He was thinking quickly, but it had not taken him long to make up his mind. The very fact that he was willing to destroy Nelson Lee proved that he was a ruffian without compunction. The inclusion of Blane in the catastrophe made little difference to him.

He was sorry for Blane, because the fellow was a Green Triangle man. But he would have to go. There were no two ways of thinking of this matter.

He had been promised a princely sum if he accomplished his purpose, and he was certainly not going to be robbed of his reward by a sentimental consideration for a man who was practically a stranger. Blane was a Green Triangle agent, but he and this man in the tree scarcely knew one another.

There was another aspect of the matter.

If the bomber reported that he had failed in his mission because of Blane's danger, he would be "black-marked" as a failure. And Professor Zingrave had a way of his own with men who were failures. More often than not he sentenced them to death; they met with strange accidents.

There was no possibility of making a false report. Nelson Lee's very arrival at the castle would prove that he had walked, unharmed, past the ambush.

No, Blane would have to go! The bomb-thrower gripped the flanged head of the safety-pin and waited, tense

CHAPTER 9.

The Double Capture!

THE truth came upon Nelson Lee suddenly, dramatically, and with a shock which was rather like that of a blow between the eyes.

Blane wasn't shaking and sweating because he was afraid of what *might* happen—but because he was in terror of what he knew *would* happen!

They had nearly got into that dip now, where the trees were so thick, and the butler was trembling in every limb; his eyes were wild; his perspiring face was like chalk.

His dilemma was a terrible one. To go forward would mean death. To speak—to warn Lee—would not only mean the failure of the plot, but he, Blane, would be a traitor to the Green Triangle! Even if he suddenly turned tail and bolted he would be a traitor—for a man of Lee's sagacity would be under no misapprehension regarding his flight.

And that would mean death just the same—sentence of death by Zingrave!

But life is precious, and the imminence of Blane's peril sent him into a frenzied panic. But now Lee had halted a few yards short of the fatal spot; he spun round and gripped Blane with such strength that the man crumpled.

"We're near, eh?" rapped out Lee. "Now, my friend, tell me the truth!"

"Get back—get back!" screamed Blane. "We'll both be killed!"

Lee looked sharply at the hedges, fully alive to his own danger now. He cursed himself for a fool. He ought to have considered this possibility.

"Control yourself, man!" he said harshly. "You're expecting a bomb, aren't you? Tell me where——"

"There—there!" shrieked Blane, pointing upwards.

**WOULD YOU LIKE A
PENKNIFE, POCKET WALLET,
OR GRAND BOOK?**

Topping Prizes are awarded for Jokes.
Turn to page 30 and see what you have
to do—

EASY AS PIE!

And, some distance behind, Nipper and Handforth and the other juniors, had turned a bend. They were not exactly disobeying orders, but they were nearer than Lee would have liked. And they heard Blane's panic-stricken voice—saw his pointing arm.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Handforth. "What's the matter with the man?"

"I knew it!" panted Nipper. "It's an ambush! The guv'nor's walked into— Oh, look—look!"

Nipper was pointing now, and the others saw the significant movement in the top-most branches of that great fir tree.

What occurred next happened within the space of seconds.

The man in the tree had heard Blane's words—and there was only one thing to be done. Nelson Lee was too far off to make it absolutely certain that he would be killed in the explosion. But this was not a moment for hesitation. Blane had "blown the gaff"!

With a sharp tug, the hooded figure pulled out the safety-catch, and then, with all his strength, he hurled the bomb outwards, through the gap in the tree branches.

Both Lee and Blane saw it as it came down—gleaming and shimmering in the morning sunshine. Like a stone it dropped, and it would hit the ground some yards in front of the two men.

"Run!" screamed Blane.

He attempted to run himself, but he stumbled, his knees giving way beneath

his weight. He crashed to the road, a babbling, craven wretch.

Nelson Lee acted like lightning.

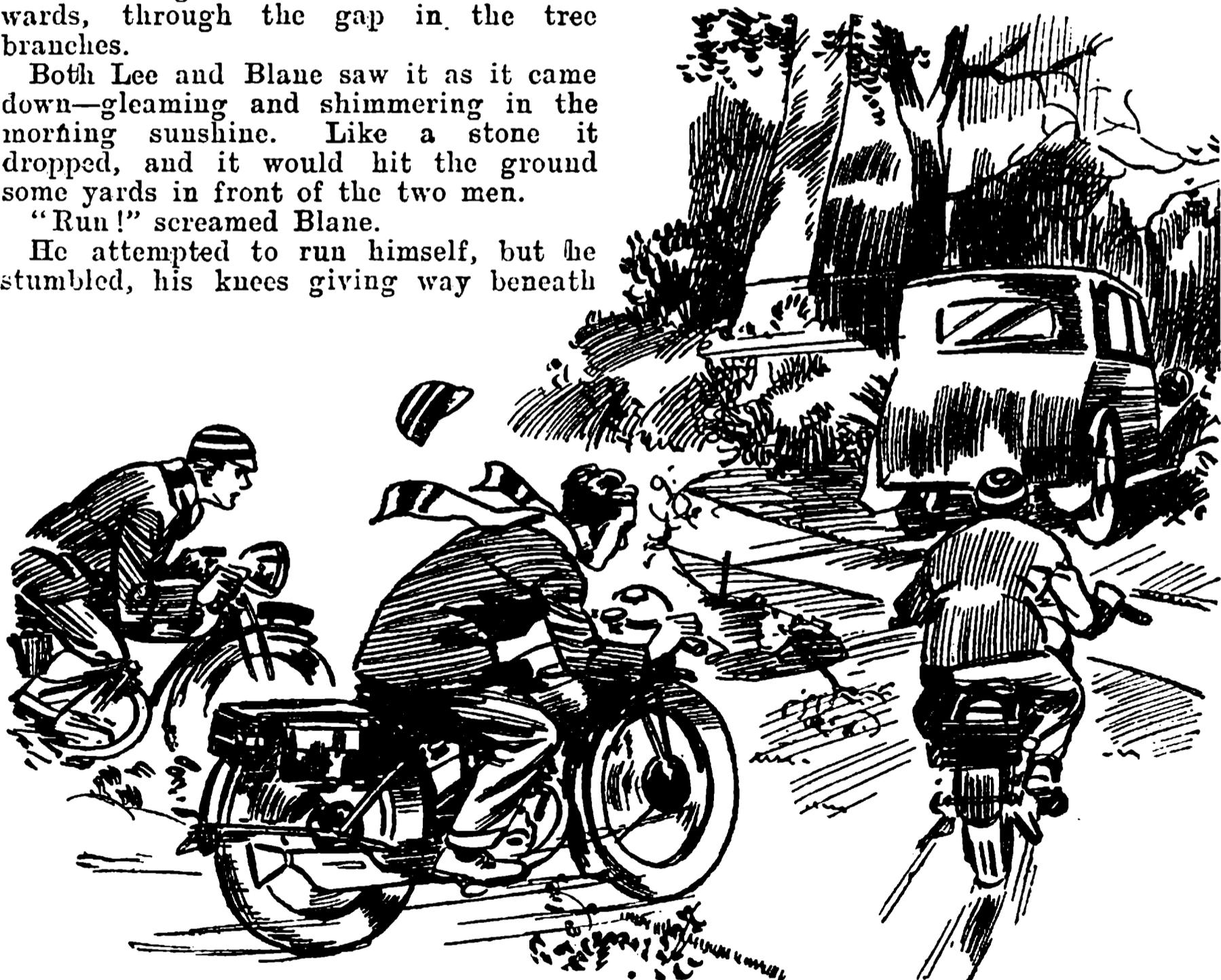
If that bomb hit the ground, it would mean death. There was just one chance. The boys in the background, watching, fascinated with horror, were reminded of a cricketer racing over the green turf in order to reach a dropping ball.

The bomb was falling! Lee leapt upwards and outwards, one hand outstretched. A missed catch here would not mean another "life" for a batsman, but death for two men!

Lee's fingers closed round the heavy metal torpedo; he held securely. But all in one movement he swung round, knowing that the fuse might reach its end—knowing that the bomb might explode in his very hand. He hurled—and the bomb sailed over the hedge, and fell with a dull splash into the deep stream which—as Lee knew—flowed on the other side.

Boom!

The explosion was terrific. The hedge sagged over as though struck by a giant



The escaping master-crook sent the car swerving wildly across the grounds, crashing through flower-beds and shrubs. And, hot on his trail, roared the St. Frank's juniors, fearless of the peril into which they were running.

18 "PREFECTS ON STRIKE." Breathless long story of Jimmy Silver & Co.

hand; Lee had flung himself flat. Water, mud and earth hurtled skywards, together with scraps of the hedge. But the shock area had been confined by the deep water. The worst danger was over.

As the schoolboys came tearing along the lane, Lee leapt forward, beneath that fir tree.

Thud-thud!

He heard the unmistakable dull reports of a silenced automatic. Bullets thopped against the hard ground near him. The bomb-thrower, knowing that he had failed, was using his gun.

Crack!

Lee's own automatic barked once. A scream sounded from up in the tree, followed by the cracking and splintering as a heavy body fell through the branches.

The man crashed to the ground, rolled over, and lay still.

"You're not as hurt as you deserve to be, my friend!" said Lee, turning the fellow over.

He had a bullet wound in the leg, and his fall had stunned him; but no bones seemed to be broken.

Nelson Lee took four strides, and he reached Blane's side—just as the man was shakily getting to his feet.

Click-click!

The handcuffs were snapped over Blane's wrists.

"If you go down for less than ten years, Blane, you'll be lucky," said Lee crisply.

"I wasn't in it, Mr. Lee!" babbled the fellow. "It wasn't me! You can't hang this on me——"

"A judge and jury will decide that point," interrupted Lee.

And at that moment the St. Frank's boys arrived, breathless and excited.

CHAPTER 10.

Doing Their Bit!

"GUV'NOR!" exclaimed Nipper thankfully.

"Yes, young 'un, it was a close call," admitted Lee.

"That explosion might have killed you, sir," panted Handforth.

"Yes, I ought to have known that Blane's companionship would be no safeguard," continued Lee. "They're not very considerate with you, Blane, are they?"

"You wait!" snarled Blane. "The chief will get you yet!"

LISTEN-IN to this!

"Hallo, everybody! Figgins calling. There are some who call me a New House waster, but, believe me, I've got one up against the School House this time. Poor old Gussy's gone "goofy" again. Yes, and it's another girl called Ethel. I'm not going to tell you just what the New House Co. is going to do, but, believe me, it's going to be a scream! You can read all about it for twopence in this week's great GEM yarn "Gussy Goes 'Goofy'!" Chin, chin!"

"Just half a minute, you chaps! This is Tom Merry, of the School House. I've just heard what that cheeky waster Figgins has been saying, so I thought I'd put you wise to the fact Figgy may not find things all his own way. That's all. You'll discover what I mean when you read this week's issue of

THE GEM 2d.
Every Wednesday



"That'll do," said Lee. "I've got a little idea about you, Blane. This way!"

He hauled the now infuriated man to a tree which grew near the roadside. Deftly, Lee unlocked one of the handcuffs; he forced Blane's arms right round the tree trunk, and they just reached. Click! The handcuff was re-locked.

"Here, what's the idea?" gasped the man, in alarm.

"You can continue to hug that tree, my good Blane, until the police come," replied Lee pleasantly.

And Blane cursed and struggled in vain. He was about as helpless as any man could be. Upright against that tree, hugging it, his wrists handcuffed on the other side, his plight was unenviable.

"I want two of you boys to remain here, and watch over these men," said Lee briskly. Blane can't do any harm, and the other one won't recover consciousness for at least an hour. Another boy will hurry to the village, find P.-c. Sparrow, and then ring up Inspector Jameson, of Bannington. Can I rely upon you to do that?"

"Yes, sir," chorused the juniors, eager to help.

"All right—see to it," said Lee.

"Where are you going, guv'nor?" asked Nipper quickly.

"To the castle."

"But Zingrave——"

"I am very anxious to meet Zingrave," interrupted Lee. "But, somehow, I feel I'm going to be disappointed. Yet there's something fishy going on at Edgemore Castle—and I mean to find out what it is."

To the relief of the boys, running figures were now seen, and half a dozen St. Frank's seniors, headed by Fenton of the Sixth, and Browne of the Fifth, came breathlessly upon the scene.

"Good egg!" murmured Handforth. "We can go along to the castle now!"

"Just what I was thinking," said Nipper, nodding. "No need for our little party to be broken up."

They had been willing enough to help, but, if the truth must be told, they were dismayed. There would have been quite a lot of argument as to which two fellows should remain with the prisoners, and which one should go to the village for the police.

The arrival of the seniors solved the problem.

"What's been happening here, sir?" asked Fenton, in alarm.

"You have come at a useful moment, Fenton," said Lee. "You may take charge of these two prisoners."

He gave the same instructions as he had given to the juniors, and Fenton and his companions promised to attend to the matter.

"I gather," said William Napoleon Browne, "that you kids witnessed the whole performance?—Alas! It is never my luck to obtain a front seat."

"We were afraid that you had been killed, sir," said Fenton. "The explosion sounded terrific, back at the school. We guessed that it was another murder attempt."

"They are becoming tiresome, Fenton," said Lee grimly. "These Green Triangle agents become more and more daring."

"I venture to suggest, Brother Lee, that they will have to become more and more clever, too, if they are to catch you on the hop," said Browne genially. "Ah! The populace is arriving in a dense mass."

It was more or less true. Crowds of seniors and juniors were running up the lane, approaching; and quite a few Moor View girls were in evidence, too. For the girls' school, being nearer than St. Frank's, had heard the shock more distinctly.

"I grieve to see this evidence of morbid curiosity," said Browne, shaking his head. "Well, these people will be disappointed. Doubtless they hoped to assist in the task of collecting the pieces."

There was a tremendous amount of excitement now. Fenton, in charge, sent two of his fellow seniors to the village for the police. Nelson Lee was glad to make his escape; he was not in the mood for answering questions now. His main anxiety was to get to Edgemore Castle.

Glancing round as he moved off, he noted that Nipper and Handforth and all those other juniors had gone. As a matter of fact, they had vanished into the trees by the roadside. And they were listening with some annoyance as they heard Forrest and Gore-Pearce and Grayson and similar fry indignantly proclaiming that Nelson Lee ought to clear out of the district. Other fellows were taking up the song. Nelson Lee was endangering them all, and if he had any decency, he would resign the headmastership.

"Don't listen to them, you chaps," muttered Nipper. "My guv'nor won't allow any harm to come to the school. The rotters!"

"They're humbugs, too, dear old fellow," said Travers. "They'd be more disappointed than anybody else if Mr. Lee went away. We haven't had so much excitement for terms and terms."

"Well, it's a good thing we got out of that crowd," said Handforth, his eyes

gleaming. "They would only have pestered us with questions. What are going to do now?"

"We're going along to the castle," said Nipper promptly. "By cutting across the park we can keep the gov'nor in sight—and we shall be handy if there's any more trouble."

Nelson Lee, meanwhile, was striding grimly towards the historic old pile. Never had he been in a more dangerous mood.

The capture of Blane and that other man meant nothing. They were mere units of the great Green Triangle organisation.

But here, in Edgemore Castle, was the master-brain—and Nelson Lee was going deliberately into battle.

CHAPTER 11.

A Surprise!

AS the detective approached the ivy-covered front of the castle he knew that he was an easy mark from any of the windows. Yet he was in very little danger here. Daring as Zingrave and his associates were, they would never be guilty of the folly of destroying their enemy in such a spot.

For it would mean the invasion of police, of Scotland Yard detectives, in great numbers. Professor Cyrus Zingrave was at Edgemore Castle, but there was no safer place for Nelson Lee.

He doubted if there would be any answer to his knocking and ringing. With Lord Edgemore a prisoner and Zingrave in hiding, there would be nobody to open the door. Even if there were other Green Triangle men here, they would not dare to show themselves.

By this time Lee was supposed to be dead; his arrival, therefore, would be a complete surprise to the enemy.

Scarcely had Nelson Lee knocked, however, before the great door swung open, and a sedately-attired footman looked at him with inquiring eyes.

Lee revealed no sign of his astonishment; he took stock of the man without appearing to do so. The footman's clothes were ill-fitting; his eyes were shifty; he held himself awkwardly. He was, in short, a crook.

"Good-morning," said Lee briefly. "I wish to see Lord Edgemore."

"Have you an appointment, sir?"

"No."

