

The BLACK GANG

By CYRIL MCNEILE
SAPPER

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"BULLDOG" AGAIN

SYNOPSIS.—To a gathering of anarchists in Barking, London suburb, Zaboloff, 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. He is interrupted by the men he is describing (the Black Gang), who break up the meeting, sentencing some of the participants to condign punishment and carrying away others. A memorandum found on Zaboloff gives an address in Hoxton, which the leader of the attacking party considers of importance. Sir Bryan Johnstone, director of criminal investigation, hears from Inspector McIver, sent to arrest Zaboloff the night before, of his discomfiture. He had been seized and chloroformed and his raid frustrated.

CHAPTER II—Continued

"Great Scott! I hope not," cried Hugh in alarm. "Phyllis gave me complete instructions about the brutes before she toddled off. I make a noise like an ant's egg, and drop them in the sink every morning. No, old lad of the village, it is something of vast import: a stain upon the escutcheon of your force. Last night—let us whisper it in Gath—I dined and further supped not wisely but too well. In fact I deeply regret to admit that I became a trifle blotto—not to say tanked. Of course it wouldn't have happened if Phyllis had been propping up the jolly old home, don't you know; but she's away in the country with the nightingales and slugs and things. Well, as I say, in the young hours of the morning I thought I'd totter along home. I'd been with some birds, male birds, Tumkins—he stared sternly at Sir Bryan, while McIver stiffened into rigid horror at such an incredible nickname—"and when I left it was about 2 a. m. Well, I wandered along through Leicester square, and stopped just outside Scott's to let one of those watering carts water my head for me. While I was lying in the road, steaming at the brow, a motor car went past, and it stopped in Piccadilly circus."

McIver's air of irritation vanished suddenly, and a quick glance passed between him and Sir Bryan. "Nothing much you observe in that, Tumkins," he burred on, quite unconscious of the sudden attention of his hearers. "But wait, old lad—I haven't got to the motto yet. From this car there stepped large numbers of men: at least, so it seemed to me, and you must remember I'd recently had a shampoo. And just as I got abreast of them they lifted out another warrior, who appeared to me to be unconscious. They put him on the pavement and got back into the car again just as I tottered alongside."

"What ho! souls," I murmured, "what is this and that, so to speak?" "Binged, old bean, badly binged," said the driver of the car. "We're leaving him there to cool."

"And with that the car drove off. There was I, Tumkins, in a partially binged condition alone in Piccadilly circus with a bird in a completely binged condition."

"How now," I said to myself. "Shall I go and induce you water merchant to return—as a matter of fact I was beginning to feel I could do with another whack myself—or shall I leave you here—as your pals observed—to cool?"

"I bent over him as I pondered this knotty point, and as I did so, Tumkins, I became aware of a strange smell."

Hugh paused dramatically and selected another cigarette, while Sir Bryan flashed a quick glance of warning at McIver, who was obviously bursting with suppressed excitement.

"A peculiar and sticky odor, Tumkins," resumed the speaker with maddening deliberation. "A strange and elusive perfume. For a long while it eluded me—that smell: I just couldn't place it. And then suddenly I got it: right in the middle, old boy—plumb in the center of the windpipe. It was chloroform: the bird wasn't drunk—he was doped."

Completely exhausted, Hugh lay back in his chair, and once again Sir Bryan flashed a warning glance at his exasperated subordinate.

"Would you be able to recognize any of the men in the car if you saw them again?" he asked quietly.

"I should know the driver," answered Hugh after profound thought. "And the bird beside him. But not the others."

"What did you do then?" asked Sir Bryan.

"Well, I brought the brain to bear," answered Hugh, "and decided there was nothing to do. He was doped, and I was bottled—so by a unanimous casting vote of one—I toddled off home. But Tumkins, while I was feeding the goldfish this morning—or rather after lunch—conscience was gnawing at my vitals. And after profound meditation, and consulting with my fellow Denny, I decided that the call of duty was clear. I came to you, Tumkins, as a child, files to its moth-

er. Who better, I thought, than old Tum-tum to listen to my maidenly secrets? And so . . .

