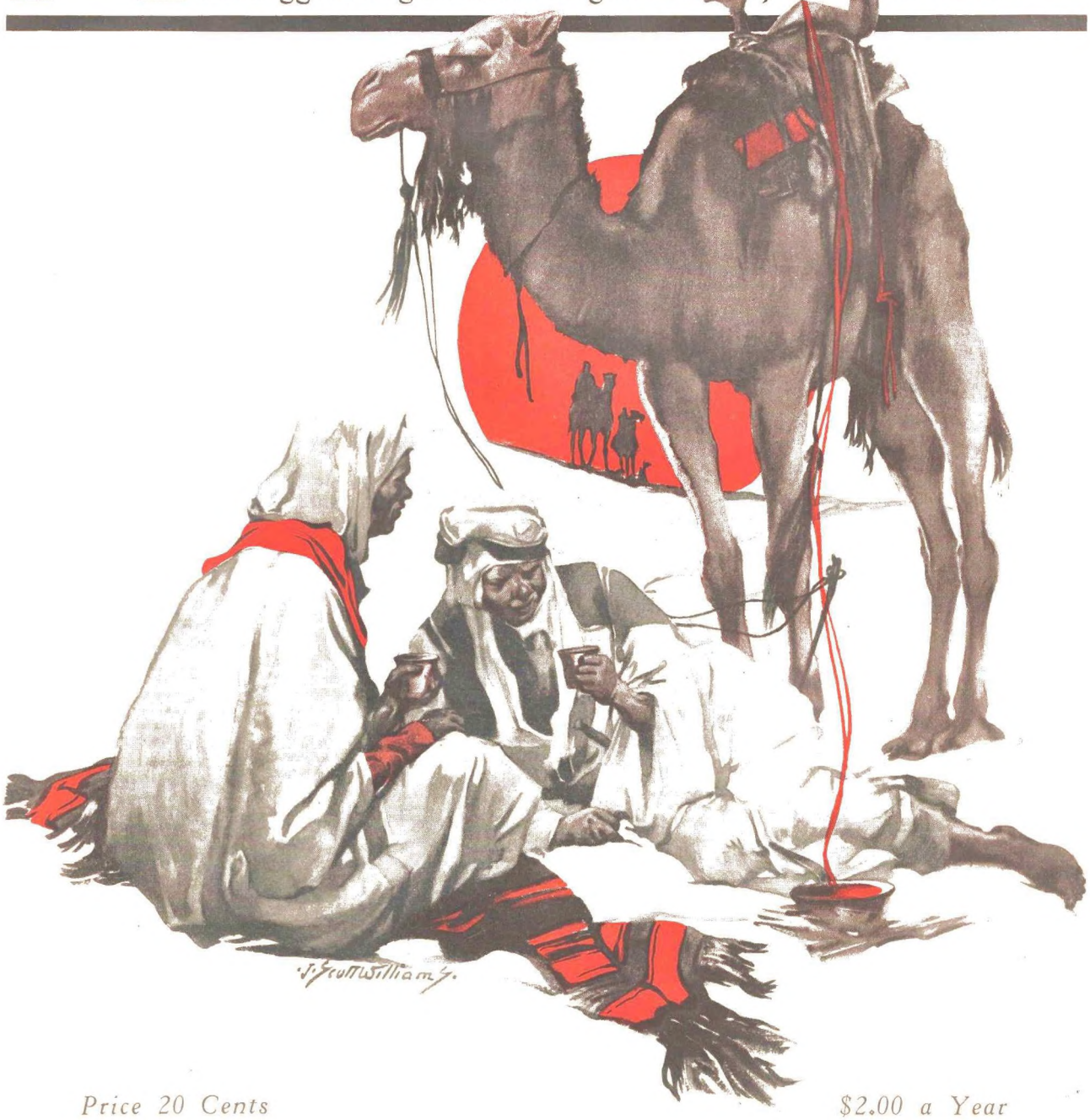
The August

American Boy

"The Biggest, Brightest, Best Magazine to[illegible] the World"



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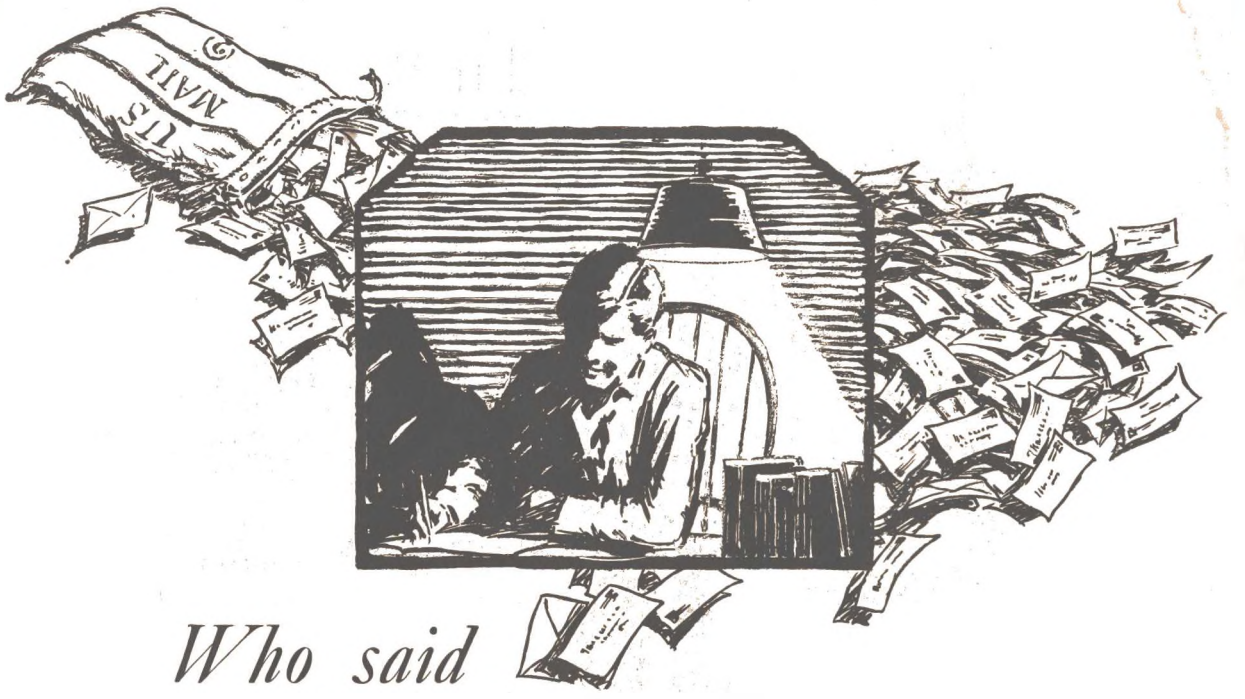

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G—A. B. 6-26

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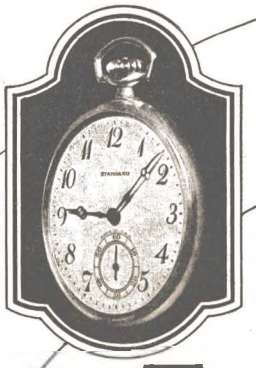

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Volume 27 AUGUST, 1926 Number 10

The Tattooed Man

By Howard Pease

Illustrated by Anton Otto Fischer

SEA FOG hazed like spindrift along the San Francisco water front. Tod Moran, coming from the echoing halls of the Ferry Building to the Embarcadero, paused uncertainly upon the damp pavement.

About him were the strange muffled sounds of a February morning when the city is smothered in mist; the distant clang of cable cars, the hoarse cries of newsboys, the dull rumble of trucks passing in the gloom like ghosts. Tod noticed a policeman standing near-by, and approached him.

"Can you please tell me," he asked, clutching nervously the book of sea adventures he had been reading on train and ferry, "how to get to Pier 43? I want the European-Pacific Steamship Company."

"Never heard of that line," the officer replied; "but you'll find Pier 43 straight down the docks to your right. A bad neighborhood — that. Know anyone there?"

Tod shook his head. "No—nobody."

The officer surveyed him, noting the boy's worn clothes, which tightly fitted his lithe young frame, his sandy hair beneath its cap and the eyes, clear and grey, that shone keenly from his tanned face. "Oh, a stranger to San Francisco, eh?"

"Yes, sir; I just got in from upriver this morning. I'm looking for my brother. He works for the European-Pacific Company—or used to."

The policeman gave him a quizzical glance. "Don't you know?"

"I haven't heard from my brother for six months. He was purser on a freighter." The boy's voice grew husky. "I'm afraid—something has happened."

The policeman waved him on. "Straight down the Embarcadero—almost to Fisherman's Wharf."

With a word of thanks, Tod Moran turned away. He walked slowly on, his eyes straining ahead into the dripping greyness. He passed great open doorways leading to covered piers where lay ships from the seven seas. He read the names as he passed. The China Line. The Java-Pacific S. S. Co. Great steamers that plied to and from the Orient. He glimpsed huge cargoes in the dim warehouses. Occasional figures passed: sailors on shore leave from battleships at anchor in the Bay, swaying seamen from Australian windjammers, groups of chattering Orientals from the Toyo Kisen Kaisha Line.

At number thirty-nine, the covered piers ended. Beyond lay open docks. Tod hurried forward. Ahead of him lay Pier 43.

A wharf office, small and ancient, first detached itself from the pearled obscurity. Tod drew near and read over the door:

THE EUROPEAN-PACIFIC S. S. Co.

Now that he had arrived at his destination he was reluctant to enter. He walked back and forth, debating what he should say to the manager. After all, perhaps his fears were groundless; his brother might have had a bad passage out, and in port, of course, a purser was always busy. Yet Neil had never before failed to write. Perhaps he was ill with fever again—that jungle fever which he had contracted upon a voyage up the Amazon for coffee. With renewed anxiety Tod returned to the office and opened its begrimed door.

> *San Francisco, Tue. February 24.*
> ***FOR MARSEILLES AND GENOA: European-Pacific Co's Stmr ARABY, Capt Ramsey --Freight Only Leaves Powell St (Pier 43) at ...pm. Freight received daily to 2 pm day of sailing. Bills of Lading signed to 4 pm Freight agent Pier 43.***
> *San Francisco Shipping Guide*

BEHIND a counter facing the entrance, a bronze-haired girl sat typing, her slender hands flying deftly over the keys. She glanced up with a questioning smile.

"Could I—could I see the manager?" Tod stammered.

"Mr. Swickard's outside just now," the girl answered. "Will you wait?"

Tod seated himself on a bench near the door. "Do you think the manager will be back soon?" he asked restlessly.

"Oh, yes; he's just outside on the *Araby*."

"Is that the ship?"

"Yes; you can find Mr. Swickard there—if it's very important."

"It is important," Tod rejoined. "I'm looking for my brother. It's been several months since I've heard from him."

The girl gave him a startled look. "Your brother?" she asked quickly. "What is his name?"

"Neil Moran."

Tod saw the blood drain suddenly from her face. Her glance fluttered past him out the door to the wharf; then she rose and came toward him. "Of course; you're Tod," she said softly, with a little catch in her voice. "He told me of you—often."

"Neil? You know my brother?" Tod questioned eagerly.

The girl glanced over her shoulder and raised a warning hand. "We've only a moment. . . . Don't let Mr. Swickard know I've been talking to you."

"Yes, but Neil! Where is he?" Unconsciously he lowered his voice. "What's happened?"

"I wish I knew. . . . Hush—Mr. Swickard!"

She slipped back to her desk, saying in a louder tone, "In just a moment. He's very busy this morning."

Tod looked up. The outer door had opened and the manager of the European-Pacific Company entered. Crossing to a desk, he hurriedly glanced through some papers. Tod watched him closely. He saw a slender, well-dressed man of thirty-five or forty, with sleek dark hair over eyes narrow and crafty.

"Mr. Swickard," said the girl, "a young man to see you."

"I'm busy, Miss Murray, as you see," snapped the manager. "What does he want?"

Tod spoke up. "I wanted to ask you about—my brother."

"Your brother?" The man turned to face the boy, his eyes narrowing. "Who are you?" he asked evenly. "What's your name?"

"Moran—Tod Moran, sir."

Mr. Swickard stared impassively, inquiringly.

"I came to ask you about my brother—about Neil," Tod faltered.

Mr. Swickard raised his eyebrows. "So Neil Moran has a brother! I didn't know he had any relatives."

"Oh, yes," said Tod. "There are just the two of us."

"Oh, I see."

Tod followed his glance to the girl at the typewriter. She was bending over her shorthand notes, but Tod knew that she was listening, watching.

Mr. Swickard frowned. "Come into my office, Moran. I'm sorry—but I have unpleasant news for you." He turned toward the glass door of his private office in the rear.

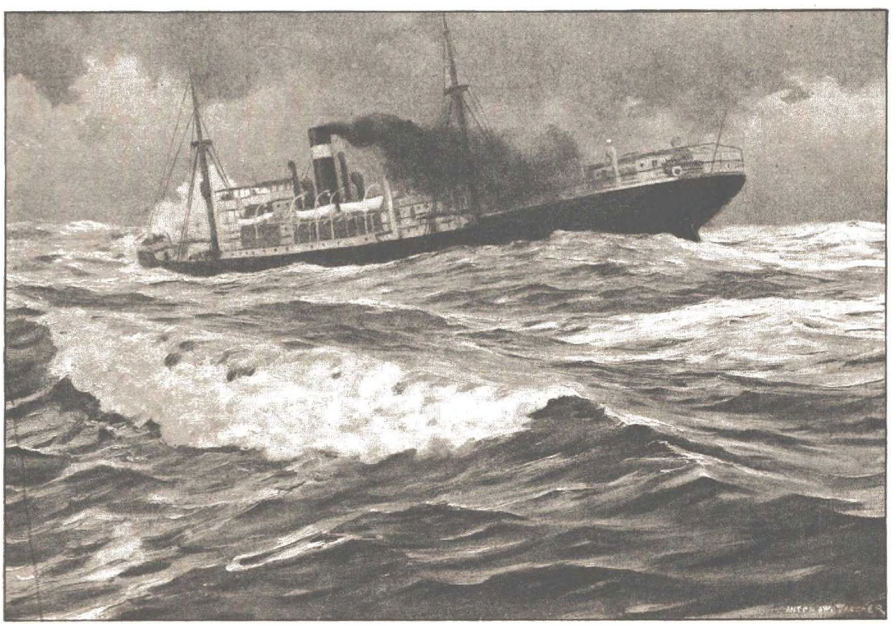
Tod shot a glance at the girl; in her tense attitude, he saw reflected the fear that clutched his heart. As he stumbled past her desk, the girl raised her head. She said not a word, but Tod read in her strained expression her warning: "Careful! Something's wrong. Find out!"

IN the little private office, Mr. Swickard seated himself and, swinging round, motioned Tod to a chair. "So you are Neil Moran's brother," he began. "Where do you live?"

Tod gulped. "At Stockton, on the San Joaquin. I've been going to high school there—and working."

"Your brother, I suppose, helped you—financially?"

"Yes, sir. I never earned quite enough to keep me going; so every month Neil sent me something. He wanted me to get an education. He was going to help me through the University, too."



The *Araby* was heading south toward warmer climes.

"Hm!" ejaculated Mr. Swickard. "Well, you probably won't be able to go on with your schooling—now."

"You mean—Neil? Something's happened to Neil?" Tod's hands trembled. "What is it, Mr. Swickard? Tell me—where is Neil?"

The man smiled coldly. "I'm sure I don't know, my boy, or I'd tell you. In fact, I'd like to get my hands on him—the cur!"

In his sudden relief, Tod scarcely noted the man's last word. "He's safe then?" he cried.

Mr. Swickard did not answer. In his eyes Tod saw bitter animosity. Bewildered, the boy rose and stepped back.

"What—what do you mean, Mr. Swickard?" he stammered with dry lips.

"Neil Moran has absconded," the manager rasped. "That's what I mean—he's run off with the ship's money!"

Tod choked. "It's a lie!" he cried hotly. "It's a lie, I tell you! Neil would never do that. I know it!"

"Now don't get excited, Moran," Mr. Swickard urged, smoothly. "Sit down and let's talk it over."

Tod did not sit down. He stood there, his head high. "All right, Mr. Swickard. Go on!" he challenged. "Tell me about it. I'm listening."

The manager coughed slightly. "It hurts me deeply," he began, "to inform one so young as you, Moran, of the guilt of a brother. But these are the facts. Your brother, as you know, was purser on our cargo carrier, the *Panama*. She sailed by way of the Canal for New York and Liverpool. I began to suspect your brother of crooked entries soon after. I cabled to England, but the ship had already departed. My agent there sent a wireless to the captain, explaining matters. Unfortunately he failed to act and unwittingly allowed your brother to escape at the next port of call." Mr. Swickard paused to light a cigar.

Tod, with fast-beating heart, watched the man puff slowly. "At what port, Mr. Swickard?" he asked in as calm a tone as he could muster.

"Bordeaux. His ship was bound for Mediterranean ports."

"Neil is in France, then?"

"I suppose so. We did not put the police upon his trail, though I believe now that we should have done so. He's only twenty-three or four, isn't he? Well, we thought perhaps he'd learned a lesson. You realize, of course, that he is finished as far as his future is concerned with ships out of San Francisco. Too bad."

Tod let the words sink in. Neil guilty of embezzlement? Never! Not if he knew him—and who knows a fellow better than a brother does! No, Tod was not convinced. He decided, however, to say nothing of this just then.

"It's queer that Neil hasn't dropped me a line from France," he reflected aloud. "He always did at every port—a post card at least."

A smile twisted the man's lips. "Don't you see—he is ashamed. You may never hear from him again—or not for a long time."

Something in the tone made Tod tremble inwardly. Was this a threat? A conviction? Whatever it was, it made the boy certain of one thing—Jasper Swickard knew more about Neil that he had told.

"Well, my boy," continued the manager, "what are you going to do now?"

"I don't know. Go back to Stockton, I guess."

"Yes, that's the best thing to do. Go back to your job and stick there. That's the only way to be successful. Only don't follow in your brother's footsteps—or you'll get into trouble."

Tod's face flamed. "I'll never believe Neil is crooked—never! . . . Good-day, Mr. Swickard. But I'm not going home. I'm going to find my brother—going to find Neil."

Chapter Two

IN the outer office the girl looked up from her typewriter. "I want to talk with you," she whispered quickly. "Go straight across the wharf to the bunkers. Wait there!" The keys of her typewriter did not stop clicking.

Without a word Tod passed out to the grey wharf where the fog pressed about him like the gloom about his heart. Mr. Swickard's story, Neil's guilt—what did it mean? What was the mystery behind his brother's disappearance?

Safely screened behind the coal bunkers, he presently saw Jasper Swickard come out and drive off in an automobile. A few minutes later the girl came hurrying toward him.

"I listened—I heard it all," she said defiantly. "Well, do you believe it?"

"No—no!"

"You're right, Tod. It's a lie—a lie!"

Tod realized thankfully that here was a friend.

"Neil's alive, thank God," she went on; "of that I'm certain. But where he is, or how—"

"What's it all about?" the boy queried, bewildered.

"Listen, Tod, it's this company that's crooked—not Neil. I'm sure of it. Ever since I came here to work a year ago, I've felt that something was wrong."

Tod stared. "You mean the European-Pacific Steamship Company?"

"Yes. The name sounds big, doesn't it? It really is a flimsy little firm though—and only a few years old. It had its birth during wartime. It has only two freighters: the *Panama* and the *Araby*. These men are crooks, I tell you; and what they've done to Neil—" She paused and pressed her hands together till the knuckles showed white.

"If I could only find him!" Tod began. "I'll do anything, Miss—Miss—"

"Murray," she supplied. "Sheila Murray."

"Anything, Miss Murray. What can I do?" he asked desperately.

"There's Captain Ramsey," broke in the girl. "He's going into the office. I must run. Wait for me here."

Tod watched her till she entered the office; then he seated himself on an iron bollard near-by to think things over. Strange! What did it all mean? Neil had sailed as purser on the *Panama* six months before. It was his second trip on that boat. He had visited Tod in Stockton and had seemed as gay, as carefree as always. Then this silence.

Tod raised his eyes. The *Panama* had berthed at this very dock. He rose and strolled forward, his hands thrust deep into his pockets, his book beneath one arm. Another freighter lay at her moorings there now, with a dozen longshoremen at work loading her.

Entranced for the moment, Tod watched the scene.

Aboard the Britisher

COURTESY demanded a lot of things of Ensigns Wally Radnor and 'Stanguey Brooke when that British cruiser steamed into the harbor. There were salutes to fire, and a courtesy call to pay, and a general gab-fest with the young English officers to plan. Nothing very sinister about that!

But Ensign Coutt—commonly known as the Pint-pot—complicated matters. Those shifty black eyes of Pint-pot's didn't see the difference between courtesy and rank dishonor. And it was up to Wally and 'Stanguey to handle the situation.

You'll grin and thrill when you read what happened. The story, by Warren Hastings Miller, of course, is called "Wally Sits on the Lid," and it appears

NEXT MONTH

Here was a steamer making ready for sea, filling her holds with mysterious cargo to be taken to some far port of the world—Hong Kong perhaps, or Sidney—London or Constantinople.

On the ship's bow he made out her name: *Araby*. The freighter *Araby*. The freighter *Araby* of San Francisco! The name brought to his nostrils a breath of the East, a perfume of spices and sandalwood, a vision of enchanted azure waters and swarming ports.

His eyes ran eagerly over the vessel. Her steel hull was brick red with dust; her wooden superstructure, once white, was now a dirty grey. She was blunt-nosed, obviously built for carrying capacity; she was old, too, and battered by the seas. Yet to Tod, this ocean tramp bound by stout ropes and cables to the wharf was romance and adventure. She held for him all the glamor of an immortal galleon about to break bondage and nose her way valiantly past headlands to the open sea.

AS opportunity offered, Tod darted past the group of toiling stevedores to the edge of the wharf, back of the cabins amidships. He wanted to see the *Araby* more closely. She was just such a vessel as Neil had told him of, only not so large, of course.

A sudden clatter of tinware focused his attention upon the cabins amidships. In a narrow, sheltered alleyway an open door showed a line of pots and pans.

"It must be the kitchen," Tod thought. "No—the galley, Neil called it. Gosh, what a racket in there! Somebody's getting killed!"

At that instant, a figure abruptly issued from the door and rolled down the alleyway. Next came a volley of curses—deep, bellowing, thunderous.

"Golly, this is the real stuff!" Tod acknowledged to himself. "That's a sure-enough sailor!"

For a second the voice died down, and Tod saw the figure on the deck pull itself together and rise. It proved to be a Chinese youth with a yellow, terror-stricken face. At his first movement toward the open door, the abuse recommenced.

"Drop the butter, will you—you blasted heathen!" roared the deep voice. "Git out! D'yuh hear? Git, before I twist off yer dirty yellow face!"

The unlucky culprit cowered against the rail. "Me no mean to!" he gasped. "Ming work. Me can do."

"Can do!" bellowed the voice. "Yeh, you blasted Chink, you can do one thing—you git!"

Tod's spellbound gaze left the Chinese boy and went to the galley door beyond. His eyes widened in amazement.

The owner of the voice stood in the doorway, huge, half naked—clothed only in a pair of short, rolled seamen's pants. His great hairy legs were firmly planted upon the deck; his herculean shoulders gleamed from the heat of the galley; his teeth flashed angrily in a flushed face as he emitted another volley of oaths.

But it was no longer the curses that amazed Tod. As in a trance he gazed at the strange pictures which appeared painted upon the man's body.

"Why—he's tattooed!" Tod muttered. "Tattooed—all over!"

It was true. The cook's torso, from the waist up, was a mass of minute tattoo work. A Chinese dragon of red and green lay coiled upon his body with two long necks writhing up to the man's immense chest where the evil heads grinned broadly. The thing was uncanny. As the man in his anger breathed heavily, the two-headed dragon seemed to twist and sway, the red eyes to dart fire and hatred.

"I won't have a Chink in this galley," bawled the cook. "Gut me, if I will. Git out—and git quick! Savee?" He threw out a hairy arm, muscular as a blacksmith's, and Tod saw that a blue snake lay wound about it. The other arm was a network of stars, like the quivering spiral of the Milky Way.

"Golly!" gasped Tod. "He ought to be in a circus!"

The Chinese boy was protesting. "Me good boy," he maintained plaintively. "Me can do. Me work long time in house in Flisco."

"In a house!" roared the tattooed man. "I'm a swab-headed deck-hand if he ain't said a house! Blast yer yellow hide! You git—before I throw a cleaver at yuh!"

The Chinese boy edged along the rail. "Yes—me go. Me no likee this ship. Gooby!"

Tod watched him dive into a doorway and appear a moment later with a bundle. He pattered along the deck to the gangway and came ashore. Tod smiled; but as his gaze came back to the huge figure of the tattooed man, the smile vanished. The cook's eyes were turned upon him in a way that froze the boy to the spot. Unconsciously he shuddered, repelled yet fascinated.

The cook gave a short, deep laugh and disappeared into the galley. Tod breathed more freely. "Golly, what a man!" he muttered, as he made his way back to the bunkers.

SHEILA MURRAY was already coming toward him. "Why—what's wrong?" she asked. "You look as if you'd seen a ghost."

"A ghost? Oh, no—just a tattooed man," Tod answered. "What's the news?"

The girl regarded him intently. "Tod Moran, have you ever wanted to go to sea?"

"Go to sea!" he echoed. "I've always wanted to! I've dreamed about it—read sea books galore. Neil always wanted me to stay in school though."

"Well, you're going to sea now—if you will."

"Now?"

"Yes, you can sail to-morrow morning as mess boy on the freighter *Araby*."

"Mess boy on the *Araby*?"

"Yes— don't repeat my words like a ninny." Her smile took the edge off her rebuke. Then she grew grave and wistful. "Oh, how I envy you! I wish I weren't a girl. But I am; so here I must stay. But you, Tod Moran, can sail for the Mediterranean by way of the Panama Canal—if you will."

Tod's eyes glowed. "Just watch me. And you think I might find Neil?"

"I don't know—but it's a chance. Listen: Mr. Hawkes, the mate, hasn't been with us long, but this isn't his first trip—he was second officer on the *Panama*. He knew Neil. He must know what happened. He left the steamer in Marseilles and came home on a Dollar Line boat when the *Panama* went on to South Africa. Make a friend of Mr. Hawkes. Get the truth from him. Find when Neil left ship and trace him through the shipping offices or the American consul."

"I'll do my best," Tod returned, athrob with hope. "How will I get the job?"

"You already have it. Captain Ramsey just came into the office and said the cook demanded a new mess boy. He's going to get rid of the Chinese boy, to-day."

"He has. The Chink just left."

"Good. I don't know Captain Ramsey very well—he's new with us, too—but I told him that I had a young friend who was just the person for ship's boy. You'll make the beds in the officers' quarters, wait on table,

and help the cook."

Tod gulped. "Help the cook!"

"Didn't I tell you not to repeat my words?" Sheila Murray laughed. "You won't mind peeling potatoes, will you?"

"No," Tod murmured weakly. "I'll do anything for Neil. But the cook—that tattooed man?"

"Yes." The girl's eyes questioned him gravely.

"I was just thinking," Tod said, swallowing hard, "that I'd hate to be in that Chinese boy's place in the galley—and now I'm there! By golly, I'll be working with a cannibal!"

"You're almost seventeen, aren't you, Tod? Old enough to look out for yourself if need be. Oh, well, if you're afraid—"

"I'm not. I'll go."

"Then go down immediately to the Seamen's Bureau and sign on. And listen—tell Captain Ramsey you will have to get your clothes, so you can't come aboard till after dark."

"So I won't—"

"Yes, so you won't see Mr. Swickard again. He must not know. And he won't, for he leaves to-night for New York. Now go straight to the Seamen's Bureau at Pier One."

Tod hesitated a moment. "You're the real stuff," he stammered at last. "I—I can't begin to thank you."

"You needn't bother," she answered. "Good-by, Tod Moran, cabin boy." Her hand gripped his.

He turned away into the fog. Cheerily, yet somehow warningly, her final farewell followed him: "Good-by, Tod Moran—cook's help!"

Chapter Three

AT the Seamen's Bureau Tod was signed on the ship's articles as mess boy of the steamship *Araby* of San Francisco.

"Report on board at once," said Captain Ramsey. "The mate will give you your orders."

"Yes, sir," answered Tod. "But my clothes—I'll have to get them. It'll be evening before I can get back."

The commander of the *Araby*, a tall, thin, blear-eyed man of middle age, turned away with a gruff, "All right."

Tod, aglow with joy and expectation, left the office. By golly, he had done it! He was a sailor on an ocean tramp. All his dreams of high adventure were about to be realized. By golly—by golly, he was a sailor!

Outside several men lolled about the dock. They strolled his way as he went whistling toward the Ferry Building.

"Got a berth?" queried a grizzled seaman.

"Yes," Tod answered gaily. "I sail to-morrow."

"What on?"

"The *Araby*."

A series of laughs rose from the little group gathering about him.

"The *Araby!* That tub? My eye!"

"Poor kid—he's done for."

Tod surveyed them in surprise. "Why, what's wrong?" he asked. "Isn't she a good ship?"

"Good? Listen to 'im!" jeered a voice. "Say, that old tramp's done for. She'll never make this port again—or any other neither. Her boilers are liable to blow up at any old time, and as for her hull—well, it's rotten."

"Ain't that hard luck fer yuh!" chimed in another. "And him just a kid, too. He'll never see Frisco no more. Too bad."

Tod tried to smile at the sad faces. "Aw, she's not that bad, is she?"

"She ain't? Say, they can't never get a crew for her. Always changing mates and skippers, too. Just you wait till she hits a swell! Well, so long. Too bad. Too bad."

Tod hurried away from their commiserating voices. He pulled his coat collar up. Gosh, what a fog! Cold, too. So the *Araby* was a rotten tub! And her captain smelled of too much liquor. And her cook was a tattooed savage. Golly! Where were his visions now?

After a long day, he returned to Pier 43 in the thick, black damp of early evening. The wharf office was silent and dark, but a light burned at the gangway. With a scuffling sound Tod dragged his suitcase and the blankets he had bought across the deck of the *Araby*.

The boatswain reached him first. Stretching forth an arm, he pulled the ring toward the boat.

He paused as a figure detached itself from the gloom near the forward hatch and came toward him.

"Who's there?" It was the watchman's voice.

"I'm the new mess boy," Tod answered. "Captain Ramsey told me to report to the mate."

The watchman snickered. "The chief mate ain't here. He's gettin' drunk, most probably, like the rest of this blasted crew. The third mate's the only officer aboard."

"What'd I better do?" Tod asked.

"Do? Blast me! Are you a green one?" He came closer to view the boy. "Well, you don't look so bad. Take your things and throw 'em in a bunk in the seamen's fo'cas'le. Don't get the one on the port bow—that belongs to the Black Gang." He motioned the boy forward.

Tod hesitated. "The port bow?"

"Oh, what a lubber!" The watchman sighed deeply. "The port's the left side goin' for'ard, and starb'd's the right."

WITH tired arms Tod dragged his things toward the ship's bows. Suddenly he was brought up against an iron wall in which he glimpsed two doors. The one to the right he swung back on creaking hinges. All was silent and dim within the forecastle. He made his way down the three iron steps, and found himself in a small triangular compartment, tiered on each side with a double row of bunks. A long guttural snore from a bunk on his right told Tod that at least one of the crew was aboard. Above him a frowsy head looked out and a sleepy voice with a Cockney accent said, "Hallo, mity."

Tod, making the rounds of the bunks, discovered that these two were all of the crew in evidence. Upon nearly every mattress, however, sprawled a blue dunnage bag. Tod found a top bunk empty, and piled his blankets upon it.

"Better make your bed, mity," said the Cockney voice across the top row. "Yer don't 'ave no servants on this bloomin' ship, y'know." He pointed to the straw mattress. "Ye'll be a lucky bloke if that donkey's breakfast ain't got bloomin' livestock in it."

Tod laughed. He pulled aside the greasy brown light-curtain on its piece of string, whipped the straw mattress into shape, and spread his blankets on it. He chatted a moment with the friendly little Cockney.

Then he climbed to the deck. The watchman was seated upon the forward hatch, smoking a pipe. He began talking ramblingly with Tod.

Presently a step sounded behind them in the gloom. "Who're you holding forth to now, Nelson?" asked a voice cheerily.

"Just this kid, sir—the new mess boy," replied the man.

From the way he jerked himself erect Tod knew that the newcomer must be one of the ship's officers, the third mate probably. Tod, also, sprang to his feet.

"Captain come aboard yet?" asked the officer.

"No, sir. The chief engineer is in his room, sir, that's all."

The third mate turned to Tod. "This your first trip?"

"Yes, sir."

In the dim light Tod could see that the third officer of the *Araby* was little more than a boy himself, certainly not more than twenty-three or four.

"Well, come with me," went on the third mate. "We'll have a look-see 'round the deck. It wasn't long ago that I made my first voyage."

In straightforward tones the boy was given his orders. He was to rise at eight bells of the middle watch—four o'clock in the morning—and report to the galley amidships. Later he must wait on the officers in the cabin aft. Not a hard job, but he must be alert.

It wasn't going to be so bad, Tod decided as he returned to the forward main deck.

He seated himself again upon the hatch. As the hours wore on, the crew returned in lurching little groups. At eleven the second mate came aboard. At midnight the captain and the first mate arrived.

The watchman heard their voices on the pier. "That's them," he whispered to Tod, "and both filled to the scuppers with booze."

The gangway creaked as the two men stumbled across. "Watchman!" It was the captain's voice.

"Yes, sir."

"Third mate aboard?"

"Yes, sir."

"Second mate aboard?"

"Yes, sir."

A PAUSE ensued as Captain Ramsey unbuttoned his pilot coat, pushed back his cap from his red-rimmed eyes, and grasped the first mate for support. "First mate aboard?"

"Just come aboard," said the watchman without a blink.

The first mate, a gorilla-like man with a powerful chest and long arms, lurched to the rail and left the captain without support. "Can't ye see me here, sir?" he queried in hurt tones through his short black beard. "How'd ye ever git here if I hadn't brought yuh!"

"Th's a'right, Mr. Hawkes," hiccoughed the captain. "No harm intended. 'Pologize, Mr. Hawkes. Where's my cabin on this ship?"

"Aft, sir," said the watchman. "Here's the cabin boy, sir. Let him help you."

"Yeh, boy—give me a hand. Give me—a hand."

The watchman whispered into Tod's startled ear: "Get 'em to their cabins, kid. You'll have to do it in every port, I'm thinking."

With the thin, swaying captain on one arm and the heavy-set first mate on the other, Tod went along the port alleyway, past the after hatches to the poop. In the officers' saloon, the two men dropped into old red-plush seats.

The captain's grey whisps of hair straggled over his forehead; his weak mouth hung half open. He sat inert. The chief mate rose after a moment and gazed with apparent scorn at his superior officer. He crossed to the table and steadied himself with a hairy paw upon the green baize cover. Upon his temple Tod saw a scar which, extending to his cheek, drew down as his dark eyes squinted in a manner that made the boy step backward.

"I ain't goin' ter eat ye," grunted the mate. "Gi' me a hand, here. We got t' git the old man t' bed." He jerked his head toward a door behind him.

Tod opened the door. Together he and the mate half-carried the captain within the cabin, laid him on his bed, and undressed him.

"Now we'll tuck him in nice," said the mate with a grin. "Nighty-night, Captain."

He waved Tod out and stepped into the saloon, closing the door sharply behind them.

"Is that all?" asked Tod. "I'm tired out—think I'll turn in."

From his position near the table the mate whirled, his eyes glinting fire. "Think you'll turn in, do you?" he snarled. "You wait till I tell you to."

His long arm reached forth and grasped Tod's shoulder in a grip of iron.

(*Continued on page 28*)

"You'll have to go to school, Scotty," he said.

The Man Who Was Wanted

By Laurie Y. Erskine

Illustrated by Frank E. Schoonover

SCOTTY McLEOD got a job with Jason Burritt who raised pigs and ran a carpentry shop; Scotty worked in the carpentry shop, because he liked the smell of new cut wood. He came back to the police post one evening and found Renfrew at the desk in the orderly room with a pile of various small booklets at his elbow. Scotty came in and put one hand on Renfrew's shoulder.

"I've lost my job," he said.

Renfrew swung around in his seat.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Bad work?"

"No," said Scotty. "It's just that Jason can't afford an extra hand. He said that my six dollars a week was just about what he made out of the carpentry work." Scotty frowned at the opposite wall.

"It's tough luck," he said. "Because there isn't much else I can do around the village here."

"That's all right," said Renfrew. "I have another job for you."

Scotty brightened.

"What?"

Renfrew stared thoughtfully at the little booklets on the desk.

"You'll have to go to school, Scotty," he said.

And Scotty saw that the booklets were catalogues of various preparatory schools in all parts of North America. His face fell.

"You mean go away from here?" he asked feebly.

Renfrew nodded. "You've got to be getting ready for college."

"Who wants to go to college?" Scotty was mentally contemplating the death of all adventure. Renfrew had freed him from a bitter bondage when he took him out of the hands of Lyfe, who had treated him like a farm hand, and in all his orphan life Scotty had not known such a devoted friendship as Renfrew gave him. Also, Renfrew had that singular splendid quality that made him seem the very spirit of adventure, the embodiment of all the free, brave, daring things that boyhood loves. As Renfrew's ward, Scotty lived in that world of fine adventure, riding the range with this scarlet clad companion. With Renfrew he had run murderers to earth; with Renfrew he had ridden night rides in the invigorating prairie air; with Renfrew he kept the post of the Royal North West Mounted Police at Sagrinay. And now he was to be exiled and shut off from it all; sent like a little boy, unwillingly, to school. He bit his lip, feeling as though everything joyful had been swept out of his brief sojourn in the sunlight.

RENFREW pressed one hand upon his shoulder. "Sit down," he said gently.

Scotty subsided in a chair beside the desk.