"If you will come in and wait, sir, I will see if his lordship is in," said the footman respectfully. "May I have your name, sir?"

"Tell his lordship that Mr. Lee has called."

"Very good, sir."

The footman went across the great hall to the library. He tapped, opened the door and entered. Nelson Lee watched him closely, and one of the detective's hands was on his automatic in his pocket.

He was not surprised when the footman immediately returned.

"His lordship will see you, sir," announced the man deferentially.

He stood aside by the library door, and Nelson Lee's wits were at their keenest. He was irresistibly reminded of the old saw: "'Walk into my parlour,' said the spider to the fly."

He advanced, wondering what sort of a reception had been prepared for him in the library. Then he experienced a shock, for a tall, bronzed figure appeared in the opening of the great doorway.

"Glad you came, Lee," said a familiar voice. "Come in."

The man was Lord Edgemore himself! He was the last person Nelson Lee had expected to see—knowing all he did know. And as the detective entered, he caught a fleeting glimpse, out of the corner of his eye, of the footman's almost mocking smirk.

Even as Lee shook hands he was ready for swift action. But there was nothing to fear. The man with him was unquestionably the Earl of Edgemore. The first thought that had sprung into Lee's mind was that this man was an impostor—a Green Triangle agent impersonating the earl.

But Lee dismissed the theory at once. This man, beyond all shadow of doubt, was the earl.

"You got my note, of course," said his lordship, with a sigh. "Poor Skeets! I can't understand him, Lee. Quite a sudden attack. But I guess he's young, and I mustn't worry too much."

"I came over," said Lee deliberately, "because I thought you might be in need of my help."

"Good of you, but I don't think you can do anything," said his lordship, shaking his head. "Sit down, Lee."

Lee made himself comfortable—but not before he had taken a quick, searching look round the room. But everything was very ordinary.

Lee was trying to fit this puzzle together. Lord Edgemore was himself—and yet there seemed to be a strained, far-off look in his eyes. But that could easily be accounted for by his concern over his son. Then Lee thought of the

(Continued on page 24.)

Special "Law and Order" Issue of—



HANDFORTH'S Weekly

No. 52. Vol. 2.

EDITORIAL STAFF.

April 16th, 1932.

THE
EDITOR'S
CHIN-WAG

Editor-in-Chief
E. O. Handforth
Editor E. O. Handforth
Chief Sub-Editor
E. O. Handforth
Literary Editor
E. O. Handforth
Art Editor E. O. Handforth
Rest of Staff E. O. Handforth

St. FRANK'S
BLACK
LIST

E. O. HANDFORTH, reformer—that's me. My name will go down to posterity. I shall live for ever in the history of St. Frank's. A bust of me will stand prominently in the Triangle in days to come.

At least, that's what ought to happen, although I don't suppose for a single moment that anything of the sort will ever come about. The authorities never seem to appreciate genius. But does it grieve me? No—at least, not very much.

My latest movement inaugurated for the benefit of St. Frank's has caused a sensation—not to say a riot. I decided that the school needed reforming. Just lately fellows have been flagrantly flouting the laws and regulations. There's Forrest, for example. Only the other day he publicly declared that rules are made to be broken. Jevver hear anything like it?

Needless to say, I remonstrated—forcibly. Travers then promptly pointed out that I myself had broken a school rule by fighting. That was unfortunate, for I'd overlooked the fact. However, to prove that I was in earnest I punched myself in the eye—and did it so realistically that it cost me the price of half a pound of best rump steak to cure.

But it's all in the good of the cause, and I'm going to stick to my guns. Law and order at St. Frank's. That's my cry henceforth—and I'll lay down the law and give the orders. If the juniors don't like it—well, they can lump it. If the seniors don't like it—well, being seniors, I suppose I shall have to lump it. As for the masters—yes, perhaps it would be best if I make them exempt from my activities.

Fullwood asked me why I started this law and order movement, and what I expect to gain from it.

My sole aim is the good of the school. I expect no reward, no thanks from the authorities—although if Mr. Wilkes likes to rescind that gating he gave me for breaking a window

(Continued at foot of next column.)

The following are charged on the aforementioned counts and will be brought before his lordship Judge Edward Oswald Handforth—and may they jolly well be ashamed of themselves!

Archie Glenthorne. For causing a riot by wearing an awful and unlawful purple and yellow spotted tie. For causing an obstruction in the public highways by falling asleep in the Remove Passage. For causing a public disturbance by snoring during aforementioned unlawful act.

Ralph Leslie Fullwood. Who is sued by Edward Long for a claim amounting to 10/-. The plaintiff pleads that he contracted tooth-ache while listening at defendant's keyhole, and had to have his molar extracted. Damages claimed: 2/6 dentist's fee, and 7/6 for pain suffered and incurred during extraction.

Cornelius Trotwood. For being a menace to the safety of the public. Trying to make him understand what is being said to him strains the vocal chords and shatters the ear drums of innocent passers-by.

James Fatty Little. For causing an obstruction and delaying traffic in the school corridors in that his ample figure almost completely fills the width of the said corridors, thus denying right-of-way to the general public.

Bernard Forrest. For causing a fog when he smokes his vile cigarettes, and for setting a bad example to the rest of the community.

George Bell. For aiding and abetting the aforementioned accused.

Albert Gulliver. Ditto.

Claude Gore-Pearce. For being a blot on the landscape and for being the cause and the means of endangering the eyes of all law-abiding citizens who chance to behold him.

I shan't object. You see, there's an important footer match that day, and I'm awfully keen to play.

Yours hopefully,

E. O. H.

JUDGE HANDY CAUGHT IN COURT

SCORES OF SNORES

(Being a full report of the proceedings in the Remove Court, presided over by Judge Handforth. The writer, for reasons that will be obvious, wishes to remain anonymous.)

PROMPTLY at 5.30 the undignified figure of Judge Handforth entered the court. Usher Church requested everybody to rise, but nobody did so. His lordship got into a fine old rage at this exhibition of disrespect and threatened to arrest everybody. Ribald merriment greeted this announcement, and as Handforth realised that he had only two unwilling supporters in Church and McClure, usher and clerk respectively, he decided to abandon his threat.

Seating himself in the judicial chair, his lordship then met with a double disaster. First he sat on a drawing-pin, and then the chair collapsed altogether owing to a sawn leg. Everybody howled, including Handforth—he with pain, the others with laughter.

"Order! Silence!" bellowed the judge wrathfully disentangling himself from the wreckage. "Silence, or I'll clear the court!"

All present immediately howled louder than ever, much to the indignation of his lordship. So he graciously relented, and at last order was restored.

"Who is the prisoner—what is the charge, fathead—I mean, Mr. Usher—I mean—oh, read out the doings, Mac, you idiot!" stormed the judge.

"Who's a fathead and a idiot?" wrathfully snorted the clerk, and for a moment it looked as if he was going to lay hands upon the sacred personage of his lordship. The court was denied this pleasure, however, and the proceedings proceeded.

The first item on the agenda, so to speak, was Archie Glenthorne. He was charged with being an obstruction and a nuisance, or some such silly rot.

Unfortunately, the prisoner was not forthcoming when his name was called. Violent snores indicated his whereabouts, however, and Archie was fished out from under the table.

"Glenthorne, your sentence, when decided upon, will be doubled, trebled, quad—quad—"

The worthy judge failed to think of the word and subsided with a splutter.

"I object, brother—that is to say, your lordship," protested William Napoleon Browne, who was defending counsel, and promptly launched into a long speech that reduced everybody in court to tears in

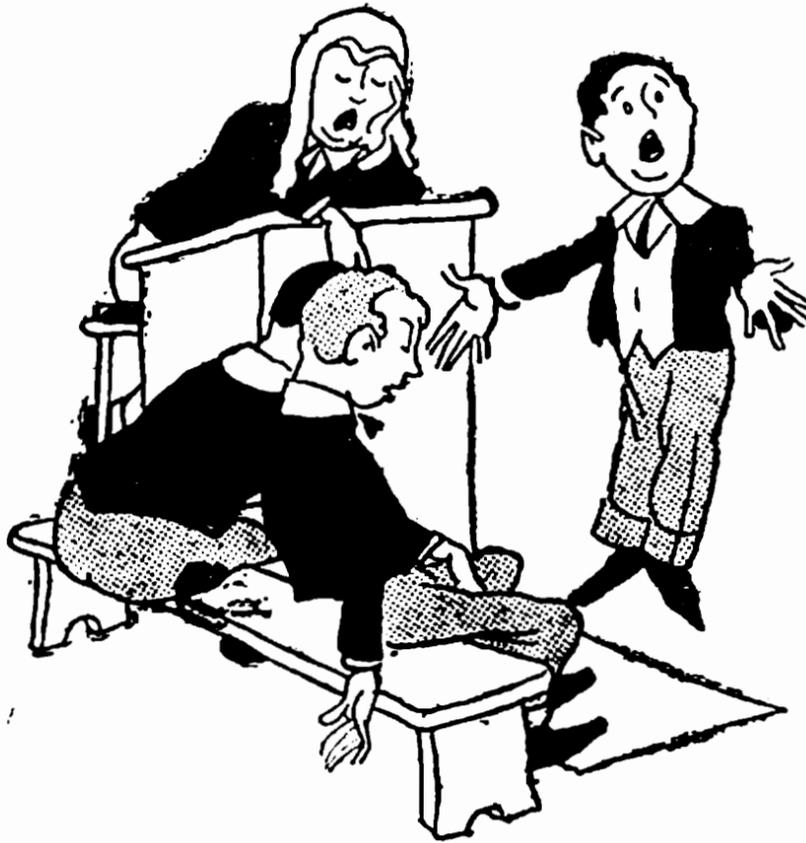
two minutes and sent them to sleep in four. Even his lordship slumbered at the end of six, giving a good imitation of a volcano in eruption. Browne, not aware of this sad state of affairs, in his enthusiasm, talked on and on—and on.

One hour, two hours, three hours passed. And still he gestured, still his flow of eloquence continued. At the end of the third hour, just when Browne was beginning to get properly settled down to business, a bell clanged loudly from outside the courtroom.

Everybody woke up with a start.

"That's calling-over bell!" gasped one of the jurymen.

"Brothers, brothers," said Browne, in distress, "how long have I been talking? Why, surely it only seems a matter of minutes—"



"Better look behind you," suggested another jurymen. "There's a calendar on the wall."

"I haven't the faintest idea of what you've been gassing about, Browne, but your objection is over-ruled, anyway," declared Judge Handforth pompously. "I hereby pronounce sentence upon the prisoner. He shall be made to wear clogs and go about without socks."

Immediately there was an uproar at the judge's harshness; and Archie himself shuddered, wilted, wobbled at the knees, and then collapsed into a state of complete coma.

"And now the court will adjourn!" announced the judge majestically.

(Continued at foot of column five)

FOR THE D

By W. N. BRO

IN view of the crazy notion and order that has been briefed victims to defend before Judge Ed

I can't quite make it a leg pull, or why desire me to use my of speech and some clutches of Broth

But no one has ever in vain, and so I if you understand my own irreproach

I shall do it by talking to brothers and sisters unkindly, I fear, of talking the hind

Well, perhaps that justified for once. that Brother Hand we'll see what he'll do with his leg when I switch him. I rather think that he'll want to direct

My battle of with Edward Oswald shall edifying entertain listen. Like all go proceed to prove the

Such will be the masterly eloquence able to prove the the guilty innocent annoys me can be even cause a sense by proving to them himself is the guilty

I remember once when my pater was a learned judge who was cross-examined witnesses.

"Have you a calendar pater asked in that fashion.

"Well, I dunno, unhappy witness. court this morning, but after listening sure about it now

Such eloquence my readers that carrying on the nose Browne family.

So let Brother him remember always won by as the prevention of main objects in be instrumental in the hour of his

TOMMY WATSON MAKES A COLLECTION OF LAWS WE WOULD LIKE

THE DEFENCE

BROWNE, Kay Cee.

Whether Handforth's maintaining law at St. Frank's, I have by many of the them when appearing before Oswald.

Let me out whether this other they seriously undoubted powers to remove them from the Handy.

For come to a Browne shall do my stuff—what I mean—in a noble manner.

King—yes, talking, It has been said, that I am capable of being off a doukey.

That remark will be Nobody will deny that is a donkey, and opens to his hind by eloquence upon that, upon reflection, to raise it in my

wards with Brother would prove a highly present to all who would lawyers, I shall that black is white.

Conviction of my that I shall be innocent guilty and—so anybody who look out. I might opinion in legal circles try that the judge by party!

Memorable occasion at the Bar—he's that, you know. He being one of the

"my celebrated his best lawyer's

"sir," replied the "When I came to thought I had one, so you I'm not so

And I can assure William Napoleon is the traditions of the

Andy beware. Let battles are not and brawn—and fighting is one of the campaign, I may making him happy defeat!

HANDFORTH'S idea of reforming St. Frank's is crazy. Why, he himself is one of the worst offenders! I believe this latest fad is only an excuse to get himself into the good books of Mr. Wilkes so that the Housemaster will release him from a gating for the footer match on Saturday. I guess Handy will "arrest" me for saying a libellous thing like that, but I'm willing to take the risk. And it'll be good fun, anyway.

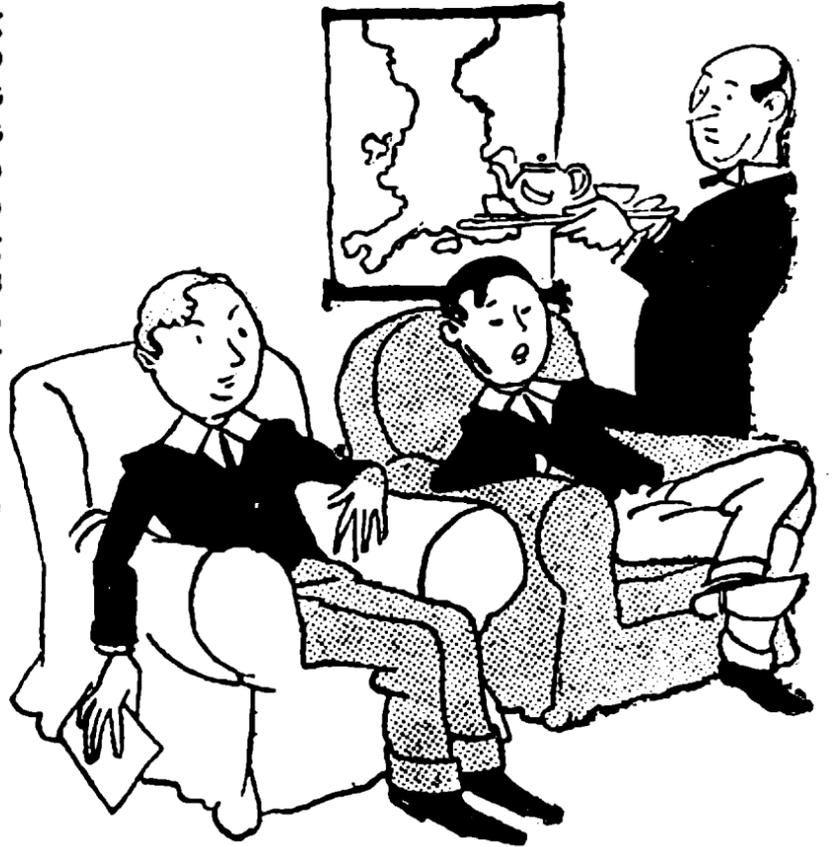
However, his stunt gave me a notion for some copy, and I went round to all the St. Frank's celebrities and asked them what they would do if they were in the position of making new rules and regulations at the old school.

Archie Glenthorne said that he would do away with rising bell. Everybody should be allowed to get up when they liked; he would institute armchairs in the classrooms and have cups of tea brought round during lessons. Trust that lazy slacker to suggest a thing like that.

Fatty Little, of course, stated he would pay more attention to the grub routine of the school. Grub would be obtainable when, where, and how he wanted it. If necessary, lessons would be cut out altogether to satisfy the inner man. Ah, well, it's fortunate that Fatty isn't in the position to make his own rules, otherwise I can see him becoming the size of an overgrown elephant.

Nipper was more levelheaded in his suggestions. He would introduce criminology into the school curriculum and perhaps devote a little more time to sport. I agree with the latter suggestion, but I'm not so sure that I would be interested to know the size of Bill Sikes' toeprint.

I didn't trouble to tackle Forrest. I know only too well that he'd want to turn St. Frank's into a gambling den. I expect



he'd also become a bookmaker, and probably start a racecourse on the playing-fields.

