



The BLACK GANG

A Sequel to Bulldog Drummond.

BY CYRIL McNEILE SAPPER
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE H. DORAN CO.

BLACKS AND REDS

SYNOPSIS.—To a gathering of anarchists in Barking, London suburb, Zaboleff, foreign agitator, tells of the operations of a body of men who have become a menace to their activities. He says they are masked and wear long black cloaks and are acting without the law.

CHAPTER I—Continued

In the doorway stood a huge man covered from head to foot in black. In each hand he held a revolver, with which he covered the eight occupants during the second or two which it took for half a dozen similarly disguised men to file past him, and take up their positions round the walls. And Waldoek, a little more educated than the remainder of his friends, found himself thinking of old tales of the Spanish Inquisition and the dogs of Venice even as he huddled a little nearer to the table.

"Stand by the table, all of you." It was the man at the door who spoke in a curiously deep voice, and like sheep they obeyed him—all save Flash Jim. For that worthy, crook though he was, was not without physical courage. The police he knew better than to play the fool with, but these were not the police.

"Wot the—" he snarled, and got no farther. Something hit him behind the head, a thousand stars danced before his eyes, and with a strangled grunt he crashed forward on his face. For a moment or two there was silence, and then once again the man at the door spoke.

"Arrange the specimens in a row." In a second the seven remaining men were marshaled in a line, while behind them stood six motionless black figures. And then the big man walked slowly down in front of them, peering into each man's face. He spoke no word until he reached the end of the line, and then, his inspection concluded, he stepped back and leaned against the wall facing them.

"A nauseating collection," he remarked thoughtfully. "A loathsome brood. What are the three undersized and shivering insects on the right?"

"Those are three of my clerks," said Waldoek with an assumption of angry bravado. "And I would like to know—" "In good time you will," answered the deep voice. "Three of your clerks, are they; imbued with your rotten ideas, I suppose, and yearning to follow in father's footsteps? Have we anything particular against them?"

There was no answer from the masked men, and the leader made a sign. Instantly the three terrified clerks were seized from behind and brought up to him, where they stood trembling and shaking in every limb.

"Listen to me, you three little worms." With an effort they pulled themselves together; a ray of hope was dawning in their minds—perhaps they were going to be let off easy. "My friends and I do not like you or your type. You meet in secret places and in your slimy minds you concoct foul schemes which, incredible though it may seem, have so far had more than a fair measure of success in this country. But your main idea is not the schemes, but the money you are paid to carry them out. This is your first and last warning. Another time you will be treated differently. Get out of here. And see you don't stop."

The door closed behind them and two of the masked men; there was the sound of a boot being used with skill and strength, and cries of pain; then the door reopened and the masked men returned.

"They have gone," announced one of them. "We helped them on their way." "Good," said the leader. "Let us continue the inspection. What are these two?"

A man from behind stepped forward and examined them slowly; then he came up to the leader and whispered in his ear.

dragged themselves on their knees to wards the impassive leader. "The cat for cases of this sort is used legally," he remarked. "We merely anticipate the law."

With a fresh outburst of moans the two watched the door open and the inexorable black figure come in, holding in his hand a short stick from which nine lashes hung down.

"Heavens!" gasped Waldoek, starting forward. "What are you going to do?"

"Flog them to within an inch of their lives," said the deep voice. "It is the punishment for their method of livelihood. Five and six—take charge. After you have finished remove them in Number 3 car, and drop them in London."

Struggling impotently, they were led away, and the leader passed on to the remaining two men.

"So, Zaboleff, you came after all. Unwise, surely, in view of the police?"

"Who are you?" muttered Zaboleff, his lips trembling.

"A specimen hunter," said the other suavely. "I am making a collection of people like you. The police of our country are unduly kind to your breed, although they would not have been kind to you tonight, Zaboleff."

"I can assure you, Mr. Waldoek, that I will make it my personal business to see that their natural curiosity is gratified," answered the leader suavely. "But for the present I fear the three filthy rags you edit will have to be content with the office boy as their guiding light. And I venture to think they will not suffer."

He made a sudden sign, and before they realized what was happening the two men were caught from behind and gagged. The next instant they were rushed through the door, followed by Flash Jim. For a moment or two the eyes of the leader wandered round the now empty room taking in every detail; then he stepped forward and blew out the two candles. The door closed gently behind him, and a couple of minutes later two cars stole quietly away from the broken-down gate along the cart track.