"One moment, Hugh," Sir Bryan held up his hand. "Do you mind if I speak to Inspector McIver for a moment?"

"Anything you like, old lad," murmured Drummond. "But be merciful, remember my innocent wife in the country."

And silence settled on the room, broken only by the low-voiced conversation between McIver and his chief in the window. After a while a strangled snore from the chair announced that Drummond was ceasing to take an intelligent interest in things mundane.

"He's an extraordinary fellow, McIver," said Sir Bryan, glancing at the sleeper with a smile. "I've known him ever since we were boys at school. And he's not quite such a fool as he makes himself out. You remember that extraordinary case over the man Peterson a year or so ago. Well, it was he who did the whole thing. His complete disability to be cunning utterly defeated that master-crook, who was always looking for subtlety that wasn't there. And of course his strength is absolutely phenomenal."

"I know, sir," said McIver doubtfully, "but would he consent to take on such a job—and do exactly as he was told?"

They were both looking out of the window, while in the room behind them the heavy breathing of the sleeper rose and fell monotonously. And when the whole audience is asleep it ceases to be necessary to talk in undertones. Which was why Sir Bryan and the inspector during the



"My Business Won't Take You a Minute," Sir Bryan.

next ten minutes discussed certain matters of import which they would not have discussed through megaphones at the Savoy. They concerned Hugh and other things, and the other things particularly were of interest. And they continued discussing these other things until, with a dreadful noise like a racing motor back-firing, the sleeper sat up in his chair and stretched himself.

"Tumkins," he cried. "I have committed sacrilege. I have slept in the Holy of Holies. Have you decided on my fate? Am I to be shot at dawn?"

Sir Bryan left the window and sat down at his desk. For a moment or two he rubbed his chin thoughtfully with his left hand, as if trying to make up his mind.

"Would you like to do a job of work, old man?"

Hugh started as if he had been stung by a wasp, and Sir Bryan smiled.

"Not real work," he said reassuringly. "But by mere luck last night you saw something which Inspector McIver would have given a good deal to see. Or to be more accurate, you saw some men whom McIver particularly wants to meet."

"Those blokes in the car you mean?" cried Hugh brightly.

"Those blokes in the car," agreed the other. "Incidentally, I may say there was a good deal more in that little episode than you think: and after consultation with McIver I have decided to tell you a certain amount about it, because you can help us, Hugh. You see you're one up on McIver: you have at any rate seen those men and he hasn't. Moreover, you say you could recognize two of them again."

"Good heavens! Tumkins," murmured Hugh aghast, "don't say you want me to tramp the streets of London looking for them."

Sir Bryan smiled.

"We'll spare you that," he answered. "But I'd like you to pay attention to what I'm going to tell you. Last night a very peculiar thing happened to McIver. He and some of his men in the normal course of duty surrounded a certain house in which were some people we wanted to lay our

hands on. To be more accurate there was one man there whom we wanted. He'd been shadowed ever since he'd landed in England that morning, shadowed the whole way from docks to the house. And sure enough when McIver and his men surrounded the house, there was our friend and all his pals in one of the downstairs rooms. It was then that this peculiar thing happened. I gather from McIver that he heard the noise of an owl hooting, also a faint scuffle and a curse. And after that he heard nothing more. He was chloroformed from behind, and went straight out of the picture."

"Great Scott!" murmured Hugh, staring incredulously at McIver. "What an amazing thing!"

"And this is where you come in, Hugh," continued Sir Bryan.

"Me!" Hugh sat up abruptly. "Why me?"