Mr. Suncliffe was all for cricket. He seemed to forget his responsibility as a Form-master, and said that he wouldn't mind if cricket was played all day and all the year round.

"But it rains 364 days of the year—and 365 days during Leap Year," I pointed out.

"Wouldn't worry me in the least," he replied triumphantly. "We'd have an indoor cricket pitch. Big Hall, for instance. Rather limited in dimensions at the moment, but that could soon be remedied by knocking down the walls and enlarging it."

Methinks Mr. Suncliffe knows what he's talking about!

All I can say in conclusion is that St. Frank's would be the world's most popular school if the fellows had their way. But what a hope of that coming to pass!

BECOME AN ALL-TALKING TALKIE

Improve your elocution by taking
BROWNE'S
extra special
YELLOW

"Gassbagg" pills.
They make you
RED

in the face with talking
and give listeners the
BLUES.

WARNING.—These highly successful pills are not recommended to people with false teeth unless said teeth are securely clamped to the mouth with three-inch nails, or something similarly strong.

JUDGE HANDY CAUGHT IN COURT

(Continued from column 2.)

"One moment, please!" cut in a voice from the doorway, and upon the threshold stood Mr. Wilkes, frowning thunderously. "So you are a judge, eh, Handforth? Well, before adjourning the court you will pass one more sentence. You will charge yourself with causing a disturbance and you will sentence yourself to five hundred lines."

And when Handforth had done so, everybody agreed that he was a judge with a real sense of justice!

THE HOUSE OF DREAD!

(Continued from page 20.)

footman—so obviously a Green Triangle man. How was it that the earl accepted that fellow as a servant? And Blanc, too?

"I'm glad you're here, Lee," said the earl suddenly. "What's all this nonsense about Skeets and me disappearing? Who put that ridiculous story into circulation?"

"It was reported by the railway police that you were lured away from the train just as it was about to start," replied Lee. "And I must confess, Lord Edgemore, that I myself feared that you had fallen into evil hands."

The earl laughed—but it was a mirthless effort.

"We left the boat train hurriedly and unexpectedly, I will admit," he said. "Skeets came over faint very suddenly, and I decided, on the spur of the moment, to bring him straight to the castle. I had intended telegraphing to the London terminus about our baggage, but Skeets was so much worse by the time we arrived that I forgot the matter."

Lee nodded, watching his host closely. He could not get rid of the impression that Lord Edgemore had spoken the words mechanically, after the fashion of an amateur actor saying his lines.

"I heard a different story from the police," said Lee quietly.

"Oh! How different?"

"I was told that a stranger, in shirt-sleeves hurried up to you, and that after a few moments conversation you accompanied him to a waiting car," said Lee. "The man in shirt-sleeves has not been traced—neither has the car. To be perfectly honest, Lord Edgemore, I am relieved to find you here, safe and sound."

"There has been some absurd blundering," growled the earl. "I remember the man in shirt-sleeves; he mistook me for somebody else and scarcely ten words passed between us. I happened to see a waiting car evidently belonging to a hiring company, and I offered the man double money if he would get Skeets here quickly. I don't know where the car came from, or what happened to it after I had paid the driver off. But there has been a lot of mystery over nothing. I am here—Skeets is upstairs in bed—and I want no police inquiries, or police interference."

Again he spoke as though he were repeating passages that he had learned by heart. Ordinarily, perhaps, Nelson Lee would not have noticed it; but just now his wits were super-alert.

The earl's story sounded satisfactory; but, according to Nelson Lee's information the police could produce witnesses to prove that the man in shirt-sleeves had come up to the boat train, inquiring specifically for Lord Edgemore.

So his lordship had lied about that. Why? There really seemed nothing to hide. Did he know of Professor Zingrave's presence at the castle, and had he been intimidated?

And then, as Nelson Lee looked across at his host, the truth came to him like a flash of inspiration.

CHAPTER 12.

The Mystery Malady!

AS the startling explanation came to Nelson Lee he looked with new interest at his host. He even rose to his feet and, bending forward, peered closely—even rudely—into Lord Edgemore's face.

He was not surprised when the earl showed no resentment. He seemed hardly aware of Lee's scrutiny. He sat mechanically, listless and indifferent. And Lee was satisfied with this proof of his theory.

"You are not yourself, Lord Edgemore," said the detective suddenly.

"No," muttered the earl. "I—I— What? What did you say?" He spoke with sudden harshness. "Not myself? Say, what are you trying to do?"

Nelson Lee did not answer. He was no longer baffled. And his thoughts automatically strayed to Skeets, for the one train of thought inevitably led to the other.

"What is the nature of your son's sudden illness?" he asked abruptly.

"Skeets' illness?" said the earl. "Yes; very mysterious. I am terribly worried about the boy, Mr. Lee. If I am abrupt in my manner I hope you will forgive me."

His voice was almost toneless, and Lee was not looking at him. The detective was searching the room, and even went to two or three of the heavier pieces of furniture and glanced behind them. Whilst thus occupied he passed one of the windows, and he saw the group of St. Frank's fellows who were approaching the wide terrace.

For a moment Lee frowned, and then his brow cleared.

"Some of the boys are coming," he said.

"Boys?" repeated Lord Edgemore. "Oh, you mean from St. Frank's? They are perfectly welcome— No, I don't want them here," he added suddenly. "Who told them to come? I won't be pestered with schoolboys!"

"They are your son's friends," said Lee gently. "Naturally, they are anxious about Skeets."

It was some moments before the earl replied.

"Yes, of course," he said, at length. "Let them come in, Mr. Lee. Surely. It is thoughtful of them to come along to inquire about my son."

It was Lee who made a move towards the hall, and the earl, after a moment of hesitation, followed.

Nipper and Travers and Handforth and Willy and the others were considerably startled when they saw the great door open—and when they saw Nelson Lee side by side with Lord Edgemore. They had been uncertain as to the wisdom of their approach, but now they halted in sheer bewilderment.

"Great Scott!" muttered Church, staring. "It's—it's the earl himself!"

"Here—safe and sound!" said Travers. "Well, well! Who'd have thought it?"

"You may come in, boys," called Nelson Lee from the doorway. "Lord Edgemore would like to have a word with you."

They hurried up the wide steps, eager and excited.

"It seems that the police have made a silly blunder," went on Lee. "Lord Edgemore and his son did not disappear at all; they merely changed their plans and came straight home, instead of going to London."

"My only hat!" ejaculated Handforth. "What a frost!"

"We're glad to hear it, sir," said Nipper quickly. "Is it really true that Skeets is unwell?"

They surrounded the two men in the hall, and Lord Edgemore was looking worried and uncertain.

"Yes; Skeets is in bed," he said. "I don't know what's the matter with him. The attack came suddenly. He was in perfect health during the voyage—right until we were about to enter the boat train, in fact. Then, suddenly, he developed this extraordinary malady."

"But what is it, sir?" asked Handforth eagerly. "'Flu, or biliousness, or measles, or something?"

"I don't know what it is," replied Lord Edgemore quietly. "I wish I did. He seems healthy enough in body; his pulse is sound, his appetite is good, and there is no sign of any fever. Yet the poor boy is like a stricken thing."

"May we go up to see him, sir?" asked Travers. "I'm one of his very special chums, you know."

"So am I, sir," said Handforth quickly. "We're all his chums. Perhaps we can cheer him up a bit."

Only for a moment did Lord Edgemore hesitate.

"Yes, certainly," he said. "It is good of you to be so thoughtful. I will take you up to Skeets at once."

**EXTRA LONG
COMPLETE
Detective-
Thriller**
appears in
**NEXT WEEK'S
GRAND ISSUE!**
Tell Your Pals!

CHAPTER 13.

The Patient!

NELSON LEE was both gratified and surprised. He had not expected that the request would be granted.

The boys, he could see, were not suspicious; if they noticed any difference in the earl's manner, they set it down to his worried state of mind. Nipper, perhaps, was the only one who kept looking at Lord Edgemore with keen, concentrated intentness.

"Something funny about this," he whispered, as they moved towards the stairs.

"Just what I was thinking," murmured Willy Handforth, who was next to him. "What about old Zinny?"

"That's what I mean," said Nipper softly. "Perhaps he cleared out after Skeets and his pater arrived. Yet that doesn't explain it."

"Not by long chalks," said Willy. "Better keep mum now, though."

He did not like the look of the footman; he noticed, too, that Nelson Lee was keeping a wary eye on the fellow. The footman himself had remained in the hall, and he was looking up the wide staircase with undisguised resentment.

The boys felt a subtle difference in the very air. Edgemore Castle was not the free and easy "liberty hall" as of old. There was a sort of tension in the air.

But Lord Edgemore readily opened one of the bedroom doors, and the guests were ushered in. The handsome bed in that noble apartment was occupied by a solitary figure.

"Hallo, Skeets, old son!" murmured Travers, approaching.

Skeets, usually so cheery, made no answer. He was lying comfortably and easily, and the boys were gratified to see that he was looking disgustingly healthy. He was bronzed from his recent sea trip, and it would have been difficult to imagine a more robust youngster.

But there was something startlingly peculiar about his eyes. Their expression was dull, flat, characterless. He looked from Travers to Potts and from Potts to Nipper, and then the others. But his expression did not change. They might have been strangers to him.

"What's—what's wrong with him?" whispered Handforth uneasily.

"Skeets!" said Jimmy Potts, bending over the bed. "Skeets, old man!"

But the young Viscount Bellton looked at Jimmy as though he had never seen him before. His lips moved, and the boys heard an unintelligible murmur. But that was all.

"Don't press him," said Lord Edgemore. "He's been like that since last night—since it happened. He scarcely knows me, even."

"How awful!" whispered McClure,

"It's—it's so rummy," said Handforth, troubled. "I mean, he looks so jolly healthy. Yet he's in a sort of—of trance!"

"You seem to have selected the right word," said Nelson Lee, nodding. "Yes, a sort of trance."

"I think it must have been a stroke," said Lord Edgemore. "At first he came over dizzy, and it was that which prompted me to bring him straight home. But soon after arriving here the poor boy developed this extraordinary condition. I cannot get him to answer any questions. He just lays there helpless. Yet, when food is brought to him, he eats with all his normal appetite."

"It—it must be something to do with his brain," said Handforth in an awed voice. "Poor old Skeets! It's terrible to see him like that. Haven't you had a doctor to see him, sir?" he added, turning to the earl.

"I am afraid our local doctor would be baffled," replied Lord Edgemore. "I have sent for a great West End specialist, and he will be down this afternoon."

"A specialist!" said Lee sharply.

He was more alert than ever. The boys, however, thought they could understand Lord Edgemore's strange behaviour. With Skeets in this condition the father was naturally worried stiff.

"I think we had better go down," said Lee. "Come, boys. There is nothing to be gained by remaining here. We can only hope that poor Skeets will make a rapid and satisfactory recovery."

They went downstairs, Nelson Lee and Lord Edgemore leading the way.

"I am glad to hear that you have sent for a prominent London doctor," remarked Lee. "One glance at Skeets convinces me that our local medicos would be unable to prescribe the correct treatment."

"That is what I thought, too," said Lord Edgemore. "The man who is coming is a great brain specialist."

"May I be permitted to know his name?"

The earl did not answer; it seemed that he had not heard the question.

"Who's the doctor you've sent for, sir?" asked Jimmy Potts eagerly.

Lord Edgemore swung round upon him; they had just reached the hall.

"Don't bother me," he said impatiently. "You wouldn't know, if I told you. He is an eminent specialist, and if he cannot discover the nature of my son's malady, no man can. Let that be sufficient."

"Sorry, sir," muttered Jimmy

Lee himself did not pursue the subject.

"I wonder if you have noticed anything different about the castle?" he said, going off on another tack. "Were you disturbed at all during the night, Lord Edgemore?"

"Disturbed?" repeated his lordship dully. "I don't understand what you mean."

"Did you see any mysterious figures? Did you hear any unusual noises?"

"Of course not," said the earl, with sudden impatience. "The castle is the same as it always was. What are you driving at, Mr. Lee?"

"Nothing," replied Lee. "It doesn't matter."

Lord Edgemore held out his hand, and it was an indication that the visit was at an end. Lee took the hand, and was impressed by its listlessness. For it was characteristic of the earl that his handshake was firm and even powerful.

"Good-bye, Mr. Lee. Good-bye, boys," said his lordship. "I thank you for coming, but you will not misunderstand me when I tell you that I prefer to be alone. In my present state of mind I am, I am afraid, an indifferent host."

He turned abruptly from the door, and walked back to the library. And Nelson Lee and the boys made their exit, and the heavy door closed with an unmistakable thud, operated by the resentful footman.

And there had been something ominous in the sound of that thudding door.

CHAPTER 14.

Professor Zingrave's Fury!

LORD EDGEMORE having returned to the library, shut the door and sat down in one of the easy chairs before the fire.

He did all this mechanically, as though impelled by some unseen, hidden force.

He sat there motionless, and now there was a startling similarity in his condition to that of Skeets.

A minute passed—two minutes—three minutes.

And then, with a little click, the door of an adjoining room opened. It was a small study, and there was a communicating door between this apartment and the library.

Professor Cyrus Zingrave entered; and his usually immobile face was distorted with well-nigh uncontrollable fury.

"Lee!" he snarled passionately. "Lee again! A thousand curses on the interfering dog's head!"

He had reached the fireplace by now, and he paced up and down on the rich hearthrug. Lord Edgemore, sitting so near, took scarcely any notice of him.

"You!" went on Zingrave, glaring at the earl. "By Heaven! I managed you all right—but it was an appalling strain. How did Lee escape?" he went on harshly. "Answer me that, you poor thing! How did Lee escape?"

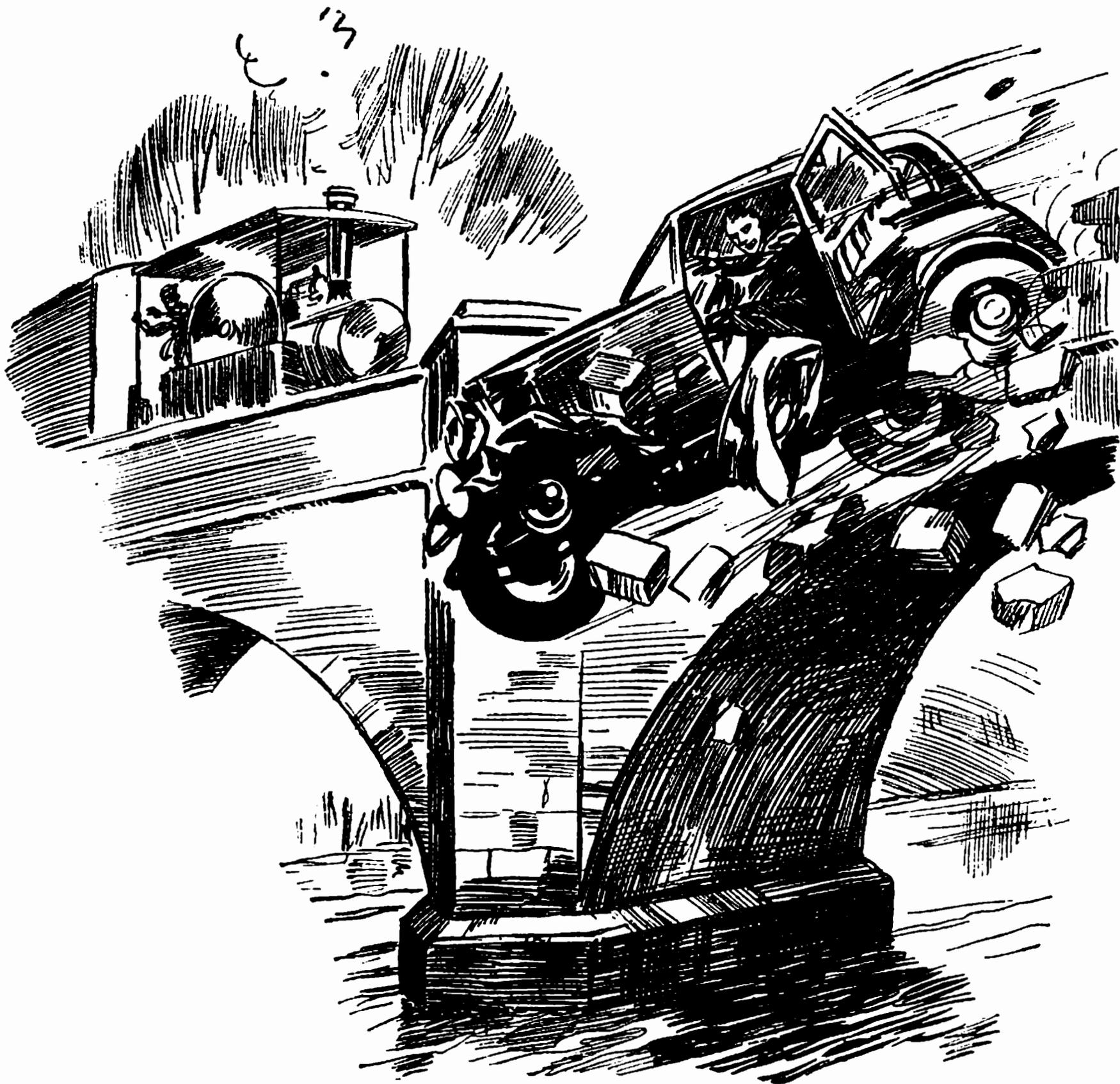
The professor was almost beside himself.