It was not until the leading car turned carefully into the main road that anyone spoke.

"Deuced awkward, the police being there."

The big man who was driving grunted thoughtfully.

"Perhaps," he returned. "Perhaps not. Anyway, the more the merrier. Flash Jim all right?"

"Sleeping like a child," answered the other, peering into the body of the car.

For about ten miles they drove on in silence; then at a main cross-roads the car pulled up and the big man got out. The second car was just behind, and for a few moments there was a whispered conversation between him and the other driver. He glanced at Zaboleff and Waldoek, who appeared to be peacefully sleeping on the back seat, and smiled grimly.

"Good night, old man. Report as usual."

"Right," answered the driver. "So long."

The second car swung right-handed and started northwards, while the leader stood watching the vanishing tail lamp. Then he returned to his own seat, and soon the first beginnings of outer London were reached. And it was as they reached White-chapel that the leader spoke again with a note of suppressed excitement in his voice.

"We're worrying 'em; we're worrying 'em badly. Otherwise they'd never have sent Zaboleff. He was too big a man to risk, considering the police."

"It's the police that I am considering," said his companion.

The big man laughed.

"Leave that to me, old man; leave that entirely to me."

"You needn't; it is obvious. And now that you are caught—he will come himself. Perhaps not at once—but he will come. And then . . . But we waste time. The money, Zaboleff."

"I have no money," he snarled. "You lie, Zaboleff. You lie clumsily. You have quite a lot of money brought over for Waldoek so that he might carry on the good work after you had sailed tomorrow. Quick, please; time passes."

With a curse Zaboleff produced a small canvas bag and held it out. The other took it and glanced inside.

"I see," he said gravely. "Pearls and precious stones. Belonging 'once, I suppose, to a murdered gentilewoman whose only crime was that she, through no action of her own, was born in a different sphere to you. And, you reptile—his voice rose a little—"you would do that here."

Zaboleff shrank back, and the other laughed contemptuously.

"Search him—and Waldoek too." Two men stepped forward quickly. "Nothing more," they said after a while. "Except this piece of paper."

There was a sudden movement on Zaboleff's part—Instantly suppressed, but not quite soon enough.

"Injudicious," said the leader quietly. "Memory is better. An address, I see—No. 5 Green street, Hoxton. A salubrious neighborhood, with which I am but indifferently acquainted. Ah! I see my violent friend has recovered."

He glanced at Flash Jim, who was sitting up dazedly, rubbing the back of his head. "Number 4—the usual."

There was a slight struggle, and Flash Jim lay back peacefully unconscious, while a faint smell of chloroform filled the room.

"And now I think we will go. A most successful evening."

"What are you going to do with me, you scoundrel?" spluttered Waldoek. "I warn you that I have influential friends, who—who will ask questions in—In parliament if you do anything to me; who will go to Scotland Yard."

"I can assure you, Mr. Waldoek, that I will make it my personal business to see that their natural curiosity is gratified," answered the leader suavely. "But for the present I fear the three filthy rags you edit will have to be content with the office boy as their guiding light. And I venture to think they will not suffer."

He made a sudden sign, and before they realized what was happening the two men were caught from behind and gagged. The next instant they were rushed through the door, followed by Flash Jim. For a moment or two the eyes of the leader wandered round the now empty room taking in every detail; then he stepped forward and blew out the two candles. The door closed gently behind him, and a couple of minutes later two cars stole quietly away from the broken-down gate along the cart track.

It was not until the leading car turned carefully into the main road that anyone spoke.

"Deuced awkward, the police being there."

The big man who was driving grunted thoughtfully.

"Perhaps," he returned. "Perhaps not. Anyway, the more the merrier. Flash Jim all right?"

"Sleeping like a child," answered the other, peering into the body of the car.

For about ten miles they drove on in silence; then at a main cross-roads the car pulled up and the big man got out. The second car was just behind, and for a few moments there was a whispered conversation between him and the other driver. He glanced at Zaboleff and Waldoek, who appeared to be peacefully sleeping on the back seat, and smiled grimly.

"Good night, old man. Report as usual."

"Right," answered the driver. "So long."

The second car swung right-handed and started northwards, while the leader stood watching the vanishing tail lamp. Then he returned to his own seat, and soon the first beginnings of outer London were reached. And it was as they reached White-chapel that the leader spoke again with a note of suppressed excitement in his voice.

"We're worrying 'em; we're worrying 'em badly. Otherwise they'd never have sent Zaboleff. He was too big a man to risk, considering the police."