"One of the men inside the room was an interesting fellow known as Flash Jim. He is a burglar of no mean repute, though he is quite ready to tackle any sort of job which carries money with it. And when McIver, having recovered himself in the morning, ran Flash Jim to ground in one of his haunts he was quite under the impression that the men who had doped him and the other officers were pals of Flash Jim. But after he'd talked to him he changed his mind. All Flash Jim could tell him was that on the previous night he and some friends had been discussing business at this house. He didn't attempt to deny that. He went on to say that suddenly the room had been filled with a number of masked men, and that he'd had a clip over the back of the head which knocked him out. After that presumably he was given a whiff of chloroform to keep him quiet, and the next thing he remembers is being kicked back into activity by the policeman at—"

"at Piccadilly circus."

"Good Lord!" said Hugh dazedly.

"Then that bird I saw last night sleeping it off on the pavement was Flash Jim."

"Precisely," answered Sir Bryan. "But what is far more to the point, old man, is that the two birds you think you would be able to recognize and who were in the car, are two of the masked men who first of all laid out McIver and subsequently surrounded Flash Jim and his pals inside."

"But what did they want to do that for?" asked Hugh in bewilderment.

"That is just what we want to find out," replied Sir Bryan. "As far as we can see at the moment they are not criminals in the accepted sense of the word. They flogged two of the men who were there last night, and there are no two men in England who more richly deserved it. They kidnapped two others, one of whom was the man we particularly wanted. Then to wind up, they planted Flash Jim as I've told you, let the others go, and brought McIver and all his men back to McIver's house, where they left them to cool on the pavement. And what I want to know is this. If we give you warning would you care to go with McIver the next time he has any job on, where he thinks it is likely this gang may turn up? We have a pretty shrewd idea as to the type of thing they specialize in."

Hugh passed his hand dazedly over his forehead.

"Sort of mother's help you mean," and McIver frowned horribly. "While the bird biffs McIver, I biff the bird. Is that the notion?"

"That is the notion," agreed Sir Bryan. "Of course you'll have to do exactly what McIver tells you, and the whole thing is most unusual. But in view of the special features of the case . . . What is it, Miss Forbes?"

He glanced up at his secretary, who was standing in the doorway, with a slight frown.

"He insists on seeing you at once, Sir Bryan."

She came forward with a card, which Sir Bryan took.

"Charles Latter." The frown deepened. "What the deuce does he want?"

The answer was supplied by the gentleman himself, who appeared at that moment in the doorway. He was evidently in a state of great agitation and Sir Bryan rose.

"I am engaged at the moment, Mr. Latter," he said coldly.

"My business won't take you a minute, Sir Bryan," he cried. "But what I want to know is this. Is this country civilized or is it not? Look at what I received by the afternoon post."

If "Bulldog" Drummond is going to mix up in the case things certainly will be interesting. And who's Charles Latter?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Enviably Immunity

To the envy of the shoplifter, time steals on and cannot be arrested.

THE FUTURE

By DOUGLAS MALLOCH

IF THAT strange lady that we call The Future came to you and me revealing to our vision all The long, long years that are to be— Yes, robbed of all her mystery If she would let us read the days That are to dawn, reveal the ways We yet must go, think not that man Would then be any happier than He is, who now the road must tread Not knowing what may lie ahead.

How poor the future joys would seem! No, joys must come as now they do: The joys worth having we must dream, There must be much of waiting, too. If all were all revealed to you Then men would miss the greatest joy: Their busy fingers to employ To fashion something. Better wait For joy, although it come too late, Than have our joy, and have it done, And not a hope ahead of one.

How great the load of grief would be If all the grief we are to bear Were hidden not in mystery, The present has enough of care— Oh, may the future always wear A garment like a clouded moon. Seek not to know too much too soon, For who would care to face the years Who knew the sum of all their tears?

If that strange lady that we call The Future should reveal them all. (© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

YOUR Last Name

IS IT VERNON?

VERNON is best known to Americans because of its association with the home of Washington on the banks of the Potomac—Mount Vernon. Few persons realize that this home of Washington was named in honor of William Vernon, a staunch patriot with whom Washington corresponded. His home was in old Newport, where he was the host of many distinguished men during the Revolutionary period.

Vernon is an old English surname usually said to have had its origin in Normandy. In fact the Vernons of Edgland claim descent from one who went to England with William the Norman Conqueror. Seemingly there are several places in Normandy or other parts of France that might have given rise to this surname Vernon.