"I said it was a job I had for you," Renfrew explained. "That's what it is, a job. A work to be done, an end to be achieved; something to be accomplished."

"I could accomplish more by making my own living right here," protested Scotty. "What good is college going to do a fellow who's going to live his life out here on the prairie?"

"You're not," said Renfrew. "And anyway that isn't the question. The question is, What good are you going to do the world? You're not worth the skin you're covered with as you are now; any more than a colt in a pasture is worth his salt. Of course, if you train the colt rigidly you can make a good draft horse of it. If you get the same sort of training, you could make yourself just about as useful. But I'm betting that you've got in you the makings of a man who can use the money your father left you to the advantage of more people than yourself. We can't all be great men, but we can use the raw material God gave us to make ourselves as great as possible. If you hang about here, Scotty, you will be chucking a good part of your raw material into the ash heap, and that's the very worst sort of shiftlessness."

Renfrew's voice warmed up as he spoke, and Scotty found himself sitting erect in his chair, staring into the eyes of his friend. But he said nothing.

Renfrew resumed more gently: "All the wisdom and knowledge and beauty of the entire life of mankind is at your disposal, Scotty. You can get it most quickly and surely in school and college. You can feed your mind and your soul with it. You can train your mind to use it. You can make yourself into the finest man that can be made of the stuff that's in you. So you've got to go to school. See?"

Scotty saw, he saw it written on the wall directly back of Renfrew's neck, for upon that wall he stared darkly, woefully.

"I mean you've got to want to go," said Renfrew, smiling.

Scotty grinned, too.

"It's like going to jail," he said. "Life's so adventurous out here."

"But adventure is only play unless it accomplishes something in the making of a man," said Renfrew; and he frowned, wondering what adventure was making of him. "The gaining of great accomplishments through the doing of things that are hard to do, those are the big adventures. Make yourself into the finest product possible, Scotty. You've got manhood in you, just the same as dough's got the making of good bread in it."

Scotty turned on him with a delighted grin.

"There's a pretty good joke in that," he said, and his eyes bubbled with humor.

"Steady on, young feller, I'm deadly serious." But Renfrew was grinning too. He liked to see Scotty smile.

"Something about making my dough into a first-class loafer," said Scotty. Then, suddenly serious. "Isn't there any way I could prepare for college without going to jail?"

"None that I know of."

"Tutors. Some fellows have tutors—"

Renfrew shook his head.

"Too easy. It's no use, Scotty; pleasure has got to be earned. If you can earn yourself the pleasure of having a tutor, go ahead."

"You mean earn the money to pay one?"

"You couldn't. It would need thirty dollars a week, and his fare."

Scotty wrapped himself in resignation.

"It looks pretty hopeless, doesn't it?"

"It depends on what you mean by hope. If I were you, I'd hope to find school life as interesting and as adventurous as your life is here. In that light, it looks pretty hopeful, because a good man always gets fairly close to what he hopes for."

Scotty stood up and, in his mind, confronted himself.

"That sounds right," he admitted. "You're always pretty right, Doug. I guess probably I'll see it the same way as you do in the morning." And without another word he left the orderly room, where Renfrew continued to sit until late into the night. He wondered what view he would have taken of the matter if he had been in the shoes of Scotty McLeod.

IN the morning Scotty didn't have an opportunity to talk with Renfrew further, because duty called the mounted policeman away before the sun was up, and he had scarcely time to explain his departure to the boy before he was in the saddle and on his way. Scotty, left alone, examined the school catalogs for himself. He found after studying them a while that there was a certain fascination to the life pictured in them; there was something desirable about the world of boys with which they dealt. Scotty found himself dreaming of what he might achieve in these strange surroundings.

He was roused from his reverie by the shrill honking of a klaxon in the street outside. He went to the window, and, almost immediately, to the door. It was Dick Ranney, at the wheel of the automobile that had come to the Scratch Rock Farm when Dick's mother and father moved in. The tall, handsome boy was as nonchalant as ever. Scotty had never seen him anything but carefree—not even on that day when the odd man who lisped had seemed at first to be a deadly enemy.

"Come on," yelled Dick. "Mother wants you and Mr. Renfrew to come out to dinner. I'll run you out now and Mr. Renfrew can come later."

"He's away!" cried Scotty.

"Leave a note for him, and come on. I'm in a raving hurry." He made the klaxon shriek to emphasize his point.

"All right," laughed Scotty. "Just wait till I scribble a note. What time do you want him?"

"Seven o'clock dinner," announe l Dick. "I'll honk the horn until you come out. Then you won't forget to hurry." And he did. He made the horn howl dolefully over the prairie until Scotty came running from the house, begging him to shut it off.

"All right," grinned Dick; and he made the car whirl down the street with intoxicating speed and grace. At the four corners a young man dashed out from the general store and waved his hands wildly. Dick stopped.

"What's the matter?" he asked coolly. "Want to know the time?"

The young man gazed at him with eyes that seemed to burn with a strange intensity.

"Are you Mr. Ranney?" he asked.

"The same," smiled Dick.

"My name's Crystal," said the young man.

"Mr. McLeod," said Dick to Scotty, "may I present my friend, Mr. Crystal?"

The young man nodded quickly. Then he asked, "Your mother, Mrs. Ranney, collects etchings, does she not?"

"Correct," said Dick. "She's got a dandy set of Pennells, and a Whistler that would knock your eye out."

"Will you take me out to see her?" asked the young man eagerly.

"Express service," said Dick, opening the door of the tonneau. "No stops till we reach Scratch Rock Farm." And no sooner was the young man inside than they went whirling out toward Scratch Rock Farm with breath-taking speed, while the intense young man bounced about in the tonneau without a word in explanation of his unceremonious self-introduction.

"I've got somebody out at the place I want you to meet," Dick told Scotty as they whirled along. "You've got to tell me how you like him."

"All right," said Scotty. "What is he? Another horse?"

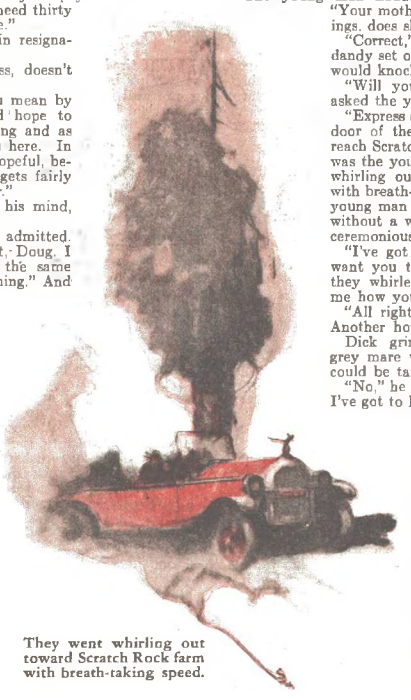
Dick grinned, remembering the mad grey mare which Scotty had showed him could be tamed.

"No," he said. "It's a tutor. You know I've got to live out here for my lungs, and I've got to have a tutor."

"A tutor!" cried Scotty. "You say you've got a tutor?"

"That's it. A tutor. But I think he's a wash-out. We got him through an advertisement from Winnipeg. I want you to tell me—Here we are!"

With great precision, he whisked the car into the new driveway and brought it up, throbbing, at the front doorway.



They went whirling out toward Scratch Rock farm with breath-taking speed.

MRS. RANNEY came to the door to greet them. She was tall and gracious and beautiful. Scotty, from the

moment of their first meeting some time before, had shyly adored her.

She seemed now to be so genuinely glad to see Scotty again and to see her son return with the healthful glow which the prairie air had brought to his cheeks, that all of them quite forgot about the intense young man. He called their attention to himself with a slight cough. Mrs. Ranney turned brightly to him.

"Oh, yes," grinned Dick apologetically. "This is Mr. Christopher."

"Crystal," said the young man. "I've come all the way from Edmonton, Mrs. Ranney, in the hope that you would let me see your etchings. There are so few collections in this part of the world."

Scotty and Dick had retired into the house as soon as they had achieved the introduction of Mr. Crystal, but they were still within earshot, and Dick caught Scotty's arm.

"That's a lie," he whispered. "He came in from Winnipeg. Saunders drove him up from the train. He told me so this morning."

"Why should he lie about it, though?" asked Scotty.

"Don't know. He's probably a swindler, or something. Leave him to Mother if he is. Poor wretch."

They had passed from the hall into the long room which had been the dining room and kitchen of the original farm but which was now, with its partitions knocked out, a high, grey-walled space lighted by long windows.

"Here he is," whispered Dick as they entered; and almost immediately a man sprang up from a table in a distant corner and looked at the two boys as though startled.

"This is Mr. Wright," said Dick. "My friend, Scotty McLeod, Mr. Wright." And Scotty found himself gazing into a pair of very sharp blue eyes that were set amazingly close to either side of a long, thin nose. "Mr. Wright is the tutor," explained Dick. But Scotty hardly heard him, for he had glanced from Mr. Wright's face to the table, whither Mr. Wright's sharp eyes had wandered, and on the table Scotty saw an article that seemed grotesquely out of place in that calm room. It was a thirty-five caliber revolver cartridge. Scotty looked immediately away from the table and strove to distract attention from his surprise.

"I suppose you'll prepare Dick for college?" he said quickly; and as Mr. Wright looked back at him, Scotty saw him slide his hand lightly across his hip. Scotty, watching that movement and listening to the man's calm answer, felt that he must get away from him or burst.

"Guess you'll have to show me those horses," he said to Dick.

"What horses?" asked Dick.

"The new ones," said Scotty desperately.

"Oh, yes, of course," said Dick, reading the message in his friend's eyes. "Come on. You'll excuse us, Mr. Wright; won't you please?"

Mr. Wright smiled absently.

"Surely," he said. And Scotty, out of the tail of his eye, saw him slide over to that table just as soon as the boys turned away. At the other end of the room Mrs. Ranney and Crystal were entering. Scotty wondered if either of them saw Mr. Wright pick up that cartridge.

"Well, what do you think of him?" asked Dick as soon as they got away from the house.

"He's got a gun in his pocket," said Scotty. "And it's loaded."

Dick stared down at him, open-eyed.

"No!" he exclaimed.

"Yes," said Scotty. "He had just been filling it when we came in. He left a cartridge on the table, and I saw him pat the gun on his hip."

Dick was grinning now.

"Good old Sherlock Holmes," he said. "I thought it was something like that. And he couldn't show any references. Said they'd have to come from Boston." Smiling broadly, he went into his breast pocket and brought forth a folded paper. "Take a look at this," he said.

Scotty read the paper. It was the usual police notice describing a man wanted for forgery. The description in a general way fitted Mr. Wright.

"See?" cried Dick. "About thirty years old, five foot eleven, blue eyes, thin nose, everything. That's our man, all right. And he's a cool hand, too. How could a man hide better than as a tutor in a private family, especially away out here in the prairie?"

Scotty was examining the notice with dancing eyes.

"But, Dick!" he cried. "This is the man whom Renfrew's after. He was traced to Starnes, and Renfrew went down this morning to look for him. He'll come here to-night and walk right into him!"

"Fine!" cried Dick. "It couldn't be any better."

On the floor beside him, trussed like a bundle of fagots, lay Marbry.

"But Wright's armed!" cried Scotty. "That means a gun fight."

"Sure as shootin'!"

"We've got to get that gun, Dick. We've got to."

"Right! Renfrew'd walk right into the muzzle of it. Come on back to the house!"

THEY hurried back, with Scotty fighting down a desire to attack the unsuspecting Mr. Wright and take from him the gun that menaced Renfrew's life. They dashed into the long room through one of the French windows, and came face to face with Mr. Crystal, who was staring at the wall beside the window while Mrs. Ranney stood behind him, and Mr. Wright beside her held an open portfolio filled with etchings.

"That's a Lumsden," Mrs. Ranney was explaining. "Do you know his etching of Winter Morning on the Moors?"

"Yes, indeed," said Mr. Crystal.

"Or is that Benson's?" asked Mrs. Ranney innocently.

"Eh?" cried Mr. Crystal, swinging toward her. "Benson's?"

"Yes, didn't Benson do an etching called Winter Morning on the Moors?"

"No," said Mr. Wright, unexpectedly. "Winter Morning on the Moors is by Leonard Squirrel."

Mr. Crystal turned on him with his burning intensity.

"How do you know?" he cried.

"It happens to be the top etching of these I hold in my hand," said Wright.

"You don't seem to know a great deal about etchings, Mr. Crystal," murmured Mrs. Ranney, smiling. Then she turned to Scotty, leaving Wright and Crystal to glare at one another angrily.

"When are we to expect Mr. Renfrew, Scotty?"

Crystal turned his somber eyes on Scotty as the boy answered.

"Not till late, I'm afraid. He's gone down to Starnes."

Dick, his eyes shining, was watching Wright intently.

"He's gone to trace a man who's wanted by the police, Mother! A forger named Marbry!"

But it was Mr. Crystal who started.

"Wanted by the police?" he asked; and his voice was queerly tense. "Who is this Mr. Renfrew?"

Mrs. Ranney gazed at him calmly.

"The Mounted Policeman at this post," she said.

"Do you think he'll get him?" Crystal asked the question of all of them, but it was Scotty who answered.

"I know he will," said Scotty. "Renfrew always gets his man."

There was a little pause.

"He'd better be careful," said Crystal, then; and his voice was very calm, very quiet. "This man, Marbry, is a dangerous character."

"You mean he'll fight?" queried Dick, and his eyes were still on Wright, who had fallen to a calm study of the etchings in his hands.

"I know he'll fight!" cried Crystal sharply. "Put yourself in his boots. I'd never be taken alive!"

Wright looked up sharply, his keen blue eyes like those of an eagle seeming to pounce upon the speaker; and they all looked fixedly upon Mr. Crystal.

"I think we'd better go and get ready for luncheon," said Mrs. Ranney quietly. "Dick, you take care of Scotty, dear." And she led the way to the door.

The two young men fell in behind her, leaving the boys together. Dick would have followed the others, but Scotty stood as though transfixed, with his eyes upon the retreating form of Mr. Crystal until that young man vanished through the doorway.

"Come on, old sportsman," urged Dick.

"Dick," whispered Scotty, "that Mr. Crystal—as sure as I'm standing here, he's got a gun in his pocket, too. It's under his arm! His breast pocket!"

Dick, from his magnificent height, stared down on the other boy.

"My word!" he ejaculated. It was his tribute to the fact that had not until now dawned on him; the fact that as far as the description in the police notice was concerned, Mr. Wright and Mr. Crystal, while they bore not the slightest resemblance to one another, might have been one and the same man.

"Long thin nose, blue eyes, five foot eleven, and thirty years old," murmured Dick. "My gosh, Scotty, we must be seeing double."

THE boys were silent during luncheon, but they observed every movement and marked every word of the two young men whom Mrs. Ranney kept constantly involved in her brilliant stream of conversation. Scotty was divided between moments when he was lost in admiration of that beautiful lady's deft handling of a difficult situation, and moments when he was desperately striving to invent a means to disarm those two men who sat on either side of him. It was plain to Scotty that at least one of these men was the forger, Marbry, and that both of them had a deep and desperate aversion to meeting Renfrew; that had been evident

to Scotty in their separate reactions to the mention of the mounted policeman's coming. Both were intense and reckless men, and both of them carried guns—and Renfrew was coming, all unprepared, to meet them.

Mrs. Ranney's situation in the meantime became every moment more difficult. Wright and Crystal failed completely to conceal a deadly antipathy that seemed to develop fast between them; and she had every proof that Crystal was in her house under false pretensions. Why he was there, she had no idea; no doubt his coming was in some way connected with the antipathy that Wright displayed toward him.

"I suppose you will want to return to Starnes as soon as possible, Mr. Crystal?" she said.

Crystal frowned, obviously disconcerted.

"I had thought you might be willing to part with some of those etchings," he said lamely. "I had hoped to add to my collection from yours."

"But I could hardly take advantage of you," she said, smiling. "You seem to have had so little experience, Mr. Crystal—with etchings!"

"Aw, why don't you run along," said Wright suddenly.

They all looked at him. His tone had in it the tang of something foreign to the atmosphere in which he spoke.

"I mean, you'll never get away if you don't catch that evening train," explained Wright quickly.

"Mr. Crystal is probably the best judge of what train he wishes to catch," murmured Mrs. Ranney.

But Crystal did not cease to gaze at Wright with the most embarrassing intensity.

Wright's sharp eyes caught Crystal's for an instant, wandered to Scotty, and then dropped to the table cloth. He emptied his coffee cup with a sudden gesture of haste and turned to Mrs. Ranney.

"Will you excuse me?" he asked. "I've got lots of work to do." And he arose from the table.

Mrs. Ranney nodded her permission and Wright slipped from the room. Scotty noticed that Crystal desired to follow him immediately, and he grinned delightedly at the predicament of the intense young man as he sat beneath Mrs. Ranney's flow of pleasant, gracious conversation, and writhed with impatience. Then Scotty felt Dick kick him under the table.

"Do you mind if Scotty and I leave you and Mr. Crystal alone, Mother?" asked Dick. "There are so many things to do."

Mrs. Ranney never betrayed a hint of her own predicament.

"When can you take Mr. Crystal to Starnes?" she asked.

"Not till Paxton gets back with Renfrew," said Dick; and his eyes hovered triumphantly upon Crystal. "I told him to go right after lunch, and I heard the car go out just a few minutes ago. Come on, Scotty."

Outside the dining room, Dick chortled with glee.

"Now we've got 'em both stranded here," he exulted. "And I'll tell you what we'll do. These two men are criminals, and Crystal is after Wright, or I miss my guess. One of 'em is Marbry, the forger, and I'll bet Renfrew will be glad to lay hands on both of 'em. Now we've got to get Wright out of the way. I think he'd be most useful tied up in the barn, eh?"

Scotty saw the point immediately.

"Sure," he whispered. "Get him out there on some excuse and then jump him. We've got to be careful of his gun."

"That's the idea," said Dick. "Jump him with care and a good sized brick. Come on up to his room."

THEY went upstairs to the bedroom that had been allotted Dick's mysterious tutor and found the door shut. Dick knocked, and receiving no answer, tried the handle of the door. It opened, and no voice protesting, they entered. The room was empty.

"Not here!" cried Dick.

"You bet he isn't," said Scotty excitedly. "Look!"

He pointed to the bed, where, among a chaos of wearing apparel that had obviously been hurriedly flung from the gaping draws and cupboards, a cardboard box lay with its label upturned to the boys' gaze.

"He's run for it!" cried Dick.

"And taken all his ammunition," added Scotty, for the box had contained cartridges.

"He's a quick thinker," grinned Dick. "He got Paxton to take him down. Wonder what he'll say when he meets Renfrew."

"Oh, my gosh!" groaned Scotty, picturing a sudden meeting and guns blazing, with all the chances against the redcoat. "I hope he makes a clean getaway before Renfrew shows up!" he blurted out defiantly. "Now let's get this other gunman!"

They were very serious as they walked down the stairs, because the menace that hovered about Scotty's absent friend was in their minds; the ugly picture of Renfrew's sudden, unexpected encounter with death was vividly before them. They walked into the long room and found Mr. Crystal standing before the French windows examining the magazine of a thirty-two calibre automatic pistol.

He started when he heard them enter, and his hand glided with the movement of a snake to his breast pocket. The pistol disappeared with the effect of magic.

"What are you doing with that gun?" blurted Dick.

"Putting it in my pocket," sneered Mr. Crystal, and his blue eyes burned defiantly. "Surely I don't have to explain what is in my pockets?"

"If you're carrying it because you're afraid of Wright," said Scotty abruptly, "you can throw it away. Wright's gone."

The effect of this remark upon Mr. Crystal was amazing. He seemed for a moment about to strike Scotty with his clenched fist, but held it poised in midair instead; then he looked quickly about the room, like an animal seeking a loophole for escape.

"You young fools!" he cried at last. "What have you done with him?"

"That isn't polite," said Dick coolly. "I'm your host. If it comes to that, why shouldn't I demand to know why you come here gunning for my tutor? Anyway, it's a lie about those etchings. I don't believe you ever saw an etching in your life before."

"You're a young fool!" cried Crystal. "You play about with matters of life and death as if they were child's toys. What have you done with Wright?" He moved suddenly so that he had them in a corner of the room. "Come on!" he cried. "I mean to know."

Whether the movement he made with his right hand toward his breast was really a movement toward the gun or not they could not know, because Scotty, who had learned to be alert in all matters concerning guns, picked up from the table a heavy folio volume of Chaucer's poetry, published in the seventeenth century and bound in contemporary calf, and fetched the ardent Mr. Crystal a neat clip with it upon the side of his head.

MR. CRYSTAL reeled against a dainty Sheraton table. The table collapsed and a lamp, three ash trays, four books and Mr. Crystal went down with it to the floor. This time Mr. Crystal snatched at his gun in deadly earnest; so Dick made a flying tackle for his right arm, and threw all his weight upon it, with the result that he had Mr. Crystal's arm under his chest and the gun, in Mr. Crystal's hand, under one ear. Scotty pounced upon the gun and tried to twist it from the man's hand. Mr. Crystal seemed to lie inert and endeavor to consume them with his eyes, but that was merely for the moment. In another one he had executed a phenomenal twist of his entire body that threw Dick into the crook of his arm and Scotty, who had been prostrate across his legs, to the other side of the room. Then Crystal did something with his crooked arm that permitted him to rise and leave Dick inert upon the floor. It seemed to Scotty that the man had broken Dick's neck, and maddened by this, he grabbed a chair and rushed furiously at Mr. Crystal. The man raised the gun. Scotty raised the chair to protect his face and body. Dick leaped from the floor and, towering four inches above the man with the gun, seized Mr. Crystal's throat from behind. Mr. Crystal fired into the air and made a sharp, inarticulate sound in his throat, whereupon Scotty, dropping the chair, again seized the gun.

The three of them then wrestled silently, Crystal trying in vain to break Dick's hold on his throat, Dick trying in vain to tighten that hold, and Scotty vainly striving to wrest the gun from Crystal's hand.

Mrs. Ranney, startled by the shot, had come into the room. She hurried forward and seized Dick's shoulder.

"Let go!" she cried.

"Get out, Mother!" cried Dick, distressed.

"Have you all gone mad?" she cried. And Scotty saw that the room was full of people. Servants, who had come in at the sound of the shot. Scotty hung grimly to the gun.

"Hit him with something, Mother!" gasped Dick. "He is dangerous!"

The French windows swung open with a crash, and Renfrew appeared, a brilliant splash of scarlet in the long, light room. Dick's father was at his heels.

"Drop that gun!" Renfrew cried, and came forward with a grin.

Scotty felt the gun loosened from Mr. Crystal's grasp. It dropped to the floor, and Scotty changed his grip to Mr. Crystal's arm. Dick seized the other arm, and Crystal stood there, confronting Renfrew with his face set in a tense and burning fury of chagrin.

"Hello, Bliss," smiled Renfrew, lightly. "Whom do you want me to arrest?"

Mr. Crystal gazed at him with extraordinary bitterness.

"If it weren't for these confounded young puppies, I'd have had the catch of the season for you!" he snarled.

"Surely you haven't discovered that Mr. Ranney is a fugitive from justice, or is it Mrs. Ranney?" Renfrew asked.

"Don't play the fool," said Crystal. "It's Marbry, the forger."

"Come, Renfrew, what's all the mystery?" demanded Mr. Ranney. He was a tall, hard-bitten, energetic man, with a manner that was not to be denied.

"Of course," said Renfrew. He indicated Mr. Crystal. "Allow me to introduce my friend Mr. Christopher Bliss, star reporter and general manager of the *Winnimac Herald*. Mr. Bliss is the most persistent amateur detective in the northwest."

Mrs. Ranney laughed as she saw the light. The amateur detective composed himself to a new dignity.

"I'm afraid I must appear somewhat ridiculous," he said. "But the fact is that I discovered last Tuesday that Marbry, the forger, had obtained a situation as tutor here through an advertisement in the Winnipeg papers. So I followed him up. You can smile like a collar advertisement from now till doomsday, Renfrew, at the idea of my running him down without the co-operation of your precious police, but the fact remains that I did run him down and I'd have got him, too, if these fool youngsters hadn't given him the warning."

"We didn't warn him!" cried Dick. "He got away because you let him find you out. Anyway, why did you pull a gun on us?"

"I didn't," said Bliss, very seriously. "I wanted to get the darned thing out of the way when you jumped on me, for fear it would go off."

But Renfrew had become suddenly cold and businesslike.

"Marbry!" he said. "Where is he?"

"He went down with Paxton," said Scotty. "You can depend on it, he took the four-forty-three from Starnes."

RENFREW had already turned to the window again, and Scotty ran to his side.

"Be careful, Doug!" he cried. "He's armed. He'll fight."

Renfrew smiled down upon him.

"Thanks, old man. I'll take care," he said.

"Thay!" boomed a deep voice in the doorway. "Doth thith guy belong here?"

They all turned to that commanding bellow and saw in the doorway Paxton, the man who lisped, and on the floor beside him, trussed like a bundle of fagots, Marbry, alias Wright.

"No," said Renfrew. "He belongs in jail, but I'll take care of him."

He strode the length of the room, and with the help of Mr. Ranney and the burly Paxton, he divested Marbry of his pinions and snapped on a pair of handcuffs in their place.

"How did you manage to get him?" asked Dick, proudly gazing on the ugly, squat form of the man who lisped.

"He athked me to drive him to Thtarneth," said Paxton. "But when he heard I wath going to get Mithter Renfrew, he changed hith mind and told me to drive him to Burgen; but that wath too far, and I told him I couldn't. Tho he drew a gun, but that didn't make it any nearer; tho I threw him out of the car and took the gun away from him and tied him up. Then I came back here." He said all this very slowly and very thoughtfully.

"Good man," said Renfrew. He turned to Bliss. "Between you and Paxton," he said, "we seem to have a good auxiliary police force."

"And Scotty," cried Dick. "That kid's a real detective. He discovered that Wright and Christopher here had guns with 'em (*Continued on page 51*)

Kearny of the Camel Corps

NEXT month, an ex-army officer's story of white man's daring and black man's magic—of the testing of a happy-go-lucky young American in merciless Africa.

Lieutenant Kearny, of the Third Egyptian Camel Corps, sat before the heat-splintered desk in his tent on the sweltering Soudan frontier, bleakly studying the situation.

Cholera! The Camel Corps had lost nearly half its men and most of its officers. On Kearny and the Irish surgeon lay the entire responsibility for the stricken Corps. And—jungle tribes were on the warpath! Coming to wipe out their cholera-weakened forces.

What to do? To Kearny in his stifling tent, wrestling for an answer, came an old enemy—Mgalawa, the medicine man.

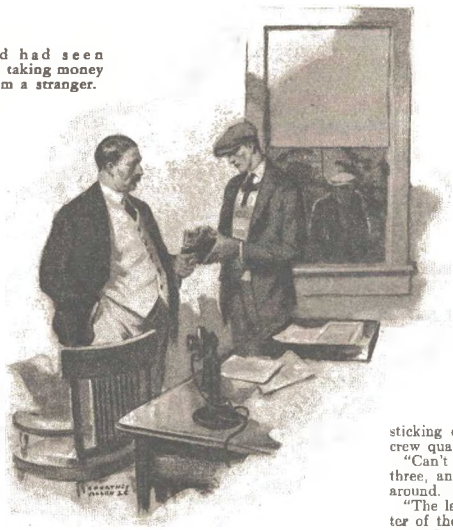
There began a strange alliance. . . .

Look in September for this story by Achmed Abdullah, writer and fighter, and ex-officer of a Soudanese Camel Corps.

The Sheriton Eight

By George F. Pierrot

Illustrated by Courtney Allen



Red had seen him taking money from a stranger.

Part II

A SPY on the Sheriton crew!

Anyway, if Bradley, stroke oar, wasn't a spy, Red Barrett and I asked ourselves, what was he doing down here in Summerville, the night before our big race with Berkeley?

Red and I were going to find out. Seemed as if we were guardians of the crew, anyway. First the shell had been stolen, and we had located it in an old shed down here on the water front. It was up to us to get it safely back—to snake it past the four guards. And now we had Bradley—the man who was a whale of an oarsman but as sour as vinegar and as pleasant to everybody as an octopus—to handle, too.

Well, we sat there in Carrie A. Nation, Red's eight-year-old flivver, smack under the arc light, and waited for Bradley. Just a few moments before Red had seen him taking money from a stranger—and that looked bad, because Summerville was the headquarters, we believed, of the gang that had put so much money up against Sheriton, and then had stolen our new shell from us.

"Mr. Bradley," Red gritted between his teeth, "is going to have some explaining to do."

Bradley came full upon us before he saw us, then drew up short. Dark though it was, we could see his cheeks redden.

With a bound Red was beside him, grasping his arm.

"Better explain yourself, big boy," Red flamed. "Why aren't you back in crew quarters, asleep?"

Bradley tried to sneer, but he made a poor attempt of it.

"Always meddling in somebody's business," he said. "You ought to have been a nursemaid."

"We've got more against you than breaking training," Red told him, grimly. "When Sheriton's new shell was stolen, we blamed it on a bunch of roughs and gamblers. It never occurred to us that one of our own squad could turn traitor. Now we're not so sure."

Bradley winced as though a blow had been aimed at him.

"Stolen!" he gasped. "What do you mean, stolen?"

"Just that. And not two hundred yards from where the thieves have hidden it, we find you, a fellow who's been acting darn funny all season, and who right now ought to be in bed, eight miles away."

FOR a moment Bradley just stared at us, and then he found his voice.

"So that's it," he flared. "You high and mighty boys who think you've got a monopoly on working for Sheriton! Detectives, huh? Think you've discovered something, huh? Well, now, what I'm here for is *my* business, and I don't tell my business to you or anybody else. In an hour I'll be back in crew quarters, with a good night's sleep ahead of me. But first what's all this rubbish about the new shell being stolen?"

I could see that Red didn't put much stock in what Bradley was saying. But he kept his voice steady.

"Just to make you sure *we're* open and aboveboard, I'm going to assume that you are telling the truth. Yesterday Jim Chappelle put the new shell on a flat car. It should have reached Berkeley in time for to-day's practice. But it didn't. It had been stolen. The only place the train stopped was right here at Summerville, so Flip and I came up to look around. Flip has located the shell—it's in an old building on the water front, with a pair of guards on both ends of the building."

"We'll clean up the guards," said Bradley, sticking out his chin, "and row the shell to Sheriton's crew quarters."

"Can't do that," I put in, "because they're four to three, and probably have all kinds of helpers skulking around. Besides, you can't row a shell without oars."

"The last is easy," Bradley answered. "There's a chapter of the Berkeley alumni association here. They've a room fixed up in the library—saw it through a window. They've got two oars, regular kind, hanging on the wall—old crew men must have loaned them. Nobody around there this time of night—I'll just slip through a window and borrow them for a couple of days."

Red looked at me and I looked at him. Both of us were thinking the same thing—how did Bradley happen to know so much about Berkeley's alumni association? But we were taking a long chance, and we had to trust him. We left the flivver and followed Bradley. A few minutes later, with a couple of long, light crew oars over our shoulders, we were sneaking down an alley toward the shore. We halted under a tree and Red slipped forward to reconnoiter.

"If two of us could slip up the runway and get the shell," he whispered, "they could carry it behind that other building, and if the third one of us was waiting there with the oars, we'd have an even chance of making it."

"We'd have an even chance of getting away with the Woolworth Tower," Bradley growled, "if we could get it on our backs, and it wasn't too heavy."

"You and Bradley crawl as close to the front of the building as you can," Red directed. "Be ready to rush up the runway to the second floor where the shell is. Then I'll go to the rear of the building and create a diversion, as Napoleon used to say. While I'm diverting the enemy, you fellows make your get-away. Then I'll meet you on the other side of the building, with the oars."

And Red was gone, gliding up the path that scaled the cliff. Bradley and I flopped down and started worming toward the building. We crawled as close as we could to the voices, and then lay still. We must have been there a good five minutes when Bradley gripped my arm.

From the top of the cliff, beyond the building, came a funny sort of clatter, as though a lawn mower were driving through a pile of tin cans. Carrie A. Nation in full cry! Louder came the noise, and louder—Carrie was approaching. Closer to the cliff, and closer. And then, with a thunderous, tearing crash, Carrie was over the brink, and smashing down through the underbrush on her way to the bottom. And from her vicinity we heard an agonizing, blood-curdling shriek.

There was a sound of running near us—the two guards were rushing for the scene.

"Now!" breathed Bradley and I together, as we sprang to our feet and dashed up the creaky runway. The door at the top pushed open, and we burst in.

MY flashlight showed that Lady Luck was with us, for that shell was on roll-sawbucks—I doubt that we could have carried it alone. It was awkward trundling that 65 feet of shell along, but we managed it. We tried to tread softly, but our feet and the sawbuck wheels, as they echoed on the wooden descent and crunched along the hard sand, seemed louder than drums.

At the corner of the building we found Red, the two oars over his shoulder.

"Fooled 'em," he chortled gleefully. "Fooled 'em. Poor old Carrie! They're all hunting for her, and for a corpse or two!"

Bradley, the crew man, took command.

"Push her straight out," he directed softly, "sawbucks and all. Now a big heave—over with her! Set her down easy. I'll sit here, in the rear, and Red—you turned out a few days and you know the trick of rowing—you go up in front. Flip here can take the tiller ropes and cox us."

We got in, Red and I, while Bradley steadied the boat and then, with both oars straight sideways in the water, Bradley took his place. Right then we heard, just a few rods away, a loud yell.

"We're discovered," (*Continued on page 40*)

As the two crews flashed into the dense, enfolding shadow of the bridge, the Sheriton stroke quickened.

Pirates of the Desert

By Warren Hastings Miller
Illustrated by H. Weston Taylor

FLASHES of reflected sunlight were winking and signaling across the dusty yellow immensity of the Sahara. The three white men of a small caravan of six camels had halted and were studying those flashes intently. They were tiny sparkles of light made by a moving mirror, and they meant something sinister—down here in the Asghar country west of Gaudames! They came from a low rocky escarpment, miles to the east, vaguely outlined in the dust over all the flat sands.

Mr. Barritt, U. S. assistant pomologist of the Bureau of Agriculture, gave up studying the signals after a time, for they were not Morse, and therefore it could not be that they were being sent by the French military.

"What make you of it, Faiz ben Kebir?" he asked their sheikh.

Faiz looked up lugubriously, terror in his brown eyes. "O Merciful! Murder is like the drinking of milk with them, Effendi!" he groaned aloud in Arabic.

"*Ma fehemt!* Don't understand you," said Barritt shortly.

"Why question that which is writ on the cucumber leaf (everyone knows), Effendi?" said Faiz. "Those are Tuaregs, the Accursed-of-God! Dost not see the *bordj*?"

"*Bordj*?—What *bordj*?" enquired Mr. Barritt angrily, his eyes squinting with concentration in his hard brown face as he stared hard at the distant escarpments. "The map shows no *bordj* anywhere near here!"

"He's right, Mr. Barritt!" called a slim youngster who sat a magnificent chestnut Arab slightly in advance of the caravan. "I can see it through these glasses. It's a *bordj*, all right, a regular rock citadel, laid up with ragged stones and no mortar. There are masked men in white burnouses, and I see spears and rifles jutting up."

"Fat business!" growled the third member of their caravan. "We'll never get the El Djezair Date *this* trip!"

Win dropped the reins. "Two can play at that game," he muttered grimly.

HIS tones were lugubrious and pessimistic, and they singularly belied the dark and resolute face of Jose Canda. "Dart," the caravan called him, short for D'Artagnan. Jose was an Inca, a Spanish-American boy born and raised in New Mexico. Winston Lamont liked him and admired his squat strength, but he never could understand why he bellowed and roared with despair in the face of danger—only to fight like a demon when anything really happened! Latin temperament, probably, thought Win, and never argued, for Jose *would* have his roar!

"Fat complication is right, Jose!" said Mr. Barritt grimly. "And here we are making an almost indecent exposure of ourselves out on the flat sands in plain sight of that *bordj*!" he fumed.

"That's what I say, Mr. Barritt!" wailed Jose. "What can we do? A mirror answer would do no good as we don't know their signal code. And if we don't answer pronto, it's a dead give-away!"

"What is there to do?" asked Mr. Barritt hopelessly. "If we keep on, they pounce on us. If we go back, they ride out and capture us. Can you make signals and pass us off as Tuaregs, Faiz ben Kebir?" he asked their shiekh.

The Arab shrugged his shoulders. "They speak not our tongue, Effendi. It is Telemak they use, not Arabi. And who knows the Tuareg sun flashes!"

"What's going to happen then?" burst out Barritt. He hated this! To be captured and held for ransom by the Tuaregs would make no end of trouble with the French authorities—and would not be forgiven by the Bureau. The authorities expected their pomologists to keep out of trouble. He was going to Sidi Djellal with his assistant, Jose, to secure some burgeons of the El Djezair Date, "The Emerald," after which Algiers itself is named. There are a hundred and seventeen sorts of date palms, only six of which have so far proved suitable for California. Therefore, the Bureau of Agriculture was sparing no money to try out every sort that could be found in Arabia and North Africa. They expected him to get plants of the El Djezair, *not* to get into "native rows."

"How in the world are we going to get out of this?" he asked Faiz still more insistently.

"God alone knows!—may His name be exalted!" said the sheikh indifferently, and lit a cigarette

WINSTON LAMONT spoke up. As usual they were ignoring him, and it hurt, even though he realized that they were justified in doing so. His position on this expedition was strictly unofficial. His father was Minard Lamont, the Los Angeles capitalist, who was interested in California dates because they brought a dollar a pound—those that could be made to bear. It had occurred to Win that to go along with the expedition unofficially would be a fine adventure—with sheikhs, camels, tents, the big wide Sahara and all that! It had been easy; a word from his father, and what practically amounted to an order from the chief of pomology had made Barritt take him along. But the actual experience was not enjoyable at all. Those two desert campaigners, used to Arizona and New Mexico, had made nothing at all of the Sahara, but to Win its hardships were all new and very irksome. Its heat, its cold, its everlasting wind and dust, its sand, its flies, its aggravating camels and enormous monotony, all these things that had to be met and conquered made heavy demands upon Win's more or less cheerful endurance.

