

# THE VAGRANT DUKE

By GEORGE GIBBS

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## THIS BEGINS THE STORY

Peter Nicholasvitch, Russian Grand Duke, cousin of the Czar, in a magnificent robe in a magnificent room, playing Chopin's "Revolutionary Etude," when one of his servants informs him that revolutionists have broken out in the woods and are killing and burning, and he is advised to make his escape. The Grand Duke refuses and addresses the mob when it arrives.

## AND HERE IT CONTINUES

The keen eyes of Boris saw farther through the forest than those of most men, but in a moment those of the Grand Duke Peter confirmed him. Figures were moving in the twilight, along the roads and by-ways. They seemed like a great river which had flooded over its banks seeking new levels. Behind them the flames from the woods and the shouting of the mob came rapidly, and above the roar of the flames came the sound of voices singing the Russian version of the "Marseillaise."

## CHAPTER I

### Introducing Peter Nichols

THE British refugee ship Phrygia was about to sail for Constantinople, where her unfortunate passengers were to be transferred to other vessels sailing for Liverpool and New York. After some difficulties the refugees made his way aboard her and announced his identity to the captain. If he had expected to be received with the honor due to one of his rank and station, he was quickly undeceived. For Captain Blahford, a man of rough manners, concealing a gentle heart, looked him over critically, examined his credentials (letters he had happened to have about him), and then smiled grimly.

## THE YOUNG LADY ACROSS THE WAY

But as the young Grand Duke began to speak the voices of the most rabid of the peasants were hushed for a moment by the others. "My friends and my children," he began, "one word before you do something that you will forever regret. I am your friend. I am young—of the new generation. I have kept abreast of the new thought of the time and I believe in the new life that is for you and for us all. I have proved it to you by bringing the new life to Zukovo by peaceful means, by friendliness and brotherhood while other parts of Russia nearby are in agony and darkness."

## THE TOONERVILLE TROLLEY THAT MEETS ALL THE TRAINS

"No! No! No! SKIPPER! BACK TO THE LEFT IT LOOKS LIKE ELLER'S BARN BURNING"

## SCHOOL DAYS

FRANKIE: IF YOU AND MERRY DON'T STOP RIDING ON THAT THUNDER BED I'LL BE UP THERE WITH THE RAZOR SHARP! YOU'RE KNOCKING OFF THE SETTING ROOMS! SETTLE, MOM, OR I'LL COME UP THERE!

## PETEY—Goo'by, Good Luck

"IT'S TOO BAD I COULDN'T BRING MY YACHT UP HERE IN THE MOUNTAINS—I'D LOVE TO TAKE YOU FOR A SAIL"

## THE CLANCY KIDS—Timmie Has a Soft Heart

TIMMIE, IT'S DARK NOW. SUPPOSE YOU GO OUT AND KILL THAT ROOSTER FOR TOMORROW'S DINNER.

## SOMEBODY'S STENOG—This Clerk's a Heavy Thinker

MISS O'FLAGE, DID YOU EVER STOP TO THINK OF ALL THE THINGS THAT ARE MADE OF WOOD? IT'S WONDERFUL! POSTS, DOORS, CHAIRS, TABLES, BOXES, HOUSES, BOATS—

who first noticed the blood dripping from his finger ends. "It is nothing," said the Grand Duke. Boris Rylov watched the path down which they had come. They could hear the crackling of the flames of the Hunting Lodge to the southward and the cries of the mob at the Castle, but there was no sign of pursuit. Perhaps they were satisfied to appease their madness with a little and fire. Half an hour later Boris pointed backward. A new glow had risen, a redder, deeper glow. "The Castle, Master—" wailed Vassil. Peter Nicholasvitch drew rein at a cross-path, watched for a moment and then turned to his companions, for he had reached a decision. "My good friends," he said gently, "our ways part here."

But he was resolute. "I am going on alone. I will not involve you further in my misfortunes. You can do nothing for me—nor I anything for you except this. Vassil knows. In the hall below the wine-cellar, hidden away, are some objects of value. They will not find them. When they go away you will return. The visit will repay you. Divide what is there into equal parts—plates and gold. As for me—forget me. Farewell!"