"It's the police that I am considering," said his companion.

The big man laughed.

"Leave that to me, old man; leave that entirely to me."

First blood for the Blacks! and a pretty good job. And so delightfully mysterious, as well as efficient.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Absurdity of Man

Really, when it comes to glory there is no limit to the absurdity of man. A man will glory in a disease, a vice, the wealth of an ancestor when he is himself poor or the poverty of an ancestor when he is himself rich; the color of his hair, of his eyes; the possession of something which he picked up in the street—even the abuse of some one more notorious than himself. Men will glory in anything, just as the famine-struck will eat anything. Such is the appetite for glory. And why is it there? I say again, to make men achieve, to make them write bad verse, build hideous houses, put up impossible monuments, pass bad laws, and in general destroy their kind.—Hillare Belloc in *The New Statesman*.

Georgia Hale



This well-known "movie" star climbed into pictures via the "extra" path, traversed by many others. Born in St. Joseph, Mo., of English and French parents, Miss Hale spent most of her life in Chicago, in the latter city having won a beauty contest in 1922. She was singing and dancing when she was six, in school she played parts in little dramas. Later she braved the coast and obtained employment as an "extra," and her success now is well known.

AN ABBREVIATED STORY

JIBEN TACK

JOBLETS REMNANT, the civil service examiner, was putting young Jiben Tack through a course of questions to determine whether he was mentally fitted for the job of dog license inspector.

"Who invented the first steamboat?" he asked.

"Ponce de Leon, wasn't it?" replied Tack evasively.

"Well, no; but I don't know as it's so important," said Joblets Remnant. "Where does the Ganges river rise and where does it fall?"

"It rises in the east and falls in the west," hesitated Tack.

"Wrong; but there's smarter men than you that don't know the answer to that," admitted Remnant. "Name two principal ingredients of bronze."

"Ivory and blubber," named Jiben Tack.

"Not exactly, but we'll let it pass," said Remnant. "One more question. Who was the most famous French general of history?"

"Schopenhauer," replied Tack after some minutes' thought.

"Oh, well, I'll pass you for the job," agreed Joblets Remnant. "I've passed more uneducated men than you. By the way, is that the afternoon paper in your pocket? Who won the game?"

"I never read the football news," said Jiben Tack.

"What?" roared Remnant. "Such criminal ignorance is positively shocking! Your application is rejected!"

(By George Matthew Adams)

Among the NOTABLES

CHRISTINE NILSSON

JENNY LIND, Adelina Patti and Christine Nilsson were the three supreme singers of the last century. Lind and Nilsson were both from Sweden. Christine Nilsson, born August 24, 1843, had few advantages of education as a child. Her father was a poor working man, but in some way, the young girl learned the violin and used to play and sing at popular gatherings. And one day when she was fourteen, a wealthy man with considerable musical taste heard her and recognized something of her wonderful gift.

He provided her family with the means of sending her to a school for proper instruction in singing, and she studied so hard that when only seventeen she appeared on the concert stage in Stockholm and Upsala. She went to Paris for four years more of hard study, and made her debut as "Violetta" at the Theatre Lyrique. From then until she was nearly thirty, when she married and partially retired, she was the leading prima donna. She went to London, and all England thronged to hear her. After a time in Paris, she came to America, which, recovering from the strain of the Civil war, was becoming another musical center.

Her husband died in 1882, and Nilsson again came to America—this being her third trip. Some five years later, she married a second time and retired finally from the stage. She was now fifty, and friends claimed her voice was fresh as when a young girl, but she insisted on a quiet life.

(By George Matthew Adams)

In the JUNGLE

With Cheerups and the Quixies
By Grace Bliss Stewart

MR. HOOPOE'S HORN

"THIS cry I make would be all right for some folks, I suppose. Lots of little birds would be proud of it, but I'm not satisfied. It isn't loud enough to suit me," mumbled and grumbled a Hoopoe to himself, as he sat one fine day in the shade of a rock out on the Great Desert.

He looked so nearly like the sand as he crouched there that he was scarcely visible. His body of grayish brown and his black wings and tail, barred with white, were a perfect protection.