But worse than these was the professional explorers' treatment of him as a rank outsider. Win no longer wondered at this. Even his brief experience had brought him to the point where he understood why these hard-working, modestly equipped professionals resented having thrust on them a wealthy young amateur, with his fine Arab horse, his expensive binoculars, his high-priced rifle, and all the rest of the equipment that had been selected regardless of cost. And Win realized that at first, in his youthful exultation over his new outfit, he had tactlessly rubbed in the difference between his equipment and that of these government workers, who got along somehow with what they had, which was not much and well camp-worn! They had broken him of that, with caustic words and ungentle practical jokes, but he was still "in bad," even with Jose. The Spanish-American boy had never quite forgiven a thoughtless laugh of Win's at the old .30-30 Winchester that Jose had carried once on a fifteen-hundred-mile lone hike across New Mexico and Arizona and up into California, and cherished as a fetish.

By now Win wanted mightily to win a different standing, to be received by these two as a regular fellow, and not as a rich man's tenderfoot son somehow wished on them. And he had been seized by an idea that might relieve the situation and give him a chance to prove himself worthy of real comradeship.

"Look here, Mr. Barritt, I think I have got the dope!" He spoke impulsively yet diffidently, flushing through his sunburn. "Here's Hamdani Simri, my Arab. The Tuaregs would rather have him than this whole caravan of camels, I'll bet. He's worth ten thousand francs just as he stands. Suppose I stay here for a decoy, while you and Canda push on for El Gheel well? It's a detour, but you can water-up there. When these Tuaregs get going and come out, I'll ride for the Jebel Humar mountains over there to the west. There must be a well there. Then I'll lose 'em there, somehow, and meet you later at El Gheel. How about it?"

Mr. Barritt was eyeing him fixedly, his hard black eyes squinting more than ever. "Ba—ber—" he began through pursed lips and gathering force for his outburst, "Ba—ber—*blast my cats!*—if that isn't the craziest scheme I ever heard of!" he barked. "Young man, do you know what these Tuaregs ride? They ride *mehari* racing camels, that can go eighteen miles an hour and keep it up for a hundred and fifty miles! They would ride your horse down if you went to the ends of the earth! And you wouldn't lose them in the Jebel Humar mountains—you'd simply break your Arab's leg somewhere. Another thing: Do you know why El Gheel is called that? It's because a man named El Gheel missed it once. They found his bones not two miles off from it. It is a mere hole in the sand. Not even a date palm to mark it. How would you ever 'meet' us there, as you say? The whole scheme is nonsense."

Win winced under Barritt's scathing analysis of his plan. Nevertheless he clung to the idea persistently. "Still, I don't see what else there is for us to do," he said. "They'll come out of that *bordj* soon, on those *mehari* racers you speak of. In fact, there is just one man left on the walls now, and he is looking fixedly at us," he added after a look through the glasses. "You know what that means, Mr. Barritt—boots and saddles! We've got about five minutes left to do something in. Help me, Dart!" he flung to Jose. "Back me up! It's the thing to do. Don't you see?"

HE had unconsciously appealed to Jose by his nickname of "Dart" instead of using the more formal "Canda" he had come to feel Jose preferred from him.

Rather surprisingly, the dark youth reacted pleasedly to that "Dart;" besides, the idea of this daring ride appealed to his Latin temperament.

"I wish *I* owned Hamdani!" His heavy face gave forth a kind of scowling grin. "I sure would offer to try it, Mr. Barritt! It looks like a good scheme to me."

The pomologist scratched his head. Two against one; and those keen young brains were quite the equals of his own when it came to looking all around a proposition. "If I could only spare him Faiz!" he mused. "But we'll have to have him with us to find El Gheel. He can't tell us how, as he has only vague bearings himself, somewhere in the back of his memory. And then, two on Hamdani! That would be hopeless! You alone, Lamont, can hardly hope to outride them."

"Leave that to me, sir! And hurry!" urged Win. "You ought to be on your way now, to be over the horizon rim in time. I'll wait right here, for bait. They will come out to me first. And then I'll keep 'em going—after they've had one close look at this prize horse!"

"As for El Gheel, why can't we make him a signal, a smudge of smoke or something, when we get there?" put in Jose. "He can see that miles across this desert and find us all right."

"That's so," said Mr. Barritt, wavering. "But suppose you reach the Jebel Humar. I doubt if you can work Hamdani there at all. And then all that is left is a dash

out onto the desert again; and if you come to El Gheel, you bring about fifty Tuaregs behind you. So it will be all for nothing, anyhow."

"But the plan may go through all right, sir," argued Win. "And it's our best chance, isn't it?"

"It's *our* best chance," answered Barritt gruffly. "I'd say that *your* best chance lay in riding off on Hamdani on your own and leaving us to the Tuaregs." Then as Win shook his head, indignant wrath blazing in his eyes, the pomologist ended abruptly, almost grudgingly: "Oh, well, have it your way then. It's rather fine of you, youngster."

It flashed over Win that he would rather have had his services accepted as a matter of course, as Jose's perhaps might have been—as the natural thing to expect from him. But he only urged:

"Then *go!* But first ask the shiekh if there is a well in the Jebel Humar mountains, and where. They are twenty miles from here and I must water Hamdani."

"What does he say?" put in the sheikh, who had been trying to understand their English. "*Him* ride to the Jebel Humar alone!" he scoffed as Barritt explained. "*Wallah!* The sands are covered with the places whereon I rested, but *thou!* What dost *thou* know of the desert, youth?" he asked Win scornfully.

"Tell me of the well," insisted Win, ignoring the rest of it.

"*Mashallah!* It is death, Effendi!" the sheikh counseled Barritt. "But know, then. On this flank it is; marked by two acacia trees and an aloe growing in the rocks—but he'll never find it, by the Smiting!"

"I'll find it all right! Got a scheme for that too!" grinned Win as another thought struck him. "Get on with the camels, please, Mr. Barritt! I'll look for a smoke to the south about sundown."

They seemed dazed as they agreed at last and helped the Arabs drive around the long-necked and ungainly camels. At once the brown humps were plodding off across the flat sands. Win watched the *bordj* through his glasses and saw the lone sentinel hastily disappear from the wall—evidently to give the alarm.

"Hurry, Mr. Barritt!" he called after them. "Make them trot, if you can! You have about fifteen minutes left!"

Urgent yells—*Oosh!—Udrr!* in the grunting Arabic; yells and whack upon whack of stout leather canes!

The camels bobbed and galloped clumsily in all directions their foolish noses led them, each pursued by a shouting and whacking Arab. Swiftly the whole caravan was scuttling in a brown clump of humps and necks and trotting legs across the sands; then it went over the edge of a dry *oued* that meandered to the south and Win could see just the long file of humps and heads. In five minutes more, that was becoming quite indistinguishable from the general desolation of rocks and cutbanks and low dunes that stretched for endless miles.

WIN turned his attention with interest to the *bordj*. His glasses showed him that another long file of camels was winding down a ragged trail from the top of that red escarpment—but what a different lot were these! Whereas their own were the ordinary brown burden camels, good for a walk of about three miles an hour and a camel march of twenty miles, these were immense lean, gray *meharis*, slender and sleek, each with a net of thick red rope hanging down in tassels along its flanks and each with a muffled rider in the red saddle before the hump—with long guns and spears jutting over shoulder!

They were about three miles from where Win still sat Hamdani Simri, who pawed the sand eagerly with his hoofs and snuffed at those oncoming riders. He belonged to the great Khamseh, the Five Families of Arabian horses, and was worshiped by a whole tribe of Bedouins on the Syrian Desert where he was foaled. Win had bought him in Algiers when their expedition started. Hamdani had the matchless endurance of the Arab; was good for forty-five miles at a pinch. The *meharis* could run him down in time, but he had the speed of them and could make respites for rest and water and food.

On, across the flat sands now, came the long file of Tuareg *meharis*. They moved in a long, shambling trot, five feet to the stride. Their riders lurched and swayed atop of them, legs resting out along the gray necks, thighs grasping tight the high red pommel like a cross. All were masked; some white, some black. Win knew all about the Tuaregs, that fierce tribe of black white men who came from Crete before Egypt was, had occupied all the central Sahara, and had never been subdued by anyone from Roman to Frenchman. "Pirates of the Desert," they were called by the French, and Mr. Barritt's date trips had been most carefully selected to oases where they rarely raided. But Gaudames was an Asghar Tuareg town, and anywhere near it you took a chance. Only the lure of the El Djezair Date had made him attempt to reach Sidi Djellal where it grew.

Well, they had met the Tuaregs now, Win reflected, thrilling defiantly as he watched them come on. They were having a fandango, powder-play, tossing up spears and swords with matchless horsemanship as they came. They did not yell and whoop like the Arabs; there was only that silent, murderous, purposeful rush of their racing camels.

For a moment Win had panic, as Hamdani seemed about to bolt straight for this band of desert pirates! He neighed, whinnied, gathered himself for a spring, awaiting only the touch of a spur to go. Hamdani thought the oncomers were friends! He was familiar with bands of this sort.

Win slapped him on the haunch and turned him around. The boy looked around once at the Tuaregs, now near enough to be yelling at him vociferously; and then—"*Now* Hamdani Simri—what good are you!" he yelled and gave him the spur.

A volley of shots answered that maneuver. Out of it leaped Hamdani as if he had wings. Win headed straight for the hazy outlines of the Jebel Humar twenty miles away. There was nothing but desert between him and his pursuers—no sand dunes, no areas of broken rock. He had no idea where that well was, save that it was somewhere in the middle of that red and ragged line of bare hills; but he had a plan to locate it exactly when the time came.

Behind him he could see the line of *meharis*, now swung out like a fan, with himself for a pivot. They swayed and shambled in their long, tireless trot, good for one hundred fifty miles, relentless as death, absolutely sure to run down even Hamdani unless Win could somehow throw them off his track. The Tuaregs were not wasting any powder on him after that first outburst of anger. That was a prince of horses he was riding, and not to be risked to the chance bullet! They were just following; but they would keep *on* following until—

Win slowed Hamdani down. He was well out of range ahead of them, now, and the Arab would need all his endurance this trip! He looked to the south for signs of the explorers' caravan and thought he saw something moving in all that immensity down there, but could not be sure. One thing was going well in this; the Tuaregs had detached no one to follow the caravan. One sight of the proud, arching neck and sweeping tail and graceful withers and haunches of Hamdani Simri had been enough for them! This was a horse without price!

Hamdani nickered and snorted and pranced across the sands. He was enjoying this, and so was his rider. The Arab had abundance of reserve; enough to kick up his heels occasionally, backfiring, and laughing with glee as only a horse can laugh. Win looked back over his shoulder. The Tuareg formation was gradually crossing behind him. How fast they went, those loping and swaying racing *meharis!* They kept Hamdani at a fast trot that made Win post continually—and they were diverging now in a long slant from his own course toward the distant Jebel Humar.

That was the cue Win was waiting for! They knew precisely where that well was and were heading directly for it! Once they reached it first, all they had to do was wait for him. It was that that Win had thought upon before he parted from his own caravan, and it was his intention to *make* them chase him to his own drink! He edged Hamdani over to place him directly in front of the center of the Tuareg line again. High-pitched yells of exasperation answered that maneuver, telling him that he had guessed them out correctly.

"And that's that!" said Win with complete satisfaction. "Take it easy, Hamdani. There's a pile of miles ahead of us yet!"

Beyond him lay that endless horizon rim. The curve of the earth was perceptible here. He could not see the base rocks of the Jebel Humar because of it. It meant that ten miles at least lay between him and the well. He looked back and noted that the Tuareg chieftain's answer to his maneuver had been to throw out flankers. They rode the fastest *meharis* and were goading them continually. Win thought it over with some uneasiness. Their object was evidently to reach the flanks of the Jebel Humar about the same time that he arrived at the well. Before he could water Hamdani and fill his own canteens they would have reached the rocks on both sides of him. Should those mountain flanks prove impossible to his horse—

"More fun!" chuckled Win to himself a bit grimly. "This bird certainly knows how to keep up the interest!"

It looked rather hopeless as he continued to consider the possibilities in store for him. With those flankers in the Jebel Humar, he could go neither to the right nor the left!

"Well, it's over them or through them!" decided Win and patted Hamdani for a little more speed.

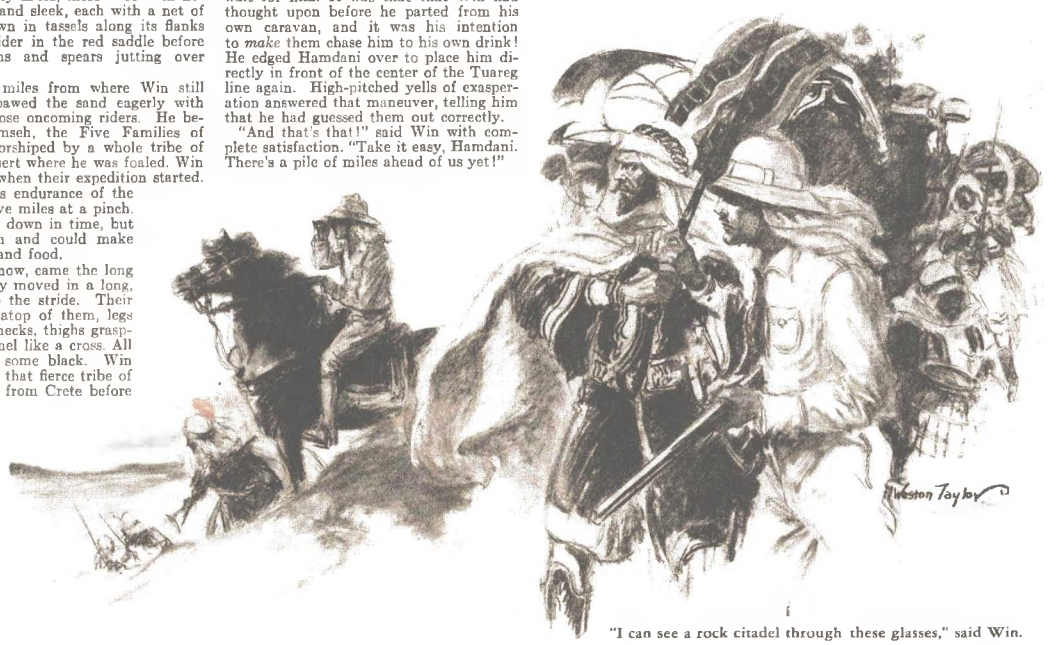
THE distance had now narrowed to five miles. He could see the base of the Jebel Humar now, and that ridge was not reassuring. It rose with steep slopes of bowldery talus up to rim rock, with few ragged gaps in it. Hamdani would have to climb like a fly to reach those, and—once through them? Suppose it should turn out all ragged bowlder fields, with hardly rat-cracks between them, such as Win had seen in these desert plateaus before? Hamdani could not move there without breaking one of his slender legs!

Two miles further on, Win was scrutinizing that talus for signs of the well. Yes; there they were! Gray-green hummocks that must be those two acacias! The well was under their roots. They were about halfway up the slope and he could see a faint trail zigzagging up.

Win touched Hamdani with the spur. "Now, old boy!" he chirped. Hamdani lit out in a fast gallop as if made of steel springs. The wind whistled in Win's ears, roared in the ventilator of his sun helmet. Distance opened out rapidly between him and the Tuaregs. They were yelling madly now, beating and goading their *meharis*. The tall beasts were going in a prancing gallop, flinging their long legs out so that their big pad hoofs threw up spurts of sand. Hamdani was wheezing hoarsely, for there was soft white drift-sand under hoof and it was bad medicine for him. Still he was gaining on those galloping *meharis* at that. Five minutes! That was all the time Win asked before he would be on his way again. No; *three* minutes! It would have to do!

Like the Pony Express, Win spurred to the base of the Jebel Humar. The vast walls towered above him now. They looked hopeless, but the spring was first. He urged Hamdani up that trail, stopped under the acacias, flung himself out of the saddle, and at once unhooked his canteen and began filling it. His knees nearly collapsed under him from all that posting, but he had no time for them. He was looking up at the rim rock while the water gurgled into the canteen neck and Hamdani was draining the

(*Continued on page 38*)



"I can see a rock citadel through these glasses," said Win.

The Blow Down

By Rex Lee

Illustrated by Ernest Fuhr

The crashing pole struck the clown a glancing blow on the shoulder.

IT seemed to Rann that a pile driver had hit him. He sprang into full wakefulness from dead slumber, to find the mahogany-tinted face of Horse O'Donnell peering in at him through the curtains of the berth.

"Come on!" bellowed the boss canvasman of the Selfridge Show. "Think this is Sunday? Shake it up a little! Shake it up a little!"

And the gigantic Irishman charged down the aisle to finish dressing.

"Horse is still feeling itchy," reflected Rann. "Thought he'd be over his fit by now."

He took a look out of the window before getting up. The circus train was right in front of the depot, and there were fully two hundred people waiting around to watch the unloading.

"Looks like a good day's business," Rann reflected.

It was a small Texas town, and consequently the turnout was good for four o'clock in the morning.

He was dressed in a jiffy, and climbed down off the car, bright-eyed and vigorous despite having had a few minutes less than four hours' sleep. He'd get three or four more hours in between shows, as was his daily custom. Three years of life in the open air, plus his daily exercise as star flyer of the Ford Flying Troupe of gymnasts, had made of Rann Braden an athlete who was always in the proverbial pink of condition.

He walked down the long line of quiet, white cars to the privilege car, where he found Horse and his four assistants—"The Four Bossmen"—busy with rolls and coffee. Breakfast was not served in the cookhouse until the big top was up, in any event, and it took over two hours to set the cookhouse itself up, get it in working order, and have everything ready to feed six hundred people.

From the flat cars came the rumble of unloading wagons, the shouts of razorbacks and teamsters, and an occasional sleepy roar from some of the cats.

"This fleabitten country is hotter'n blazes," growled big O'Donnell. "Hot now, at four in the morning! By night we'll be fourteen pounds lighter than the tail feather of a hummin' bird."

Horse was on a rampage—had been for twenty-four hours. The big, lovable Irishman was as temperamental as an opera star, once in a while, and this was one of the times. He was homesick—after twenty years of gallivanting around the country in the show business.

Rann understood. Homeless himself, he understood more than most, possibly, for all he had was memories. And Horse had said to him:

"I've got a wife, a home, a dog and an automobile back in Lynn, Massachusetts—and I miss 'em. If I stay home I get itchy for the lot; if I'm with a show I get lonesome for the folks. So what in blazes am I gonna do?"

That was all right. Those sentimental moods passed, the clouds always clearing before the sunny Irish smile that would out, sooner or later. But yesterday things had gone wrong. One of his best canvasmen, with the show four years, had gone berserk and been fired in O'Donnell's absence. And that, in his pessimistic mood, had been the last straw. Right now, O'Donnell was raring.

AS he fumed on in his deep voice, Rann was watching the door for Alex Ray. The young clown who had become Rann's closest friend—the only friend of his own age that he had—had formed the same habit Rann had always had. Rann had persuaded Alex that in order to be a big man in the show business one couldn't be satisfied with being a performer. Rann himself was always the first up in the morning and the last to get to bed at night, and right then, as far as knowledge went, he was qualified to hold any job on the show, and that went from manager down to steward of the cookhouse. And when he got older, and had more money, and more practical experience, he intended to hold some of those jobs.

And Alex had been with him since he'd joined the show that spring. Sometimes the two talked along the railroad tracks at night about the Braden-Ray show that would go out some day. . . .

"He isn't coming, I guess," Rann reflected, and somehow the tiny incident threw a shadow over him. Alex had been acting peculiarly for over a week now, and for once he would not confide in his friend. Something was on his mind—something that kept him silent and brooding.

"Know whether anybody called Alex?" Rann inquired as they climbed off the privilege car and started for the lot.

"Sure! Why wouldn't we?" snapped O'Donnell, and Rann was such a good friend of the older man's that he retorted:

"Got a burr under your saddle, Horse? Why the loud barking around here?"

Blackshirt Bill, unregenerate old-timer, winked portentously behind Horse's back. Horse said nothing, but plowed along with a thundercloud on his ruggedly handsome face.

Rann again fell to thinking of Alex. He wished he could help the clown out somehow, partly for Rann's own sake. Their friendship had become so close—a different sort of relationship than the half paternal feeling between himself and O'Donnell and Eddie Ford—that to see Alex in the dumps was just about as bad as to be worried himself.

Alex had had a bit of a hard row to hoe when he hit the show. He had been a successful actor before that, but it was his first year with a circus, and things had been hard for him. Shy, sensitive, accustomed to more ease and comfort than was obtainable in circus cars and circus tents, he'd become very unpopular at first. Now he had proved himself a trouper, but there were still people around the show—like Horse O'Donnell—who didn't think much of Alex Ray personally. No one could disparage his work much. For two months Rann had been trying to get Alex and Horse together; but to Horse, Alex was a First of May who wasn't man enough to bother with, and to Alex, Horse was a big, blasphemous bruiser who was always shouting around and razzing people.

The situation worried Rann. To his mind they were both men to tie to, and the mystery of their dislike for each other was something he couldn't solve.

"Will you look at that two-by-four lot!" snapped O'Donnell as he saw the field stretching before him. "Some of these twenty-four men never get out of bed, and then expect me to get a show this size into any lot some rube palms off on 'em over the phone!"

The lot was none too big, but it had two good entrances, would be well drained if it rained, and by crowding the side shows a bit—taking one pole out of the top—it would be O. K. in Rann's judgment. And the Four Bossmen so expressed themselves, whereat Horse grunted scathingly.

Then he went to work, as the cookhouse wagons rolled in behind the stake driver. His practical eye had the lot laid out instantly. A few measurements with a tape line, and he had grabbed a slim iron laying out pin and driven it down. That was number one center pole—the king pole—of the big top.

FROM that start the bosses went to work. The center poles were placed fifty feet apart, the stake line laid out for both big top and the adjoining menagerie, and then padroom, ballet top, wardrobe tent, and others which always had the same position in relation to the big top, could be laid out automatically.

Likewise the sideshow. It might be on one side or the other of the entrance to the big top, but it was always there in front to lure the incoming crowd into its doorway before they went on into the big show. In three minutes Horse had indicated the spot for the cook tent, to the right of the big top, and had spotted the horse tents as close in to the back yard limits as the stake lines would permit. Horse tents and cookhouse were movable units stuck anywhere space would permit.

Rann stayed right behind him, but this morning Horse did not give his reasons for each move, pointing out, for example, just why a ditch there might hinder the stake driver, or a difference of five feet in the spotting of the king pole mean a troublesome hump or grade in one of the three rings. He explained nothing, but bellowed a constant stream of entreaty, recrimination, and command to his far-flung hundred men. Rann, knowing his friend from feet to hair, followed, watched, learned something new, and said nothing.

He was watching the mechanical stake driver—a motor on a wagon which worked a walking beam that drove the stakes—as it drove the line of big top stakes over near some undergrowth. As he watched, he saw a familiar figure emerge from a path through the shrubbery. Alex Ray—but he looked different. He was roughly dressed in overalls, and had a floppy old hat pulled down over his eyes. His face was unrecognizable in the shadow of the brim.

The tall, slender young clown, shooting constant glances at the crowd of people who were watching the work on the lot, made his way toward Rann and O'Donnell.

"Where are you coming from?" drawled Rann, real curiosity beneath the casual words. Alex looked pale and haggard.

"Took—a short cut," answered Alex evasively, his brown eyes bright.

O'Donnell glanced around.

"Why didn't yuh put us wise?" he demanded. "Holding out on us, were you? Just like you blamed kinkers!"

Alex's face flushed, and he seemed about to flare up, but he didn't.

Rann sensed a difference between the Alex of even (*Continued on page 42*)

"They've got me," whispered Alex, and dropped limply to his stool.

As the great black prow headed for Pier 7, the *Manukai* went out to meet her.

The Cub Dives In

By Mitchell V. Charnley

Illustrated by Dudley Gloyne Summers

"HEY, kid! Get out of there!"

Wallace Tatum wheeled his long frame sharply from the rows of bamboo-bound wooden buckets piled half the length of Pier 7—just arrived in Honolulu from Japan, they were—and searched the dim landing platform, fifteen feet above his head, for the owner of the voice. It rasped on.

"Get out! And make it fast. Can't you read? Get off this pier and—oh, it's you, is it?"

The tone was suddenly mollified. Tatum, water front reporter for the Honolulu *Evening Transcript*, recognized the voice as that of Andrew Crosby, commissioner of ports for the Territory. Crosby was idling along the platform with Whiting, reporter for the rival *Chronicle*, and both were grinning at Tatum's discomfiture.

"I didn't know you," grudgingly called Crosby through his stubby moustache in a moment. "Stay as long as you want to—not that you'll find any news there." Whiting and Crosby walked on, chuckling.

Tatum, with a parting kick at one of the unsympathetic Japanese buckets, did not reply. Crosby was touchy, anyway. His predecessor on the water front for the *Transcript* had told him so when he took the job, six months before—had told him, for one thing, how Crosby was always criticizing the customs officers for not "doing something" about opium smuggling. And Whiting—well, Whiting, in his immaculate ducks and snowy pith helmet, was all right, and square enough as a rival, but he always treated Tatum as a novice.

"Maybe I haven't been on this beat for fourteen years, the way Whiting has," Tatum savagely told himself. The tanned face under his dark hair showed an unaccustomed frown. "Maybe I don't know all there is to know about shipping news. But I'll show him—some day."

The indefinite "some day" when he could break his big story, scoop Whiting and astonish the gang in his own city room was becoming increasingly necessary to Tatum's peace of mind. For six months he had been learning the ropes. He had come to Honolulu as a hand on a lumber schooner. And the languorous perfume of the tropical air, the ideal swimming, the fascination of the palms and the brilliant hibiscus blossoms and the conglomerate population had kept him.

It was the swimming, mostly, that he liked. He had spent hours every winter day, it seemed, loafing in the sun on the pleasant beach, or plowing through the lazy waves, or learning, with the willing aid of Pua Lanaha, to ride a surf board in from the reef with a misty, roaring breaker behind him.

But his work he liked, too. The job on the *Transcript* he had sought because, next to traveling, newspaper work appealed to him as the ideal occupation. And he knew that he had done well enough. Orson, the city editor, had let him know that. But what he wanted was to show them that he was more than the cub they thought him. Just let him land a story that would carry a streamer across the *Transcript's* front page! Then, maybe, Whiting wouldn't be so ready to laugh at the "kid." He'd show 'em!

THE ever-present hope of digging up this big story in the back of his head, Tatum continued his beat on this morning. Dry docks, big piers where the trans-Pacific vessels paused for eight hours in the middle of their long voyages, smaller wharves for the steamers which connected Honolulu and the other cities of the Islands; harbormaster's office, the neck of the bay where were docked the scores of sharp-nosed fishing sampans, baby blue in color and fishy in smell; shipping offices, Seamen's Rest (where Orson always insisted there were dozens of human interest stories waiting for him); he covered them all. And all he got was a few meager notes which would not make more than a quarter column on the inside pages.

Disgusted, Tatum turned toward the office of the collector of customs. There, at least, he would be treated civilly, not like a *malihini*—an outsider. Collector Lansing always put aside his work and chatted; mighty fine chap, the collector.

Slumped in a big leather chair before the collector's desk, Tatum sat quiet while the official leaned back, passed a big silk handkerchief over his forehead, talked.

"Well, what'll we give them a story about to-day?" he was saying. "There hasn't been an opium story since you've been on the *Transcript*, has there? The papers always have a couple of 'em a year. How about opium to-day?"

"Sounds fine," agreed Tatum, his dark eyes shining. "But what is there about opium that's news?"

"Likely to be a little something, if you'll wait long enough," said the collector with a smile. "Right now six of the boys—customs inspectors, you know—are over in the hold of the *Wailele* looking for some stuff we have a tip is concealed there. And we're trying to get it out before they get a chance to smuggle it ashore."

Tatum was all ears. Was this the big story?

"That's where we ought to get 'em—when they try to take it ashore," went on Lansing, with a half-scowl. "For some reason we haven't been able to do it, though. Sometimes some of the inspectors aren't on the job, you know, and sometimes some of them take bribes. Right now they're all straight, I'm certain, except perhaps Joe Lanaha. Joe is the oldest man on the staff, and the only one I haven't fired since this smuggling started, a year ago. And I wouldn't think of letting him go if the stuff didn't keep coming in. . . . It's a big temptation to the boys—they get low salaries, and it's easy money for keeping their eyes closed five minutes." Again the big handkerchief.

"But what we want is to get the man higher up. If we found out who that was, we'd stop it mighty quick. The man higher up furnishes the money to buy it from the Orient, you see. And for more than a year he's managed to keep under cover. So all we can do is stop it in dribbles, like this one we hope to get from the *Wailele*." He paused a moment.

"You reporters understand how it is, though," he concluded. That was the way the collector was—took it for granted Tatum knew the ins and outs of the game. And he knew that a newspaper man would respect a confidence. Tatum appreciated that. But he didn't get a chance to ask more, for just then a knock came from the door, and five men entered. Big Hawaiians they were, dark-skinned and weary-eyed, as though they had not slept for days. Good-natured Joe Lanaha, whom Tatum knew and liked as the friendliest and most helpful of all the inspectors, led them; over his broad shoulders was a burlap sack. He dumped it on the floor beside the collector's desk. As he began to speak he reached into the sack and placed on the desk a little red tin, like a tobacco box with a brass cover.

"Collector, we got 42 tins of it there—around $800 worth," he explained. "Me 'n' the boys 'll swear there ain't another pipeful anywhere on the *Wailele*. Found this packed around a bolt of cloth in the fo'c's'le—and there wasn't a man on the boat knew anything about it."

Lansing glanced significantly at Tatum as he commended the inspectors and sent them out.

"That helps," he said, mopping his brow nervously. "But it doesn't catch anybody—and it leaves me where I was as far as Joe is concerned—"

Tatum interrupted. This, he declared, was a real story.

And in a fever of haste he worked the facts from the collector—the seizure, the men engaged, the penalty against the *Wailele's* owners. Then he left for the *Transcript* office, his story commencing to form in his mind as he walked along the harbor's edge.

FOR all his haste, Tatum could not pass the little slip in the corner of the sheltered harbor where lay the disreputable little gray launch *Manukai*—Bird of the Sea, ironically—and where loafed Pua Lanaha, leader of the harbor diving boys, with his bronze-skinned, fun-loving company. For these boys, who went out into the harbor in the *Manukai* whenever a liner came in, and swam and shouted and dove around her prow and curving sides to retrieve coins tossed by admiring voyagers, knew every trick and turn of Tatum's favorite sport. He had taken pains to make friends with them—there is nothing easier than to make friends in Hawaii with the Hawaiians—to loaf for a moment to talk with them now and then as he made his rounds, even to swim with them occasionally.

"You hurry too much, you reporter!" shouted Pua Lanaha, younger brother and smaller edition of Joe Lanaha. Pua was crouched on the tiny after deck of the *Manukai*, haunches resting on his heels, his arms around his knees—a pose the Hawaiian can maintain for hours without tiring. Pua's costume was an abbreviated purplish pair of cotton swimming trunks; his gleaming white teeth accentuated the deep color of his skin as he called to Tatum.

"Where you go so fast?" He laughed in glee at the reporter's rapid gait.

"I'm in a hurry to-day," responded Tatum a bit importantly. "I've got a big story—an opium story," he added. The last phrase had immediate effect.

"Opium!" shouted Pua, with a louder laugh than ever. "Yah! Collector tell you 'bout opium? He don't know. You get me tell you, Joe tell you, then you have b-i-i-g story, mebbe." Again the broad-shouldered, muscular Hawaiian laughed. Then his face grew sober for a moment.

"Joe he say opium bring *pilikia*—too much *pilikia*, Joe say. Opium no good. Mebbe you not know much about opium, I think?"

Tatum looked sharply at the Hawaiian. What was it the collector had said about Joe Lanaha and opium smuggling? And what did this boy know about opium *pilikia*—opium trouble? Then he shrugged his shoulders and answered Pua's question.

"Maybe I don't—and maybe I do. You wait 'til you see the *Transcript*—you'll know more'n you do now."

Pua's amusement at his story piqued Tatum. It *was* a good story, he reflected as he swung his angular figure in its loose clothing down the street. But these Hawaiians always laughed at anything. Never did take anything seriously.

He was still astir with excitement when he entered the cool office, greeted one or two other reporters, seated himself before the typewriter table grandiloquently labeled "Marine Editor." He wouldn't show off, he thought—just turn the story in and let 'em see he could do something by himself.

An hour later he had finished four laborious pages of copy, and was still pecking at his typewriter. The other reporters were all in—they had covered their beats and were leisurely comparing notes, or "writing their stuff." Tatum heard his name nasally called from the city editor's desk.

"What you writing there, Tatum—a book?"

Tatum fingered his four pages. "A thousand words here," he said, "and five hundred more coming. Got a good story."

He had heard Carse, the star reporter, rattle it off like that when he had something out of the ordinary. So had Orson, for he left his desk and came to bend his lean form over Tatum's shoulder.

"What's it about?" The others in the office were listening, Tatum knew.

"Well, you see, Joe Lanaha and the other inspectors got some opium off the *Wailele*—"

"Opium!" cut in Orson abruptly. "How much'd they get?"

Tatum had a sinking feeling. "Nearly $1,000 worth," he declared in a hurried defensive. "Or maybe less—$800 worth, anyway. And they had an awful—"

"Son, that was a good yarn once—the first 27 times they pulled it." Orson's bored nasal twang silenced Tatum's eager defense of his story. "Gimme about a page on it, will you? Opium's old stuff—not much news in it any more.

"And after this you'll save yourself a lot of trouble by telling me what you've got 'fore you start to write it."

Orson slouched back to his seat. The other reporters turned to their desks with half-smiles which Tatum saw out of the corner of his eye. He felt the deeper color rising beneath his tanned cheeks as he jerked the sheet from his typewriter and tremblingly put in another.

In ten minutes he hurried from the office. He heard a laugh as he left, and fancied it was directed at him . . .

TWO days later he was talking casually with the helmeted Whiting as, in the cool of the early morning, they coasted over the swells outside the bottle neck entrance to Honolulu harbor. The *President*—great United States liner—was hove to, and they were waiting for the Army surgeons to complete their routine inspection of passengers on the incoming vessel. Then Joe Lanaha and his customs inspectors, together with the newspaper men, would be allowed to go aboard from the little customs launch.

This was a regular part of the water front reporter's work. Each vessel he must meet, and in the half hour between the time she started through the narrow harbor entrance and the moment the gangplank was put down the reporter must comb the passenger list for notables and stories, seek personages, get interviews. Covering the ship, it was called. Six months had made it a commonplace with Tatum; he no longer feared the more experienced Whiting, nor the possibility of being scooped. His aim was to do the scooping himself.

This morning was no different from any other. Tatum

and Whiting conversed with apparent amity—about the swooping Army airplanes that watched each vessel to prevent the dropping of contraband to waiting sampans, about a coming election, about everything except news. Then the yellow flag—the signal of quarantine—was hauled down from the liner's masthead, and the launch chugged its way to the lower end of the rope ladder, awash in the easy blue swells. As Joe Lanaha swung to the bottom step and Tatum followed, Whiting referred first to their work.

"Well, Tatum, what're you going to get here to-day?" Then, an exasperating smile in his eyes, he added, "When are you going to spring another big story, sonny? Another opium story?"

Tatum dashed up the ladder at the imminent risk of his neck, pretending not to hear. His burst of enthusiasm was history in the *Transcript* office now; they'd all forgotten it. But how in thunder had Whiting heard of it? Probably the *Chronicle* office was laughing at him now, he thought. He ignored the steward's greeting as he mounted to the main deck, and kicked wickedly at a gleaming white stanchion.

It was fortunate for Tatum of the *Transcript* that the *President's* passenger list contained little of interest that day. Grimly Tatum went through it; his cheeks tingled with the memory of Orson's disgust and Whiting's laughter as he sought interviews with a great tea importer, a Chinese statesman, a millionaire tourist. Then, fifteen minutes before the vessel docked, he found a vacant spot at the port rail—the passengers always gathered on the other side, the side where lay the piers, the mile or so of low flats with the city and the towering dark green hills behind—and stared moodily at the churning water below.

Was that mistake of his going to follow him all his newspaper days? In his inexperience Tatum saw himself forever a laughing stock, forever pointed out as the cub who tried to put across a story so old it was legendary; forever the opium reporter. Even the diving boys—their shouts on the other side of the vessel reminded him of it—laughed at him; even Pua Lanaha said he knew more about opium than Tatum.

Well, probably he did. Certainly Tatum himself had not shown to very good advantage. But he'd learn! He would not make the same mistake again. "Old stuff," Orson had said. . . .

What was the matter with that crazy pilot boat, anyway? Why, after it had set the pilot aboard the *President* outside the harbor, hadn't it gone back to its berth alongside Pier 7? There it was dawdling and circling along in the wake of the liner, its one-man crew idly swinging the wheel from side to side. Suddenly, then, the idling tactics stopped. The little launch straightened out, its speed accelerated a trifle as it headed straight for the stern of the *President*, disappeared from view. A moment later Tatum heard the unmistakable "jeep! jeeeeep!" of its screechy whistle.

There was an increasing clamor from the other side, and his attention was diverted to the ever-enthralling business of making a landing. He went to the starboard rail, and left behind opium, tea importer and Whiting in watching the great hulk warp and sidle up to the pier, hardly brushing the creaking piles as it came to a dead stop from the pull of a line.

WHITING forgot it all after that, though, and Tatum realized his mistake was just one of the myriad any new reporter makes. Just the same, it rankled. The brown-faced, dark-haired big lad did not relish being laughed at; and the desire to bring in a big story—one that Orson couldn't call old stuff—still burned. "Not opium," he said to himself. "I know better 'n that. But I'm going to find something. . . ."