Nelson Lee's visit had been as unexpected and as shattering as a bombshell. Zingrave had only just managed to cope with the situation. But he had coped with it, and this was the only satisfaction he could obtain.

He had heard the dull report of the explosion; he had congratulated himself upon the fact that Nelson Lee, at last, was no more. Then Lee, as cool as ever, utterly unscathed, had turned up!

There was something uncanny about it. No matter how Zingrave plotted to end Nelson Lee's life, the detective still lived. He seemed to bear a charmed existence.

And this time the professor had assured himself that there could be no possible miscarriage.



Zingrave saw the blocked roadway—knew he could not stop the car; and, in a desperate bid for freedom, crashed straight through the parapet of the bridge, into the swirling river below!

He had expected Lee to come to Edgemore Castle in answer to that note; he had arranged the ambush.

There came a tap at the door, and Zingrave, pulling himself together, turned.

"Come in!" he said in a calmer tone.

It was the footman who entered.

"All clear, Chief," he said hoarsely. "They've gone."

"I know they've gone, you fool," retorted Zingrave. "Is that all you came to tell me?"

The man cast an uneasy glance at Lord Edgemore.

"Don't worry about him, Gull," said the professor impatiently. "He scarcely knows what we are saying—and he is not taking the slightest interest. Where's that fool, Blane? Hasn't he returned yet?"

The footman looked frightened.

"I came to tell you about him, Chief," he said nervously, "Number Sixteen rang up

from the village. The call came through to the other telephone——"

"Well?" snapped Zingrave.

"Blane's arrested, Chief," blurted out Gull.

"Arrested!"

"Yes, Chief—and so is Number Twenty. It seems that Number Twenty is injured, too—they took him to Bannington in an ambulance."

"Get out!" snarled Zingrave. "This is Lee's work!"

"Hadn't we better be moving on, Chief?" asked Gull feverishly. "We'll have the police here next——"

"Don't be a bigger blockhead than you can help," interjected the professor curtly. "The police cannot connect that affair with Edgemore Castle. If the police do come, Lord Edgemore will see them, and he will give a satisfactory explanation about Blane. Now get out!"

Gull was only too glad to escape. He had seen the Green Triangle's chief in angry moods before, but never had he seen him so infuriated as now.

For some time Professor Zingrave paced up and down like a madman. His rage against Nelson Lee was terrifying to witness.

Again Lee! Blane and Number Twenty arrested—and all because of Nelson Lee! Every time, at every turn, Nelson Lee scored!

"But I'll get him!" panted Zingrave, his eyes burning. "He can't escape the vengeance of the League much longer! I'll get him—I'll get him—I'll get him!"

He spoke aloud in a paroxysm of fury, and he glared at the unheeding Lord Edgemore.

There was, indeed, something terrible in the earl's indifference to Zingrave's outburst. Yet the explanation was simple enough.

Lord Edgemore was hypnotised!

The previous night Zingrave had pitted his will against the earl's, and that bluff, honest man had been utterly unable to cope with the master-criminal's evil, uncanny force.

He had succumbed at last, and now he was completely under the sway of Professor Cyrus Zingrave's will.

This, too, was the explanation of Skeets' "malady."

The boy was, in reality, perfectly healthy; only his will-power had been taken from him. He was hypnotised, too—he was held tightly in that grim thralldom.

CHAPTER 15.

The Plan of Campaign!

PROFESSOR ZINGRAVE knew only too well why Nelson Lee had called. Lee was suspicious!

And here the rascally professor was at a disadvantage. For he did not know that Nelson Lee and the boys had discovered—even as early as the previous night—that he, Zingrave, was at the castle. Thinking things over, he reassured himself. Suspicious as Nelson Lee was he had discovered nothing of importance during his visit.

"He wanted to know the name of the specialist, did he?" muttered Zingrave, fixing his burning gaze upon Lord Edgemore. "Do you hear that, you dummy? He wanted to know the name of the specialist. And you wouldn't tell him, would you? Of course you wouldn't! How could you? You don't even know the name."

It was true. Zingrave, by terrific mental concentration, had controlled Lord Edgemore's speech. And although the earl appeared normal, except for a certain peculiarity of manner, he was really nothing more or less than a mouthpiece for Zingrave. He had been told that a great specialist was coming down to see Skeets, and in his bemused mental condition he was grateful.

For he actually believed that Skeets was genuinely ill.

"Yes, my charming host, we'll do the thing properly," said Zingrave mockingly. "Dr. Marlby Gower is a great man; a brilliant man. I haven't the slightest doubt that he will

be able to diagnose the poor boy's malady—and prescribe for it."

An evil light was in Zingrave's eyes now.

"The boy is a nuisance," he went on, as though speaking to himself. "Yes, I am glad I sent for Dr. Gower. The boy is an excuse for those other boys to come to the castle making inquiries. That must be stopped.

"Furthermore, it will be difficult enough to keep you under control, Lord Edgemore, without having to bother with your son. You are the one I want!"

Lord Edgemore looked at him listlessly.

"The boy?" he said questioningly. "I can't remember. Everything is so vague."

Zingrave bent over him, and stared unwinkingly into his eyes; a hard, concentrated stare. And gradually the earl slipped back into his former condition.

"The boy must go," muttered Zingrave. "It will take me all my time to hold you in your place."

Calming down, the professor was not so alarmed over Nelson Lee's visit. After all, Lee had discovered nothing. On the contrary, he had found Lord Edgemore in residence, and if he had had any suspicions, they were allayed.

Whilst Lord Edgemore was Zingrave's slave—as he was now—there could be no danger.

There was no reason why Zingrave should not remain here for months—until the police were definitely and positively satisfied that he was really dead. He would have all the comforts of the castle, complete freedom within its walls, and the best of living.

There were only a few servants, and these were all Green Triangle men. They had been carefully selected. The castle was a veritable fortress, too. And after nightfall it could be bolted and barred so securely that even Nelson Lee, with all his ingenuity, could not enter.

"Yes, I am safe!" muttered Zingrave gloatingly.

There was another cause for his satisfaction. He had, within his reach, the means of acquiring much wealth for the future needs of his criminal confederation. Lord Edgemore's wealth!

From the first, Zingrave had designed to secure the Edgemore treasure for his own purposes. Nelson Lee had foiled him. But Nelson Lee would not do it again!

For Zingrave, with his usual audacity, had decided to secure that treasure yet!

But he would use different methods now.

During the coming weeks he would play a slow and deliberate game. Lord Edgemore would do everything he was told. Insidiously, and in such a way that no suspicions would be aroused, the earl's fortune would be diverted into other channels. Stocks would be taken out of one broker's hands and placed into another's. Bonds would be quietly transferred. Zingrave had it all mapped out. And later, when the right moment came, Lord Edgemore would awaken from his hypnotic trance to find himself a beggar. And so cunningly would his fortune have been dissipated that no trace of it would be left.

That, in a nutshell, was Professor Zingrave's daring plan.

Thus, he had had a double reason for seeking refuge under this historic roof. Not only was

the castle a haven of refuge, but he would gain a fortune through his enterprise.

As for the boy—well, the boy was not wanted, and he would have to go.

And Professor Zingrave's method of dealing with people he did not want was not pleasant.

CHAPTER 16.

Nelson Lee's Suspicions!

AS Nelson Lee walked back to St. Frank's with the juniors, he was in a thoughtful mood.

And his thoughts revolved, mostly, round that reference to a London specialist.

And there was every reason for the detective's deep suspicions.

"Poor old Skeets!" Handforth was saying. "Must be some sort of brain disease. I suppose."

"An evil brain disease, Handforth," said Leo bluntly.

"What do you mean, sir—evil?"

"I mean just what I say."

"Well, there's a specialist coming down this afternoon——"

"By whose instructions?" interrupted Lee, significantly.

"Eh? What—what do you mean, sir?"

"I can see what the gov'nor means," said Nipper. "Are you chaps all stupid?"

Lee looked at him hard.

"Then you have guessed, Nipper?" he asked.

"I think so, gov'nor."

"Guessed what?" asked Handforth, in bewilderment. "I say, hadn't we better go easy, sir? I mean, there may be another attempt on your life——"

"That's not likely this morning, Handforth," said Lee. "But don't worry; I am keeping a sharp watch."

"I believe that Zingrave is somehow responsible for Skeets' condition," said Nipper slowly.

"Think it out, you chaps. Skeets and his pater didn't come to the castle because they had suddenly changed their plans—because Skeet was taken ill. Zingrave is mixed up in it somehow—but I can't quite figure out how. And it's my belief that Skeets has been drugged in some way——"

"You're wrong, Nipper," said Nelson Lee.

He decided, then and there, to take these boys into his confidence. They knew so much that it would be hardly fair to keep them in the dark. And this was a good opportunity, for they were walking across the open parkland, and there was no possibility of being overheard by enemy ears.

"Walk more slowly, boys," said Nelson Lee. "I have something to tell you. You noticed that Lord Edgemore was cold and abrupt in his manner, didn't you?"

"Yes, sir," they chorussed.

"I will tell you why," continued Lee. "Lord Edgemore, when we saw him, was hypnotised."

"What?"

"Great Scott!"

"So—so that's the explanation?"

"He is hypnotised—by Zingrave," said Lee, in a hard voice. "That story he told me about Skeets being taken ill was a false story—

inspired by the brain that controlled him. Actually, Lord Edgemore and his son were kidnapped; just as the police reported. But they were brought to the castle, where, as we know, Zingrave was waiting. His first task was to get them both in his power—mentally."

"It—it sounds fantastic, sir," said Handforth huskily.

"It sounds fantastic because it is fantastic," agreed Lee. "I doubt if there is another man who could have accomplished this evil thing. Zingrave is one of the most brilliant men who ever arrayed his genius against the law. He might have been one of the world's greatest scientists; but somewhere in his brain there is a kink. He has deliberately chosen to make himself an enemy of society. But don't let us stray from the point. Zingrave, I say, kidnapped Skeets and his father, and had them brought to the castle."

"You mean that Skeets isn't drugged at all—but simply hypnotised?" asked Nipper, breathlessly.

"I am certain of it," replied Lee. "Think of the possibilities! His lordship is openly in residence, and but for a lucky chance none of us would have known that Zingrave was there. Skeets' 'illness' is so obscure that no doctor could have diagnosed it. And that brings us to the question of the specialist."

He spoke gravely.

"But isn't it a good thing the specialist is coming down, sir?" asked Handforth.

"My dear boy, you don't seem to realise the hideous possibilities," said Lee, almost impatiently. "Lord Edgemore could not even tell us the name of the specialist—because he did not know it. Can't you understand? The specialist is not being brought down by Lord Edgemore—but by Professor Zingrave!"

"Phew!" whistled Handforth.

"And why?" continued Lee. "Why should Zingrave bring a man down from London? It may be that his only idea is to increase the atmosphere of general respectability. The visit of a great Harley Street doctor would naturally be talked about, and he could hardly arrive at the castle and depart without being seen by a good many outsiders. In that way, Lord Edgemore's decision to get along without local medical aid would be logical."

"But I suspect there is more in it than that."

"You mean, gov'nor, that this specialist will be a fake—a Green Triangle man in disguise?" asked Nipper. "By Jove! I'm beginning to see!"

"I don't even mean that," said Lee slowly. "Zingrave would not make such a blunder. He would call in a real doctor."

"And then hypnotise him, too!" gasped Handforth. "By Jove! And make him poison Skeets, or something!"

Lee gave him a sharp look.

"You are nearer to it than the others, Handforth," he said quietly. "Frankly, I am gravely afraid for that boy. The earl is necessary—he must be kept at the castle at all costs. But the boy is only a nuisance. And Zingrave is ruthless."

"We've got to do something to save him, sir!" said Travers. "For the love of Samson!"

I never dreamed that the situation was as serious as that."

"I don't think there is any immediate danger," said Lee. "I am trusting you boys to keep this matter entirely to yourselves. Skeets' very life may depend upon your discretion. As I said once before, we must go warily."

"You mean, that if we took drastic action, it might lead to something bad, sir?"

"It might cause the death of Skeets—and the death of Lord Edgemore, too," replied Lee. "I am trusting you, boys—and you must not fail me."

"But can't we do something, Mr. Lee?" asked Handforth eagerly. "I mean, think of those two, helpless in the castle, in the power of those crooks! Oh, my only hat!"

"What you must do, Handforth, is to keep cool," retorted Nelson Lee. "I am afraid there is no way in which you boys can help immediately. But, make no mistake, Lord Edgemore and his son will be saved."

And there was a world of determination in the great detective's voice.

CHAPTER 17.

The Man from London!

DR. MARLBY GOWER, of Wimpole Street, did not much resemble the popular conception of a West End specialist.

He was sitting, now, in his limousine, driving towards Edgemore Castle—and he did not look

any too pleased about it, either. There was, in fact, an expression of great uneasiness in his watery, pale-blue eyes.

With Dr. Gower, it was a case of "physician, heal thyself." For he was certainly not a hale and robust man. Inclined to stoutness, he was flabby, his face was red and blotchy, his bulbous nose being particularly arrogant in colour.

Years ago, during the early days of his Wimpole Street practice, he had been one of the smartest men in London. Now he was not so particular. His clothes were good, but they were ill-cared-for; his linen was not as clean as it might have been.

He was nervous. He had been worrying ever since the car had left London. There had been no mistaking the origin of the call which had brought him into the country. And Dr. Marlby Gower had no desire to reopen an acquaintanceship which he had long since believed to be dead—and forgotten for ever. But the call had come—and he knew better than to disobey.

Dr. Gower's practice, in the main, was an honest one. He had quite a few genuine patients. He was a brain specialist—and a brilliant man, too. But there were some services he performed which could not bear the light of day. There were people in the private lunatic asylums of England who would never have been there but for the services of Dr. Gower. And from the wealthy relatives of these unfortunates the crooked specialist exacted liberal hush money.

The car drove into Edgemore Park, and



Jokes from readers wanted for this feature! If you know a good rib-tickler, send it along now. Pocket wallets and penknives and books are awarded each week to the senders of the best jokes. Address your jokes to "Smilers," Nelson Lee Library, 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4.

Merciful Judge: "Your sentence, my man, is to be suspended—"

Thief (interrupting): "Gosh, Judge, if I'd 'ave known that pinching chickens was an 'anging matter, I wouldn't 'ave gone near that 'edge for worlds."

(A pocket wallet to E. J. Turl, 52, Lisbourne Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.)

First Navy: "Look at poor old Bill. 'Is sight's so bad 'o's working himself to death."

Second Navy: "Wot's 'is sight got to do with it?"

First ditto: "W'y, poor fellow, 'e can't see when the boss ain't looking at 'im, so 'e as to keep on working all the time."

(L. Berger, 214, Croyland Road, Lower Edmon- ton, N.9. A penknife.)

"What are you crying for, Willie?"

"Sister's stolen my orange and means to keep it."

"How do you know she means to keep it?"

"She's eaten it!"

(R. Pascoe, 4, Woodway Street, Chud- leigh, Newton Abbot, Devon. A penknife.)

Shopkeeper: "Were there any orders while I was out?"

New Assistant: "Yes sir. Two men ordered me to put up my hands while they took the cash register."

(C. Plume, Children's Ward, War Memorial Hospital, Chase Side, Enfield, Middx. A grand book.)

Doctor: "Have you tried gargling with salt and water?"

Old Salt: "I should think I have. I've been shipwrecked five times."

(R. Taylor, 1, Lister Cottages, Dagger Lane, Elstree, Herts. A grand book.)