HOWITT—This, like Hewett and Howlett, is from Hugh, made popular as a first name in England and France by two or three saints of the name.

PICKFORD—This is a compound of Pick and Ford. Pick here may be an old first name so that the name would have the significance of Pick's Ford. Or it may be that it is derived from pick, a form of peak or pike, meaning hill. Then the name would have the significance of hill Ford, and the first to bear it would have been so called because of their dwelling near a place of this description. (© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

WHO SAID

"He travels safest on a dark night who travels lightest."

THE resolute character of Hernando Cortez, the author of the words quoted above, was never better demonstrated than during his conquest of Mexico. That expedition was, in reality, an offshoot of the expedition of Velasquez to the new world.

Cortez had accompanied Velasquez on his expedition to the island of Cuba. Following the conquest of the island he had sought permission to explore the mainland of Mexico, and it was granted. When he landed he persuaded his men to burn their ships in order that they might not be tempted to return before victory had been achieved.

In his march toward the kingdom of Montezuma, the most powerful in Mexico, Cortez was able to defeat the smaller Indian tribes opposing his advance. The success which he achieved alarmed Montezuma, who forthwith set about making peace with the Spaniards. With his court he received Cortez with the greatest courtesy and made him lavish presents. For days the Spaniards tarried in the country of the Aztecs and gave themselves over to enjoyment.

The wealth which was displayed before the envious eyes of Cortez and his men, however, was too much for them to withstand. The Aztecs were treacherously attacked and their city destroyed and their wealth was confiscated to enrich the coffers of Spain.

In 1528 Cortez returned to Spain to face those who had accused him of treason during his absence. He was coldly received. Once more he returned to America as a powerful noble, but without any position to command. In 1540 he again journeyed to Spain but the sovereign received him with the utmost neglect. Seven years later the great explorer died. Wayne D. McMurray. (© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

In the United States more than 2,000 women in 1,977 cities are employed as executives in banks and trust companies.

In the JUNGLE

With Cheerups and the Quixies
By Grace Bliss Stewart

THE ODD OKAPI

"I AM going to call on Cheerups this morning," said Ollie Okapi to Mrs. Okapi, with a determined air.

"Well, I don't see why you shouldn't go, my dear," replied Mrs. Okapi, much to Ollie's surprise. "I should think he would be delighted to see you. This Cheerups person may be wonderful and helpful and all that, but when it comes to curiosities, there isn't one that I know of who can hold a candle, or a firefly I mean, to you, Ollie. You are the most oddest—"

"The oddest my dear, the oddest! I do wish you would be careful of



"Make Yourself Quite at Home," Greeted a Small Voice.

your African," said Ollie gently, for he was feeling very much flattered. "Perhaps it would be a treat to him to see me, now that you speak of it. Why shouldn't I do folks a favor once in a while, when it's so easy? That's a very good idea, indeed," and Ollie Okapi strutted up and down as well as he could for the Great Trees and the Twisty Vines which got in his way. "How do you think I look; all right to start, my dear?"

"Oh, yes, you look very handsome, Ollie," cried Mrs. Okapi, turning on him admiring eyes. "But don't stay away too late or I shall worry."

"No, I won't, Mother; good-by!" and with a whisk of his tail and a frisk of his heels, the odd Okapi dashed away through the Woods on his journey to Cheerups.

"I don't believe it's very far," thought he to himself, "for the Jungle and the Deep Forest are really the same thing. I ought to be finding him soon. Why, here's a nice little clear place to stop and look around."

"It certainly is, sir; make yourself quite at home," greeted a small jolly voice. "I'm Cheerups and on the lookout for adventures this morning, but really, I hardly expected—"

"No, of course you didn't, Mr. Cheerups," shouted Ollie joyously. "I just knew you would be too surprised for anything when you saw me. But you haven't hurt my feelings a bit, sir. You couldn't be expected to know about me, because I have only been recently discovered by a famous explorer. Nobody really knows anything of my habits except that I live in the densest part of the Deep Forest and seem to go about with my mate only. Two's company," say I. Okapi is my name, Ollie Okapi to my friends, and I hope you will be one of them, sir."