They saw that he meant what he said. He offered these few faithful servants his hand and they kissed his fingers—a last act of fealty and devotion and in a moment they stood listening to the diminishing hoof-beats of Vera as the young master went out of their lives. "May God preserve him," muttered Vassil. "Amen," said Boris Rylov and Leo Garshin.

"We've got room for one more—and that's about all." "I have no money—" began the refugee. "Oh, that's all right," shrugged the Captain. "You're not the only one. We've a cargo of twenty princes, thirty-two countesses to set up new nation somewhere. Your 'Highness' is the only Duke that has reached us up to the present speaking, and if there are any others, they'll have to be brisk for we're sailing in twenty minutes. The matter-of-fact tones with which the unemotional Britisher made this announcement restored the lost sense of humor of the Russian refugees, and he broke into a grim laugh.

"An embarrassment of riches," remarked the Grand Duke. "Riches," granted the Captain, "in a manner of speaking, yes. Money is not so plentiful. But jooks! Good God! There must be half a ton of diamonds, rubies and emeralds aboard. All they're got left, most of 'em, but complaints and nervousness. Give me a cargo of wheat and I'm your man," growled the Captain. "It stays put and doesn't move." "You're not expert" any val suite aboard the Phrygia, are ye?"

"No. A hammock for'd will be good enough for me." "That's the way I mean to talk. Good God! An man to man, ask you—with Counts throwin' cigarette butts around an' princesses cryin' all over my clean white decks an' what's a self-respectin' skipper to do? But I've my orders to fetch the odd lot to Constantinople, an' fetch 'em I will. Oh! They're odd—all right. Go below, sir, an' have a look at 'em."

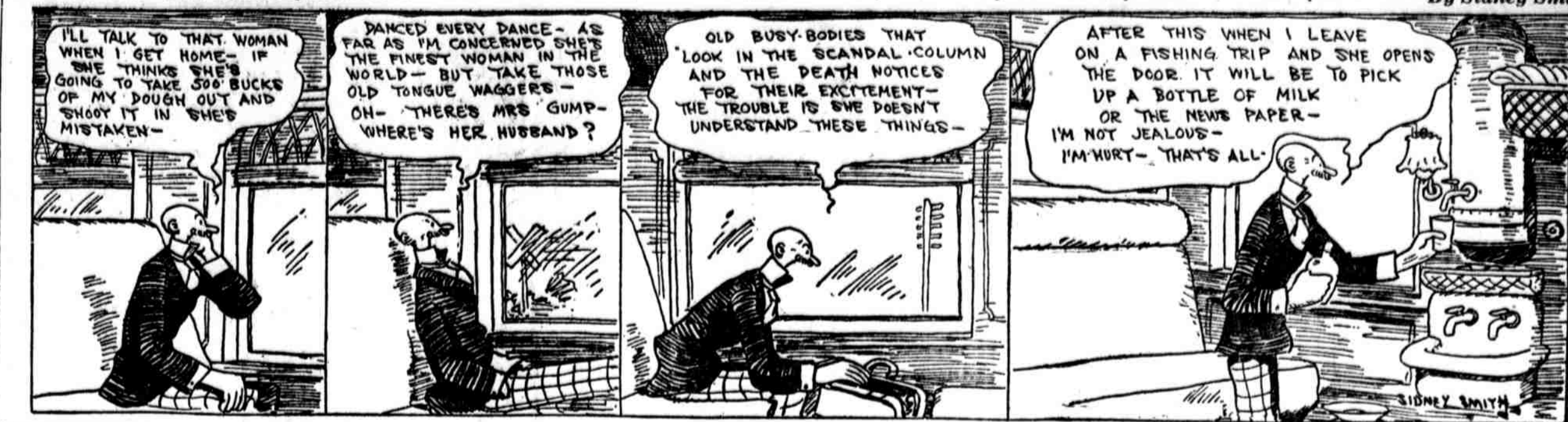
But Peter Nicholasvitch shook his head. He had been doing a deal of quiet thinking in those starry night-voids upon the Dnieper, and he had worked out his problem alone. "No, thank you," he said quietly, "if you don't mind, I think I'd rather preserve my incognito."

"Incognito, is it? Oh, very well, suit yourself. And what will I be callin' Your Highness?" "Peter Nichols," said the Grand Duke with a smile, "it's as good as any other."

"Right you are, Peter Nichols. Lay for'd and tell the bos'n to show you up to my cabin."