Collector Lansing, who helped Tatum to forget that the others considered him a novice, was of no aid in relegating opium to the background. It was always a topic in his daily conversations with the reporter as, mopping his face with the ever-present silk handkerchief, he told of his worries in the sure knowledge that Tatum would not reveal confidences.

"There's a leak somewhere," he complained one day, "and Joe and the boys don't know where it is—or say they don't. Everything's being done. I'm just about certain it isn't coming over the wharves while the boats are in port, for the inspectors and the harbor police are all on the job, and they know they'll lose their jobs if anything's found coming in while they're on duty.

"And sampans can't bring it any more, since we have the air patrol." He threw up his hands. "I don't know where the hole is—but it's a wide one all right."

"What about this man higher up?" asked Tatum, remembering an earlier conversation. The collector swept his brow nervously.

"He's the man I want—he and the chap who's helping him. And"—the collector hesitated a moment—"I'm afraid the helper's going to turn out to be Joe Lanaha, for I'm sure of all the other boys."

As Tatum left he was vaguely worried about Joe's implication. Pua *had* hinted that the two of them knew something about opium. But with an effort he drove the worry away—for his business was news, and didn't he know opium wasn't news?

Nevertheless in the back of Tatum's mind lay the resolve to find out what Pua had meant when he referred to opium as a *pilikia*-maker. And his friendship with the easy-going Hawaiian lad grew stronger as a result. Late afternoons, when the last edition was off and his work done, he swam with Pua; not in the harbor—the water was oily and dirty, and the only object of swimming there was to dive for coins—but off Waikiki, or sometimes, on Sundays, on the beautiful sandy beach of Waimanalo Bay, on the other side of the island. There he and Pua plunged into the surf and raced and dived and played; or lay under the man-planted ironwood trees, or in the shade of a clump of towering royal palms when the sun was high overhead, to talk.

And the eager questioning of Tatum never got from Pua more than a shouting laugh and a show of gleaming white teeth.

"What you think *I* know?" Pua would exclaim gleefully. "Why you want *pilikia*? No, you reporter—opium no good. I think you leave him alone—hunh?"

Then Pua would plunge again into the water, and Tatum would follow, for a lesson in diving for the white stone or piece of shell Pua would toss before him. To the Hawaiian boy it was no trick to dive as the coin from the boat or the stone from a comrade's hand spatted into the water ten strokes from him, and to swim with uncanny precision to where it was sinking, five or ten feet below the surface. But Tatum was not so skillful. It took persevering practice and constant encouragement from the brown boy before he mastered the trick. At last even Pua, best diver of them all, was satisfied.

"You dive 'most as good as my boys, I think," he announced. "Mebbe you go with us one day when boat

comes in?" he grinned.

That gave Tatum an idea. He could swim as well as these boys; he loved it as they did; why shouldn't he dive for coins? Of course *haoles*—whites—didn't do it; but it would be fun for once. And maybe—just maybe—he could find out what Pua knew about opium.

So, two weeks later, Tatum came strolling down to the harbor and informed Pua and the other divers he was going to accompany them the next day, when the *Katuzu Maru* came in.

"I struck 'em for a two-day vacation at the office," he said, "and I'm going to spend it doing nothing but swimming!"

HARDLY ruffling the greenish-blue surface of the harbor, the great black prow of the *Katuzu Maru* slid slowly through the bottle neck and headed for Pier 7. Like a chip covered with shiny brown ants—one of them a lighter brown than the others—came the *Manukai* to meet her. Twenty feet from the hull the ants jumped shouting from the chip and swam with long, easy strokes alongside the big vessel, eager dark eyes turned up to the row of curious faces lining the rail of the prominade deck.

A hand shot from the rail, and a silver coin flashed in the morning sunlight, fell with a tiny splash in the midst of the swimming group. Like flashes the forms dove; seconds later they came to the surface, tossed their long dark hair back from their eyes. Pua Lanaha held a hand high with the coin in it, then transferred it to his mouth. With a grin he shouted for more.

The tourists were lavish, as always. Two favorites they picked at once; the splashing, laughing Pua and, unaccountably, the novice, Tatum. Coppers came down in the metal rain, and these the Hawaiians scorned. Better lose a penny to win a quarter, they knew. But all coins were alike to Tatum. He dived and dived, and often lost when some other boy went after the same coin as he. Slowly he fell behind his companions, who swam to keep pace with the creeping vessel. Tatum, for all his interest in the game, was looking for same vague thing—he didn't know what.

Then, with a hollow plump! sharply different from the spat! of coins, he heard something hit the water behind him. Turning, he saw it—a little black object. Things were always falling from the boats, he thought. But something led him to swim to the black object, and as his fist closed over it something led him to glance up. From a porthole directly above, a sallow face with narrow, gleaming eyes peered at him, and a wave of oriental oaths followed him as he plowed back to the *Manukai*.

Tatum didn't tell anybody about his find—not even Pua. As the little boat chugged toward her berth his eyes were glued on that porthole aft. Nothing appeared. But he did see the pilot boat zigzagging nervously about the center of the harbor, crossing and recrossing the whitish water where the stern of the *Katuzu Maru* had been as she swung her nose into the slip.

Two hours later, secure in his room, Tatum eagerly ripped off the tight black cloth wrappings of his find. Carefully waterproofed, it was a little red tin exactly like those Joe Lanaha had taken from the *Wailele*. And inside he found—

"Looks like some silly kid's drawing," he muttered disgustedly. "A boat in a narrow river—might be the harbor entrance, the way it widens on each side. And on the other side nothing but letters that don't spell anything at all—fta."

Fta wasn't a Hawaiian word—no t's or f's in the language. It didn't sound like Japanese, though it was a bit like some Chinese names he had seen. It certainly wasn't English, unless it was an abbreviation . . . fort! "Fort A!" And that could only be Fort Armstrong, there at the mouth of the harbor. No fort at all, really, except for a few small guns and some buildings and palms and hau trees, and a long concrete pier along the harbor edge. But there it was, at the harbor entrance—and so was the boat in the picture!

"All of which," he concluded, "means just exactly nothing at all. But—well, I haven't anything to do to-day anyway."

So the day he spent in the vicinity of Fort Armstrong, casually walking along the concrete pier, searching the barren rocks of Sand Island across the inlet, prying as boldly as he dared past the fort's *kapu*—keep out—sign into the slight armaments of the fort itself. The scores of chattering blue sampans, too, passing back and forth he watched closely. It was a day wasted. Even when the *Katuzu Maru* steamed majestically out against the golden afternoon sun, with a farewell who-o-o-om of her throaty whistle, he saw nothing. The pilot boat took the pilot off the *Katuzu*, came bustling through the channel and went directly to her berth beside Pier 7. And Tatum was none the wiser.

"One of my vacation days wasted," he said disappointedly to himself as he turned toward home. "Well, there's another coming—"

The vessel arriving the next day was the *Konyo Maru*—not so big nor so handsome as the *Katuzu*, but a source of revenue to the diving boys, nevertheless. Tatum was with them, and it went a good deal as on the day before. Except that he dived less frequently, and got the coin he went after more often, and kept close to his comrades as they swam with the ship. Never once did he lag; hardly did he look toward the *Konyo's* stern. But as her bowline tightened on the pier and the *Manukai* with the diving boys scuttled away, he saw the pilot boat circle through the wide wake, saw her brown-skinned boatman emerge from the cabin and lean far over the gunwale, saw him scoop something small and black from the water. Then he slunk back to the cabin, headed for the slip and pulled the whistle cord twice—"jeep! jeeeep!"

Gleefully Tatum turned to Pua, engaged at that moment in counting the silver he took from his mouth.

"Pua, old scout, I learned something that time!" he shouted.

Pua's white teeth shone.

"Yes? I think mebbe, you come some more, you be p-urty good diving boy."

Tatum's laugh was out of all proportion to the little sarcasm of Pua's remark.

THE *Konyo's* coal bunkers needed almost complete refilling, and all day long winches screamed and tackles rattled as the dirty fuel was hauled over her side from the lighters warped into the slip alongside. All day long, too, Joe Lanaha and the inspectors stood watch on Pier 7 and Pier 8, running inquiring hands over the pockets of disembarking passengers, seeking evidence of attempted smuggling. It was nearly dark when the gangplank was pulled in, and the cool evening breeze was springing shoreward when the *Konyo Maru* clumsily backed from the pier, churned the water to ghostly white and headed through the bottle neck.

Nobody on the vessel saw the figure crouched far back in the blacker shadow of the hau tree just inside the military reservation at the harbor neck—not even the little rat-faced man who slunk to the aft cargo hatch just as the *Konyo* was leaving the narrow passage, hardly 30 feet from shore. A hurried sweeping glance, and the rat-faced man hoisted a big roundish bundle to the top of the rail, then gave it a tremendous shove which curved it eight feet clear of the hull and just beyond the suck of the *Konyo's* propeller. Before he heard the splash in the dark water, Rat-face had disappeared.

The figure under the hau tree was silent for five full minutes. Then, at a run, it rushed to the pier's edge, searched the water eagerly. Its eyes fixed a spot not far from shore, a bobbing spot a little darker than the quieting water. Then it gave a satisfied grunt and dashed back to its hiding place.

Half an hour. From outside the harbor came the steady mutter of a gasoline engine. Into the harbor neck came a whitish blot on the water that was the cabin of the pilot boat. Once in the passage, the mutter quieted for a moment, then commenced in an undertone. A man appeared on the tiny deck; with a boat hook he harpooned the bobbing black spot as the boat loafed by; then he hoisted the bundle to the deck and the muttering broke out full again.

As the little craft chugged toward the light of Pier 7 the figure under the hau tree, safe from observation, broke into the open. Over the concrete pier, past the immigration station and the dry docks it sped; along the water front to Pier 6, smelling stickily and saccharinely of raw sugar. There it stopped, darted into the wharfinger's office and feverishly banged the receiver hook of the desk telephone, while the sleepy night watchman dully complained at the invasion.

"Joe Lanaha!" said the newcomer into the mouthpiece. Then, "Tatum—yes, Tatum of the *Transcript*, Joe. Joe, Pier 6—yes, I'm there now—want you to come in a hurry—something to show you—make it fast—"

There were no shadows around the little shack that served as quarters and offices for the pilots and boatmen alongside Pier 7, just above the launch's moorings in the corner of the slip. It was tacked onto the high wall of the pier shed at its shore end like a loaf of sugar against a loaf of bread, and the lights of Allen Street threw it into stark relief. But, Tatum and Joe Lanaha knew, there was but one entrance—that from the street—and it was plainly in sight for them, crouching behind the dark window of Pier 6's office across the slip.

They were arguing in violent whispers, after Tatum had told the customs inspector all he knew about the bundle the pilot boat had picked up.

"It's there, ain't it?" queried Lanaha. "And nobody is in there but the pilot an' the feller who runs his boat. I c'n get them by myself—you don't have to come."

Tatum ignored the slur. "That's just it, Joe," he pleaded. "I know you could get *them*. But they're not the ones we want—don't you see? That is, if we could get anybody else with 'em, and I think we can—"

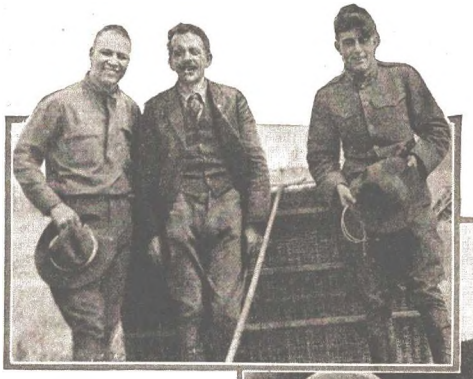
Joe subsided. At intervals he started up, but Tatum managed to hold him. Then, along the quiet front, an automobile, strangely incongruous in the still tropic night, with the lapping water and the heavy smell of night-blooming cereus, came throbbing to a stop before the office. A man stepped out; and Joe and Tatum gasped in unison.

(*Cont. on page 57*)

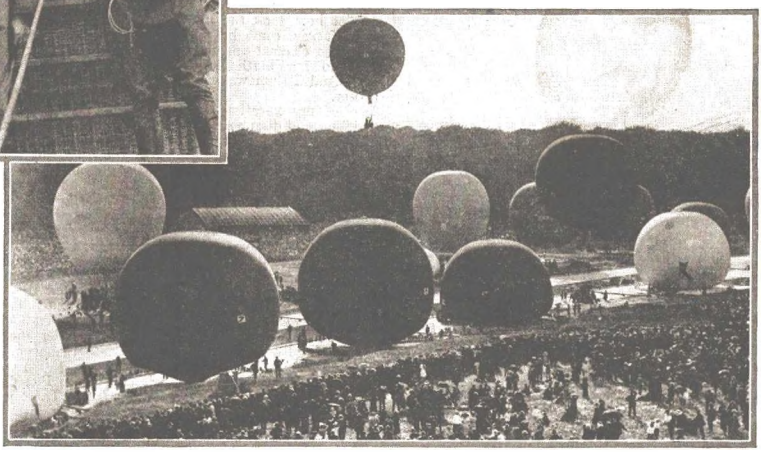
"Right now inspectors are in the *Wailele's* hold looking for contraband."

BALLOONING

Aerial Adventure Over Distant



Pilot 13 (center) and two of the cadets he trained in the World War.



She's off! Starting an international balloon race—and cricks in craned necks.

TO be frank, I became a balloonist by accident and against my inclination—largely as the result of a single innocent question

Being an earnest young reporter bent on getting a story for my newspaper in North Adams, Massachusetts, I asked Oscar Haendler, who had landed in North Adams with a clean collar and a small balloon for baggage, who was going up with him.

"You, if you like, Arnold!" And he smiled. Skeptically. Well, that settled it. I hadn't been hinting. I didn't yearn to go ballooning. But I couldn't decline the invitation. Not after that smile.

Swallowing hard twice, I said nonchalantly: "All right. When do we start?"

What a flight that was! During an unduly prolonged part of a cloudy September day in 1907, we roamed around over mountains and whatnot, and finally landed on top of a 25-foot rock cut looking down on a railroad. The basket was perched on the very brink of the precipice; the envelope, collapsed, was hung partly on a barbed wire fence and mostly on an extensive collection of unkind, long-pronged blackberry bushes.

As I climbed out of that basket, held in place only by the anchor rope and the envelope, I decided unanimously: "Never again."

But Leo Stevens, balloon constructor and pilot extraordinary, visited our city and suggested to me that North Adams ought to have an aero club. He hinted that I, being the only resident who had been up in the air, would be the logical candidate for pilot of the club balloon. Somehow he conveyed the impression that in starting a balloon-buying club, I should be engineering a boom for the city, and also providing myself with a pleasurable source of income.

I fell. I started engineering the boom. At the end of two hours, I realized dazedly that I had the necessary pledges. That night the balloon was ordered, and I tried hard to sleep off the knowledge that I was doomed to be either a balloon pilot or a quitter.

NOW back in those days, lengthy human flight was possible in only one way—by balloon. A few men of means in the United States had taken up ballooning as a sport. But there were not many licensed spherical balloon pilots. The Aero Club of America issued me license number 14, judiciously skipping the preceding number. But I am actually the thirteenth man in the United States to be officially designated as a spherical balloon pilot. I always consider my number as 13, and a lucky 13 at that. In almost innumerable flights, I've never been hurt.

But my luck doesn't always cover my companions. So when I asked Harry J. Hewat of North Adams, who had made one flight with me, to go with me to Europe on a big ballooning adventure, no guarantee went with the invitation. That, however, made no difference to him.

"When do we start?" he asked, even as I had once asked.

And in what seemed no time at all, we were sailing from New York City to represent the St. Louis Aero Club in the international balloon race which, in that year of 1908, was to start from Berlin. I had been selected by the Aero Club of America, acting for the St. Louis Club, to pilot the new balloon, the *St. Louis II*, built in Paris for the occasion. All my expenses were to be paid, and I had the privilege of choosing my aid. I made no mistake in choosing Hewat, but some might think he blundered in accepting my invitation.

We had six days in Berlin before the day of our endurance race was to start. One of our first callers was Dr. L. D. Dozier, president of the St. Louis Aero Club, who had journeyed to Berlin to see the start of the race. Considering the fact that his club's new balloon was to be piloted by two young chaps of whom he knew nothing, he displayed remarkable control of his emotions.

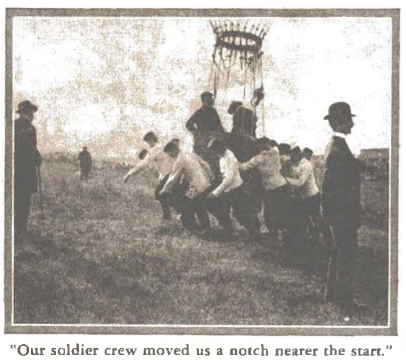
We had some wonderful adventures with our German, but managed to keep ourselves fed and get our affairs whipped into shape.

That October day of the race dawned bright and clear with the wind set to carry us into the Balkans. Each balloon, because of the proximity of water in several directions from Berlin, was to be equipped with life preservers and carry floats for the basket. The order for our floats had been given to a manufacturer who was also supplying them for one of the Belgian entries and he shipped them all in a single package addressed to the Belgian pilot.

But that pilot could not appear because of illness, and sent his alternate. That fact disastrously settled the floats for both balloons. The express company steadfastly refused to deliver the parcel to anyone but the addressee. It may be in that Berlin express office yet.

Fortunately, Hewat and I had made it our business to buy personal life preservers. We found later that they had been quite rightly named.

As the manufacturer of our balloon had sent with it Gaston Hervieu, an expert, to rig and inflate for us we were left quite free to take in the sight of 23 balloons, all but one of the full size permitted by the rules—80,000 cubic feet capacity—in process of inflation at one time, and the largest crowd either had ever seen. The immense field was surrounded on three sides with tier upon tier of grandstand seats, erected especially for three days of balloon racing, the center of one side being reserved for a canopied box for the Kaiser.



"Our soldier crew moved us a notch nearer the start."

To each of the twenty-three contesting crews was assigned a detachment of soldiers from the balloon corps of the German army. A junior officer commanded each detail. They were there to rig and inflate the balloon. So was Hervieu. Right there French methods and German regulations collided. The noise, mostly French, was audible at some distance.

Hervieu, quite naturally, spoke his native tongue with fluency. He knew considerable English, including profanity regularly listed in all countries. He was handicapped by knowing a little German.

I had no difficulty in understanding that Hervieu's ideas of rigging a balloon and of its general treatment were not favored by the German army authorities. But I found it hopeless to try to follow Hervieu's outbursts. Starting in rapid and high explosive French, his expostulations would shift to staggering German—at least that seemed to be the effect—and then, just as the boiler was about to burst, both clenched fists would shoot upwards and the tirade would wind up with an American-English bang. Not until some years afterwards was there a German crew ever quite so dumbfounded as that crew of ours.

THE *St. Louis II*, our balloon, scheduled to start in seventeenth place in the race, was in the next to the rear rank of the balloons that were spaced across the immense field in rows. The American built *Conqueror*, ninth starter, to be piloted by Forbes, an old basket-mate of mine, was down in a depression, and McCoy's balloon, the *America II*, which was to be the first starter, was naturally first in the first line.

Hervieu had undertaken to help Forbes rig and inflate. He lost considerable poundage that day, scrambling up and down the sandy bank back and forth between the two balloons. And he provided verbal fireworks at frequent intervals.

I didn't do much but putter around, learn from Hervieu, and tell visiting Americans that we might not win but that we would not finish in last place either.

Once I wandered over to the *Conqueror*. Forbes had attached a tremendously long appendix, which had met with general criticism from experienced aeronauts. Hervieu was especially outspoken in his denunciation. He told Forbes—and everyone else within a radius of half a mile—that there was nothing right about the appendix; that the gas could not escape rapidly enough under expansion; that it was not mathematically correct. Leo Stevens, who had built the balloon, had told him the same thing. Forbes did finally cut off a few feet, but that satisfied no one—not even Forbes.

I was intensely interested in the military manner in which everything connected with the race was accomplished. Uniforms everywhere. And discipline.

As the day wore on the crowd kept increasing in density, but there was not the slightest confusion on the part of the balloon corps in charge of the inflation, except when our particular crew stopped all operations to watch Hervieu talk.

McCoy, captain of the American team, during the early afternoon sent us two hammock seats—mere strips of canvas six or eight inches wide, with rope at each end to tie around suspension cords—for which I have never ceased to thank him. With them he sent word that we must not forget our floats and life preservers.

We had the life preservers. But the floats were unobtainable. They had been wound about too closely with official red tape. Still, with the wind blowing in the direction of the Balkans, no one worried particularly about the absence of the floats. We fastened our life preservers securely to the outside of our basket and went along with our preparations.

The floor of the basket was packed solid with bags of sand ballast. Hewat had an ulster and overshoes and, I think, a sweater. My extra equipment consisted of an ordinary overcoat, a woolen vest, a heavy sweater and

WITH PILOT 13

Lands and Dangerous Seas

By Nason Henry Arnold

a pair of felt boots. These things with a dozen thermos bottles, food in a big box, and a few more sandbags around the edges of the basket on the inside were about all we carried beside ourselves—inside the basket.

Outside were hung the life preservers and about as many more sandbags as there were inside. In the rigging hung our instruments.

We were busily engaged in packing the basket—Hewat and I—when we were startled by the crashing of a mighty band into the American national anthem. We both straightened up, faced the starting point far across the field, and stood at attention. McCoy had been moved to the starting point and every balloon crew was moving its particular charge another point nearer the starting place.

There was a short pause, and then the *America II* slowly rose. A mighty cheer escaped from the crowd as every neck was craned to watch her float higher and higher and then gather speed. "He's headed for the Balkans," everyone said to everyone else.

WE returned to our packing. Before long, we again heard the massed bands playing the Star Spangled Banner and we turned to see the *Conqueror* in position at the start. I swung back to resume work and did not see the actual start, but an exclamation from Hervieu caused us all to turn hurriedly.

Forbes had started too heavily ballasted. Before either he or Post could spill ballast enough, the freshening breeze had crashed the basket against the strong board fence around the field of inflation. Both Forbes and Post got rid of ballast and the fence tore three of the bags hanging on the outside so that, once started upwards, the only American-built balloon in the race climbed with rapidly increasing speed.

The impact with the fence had caused the basket to swing back and forth on a long arc. There were no cheers. Every one was holding his breath. We watched for a minute or two until the basket had nearly stopped swaying, then returned to our own preparations.

Just as our crew was moving us along to the next stopping place, all activity suddenly ceased.

A mighty groan had gone up from the crowd—a note of impending certain disaster. I can feel now the shiver that raced up and down my spine as I gazed up.

The *Conqueror* was not acting right. A white streak appeared near the bottom of the envelope and raced upwards as a cloud of vapor escaped into the air.

I glanced at Hervieu. Hatless, he was looking upwards, both hands clenched. His breath was being forced out with a whining whistle through clenched teeth. Hewat, one hand still extended and holding a thermos bottle, was looking upward over one shoulder.

I looked up again. The *Conqueror's* race was ended. She was plunging downwards.

"He's burst," Hervieu said, slowly, as if uttering a sentence of death, his eyes following the falling reostat. Then he suddenly shrieked:

"It's that rotten long appendix!"

For a minute or two, everyone gazed up, spellbound with horror. Down the balloon plunged, rip after rip appearing in the envelope as the strain of the rush through the air proved too much for the fabric.

Suddenly the whole bottom of the envelope went upward in the net and the falling craft became a huge parachute with a tiny basket hanging far below it.

"He's cut his appendix rope," I exclaimed with some relief.

I had been told that should be done in such an emergency to enable the envelope to bunch at the top of the net and form sort of an umbrella.

"He's done all he can," grunted Hervieu, turning his back on the spectacle and volleying orders in any language he happened to get his tongue connected with. Stolidly, the crew resumed their several duties, while I continued to watch the *Conqueror* until it disappeared from view.

As if to fill the gap in the number of balloons that spotted the sky, as Forbes and his *Conqueror* disappeared, Erbsloh climbed briskly upwards from the starting point. Automatically every other balloon was in motion for the next nearer post to the starting point.

For some reason, probably because we were the last American team, young and inexperienced, everyone seemed deeply concerned about the effect of the accident upon us.

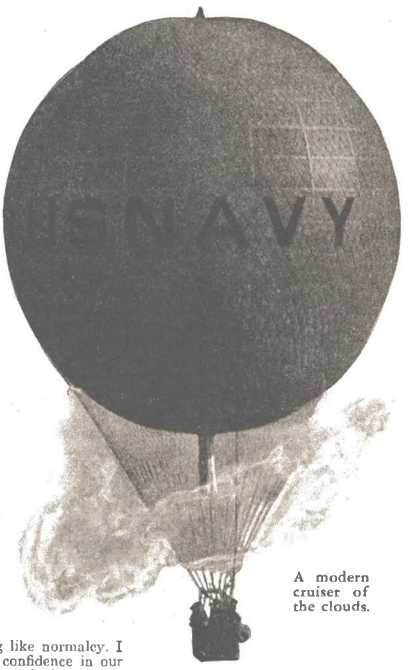
Among the first to reach us was Harry Delacombe, a special representative of the London *Times*. "Keep a stiff lip," he said solemnly, shaking hands, "I'll find out about them." And he dashed off.

Then a German officer in his glittering uniform hurried up to express regret that we should have been disturbed by such a sight. He, too, promised information before we left and hurried off toward the telephone.

Mr. Dozier appeared, breathless and agitated and very anxious. I can see him now as he hurried around and around us.

"Is your balloon all right?" he asked. "Do you feel all right? You're sure everything is O. K.?"

Mr. Dozier's anxiety forced me back to something like normalcy. I expressed what I felt, entire confidence in our balloon, and told him that we had no newfangled ideas hitched to it and, consequently, had no cause for worry.



A modern cruiser of the clouds.

AT last, still followed by anxious visitors, we found ourselves at the starting place—bareheaded, facing a battery of cameras, our eyes blinking at glittering gold lace and brilliant hued uniforms.

Suddenly, elbowing his way through cameramen and officials, Delacombe appeared. Perspiration was streaming from his face and he was panting from his long run. "Absolutely unhurt," he shouted. "They landed on the roof of a house all right."

The German officer who had promised information was but a moment behind the London newspaper man, and brought similar assurance. The unexpected good news brightened our start.

The official starter did the balancing, judiciously ordering the number of bags to be taken off. Another official presented each of us, on behalf of the Berlin Aero Club, with a medallion in a case, and a pin, both emblematic of participation in the race. Hervieu and the officer who had direct charge of our crew shook hands with us. An instant later, amid the crashing strains of the Star Spangled Banner, came the German order to the crew. We were off at 4:12 on something of a far adventure.

As the cheers of the crowd followed us up in the air, I realized afresh that I was facing two things new to me—the piloting of a balloon twice as large as any I ever had handled, and my first all-night trip in the air. Hewat, with his one daylight flight as his only background, had ahead of him quite a few conditions that were new to him.

Once up, we were soon busily engaged in counting the balloons around us, some higher and some lower than we were traveling.

Before darkness could settle down, I made sure that everything in the way of ropes and ballast bags that I might need in a hurry were where I could find them even in the dark. Hewat saw to the commissariat, swung the hammock seats, and tried out his with a grunt of satisfaction. He began keeping the log, in which frequent entries were to give, from time to time, direction, altitude, location if possible, and any interesting incident.

With the excitement of getting off well over, I had time to remember that my last meal had been so long before that I was having no benefits from it. I demanded of my mate some sustenance.

Proudly Hewat opened the big box and I had my choice of roast chicken, sausages, several other kinds of cold meat and trimmings enough to make up a regular dinner anywhere. As it grew dark, Hewat, who had been up late the evening before, complained of being sleepy. Donning his great frieze ulster, he disposed his long body around the inner edge of the basket on top of the sandbag floor and in five minutes was dead to the world. And yet he told me later that had anyone offered to take his place after Forbes fell he would have given three cheers and resigned. That's the only thing he ever told me that I did not, and do not, believe.

THERE I was half a mile or so in the air over a strange country, with my companion snoring, facing the prospect of ten hours with no one to talk to and not much to do except keep awake and occasionally make an entry in a log book. The moon was out and I could see faintly the earth below me, now and then make out a road and here and there the outlines of farm buildings.

Seated comfortably in my hammock seat, elbows on the basket edge, chin in cupped hands, I idly watched the shadow of the balloon slowly make its way across the fields.

Presently I glimpsed the glint of water ahead in the moonlight. Perhaps that would give me an inkling of where we were. The compass showed that we were still heading slowly towards the Balkans, and our map should show any large body of water on the route. I hunched over the map and with flashlight tried to find water on our route before reaching the sea. Looking down again, I discovered that I could now see all the water there was there—a duck pond on a farm.

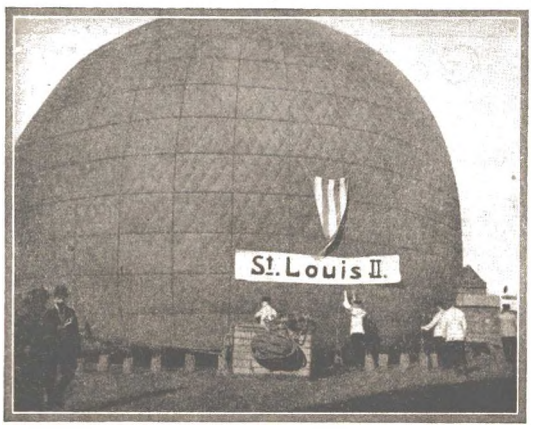
The shadow of the balloon gradually crept along until it reached the nearer shore. What a commotion it aroused! All the ducks and geese suspected the approach of some unknown winged monster desiring to dine upon them. With cries of alarm, they took to the water. I laughed aloud. Here at last was something to help kill time.

Suddenly a light gleamed in a window at one side of the pond. I had not made out the outlines of the house before. I watched. In a minute the light showed in an open door. It was held high as the farmer peered forth in an effort to determine what had startled his flock. I wonder if he ever knew. The shadow of the balloon had passed from the water. There was no noise, even the startled birds having stilled their cries as the shadow left.

Just once more during that long night did I have a break in the monotony, another almost identical disturbance and, probably, another much puzzled farmer. I passed hours battling to keep awake and wondering what names our map gave to the Noah's ark villages over which we slowly floated. Not a single distinctive feature of landscape was there to identify any one of them.

Every little while I would catch the flash of a light in the dim distance, showing me that some other

(*Continued on page 62*)



"We're two-thirds inflated, thanks to Hervieu's verbal fireworks (not shown here)."

The American Boy
"The Biggest, Brightest, Best Magazine for Boys in All the World"

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Friendly Talks With the Editor

Disagreeable Jobs

WE have a way of postponing or dodging what we consider to be disagreeable jobs. We sort of back off from them and dodge around corners in the hope that, somehow, the job will vanish and we won't have to go to work at it. Wrong idea again. If we used the time we spend dodging jobs we don't like in doing jobs we do like, we would be a lot farther ahead at the end of the day.

Time Wasters

THERE isn't so much time after all. There are only twenty-four hours in a day. One hour is four per cent of a day, and that is savings bank interest. We wouldn't throw away the total income on our savings, but we do throw away the equivalent of it in time. If your day is worth a dollar, a wasted hour is four cents gone to the dogs. You might just as well reach into your pocket and toss four pennies over the bridge. But at this day and date an hour is worth a lot more than four cents.

Maybe

POSSIBLY it is worth fifty cents to you to dodge a twenty-five cent job—and then have to do the job after all your dodging. But we don't think so. A disagreeable job done and out of the way is a disagreeable job no longer. It is a kind of pleasure. We enjoy the knowledge it is done. And, after all, there aren't many rotten jobs. Not really disagreeable ones. They just look that way.

Interesting

ALMOST any piece of work can be interesting if we stand up on the springboard and dive into it. Mowing the lawn isn't a cruel and unusual form of torture. Of course it is a bit unpleasant to have to crawl under the barn to fetch out a very dead rat. But even that is soon over and you can improve it quite a bit by tying a spongeful of attar of roses under your nose.

Even Exciting

YOU can find ways of getting thrills out of even a pretty tame job. Maybe you can do that job so much better than anyone expected you to that you'll rake real glory out of it. Maybe you can uncover a new and better way of doing it that will just about cut the job in two. Then there's always the old game of beating the clock. "G'wan, I can finish this job in twenty minutes!" you tell the clock. And then you do it in eighteen. "What did I tell you?" you sling at the clock. "Lost your speed, haven't you, old ticker?"

Queer

IT is queer how much fun you can get out of any piece of work if only you go at it that way. Of course you can stick out your lower lip and scowl and get in a state of mind that will make you very miserable. But even that is a sort of satisfaction. You derive a heap of comfort out of dwelling on how mistreated you are. There are folks like that, fellows who enjoy being miserable.

More Fun

BUT we think it is more fun to enjoy having a good time than it is to enjoy being in the dumps. If you really despise the thing you must do, why hop to it and get it out of the way as quickly as possible so you can lean back and say, "Gee, I'm glad that's done." It's like going to the dentist to have a tooth pulled. You hate it and hold back and the tooth aches and you suffer for a couple of days, maybe. But you know all the time it must be done. And then you get up your courage and go. Two minutes afterward it is all over! If you had gone and endured that minute or so in the first place, you would have escaped a couple of days of misery.

Pay

YOU get paid for everything you do, just as you must pay for everything that is done for you. Maybe not in money, but in some commodity like satisfaction or gratitude. The best pay for doing a rotten job is the knowledge at the end of it that it is done and will never bother you again. Did you ever think of that? Once a job is done and it is done forever. You may have to do a similar piece of work, but that particular piece has become history. It is out of the way and never can contrive to get in the way again.

Every Day

SOME task is sure to come along every day—some task you don't like doing. A fine idea is to do that thing *first*. We all have the habit of putting it off to the last, and of sitting and thinking about it off and on in the meantime. If we jump to it the first thing after breakfast the rest of the day is clean. It won't be all spotted up with grouches. And there will be a lot more room in it for things we want to do.

Make Room

MAKE room in your day. You don't like to have your house or your yard so cluttered up with rubbish that you can't move around. We have seen fellows moving rubbish out of a vacant lot to make room for a baseball diamond. Well, then, don't you want room in your day? You never can tell what pleasant thing you can put in a day if there is room for it. But if the morning and afternoon are all cluttered up with putting off a mean job—how will there be space for the desirable things?

For Instance

FOR instance, we didn't want to write these editorials to-day. It is about the first fine day we have had for a week and we wanted to loaf around the shore and watch the boats and talk to folks. But all day we would keep remembering these pieces have to be written, and it would annoy us and mess up our pleasure. So we just sat down to it, and, as we didn't expect at all, we are really enjoying doing it to beat the band. We're getting a lot of things off our chest, and as Mr. Briggs says, "Ain't it a grand and glorious feeling?"

Up to You

ABOUT ten years from now, say, you'll meet a man with whom you'll spend the rest of your life. Sounds like a fortune teller's prophecy, but you'll find it a fact. It may be a dolefully solemn fact. How would you like to spend the rest of your life with an edgy, ornery mule of a man whom no one likes? Or with a shiftless, luckless loafer whom no one respects? Don't care to? Then don't do it. No need. You can make that man you'll meet anything you want to make him. It's up to you, for he's *you*.

Yes, You

LET'S say, just for the sake of the argument, that you are fifteen years old now. By the time you're twenty-five, the man you're going to make will be pretty well set in his ways. We hope you'll like them. If you don't, you'll be out of luck. Few men change radically after twenty-five. Take a look now at the man you'll make if you keep on as you've started. Don't quite like him? Well, then. You have ten years to change him. You can do it. . . . What is that? You're eighteen now? Twenty? Boy, you'd better hustle. But it's not too late.

Face Yourself

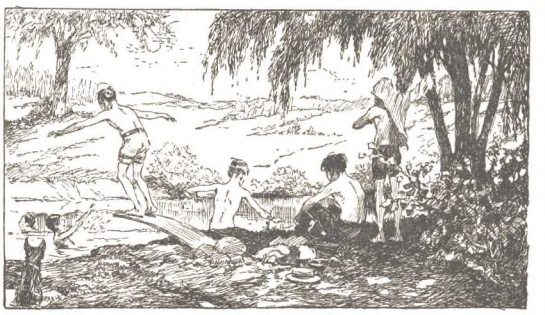
TAKE a hard-hearted look at yourself as you are. Given to grouching, loafing, grandstanding, cowardly sidestepping, or pigheaded plunging? All right. You've faced it, acknowledge it. Now forget it.

Right About—Forward March

SWING clean around. Leave your bad habits behind you. Look ahead to what you'd like to be. You wish you didn't grouch? Then forget past grouching. Cultivate a grin and a civil tongue, and they'll soon come natural. You wish you didn't find it so easy to loaf? Forget it. Dig in. It will get to be a habit. You wish you hadn't got to running with a pretty wild crowd? Cut loose. Earn yourself a welcome among fellows worth while. You can do it. Just get at it. That's all.

Meet the Man

THEN somewhere along the road you'll travel ten years from now, you'll meet the man with whom you must spend the rest of your life. He'll be a man who can make friends and keep them; a man who's going up, even though he may go slowly; a man with a game grin and no end of resourcefulness. A happy-going, pretty outstanding, useful, likable man!—You, yourself!



Goin' Swimmin'?

By MITCHELL V. CHARNLEY

When a fellow's feeling crusty—when he's tired and hot and dusty—
When the summer sun pours down its fiery rays—
When he feels an urge for shirking—when he yearns to lay off working—
When ambition races off to lakes and bays—

Why, there's nothing half so bracing, nothing half so languor-chasing,
Nothing half so full of thrill and chill and vim,
As the feel of water splashing, legs up-kicking, arms down-thrashing—
As a common, every-day, old-fashioned swim!