"Thank you, thank you, but—but—" stammered Cheerups. "It's your looks, Ollie, that are so confusing. You are something like a giraffe, something like an antelope, something like a zebra and something like an ox, and I can't decide where one begins and another leaves off."

By this time Ollie was too pleased and excited to control himself. He pranced, capered, shook his tail and wiggled his ears with pride and joy. "I can't blame you, sir," roared he in a boastful tone. "I guess most anyone would be astonished to see the reddish coat of an ox, the striped legs of a zebra, the horns of a giraffe and the general shape of an antelope all belonging to one animal. Now that I have given you a treat, sir, I think I must be going."

"Don't hurry, Ollie," said Cheerups, who had recovered his composure by this time. "But of course, if you think Mrs. Okapi would be worried, you'd better be off. Remember, though,

"No matter how fine one's looks or dress, a boasting manner makes them less."

"Good morning!"

"Now I wonder what he meant," mused Ollie Okapi, as he scampered away through the trees. (© by Little, Brown & Co.)

THE WHY of SUPERSTITIONS

By H. IRVING KING

OUIJA BOARD

THE ouija board is not new—many of us remember its immediate predecessor, the planchette. But its pedigree can be traced far back of the planchette, its first "ancestors of record" being, apparently, the device used by Hilarius and his fellow conspirators to discover who would succeed the Roman emperor, Valens, who died A. D. 378. Hilarius, under torture, described the device used as a little table with three legs bearing a disc on which were inscribed the twenty-four letters commonly used in the Latin alphabet. The diviner held over this table a ring suspended by a thread and the ring, swaying first to one and then to another of the letters, spelled out the answer to the question asked of "Weejee."

With Hilarius the ring spelled out "Theod—" whereupon one of those present cried out "Theodorus." This brought Theodorus and the ouija party to the executioner. But, nevertheless, Valens was succeeded by Theodosius, thus vindicating the ouija of the day in the minds of the populace.

The selection of the letters, as every sensible person knows, results from unconscious muscular movement on the part of the operator—to which a suspended ring was even more responsive than the device used at present. The rest is merely a survival of the "spiritism" of primitive man who sought to account for natural phenomena by ascribing it to supernatural agencies and thus surrounded himself with invisible spirits which he suspected of constantly interfering in his affairs and which he was constantly trying to bring under his own control by "trick and device."

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"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

NELLIE

THERE is considerable room for doubt in assuming that Nellie is a derivative or a contraction of stately Eleanor. Though some etymologists claim that the former name is evolved in the lengthy process between the original Helen and the final Lina, there are two other sources from which Nellie might well be sprung without such a formidable history of derivation.

The Dutch have a name which they call Nelle, meaning "horn," which is pronounced the same as our Nellie and might easily be the direct progenitor of this popular little name. For those who reject this derivation, there is the German Nelli which has wide vogue in all countries under Teutonic influence. It was evolved through the quaint English Petronella, a feminine name given in honor of Saint Peter.

The first Petronella was said to have been his daughter. For that reason the name was exceedingly popular in Spain as Petronilla. In Norway it made its appearance as Petronille and was shortened to Nille, a name which corresponds very closely to our Nellie.

The bloodstone is Nellie's talismanic gem. It will preserve her health and protect her from diseases, especially from those which affect the blood. Tuesday is her lucky day and 1 her lucky number.

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A LINE O' CHEER

By John Kendrick Bangs

THE QUESTION

"Who goes there?" "Mr. Room."

"No admittance. No more room."

"Who goes there?" "Mr. Care."

"Keep right on—no room to spare."

"Who goes there?" "Brother Cheer."

"Come in, Brother—come right here."

"Bring your family, servants, too. There is always room for you. And what friends are in your party? Will receive a welcome hearty."

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