Tramp: "Please, mum, will you lend me a cake of soap?"

Lady: "Certainly. But what do you want it for?"

Tramp: "My pal's got the hiccups, and I want to give him a shock!"

(F. L. Yearley, 183, Moselle Avenue, Wood Green, London, N. A pocket wallet.)

presently it pulled up on the terrace, before the great steps leading up to the imposing door. The afternoon sun was bright, and the castle gardens were looking gay, with the spring flowers blossoming in their hundreds.

"Huh! So this is the place?" grunted the doctor. "You'd better wait, Parsons."

"Very good, sir," said the chauffeur, as he opened the door.

Dr. Gower mounted the steps and it was unnecessary for him to ring the bell, for the door opened, revealing Gull, the footman.

"You are Dr. Marlby Gower, sir?" he asked respectfully.

The visitor looked at him through his gold-rimmed glasses.

"Yes," he said.

"His lordship is expecting you, sir," said Gull. "Will you please follow me, sir?"

Bag in hand, Dr. Gower walked across the great hall. He was looking about him inquisitively—suspiciously. Things were not quite as he had expected.

"Dr. Marlby Gower," announced the footman, throwing open a door, and standing aside.

The specialist walked in—and found himself facing, not the Earl of Edgemore, but Professor Cyrus Zingrave. They were in the library, and the Earl, at that moment, was in a hypnotic sleep in the little study, adjoining.

"You are late, Gower," said Zingrave, briefly.

Dr. Marlby Gower was staring at him in consternation.

"Is this wise?" he asked nervously. "Good heavens, man, anybody might think you owned

the place! Aren't you afraid of the police? How on earth——"

"You never were a quick thinker, Gower," interrupted Zingrave, almost contemptuously. "Do you think I let everybody know that I am here? H'm!" He was eyeing the doctor with disfavour. "I haven't seen you since the old days. How many years ago is that? You haven't improved, Gower."

"We all grow old," muttered the doctor, uneasily shifting his gaze—as though he had read Zingrave's thoughts.

"The change in you, my friend, is not occasioned by the advance of years," said Zingrave bluntly. "You always were a fool with the drink, weren't you? How often did I warn you? You look a bigger drunkard than ever."

The words stung, for seldom had Dr. Gower been spoken to as bluntly as that.

"Are you the one to talk to me about drink?" he asked hotly. "If I hadn't been drunk that night, years ago, I would never have joined your infernal League!"

"And you are still a member of that infernal League," said Zingrave softly.

"Yes, and I suppose I must obey orders without question?" asked the doctor, his voice rising shrill. "I must do just what I'm told, eh? If I don't, I'm a traitor! You don't think I came here willingly, do you? I was hoping that I had finished with all this——"

"Don't be a bigger fool than you can help, Gower," broke in Zingrave. "I'll put money in your pocket. You haven't lost your love for money, have you?"

Tommy: "Let's have a competition to see who can pull the funniest face."

Johnny: "No fear. It wouldn't be fair. Look at the start you've got."

(A. Coverey, 29, Mayhill Road, Charlton, S.E.7. A penknife.)

Bill: "I say, Mike, I have an uncle who sleeps with his feet out of the window, because he's so tall."

Mike: "That's nothing. My uncle's so tall that he has to climb up a ladder to put his hat on."

(E. Green, 3, Holme Bank East, Ashgate Road, Chesterfield. A grand book.)

Lady (to driver of steam-roller): "Driver did you see a half pound of butter down the road? I think I must have dropped it."

Driver (scratching his head): "Come to think of it, mum, I did feel a bit of a bump!"

(W. Pudney, 15, Leamington Road, Southend-on-sea, Essex. A pocket wallet.)

Friendly Warder: "A musician, were you. Well, I'm afraid I won't be able to give you any comfort in musical ways."

Convict: "If you give me a file, sir, I think I could get through a few bars myself."

(J. Finegan, North Park, Donervile, Co. Cork. A grand Prize.)

When William attained majority, his father remarked:

"Well, Bill, now you are 21, perhaps you will do a little to help your old Dad?"

"Certainly," said Bill. "What could I do?"

"Well," came the astonishing reply, "you could pay off the last two instalments of your perambulator!"

(M. Vernon, "Ellerslea," Park Avenue, Sale, Cheshire. A pocket wallet.)

Bert: "My father's so absent-minded that he forgot to go to work the other morning."

Bob: "My father was out yesterday when he thought he had left his watch at home, and he took it out of his pocket to see if he had got time to run back home and fetch it!"

(B. L. Hughes, 10, Council Houses, Sawtry, Nr. Peterborough. A grand book.)

Teacher: "So you admit this boy was thrown into the pond."

Willie: "Yes, sir."

Teacher: "And what part did you take in it?"

Willie: "The left leg, sir."

(R. Litchfield, 2, Westfields Street, Higham Terrace, Northants. A penknife.)

Dr. Gower, breathing hard, calmed down. Hundreds of times, during the past few years, he had prayed—if he was capable of praying—that he would never have anything further to do with the League of the Green Triangle. He had been a brilliant doctor in his young days, and he had “gone wrong” from that fatal date when he had been mad enough to throw in his lot with Zingrave. He had even been an Inner Councillor—and he supposed he was still one. When the summons had come he had not sufficient courage to ignore it.

“Well, we won’t argue,” he said gruffly. “What do you want me to do?”

“That’s better,” said Zingrave. “Your visit here, Gower, is purely a professional one. You have come openly, and there is not the slightest necessity for any secrecy. There is a genuine patient for you in this house, and you had better come up and see him at once.”

“What’s the trouble—brain disorder?”

“You’ll see when you examine him,” replied Zingrave. “Don’t be alarmed—there are only a few servants, and they are all my own men.”

“But what of Lord Edgemore?”

“He means nothing in this castle,” replied the professor. “I am the master here—he is the slave.”

Dr. Marlby Gower looked at him strangely.

“I may have changed, Zingrave—but you haven’t,” he muttered. “The same cold, devilish strength! Prison hasn’t altered you a bit—”

“That will do,” said Zingrave sharply. “Only rash men remind me of prison.”

They went upstairs, and Dr. Gower was silent.

CHAPTER 18.

The Operation!

“EXTRAORDINARY! I must confess I have never seen anything like it.”

The brain specialist, bending over Skeets’ bed, had finished his brief examination. He had looked into Skeets’ eyes, he had lifted the eyelids, he had felt the boy’s pulse, and had taken his temperature.

“There is no fever,” he went on. “I have never seen a case quite so puzzling—”

“You are not so clever, Gower,” said Zingrave contemptuously.

His tone stung the visitor.

“What do you mean?” asked Gower, with quick anger.

“You specialists have your own little ruts,” replied Zingrave. “If this were an ordinary case of brain disorder, you would recognise it at once. But it’s outside your own particular, narrow province. I wondered if you would find out what was wrong with the boy. I’ll tell you. There is nothing wrong with him.”

“Nothing?” repeated Dr. Gower. “Do you think I don’t know—”

“He is in perfectly normal health,” said Zingrave. “By staring into his eyes, and making a few passes, I could restore him within a few minutes.”

“By heaven!” gasped the doctor. “You—you mean that he is in a hypnotic trance?”

“Just that, and nothing more.”

“Then, why have you brought me here?” demanded Dr. Gower, with justifiable wrath. “You can cure him better than I! You hypnotised him, didn’t you? You’re an uncanny devil, Zingrave! I’ve always scoffed at hypnotism—”

“I don’t want this boy to be cured,” broke in Zingrave, speaking deliberately. “I’ve brought you down here for one purpose, Gower. You are to kill him.”

The blotchy-faced specialist jumped.

“Kill him?” he repeated hoarsely.

“It is impossible to send him away, and he is a nuisance,” said Zingrave. “The funeral will be very quiet; he will be buried in the Edgemore vaults. His father will be the only mourner, and—”

“But you are not serious?” asked Dr. Gower, his watery eyes full of horror.

“Surely, my dear Gower, you are not becoming squeamish in your old age?” asked Zingrave mockingly. “I remember one man, several years ago, who died whilst under your treatment. You have done much worse than this. There are some things a great deal more hideous than death. How many unfortunate people, in so-called nursing homes, are dragging out their hopeless existence because of your—”

“No, no,” muttered Dr. Gower huskily. “Why change the subject? You say that you want this boy—killed? How?”

“We need not take his father’s feelings into consideration,” replied Zingrave. “Lord Edgemore, being in my power, will accept the boy’s death calmly. It is the outside people we must think of. Several of the youngster’s school-fellows came to see him, and they were all grieved. They think that he is suffering from some unknown brain malady. When, therefore, he takes a turn for the worse, no suspicious will be aroused.”

“But another doctor must be called in—”

“Have you lost your nerve, Gower?” interrupted Zingrave impatiently. “You know what to do with this boy.”

“Yes, yes—all right,” muttered the other. “I can do it—I can give him an injection that will leave no trace.”

“When will he die?”

“He will linger for two days, perhaps—and then, when the brain is fully effected, he will have a paroxysm resembling a fit. That will be the end.”

“And no doctor will be able to detect foul play?”

“Nothing will be discovered, even if they hold a post-mortem,” replied Dr. Gower confidently. “His death will apparently be from natural causes. Paralysis of the brain. There will be no trouble with the certificate.”

“Exactly,” said Zingrave, nodding. “Well, you can proceed.”

“But there is one thing I want to know,” said Dr. Gower, staring at his companion. “You could have done this thing just as well as Zingrave. Why are you putting it on my shoulders?”

Zingrave laughed.

“You forget that I am not supposed to be here,” he replied. “It was Lord Edgemore who sent for you; a doctor of some kind had to

attend to the boy. And if there should be any query as to his death—if there should be any police inquiries—you will be responsible.”

“I thought as much,” said Dr. Gower hoarsely. “If there’s trouble over this, I’m to suffer, eh?”

“Have you so little faith, then, in your own abilities?”

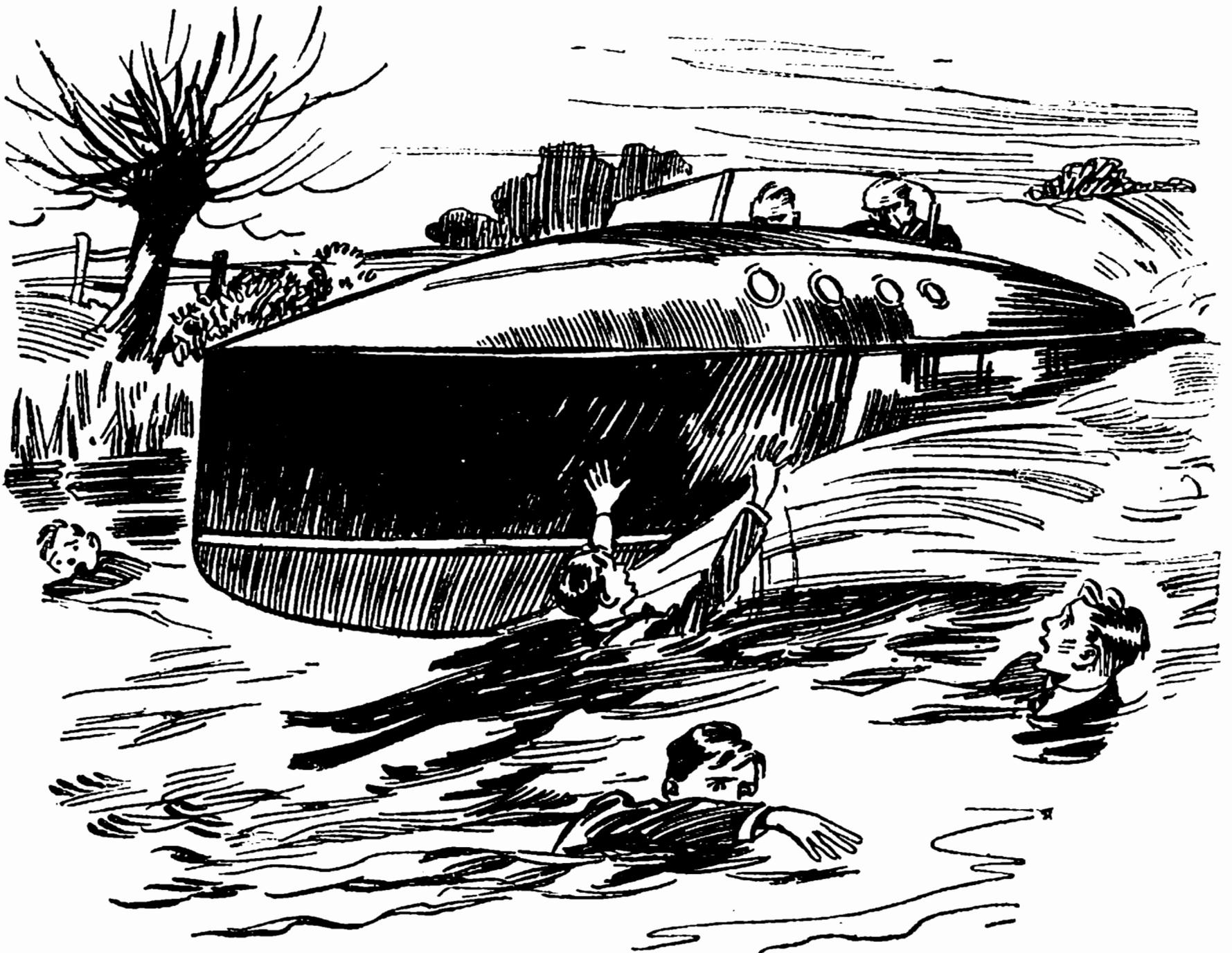
“All right—I’ll show you whether I can do it or not,” muttered Dr. Gower. “What’s the good of jibbing, anyway? You know too much about me—and I’m well aware of your threats,

“You fiend!” he breathed. “What kind of a mind have you that you should want that unfortunate father to witness something which is virtually the killing of his own son?”

He shivered slightly, and then, opening his bag, he prepared for the “operation.” By the time he was ready, Professor Zingrave had returned, bringing with him Lord Edgemore.

“This is Dr. Gower, a specialist from London,” said Zingrave pleasantly. “He tells me that he can effect a simple cure.”

“I am glad,” said the earl simply.



With an ear-splitting roar the mystery craft of the Green Triangle Gang cut through the water straight at the group of swimming juniors. “Look out!” bellowed Handforth. “It’s Zingrave’s boat—he’s escaping!”

although you have not uttered them. If I refuse, the police will get certain information about me, eh?”

“I did not say that,” replied Zingrave.

“I’ll do this thing—because I’m forced to,” said the specialist. “But when I’ve done it, I want to go. Do you understand? You can’t keep me here—”

“Your society is not so charming that I should urge you to remain,” said Zingrave bluntly. “Wait! Prepare the necessary instruments, and I will fetch Lord Edgemore. It is a whim of mine that the father should see this simple operation.”

He went out of the room, and the other man glared at the closed door.

His mental condition was peculiar. Although under Zingrave’s hypnotic spell, he was yet capable of thinking, to a certain degree, for himself. In a vague sort of way he knew that Skeets was desperately ill; he understood that this stranger was a great doctor from London. He accepted Zingrave’s presence quite naturally.

“Why, yes, of course, Lord Edgemore,” said Dr. Gower, speaking with forced heartiness, “we’ll soon have the boy right.”

“Just a simple injection,” said Zingrave, smiling.

“And that will cure him?”

“Not immediately,” said Dr. Gower, with a quick glance at Zingrave—a glance which was full of angry reproach. “But it will be the beginning.”

"We shall be most interested to see just what you do, Dr. Gower," said Zingrave, in that silky voice of his.

Dr. Gower's hand almost faltered as he approached the bed. Professor Zingrave's unutterable callousness sickened him. But he was too deeply involved in the affairs of the Green Triangle to back out.

So there, in front of Lord Edgemore's very eyes, the fateful injection was made.

CHAPTER 19.

Friends in Need!

"I'M going over," said Vivian Travers firmly.

"But, my dear chap——"

"It's no good objecting, Jimmy," interrupted Travers. "Something in my bones tells me that poor old Skeets is in awful danger this afternoon."

"I feel that way, too," admitted Jimmy Potts huskily. "But what can we do? You know what Mr. Lee said."

"Sometimes," replied Travers, "it isn't wise to obey orders too strictly. I think we can be fairly certain that Mr. Lee is on the job. But that's no reason why we shouldn't go over to Edgemore Castle ourselves."