There's the fun of graceful diving—sailing through the air and striving
For a "swan" that cuts the water like a lance.
And there's racing with a strong stroke, with a distance-eating long stroke,
With a stroke that brings you home yards in advance.

Oh, there's ducking and there's tumbling (and there's lots of hearty grumbling
When you catch a crab and swallow half the lake),
But you'll find a joy in swimming that will set you simply brimming
With a thirst for life no summer sun can slake!

The Circus in the Clouds

By Thomson Burtis

Illustrated by Fred C. Yohn

TO Streak Somers, star wing walker of the army circus, the future looked like a fight in the dark.

Not that there was anything extraordinary about the circus schedule. From Syracuse, New York, the flyers went to Atlantic City, New Jersey. Sounded tame enough when you said it that way.

But when you thought of the queer, dangerous, unexplained things that had happened, you couldn't help wondering what lay ahead. At the Kentucky State Fair, the elevators of two planes had been bashed in on the very day of the first exhibition, and later up in the air Streak had met with a serious accident that might or might not have been the fault of burly Cocky Roach, his jealous pilot.

Then at the New York State Fair Streak's ladder, made of wire cable for special wing stunts, had been found wrecked. Just as Brush Parsons, the astonishingly active press agent for the motion picture company that was going to use the flying circus stunts, had been lecturing about the ladder to some newspaper men, Fulz, a mechanic, had discovered that the wire cable had been filed nearly in two. Undiscovered, that filing would have meant death for Streak.

Barnes, throwing a malevolent look at Kennard and Streak, was led away.

And then, too, there at Syracuse, there had been that mysterious attempt to kidnap Streak by airplane. Foiled, to be sure. And Streak's own quickness and courage had brought about the capture and imprisonment of the would-be kidnappers. But why the attempt? And why were the captured kidnappers so unconcerned—hinting at powerful interests that would protect them?

Streak felt that he could use a little powerful protection himself. All the attacks of the mysterious enemy seemed to center around him. True, Captain Kennard was taking every precaution, but who could guess what sinister danger might next leap out unexpectedly?

Streak's mouth had a trick of closing grimly those days; yet he thrilled to the thought of battle, even though it proved a battle in the dark. And the close comradeship of his fellow flyers helped to steady his nerves.

"WELL, Streak, my boy, looks to me like you were going to play to a crowd to-morrow," drawled Don Goodhue. "Look at yon Boardwalk, and it's only Friday night. They tell me that to-morrow'll be worse, and that Labor Day will see the houses bulging out with people that can't find room in the open."

"I tried to walk down to buy a stamp, and it took me fifteen minutes to make a hundred yards," Jimmy Little put in with a grin.

All four army flyers were sitting on the balcony of one of Atlantic City's huge hotels, overlooking the Boardwalk that stretched for seven miles along the edge of the sea. And the wide walk was a solid mass of slowly moving pedestrians, down at the shore for the Labor Day week end. They had come from all over the country. It had been no mistake to schedule the circus for Atlantic City directly after the New York State Fair.

Streak's eyes took in the piers, stretching hundreds of feet over the sea, their myriad lights tracing them in lines of fire. Then his gaze went back to the shining sea. The moon blazed a silver path across the low swells that burst on the beach with a never-ending roar—and the young airman thought that he had never looked upon a scene so beautiful.

It made him forget his weariness—they had flown in from Syracuse that day. The ships were quartered at a commercial flying field, six miles away at the Inlet, and a guard of Atlantic City policemen made the services of the flyers themselves unnecessary. The "Playground of the World" had been eager to have the circus appear over the holiday, as an extra attraction for nearly a half million visitors. The authorities were more than ready to do everything in their power for the flyers, right down to paying for the high-priced hotel rooms they were occupying.

"Calling Lieutenant Somers, Captain Kennard!" came the voice of a bellboy, and the C. O. turned in his chair and signaled him.

The airmen had taken station in a corner, behind two huge screens, for privacy. Since all the excitement in Syracuse, they had been so mobbed by curious questioners that, as Streak expressed it, they were "sneaking around back alleys to keep from seeing anybody, and locking themselves in their rooms with the telephone off the hook."

"Mr. Ballard wants to find you, sir," the boy informed the captain.

"Oh, all right," said the square-faced captain with relief. "Tell him where we are. But don't tell everybody that asks you!"

"This Ballard bird is a lot different from what I always figured one of these movie directors were," opined Streak. "I like him a whale of a lot."

Don Goodhue nodded.

"Which is more than I can say about his ham leading man," he said in his deliberate, smiling way. "I don't imagine Ballard's idea of featuring you more prominently in this coming picture of battle, murder, and sudden death'll make Haskell feel any better, either."

Jimmy Little chortled long and loud.

"Oh, boy!" he chuckled. "I hope they put Streak through his paces! I can see him dolled up in soup and fish, trying to register tragedy—"

"Shut up!" interrupted Somers, his lean brown face wrinkled in a wide grin. "This pan of mine'll never get by!"

"LISTEN, fellows," Captain Kennard said suddenly, and his scarred face was serious. He ran his hand through his mouse-colored pompadour as though trying to gather his thoughts.

"It broke this afternoon. Fulz has been suspended from duty, and is in the hoosegow here. But don't let it out to Ballard when he comes. We don't want anybody to know—yet!"

Streak's slim body straightened in his chair.

"Got proof that he sawed that ladder back in Syracuse?" he asked, his gray eyes very bright.

The captain shook his head.

"No. But he deposited five thousand in a Syracuse bank, as you know. And the story of where he got it turns out to be a lie. He won't explain—so he's locked up until he comes clean."

Streak's face grew serious, and for a moment it seemed as though all the flyers felt that temporarily forgotten pall of gloom descend on them again. In the three days intervening between Streak's capture of the two aerial kidnappers and this night the outfit had not been molested in any way. It had seemed as though they had escaped from under the shadow that had sought to engulf them.

Now the arrest of Fulz brought it back—and it seemed more menacing than ever. If that mechanic, who had appeared to be as much above suspicion as Captain Kennard or Somers themselves, had been in the plot—whom could they depend on!

"I'll swear we'll be afraid to trust ourselves before long!" ruminated Goodhue somberly. "Streak, sure you're not trying to commit suicide?"

"Our sizing up of things may be wrong, of course," Kennard told them. "But a sergeant in the army doesn't get hold of five thousand bucks every day—and when he does, he ought to be able to tell how and where."

"Must be Fulz did it, and then lost his nerve, and discovered it himself," Streak reflected aloud.

Kennard nodded.

"That's the theory the Secret Service men are working on," he stated. "But I know one thing. If something definite doesn't appear in the open some time soon, I'll be found doing the spring dance through the lobby of the hotel, and get tucked into a nice, comfortable cell in some nut factory for the rest of my life."

"Here comes Ballard—and not by himself," announced Little.

The stunt star's round, genial face gleamed with amusement as he went on:

"Our leading man's pretty spiffy. Those white flannels are big enough around the bottom to hide any piano he might want to get away with."

In addition to Hubert Haskell, leading man of the picture, both Brushy Parsons, publicity engineer, and Cocky Roach, aerial acrobat, were with the rotund young director as he led his followers across the balcony toward the place where the flyers had secluded themselves. Cocky Roach's powerful, squat body was arrayed in a Palm Beach suit, and his low collar was garnished by a loudly striped necktie. Above it, his dark, snub-nosed face seemed to be almost black in contrast to his white clothing. His unruly black hair had been slicked down with oil.

The fidgety Parsons had not changed from the rough tweed that was almost his uniform, and he looked more like a human porcupine than ever.

"Greetings," Ballard said cheerily as he joined them. "Well, Somers, those tests of your mahogany countenance came out fine. You photograph well enough, certainly, for us to use you in a lot of close-ups and for a real role in the picture. And I'm not at all sure that we can't help ourselves, and the Air Service as well, by giving you feature billing in the dog-gone thing, and on the paper and advertising we send out."

THE director was barely thirty, but his rotund body, round, fleshy face, and partially bald head gave a superficial observer the impression of a much older man. With his short little nose, round chin, and rather heavy, pink-and-white cheeks, he was like a smiling, good-natured kewpy. That is, until one saw him at work. Then he turned into a human dynamo.

Haskell sat down rather glumly. His handsome face did not register any particular happiness at Ballard's words, but he said nothing. Although Streak didn't know it, Haskell had expected to have the heavy featuring in the picture, with Streak doubling for him in the dangerous air work.

Cocky Roach laughed loudly.

"I been laughin' fur the last hour, Somers, at the idea o' you bein' a movie actor," he proclaimed loudly.

He looked around at Parsons, who was striding up and down like a caged beast. The press agent had been in At-

lantic City for several days before the arrival of the flyers, and Streak, on his arrival, had been somewhat shocked at the publicity man's appearance.

Parsons was more gaunt than ever, and behind his twinkling, horn-rimmed glasses his eyes were hollow and sunken and unhealthily bright. He seemed utterly unable to keep still.

"Sure acts as though he had something on his mind," Streak reflected. "Wonder if it's what he's seemed to want to tell me these two or three different times. Somehow he—"

"Parsons, why don't yuh sit down!" blared the irrepressible Roach. "You're enough to make a statue do the Charleston!"

Roach himself had changed a bit. He avoided any clashes with Somers now, although his jealousy was obvious. Occasionally he'd start on a typical tirade, but catch himself up suddenly. And of all the members of the outfit, he showed the most consuming interest in reports of what progress the Federal operatives were making toward a solution of the mysteries surrounding the attempts on Streak's life.

"Shut up!" snarled Parsons belligerently. "If I walked as much as you talked, I could make a trip around the world in five minutes!"

"Yeah?" yelped Roach. "Don't talk too much yourself, big boy!"

FOR a moment the two glared into each other's eyes, and then Ballard cut in smoothly:

"That's enough, boys! This business seems to have got on your nerves, and I don't wonder. Parsons, sit down here now. I want to talk business, while we are all here. We start shooting to-morrow, of course, and there's no time to waste. All set?"

Everyone was. Roach, his heavy face dark and lowering, sat like a great bowlder in his chair. Parsons fidgeted nervously in his, and Haskell crossed one perfectly creased leg over the other with a bored air. The stout little director leaned forward and said incisively:

"I want you to know that I'm gambling somewhat with my own future. This is my first real chance to make good as a full director on my own. And in taking the responsibility for changing the story around a bit, and bringing you army men, especially Streak, further to the forefront I've got to stand or fall by it.

"The reasons for my considering it are, of course, several. In the first place, Somers is unquestionably the finest stunt man in the world, from all reports."

Cocky Roach's loud snort of contempt drew Streak's eyes his way. Roach was grinning sarcastically, and Haskell permitted a supercilious smile to cross his features. Streak flushed. That newspaper man back in Syracuse had taken the last trace of big-headedness out of him, but nevertheless it wasn't pleasant to have other people belittle him publicly.

Ballard threw a steely glance at the two malcontents before him, and then said significantly:

"Actors can be replaced at a minute's notice. Men like Somers can't. For several reasons. In the first place, that dawn-to-dusk flight started a world of interest in you, Somers. Then the events that have happened since the circus began have startled, interested, and almost frightened the whole country. Every one of you is in the public eye—Somers particularly.

"The picture, through these things, will have marvelous publicity, as it's had since the circus started. Don't get me wrong. What you boys have gone through, and what may be hanging over your head, is enough to freeze anyone's blood. The front page of every paper in the world forever wouldn't be worth it. But the fact remains that millions of people who wouldn't otherwise be interested will come to see this picture, in order to watch you fellows and especially the famous Streak Somers."

Ballard was pounding his points home tersely, one fat finger tapping on the palm of his hand.

"Now let me get things straight. As I understand it, Captain, there's no clue whatever to who bashed in the elevators of the two ships in Louisville, is there?"

Before Kennard answered, his eyes flickered to Roach, Streak noticed. There was nothing significant in it. Roach had been absolved from suspicion. But when the loud-mouthed braggart's gaze met the captain's, Streak could have sworn that the stunt man's face whitened a bit.

"No," Kennard answered.

"Then that accident in the loop at Louisville got a lot of space in the papers as about the most thrilling air adventure to date. Roach here came in on that as saving Somers' life.

"Then the final kicks in Syracuse—the sawing of the ladder and the attempted kidnapping.

"What I'm trying to get at is this. It doesn't look as though the mystery would be solved for many days, at least. That means that the eyes of the world will be fastened on us, down here, while we're shooting the sensational scenes we're going to shoot here. In turn, that means that the United States Air Service, whose men have shown what they can do against overwhelming odds since the circus has been out, are really, now, the rightful stars of the picture, because they're the ones the world wants to see. And you fellows are out for all the publicity for your service you can get.

"Now, here's the question. What we do on this picture depends, a little, on whether the mystery is solved immediately or not, and just how big it proves to be. We shouldn't be justified in taking our Army flyers and billing them prominently under ordinary conditions.

"I'm anxious to give you the biggest break I can. So, Captain, is it out of order to ask you just what progress has been made, that you know of, which the papers may not have? I promise that Haskell, Parsons and I will hold it in confidence. What do you know now about those two kidnappers?"

"Just what the papers have had," returned Kennard. "Their records are not known as yet—they won't even give their names. Their ship was bought from the Barton factory a week before the kidnapping. It may take days to identify them and trace their actions. Meanwhile, they won't talk, and their reasons for what they did are not known at all. From what they told Streak here, of course, plus natural assumption, I know that the authorities believe they were working for some powerful prominent interests."

There was a ship below him, zooming upward, its propeller about to hit him.

"Exactly. Now, about that ladder-sawing episode?"

Because of what Streak had seen before, his eyes went to Cocky Roach as the captain answered. Streak was aware that Parsons, leaning forward tensely, was also watching Roach. The big, rough pilot seemed even more nervous than he had been ever since the day when the ladder had been tampered with, and Streak had foiled the attempt to make way with him. And Cocky hadn't been himself since.

"Sergeant Fulz is in jail—on suspicion," Kennard said quietly. "That must be kept confidential, for his sake."

"You don't say!" exclaimed Ballard. "I see. Any connection between him and the kidnappers been found?"

"None!" stated the captain. "In fact, each episode seems entirely separate. The smashed elevators, for instance, represented no attempt on anyone's life—they were to prevent our flying, for some obscure reason. The filed ladder was an attempt to kill Streak, foiled because Fulz lost his nerve—"

"CAPTAIN KENNARD?"

A quietly dressed man had approached without anyone's noticing him. Streak recognized him as one of the Secret Service men.

The captain got up, and joined the middle-aged, ordinary looking operative for a moment. Roach seemed to crouch in his chair, and his face paled again. Parsons' eyes narrowed, and the fingers of his right hand kept up an incessant tapping on his chair. Ballard did not attempt to speak, and a sudden tenseness seemed to fall over the entire gathering.

In a moment Captain Kennard returned.

"Fulz'll be out of jail within an hour," he announced slowly. "He's confessed that he really won the money gambling. His story was checked up by wire to Louisville, and proved correct. He didn't want to let me know he'd been gambling. But the authorities have no doubt that he's telling the truth now. That leaves the ladder as impenetrable a mystery as all the rest."

Streak moved nervously. Not a clue, not a step forward toward the solution of the whole mess—

"Well," Ballard said briskly, "with the amount of protection you all have now, it looks as though whoever they are would lay off. But we'll shoot fast and long until we're through, anyhow.

"Somers, you're quite sure about that 'chute-jump and high dive combined?"

"Yes," nodded Streak absently.

"Then we'll get that and a transfer direct to wingskid to-morrow afternoon. I—"

"Captain!"

It was the Federal man again, and the captain got up to talk with him once more. Parsons, eyeing them gloomily, jerked out:

"This whole thing's on my nerves. Every time I see a line in the papers I feel as though we were all tangled up in a hideous nightmare. I believe—"

"They've escaped!"

Streak leaped to his feet and Parsons seemed to turn to stone as Captain Kennard turned to hurl this information at the group. The stocky little captain's eyes were blazing as he shot out in staccato sentences the facts the departing Federal man had just given him:

"Those kidnappers escaped from jail! Must have had plenty of help, including an airplane within ten miles. No dope yet, except that they're believed to be in Canada. Perkins' man I talked with just now—got this from headquarters over the phone!"

Streak dropped into his chair weakly. Somehow he felt certain that they'd never be recaptured. And Fulz had cleared himself. He was glad of that, of course. But one way and another, every hope of bringing to light the conspiracy which was making of the flyers a troupe of nervous wrecks had vanished.

For just a fleeting second Roach's face registered in Streak's brain. Was he wrong—or did it seem that the man, who had once saved his life, who had been absolved from suspicion, had a look of relief in his eyes?

Chapter Eight

AT eight o'clock next morning Streak, with the rest of the flyers, was out at the field, preparing for the morning's work. The 'chute jump was to take place before noon, and a wing-walking show that afternoon.

The planes were on the line, and the mechanics were at work inspecting them. Streak himself was merely hanging around, waiting for some of the ground shots Ballard was going to make.

"Morning, Fulz," he greeted the towering young mechanic. "Glad to be out, eh? It was too bad—"

"Yes, sir," nodded Fulz, somewhat ill-at-ease. "Kinda tough. But I can't blame the cap'n. I was dumb not t' tell right off where I got that money. No hard feelin's, sir."

"Right," agreed Streak. "Last night we had three in jail—one innocent and two surely guilty, and now they are all out."

Fulz shook his head.

"I ain't out of the woods yet," he told his young superior. "And there ain't a move I make that ain't watched."

That was true. Even the other mechanics were under the gaze of officers all the time, and knew it.

"It'll all come out in the wash some time," Streak remarked. "Here come the movie people, I presume—I'll have to run. But don't get to thinking that we're—prejudiced against you, Fulz. Everybody in the outfit's more or less under scrutiny all the time. It isn't easy to explain those elevators and that ladder, you know."

The mechanic nodded unhappily, and returned to his work on the carburetor of one of the scouts.

Ballard hopped out of the leading car. Haskill, some other actors and actresses, and camera men piled out of that and other cars.

The chubby director came over to the line of ships, and without any greeting whatever asked sharply:

"Anybody here seen Parsons this morning? Or late last night, for that matter?"

A chorus of nos was his answer.

"Well," Ballard said abruptly, "he wasn't in his room at midnight, and he wasn't in it this morning. The bed hadn't been slept in, either. He had an engagement to escort a bunch of newspaper men around here this morning, in addition to a lot of other work. And he can't be found anywhere!"

The flyers looked at each other in puzzled wonder. Streak took the plunge.

"Suspect any foul play?" he asked directly.

"Er—no!" returned Ballard thoughtfully. "I've known Parsons for five years, though—and I never knew him to pull a stunt like this. The police are at work now, trying to find him."

Roach, who never was more than five feet away when the movie man would let him linger around, slapped his thigh resoundingly.

"There's a jinx on this outfit, all right!" he proclaimed.

Kennard's eyes were on the ground, and he was scratching his head thoughtfully.

"Parsons was pretty well wrought up about the whole thing," he said finally. "And he's been working like sin since he's been with us, taking care of the swarm of newspaper men, you know. Guess he just slipped away for a little rest for a day or so. Possible, anyway."

"Well, I haven't time to worry about it," stated Ballard.

The director hustled away to talk to his camera men, while the troupers disappeared into the two offices, in separate hangars, which had been hired as temporary dressing rooms. Most of the ground shots would be made at the studio on Long Island, but there were quite a number that had to be made in Atlantic City. On Labor Day, more than five hundred "extras" were to be brought down from New York for some mob scenes on the Boardwalk and other necessary sequences.

THE flight was scheduled for eleven o'clock, and had been widely advertised. The more people who saw it from the ground, the better for picture purposes, of course. Police kept the rapidly growing number of spectators well back from the field; so the flyers were not bothered except for newspaper men. There were many of these, some from New York and Philadelphia sheets, as well as others representing news services that covered the world.

The sensational escape of the two kidnappers had aroused the public prints to renewed interest in the story, and the incarceration and release of Fulz had also leaked out. Streak was asked a thousand questions, and for an hour talked steadily with the reporters. Recognizing this as part of his work, he answered their questions without conceit, but without false modesty, either.

And, always hovering on the outskirts of the group, was Cocky Roach, seizing every opportunity to put in a word and get some paragraphs for himself. Every reporter on the field was compelled to listen to the story of his adventure in the air with Streak, although that was "old stuff" by then.

Haskell strolled over, with his yellow mask of make-up on, and showed himself very willing to be interviewed. The circus, though, was the news of the day, and a movie actor meant nothing to Atlantic City right then. Haskell's face was not pleasant, but only once did he show his jealousy of this young aviator who had so suddenly snatched the spotlight from a star.

"Do you plan to make the movies a career?" inquired one reporter.

Before Streak could answer Haskell had spoken:

"Oh, sure!" he said with sarcasm somewhat masked by a jocular manner. "A little thing like lack of experience would be no bar to a man of his calibre!"

Somers flushed.

"No!" he gulped. "I'm just around here for the Army, you know. As an actor, I'd be a bust—and I'd rather fly!"

"That's the best story of the day!" grinned a stalwart young reporter, with a sidewise glance at Haskell. "One person in the world who doesn't want to be a ham actor—"

"Well, I'll be dog-goned if that isn't one of Billy Barnes' ships!" Roach interrupted loudly, pointing upward.

Nobody noticed Haskell's expression—they were looking upward.

The drone of an airplane motor had been resounding through the sky for many minutes, because one of the commercial seaplanes at the field had been up with passengers; so the advent of a new plane had not been noticed. Now, however, Streak saw that a bright red-and-white Jenny was diving for the field.

"Billy Barnes runs a circus outfit, too," Roach explained. "I've been with him—two years back. One time in Sacramento, California—"

And he was off on a story recounting his unequalled prowess as an airman, to which the reporters listened indifferently. Ballard was rallying his troupe together for a quick sequence alongside one of the circus ships, in which Haskell, Thomason, who was the villain of the picture, and a girl were to take part.

Streak strolled over to watch, as did the rest of the flyers and reporters, and scant attention was paid to the landing ship except by Roach. Ballard was in the midst of his instructions, when Roach guided two helmeted men into the group. One was a slim, sandy fellow, of somewhat the same slender but athletic build as Streak himself, and the other was a tall, lanky, thin-lipped chap who was considerably older.

"All right? Ready—action—camera!"

Haskell and Thomason argued hotly, actually talking to fit the parts they were supposed to play, while the girl registered embarrassment. Finally Haskell hit the heavier Thomason, who went down.

"Cut!" bellowed Ballard. "Now—"

"Just a minute, Mr. Ballard!"

A STOUT, red-faced, beefy-looking man in a soft hat pushed through the crowd, accompanied by a ferret-faced little fellow in a derby.

"Is this the same kind of material as that in the suit Parsons had on?" demanded the stout stranger, and held out a scrap of cloth. As he did so, he flipped back his coat lapel and showed a badge.

Streak felt his nerves tighten. Suddenly there was utter silence. Even Roach pressed forward to see more clearly, and the director, his megaphone in his hand, took the scrap gingerly.

"Yes!" he snapped, and Streak felt his heart increase its beat as he hung on the words of the bull-like detective.

"Well, the coat we cut this here material from was found in a vacant lot down on the south side, with a bad tear in it and an inside pocket and one sleeve half ripped out. The ground around was trampled and torn up as if there'd been a buster of a fight. Nothin' else to be found though—just the coat!"

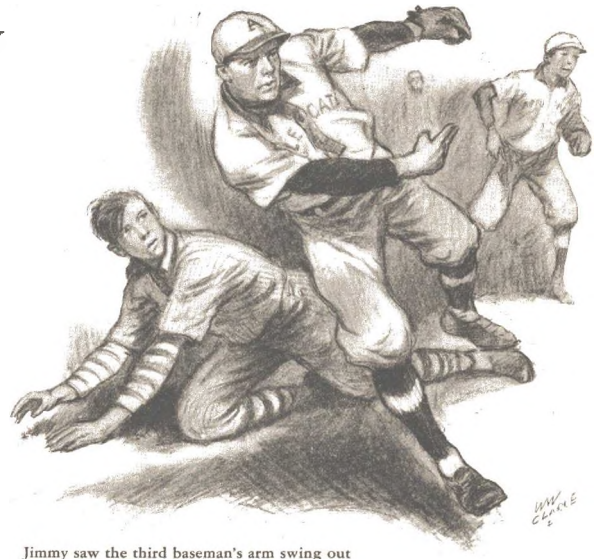
"What (*Continued on page 46*)

The speed boat was beside him almost as soon as he reached the surface.

Whistling Jimmy Goes to Bat

By William Heyliger

Illustrated by W. W. Clarke



Jimmy saw the third baseman's arm swing out in that peculiar, underhand twist.

THE play was over in an instant. A swing of the bat, the snap of a hit, and a white streak down the third-base line! The summer colony rooters from Johnstown scarcely had time to cheer. For the Applegate third baseman had raced over to the right and had made a stab with his bare hand. With a peculiar, twisting, underhand throw he shot the ball across the diamond on a line.

"Out!" ruled the umpire. The play was not even close.

On the Applegate bench the scorer made cryptic marks in the eighth-inning column. "I call that fielding," he said warmly. "The fourth play of that kind Grant's made to-day."

"He's a wonder!" breathed a substitute.

The Applegate players were coming in from the field. Jimmy Gaynor, second baseman, broke into a run and caught up with the third baseman. He was whistling something that had no name, but that sounded like satisfaction. Satisfaction in Grant's playing—in the success of the home team—in the fact that the nine was all Applegate's—none of your professional hodge podge, but all made up of Applegate men and boys. Just as Johnstown was all Johnstown's, Jimmy reflected—they'd agreed on that.

"Do you ever miss them?" he asked the third baseman.

Grant grinned. "I don't seem to be missing them to-day."

"It's too good to be true. We were sore-eyed looking for a third baseman, and then you dropped in. Where *did* you keep yourself buried that we never heard of you before?"

"I think you're up this inning," Grant said abruptly.

Jimmy might just as well have remained on the bench, for his grounder was gobbled by the Johnstown infield. Kipps, following him, struck out, Grant hit high and far, but the left-fielder had moved back and was waiting for the ball when it came down.

"Hold them this time," cried the score keeper. "Beginning of the ninth. It's their last chance. We've got them by one run, 6-5."

"Good as having them by a million," said Jimmy, and went out to his place. Kipps, on his way to center, nudged him in passing and gave a meaning look toward Grant.

"Eh?" Jimmy was surprised. "What?"

But Kipps merely winked knowingly and went on.

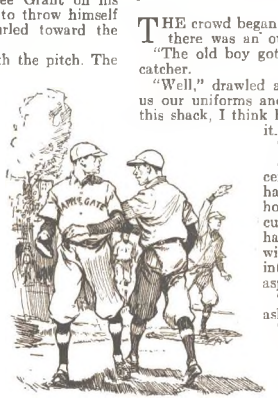
Jimmy whistled in exasperation. He didn't like mysteries—even mysteries concerning a player who had been with the Applegate summer team only three days and had dropped from no one knew where. Somebody yelled "Jim!" and he jumped for the bag as the infielders began throwing the ball around. After that there was thought only for the game.

AND there was need for thought, for Johnstown went out to make one last mad attack. The first batter lined a single into right. Fingers flashed signals around the Applegate infield: "Now for a bunt. Johnstown will try for a run to tie up the game." Jimmy was whistling almost breathlessly. He could see Grant on his toes, keeping his weight moving, ready to throw himself forward the moment the ball was hurled toward the plate.

The third baseman was in motion with the pitch. The batter bunted, and Grant was on the ball before it had time to roll six inches.

"Gaynor!" cried the catcher, who had the whole play before his eyes. "Back!"

Jimmy had also darted forward with the pitch. But even before the catcher had called his warning, his spikes had dug into the dirt and he had swung back for the bag. Ordinarily that bunt would have been a neat sacrifice and a runner would have advanced to second. Grant's speed, however, made impossible plays possible. Jimmy saw the third baseman's arm swing out with that peculiar, underhand twist. His foot found the base, and then the ball was in his glove, one precious moment in advance of the runner.



The shortstop had run over to back up the play. "Where would we be without Grant?" he grinned. "Pretty work."

Pretty work, indeed. Jimmy, trying to rub from his hands the sting of that burning throw, marveled at the skill that had turned a perfect bunt into a force-out.

The pitcher tried the next batter with an inshoot that went in too far. The ball rattled against the batter's ribs. Two runners were on.

With one already out, to try a sacrifice would be foolish. The infield moved back. Jimmy, whistling faintly, anxiously, rubbed one sleeve across his face and took the sweat from his eyes. What a game! The fourth batter was at the plate. He knew that boy's style—a left-field hitter. He shifted to the right and saw Grant shift, too. Nothing much missed the third baseman.

"Strike one!" ruled the umpire.

The batter caught the second ball and drove it straight at Grant—and that was plain suicide. The third baseman scooped and took the hit, and swung one hand backward and tagged the runner coming toward third. Then, almost without pause, that same hand whipped around and forward, twisting underhand as it moved, and the horsehide plopped into Jimmy's glove for the completion of a fast double play and the end of the game.

The Applegate crowd gave a roar of joy. Somebody yelled, "We want Grant," and the third baseman made a dash for the corrugated iron dressing room at the end of the field. Jimmy, legging it after him with the other players, barricaded the dressing room doorway against the jubilant rooters by the simple expedient of standing firmly on the sill and completely blocking the entrance.

"Back up," he coaxed. "Give them a little air."

"Yes, yes," boomed a voice. The stout, pink-cheeked, well-tailored man who pushed his way through the press had the air of one accustomed to authority. "They've earned a little air. A fine ball team."

"You said it, Mr. Hammond."

"Say, Mr. Hammond, if they can do that in their first game, what will they do when they settle down to their best work?"

"I think," Mr. Hammond said impressively, "that they will be the best summer resort team in the state. I said I was going to give Applegate a great team and I think I've done it."

"Yes, sir, Mr. Hammond; you certainly have."

"And now, my friends, if you'll just let the boys get dressed in comfort—"

THE crowd began to melt away. In the dressing room there was an outbreak of suppressed laughter.

"The old boy got a kick out of that game," said the catcher.

"Well," drawled a voice, "considering that he bought us our uniforms and bats, and base bags, and stuck up this shack, I think he's entitled to get something out of it."

"He also got us Grant," said Kipps.

Jimmy sent a quick glance at the center fielder. The words themselves had been matter of fact; but, somehow, they seemed to carry an undercurrent of meaning. And then there had been that nudge and that knowing wink out on the field. Jimmy broke into a whistle that was edged with exasperation.

"Anything bothering you?" Kipps asked innocently.

Then Jimmy realized that Kipps was playing around with some fact that was hidden away in the dark.

Mr. Hammond, having dispersed the team's well wishers, came to the dressing room. He did everything in a large way—even praise. He overwhelmed the players with his congratulations.

"When I brought my box factory to Applegate," he said, "and then bought a summer home here, I vowed that nothing was going to be too good for this town. I said I'd give you a team. Haven't I done it?" His voice sank confidentially. "Good thing you came through for me. I've been talking mighty wide in the city, and if Applegate had had a rattletrap team I'd never've heard the end of it. But you've got the stuff, boys. I said I'd do it, and R. O. Hammond keeps his word. That's my reputation in the wood box trade and that's going to be my reputation in Applegate."

Kipps, dressed, beckoned to Jimmy. "Come on; let's get out of here. The old boy gets tiresome when he gets started."

Jimmy frowned.

"Oh, I know he's a good sport, but he's windy. Come on." Kipps dropped his voice. "I want to talk to you about Grant."

Perhaps it was the fact that was hidden in the dark! Jimmy went out with him at once.

"Rather nice," said Kipps, "to have a player like Grant fall right into our lap. We're just about ready to go blind looking for a third baseman—when Mr. Hammond produces a jewel. Where did he get him?"

"From the factory." There was something in the center fielder's manner that Jimmy did not like. "You know what the agreement was—every player had either to live or work in Applegate."

Kipps waved a bored hand. "I know all that. But where did he come from?"

"What difference does it make? The men at the box factory come from all over."

"Where did he play, then? A star like Grant must have made a record some place else. Where?"

"Do you know?"

Kipps merely smiled. "You're up on baseball. Did you ever hear of a big league player with that trick throw he has?"

Jimmy's brows knitted. "What do you mean, trick throw?"

"Oh, use your head. Think."

Jimmy was nettled. "What is this, a riddle?"

Kipps gave him a sidelong look. "And you always had the reputation of having a wise baseball bean." Abruptly he caught himself up, and snapped a finger impatiently as though he had blustered too far. "Forget it," he said. "I thought I could tease you and get you mad. See you at practice to-morrow."

Jimmy went on alone, whistling absently. Two things had begun to make themselves clear. First, Kipps had given him credit for a knowledge he did not possess. Second, finding him ignorant, Kipps had dropped the subject as dangerous. Why? Jimmy's whistling became thoughtful.

ALL during practice the next day he droned a low, monotonous whistle and kept his eyes on Grant. What Kipps said about the third baseman bothered him. Who was that "big league player?"

Jimmy studied Grant play by play. Grant could almost tap the shortstop's position and still get back for balls hit inside the third base line. Lots of good third basemen had done that—Frisch, for instance, of the Giants; and Steinfelt of the old Cubs' machine, and

Heine Zimmerman in his palmy days, and "Pie" Traynor, Pirate star. Grant hit on a line, but so did many others—Cobb, Sisler, Hornsby, Speaker and Ruth. On the base paths Grant was no better than good. Anyway, it was his throwing Kipps had been talking about. That side-arm movement that sent the ball fast and true—The pucker became more pronounced. Something—But his mind seemed caught in a fog, and he couldn't dispel it. After a while he dropped out of the practice and sat off to one side, and pulled blades of grass thoughtfully, and broke them between his fingers. He couldn't get that throw out of his thoughts.

The following week the nine from Silver Lake came to Applegate and was beaten 5 to 2. At the end of the game Grant had seven assists. Three times he had knocked down smoking drives and had whistled the ball across the diamond for outs. Twice these plays had broken up dangerous rallies.

To-day the crowd, having learned that it was not wanted at the dressing room, did not follow the team. Jimmy, plodding after the players, whistled under his breath. "If I could only remember—"

Mr. Hammond, bubbling with victory, slapped his shoulder. "Wake up, Jim; you look as though you're in a trance. What do you think of him? Isn't he good?"

"He's better than good," said the boy.

The man expanded. "Between you and me, Jim, I'd like to see him behind the bat. Can you imagine anybody stealing against that throw?"

Jimmy caught his breath. The mental fog was gone. That phrase "behind the bat" had routed the mists. He knew now—Grant had a throw like the famous Jimmy Archer's. Archer, in his day a star catcher for the Cubs, had that same underhand, side-armed style. Archer had had his arm burned by the acid in a tanner's vat, and the muscles had been so pulled around that no other way of throwing was possible.

That word brought something else to mind, too. Pursing his lips in a monotonous whistle, he dressed rapidly and hurried home. Upstairs he yanked open a drawer of his desk and drew out two scrap books and a discolored pile of newspaper clippings. He went through the loose clippings first in a sort of feverish haste. Tossing them aside at last, he opened the scrap books. Halfway through the second book he came on what he hoped to find:

ARCHER THROW MAY
MAKE VARSITY STAR

Eskry, of Freshman Nine, With Bad Arm, Has Same Fling That Made Cub Famous.

That was the name, Eskry—Rufe Eskry, of the freshman team at State U. Jimmy stared at the picture that went with the story. Was it Grant? Two or three intangible things—the pose, the build, the arm movement that the camera had captured—spoke of the third baseman. But the face, that would have removed the last doubt, was blurred and indistinct. The cap cast a shadow over the features, and the profile was partly turned away. If Rufe Eskry and Grant were one and the same, then the apple of the Applegate nine's success had a worm of rottenness at its core.

SLOWLY Jimmy closed the scrap book and put it away. Presently he went downstairs, took the receiver from the telephone hook, and gave central a number. There was a way to be sure. The receiver crackled with the sound of a voice.

"That you, Kipps?" he asked. "This is Jim. Why didn't you tell me that Grant was Rufe Eskry?"

There was a moment of silence.

"Look here," Kipps cried, "this isn't a high school team. Don't start one of your crazy splurges. If Hammond wants to—"

Jimmy hung up the receiver. He had heard enough.

His steps were leaden as he went back to his room. They had agreed—Mr. Hammond and the others—that every player on the Applegate nine had either to live or to work in Applegate. It was to be a town team in name and in fact. There was to be no hiring of talent, no bringing in of outside men, none of the taint that so often creeps in when players work for money instead of for the game. Real amateur ball! And here was a college star hiding under an assumed name. Hired? Jimmy nodded his head slowly. Of course Rufe Eskry had been hired.

Jimmy whistled as he decided why Eskry had elected to be known as Grant. He wanted to cover up the sale of his abilities so that next spring, brazenly and shamelessly, he could turn out for the Varsity nine.

Jimmy was sickened. He had heard of such things, but always the occurrences had been remote. Here was a case right at his door. If Applegate was going to stoop to this— The day's victory was all at once sour in his mouth.

Grant had sold his college, but somebody else had sold out the ideals of the Applegate team. There was no need to ask himself who the seller had been. He winced, and went downstairs again to the telephone. There was an instant response to the number he gave.

"Mr. Hammond?" he asked. His voice was steady. "This is Jim—Jim Gaynor. Could I see you a few minutes before train time to-morrow? Yes; it's about the nine. All right: I'll be at the station at eight o'clock."

He had moved only a few feet from the telephone when the bell called him back.

"Look here, Jim," came Kipps' voice, "you don't want to go off half-cocked on this. Nobody's committed a crime. I know how you feel about a lot of things, but other fellows have their ideas, too. You've got to think about the team. If you start anything—"

"I've already started it," said Jimmy.

As he started back up the stairs, his older brother Art called to him from the library.

"Jim!"

Art looked up from a novel as Jimmy stopped in at the doorway a moment.

"All these telephone calls sound as if you're starting one of your jamborees again," the man said half-humorously.

Jimmy, mindful of Art's opposition to him when he'd fought for the high school basketball coach, answered tartly: "I am!"