"There's Mr. Hawk sailing around and around up in the sky. He's looking for me, I guess," thought the Hoopoe, "but he can't find me, even with his sharp eyes. I'll just flatten out



"I'm Mr. Hoopoe From the Great Desert," Replied the Bird.

my body on the sand and keep perfectly still. He'll go away in a minute without his dinner. Oh, I'm quite safe, but safety doesn't come first with me. No, sir, I want to make a noise. Perhaps if I tried and tried, I might be able to get out a decent whoop, but I ain't wise here with that pesky hawk about. I believe I'll go into the Jungle where it's cool and quiet and practice a bit."

Off flew the dissatisfied Hoopoe into the Jungle. On and on between the great trees with their big dewy leaves, in and out of the tangled Jungle Vines, across the Yellow River and through the Winding Way he went, looking for a good place to stop and begin his singing lesson.

"Here's the very spot," cried he. "It's all cleared out and there's no

body around. Oh, excuse me, sir; I thought I was alone. I hope I'm not intruding," as he caught sight of a tiny fairy dressed all in green.

"Intruding? Dear me, dear me, I should say not," chuckled the little fellow, smiling from ear to ear. "I'm Cheerups, and I just love visitors. Why, I stay at home almost all the time so as not to miss anyone. May I ask your name, sir?"

"I'm Mr. Hoopoe from the Great Desert," replied the bird, puffing out his feathers. "You'll find me in 'Who's Who Among the Hoopoes' any time you care to look, sir. I was just trying to find a quiet place for a little vocal practice. You see, I'm not satisfied with my voice. You'll agree that the quality is splendid when you hear me, but I want more volume. Will it disturb you if I begin right away?"

"Begin by all means, Mr. Hoopoe; nothing could please me better. Besides, I might be able to help you," cried Cheerups eagerly. "I am quite a judge of music. Why, I used to give lessons to the Cricket children and Mr. Screech Owl, and once I trained a chorus of bees. Buzzy Bumblebee had a wonderful bass."

With such encouragement, Mr. Hoopoe began to sing, but it was a poor attempt. Cheerups knew right away that it wouldn't do. Such a small, squeaky sound wasn't impressive at all. No, indeed, it wouldn't do!

"Your method of singing is all wrong if it's volume you want, Mr. Hoopoe," said Cheerups. "Now just puff out the sides of your neck, then hammer your beak three times on the ground, and you'll make as big a sound as anyone could wish. Every time you strike the ground with your beak some of the air in your throat will escape, and that will make the noise."

"Three times on the ground, did you say?" asked Mr. Hoopoe, puffing out his neck and looking about to burst. Then three times he rapped the ground with his beak, and out on the morning air rang three loud clear calls.

"Hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo," screamed that delighted bird. "My, but that's fine," he gasped, when he could get his breath. "It was hard work, but it was worth it; and I'll tell everybody in the Jungle who wants singing lessons to come to you. You are a wonderful teacher, Mr. Cheerups. How glad I am that I dropped in."

Then "hoo-hoo-hoo" came fainter and fainter the sound through the Jungle, as happy Mr. Hoopoe hopped away, blowing his own horn.

(By Little, Brown & Co.)

THE WHY of SUPERSTITIONS

By H. IRVING KING

EYELASHES AND WISHES

ONE way to "get your wish" is to place an eyelash—or "eyewinker" as it is sometimes called—on the back of your hand and blow it off. If it flies off at the first puff you give it you will get your wish. Another is to put an eyelash down your back, wishing as you do so; and still another is to place the eyelash on your finger and, as you wish, carry the finger three times around your head and then throw the "winker" over your shoulder. Some people, instead of trying to blow the eyelash off the back of the hand, try to knock it off by striking the hand with the other. This superstition is common in various sections of the country.

Its origin is to be looked for in the far days of the lost gods and in that primitive idea which considered the hair as a vital and integral part of the possessor so that it was often offered in sacrifice, sometimes even as a substitute for the sacrifice of the man himself. The eyelash is a hair and it comes from the eye; and the eye was one of the symbols of Osiris, the great god of the Egyptians. Therefore the eyelash is offered as a sacrifice to Osiris that he may be propitious to the wish of the suppliant.

(By McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

What's in a Name?

By MILDRED MARSHALL

Facts about your name; its history; meaning; whence it was derived; significance; your lucky day, lucky jewel

(By Little, Brown & Co.)

A LINE O' CHEER

By John Kendrick Bangs

F. AND C.

BUY all the Stocks in OH you will.

With Steel and Coal your coffers fill.

But as for me I speculate in F. and C.

Whose dividends are based on profits without ends.

That come from dealings fair and clear

In goodly FELLOWSHIP AND CHEER.

(By McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)



(By McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)