Afternoon lessons were just over, and Travers and Potts—Skeets' own particular chums—were intensely worried. They could not expect Tony Cresswell to share their feelings; for Tony was comparatively a new boy, and he had never really known Skeets. But he was just as eager as his study mates to go to the castle.

Skeets had originally shared Study H with Travers and Potts, and Cresswell had only gone into that study because Skeets had been away on holiday. Now that Skeets was back, Tony had been talking, in fact, of shifting into Study G, with De Valerie and Somerton. He felt rather uncomfortable about it—not that there seemed any likelihood of Skeets' immediate return to the school.

They were in Study H now, and they suddenly heard footsteps in the corridor. The door opened and Nipper hurried in, accompanied by Tregellis-West and Watson. They were all looking flushed.

"Just come from the Head's house," explained Nipper after he had closed the door. "The gov'nor isn't there."

"I didn't expect he would be," said Travers. "I'll bet he's on the trail."

"That's just it," said Nipper, frowning. "If we go along to Edgemore Castle we might butt into something—and spoil the gov'nor's plans."

"I don't see how we can," put in Tommy Watson. "There's nothing to prevent us going to the castle openly and asking how Skeets is getting on. We're not supposed to know that there's anything squiffy going on. It'll look natural enough."

"I'm thinking of that specialist," said Travers slowly. "He was going to see Skeets this afternoon, wasn't he? We might be in time to get a word with him, and perhaps he'll be able to tell us just what the trouble is."

"But who is this specialist?" asked Nipper.

"We shall find out when we get there."

"I don't mean that," said Nipper. "His name doesn't matter. You seem to forget that he was sent for by Zingrave, not by Skeets' pater. That's the tricky part of it. Is he genuine, or is he a part of the plot? I tell you, we've got to be wary."

There was another tramp of feet in the corridor, and Handforth & Co. charged in.

"Aren't you chaps coming?" demanded Handforth, staring round.

"Shut that door, you ass!" said Nipper.

"What's the idea of wasting time like this?" demanded Handforth, as he shut the door. "Didn't we have enough trouble in the classroom this afternoon? Old Crowell was down on us like a cartload of bricks for inattention. But how the dickens could we work, knowing that poor old Skeets is in danger?"

"I'm going, anyway," said Travers decisively.

"Well, look here, let's be cautious," said Nipper. "It might be as well to go over on our motor-bikes, so that we shall make a good deal of noise."

"That doesn't sound very sensible," said Handforth.

"My idea is this," explained Nipper. "If we're butting into any of the gov'nor's secret plans he'll hear us coming, and he'll be able to give us a warning or something. See? I've got an idea that he's at the castle, watching. He may be wearing a disguise of some kind; he may be got up as a tramp, or a gamekeeper, or something of that sort. He's up to all those dodges."

"Yes, that's a good idea to use the motor-bikes," said Jimmy Potts eagerly. "We can go along openly, of course, and it'll look all the more natural for us to go on our jiggers."

"We can go very slowly after we get into the drive," said Nipper. "Then, if the gov'nor is somewhere about, he'll hear us and see us. And he'll have time to warn us off if he doesn't want us there. We'll keep our eyes open, and if we see nothing unusual we'll ride straight up to the front door and ask to see Skeets."

"It's ten to one we'll be sent away," said Church.

They all knew this, but it did not alter their decision. They had an irresistible urge to go to the castle, if only to be near in case there was some fresh excitement.

Little did they realise, as they set out some minutes later, how exciting that visit of theirs was really to be!

CHAPTER 20.

The Bombshell!

THE tiny injection had been made in silence, and Lord Edgemore and Professor Zingrave stood watching at the foot of the bed. Only Dr. Marlby Gower's heavy breathing broke the stillness as he replaced his little instrument into its plush-lined case.

"It is done!" he muttered suddenly.

He was about to say something else, when Zingrave held up a warning hand. His quick ears had detected soft footsteps out in the

"Lee can do nothing. Whatever he suspects, he is helpless. I tried to get him this morning, but I failed."

Lord Edgemore was passing a hand over his brow, and ignoring the two men, he was looking at Skeets in a different kind of way. The truth was, Zingrave was no longer concentrating upon the earl, and the hypnotic influence was waning.

But Professor Zingrave paid no heed; he knew that he could exercise his terrible power at any moment he liked.

"You did not tell me that Lee was here!" said Dr. Gower tensely. "But he is here, Zingrave! I know it! Lee is here, and by this time he knows that you have planned to murder this boy. And he'll get you, Zingrave—I tell you, he'll get you!"

"Pull yourself together, you fool!" snarled the professor.

Truth to tell, he was startled by Dr. Marlby Gower's sudden change. A new light had come into his eyes; they no longer appeared watery. They burned with such a strange fire that even Zingrave, for all his mental strength, found it difficult to look elsewhere.

"He'll get you, Zingrave," murmured the doctor, coming nearer. "He'll come face to face with you, and then his will will prove stronger than yours."

"Don't look at me like that, you fool!" panted Zingrave. "What's come over you?"

"His will will prove to be stronger than yours," went on Dr. Gower, in a husky whisper. "And when that happens, Zingrave, this man and this boy will be released from your hypnotic power. They'll become themselves—and you will be trapped!"

Never before had Professor Cyrus Zingrave experienced the sensation which gripped him now. Dr. Gower was looking straight into his eyes, and try as he would, Zingrave could not turn his own gaze away. He was held by some tremendous power. Those eyes burned and flamed into his, and so great was the shock that for the first few moments he was confounded.

No longer could he control his own thoughts. His brain seemed to be numb. And he was bewildered, too, by this phenomenon.

A minute earlier Dr. Marlby Gower had been a blotchy-faced drunkard with bowed shoulders; now he seemed to have increased his height, his face had assumed a new strength, his jaw was set with grim purpose. But it was his eyes which revealed the greatest change of all. He had thrown his glasses aside and now, not three feet from Professor Zingrave, he was staring into the professor's eyes—staring, staring—

And then, in that instant, Zingrave knew the dreadful truth.

"Lee!" he screamed, staggering back. "You're not Gower! You're Lee! You're Nelson Lee!"

CHAPTER 21.

The Battle of Wits!

LORD EDGEMORE looked at the two figures with a kind of childlike wonder; he passed a hand over his brow again, and shook himself. But, as yet, he was not free from the thralldom which had held him.

It was a pity, for he was a spectator of one of the most amazing scenes imaginable. Master-detective and master-crook were facing one another, each pitting his brain-power against the other's.

"Lee!" croaked Zingrave, the truth now striking him with overwhelming force.

Not a word came from Nelson Lee.

Every ounce of his mental strength, every fibre of his being was concentrated upon the tremendous task he had set himself.

He had tricked his way into Edgemore Castle with this one definite purpose in mind—to come face to face with Professor Cyrus Zingrave and pit his own will-power against his enemy's. If he lost it would be the end of him; if he won, Lord Edgemore and Skeets would be mentally freed.

Until the right moment had arrived, Nelson Lee's impersonation had been brilliant; now it didn't matter. He had seized the opening for which he had sought, and he had gained the momentary advantage of catching Zingrave off his guard.

So clever had been Nelson Lee's acting that the wily professor had suspected nothing; he had not known his visitor's real identity until Lee had deliberately chosen to reveal himself.

Deliberately, calmly, the great detective had walked into the "lion's den." Now he was a veritable Daniel.

The impersonation of Dr. Marlby Gower had not been difficult to arrange.

Nelson Lee's first task, after leaving Edgemore Castle that morning, had been to learn the name of the London specialist who had been called down by Zingrave. It had proved easier than Lee had dared to hope.

Armed with special authority, he had gone to the Bannington telephone exchange, and every call that had been made from the little Edgemore sub-exchange had been traced. And one call, from the castle, had been put through to Dr. Marlby Gower, of Wimpole Street.

The rest was easy.

For years Nelson Lee had known that Dr. Marlby Gower was a man of questionable character. Lee had even suspected that he had once been associated with the League of the Green Triangle. Scotland Yard had full particulars of Dr. Marlby Gower in their records, but they had never been able to obtain sufficient evidence to convict him.

This, then, was the man who had been called down to see Skeets. It had been easy enough for Lee to guess exactly why Dr. Gower had been sent for.

Without the delay of a minute Lee had motored to London and, accompanied by Scotland Yard officers, he had gone to Wimpole Street. Without any fuss or commotion the doctor had been taken to Scotland Yard.

There, sodden with drink, he had confessed that it had been Zingrave who had sent for him.

And Nelson Lee, with the permission of the Chief Commissioner, had donned Dr. Gower's clothes, and had so changed his appearance that Dr. Gower's own patients would not have known the difference.

The risks were small, for Lee knew that Zingrave had not seen the doctor for years. Any

slight imperfection of voice, or facial resemblance would be set down to the natural changes brought about by the passing of the years.

Thus had Nelson Lee played his hand; and now he had produced the ace. It remained to be seen whether Professor Zingrave would trump it!

It had been too risky to raid Edgemore Castle in full daylight—and equally risky to allow the real Dr. Gower to go there. There were secret passages at Edgemore, and Zingrave probably knew of these. He must have no chance of escaping.

So Nelson Lee, playing a lone hand, had taken the great chance.

They stood now facing one another, Zingrave crouching back like a trapped animal. And, try as he would, he could not wrest his gaze away from Nelson Lee's.

"You shan't—you shan't!" croaked Zingrave. "My will is stronger than yours! Take your eyes away, curse you! Don't look at me like that!"

He was in terror. With a tremendous effort he forced himself to think of something besides those staring eyes. Yes, Gull! And there were other men! He would shout and call them, and—and—

But he couldn't shout: something was preventing him from raising his voice. He couldn't even think of Gull and the other men. His thoughts were being dragged back by the terrific will power which faced him.

"No, no!" he whispered. "I'm stronger than you, Lee! You can't beat me like this!"

And still Nelson Lee maintained that deadly silence. He only faced Zingrave, staring, staring—looking into his very soul, his will power burning into Zingrave's brain like a red-hot iron.

And now the perspiration was pouring in streams down Professor Zingrave's face. Lee, too, was feeling the terrific strain. He was perspiring almost as much, and his make-up was suffering—until his face looked grotesque. Yet nothing could alter the power of those eyes.

Another change was taking place in that room during these tensely dramatic moments. Skeets was sitting up in bed, and he was looking about him with bewildered gaze. Lord Edgemore, near the bed, was breathing hard, and his own eyes were filled with the old, rational light.

"Dad!" came a murmur. "I—I don't understand! What's happening, dad? Where are we?"

"Hush, Skeets, son!" said Lord Edgemore, dimly realising what it all meant. "Thank Heaven you are recovering!"

The evil force was removed; for now every fibre of Zingrave's being was concentrated upon the task of resisting Nelson Lee's mental strength. Those two victims were liberated, but only gradually did they return to normal. They were still very confused and bewildered. They found themselves watching the scene with bated breath.

Lee, of course, had made no real injection; he had done nothing whatever to Skeets. He had used that instrument in order to gain time.

And now he knew that he was winning; he could feel that his iron will was conquering. He

was holding Professor Zingrave at bay; he was proving the master.

And as this knowledge came to him, so the realisation of defeat came to Professor Zingrave.

He was helpless; he could see nothing, now, except Nelson Lee's eyes. All else had vanished—the room, Lee's very body and face. He could see nothing but those eyes, burning and searing into his brain. They held him as in a steel vice.

Curiously enough, it was Lord Edgemore himself who broke the spell. Skeets had got out of bed now, his brain clearing rapidly; and the boy was horrified to realise what was going on. The earl, too, was feeling that ugly clouds had been swept out of his brain; he was beginning to see things clearly.

"Zingrave!" he said loudly.

"Yes, dad; it's that crook!" panted Skeets. "Oh, what's happening? We'd better grab him, hadn't we?"

Lord Edgemore seized Professor Zingrave and pulled him round. This scene was becoming unendurable. And that pull shifted, for an instant, Zingrave's gaze.

It was in that second that the spell broke. And the professor, with a wild scream, staggered to the door.

CHAPTER 22.

The Escape!

IF Lord Edgemore had been his normal, agile self he would have stopped Professor Zingrave before he got out.

But the earl hesitated, bewildered.

And there was something else to claim his attention, too. Dr. "Marlby Gower," staggering drunkenly, collapsed to the floor.

Nelson Lee had won that great battle, but the strain had been so terrific that at the moment of victory he became incapable of carrying his own weight.

Not only had it been a tremendous mental strain, but an equally great physical strain. The reaction was devastating.

"All right—all right!" he muttered, his breath coming and going heavily. "Don't bother about me, Lord Edgemore. Zingrave! Follow him—catch him!"

Lord Edgemore stared dully.

"That voice!" he exclaimed. "Skeets, did you hear? It's Mr. Lee's voice! I've had an impression, for some minutes, that Mr. Lee——"

"Yes, I'm Lee," interrupted the detective. "But go! Zingrave is escaping!"

There was an expression of triumph in Nelson Lee's eyes. He had won a splendid fight. Pitting his own brain power against that of Professor Zingrave, he had conquered. He had freed Skeets and his father from that hypnotic spell. And not only were Zingrave's plans shattered, but the discomfited crook-scientist was on the run.

Lee's one regret was that his great strength had not lasted out until the bitter end. But he possessed amazing recuperative powers, and only a minute or two elapsed before he felt his strength returning. He was wet with perspiration and all his limbs were shaking as though with an ague.

Meanwhile, Professor Zingrave, reeling down the wide staircase into the hall—for he, too, was suffering from the strain—found Gull, the footman, there.

“Chief,” gasped the man, frightened, “what’s—what’s happened? You look awful!”

“Do I?” snarled Zingrave. “Get outside, you fool! Get into that car!”

“But—but, Chief——”

“Lee’s upstairs!” panted the professor. “There’s not a moment to lose!”

He knew that it would be madness to remain at the castle. Exposure had come—dramatically, with the suddenness of an exploding bombshell. And once again Nelson Lee was the cause of it. Professor Zingrave’s hatred against the detective was now so great that he felt he must be going mad.

But his own safety came first.

At any cost, he must get out of the castle; he must make his escape. He flung open the great door and, racing down the wide steps, he saw that “Dr. Gower’s” car was standing there—empty.

And down the wide stairs raced Lord Edgemoore and Skeets. They got to the front door just in time to see Zingrave and Gull leaping into the car. If there were any other Green Triangle men in the castle, they were being deserted. There was no time even to warn them.

Zurrrrh!

At a touch of the starter-button the engine leapt into life. The car lurched as Zingrave, at the wheel, jerked in the clutch.

And it was at this dramatic moment that a number of motor-cycles, to say nothing of a little Morris Minor, hove in sight down the drive. They were approaching the castle slowly. Nipper & Co. had arrived—and, in accordance with the pre-arranged plan, they were advancing slowly.

They did not even see the many figures which had suddenly appeared from behind hedges, laurel bushes, and clumps of trees.

For those figures were special officers of Scotland Yard’s Flying Squad. Nelson Lee had given strict instructions that those men were not to show themselves unless something palpably sensational was happening. Zingrave himself did not realise it, but the castle was surrounded.

Nipper, who was in the lead, had a good view of the two figures which dashed down the steps and got into the waiting car.

“Look, you chaps!” he shouted. “It’s Zingrave!”

“And, by Samson, he’s making a bolt for it!” ejaculated Travers. “This is where we come in, isn’t it?”

If Zingrave had had any intention of leaving the castle property in the ordinary way, he now abandoned it. One glance told him that he would not be able to get past the motor-cyclists.

He sent the car swerving wildly across the carpet-like lawns; it leapt the flower-beds, crashing rose-trees and spreading ruination amid the blossoming borders.

Lurching, swaying, the car gathered speed. Then on, straight across the smooth grassland of the park itself.

And hot on his trail roared the St. Frank’s juniors, fearless of the peril into which they were running.

CHAPTER 23.

The Crash!

IT was a wild, exhilarating experience.

The boys, glad enough to be in “at the death,” were nevertheless mortified by the fact that they had arrived a minute too late.

Nipper was intensely worried. Zingrave’s very escape hinted that something serious had happened within the castle. What of Nelson Lee?

But this was no time for thinking. Zingrave was escaping—and he had to be captured!

Fast as those motor-cycles were the great car was faster. And seldom in his infamous career had Professor Zingrave been more desperate.

He had had no time to look at those motor-cyclists closely; he did not even know that they were schoolboys. But he had seen other figures appearing as though from nowhere. Now he understood the reason for Gull’s earlier uneasiness.