Art's next words surprised him—and made his job a lot easier.

"Go to it, old-timer! I don't know what it's about this time, but I've got so I'm with you!"

HE was waiting, a frowning, red-haired figure, when the manufacturer came to the station the next morning. One look at the man's face and he was sure that the nature of his errand was known. Mr. Hammond had shed his customary good humor and looked angry and annoyed.

His greeting was curt. "Look here, Jim; what's this Kipps has been telling me about your objections to Grant's presence on the team?"

"Rufe Eskry's presence," Jimmy corrected him.

"Eskry, then. What difference does it make? Here he's known as Grant."

"What we call him here doesn't change the situation. We agreed—"

"We had to. What was the use of quarreling? You had a certain idea in your head and you talked the others around."

"You agreed to it, too."

Mr. Hammond gave an impatient snort. "I am a man of affairs; did you expect me to spend my time arguing with you? When I need men in my office or my factory I go out and get them. I gave the team all the rope it wanted. I kept my hands off for a long time. When it became apparent that we were not going to get a third baseman, I did some scouting of my own. If I want to get a player for my nine—"

"It isn't your nine, Mr. Hammond. That's the trouble. It's Applegate's."

"Applegate's?" The man's voice rose in anger. "I notice that nobody objects when I spend my money for uniforms, and bats, and base bags. You talk as though making it comfortable for Grant to play on the team was a prison offense."

"It broke an agreement," Jimmy insisted stubbornly.

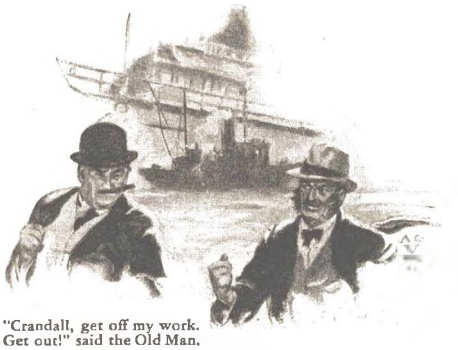
"Oh, bother the agreement! I've tried to make you see that we made that because there was nothing else to do at the moment."

"Are business agreements made that way, Mr. Hammond?"

"Look here, Jim—" The man controlled himself. "Business promises are different. This is just a sport. I needed Grant and I fixed it up so I could get him. Where's the harm?"

Jimmy had the futile feeling that this interview was getting no place. The question of paid talent had been threshed out at meetings at Mr. Hammond's house before the season started, and now it was necessary to fight it all over again. He did not mention that playing on a nine with a professional might bar him from high school athletics. Characteristically, he wasn't thinking of himself at all. (*Continued on page 35*)

Relief swept through Jimmy. "I'm glad you told me," he said.



"Crandall, get off my work. Get out!" said the Old Man.

Under the Bilge

By Arthur H. Little

Illustrated by A. C. Valentine

NERVE? Say! Speaking of nerve reminds me of Bud Moody and the steamer *Farwell*—what she did to us and what he did to her.

For a steamboat, a steel six-hundred-footer that was the flagship and the pride of the Inland Steamship Company, the biggest freight line on the Great Lakes, the *James A. Farwell* surely was in a funny fix.

There she lay, head up, tail down, half her length out of water, her nose in the back end of a garage on Colorado Avenue—a garage that stood a city block from the river's edge—and her stern a-settle in the mud of Southport channel. Honestly, she looked downright disreputable.

She'd been caught in the annual freshet in March, when the river, ice-locked all winter, had broken loose and messed up the whole harbor. The *Farwell*, in winter quarters at the Southport Shipyard, where she had been launched with much ceremony less than a year before, had snapped her mooring lines and, carrying only a worried ship-keeper and his wife, had swung out into the river and drifted downstream for a dozen lengths or so, then veered to starboard with a cross current, poked her nose across what normally is about a hundred yards of dry land, and smacked her stem for thirty feet through the corrugated iron, rear wall of a public garage owned by a perfect stranger.

Next morning, when the pack ice at the river mouth let go and the water level fell sixteen feet in three hours, the Farwell sat down right where she was. As far as she was concerned, the arrangement could be permanent. "And," she seemed to ask, "whose business is it?"

Well, for one, it was the garage man's. He was annoyed. "I admit that I admire boats," he said. "I enjoy seeing them pass in the river. But I don't like 'em so all-fired chummy as this one is. She's ruined my heating plant."

It was the business, also, of quite a number of others. It came to concern our boss, Old Man Strang, and our whole marine-contracting outfit.

It concerned the Inland Steamship Company, which owned the *Farwell*.

It concerned the Continental Railroad, whose coal-loading docks lie straight across the river from where the *Farwell* had sat down.

It concerned the city of Southport.

It concerned the *Southport Morning Sentinel*—in particular the *Sentinel's* bespectacled young editor, by name Milton Dante Crandall.

But mostly, it came to concern our diver, Bud Moody—Moody, with his red hair and his freckles and his hair-trigger ways. Maybe it would be nearer the truth to say that he came to concern it. For when Moody uprose and reached out and took the situation by the tail, he— But wait.

THE layout was complicated. Aside from having punched in the rear of the garage man's garage and aside from having tied up the two-million-dollar investment that she herself represented, the *Farwell* was impeding navigation. Her after end, some three hundred feet of it, stuck straight out into the river at a point where the channel width is just about four hundred feet—pointed straight at the Continental Railroad's coal docks and cut them off, you might say, from the world.

And there, for two months, the *Farwell* had lain. Meanwhile, lake navigation had opened. And meanwhile, too, there was talk of lawsuits—mostly against the city. The city had been negligent by failing to keep the harbor mouth free of pack ice, the city had brought on the March freshet. That was what the garage man said; but he was merely echoing, I think, what had been said by the Continental Railroad.

Of the two parties, one—the garage man—I believe, was sincere. He probably had a real grievance.

But the Continental Railroad—well, that was different. For years, the Continental had been fighting the city, fighting over franchises for spur tracks, fighting over rights along the river, fighting over tax assessments. And the feud had involved others, principally our own boss, John Strang. When the Continental had proposed to widen its track space just south of the Nickel Plate bridge by building out into the river for some seventy feet and then "compensating" the city by dredging away seventy feet of the opposite bank, the Old Man had stepped forward as a citizen and protested. He protested so well that both the city council and the federal government said to the Continental: "No, you can't do it. It amounts to a steal."

Beaten, the Continental had proved to be a poor sport. It longed for a chance, so we were sure, to "ride" our Old Man. It harried him. And it dragged into the scrap Southport's biggest newspaper, the *Sentinel*. Not that the *Sentinel* needed much dragging. For, thanks to certain manipulations and financial transactions going back a number of years, the *Sentinel* boasted an editor and half owner in the bespectacled person of Milton Dante Crandall who was the son of old Joseph P. Crandall; and Joseph P. Crandall was the Continental Railroad's Southport Division superintendent and a power in the Continental's councils.

That, then, was the line-up when the *Farwell* climbed halfway out of the river in March and left her stern out in the channel.

On the advice of the city solicitor, the mayor himself called a public conference in the council chamber of the city hall. "Come on in," he said to the garage man, the steamship company, and the railroad, "and we'll talk this thing over and see if we can't settle it." And that seemed reasonable enough.

"Let's go down and listen to the meeting," Bud Moody suggested to me. "Perhaps there'll be some fireworks." And down to the city hall the two of us went.

Well, they met. Everybody brought along a lawyer, or two or three. And what the mayor had thought was going to be a nice, brotherly little chat turned into a row.

"We'll sue to-morrow!" said the lawyers for the garage man.

"And we!" said the lawyers for the Continental Railroad.

"And if everybody else sues," said the lawyers for the steamship company, "we'll sue, too."

THEN it was that 'way back in the corner among the spectators, a bearded little man arose, our chief, John Strang. Bud Moody and I we'd got ourselves a couple of ringside seats up against the rail; and we hadn't even known the old gentleman was in the room. He began to speak gravely and low.

"Gentlemen," he said, "as a citizen of Southport, I venture a suggestion. In all your discussion thus far I haven't heard mentioned what seems to me to be the most important point. And that is—when is the *Farwell* to be floated? You talk of lawsuits; but I've heard no one speak of the possibility of removing the cause. You talk of suing the city. Southport, gentlemen, is your city and my city—our city. Here we live and work and earn our livings. When we talk of what the city owes us, let's not forget what we owe her."

"Mostly," spoke up one of the railroad lawyers, "we seem to owe her taxes."

"But, sir," the Old Man came back at him, "she gave your railroad a harbor."

"And when this gentleman," interposed the city solicitor, indicating Mr. Strang, "when this gentleman speaks of the harbor, he speaks of something rather close to his heart. For he created it. Twenty years ago, when the Southport Steel Company offered to bring its great plant here if Southport would provide a harbor, the city was broke. And this gentleman came forward and said, 'I'll do it.' He did it—turned his dredges loose and dredged a harbor for us four miles long. And it didn't cost the city a cent!"

The Old Man smiled. "But all that," he remarked, "was twenty years ago. This is now. May I repeat the suggestion, gentlemen, that you discuss how and when the *Farwell* is to be floated?"

A dozen pairs of shoulders shrugged.

"Perhaps," said one of the lawyers for the railroad, "*you* have some suggestions."

The Old Man wasn't smiling now. "Young man," he said, "I have. I have inspected the *Farwell*. I believe she can be floated."

"She can?" the lawyer demanded. "In how long?"

The Old Man was mad. He snapped: "Ten days!"

"Can you do it?"

"I can! The job will cost the steamship company exactly what it costs me. And you may draw up a joint contract, establishing that if I fail to float the *Farwell* in ten days, you all can collect your damages without lawsuit, from me!"

Bud Moody, grinning in ecstasy, jolted me in the ribs and whispered: "'At a boy!"

Right there in the room, the contract was drawn and signed. And at six o'clock that night, working under acetylene flares, our outfit ganged the *Farwell*.

From our headquarters

Crandall, his face white as steam, grinned at me and asked, "What happened?"

up the river we brought down the three Strang tugs, the *True*, the *Cascade*, and the *American Eagle*. We brought down also two big derrick scows that we rigged with water jets; a hydraulic jack; and two diving rigs—his regular one and a spare—for Bud Moody.

Structurally, the *Farwell* was in perfect health. She'd gone on the mud when she was light. No holes in her plating, no special damage anywhere. Just in wrong, that was all, with half her huge weight of steel on land and half in the water.

"The big brute thinks," Bud Moody remarked to me, "that she's an amphibian—maybe an alligator."

"She does," I said. "And it looks to me as if the easiest way to get her back into the water would be to take her apart, carry her back to the shipyard, put her together there and then launch her all over again."

We went to work on her from two ends. At her bow, and inside the punctured garage, the rigging gang set up the hydraulic jack—brought it to bear just at the under-curve of her stem, so that it could lift, and, at the same time, push sternward.

At her after end, Bud Moody, dolled up in helmet and rubber suit and accompanied by a submarine flood light, went down to explore. For a hundred feet or more, starboard and port, feeling his way about under twelve to twenty feet of water, he sized up her position. Then, at his signal, we hauled him up and unscrewed his face plate.

"Tight!" he said to Old Man Strang. "She's cut a sloping channel for herself straight back into the mud. Back aft here, around her wheel and rudder, she's fairly free. But forward of that, where her bilge starts, she's jammed in."

"Blackie," the Old Man said to me, "rig up those jets."

I rigged four of them, two on each side. A jet is a stream of water shot through a nozzle at the end of a long pipe that you manipulate from the surface. The idea is to excavate—in close quarters—by scouring. Our plan was to cut the freighter loose along her sides.

With the four jet pumps howling, the Old Man next built the *Farwell* a harness. Around her bow and back along her sides he looped a steel cable as big as your arm, the ends running out a hundred and fifty feet or so aft of her stern, the lengths along her sides suspended halfway up her plating by heaving lines made fast to her deck.

The three tugs backed into position and took hold of that cable.

"Now, Blackie," the Old Man said to me, "go forward to the jack at her stem. When you hear the *True* whistle, start the jack and we'll give her a trial pull."

I went forward and waited. "Shoot!" said the *True*; and the boys of the rigging gang, manning the big jack, bent their backs to lift some six thousand tons.

Back there astern of her I could hear the three tugs, the *True* and *Cascade* on one side and the *Eagle* on the other, tearing loose. "Wooo-wooo—wooo-wooouh!" said the *True's* high-pitched siren—"Give 'er the gaff!"

Sparks shot upward from three belching funnels as the three straining tugs, the river water boiling and churning astern of each of them, piled their weight and every ounce of their power upon that line.

Forward, I watched the *Farwell's* towering stem. Slowly, with the upward surge of the jack, it rose. But that was all. The jack went up to its full height—a foot, not more. At the *Farwell's* stern, the three tugs, their exhaust pipes barking, toiled and writhed and swung their quivering lengths from side to side.

But the *Farwell* didn't budge.

Then, "Wooouh!" said the *True*—"Shut off!" And the din subsided.

Back aft I went to find the Old Man. I found him in council with Bud Moody. "What she needs, I think, sir," Bud told him, "is a lot more of that jetting."

We sent the *True* back to headquarters for more jets—four of them. I hooked them up; and Bud Moody, back in his helmet again, went down and placed them himself, then came up to get out of their way; and we scoured away for three hours. Then down went Moody again to inspect.

"Pits," he said, when we'd hauled him back to the surface and unscrewed his face plate. "Dog-goned clay down there seems to be all full of pockets of sand. Comes out in big holes and leaves the clay in between. Give 'er some more."

We scoured some more—about an hour—and then the three tugs and the hydraulic jack went into action again. But no go. Not an inch, not a tenth of an inch, would the *Farwell* move.

DAYLIGHT found us still alternating between the jets and the tugs; and along those lines we pounded away all that day. At nightfall the Old Man laid out a schedule for eight-hour shifts. Moody and the Old Man himself and I to catch cat naps when we could on the bunks in the pilot houses of the tugs.

All that night we wrestled the *Farwell* and all the next day and all *that* night and the next day after that. The following morning the Old Man chartered another tug from the Interlake Towing—the *Samson*, a big steeple-compound—and she, with our own tugs, horsed away at that steel cable for two solid hours. And did the *Farwell* notice the difference? Not by half a hair.

In four days, Bud Moody had slept, I think, a total of about seven hours. His face was drawn and white—so white that the freckles stood out on him as if he'd been spattered with red hull-paint. His eyes followed Old Man Strang.

"Blackie," the redhead said to me, "how do you think she looks?"

"Not so good," I told him. "And as she goes along, she keeps looking worse. If you want my opinion, we're stumped."

He nodded, then turned and gazed across the river. "Trouble is, I think," he said, "those tugs haven't any foothold. You know—the old wheel slippage wastes their power. Ain't anything they can get their *teeth* into. Seems like there ought to be some other way!"

And then, on the eighth day, the Old Man tried something different. "The tugs need leverage," he said. "We'll give them a better chance. We'll run a block-and-fall line across the river, with the anchor block over on the other side. Blackie, you lay out the falls. Four-sheave steel blocks. Reeve 'em with cable. And I'll arrange with the Continental Railroad people for permission to anchor to that clump of piling over there beyond their tracks on the bend."

"And this," Bud Moody remarked to me, confidentially, "is something like it. This will fetch her."

Well, my part of the plan went through. I rove the blocks. But we never used them. For, when the Old Man called the Continental Railroad's division offices on the telephone, he talked with Division Superintendent Crandall; and within twenty minutes Crandall himself, big and grizzled and bear-like, was on hand in person.

"If you string that tackle to that clump of piling," he barked at our Old Man, "you'll block two of our river-side tracks."

"Yes," said our chief, "temporarily."

"Can't be done," said Crandall.

"You refuse me permission?"

"I do! I don't consider it advisable."

"But," the Old Man urged, "your railroad company claims to be suffering by the *Farwell's* position. Those two waterside tracks of yours are merely sidings, both empty now. The harbor, you admit, is blocked. Yet you'd handicap me."

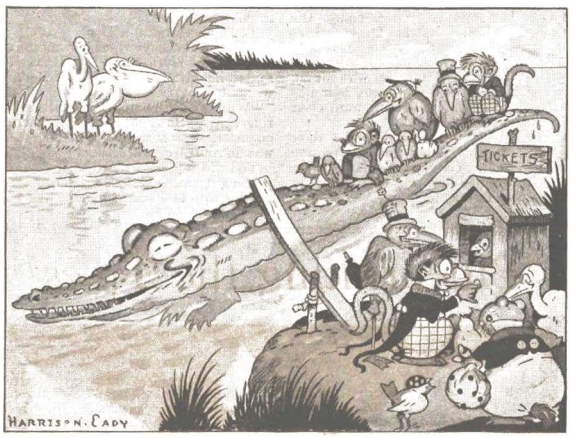
"You can construe my action," Crandall snapped, "as you please!"

Our chief's eyes narrowed. "I see," he said. "I see! Your company's idea is to punish *me*. You're thinking of those damages you're going to collect. Crandall, get off my work! *Get out!*"

Without a word, Crandall turned and marched off.

Bud Moody, resting in his armor between dives, with his helmet on the deck beside his heavy, three-legged stool near the edge of the derrick scow's deck, watched the performance, then turned, spat carefully into the river, looked up at me and remarked:

"And that's that!"



Mr. Monkey: "Quick, mister, give me a seat back towards the stern. I think I'd feel safer riding there than too far forward."

W-E-L-L! The next morning's *Morning Sentinel* honored us with half its front page. An editorial, I guess you'd call it, set in big type. It told about that argument; anyway, it told the *Sentinel's* version. An astonishing, exasperating version! Our chief, so the newspaper said, had refused, "point blank," to co-operate with the railroad in the work of removing an obstruction from the harbor. And not only had he "refused to listen to the railroad company's suggestions, but, when approached in person by one of the railroad's officials, Strang had flown into a rage and, assuming doubtful authority, ordered the railroad official to 'get out.'"

And the piece wound up like this: "Who owns Southport harbor? Is a self-constituted martinet, upon the basis of a dim, legendary record of having 'donated' the harbor to the city, to assume a maritime dictatorship?"

We read the thing, Bud Moody and I, sitting together on the bunk in the pilot house of the *True*. When we finished, Bud whirled on me and his eyes were blazing.

"Who wrote that?" he demanded.

"Why," I told him, "I suppose the editor did—young Crandall."

"The bird that wears specs?"

"The same," I said. "Old Man Crandall's little boy."

"Huh!" said Bud. "Let's go get 'em."

"No," I told him. "We've got work to do."

Work we had, and plenty of it. Twenty-four hours to go. The Old Man, a copy of the *Morning Sentinel* rolled in his hand like a bandmaster's little stick, ran the job from the *Farwell's* deck. Forbidden to string tackle across the river, he'd proceed along the lines on which we'd begun. Eight water jets were roaring away now, scouring away at the clay. Four hydraulic jacks instead of one were straining at her stem. And at her stern, on the steel cable, four big tugs, eating coal and churning water.

And then—Zing! went a steam line on the derrick scows. And the water jets stopped like that!

Moody hadn't yet climbed into his diving rig for the day. I grabbed him as a helper and the two of us tied into that broken steam pipe. We'd unbolted it and the Old Man himself had gone up over the bank for two lengths of five-inch flanged piping, when behind Moody and me somebody said: "Good morning!"

We turned. And there on the deck, spectacles and all, stood the young Mr. Milton Dante Crandall, editor of the *Sentinel*, himself.

"Good morning!" I said.

And Bud Moody slowly laid down a wrench and very carefully stood up.

"Wait, Bud!" I said. Then to Crandall: "Well, sir, what can we do for you?"

I give the guy credit. He had the sand to smile. "I've come down here," he said, "to get some atmosphere."

"Huh!" I grunted. "Well, if it's the air you want, see Mr. Strang."

"No," and he smiled again and shook his head. "No, I don't want to interview him. Perhaps, after what the *Sentinel* said this morning, Mr. Strang feels a little put out. I hope, however, that he'll come to see that that was merely one of the fortunes of war. As I say, I'm looking for atmosphere. You see, as a side line, I'm writing a book on fresh-water diving and submarine salvage work. I want the experience of going down in a suit on this job."

Bud Moody stared, then turned to me with: "Blackie, the guy means it!"

"Yeh," I said, "but it can't be done."

"It can't!" said the redhead. And before I could stop him he was dragging out the rig. I admit, I didn't exactly fight him. Let the cocky young writer fellow see how it felt under water, I thought. It wouldn't feel so good to a greenhorn, but it would not hurt him. Or anybody else. The Old Man was nowhere in sight. We were shut down, temporarily. And here was this poor sap *asking*—well, yes, I did help put him into Bud's suit. And then I manned the air pump.

Carefully, Moody led him to the edge of the derrick scow's deck. Then, just before he screwed on the face plate, Bud said to him:

"Keep your head. You'll notice the air pressure a little; but pay no attention to that. This ladder here goes down to within about six feet of the bottom. When you get to the bottom rung, drop off. The river bottom has been scoured smooth by water jets and you can walk around. If you want to come up, or if we want you to come up, the signal is two jerks on the life line. And watch your step for pits!"

On went the face plate; and down the ladder, his helmet nodding with every laborious step, went young Crandall—down until the air valve went under and then on down out of sight. Bud was acting as tender.

"Well, Bud," I asked him, as I rolled the big wheel of the air pump, "what's the idea? Going to haze him a little?"

"No!" he snapped. "No monkey business!"

WE watched the bubbles rising from Crandall's helmet. Having reached the bottom easily, he was taking a little stroll. The bubbles moved toward the *Farwell's* port side, near her rudder post, then away from us and toward the river bank. Moody, paying out the life line and the air hose, looked a little anxious. On went the bubbles, to the point where the freighter's bilge began, then past that point—on and on. Moody looked at me, shook his head doubtfully, then turned to the bubbles again. On they went, straight into the narrow channel between the *Farwell's* side and the clay bottom—on—then paused. And then stopped.

I saw Moody jerk the life line twice. Then twice again! He turned to me.

"Blackie," he said, "get two more men here! Put one on that pump. The other

(*Continued on page 61*)

The Tattooed Man

(*Continued from page 7*)

Slowly, deliberately, the mate shook the boy, shook him till his teeth chattered and his eyes closed.

"Speak to the first officer like that, will you! I'll learn ye, ye wharf rat! Be 'spectful to yer officer. Git!"

He flung Tod from him, and the boy went crashing against the cabin wall. The mate stood there with chin shot forward; the scar on his temple flamed crimson. Tod picked himself up.

"Don't speak till ye're spoken to—understan'? And call me 'sir.' Ye got to start right on this ship, or I'll throw ye overboard." He grinned broadly. "We'll lick ye into shape—the cook and I. Yeh, if the cook don't do it, I will. Now go crawl into yer donkey's-breakfast, little boy."

The new mess boy of the *S. S. Araby* was learning. "Yes, sir," he stammered as he let himself out the door. "Yes, sir."

AT four bells Tod was roused by the call of the watch. He lay in his bunk for a moment listening to the grumbles of the men as they turned out. Suddenly he became aware that something small and brown was moving on the wood of the bunk above him. He wiped the sleep from his eyes and stared. Yes, there was another of those moving spots. A cockroach! Two of them—no; three. Oh, well, what was a cockroach, anyway! So long as there was nothing worse. He sat up and began pulling off his pajamas.

Suddenly a yell burst from a tall Swede. "Yiminy! Look—the kid's undressed!"

Tod glanced round in surprise. The four men of the watch were eyeing him with amazed grins.

"Blimey! What's the bloomin' lubber wearin'?" called the little Cockney. "Look, mity! Strike me blin' if he ain't sleepin' in a suit!"

Tod's cheeks reddened as he slipped into his shirt. One glance told him that all the seamen had slept in their underwear.

"Aw, leave the kid alone, Toppy, ye blasted lime-juicer!" said Nelson the Dane. "Ain't he got a right to wear 'em if he wants to? You guys don't know no better. Ye're too fresh, anyway. He'll larn. Yes, he'll larn."

Tod quickly finished dressing, his mouth a hard, thin line. He vowed that at the first opportunity he would toss the offending garments overboard. By golly, a forecastle was no place for pajamas!

He followed the men up to the deck. A chill breeze had sprung up; the sky was strewn with a mass of quivering stars. The water front lay silent and black about him. Aft a winch whirred noisily where the boatswain loaded a few belated boxes.

"By sunrise we'll be sailing," thought Tod.

How little he knew that morning of the ways of ocean tramps! The tramp freighter, rusty and woe-begone of aspect, comes and goes like a will o' the wisp, regardless of schedule. It follows not the well-charted lines of travel, but takes to the open sea, filling its holds with cargo disdained by the larger ships, and taking it to remote ports of the world seldom visited by its luxurious sisters.

These things Tod was to learn. But that morning something else lay before him. As he crossed the deck to the port alleyway leading to the galley, the domain of the Tattooed Man, his steps faltered in trepidation. By golly, he was in for it now!

The galley door was open. Tod stopped on the threshold. The half-clad Tattooed Man bent above the ship's range making the fire. He turned his head.

"'Bout time ye're here," he greeted. "After this ye start the fire—see" He closed the lid with a bang.

"Yes, sir," said Tod meekly.

The cook flushed. In amazement Tod saw the red creep up the broad neck to his cheeks.

"Gut me, if I'll have you call me 'sir,'" he growled. He swung about and rattled the pots on the stove. "I'm the cook—and a blasted good cook too!"

Tod blinked. "What'll I do?" he asked. "I'm new at this game, but you tell me where to start and I'll light in."

"Sufferin' tripe! Ain't you never been on a ship before?"

Tod shook his head.

The cook heaved a deep sigh. "Gut me, if I don't have the worse luck! Well, you don't look quite so bad as the Chink, anyway. Here—put on the Java."

Tod gave him a questioning glance. "Java?"

"Sufferin' fish hooks," exclaimed the cook. "Where was you raised—on a cow farm?" He looked the boy up and down. "H-m! A reg'lar dude, a swell, a macaroni. What's your name?"

"Joseph Todhunter M—" Tod stopped abruptly. Did he want to tell his name?

"H-m! Well, Joe Macaroni, you got t' work on this here job. Dive in!"

As Tod worked, he cast surreptitious glances at the cook. He wondered what story lay back of the strange figure. His age, Tod reflected, might be anywhere from twenty-five to thirty-five; certainly he had not always cooked, for his great body was brawn and muscle, without an ounce of fat upon it. His tawny hair was cut short. His eyes, Tod felt, were clear and strong—and hard.

At four bells the crew brought their mess gear to the galley door to receive their hand-out. Only in rough weather, the cook informed him, was chow taken to them in the forecastle. At seven o'clock Tod, in a clean white coat, served breakfast to the officers in the cabin aft, setting a covered dish of hot cereal before the captain on the very stroke of the hour.

THE commander of the *Araby* glanced at the new boy as if he had never seen him before. The black-bearded first mate, upon the captain's right, watched him with dark eyes beneath dark brows, but said no word. The chief engineer, upon the left, was a pleasant, rosy-cheeked Scotchman. Being deaf, he talked in a loud, high voice.

The meal had begun, and Tod was pouring the steaming coffee when an oath from the first mate startled him. "What's this?" snarled the mate. "Blast my hide—it's a cockroach!" Glaring at the new mess boy, he held up the offending insect in his spoon.

Tod's knees trembled.

Captain Ramsey wiped his mouth with the back of his hand. "Mr. Hawkes," he said solemnly, "I ain't never seen a ship without cockroaches."

"Wull ye no' eat them with th' porridge, Mr. Hawkes?" grinned the chief engineer. "Now well I remember whin I was in the *Mary McKinnon*—"

Tod did not hear more of the chief engineer's story. The first mate had reached out his arm and seized him by the tender flesh of his waist. The big fingers, closing on the boy's slim body, brought forth excrutiating pain.

"Serve 'em with our meals, do you!" he hissed. "What'd I tell yer last night?"

Tod's teeth closed over his lips to keep back a cry. A hand went to his head as if he would ward off an impending blow. The other held the handle of the steaming coffee pot. He saw the dreaded face of the mate close to his; he jerked back, at the same moment tipping the coffee pot's boiling contents on the mate's thick legs.

With an oath the man was on his feet. His arm shot back for a blow.

"That'll do, Mr. Hawkes," said the captain. The chief engineer had risen; he glanced thankfully at the master. "Sit down," went on the captain. "Doesn't pay to get too touchy, Mr. Hawkes."

The Scotchman smiled grimly. "Mon, d'ye think this is a win'jammer?"

"It's as bad," snapped the first officer as he took his seat. "I'll teach the kid to treat the officers' mess like this, I will."

Tod stumbled to the door; the blood had left his face; his eyes were steel gray with hatred.

"Take the stuff away," said the captain. "And tell the cook to be more careful after this."

"Yes, sir," Tod gathered up the dishes and almost ran from the cabin.

In the galley the Tattooed Man was flinging slices of bacon on to a platter. "Well, Joe Macaroni," he boomed, "how you gettin' along?"

"Not very well," Tod gulped as he rubbed his side. "There was a roach in the mush."

"The deuce there was! Well, we'll have to be more careful, won't we?" He laughed deep in his throat.

The new mess boy's lips tightened. Grimly he went about the remainder of the meal. Then, still grim, he cleared off the table in the saloon, and made up the cabins of the captain and the first mate.

As he made his way across the after deck, he was met by a burly longshoreman. "Are yuh the mess boy?" he asked.

At the boy's assent, he brought forth a white envelope which he carefully handed over. "She said to give it only to you."

Tod took it with a nod of thanks. He glanced about him quickly, took the letter to the port alleyway, and ripped it open.

It was from Sheila Murray, and read:

Dear Tod: Just a line to wish you the best of luck upon your trip. Mr. Swickard left last night for New York, supposedly; but the rumor has leaked out that he is going to France. Can Neil really be there?

Are you making friends with Mr. Hawkes, the first mate? He was on the Panama with Neil, you know. Find out all you can from him. I won't try to give you advice; you know what we want—you and I.

Ever your friend,
Sheila Murray.

Tod re-read the letter twice, then entered the galley to wash the dishes in the trough. Somehow those written words seemed to keep him in touch with friends. He felt strengthened as he worked on in the quiet galley. The cook had disappeared into his narrow cabin.

Suddenly shouts struck his ears. He listened. It was the captain's voice: "Let go aft!"

Tod's heart jumped. He dropped the dish rag into the trough and ran to the forward deck. The *Araby* was slipping away from her moorings.

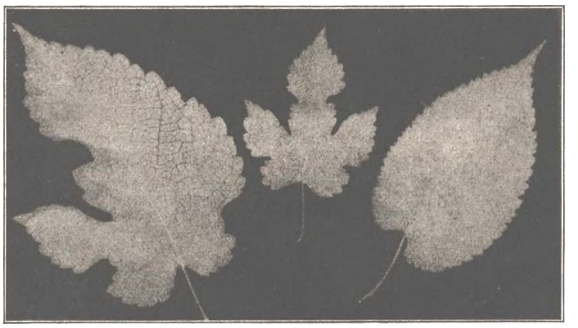
Chapter Four

THE little freighter backed slowly out into the Bay, stopped, and swung ahead, her bows pointed toward the Golden Gate. Against the grey sky overhead the gulls screamed and wheeled. A breath of moisture-laden air struck Tod's cheek as he leaned over the forward rail.

The grizzled boatswain paused an instant at the boy's side. "Dirty weather

(*Continued on page 30*)

Blueprinting the Trees



All from the same tree—mulberry leaves.

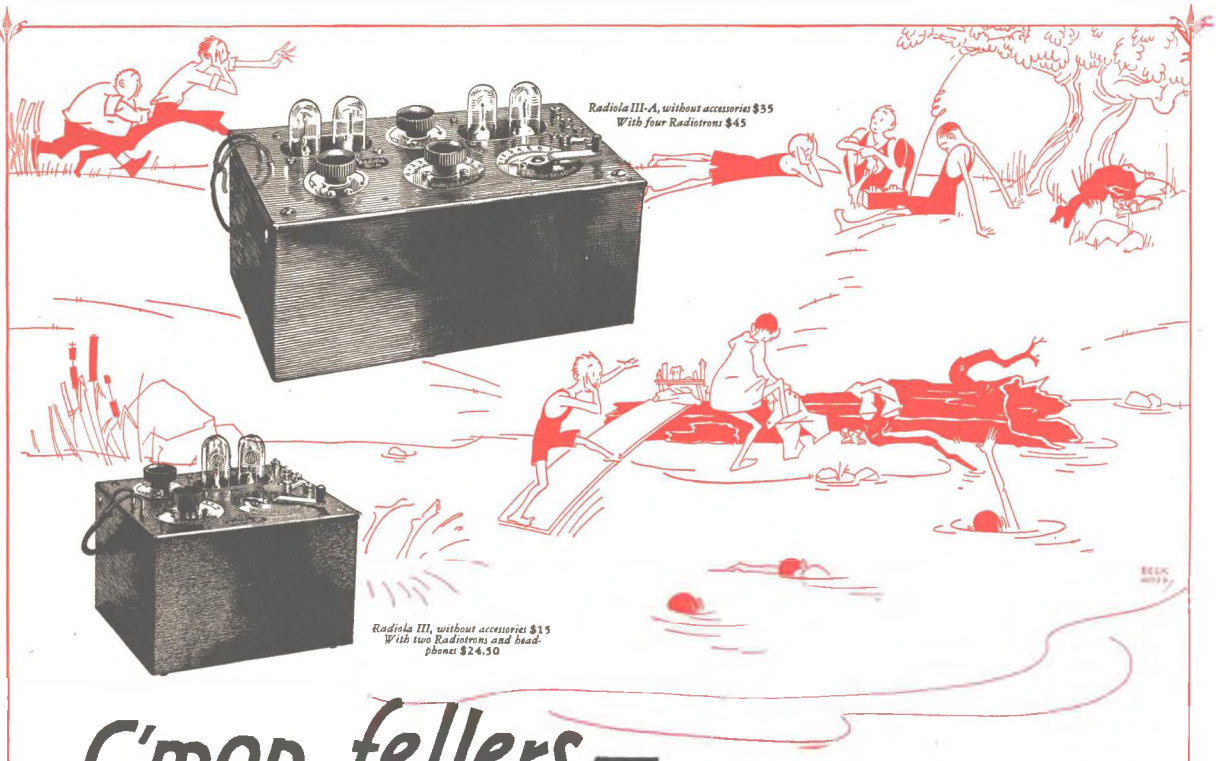
HERE'S something new—nature sleuthing. You can get records on trees just like detectives get records on men, only instead of taking finger prints, you take blue prints—and then find out that you are not only a sleuth but an excellent artist.

All you need for blueprinting is a printing frame, blueprint paper and a bichromate of potash wash. You can either buy a cheap printing frame at a camera shop, or you can make one from an old picture frame or a piece of window pane and some cardboard. The blueprint paper can be bought cheaply at a bookstore. Don't buy any more than you'll need at once, because it doesn't last long. Handle it only in dim light and keep your reserve supply in the dark. Five cents worth of bichromate of potash, from the nearest drug store, will last a long time. One teaspoonful in a quart of water is the proper solution.

Seeds and young leaves of the red maple make an artistic decoration.

The specimen to be printed—preferably a young leaf or plant—is placed flat on the glass, the blueprint paper is laid over it, and the cardboard or backing is clamped tightly over all. Expose the glass to sunlight or strong electric light for from one to five minutes—about one minute for frail flowers, longer to get the veining of leaves. Then remove the paper from the frame and wash it in clear water, in potash solution and in clear water again, and finally place it on a smooth cloth or blotter to dry.

Fun? Say! Practical, too. In addition to keeping a scrapbook of leaves and flowers—elm and maple with their tiny blooms, alder "tags," catkins of oaks, hickory and willow, blooms of the wild plum and wild cherry—you can make useful gifts. Well-made blueprints serve as excellent decorations for blotters, calendars or glass tea trays.—*C. Dormon.*



C'mon fellers— bring along your Radiola!

"Meetcha in the water 'n ten minutes. And don't forget the Radiola."

"Betcha life! And let's mark the score down on the big rock. And hey, I'll betcha this two-blade knife against your harmonica, the ol' Blue Sox'll win!"

* * *

Take along a Radiola—a real RCA Radiola, of course. But which one?

There's a Radiola III. It's a two tube set. With a pair of headphones, that Radiola can show many a bigger set what distance means! It's little—easy to tote around. And best of all—it costs only fifteen dollars—a price any boy can *earn*.

* * *

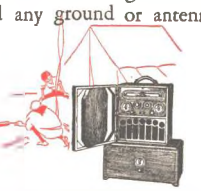
There's a Balanced Amplifier that you can add to Radiola III. If you can buy both

right away, you can buy them together in one cabinet. That's the four tube Radiola III-A —at only $35. Talk to Dad. This is a corking set—has won fame from the ice peaks of the Canadian Rockies right down to the Tropic of Capricorn! Maybe the Club can chip in for this and a Radiola Loudspeaker.

* * *

And here's an idea. A set that has been carried tied to a mule's back, and up miles of old Mexican mountain trail is a pretty good one to take on camping trips. One party of hunters sent us pictures of the Radiola 26 taken high up in the Mexican wilds. And what a catch those pictures showed, too—a bear, a puma and a deer they had shot!

This Radiola 26 is a portable superheterodyne with everything inside it—loudspeaker, battery space, loop in the cover. It's great for canoeing because it doesn't need any ground or antenna. And it's protected, like all "superhets," by the catacomb that seals in all the delicate parts.



Radiola 26, with six Radiotrons $225

Look over these Radiolas, right today, at the nearest RCA Authorized Dealer's.

Buy with confidence where you see this sign

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RADIO · CORPORATION · OF · AMERICA · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · SAN FRANCISCO

The Tattooed Man

(*Continued from page 28*)

ahead," he grumbled. "February's a bad month for a passage south."

Tod's eyes glowed with expectation. "Think we'll hit a storm?" he asked eagerly.

"Running right into one," returned the boatswain calmly, and passed forward, disappearing into the seamen's forecastle.