# THE GUMPS—The Green-Eyed Monster

By Sidney Smith



# SOMEBODY'S STENOG—This Clerk's a Heavy Thinker

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By Hayward



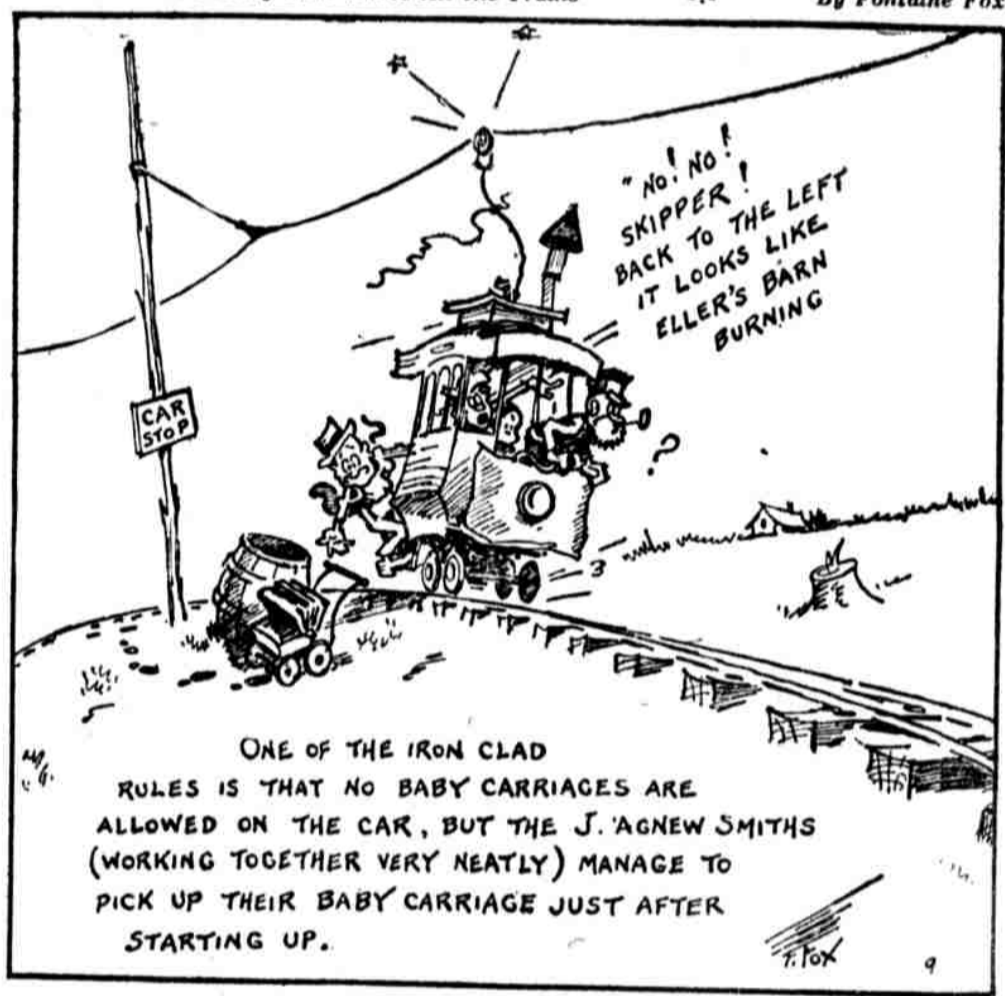
# The Young Lady Across the Way

# The Toonerville Trolley That Meets All the Trains

By Fontaine Fox

# SCHOOL DAYS

By DWIG



The young lady across the way says the hottest days, so far as one's feelings are concerned, are those when the humidity is above 100 and still it doesn't rain.

ONE OF THE IRON CLAD RULES IS THAT NO BABY CARRIAGES ARE ALLOWED ON THE CAR, BUT THE J. AGNEW SMITHS (WORKING TOGETHER VERY NEATLY) MANAGE TO PICK UP THEIR BABY CARRIAGE JUST AFTER STARTING UP.

# PETEY—Goo'by, Good Luck

By C. A. Voight



# THE CLANCY KIDS—Timmie Has a Soft Heart

By Percy L. Crosby



CONTINUED TOMORROW