Crack—crack—crack!

Three or four men, running from behind some trees, fired at the roaring car. They were aiming at the tyres, hoping to burst them. But they were unlucky.

The car roared on, and close in its wake hurtled the schoolboys on their motor-bikes.

“Good glory!” ejaculated Chief Detective-Inspector Leonard, of Scotland Yard, as he witnessed the extraordinary affair.

Any moment he expected to see the car overturn; in places the grassland was bumpy, and the limousine rolled and swayed, sometimes leaping several feet into the air. But still it hurtled onwards.

Gull, sitting next to Zingrave, clinging to the seat, was so terrified that speech was impossible. Arrest was preferable to this!

He saw a closed gate ahead. Dimly he remembered that there was a narrow country lane, and——

Cra-a-a-sh!

The car charged at the gate full tilt, and the gate disintegrated into a thousand splinters. With a terrific wrench, Zingrave swung the car round, the off-side wheels mounted the bank, and for one instant it seemed that nothing could save the vehicle from overturning.

But miraculously it recovered, swayed across to the other side of the lane, and Zingrave then regained full control. His foot went down on the throttle and the engine fairly screamed.

Faster and faster—for the lane was straight.

In the rear came Nipper and Travers and Potts and Cresswell and one or two others. They had been momentarily delayed at that gateway, for they had been obliged to pick their way through that mass of debris. Now they were in full cry again, taking breathless chances.

The fugitive car swung round a bend; brakes screaming, in a dreadful skid; for, just ahead there was a sharp turn which Zingrave had not known about.

He never knew how he negotiated that turn, but he just managed it. Then on again, and now there was a long straight stretch, with some white railings in the distance, and stone walls on either side of the road. The ground rose, too.

There was a bridge ahead—a bridge which crossed over the River Stowe.

The schoolboys, entering that "straight," were just in time to witness the sensational climax.

It seemed to them that victory was within their grasp. For the road, at the bridge, was blocked!

A lumbering traction-engine, with a farm "drum" and a pitcher sailing behind, had just hove into view. And the bridge was so narrow that there was no room for any other vehicle to pass.

"He'll have to stop!" yelled Nipper. "We've got him!"

And even as he shouted the words he knew that it was impossible for Zingrave to stop the car in time. For it was hurtling along at a speed which could not have been much under seventy miles an hour.

The next thing happened in a flash.

The car's brakes shrieked, there came a wild swerve, and, with a noise like an explosion, the limousine hurtled headlong through the brick parapet of the bridge. Bricks, mortar, and stonework flew in all directions.

So great was the force of the impact that the bridge suffered far more than the car. Indeed, it seemed that the vehicle's progress was only momentarily hindered. It soared into mid-air, pitched nose downwards, and dived with a terrific splash into the river!

"Lawks o' mercy!" gasped the traction-engine driver.

The motor-cyclists came up like a swarm of hornets. The boys leapt from the machines, and a series of clatters followed as the motor-bikes were allowed to fall on their stands.

"Look! The car's under!" yelled Travers, pointing.

Breathless, their hearts thudding, the boys stood on the edge of the broken bridge. The river, beneath them, was wildly disturbed; foam and scum showed on the surface; bubbles were arising in great quantities. They caught a glimpse of the car's roof, and then it vanished.

"Well, Zingrave may have as many lives as a cat, but if he hasn't lost all nine of them this time I'm a marshmallow!" said Travers. "Even if the crash didn't kill him, he'll be drowned."

"Hadn't we better dive in?" suggested Nipper quickly. "Hang it, crook though he is, we can't leave him trapped in that car! Come on, you chaps!"

Without troubling to remove any of their clothes, they leapt into the river.

But Professor Cyrus Zingrave had yet one more card up his sleeve.

CHAPTER 24.

Nelson Lee's Triumph!

JUST near the bridge, half-concealed by overgrown willows, stood a ramshackle old boathouse.

It was on the Edgemore estate, but it had not been used for many years. Lord Edgemore, in fact, did not even know of its existence. But Professor Cyrus Zingrave did!

For it was in that boathouse that the secret motor-boat was concealed! That queer craft which had brought Zingrave up the river so recently.

The little building was of wood, with double doors facing the river. The doors were just short of the surface of the water.

Zingrave had had this boathouse in mind when he had started on his spectacular dash away from the castle. But he had certainly not intended to dive into the river in such a reckless manner.

As things turned out, however, he and Gull were trapped, and it was touch and go whether they would escape from the submerged car.

It was only a piece of sheer luck that the driving door, at the moment of impact, had been wrenched open. And Zingrave, bruised, bleeding, and dazed, found a way of escape.

At this time the car was only half-submerged, and Zingrave was able to force the door open, and drop into the river. Gull, bleeding from a great gash in the forehead, followed. With half a dozen strokes they were concealed amid the tall reeds which grew near the bank.

Thus, when the boys arrived on the bridge, they were just in time to see the car submerging—and they naturally concluded that the professor was still within it.

The boys helped Zingrave greatly—although they did not realise it. For, by leaping into the water, and making a great splashing commotion, they enabled Zingrave to worm his way unseen through the reeds.

He and Gull reached the boathouse, and it was an easy matter for them to swim beneath the closed doors. Now they had vanished.

"It's no good!" panted Nipper, rising to the surface after a dive. "The river's tremendously deep here—we can't do anything at all."

"So they're drowned—Zingrave and that other man!" said Jimmy Potts, as he swam round in a circle. "Crumbs! What an end!"

Shouts were sounding from the bridge. Handforth & Co. had arrived in the Minor, and Handy was in a rare stew because he had been left out of the chief excitement.

Other cars were coming up, too—cars filled with Scotland Yard detectives. Nelson Lee, his make-up hastily wiped away, and recovering, was there with Lord Edgemore and Skeets.

Cra-a-a-a-sh!

With an unexpectedness which was shattering, the rotten doors of the boathouse flew to pieces. The black, wicked-looking nose of a strange motor-boat shot out into the river straight at the swimming juniors.

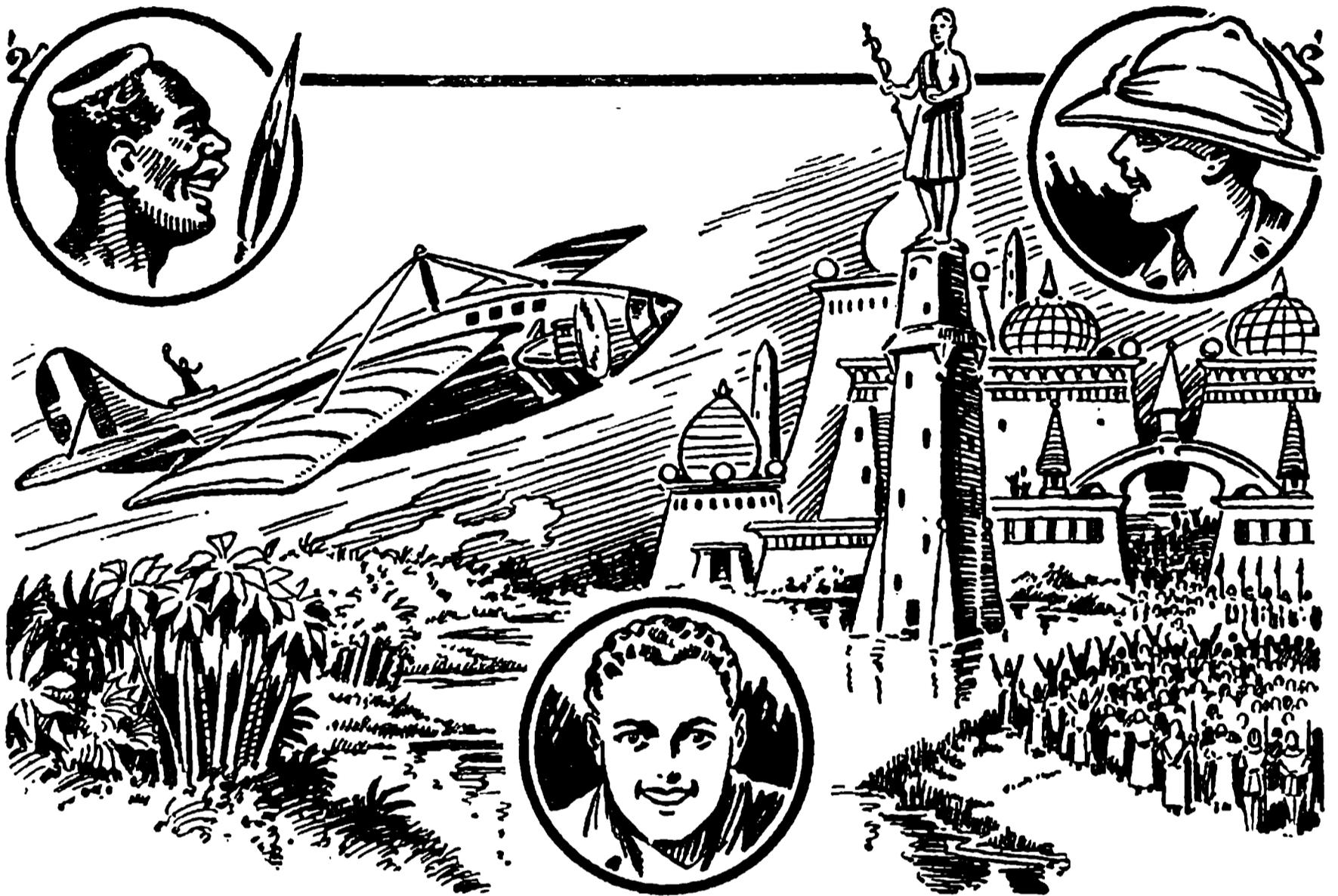
"Look!" bellowed Handforth. "It's Zingrave's secret boat, he's escaping!"

The craft swept round, and Nipper and those other boys in the river were obliged to swim

(Continued on page 44.)

All-Thrilling Story of a Great Treasure-Hunt in Mysterious Africa!

The CITY of GOLD!



Three treasure-seekers set out in a wonderful craft, the Flying Fish, and travel to a secret City of Gold in Unknown Africa. Young Tom Cook, their leader, with Lulu, a Zulu warrior, makes a perilous attempt to liberate white slaves in the heart of the city. Lulu then impersonates a native guard named Lesardu, and tries to trap the cunning high priest.

Lulu Fools the Serpent!

LULU and the High Priest sped through two more doors and another passage, and then the old priest brought up and clutched the huge Zulu by the arm.

"Lesardu, you are faithful to me, and will do my bidding in everything?" he gasped.

"In everything, lord. Speak!" gurgled Lulu, with his hand on his keen knife.

"To-morrow, the white youth who bears so close a likeness to the idol, Tomkuk, which stands at the gates of the City, I would have you kill, Lesardu, as he is about to be crowned king and god of the Golden City as these fools of citizens design. Tchah, he is no more a god than I am. It is a chance resemblance to Tomkuk the Great, but—if he once gains dominion over these simple people—my power is gone, d'ye see?"

"True, master!" mumbled Lulu.

"Will you do this for me, your benefactor

and master?" hissed the aged sinner. "Kill, for me, Lesardu?"

"Me—k-kill the Tomkuk—the G-great?" stammered Lulu. "A poor soldier kill a god? Master, how can that be? He would s-slay me with a glance, and ere I struck would wither me with a glance and crush me to dust!"

"Bah! You who have been priest under me should know better. The white youth is but an impostor! Must be, for—ssh!—the old Tomkuk was but a white man; and the idol—the great statue—the worship of Tomkuk—is but a legend; invented long years ago by cunning priests to give them power, and since then the deception has been kept up by their descendants, of whom I am one! If you kill this youth, you do but slay a white man. Die he must, or the priests perish. If you refuse to kill him, you die—and quickly!"

"Sez you!" Lulu muttered to himself, moving closer to the old man and preparing to use his razor-keen knife. He knew more

than a little about African temple priests, witch doctors, and medicine men. He knew that, as a rule, they were up to all sorts of tricks, that their "revelations," miracles of their great idols, were the baldest fakes of conjuring tricks. They had been handed down from generation to generation of priests until they had become second nature.

He knew that he must match cunning with cunning with this wizened old humbug. He thought it was lucky that the old man was so short-sighted that he could not spot the difference between him and the soldier, Lesardu. But that was where Lulu had not realised that, in the armour and helmet, he really might have passed for the soldier's twin brother.

"Say on, lord; I obey," he stuttered.

"Listen, Lesardu," said the priest, dropping his voice; "to-morrow this white youth will come to keep up the pretence of being Tomkuk, returned to his people. What his object is I know not, though maybe I can guess. Years ago two white men came to this country. One remained, who was Tomkuk. The other returned to his own land, but perished miserably on the way, taking with him some of the shining pebbles that these white fools treasure so much. Mayhap they are the reason for this white youth coming hither with his great bird."

Lulu could not but appreciate the shrewdness with which this priest of a "savage" race had sized matters up, and he looked at the vulture-headed scarecrow with a new respect.

"Again a white man visited here twelve years ago. He was useful to us in certain ways and was allowed to live. That fair-haired lad yonder in the arena awaiting death is his son. He, he!"

"And his father?" gritted Lulu, between his teeth.

"He, he! He was himself a priest of the white men, and taught that Tomkuk was not a god, and that we, his priests, were fooling the people. We were, of course, but it was not for the common folk to know that—so he died, painfully! The fools who believed in his story of another god were sacrificed to Tomkuk as an example. Ha! That was a great killing, Lesardu!"

"By the horns of the moon, but one day I take you by your scraggy neck and wring it like a chickens!" muttered Lulu. "But just now—you are too useful, old serpent!"

"What are you saying?" muttered the priest suspiciously.

"It must have been a pretty sight, lord!" grunted Lulu. "Why was not the child slain?"

"Fool, have you forgotten?" snarled the old man. "Did not Lousla, your commander, take the child as his own and bring him up? He, he! Lousla fancied he was master of the Golden City and all it contained, but he died after partaking of a cup I prepared for him at the banquet in his honour after his victory over the forest dwarfs. He was a strong man, but—he!—my cup was stronger. He, he!"

"Your mother must have eaten bitter aloes when you were born," muttered the Zulu. "I must bide my time until I have learnt what I wish—then will I tear your liver out and stuff it down your gullet, of father of crawling things!"

"Now follow me, Lesardu," said the old man sharply, as if aware that he was lowering his dignity by confiding in this common soldier. "I will take you into the temple and show you yet another of the secrets of Tomkuk. He, he! He is a powerful god—when the priests make him so!"

He scurried along through another maze of passages, the direction of which Lulu studied carefully, for he had an idea that perhaps his own and other lives might later depend upon his accurate knowledge of the secrets of the temple.

As a matter of fact, he was in a state of quivering funk inside. He did not like this messing about with strange gods, for, like most of his race, he was superstitious; but he would dare anything in the cause of his "young baas."

The winding passages seemed to be built in a gradual ascent, and Lulu realised that they must now be well above the level of the market place outside. At last they arrived at what looked like a blank wall until the old man leant against it and touched one particular stone, when a slab of the stonework a yard and a half wide sank into the floor.

"You now know the very secret entrance of the high priest into the place of the god!" hissed the old man. "But, for the good of your health—forget that you have ever seen it! Breathe but one word of the secrets of the priests and your bones will melt within your flesh. My magic can find ye though ye be hidden many miles away, and from afar I can blast ye!"

"Sez yuh!" murmured Lulu. "Maybe your magic will strike backwards and wither the hand that throws it!"

The Plot!

"LOOK upon the figure of the god Tomkuk!"

Lulu stared up at the mighty idol. It was even bigger than the statue at the river, but evidently designed by the same hand, though the face had a sterner and more sinister aspect, and the hand that held the golden serpent was upraised threateningly. As he gazed up at it, the face seemed to gradually glow with an inner light and the eyes turned towards him glowing redly. He started back in terror as he saw the mighty arm quiver—then it crashed down with a swift movement, just over the spot where he had been standing!

"Waw, Ikona mali Sagosa!" he spluttered. "It lives—the idol lives! Where is that old serpent? His idol came nigh to dashing out my brains—"

"He, he he!" chuckled a voice that seemed to issue from the idol's lips but which he recognised as the priests. "Lesardu, the brave warrior is scared, is he not? Fear not, soldier; walk round to the back of the god and I will show you a thing."

Thankfully Lulu sidled round the back of the great statue which had resumed its former pose until he got to the back of the pedestal on which it stood.

To his surprise the back opened and the old priest emerged.