Tod stood for several moments, pondering—thrilling. So the *Araby* was plowing ahead into a storm. Ah, this was life—this was living!

Rousing himself, he returned to the galley. A door opposite was open and Tod saw the massive cook lying inert upon his bunk, reading a book that bore the word *Astronomy*.

When he heard Tod, he rolled over and gathered himself into the crouching attitude of a powerful animal about to spring. "Run away, did ye?" he bellowed. "Yeh, that's a blasted queer way to begin a passage. Git busy! See?"

Tod swallowed. "I forgot," he began. "I'll—"

"Forgot!" roared the Tattooed Man. "I'll teach yuh not to forget." He hurled the book at Tod's head.

The boy ducked, and the book thudded to the galley floor.

"Bring it here!" ordered the cook.

Trembling, Tod obeyed, fearing a blow from the great iron fist the cook was shaking at him.

But the blow did not fall. The Tattooed Man permitted the boy to lay the book on the bunk and retreat unharmed. "Now wash the rest of the pots and peel the spuds," he grunted.

With the slowness of one unaccustomed to such work, Tod washed the pots in the trough. Then he took a basket and filled it with potatoes from the locker. He seated himself upon a stool and began running his knife around a potato. Through the porthole he caught glimpses of green waves crested with white. He could feel the pulse of the engines. The *Araby* was heading south toward warmer climes.

"It's great to be at sea," Tod ventured, forgetting past hazards. "It's wonderful, isn't it, Mr. Jarvis?"

"Huh!" grunted the Tattooed Man from his berth. "Just you wait, kid. You'll see. Wonderful? Sufferin' catfish!"

Presently Tod rose and renewed the fire in the range. The galley was hot; he wiped the sweat from his forehead. The ship began to roll as she plunged through heavy swells. They must have passed through the Gate, Tod realized.

Then his hand went to his head in sudden horror. He was oddly dizzy. And his stomach felt as if it were whirling around.

How the ship was wallowing! Tod leaned limply against the galley wall.

The Tattooed Man glanced up, and his white teeth flashed in a jeering grin. "Sufferin' halibut!" he murmured. "Our little Joe Macaroni is seasick!"

"No, I'm not," Tod denied valiantly, reaching for the pan of potatoes.

But the walls of the galley careened appallingly; the floor tilted up and down every moment; the potatoes became a blurred mass in a swimming pan. His stomach felt queer, his head hot. He grasped.

Nausea gripped him.

The Tattooed Man gazed at him in scorn. "Git, you landlubber," he bellowed. "You're sick. You won't be worth the price of a herring till it's over. Now git!"

Tod went. He grasped the door for support and stumbled down the alleyway to the forward deck. Indifferent to amused, contemptuous glances, he lurched to the rail. Here the biting wind met his cheek with a welcome caress.

At sea. At sea in the tramp steamer *Araby*. The irony of the thought burned into his brain. He had no dreams of high adventure now; other matters required his attention.

A FEW minutes later he crawled weakly along the bulwarks toward the seamen's forecastle. He wanted his bunk. It had become a haven of rest in a world cruel and heartless, a world of mountainous seas whose white crests foamed high above the forecastle head.

He stumbled blindly on, reached the distant doorway, half fell down the three steps of the ladder to the thick, stuffy atmosphere of the seamen's quarters.

"Blimey, the kid's sick." It was the Cockney's taunting voice.

"Aye, he looks green as er lizard."

Amid laughs and jeers Tod climbed up to his bunk. He dropped flat on his back. Ah, this was better; this was heaven after the warm odors of cooking in the galley. Just to rest. Let the crew rave; he didn't care.

"Ain't our new cabin boy cute, now, mity," went on Toppy. "I bet the bloomin' cook is 'appy, too. And what'll our chow be like, I asks yer, with the kid gone? He'll never get well. Blimey, we will 'ave t' toss him over ter the fishes."

"Shut yer jaw!" cut in Nelson the Dane. "Leave the kid alone."

"Look 'ere, now," said Toppy aggrieved.

Trapped!

FIVE stories up, on the flaming roof of the warehouse, were two men: Jim Egan, slender recruit of Fire Engine 22, and big Gus Remus, the terror of every new man in the department.

Just five minutes ago Gus had called Jim a "worthless brat!" Now, they were facing the biggest crisis of their lives, together, on a tottering wall.

In front of them—red blasts; behind them—the cold, black river.

It's a story worth reading, that one next month by Karl W. Detzer, called

The Wharf Rat

"Cawn't I even open me mouth in this bloomin' ship? A bloke like you ain't got no right—"

"All hands on deck!"

The cry came down from the doorway like a sudden pistol shot. With muttered curses the men pulled on their shoes.

"Didn't I tell yer this ship wasn't no good? She can't stand even a southwester. She'll knock to pieces in a sea."

Grumbling, they climbed the steps to deck.

"Good-by kid," yelled Toppy from the entrance. "An' look 'ere, if the bloomin' ship starts to sink, I'll call yer. It ain't nice ter drown down there. No, it ain't nice."

Tod heard him laugh as he closed the iron door.

The boy lay silent. The deserted forecastle was dark with shadows. Close at hand he heard the seas pounding on the bows, and the whistle of the gale outside. Beneath him the bunk rose with a great swinging movement, quivered for a moment, then plunged down into what seemed a black abyss. He closed his eyes. Let her sink; he didn't care. Anything to end this awful misery.

But it wasn't fair. This was his first voyage, his first day out, and they had to hit a storm. A storm in this battered tub! Sheila Murray had put him aboard this ancient tramp with its strange crew and its strange officers. Sheila Murray—Neil! He had almost forgotten his brother. His brother!

Why, it wasn't so bad. He'd do anything for Neil. Yes, if he had it to do over, he'd ship again on the old tramp. To-morrow he'd get his sea legs. He'd work. He'd show them! He'd show them!

Presently he became aware that a hand was dragging at the door. In the gloom he saw Jorgenson, the Swede, descending the steps.

"Cook sent yuh this lemon," he announced in his slow, deep voice. "He wants t' know as how ye feel. He says, 'Ask that Joe Macaroni if he still thinks the sea is wonderful.'"

Tod rose on one elbow. His white face screwed into a smile. "Tell him," he answered slowly, "that I think it's great. It's wonderful. I wouldn't be back in Frisco for all the money in the world. You tell the bloomin' cook I'll be serving breakfast in the cabin to-morrow morning."

As Jorgenson let himself out, Tod heard the whine of wind in the rigging, and the beat of rain on deck. With a frantic movement he picked up the lemon and bit into its acid center.

POINT CONCEPTION lay astern and the Santa Barbara Islands on the starboard beam when, for the second time since leaving San Francisco, night overtook the freighter *Araby*.

Tod lay in his bunk, his tired eyes closed. Although the violent nausea of the day before had left him, he had not yet gained his sea legs. But he had gone doggedly through his second day's work. Eight bells had just rung; he was free now until ten o'clock, when he must take hot coffee and sandwiches to the officers in the cabin aft.

The forecastle was rank with tobacco smoke. Regardless of the clamor and fury of the wind without, the men in their watch below talked in fitful spasms from their tiers of bunks, or read paper-covered books by the dim light of the two electric bulbs fastened in the deck head. Directly below Tod, Red Mitchell, a small young coal passer of uncertain age and antecedents, who bunked in the firemen's forecastle, was conversing in low tones with Swede Jorgenson across the way.

"I tell you I don't like this ship," Red complained. "For one thing she's too old; she ain't safe. And for another, the Old Man's no good. Ain't I right, now?"

Swede Jorgenson nodded slowly.

"But it ain't only the skipper," went on the querulous voice of the visitor; "it's the whole cabin aft. 'Specially that bucko mate—that bully Hawkes. Ain't I right, now?"

Jorgenson grunted agreement.

"And the grub's no good, either. Gotter match, Swede? Yeh, what'll they give us to eat after we hit Panama? Wormy biscuits and maggots in the prunes. Oh I know. I've been on these tramps before, blast 'em."

"Yah—and the grub ain't the worst," commented Jorgenson. "She might sink—yah?"

"Sure she might. And burn, too. Yuh orta see the rotten dust in the bunkers they call coal. Just th' kind t' smoke 'n blow up."

"Do you think there's a Jonah on her?" Jorgenson whispered.

Red Mitchell lowered his voice. "Mebbe there is, and mebbe there ain't. I'm wondering, that's all. Now that cook—he's a funny one. What's he up to on this old tub? He ain't a real cook. Ain't I right, now?"

"Yah," Swede Jorgenson grunted, and sighed heavily.

Tod turned in his bunk, listening to the talk of the men above the muffled roar of the crashing seas without. Golly, what a night! He'd have to watch his step when he took coffee to the officers' saloon.

AT nine-thirty he slipped on his shoes and made his way to deck. The icy wind flung him down the alleyway to the galley door. Once within, the warmth soothed him. He stirred the fire in the range, put the coffee on to boil, and began cutting thin slices of bread and cheese.

Abruptly he became aware that voices were coming from the cook's cabin across the alleyway. Some deck hand, probably, conversing with the Tattooed Man. Then, in a lull in the wind, a name struck him into attention. The *Panama*.

He waited, athrob with hope. The voice was now unmistakable. It was that of the mate, Mr. Hawkes. Tod caught scattering words:

"The *Panama* put in . . . dumped the guy at Bordeaux. . . . What you got agin him, huh? . . . was a fool . . . had his chance same as you can have. . . . Now listen." The mate's voice was lost as the wind whined down the alleyway.

What did it mean? The *Panama* had put in at Bordeaux. Mr. Swickard had

(*Continued on page 32*)

The GREATEST BUICK EVER BUILT

WHEN BETTER AUTOMOBILES ARE BUILT ··· BUICK WILL BUILD THEM

The Tattooed Man

(*Continued from page 30*)

admitted that Neil had left at that port. "Dumped the guy at Bordeaux!" Were the two men discussing his brother? Why should the cook have anything against Neil? Did these two know the truth of what lay back of Neil's sudden departure from the ship? Tod smiled grimly. If they did, by golly, he, Tod Moran, would find out.

Tod could now hear only a sibilant murmur behind the door of the cook's cabin. He grasped the swinging handle of the coffee pot and felt his way through the stinging blackness to the cabin aft.

Across the green baize of the table the commander of the *Araby* faced the chief engineer. The Scotchman was dealing cards for a game of coon-can. "Well, lad," he greeted Tod, "I was just thinkin' I'd no' be sorry fur a hot gless." His pink face dropped into a frown as a plunge of the ship's bows sent the screw racing furiously beneath them.

Captain Ramsey nodded over his cards. "Thick weather to-night," he muttered. "Boy, you had better take a hot cup up to Mr. Burton on the bridge. He'll need it—and tell him that I'll be on the settee in the chart room to-night."

"Yes, sir," Tod answered.

He returned to the galley, refilled the coffee pot, and swung out of the door again, pot in hand.

Chapter Five

SUDDEN booming gusts of wind hummed down the alleyway to meet him. The ferocity of the gale sent him reeling against the boat-deck ladder. A sea crashed over amidships with a terrible bellowing roar. Tod clung to the ladder with the coffee pot swinging in his hand. This was no night to be washed overboard. Salt water swirled and hissed about him. It was in his eyes, his nose, his mouth. Masses of seafoam, cold and clammy, darted about his feet.

The ship rose gallantly on the waves, plunged on through the night. The slanting deck sent him lurching up two steps of the companion. There he paused.

The black figures of two men blocked his way.

"Who's that?" yelled a voice above the whine of the gale.

"The mess boy," Tod shrieked. "I'm taking coffee up to the bridge."

"Drat those officers," went on the voice. "I wish they'd—have to shovel coal—with me, down in the stokehold."

"Are you—a fireman?"

"Yep. Just came up the fiddley—to get a breath of fresh air."

"Phew! That was a bad comber," said another voice. "Ain't I right, now? A bad 'un—that was!"

Tod grasped the icy hand rail as a heavy sea rolled over the starboard bow and fell crashing into the waist. The *Araby* shuddered. The dull thunder of the seas was like the mighty booming of a drum. At the next lull in the wind, he went upward, past the stokers to the boat deck. There another companionway led up to the bridge.

At the top Tod paused, one numb hand gripping a rail stanchion for support, the other holding the coffee pot. Mr. Burton, the young third mate, stood in the lee of the weather cloth, swathed in an oilskin coat. "Java?" he queried. "That's thoughtful of the skipper. Thanks."

He stood with his black rubber boots planted wide apart, and gulped down the hot fluid. He nodded in friendly fashion as he returned the cup to Tod.

"Dirty weather," he remarked. "But it was worse than this—one passage I made on the *Panama*."

Tod's heart gave a sudden thump. He tried to keep the eagerness from his voice as he asked. "You were on the *Panama*, Mr. Burton?"

The third mate raised his voice above a sudden whistle of the wind. "Yes, a year ago. Better ship than this."

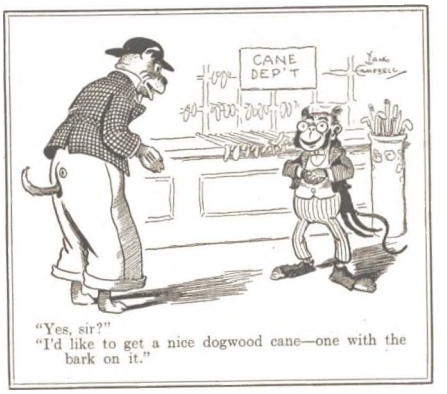
"Did you know the purser—Neil Moran?"

The third mate grasped the rail and walked up the slant to the shelter of the weather cloth. "Sure I knew him," he called. "Jolly chap, too."

Tod took a step after the young officer. "Do you know what became of him, Mr. Burton?" he cried. "He's—a—a friend of mine."

The kindly voice of the third mate came back clearly in a sudden lull. "No, you see I left the *Panama* about a year ago. I heard that Moran got into trouble. Don't know why, I'm sure. Ask Mr. Hawkes. He ought to know. He went out with her on the last trip."

Tod tried to quell the disappointment that leapt into his consciousness. Ask Mr. Hawkes. Make a friend of Mr. Hawkes. It sounded so simple, he reflected bitterly.



"Yes, sir?"
"I'd like to get a nice dogwood cane—one with the bark on it."

He turned and picked up his coffee pot. He paused an instant as he became aware that another wave had crashed into the waist of the ship. The steamer quivered under the impact of the blow. Then, above the furious clamor of the night, he heard a voice, small and distant, shouting.

Tod strained his eyes into the darkness. The third mate muttered at his elbow: "What's that? It can't be!"

Again came the cry. Tod started. His hands closed on the rail in a vise-like grip. High above the exultant scream of the gale a voice sang out the dreaded words:

"Man overboard!"

THE cry electrified the third mate into instant action. "Which side?" he shouted.

The lookout's answer came back on the wind. "Port."

"Hard a-starboard, quartermaster!" the third mate ordered. Already he had sprung to the engine room telegraph. The indicator curved to the word: *Stop.*

"Quartermaster, put the helm down hard. Boy, call the cap'n—quick!"

Tod, dropping the coffee pot, slid down the companion to the chart room. "Captain Ramsey! Captain Ramsey, man overboard!" He dragged at the door with all his weight, bracing himself against the wind that fought to keep it closed.

Slowly the door opened. Tod stumbled across the brass-shod storm step. "Cap'n—man overboard!"

The commander of the *Araby* rose sleepily from a couch and switched on the electric lights. "What's that? Overboard?" He swore under his breath.

He yawned, stretched, swayed slightly, and reached for his cap. "Rotten luck," he growled, "on a night like this." He glanced at a chronometer on the wall, and Tod saw that the hands pointed to eleven o'clock.

Abruptly the captain lifted his head. Tod became aware that the faint pulsating tremor of the ship's propeller had ceased.

Captain Ramsey jammed the cap over his eyes. "What's that young rascal Burton doing?" he snapped. "Is he stopping her?"

"He's bringing her about," Tod exclaimed. "Putting out a boat, I guess—"

"Manning a boat? Where'd he get the orders? I'm the cap'n of this ship, I'll let him know." A gust of wind whirled into the room as he opened the door.

Once more on the bridge, Tod hung over the rail. He could see the doors of the two forecastles open and the men streaming up on deck. Behind him Captain Ramsey was shouting at his third officer.

"Who was it, I ask you?"

"A fireman, sir. He was sitting on the ladder. A big sea—it got him. Red Mitchell gave the alarm. The bo'sun threw over two life buoys."

"Humph. A stoker. Who told you to stop the engines for a stoke-hole rat?"

The third mate's voice was hoarse with anger and amazement. "I didn't want the man cut by the propeller, sir."

"Oh, yuh didn't! Don't you know that the ship won't have steerageway? Telegraph slow ahead, Mr. Burton."

"Very good, sir." Reluctantly the third mate crossed to the engine room telegraph and swung up the indicator. Almost immediately Tod felt the regular rhythm of the ship's propeller.

He peered down from the height. His heart thumped madly. Out in that black sea a man was tossing, clinging perhaps to a life buoy, lost in the heaving fury of the waves. And he, Tod Moran, had spoken to him only shortly before there in the blackness of the bridge ladder. Now he was gone—being left behind, Tod shuddered.

The captain was shouting angrily at the third mate. "Oh, you ordered a boat got ready, did you?"

"Yes, Captain. The port whaleboat. But I told the bo'sun not to cast adrift until you came, sir."

Captain Ramsey laughed deep in his throat. "Well, I'll see that no more men are lost to-night." He spun about and descended the companion to the boat deck. Tod went carefully after him.

ON the boat deck in the pale gleam of a searchlight a little group of men stood by the port whaleboat which swung on its davits, cover off. Tod saw the thick form of the first mate standing against the inboard gunwale of the lifeboat.

"This is murder, Cap'n," Mr. Hawkes protested in a loud voice. "Ye can't keep no boat afloat in this sea."

"I know it, Mr. Hawkes. Put her back in the chocks, men."

"Yeh, that's better," whined Red Mitchell. "The Old Man ain't got no business to send me out to-night. I ain't no sailor; I'm a fireman. Ain't I right, now?"

"I ain't goin' out in no bloomin' boat, either," blurted out a Cockney voice. "Serves the blarsted fireman right—"

"Yeah, I told the blamed fool to hold tight—and he didn't. Sitting right below me he was—"

"Shut up!" snapped the boatswain.

They set about covering the boat and lashing it to its cradle. Tod, clinging to a ventilator, heard a low murmur of discontent from a group of firemen. Suddenly a tall figure loomed up beside him. It was the Tattooed Man.

"Cowards!" he said.

At his approach Captain Ramsey whirled. "What's that? The cook?"

"What're you doin' here, cooky?" laughed the first mate. "This ain't the galley."

The cook stepped forward into the full glare of the searchlight, and faced the officers of the *Araby*. Tod could hardly restrain a gasp of admiration. The man seemed to have dropped the vestments of a cook. With eyes glowing like burning coals, mouth drawn into a straight line, and fists clenched, he appeared every inch a seaman.

"Captain Ramsey," he said, "you've never asked me about my past, and I've

(*Continued on page 34*)

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The Tattooed Man

(*Continued from page 32*)

never told you. But I've not always been a cook." He paused and glanced round the little group of surprised seamen. "You say a boat can't live in this here sea. Gut me, if I don't say it can! I've cast adrift on Skagerrack in a worse sea than this. Let me take out the boat. I'll ask for volunteers. We'll save that man."

A murmur of approbation went round the circle.

But the mate cut it short. "What's got into him?" he growled to the captain. "Who does he think is captain on this here steamer!"

Captain Ramsey's lips twitched nervously. "I've said we'll not take the risk. Yes, I'm captain here."

"Look—the men are willing to go, sir," went on the Tattooed Man in his deep, quick voice. "I heard that fellow scream when he went overboard. If you had heard—Let me go, sir! The gale's falling off."

"You'd never find him." The captain was relenting. His eyes searched the dark seas that beat outside the circle of light. "We should have had a Holmes Light, Mr. Hawkes; then in this blackness we could make out his position."

"A Holmes Light on the *Araby*?" Mr. Hawkes chuckled in his beard. "Yes, this is a great ship all right—where no one obeys the skipper." He said the last phrase softly. "Why doesn't the cook go back to the galley—where he belongs!"

The wavering captain of the *Araby* bit his lips. Crimson crept up his cheeks. "Hawkes," he scowled, "you forget yourself. Perhaps the cook is also a—a man."

Tod stared. What had happened? Had the commander that lay submerged in the depths of that weak nature come to the surface? The boy wondered as he perceived Captain Ramsey draw his frail, lean body erect. The grey eyes glowed somberly in his pallid face; his voice grew deeper, fuller.

"Very well, Mr. Jarvis. The boat is yours."

The wind, whistling through the rigging, carried aft the reply of the Tattooed Man. "Volunteers!" he boomed. "Volunteers to go in the boat!"

The waiting men seemed to draw a long breath.

"Step forward, boys!" cried the boatswain. "Of course, we go."

Above the drumming of the seas came Swede Jorgenson's voice: "Yah, we go."

"Blimey, I'm goin' too!"

At once Tom Jarvis broke in. "I want the six best oarsmen here. You, Jorgenson! You, Toppy! Bo'sun, take your place in the stern."

Red Mitchell slipped back into the shadow. The cook's eyes passed over him as he chose his men. In a moment the six had taken their places on the thwarts of the lifeboat.

"Put on the life belts, lads!" called Jarvis. "Wait—we want someone to bail."

As his eyes swept the group, Tod sprang forward. "Let me!" he begged. "I can bail."

Jarvis nodded curtly. "Get in!"

WITH pounding heart Tod clambered over the gunwale into the swaying boat. Toppy pulled him down into a seat beside him. "Put this blarsted life belt on, kid," he said quickly. "And here's yer bucket. You got work ahead."

The whaleboat was swung out on its davits by the men on deck, till it hung clear of the side.

"Lower away together!"

Nelson stood at the ropes of the after fall, another seaman at the forward, both in readiness to cast adrift when the boat struck the water. Tod dropped on his knees to the rounding bottom, one hand clasping the gunwale.

The glow of the searchlight vanished above. The boat floated in a void. Night, mysterious and evil, encompassed them. Below, the boy heard the foaming waves leaping hungrily toward them out of the darkness.

In the stern the shadowy form of the Tattooed Man was barely visible. Abruptly his voice thundered out above the roar of wind and wave.

"Ready, lads. Let go the after fall! . . . Cast adrift!"

Water swished greedily about the sides of the boat. Tod saw the cook throw his weight against the long sweep oar in its crutch at the stern, and swing the stem of the boat out toward that wintry flood of wind and sea. The round lights of the *Araby* slowly forged ahead.

"Pull, lads! Pull!" sang out the voice of their leader.

Bucket in hand, Tod crouched in the bottom of the tossing boat. In front and behind him the men pulled strongly at their oars. The boat rose swiftly on a wave, then fell with sickening suddenness into the trough.

A great wave, mountain high, bore down upon them. Gallantly their fragile boat rose to meet it. As they lay poised above a hollow trough an icy spray descended upon them. Down the incline they plunged. Tod dipped his bucket in the slushing bilge and flung the water overside. The snowy foam swirled past. The water, perishingly cold, numbed his hands. His legs grew chilled and cramped. Salt brine stung his eyes into wakefulness. The men dragged at their oars in silent, steady movements. Their commander in the stern cheered them on with a voice like thunder.

Back in the wake of the ship went the lifeboat. The *Araby*, Tod saw, was a cluster of lights swinging round in a circle toward the point where the stoker had been lost overboard.

In a hollow depression of the towering waves Tom Jarvis yelled to the boatswain in the bow. "About there, bo'sun?"

"Almost, sir."

"Think the stoker—got a life buoy?"

"I'm sure—he did! I threw two—from the poop." His voice was lost in the hum of the gale.

The bitter wind stung Tod's face; the spume rattled like shot against his life belt. Still he grasped his bucket, bailing, bailing.

It seemed hours before he heard the boatswain's triumphant cry: "To port—to port! There he is!"

"Pull, lads, pull!" Jarvis flung his great weight against the steering oar. The boat careened perilously to the right.

Tod strained his eyes through the gloom. Down the slant flew the boat. Unexpectedly a white life ring grated alongside.

"God! It's empty!"

Nelson the Dane caught the ring and lifted it, dripping, inboard. It fell to the bottom with a deadening thud. The men made no sound.

The Tattooed Man flung out an arm. "Where's the other?" he boomed. "Bo'sun, look sharp. Pull, lads; we'll get him yet!"

Again the blades of the oars dipped rhythmically. Again the boat rose on the waves and fell, while the wind howled past them across that dark immensity of moving ocean. . . . No glimpse of the second life buoy.

Once the Tattooed Man sent a gull-like cry flying over the water; but no answer came out of the profound darkness.

A WAN moon suddenly slid from behind the scurrying clouds. Tod's heart leaped. The pale light revealed to port and incredibly near them the half submerged circle of the second life buoy.

"Pull, lads!" yelled Jarvis exultantly. "He's there!"

The boat quivered under the strain of the oars. The men were aflame with hope. Tod's hands gripped the gunwale. He hardly breathed as he watched that white circle draw near.

Clinging to it was a man. One arm was thrown over the ring; his head was swaying listlessly against a sodden shoulder.

The boatswain reached him first. Stretching forth an arm he pulled the ring toward the boat. He grasped the man below the arms. Jorgenson leaning over the gunwale, put a hand under the soggy knees, and together they lifted the inert, dripping body of the stoker into the boat. The wan light showed a face blue with cold and exhaustion. The eyes were half open, the teeth chattering.

"Wave your light, Bose," called Jarvis. "We must make the ship—quick!"

Swaying in the stern, the boatswain swung aloft his lantern in a wide arc against the sky. A moment later four short blasts of the ship's whistle came back on the wind. The *Araby* had seen.

Jorgenson, in his slow, placid way, was working over the stoker. Tod dropped the bucket and, taking hold of a limp hand, began rubbing it quickly. It was cold, clammy cold, as if all life had departed.

"We're too late! Too late!" wailed Toppy. "He's a goner."

"Shut up!" snapped Jarvis from the stern sheets. "Don't begin that—till we get aboard. Look out, boys! We're a-swinging round."

The little Cockney dragged at his oar. "Blimey!" he said in Tod's ear. "Ain't we the blarsted fools? We come out—in this whoopin' gale—to save this blighter!"

"But he's a man, isn't he?"

"Naw! He's a stokehole rat." Toppy spat viciously into the heaving, moonlit sea. "And that cook," he whispered as he leaned over his oar, "he's stark, starin' mad!"

Tod raised his eyes to the man in the stern. It was a Viking who stood there with his feet planted wide apart, his hands gripping the sweep, his head thrown back, and the wind whipping his closely cropped hair.

Yes, he was mad, thought Tod—mad like Lief the Lucky when he stood at the helm and sailed to the unknown West, mad like Magellan when he ordered spread canvas and navigated the perilous Straits. Courage, fearless, intrepid, steered the fragile boat that night.

And in the heart of a boy, a lubber reared on inland soil, it struck a warm responsive chord that came down to him, like an echo of a song, through the bitter, gallant ages. . . . Well, Tod Moran reflected, if this great Viking, this strange cook, were, as he feared, somehow his enemy, Neil's enemy—he was, at any rate, a foeman worth fighting.

(*To be continued in the September number of* THE AMERICAN BOY.)

Whistling Jimmy Goes to Bat

(*Continued from page 26*)

His mind was on the bigger side of the problem.

"You say you're doing this for Applegate, Mr. Hammond. Well, every fellow on the nine is playing for Applegate except one—Grant. He's playing for money. Don't you see the difference? If I stir myself and do a service for somebody I like, that's a fine action. But if I do the service and then come around and hold out my hand, it's another thing entirely. Grant is holding out his hand. If everything is open and above-board why was it necessary for him to change his name?"

"That's his business." The manufacturer's tone was curt.

"It's my business, too. I've got to be honest with myself. I can't stay on a team that has a player under cover."

"That means you're quitting us?"

"That depends. What about Grant?"

"Are you turning your back on Applegate?"

"No, sir. But I'm ready to turn my back on the team that isn't Applegate."

"Very well, Jim. It is easier to find a player of your speed than it is to find a player of Grant's." The train came rumbling in, and Mr. Hammond walked stiffly toward the line of coaches.

JIMMY, after one bleak moment of discouragement, squared his shoulders. It would be hard to sit with the crowd and watch some other player in his position—but it would have been harder still to have stayed with the nine, swallowed his convictions, and remained silent. He had once heard his brother say that you could have almost anything in the world for a price. Well, he wasn't ready to pay *that* price.

Thinking about Grant, Jimmy walked through the town. His original thought had carried him no further than the talk with Mr. Hammond. Now he saw that,

(*Continued from page 35*)

having started to fight, he would have to carry it through. He would have to carry it to Grant.

And so, when the noon whistles sounded, he was waiting outside the Hammond plant. Presently the men came out with their lunch boxes. He saw Grant select a seat on a pile of lumber. Jimmy, with a quick breath, walked toward him.

"Hello, Jim." Grant gave him a quick look of appraisal and made room for him. "Sit down. What's on your mind?"

Jimmy didn't take the seat. "You're Eskry, aren't you?"

The third baseman showed no surprise—and no embarrassment. "How did you find it out?"

"I keep newspaper clippings."

"Oh, yes." Grant grinned. "Kipps told me you followed all kinds of queer baseball trails." Jimmy blinked. Kipps! He remembered a low-toned conversation in the dressing room. That explained Grant's lack of surprise. "Yes, I'm Eskry. What about it?"

"You can't play on this team."

"No? Kipps said you'd probably take that view. Why not?"

"We made an agreement there was to be no hired talent."

"Was Mr. Hammond a party to that agreement?"

"Yes."

"That's queer. I can assure you I was hired. Why should I deny it? Why jump on me? I didn't know anything about the agreement. I received an offer and I accepted it."

"You knew your name, didn't you?"

Grant looked down at his lap and brushed away a crumb. "Most persons do, don't they?" he asked.

Jimmy found his unconcern maddening. Bluster, threats or violent language was to be expected. This callousness, this apparent indifference, was too much.

"How could you do it?" he blazed. "Let us pass what Applegate agreed to. You couldn't know that. But you knew you were a college man, and you know how colleges rate a man who turns pro, and you knew you were counted on. Yet you sneaked in here and took money for playing, and changed your name, and fixed things so that next spring you could—"

"Who says that?" the third baseman broke in. At last his serenity was gone.

"I say it," said Jimmy.

"Why, you fool—" Grant broke off and bit his lips. "You think I'd take sly money here and then turn out for college sport? You're crazy. You don't know me. I told the Athletic Council I was through with baseball. I told them I was going to try and get on a baseball pay roll this summer. I'm not hiding out."

"You're down in the box score as Grant."

"That's another story." The third baseman picked up a sandwich, but he forgot to bite into it. "Look here; I'll have to explain this to you or you'll be ready to hang me. I'm working my way through. Last year I tried to carry my studies, my jobs, and athletics. It was too much. Some men learn quickly; I have to wade and dig. I found I would have to drop something. I couldn't drop the jobs; so that meant that I had to drop baseball. I told them."

Jimmy found himself staring off into space and trilling an almost soundless whistle. Something of doubt was stirring in him. Grant's voice— He shook himself as though to throw off a spell. Perhaps Grant had belonged to the dramatic association. A good actor can do things with his voice.

"You expect anyone to believe that?" he demanded.

"Why not? It's the truth."

"Why didn't you come here as Eskry?"

Jimmy, still staring ahead, waited for an answer. It did not come. And, instead of experiencing a flare of triumph, he felt a stab of regret. He was suddenly aware that now he wanted to believe that this player was straight.

"That was a piece of foolishness," a voice came at last. Jimmy stole a look at Grant; the third baseman's face was flushed. "I've told you this much—I might as well tell the rest. Some of the fellows with money took me up at college—guess it must have gone to my head. I—oh, what's the use of beating about the bush! I didn't want it to get back to them that I was working in a factory."

RELIEF swept through Jimmy. Without knowing why, he realized that this *was* the truth. Grant had come to them with no conscious thought of wrong. Impulsively, he pushed aside the lunch box and took the place that Grant had made for him at his coming.

"I'm glad you told me. I thought you had sold out." A new thought dawned. He began to whistle again. "If it gets noised around that you're Eskry, how many persons will think as I did?"

Grant shook out his napkin, folded it, and put it away in the lunch box. "I see what you mean. They'd say 'There's Eskry trying to pull something crooked.' That would hit the college; give it a black eye." He whistled, and grinned ruefully. "There would be a question of how many others on the team had done the same thing, too. You know how a suspicion of that kind runs. That business of your agreement makes a difference, too. Wish I'd known about it—I'd have kept out of this scrape then. . . . It's too late to come out as Eskry, even if I could. They'd want to know why I came here as Grant, and then there would be more suspicions." He paused to scratch his head.

"I think I'll drop out. I'll keep the factory job, and Mr. Hammond can hold back the extra money he was to give me for baseball."

The factory whistle blew and the third baseman stepped down from the lumber. Jimmy held out his hand.

"You're all right," he said.

"I'm not so sure," Eskry said ruefully. "I'm beginning to think I acted like a lunatic."

Jimmy set off for home whistling, but before he had gone very far the notes began to pine away. While he had been fighting for the principles, he had been sustained by a clear knowledge of the ideals at stake; now that the fight was won he was conscious that he was tired, weary. Fate seemed to decree that he should always be fighting for something.

Eskry was off the team. Jimmy could picture what would follow. The defeats would pile up, and there would be a scramble to find a scapegoat.

"And I'll be the goat," Jimmy muttered. "They'll say I sank Applegate. They won't see anything but the lost games. Even Kipps."

He felt depressed as he thought of the center fielder. Kipps had played with him for Applegate High. Kipps should have understood. Kipps knew the code. If Kipps could not see things straight what could he expect from the others?

Five o'clock that afternoon found him blue and disgruntled. At that hour the nine would be gathering for practice. His infielder's glove was on the table in his room. He picked it up, stared at it, and put it away. At 6 o'clock there was a familiar call from the street. He looked out of the window. Kipps was waiting in front of the gate.

Jimmy went downstairs. "The practice didn't last long," he said. He had to say something.

Kipps was looking down and scruffling the ground with his shoe. "There wasn't any practice. Rufe came down, and we sat in the dressing room and talked."

Jimmy said nothing.

"Have you dropped out?" Kipps asked.

"Mr. Hammond ordered me out."

"He can't do that." Kipps' head came up. "He means all right—but there are some things he doesn't understand."

Jimmy could see what that meant. They knew that they were in a bad way without Eskry, but would be in a worse fix with the second baseman gone, too. They were not backing him up; they were simply trying to make the best of the situation. Game after game they would be thinking, "If it hadn't been for you, Jim Gaynor." He smiled bitterly.

"Why don't you say it, Kipps?"

"Say what?"

"That I wrecked the nine."

"Wrecked?" Kipps shook his head. "Gosh, Jim; don't rub it in. Eskry talked to us. We want you at second."

Jimmy was afraid to believe. "Yes, and when a couple of hot ones go through some fellow at third—"

"Let up on that," said Kipps. "Are you trying to make me feel worse than I've felt for the last half hour. How many times must I tell you that Rufe told us some things? Can't you understand? Suppose we do lose some games? They'll be clean games, won't they?"

"Well, I'll be—!" was all Jimmy said. And then he began to whistle.

Work Into the Army-Amateur Net

By Armstrong Perry

THE radio amateur who would like to serve his country and develop his skill as a radio operator at the same time is going to have a chance to become a part of the network of army radio stations.

For years, the United States Army has been developing a network of radio stations covering the entire country. Day and night these stations are handling the traffic, not only of the army, but other government departments.

Now the army and the American Radio Relay League have joined forces in order to train amateurs to help out, in this important service of communication.

A boy doesn't have to be a member of the League to get the job. National and local officials of the League will be glad to help train him for it whether he is a member or not. After a few months of practice, when he has acquired a good "fist" and speed in receiving code and the League's traffic manager says that his home station is ready for service, he may apply for appointment. Army signal officers and League officials will consider his application, and if everything is favorable they will designate his station as an "army--amateur radio station" for two years.

Now comes the thrill. Signal officers will teach the new amateur-employee of the government how to handle army correspondence and how to code and decode secret messages. Instead of being merely an amateur growing tired of his fun, he'll now be a link in a nation-wide intelligence system, rendering service to the United States.

The army-amateur appointment is not an enlistment nor will it obligate the operator for military service in time of war. If war comes, the army-amateur will have a special training that will be of high value to his country.

His peace time service will be no less valuable. In floods, earthquakes, fires, tornadoes and other disasters the operator in the army amateur net may save life and property though the operator may be many miles from the center of trouble.

Here is an opportunity that challenges the patriotism and ability of every radio amateur in the country.

Students Conquer Waste Land

THERE'S nothing like a vacation in the country, say these fellows from Broadway High School, Seattle, Washington. Last summer they went with their school principal, Linton P. Bennett, and their athletic coach, "Tony" Bell, into the waste lands of Snohomish County, Washington, to clear land. It was real training and not only the boys but the State of Washington benefited for there is now a great lettuce farm where once stumps and high brush held sway. Each boy received $40 a month, his board and bunk. Needless to say that after working hours there came football, baseball and swimming.

Farmers' Institute President

SPENCER COUNTY, Indiana, proud that it furnished a boyhood environment for Abraham Lincoln, is now boasting that it has the youngest head of a county farmers' institute in the United States. He is Oscar W. Boultinghouse, now serving his second term as institute president. He was first elected last year, when he was 19.

Oscar W. Boultinghouse.

Young Boultinghouse's unusual position has been won, the farmers of Spencer County say proudly, by his remarkable ability as a farmer. For years he has been an annual winner of corn-growing contests. His father is a successful farmer. Boultinghouse was graduated from the Rockport, Indiana, High School, and spent last winter taking short courses in agriculture at Purdue University.

Boultinghouse plans to own his own farm soon. "But it will never keep me too busy to take part in civic and community affairs," he declares.