"Hither, Lesardu!" he whispered and pulled the Zulu in after him. The interior of the idol was hollow, and Lulu could see a collection of levers, handles, ropes, pulleys and small wheels within the great body which looked so solid from the outside. The old man looked at the goggle-eyed "Lesardu" with a toothless grin.

"Now you know the last and innermost secret of the priests of Tomkuk," he chuckled. "Look, soldier, this is the great god which you and the other fools worship. A thing of wood and cunning contrivance. Listen, I will teach you every trick of the god, whose brain is hollow, whose body is a sham, controlled only by me and who speaks at my bidding. Harken!"

He raised his lips to a trumpet-shaped tube which Lulu could see led up to the mouth of the "god." His voice peeled out through the megaphone arrangement by which the trick was played upon the simple people, who looked upon the "god" as a real personage.

"Ho, listen, my people!" boomed the priests. "This is my will, the will of Tomkuk the Great. Bring before me all those who have not obeyed my wishes and the wishes of Gobo, my high priest, through whose lips I give ye my commands, that I may give judgment upon them. To such as repent not—I give death. To such as are sorry for their faults and bring their ransom to Gobo, I give pardon!"

The voice died away and the old humbug turned chuckling to the gold armoured Zulu who was listening open-mouthed.

"Lesardu, you have often listened to Tomkuk, listened with your forehead touching the stone floor!" he cackled. "Little did ye think that the god's voice was the voice of Gobo. Little did ye think that when ye saw the mighty hand of Tomkuk descend to slay him who stood neath it—that it was the frail hand of Gobo that made the mighty arm rise and descend. Watch, stand back a little and see the great arm of the god move."

He pulled upon a lever, working it from right to left and Lulu, standing half at the side of the idol, could see the great arm go up as before and crash down on the spot where the victim would stand. It must have been worked by a cunning adjustment of counterweights, for the old priest could work this and the other gadgets with ease and very little sound, so well was the mechanism made and oiled.

Now Lulu realised why the right hand and the gold serpent in it were stained an ominous crimson!

Thereafter the wily old humbug taught Lesardu the tricks of the machinery which controlled every movement of the God, until the Zulu was perfect in the use of every "gadget" in the faked idol.

"To-morrow, you take my place within the great idol," he said at length. "It will be given out to the people that Gobo the priest will not be present at the crowning of the Tomkuk who has come to life. The other priests will act under my orders and you, Lesardu, will work my will within the idol, speaking the words I will give you through his lips."

"Yea, lord?"

"Then, kill the white youth by the mighty hand of Tomkuk, to show the people that the god will have nothing of this impostor who is so like him. Slay and fear not, and great shall be your reward! You desire my grand-daughter, Soups, to wife, do you not? She is yours, and as dowry she shall bring you a bag full of those shining stones, for which the fool white men risk their lives. Cattle, horses and slaves shall be yours and, after a little while, Lesardu—you shall take the place of Loslla and command the army!"

"Thanks to you, father of blue face apes!" muttered the Zulu. "But first mayhap we will show you a thing. Perhaps to-morrow, you may see that which will make your eyeballs stick out!"

It was close upon dawn when he rejoined his young baas and Tom and Al listened breathlessly to his story.

"So that's the game, is it?" said Tom. "He's a cunning old fox, is Master Gobo! But maybe we'll show him a real Tomkuk that'll make him and the priests sit up and take notice. Al, in some ways I wish the 'Fish' wasn't a boat and a flying machine. I'd just love to squeeze right into the village in a way that'd make some show of style and give these rotten old priests something to think about—some stunt that'd make Tomkuk—that's ME, ahem—making a lasting impression. See?"

"I git yuh, great Tomkuk," grinned the American cousin. "Mebbe yuh ain't yet seen all thet th' 'Fish' kin do, bo! Ben, come hither, varlet, I would have words with ye. And as for you, Lu we'll have to git a tin-opener to prise yer out o' thet Woolworth's rig. Globe polish!"

The young white slave, Olaf Jan, by name, had soon gained confidence in Tom and the others, and through him the rest of the prisoners were reassured. He told Tom of a deserted krall back in the forest strongly palisaded and fortified, which had been the headquarters of the late General Lousla, who wished to keep his soldiers away from the influence of the priests.

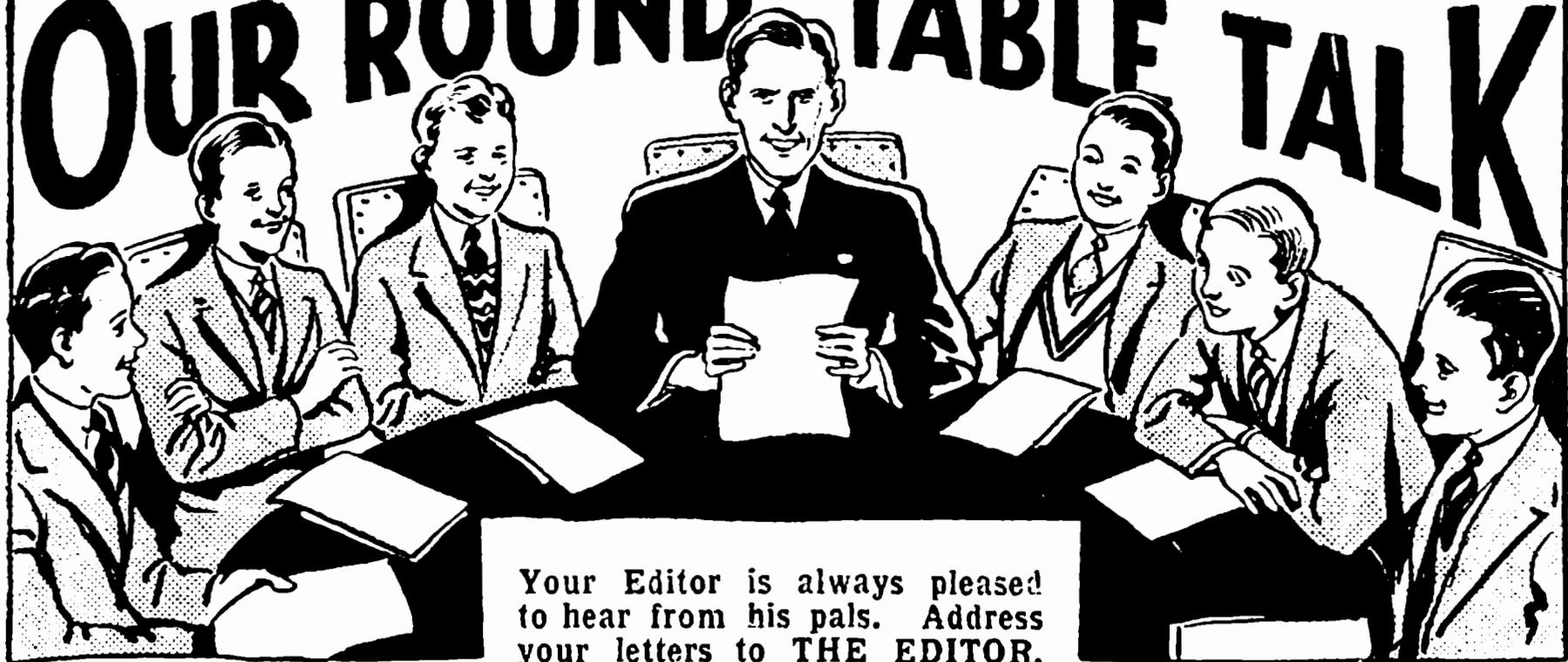
Tom decided to place the released slaves there for safety, and it might be useful as their own headquarters in case of emergency. Once having got them comfortably settled they hurried back to the temple so as to arrive before dawn.

"Lulu and I will go straight to the secret entrance. I don't want any of the people to see me before the proper time when we'll give old Gobo a bit of a shock. What about you and Ben?"

"Me and Ben have got a leetle job to do," smiled his cousin. "We're goin' to take a hand in the coronation of King Tomkuk the Twooth. Boyee, beleeeve muh, yuh are due for a surprise as well. Me, Ben, an' the 'Fish'll' be right thar on th' mat, an' don't yuh forgit it!"

(Al's got something "up his sleeve" for the ruthless High Priest who is out to kill Tom Cook, something that is going to make a big sensation. Don't miss next week's chapters of our Great African story.)

OUR ROUND TABLE TALK



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his pals. Address your letters to **THE EDITOR,**

Nelson Lee Library, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London E.C.4.

DON'T GET LEFT!

I MENTIONED last week the need for all you chaps to place a standing order for the NELSON LEE with your newsagents to ensure getting a copy of your favourite paper every Wednesday. And I cannot do better this week, than to repeat my warning.

Your newsagent is dead keen to please all his customers, and he cannot do that unless you let him know, well in advance, your requirements. If you handed him a standing order for the NELSON LEE he'd jolly soon know those requirements and there would never be chaps walking around the shops searching for issues of the paper, or writing to me with a long tale of woe about not being able to get their copies.

Don't you think it's much better to be on the safe side? Of course you do. Then go to it. See that your newsagent gets **your** standing order for the NELSON LEE **RIGHT AWAY.**

Sign the coupon below and hand it to your newsagent at once—he will do the rest.

"NELSON LEE" ORDER COUPON

To (Newsagent)

Please reserve for me a copy of THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY until further notice.

Name

Address

Date

MORE LIKE THE LAST SERIES!

J. B. M., of Moss Side, Manchester, wants "more stories like the last series." I take it he means "The Silver Dwarf" series that has just finished. Well, J. B. M., you will be pleased to hear that you are not alone in this respect. I have had thousands of similar requests.

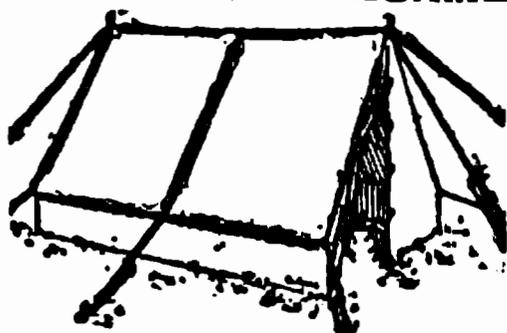
"The Silver Dwarf" series **was** successful. There is no question about that. But no one is more pleased about it than yours truly. I always try to give my chums just the kind of stories they want. And, without blushing, I might say, I have been successful.

I felt quite sure that "The Silver Dwarf" series would prove a big hit. It was more than that. It scored a century. Now, what about some more of the same class? Well, there's this week's tale, for instance.

You like it, eh. I bet you do. And last week's? That was a ripper, wasn't it. Why I could read it over again myself and get the same thrills and joy from it. You can't do that with every story you come across, anyway.

But returning to J. B. M.'s request. There is a first-class batch of **DETECTIVE-THRILLERS** on the way, starring Nelson Lee and Nipper at St. Frank's, and away from the school. In fact, next week's story, "The Secret of Salcoth Island," which deals with Nelson Lee and Nipper engaged on a big detective job away from the school fairly bulges with thrills.

CAMPING? BUY NOW THE ROAMER TENT



The greatest tent bargain ever offered. Size 6 ft. long, 4 ft. 3 ins. wide, 3 ft. 6 ins. high; 6 in. walls. Made from strong white material. Brass-jointed poles in 3 sections. Complete with all accessories in valise. **Post 1/- 11/6**

Ground Sheets to fit, 5/9. Green Rotproof materials 18/6. Many others in stock. Sent C.O.D. if desired.

BLANKS, 303, GRAY'S INN ROAD, KINGS X, LONDON, W.C.1

THE HOUSE OF DREAD!

(Continued from page 39.)

for their lives. The boat, gathering speed, shot off downstream. By the time the Scotland Yard men were able to use their guns, the craft was out of range.

With uncanny silence and ever-increasing speed, it went hurtling down the river, leaving a white, foamy wake.

"Ten thousand curses!" shouted Inspector Lennard. "He's done us again, Leo! Of all the infernal luck——"

"There was no luck about it, old man," interrupted Nelson Lee quietly. "Zingrave came to this spot deliberately. He knew that motor-boat was there, and it was his only chance of escape. He knew that all roads would be barred, that's why he took to the park."

"He'll get away, too," said the chief inspector fiercely. "We never thought of the river! He'll get down to Caistowe without hindrance—before we can get any telephone call through. And then he'll be out in the Channel."

The case was over.

After the boys had got out of the river there was a general explanation. Undoubtedly, Nelson Lee had scored a great triumph. Practically single-handed, he had beaten Professor Cyrus Zingrave—he had wrecked that brilliant criminal's elaborate plan.

Lord Edgemore and Skeets were saved, and although Zingrave had escaped, this did not detract from Nelson Lee's victory.

Round Number One in the detective's latest struggle with the Green Triangle had been won by Nelson Lee.

THE END.

(There's an extra-long Complete Detective-Thriller in next week's issue, entitled: "The Secret of Salcoth Island!" It's a winner. Don't miss reading it!)

CORRESPONDENTS WANTED

Kelly Doyle, c/o 1, Trafalgar Street, Enmore, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, would like correspondents anywhere outside Australia.

William C. Leitch, 42, Marschal Street, Aberdeen, wishes to correspond with readers.

Alec A. Gavin, 100, Swanston Street, Geelong, Victoria, Australia, would like to hear from readers who are keen on the old St. Frank's yarns.

H. Double, 81, Bury Street, Stowmarket, Suffolk, wants pen friends in Australia, Canada and India.

Miss M. Hatchman, 12, Alma Place, Thornton Heath, Surrey, wants girl correspondents overseas; ages 15-17.

John N. Salter, Winchester Hill, Sutton Scotney, Hants, wants correspondents anywhere; age 15-16.

Miss Evelyn Edwards, Dewhurst School House, Churchgate, Cheshunt, Herts, wants girl correspondents in France, New Zealand, Spain, Malay States, etc.; ages 17-21.

M. Malen, 1226, Lajoie Avenue, Outremont, Montreal, Canada, wants pen pals; especially stamp collectors.

Alfred Reid, Secretary of the World Wide correspondence Club, 89, Sutherland Road, West Croydon, Surrey, wishes to enlarge the membership.

Miss Gladys Fraser, "Wywarry," 22, Wright's Road, Lithgow, N.S.W., Australia, wants to hear from girl readers; ages 15-16.

Jack Prew, 3, Victor Street, Monkwearmouth, Sunderland, C. Durham, wants correspondents.

BE TALL Your Height increased in 14 days or Money Back. Amazing Course Write for Free Book, sent privately.—**STEBBING SYSTEM, 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.**

SPURPROOF TENTS. Model X.

Made from lightweight proofed material. Complete with three-piece jointed poles, pegs, guy lines, and brown valise. Weight 5 lbs. Size 6 ft. x 4 ft. 6 in. x 3 ft. 6 in. With 6 in. wall and 3 in. eave. **10/6** Post. 9d.

Accommodates three boys. Extra light weight in Egyptian Cotton. Weight 3½ lbs. 15/-. Send for beautiful Illustrated Camping List, post free. **GEO. GROSE & CO., 8, New Bridge St., E.C.4.**

Blushing Shyness, "Nerves," Self-consciousness cured or money back! Complete Treatment, 5/-. details, striking testimonials Free.—**L. A. STEBBING, 28, Dean Rd., LONDON, N.W.2.**

STAMMERING. STOP NOW! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars free. **FRANK B. HUGHES, 26, HART ST., LONDON, W.C.1.**

300 STAMPS for 6d. (Abroad 1/-), including Airpost. Barbados, Old India, Nigeria, New South Wales, Gold Coast, etc.—**W. A. WHITE, Engine Lane, LYE, Stourbridge**

MY GREAT OFFER

Write for my free Bargain Lists of the best **ALL BRITISH** cycles. 14 **DAYS' APPROVAL. CARRIAGE PAID.** Cash price £3 15s. or terms. All accessories **FREE.** Value 21/-. **2 WEEKLY**

O'Brien THE WORLD'S LARGEST CYCLE DEALER, 17 COVENTRY

BE TALLER! Increased my height to 6ft. 3½in. **ROSS SYSTEM - IS - GENUINE.** Fee £2 2s. Stamp brings details. **P. Ross, Height Specialist, Scarborough, Eng.**

All applications for Advertising Spaces in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "The Nelson Lee Library," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Printed and published every Wednesday by the Proprietors, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Advertisement Offices: The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian magazine post. Subscription Rates: Inland and Abroad, 11/- per annum; 5/6 for six months. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; and for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd. S.S.