Lumber Made of Stone

WHEN anybody on the rugged Indian reservation in Uintah County, Utah, wants to build himself a fence, or a shed, or a corral, he simply hitches up a

team, drives to a stone quarry and picks up a load of stone lumber!

By some queer freak of nature the rock strata along Willow Creek Canyon were so formed that long, slim pieces of stone as regular and smooth as though cut by a band saw out of wood are plentiful. There are several quarries, and in each quarry the "boards" are of the same width and thickness. In one quarry they will be two inches square; in another one inch thick and eight wide; and so on. Length is usually more than six feet. Many ranches near Nature's Lumber Yard use these stone slabs for corrals, small sheds and similar purposes.—*Robert C. Thorne.*

Pirates of the Desert

(Continued from page 13)

spring in huge soughing sucks.

And his heart was going down, down, down! That slope was like a house roof! One stumble and the Tuaregs had him! He would have to climb the horse very, very slowly and carefully; cross over two hundred yards to a gap, and then trust to luck to get through it. And meanwhile what would the Tuaregs be doing? They would not shoot, probably, for a live white man was worth a deal of ransom, and a priceless Arab horse was not to be risked. But men could climb these sands. And they would *be* there in that slope vertically, leaving the *meharis* on the gap to receive him.

Hopeless!

Well, there was still one gorgeous, daredevil chance left. He could ride through that gap between the main body of the Tuaregs and their two flankers to the south. Through the gates of danger it led, but they would aim high, to hit *him* instead of Hamdani. The *meharis* were half a mile out now and still galloping. There was a big gap between them and their flankers, enough to squeak through at top speed before they could close in on him.

Instantly Win took his decision. Better that than the risks of the Jebel Humar!

"Come on, Hamdani, you have had enough!" he chirped as he vaulted into the saddle. "*Arrahh!* (Go!)" he shouted.

Straight down the talus zipped Hamdani and out on the sands again. With the riders yelling and screaming curses, the whole line of *meharis* swerved fanwise to head him off. The two flankers belabored their camels around savagely. It was a race between both parties of Tuaregs, converging upon a point in the middle of that gap toward which Win was galloping with every ounce of speed in Hamdani. Bullets began to howl and hum about him. Win dropped the reins, and —"Two can play at that game!" he muttered grimly.

He whipped out the Winchester .405 from its saddle-scabbard, aimed at the nearest flanker, and pulled the trigger.

Bang! went the powerful rifle.

Down went the *mehari*, kicking, and his rider leapt from the saddle and began firing from the firm sands as fast as he could work the bolt. That was an Enfield rifle, the tearing sounds in the air told Win! He snapped down his own lever and knocked over the second flanker; then swerved over that way to gain more space from the shooting and yelling main body of Tuaregs.

And it gave him his freedom. Out along the base of the Jebel Humar he rode, now out of gun range again. He slowed Hamdani, who was laboring, his belly making ominous noises with all that fresh water. A few minutes more of this would founder him!

And then, as he headed south, Win began to consider what next. It looked rotten, without hope or promise now, whatever he did. Where to? Those *meharis* were following with inexorable relentlessness, and they would run him down with the finality of Fate. To try for El Gheel would simply bring this bloodthirsty mob down on the caravan again, just as Mr. Barritt had said, and all his efforts would have been in vain.

Win rode on, puzzling some way out. Rode on and on, nursing Hamdani along, waiting, waiting for an idea, an opportunity. He was in a vast area of sand mushrooms now. They were made of short trunks of *boue*, clayey soil, only needing rain to become fertile. The wind had scoured these hummocks round and piled atop of each a mushroom top of yellow sand, forever being blown off, forever renewed. They were smoky with yellow dust now in the incessant wind, little swirls and eddies popping up, now here, now there, like small explosions. A very small increase in the wind turned these areas into a thick fog of dust; a sandstorm made them a veritable hell.

Win hoped he would encounter no such storm! He had been through one once, when for eight days he did not see the sun and all about was a shrieking gale of pelting sand a mile high. But that small increase in the wind? He hoped it would come, for it would be his big opportunity. The wind rose and fell with capricious and unaccountable humor on the Sahara. One hour it would blow so that the tents could hardly be held up; the next, a flat calm.

A SMART slap that made Win reach hastily to adjust his topee chin strap came out of the west. The *gibli;* it was blowing again! Nothing much, but, more of it—

Win looked back. The Tuaregs had all abandoned his pursuit and their *meharis* were heading for the Jebel Humar. This was serious! They did not give up a priceless horse and untold ransom without a cause that meant life and death itself. But the *gibli*—whoever heard of its being dangerous! In fact it was just the increase he had been hoping for, enough to lose him comfortably in a cloud of dust so that he could elude the desert pirates and, steering by compass, get away to El Gheel.

But the *gibli*, the southwest wind, was blowing right now far beyond its usual force. The sand mushrooms were all giving forth smoke, and it was uniting into a thick fog filled with swirls and eddies. That fog was rising steadily. A shock of alarm went through Win as a great whirlpool of it enveloped him and he could see nothing at all. At the same instant the topee left his head and crashed back over his shoulder, hanging by its chin strap now choking about his neck. Bewilderment overwhelmed Win for an instant—and downright fright. The roaring wind, the stinging sand, the blinding dust, that topee half strangling him, and Hamdani going he knew not in what direction—and above all that dreaded thought—*sand storm*, a thing that might last eight hours or eight days, these all combined for panic!

For an instant only; then his soul arose with a manful shout to face it all. He had prayed for a sand storm, a nice, comfortable little one, in which he could lose the Tuaregs handily. Here was a real one. It was up to him to master it! He collected his wits with the force of a strong will. The compass, and quickly! Hamdani was following his instincts and heading into the wind, as every desert horse and camel will. That wind was from the southwest, and it would take him far off the course to El Gheel and out into dry immensities that had no end. That way lay death!

Hastily Win fumbled for the compass in his breeches pocket. Its shivering needle told him that Hamdani needed a firm rein pulling him constantly toward the south. That took the whole power of one hand. The other held the compass. Win realised with another electric shock that if he dropped it on the sands it meant the end of everything! His life hung on that delicate needle! He could see nothing in any direction now but enormous swirls and clouds of yellow dust. The sun was blotted out. His topee ballooned out and chafed like a wild thing. Eyes, nose, and mouth all smarted with stinging sand. It was just getting a little *too* much, all this together and for a moment he thought of putting back for the Jebel Humar where the Tuaregs had sought refuge.

But no! This was his chance; a stern one and a dangerous one, but it simply needed confidence and coolness to win out. El Gheel lay about fifteen miles to the south. Say, three hours of boring through this storm. Win decided on it with finality; pocketed his compass tem-

porarily to have a hand free to get organized, got the topee back on firmly with his chin pushed hard against its strap, muffled himself to his eyes with his bandana, seized the reins again, and set Hamdani on his course.

The rest was endurance; horse and man bowed before the shriek of the gale. Grimly they plodded on, on, on; that needle the sole thing in all this blind fury still having any sense of direction. . . .

And two hours later he suddenly came out of it, onto a vast region of bare pebbles with no sand at all. Here was only the strong wind, and beyond the grim, broiling immensity of the Sahara, with another huge sand cloud to the east. Win searched the horizon to the south and finally made out a curl of smoke. El Gheel! The caravan had reached that well in safety!

An hour later Jose and Mr. Barritt were greeting him with accents of wonder and not a little admiration. "Great Scott, Win!" cried out Mr. Barritt and pointing north to the clouds of dust a mile high that still obliterated all the horizon, "we sure thought that would be the finish of you! Jose and I have been talking it over. It—was rather a fine thing of you, all of it, you know, when you come to think it over." He spoke awkwardly, as a practical man will in trying to find unaccustomed words, but presently he came out vehemently with his idea: "But, by George, we decided that if you made it and came through all right, we were going to initiate you!" he barked. "Get into the tent with you!"

Jose grinned saturninely as he picketed Hamdani and then followed Win within their conical marabout tent.

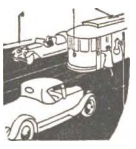
Its pole was greased slick with lard; but good to Win felt those hilarious bootings and punches wherewith they initiated him into that select band of the world's most intrepid souls known as The Explorers! For, through the Gates of Danger he had won his entry into it. He was no longer Winston Lamont, the capitalist's son, but Win, the regular fellow, who had matched wits with the Pirates of the Desert.

The Wise Driver

By Walter Kellogg Towers

THE wise automobile driver is known by the speed at which he travels. There is a wise and safe speed for every set of conditions. In many states a speed of 35 miles an hour is permitted on the open road, either by law or by custom; but the limit is far lower in towns and cities. What is a wise speed depends in part on the car. You can walk for several hours without tiring, but you can't run very long without wearing yourself out. So with a motor car. If you push it to its top speed for long stretches, it is overstrained even if it does not overheat. Big repair bills and a badly worn car follow. Travel at about half of the maximum speed of your car and you will not be overstraining it; "step on it" habitually and you will be.

Such a speed is usually the most economical speed in gasoline and oil consumption. Cars driven at top speed or at slow speeds usually show fewer miles to the gallon.



Hold to whatever pace is the wise one as steadily as possible. Jamming the accelerator down to the floor board for the quick spurt ahead wastes gasoline and puts an unnecessary strain on the car. Sudden stops are even more wasteful. One quick stop may take more off your tires than a thousand miles of driving, and it also strains the mechanism and wastes gasoline. If you know that you are to stop, take your foot off the accelerator and coast easily up to your stopping point. The show-off who dashes madly ahead in quick spurts and stops suddenly with much screeching of brakes is never respected as a good driver. The driver who covers the most miles in a day safely and surely is the one who maintains a sane but steady grind.

Watch for the Worst!

BE a pessimist in driving—always expect the worst to happen. Expect another car to come shooting around that blind corner and be prepared for an instant stop. When you come to a curve that you cannot see around expect the car coming in the other direction to be driven by the kind of fellow who doesn't stay on his own side of the road on turns. There is a great temptation to show off and pass the other fellow on the hill if you can, but if you are nearing the top and cannot see what is coming from the other direction, do not attempt it. Never try to pass a car anywhere unless you can see around it and know that you have plenty of room.

"It is better to go into second than to be gone in a second," is a saying worth remembering. Do not be ashamed to shift gears. The skilled professional driver shifts into second going up a steep hill because he knows he can climb it faster and more safely. He shifts into first or second at dangerous or blind rail crossings. He shifts into second going down hill so that the resistance of the motor will help the brakes in keeping the car under control. Where there are two tracks at the crossing and a train has just passed on one track, or is standing just beyond the crossing, he is ready to stop to miss another train shooting from the opposite direction.

Expect the worst not only from the other driver but also from persons on foot. Expect the man on the curb to step off it just as you come up to him. If a small boy is hanging from a wagon expect him to fall in front of you just as you try to pass, and be prepared for it. In particular, expect *anything* from small children on roller skates and bicycles.

Why So Many Accidents?

SEVENTEEN thousand persons are killed every year *because someone took a chance*. Nearly three quarters of all the people killed in automobile accidents are persons on foot who are knocked down by motor cars. Look out for the other fellow, and remember that 25 miles an hour may not sound like much, but that at that speed you travel 36 feet in a second.

If you keep always the rule that you must be prepared for the worst and ready to stop within the space you can see ahead you know how to conduct yourself in night driving.

You have no use for the boy who is a poor sport in football or baseball. He is the fellow who won't follow the rules. He wants to be spectacular, do things his own way and pay no attention to team play. You dislike him and know that he is a poor player. Apply the same principles to motoring. The wise driver follows the rules of safety not only because he is wise, but also because he is a good sportsman and considers the other fellow.

On heavily traveled roads, just wide enough for cars to pass and with a steady stream in each direction, one slow motorist holds up hundreds who are going some place. Under such circumstances you owe it to the people behind to travel at the usual pace. Don't loaf and tempt the fellow behind to cut around you and cause an accident.

For the Boys to Make

A water scooter is great fun.

By A. Neely Hall

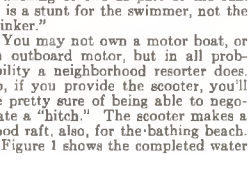
Author of "Boy Craftsman," "Homemade Games," etc.

Build a Water Scooter

KEEPING your balance on this new type of surf board, while speeding over water in the wake of a power boat, has more thrills than bareback riding. Acquiring skill is a matter of practice, with a ducking or two as part of the fun. It is a stunt for the swimmer, not the "sinker."

You may not own a motor boat, or an outboard motor, but in all probability a neighborhood resorter does. So, if you provide the scooter, you'll be pretty sure of being able to negotiate a "hitch." The scooter makes a good raft, also, for the bathing beach.

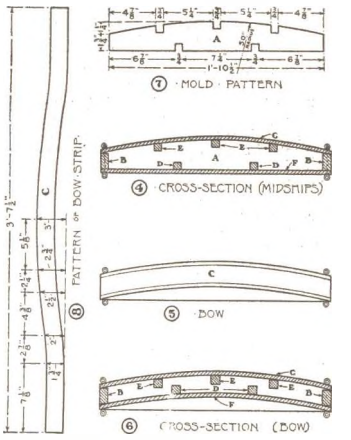
Figure 1 shows the completed water scooter, with reins and tow rope attached, Fig. 2 shows the completed framework, with the bottom sheathing nailed on, Fig. 3 a plan of the framework, and Figs. 4 to 8 details of the construction.



The completed water scooter.

The framework must be strong and light in weight. Soft pine free from defects, such as knots and cracks, is good material to use. Molds A and bow strip C require 4-inch boards ⅞-inch thick, side strips B 1-by-2-inch strips, ribs D and E 1-by-1-inch strips, and the hull and deck sheathing (F and G) ¾-inch boards.

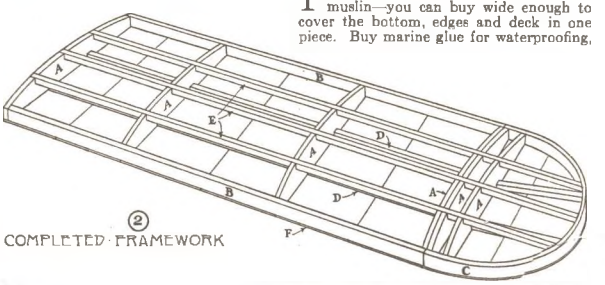
For assembling the framework, buy galvanized or cement-coated 6-penny nails for the framework and 4-penny nails for the sheathing. Get a paper of tacks for holding the cloth covering, and four 3-inch ring bolts to set in the framework for the reins and tow rope. Doubled clothesline will serve well enough for rope.

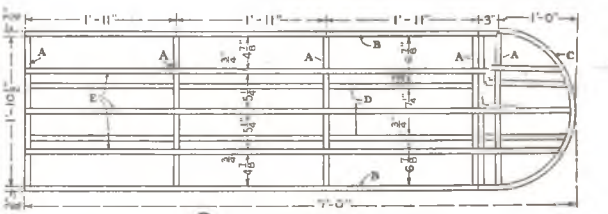


Cross section details showing construction.

Start on the Molds

THE skin—a heavy grade of unbleached muslin—you can buy wide enough to cover the bottom, edges and deck in one piece. Buy marine glue for waterproofing,





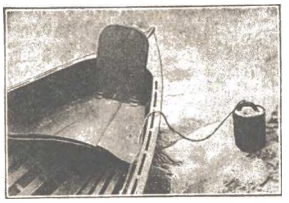
This is the way to make the framework.

oil paint for two body coats, and automobile enamel for a finishing coat.

The molds (A) are the first portion of the framework to prepare. You need six of them, as you will see by Figs. 2 and 3. Lay them out by the pattern of Fig. 7, using a 50-inch radius for describing the arc for the upper edge. A stick with two nails driven through it 50 inches apart, one for a center, the other to scratch the arc with, is a good compass.

Cut side strips B out of straight pieces of 1-by-2 according to the length in Fig. 3. Bow strip C is curved two ways, from side to side by bending, and up and down by cutting, so must be cut out of wider stuff than the side strips B. In laying out strip C, locate points corresponding to those located by dimensions on Fig. 8, then draw a curve through them as shown. The ends of the piece must be alike, and the way to make them so is to draw one-half of the length, make a tracing of this half upon paper, reverse the paper, and transfer the outline upon the other side of the center line.

With molds A, side strips B and bow strip C cut, nail strips B to the ends of



Showing the anchor and lazy back in use.

four of the molds A, spacing the molds as in Fig. 3. Then bend the bow strip into an arc having a 12-inch radius, fasten the ends to the fifth and sixth molds, and screw or nail the fifth mold to the fourth mold (Figs. 2 and 3).

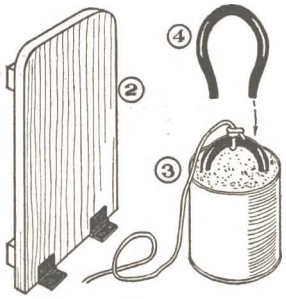
Trim Ribs to Fit

CUT horizontal ribs D and E of the right lengths to reach from the stern mold to the bow strip. Ribs D fit the notches in the molds, and are bent up at the bow to meet the lower edge of the bow strip. Ribs E run straight from the stern mold to the bow piece. Trim off the ends of the rib strips to fit against the curved bow strip. You will see by the front view of the bow (Fig. 5) and the cross section (Fig. 6) how the under side of the hull curves.

With the framework nailed together, sheath the hull bottom and deck with boards ⅜-inch thick, or with cellotex or one of the other forms of insulation lumber (Figs. 4 and 6).

The waterproofing must be put on next. Full directions for applying the glue and muslin accompany marine glue, so suffice it to say that the method consists in coating the wooden surfaces with the hot glue, allowing this to cool, then spreading the cloth over the surfaces and applying a hot iron. The heat sweats or melts the glue, and draws it up into the pores of the cloth.

When the waterproofing has hardened, paint and enamel the surfaces.



Working drawings for the anchor and lazy back.

After finishing, set the ring bolts for the reins and tow rope, placing those for the tow rope rings 24 inches from the bow, and those for the rein rings 4 inches back of them. Bore holes down into strips B of the framework for the ring bolts.

A Boat Anchor

THE anchor shown in the photograph is made of materials easily obtained. Once having tried it, you will say it is a dandy.

You will see by the detail drawings of Figs. 3 and 4 that it is made of a large tin can (a No. 10-size is about right), a horseshoe and concrete. As little concrete is required, you can probably get what you need from a mason's batch. Often enough left over at the close of a working day can be had for the asking.

Fill the can half full of concrete, then set the ends of the horseshoe in it, center the shoe, and fill in concrete to the brim of the can. When the concrete has set, tie a boat's painter to the horseshoe.

A Lazy Back

THIS homemade attachment was devised by a fisherman, and its restfulness will be appreciated by devotees of the sport. The back only requires a piece of 10-inch or 12-inch board 16 inches long, and a pair of hinges, but it is a good plan to batten the board with a pair of strips as indicated in Fig. 2 to keep it from warping. Fasten the battens with screws. Round the upper corners of the board, and sandpaper all edges to remove splinters. Finish to match the seat it is to be fastened to. Hinge the lazy back far enough from the stern of the boat so it will have a slightly reclining position.

Use this ballot (or make one to avoid cutting your magazine) to tell us what kind of reading you like best. It will help to bring you more of the same.

My "Best Reading" Ballot

"Best Reading" Editor, THE AMERICAN BOY,
550 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Michigan. Date.....

I like best the following short stories, serials and articles in the August AMERICAN BOY:

1..... 3.....

2..... 4.....

I'd like more stories and articles about.....

.....

Remarks .....

.....

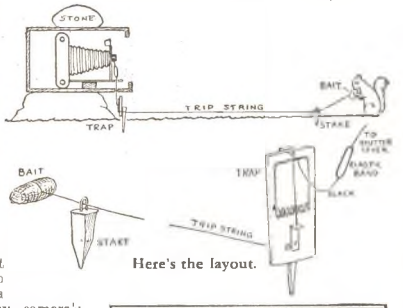
Name..... Age.....

Address .....

MAIL YOUR BALLOT TO-DAY

Wild Life Photos With a Mouse Trap

He took the bait.



Here's the layout.

Mr. Squirrel snaps himself.

Set your camera for a nest.

AFTER I had spent most of an afternoon trying to tiptoe close enough to a squirrel to locate him in my camera's finder—and had failed to get near enough even to see the whites of his eyes—I decided to build a regular wild-life photo machine. I thought a while, got a rubber band, a mouse trap and some string—and before long I had dozens of top-notch animal pictures.

The mouse trap was the kind with a sensitive catch or trip, a stiff spring and a heavy wire intended to catch Mr. Mouse behind the ears. I used it as the diagram shows.

Put the bait—corn, fruit, meat, almost anything a bird or small animal will eat—on the ground, with the string fastened to it and running through an eyelet in a stake shoved into the ground. Run the string along the ground, concealed as well as possible, and attach its other end to the mouse trap trip through a hole in the trap's base. First you've mounted the trap on a stake to hold it firmly in the ground.

Now tie a short string, with a rubber band making a link in its center, to the heavy wire of the trap at one end, and to the camera trigger at the other. The trap will be just below the camera; the connecting string will be long enough so that, when the trap is set, it will hang slightly slack. Set the trap; conceal the camera well with twigs, a box or an old coat; and you're ready for business.

I used to set my camera in a likely spot, bait it and then go for a long walk. Almost always the bait would be gone and the shutter snapped when I returned. It might be squirrel, owl, raccoon, skunk, blue jay, rabbit—almost any kind of little wild animal. And usually the pictures are excellent—although some failures are always recorded. Once a cow wandered into the camera's eye, and I got an excellent picture of cloven hoof; another time it was a box turtle.

But the percentage of success will be high, and the trip-trap is easy to make. Why not try it?—*C. B. Sanford.*

The Blow Down (*Continued from page 14*)

the day before and the one before him now. The young clown was evidently strung tight—almost to the breaking point. Apparently to-day was a sort of climax, for Alex Ray, to weeks of worry and dread. What did this little Texas town hold for the clown to fear?

"It's sure going to be hot," drawled Rann, by way of changing the subject.

Alex nodded. Already it was uncomfortably warm—what would it be under the canvas in the middle of the afternoon?

It seemed to affect the men, too. Ordinarily, under the lash of the bosses' tongues and the inspiration of their example, the whole outfit was worked up into a perfect frenzy of activity within ten minutes. Now there was something slothful in the atmosphere. The men moved languidly, and the bosses' rapid-fire chatter could not make them pep up. There was no life in it. Horse shouted louder, picked men out by name, rushed from gang to gang.

Rann and Alex followed him silently.

Then, suddenly, Horse let out a bellow, and started at a half-run across the lot. For the fourth time he was after the stake driving gang—eight big fellows who drove some of the larger stakes by hand.

On ordinary days they were marvels to watch. Stripped to the waist, with their gorilla-like muscles coiling and writhing below the skin, the eight swung their sledge hammers in perfect rhythm, beating a tattoo on the top of the stake—and it went down three feet in ten seconds. The thudding blows were literally like the roll of a drum.

"Heat's got 'em, I guess," remarked Rann, his tanned face serious as they followed Horse.

IN his heart he felt that the heat was not all. It was days of heat, plus a certain lawless spirit that had seemed to permeate the outfit for the past few days. The feeling was a psychological phenomenon such as may overtake any organization once in a while, and make of it a disorganization for the time being. Probably the firing of Robinson the day before had helped. He'd been a good worker when himself, and had been well liked.

"What's the matter with you?" roared O'Donnell as he made for the stake drivers. "That stake's been there a minute, you, you big cheese, have just been tappin' at it to get it set and not a one of you other loafin' lumps of mud are raisin' a sledge!"

"Aw, whatddaye want us t' do, yuh big stiff?" rumbled Big Bill, a Goliath of a man who was leader of the gang.

He didn't exactly intend that Horse should hear him—but Horse did.

"What did you say? What did you say?" bellowed the boss canvasman.

Indistinguishable murmurs from the gang, and in a second Horse was in the middle of them, throwing them right and left.

"What did you say, Bill?" he demanded.

Bill straightened and wiped his sweating forehead. His red-tinged eyeballs looked ugly. Then:

"Nothin'!" he spat, with a leer that was in itself a defiant challenge.

"You're a liar. Any talkin' you do around this show can be done to me! Understand? Now, out with it! Spit it out!"

That was Horse all over—not a man, from manager to newest helper, ever got by with a thing on him. When he was boss in name, he was boss in fact.

"I told yuh I didn't say anything!" snapped Big Bill, and that second Horse's ham-like fist smacked home to the jaw and the giant stake driver went down.

Up he came like a rubber ball, and plunged in, white teeth flashing across his distorted face. Horse ducked, downed him with a full arm swing to his throat, and then, as Bill started to his feet, Horse dropped him another time with staggering blows to jaw and head.

Dazed and swaying, Bill tried to get up again. He got as far as one knee, and again Horse O'Donnell sent him down. And he stayed.

Horse whirled around, his back to the other seven seemingly paralyzed stake drivers, and his mighty shout resounded across the field:

"Send every canvasman on the lot over here!"

As Horse turned back, Alex Ray leaped forward. Rann, surprised, remembered that he had been vaguely aware of the fact that Ray had been mumbling something as he had watched.

"I just want to say one thing to you, O'Donnell," Alex was saying, his voice low, but utter fury in every word. "That's the most brutal exhibition of bullying I've ever seen! You had him licked from the start, and yet you kept on punishing him! You ought to be in jail!"

The young clown was quivering as he stood there, eyes blazing into O'Donnell's. Rann, his heart sinking, took a step nearer. His muscles tensed to spring between them as he saw Horse's great fist clench and the flame in his eyes glow brighter—

Suddenly his hand shot out, and ripped Alex's hat from his head.

"Look me in the eye like a man!" barked the boss canvasman as his crew came loping across the lot toward the scene of the battle. "Now what did you say, mister kinker?"

"That you're an overgrown bully who's got no right to take advantage of a poor geezer who has to work for you, by hammering him senseless after you've got him licked!"

O'Donnell's face went white below the deep tan, and his gigantic body began to tremble. His head came down between his shoulders, and slowly his arm came back. At the second that Rann, sick at heart, was about to leap in, Alex scornfully thrust out his jaw.

"Go ahead!" he said in clipped phrases. "Do your stuff. Outweigh me seventy pounds, but anxious to add another scalp to your belt. Lick any lightweight living—the lighter, the better—that's your speed!"

The utter contempt in his words seemed to freeze O'Donnell. He stood motionless, while nearly a hundred men watched and wondered what the two were about. Nothing could be heard, but their attitudes—

A SECOND of tense silence, and Rann stepped forward.

"Listen. Alex, pipe down a bit," he drawled. "And you too, Horse. Neither

one of you knows what you're doing—"

"Who asked you in here?" demanded O'Donnell savagely.

"Nobody—but anyway, Horse, not before these men—"

"Get off the lot, you chicken-livered, baby-faced kinker, and don't you ever come on it again while I'm in charge or I'll kick you all the way off! Understand?"

Alex took that quietly, but suddenly it seemed as though something had gone from him. His taut body seemed to slump, and his eyelids to droop wearily.

Horse whirled around—a gargantuan figure of a man dominating every laborer in the crowd before him. He walked over to the prostrate Bill and, pointing down at him, faced the crowd:

"For the last couple o' days you've all been layin' down. More than that, your mouths've been movin' a lot on the sly. Bill talked out of turn. Here he is. Any other man here that wants it can get the same. Anyone got any ideas of their own about who's boss around here? Speak up!

"All right. Go back to work, and work like you never did before. If you don't like this show or any boss in it, get your time and hotfoot it out of here. But if you want to hold your job, get to work! Now blow! Beat it! Shake it up, everybody! All right, Woody—right in here with that 62 wagon! Get out of here, Blue! Shake it up a little now!"

In a moment the lot was a scene of frenzied activity. Canvas sections were being laced to the big bail rings, the stake driver was whining and thudding away, and two teams and two elephants who were to haul on the center pole pulley ropes to raise the big top were in place, and all of a sudden the old spirit was in evidence below the red hot morning sun.

Horse turned toward Bill, just as that battered giant weakly arose.

"Well, Bill, had enough?"

Bill nodded limply.

"Going to keep your mouth buttoned up tight?"

Bill nodded again with, surprisingly enough, the flicker of a sheepish grin.

"All right, get to work!"

Then Horse turned to Rann and Alex.

"You two little boys run along," he told them. "I don't want anybody sick around the canvas, and some of the dear canvasmen might get hurt a little, and bleed, or something!"

And he was off to see that the teams and elephants were all ready to go.

"Don't mind him, Alex," drawled Rann. "He'll get over it."

And yet, deep in his heart, there was a curious sinking feeling. Somehow Horse had got the idea that both of them were despising him for what he had done. And whenever the big Irishman, as sentimental as a woman and as sensitive as Alex himself, got to thinking that way it took a long time to persuade him differently.

So it was an entirely unhappy Rann who wiped the perspiration from his face and said slowly:

"Alex, I think you made a mistake, butting in here a minute ago, but I sort of admire you for it, at that. And I know you're on edge—have been for a week or so. Listen to me. It's none of my business, maybe, what's bothering you—but if you want to shoot it, tell me and you know dog-gone well I'm with you and I'll do what I can."

Alex's lean, fine-featured face was a study. He was looking at the ground, his fingers clenching and then opening nervously.

"I—I'd rather not," he whispered. "It's—well, I'd rather not, that's all."

"Suit yourself. If there's anything I can do, holler, that's all."

The day dragged along miserably. Rann had never been so hot in his life. The matinee crowd was very poor, due to the heat, and the Ford act was torture to do with sweaty hands and wet bodies and the wet-blanket of a small, apathetic crowd.

AFTER the act, Rann joined Alex, and they went out together to spread a blanket in the shade of some mesquite. Suddenly Rann became aware of low-hanging, ugly clouds in the east.

"A thunderstorm, maybe—it'll cool things off," he remarked.

Alex looked up.

"That looks bad—in Texas," he answered absently. "This whole day and that red sun have meant something. I suppose they'll guy out the big top as usual."

"Yes," said Rann in surprise, looking backward. "There's Horse yelling to 'em to put the storm ropes on!"

"He must know Texas weather," said Alex feverishly, his eyes darting from Horse to the sky and back again. "He's a great boss canvasman, but—"

"You get along with him like that tiger Cora would in a cage with Kaiser," drawled Rann, and the old depression settled down on him.

He was in a difficult position. While his relationships with Horse and Alex were entirely different, each of the two was, in his way, a real friend of Rann's. And each, he knew, resented his intimacy with the other. This feeling was poisoning his friendship with both of them, and at that moment it seemed to Rann that it would not be long before he would lose both of them.

He awakened two hours later with that same queer sinking sensation—as though disaster were just ahead. And Alex, who hadn't slept at all, was as nervous as a witch. So much so that Rann stayed in the men's dressing room with him, although Rann himself did not have to get dressed until nine-thirty.

It was terrifically hot, and ominously still. The sky was piled with dark clouds, and the experienced circus men were worried and ill-at-ease. The show was being run off in jig time, each act cut almost in half. O'Donnell and his bosses roved from tent to tent and pole to pole, watching, waiting, scanning the sky—aching for the show to end so they could get the big top down before the storm came.

Rann stayed in the dressing room during the intervals when Alex was changing his costume, and then while Alex was working, spent most of his time in the back yard watching and worrying about the coming storm. Probably just a thunder shower, but even that meant a muddy lot of gumbo mud, soaked canvas to take down and pack, and hours and hours of extra work.

It was nine-fifteen, and the clown band was coming out of the back door of the big top, having finished their burlesque concert. Rann strolled into the dressing room as they came in one by one, and waited by Alex's trunk. The other clowns, perspiring profusely beneath their chalk-white makeup, scattered to their trunks. Where was Alex?

Then he came in, shoulders drooping and face like a tragic mask. He came to his trunk as though in a trance. Rann's heart tightened—suddenly he felt as though the vague thing which had been weighing on his own spirit had swooped down and engulfed them both.

Without stopping to think of what he was going to do or say, he faced the slim young clown and said in low tones:

"What is it, Alex? You might as well tell me. Something's up—"

"They've got me," whispered Alex, and dropped limply to his stool.

"For what?"

"Assault with intent to kill!"

Rann's eyes grew very grave. There was an instant of silence between them, and the conversation of the other clowns seemed far away.

Suddenly Alex got to his feet, and a living flame seemed to be dancing in his eyes. His shoulders were back, his head erect, his lips twisted into a mirthless smile.

"I knew it would come—and now I'm glad of it. I'll fight it and win it in spite of Drew and his whole mob! And my mind'll be free—"

There were voices outside, and the next minute a little bald-headed old man and two policemen had burst into the tent. Every kinker stopped talking, and stared his amazement.

"There he is!" shrilled the dried-up little old man, and pointed to Alex.

Before the policemen could start for him, Alex barked to Rann:

"Come on with me—outside."

They walked down the lane between the trunks to meet the police, and Alex said:

"Let's go out and talk it over. I'd like to finish the show before you take me away."

He walked past them out into the back yard, and they followed as though too sur-

(Continued from page 43)

prised for words. Rann brought up the rear.

Outside there were drops of rain—great, isolated drops that fell heavily. From far away, it seemed, there was the low moan of the rising wind.

"You're here to get me for shooting your son, Mr. Drew?" inquired Alex, talking loudly to be heard above the blare of the band and the growing roar of the wind.

THE old man nodded, and it seemed that he was gloating over his victim.

"Rann, and you policemen, too—I just want to explain things a little before I go. Mr. Drew's son was as tough a young fellow as Texas has seen for a long time—the spoiled son of a wealthy and powerful man. I ran against him when I was playing here. He was drunk, there was an argument, he tried to pull his gun. I got him, and in the fight the gun went off and wounded him."

"Probably crippled him for life!" shrilled the little old man.

Alex winced, but went on doggedly: "I couldn't fight his father at that time. I wouldn't have had a chance. He rules the roost in this county. If I'd been to blame I'd have taken my medicine. But I wasn't to blame. So I skipped and joined this circus. I've saved my money, and now, by the mighty, I can fight the thing out. I didn't have to play here and get caught, but I figured if I did play and didn't get caught, my mind would be freer because I'd know the chase wasn't on and I in constant danger. If I did get caught, I'd fight it, and get the poison of fear out of my system!"

He was shouting, now. They ran for shelter into the big top, and the wind was whipping the side walls into ribbons as they entered. The center poles were swaying, the quarter poles likewise, and the beat of the rain on the canvas was like thunder.

The trained horses were on—twelve to a ring, and their trainers worked them as though there was nothing unusual about to happen. The showmen scurried around from pole to pole, talking to each other in short, frightened sentences.

Then, as though some giant of the upper air had released all his power, the wind rose to cyclone strength, in the full, roaring fury of such a storm as few men see in a lifetime. The big top bellied up, and suddenly a quarter pole fell with a crash, ripped from its ropes.

The next second the band stopped, and Horse O'Donnell's voice through a megaphone sounded clearly above the storm as the horses were rushed out into the blinding rain and wind.

"Everybody out—slowly!" roared O'Donnell. "Don't crowd!"

"Come on, Rann!" yelled Alex, and without a word to the two policemen they ran for the seats. If a blow-down threatens with a crowd in the tent, every showman must help. The ushers and performers and ticket men were down in front of the seats, pleading, advising, warning as the storm drowned their voices and the people rose to go out.

The center poles were swaying—as though they were about to fall at any moment. Then, with a report as though a dozen pistols had been shot at once, a whole section of the side wall blew in, and the terrific wind rushed through the opening and fairly lifted the entire big top from its moorings. The canvas was ripping from the bail rings, quarter poles were swinging clear of the ground—mechanical clubs threatening death to anyone who came within range of them.

Rann and Alex were side by side, shouting reassurances to the people. The crowd, terror stricken, was rolling down off the plank seats in a wave that was sweeping the weaker ones off their feet. Shrieks, shouts, screams; and undertoning all, the roar of the storm!

At any second the whole top would go, and sheer panic had those eight thousand people in its grip. Rann, begging them to take it slowly, fought and tore his way through the crowd, rescuing people from the ground, forcefully restraining those who were trying to plunge through too fast.

All over the tent the showmen were wrestling with the crowd. Suddenly a great hole was ripped in the top, and rain came pouring through. The canvas was tearing, practically every quarter pole swinging clear of the ground, and men and women were struggling madly and crying for help. Rann, his eyes like living flames and his marvelously developed muscles strained to the breaking point, fought that crowd and tried to force them to act calmly. He took his position next to Alex in the center of the track, even with the fourth center pole, and together they tried to stem the torrent of humanity.

He could hear O'Donnell's voice begging and pleading as the giant boss canvasman did the work of a regiment in handling the mob. Rann plunged through the crowd, reached down and dragged a woman upright—in another moment, she would have been trampled to death.

As he gripped a man who was knocking people down right and left in his wild charge to get out, there came a sudden access of noise. The storm seemed to have gathered itself for a final effort—and as the gale rose to a shrieking tornado and the rain became a cloudburst the entire big top was lifted bodily, torn loose from the center poles, and with quarter poles dangling whipped off to one side. Men and women were knocked down by the poles—

"Watch out for the center pole!" roared Rann through cupped hands.

THE crowd scattered now—the seats had been blown down and the people had been left out in the open. They scattered like rabbits through the night as cables and rigging fell and the fourth center pole seemed poised to fall. Fifty feet high, weighing six hundred pounds, the pole would crush anything in its path.

Everyone was out of its way! No—

"Somebody's under it!" yelled Alex, and leaped forward. Rann was just behind him. A man was lying on the ground beneath the pole, directly in line with it—old man Drew!

"Drew!" yelled Alex over his shoulder. The pole was starting to fall now. It was leaning slowly forward, balancing there for a second—

Alex leaped forward. In one mighty bound he'd covered the distance. The pole was starting its real rush downward as he was stooped over the bald-headed, wispy-bearded old man. Alex lifted him, and tried to get to one side. He hurled Drew, who had evidently been knocked unconscious in the panic, out of the way—but the crashing pole struck the clown a glancing blow on the shoulder. Rann was just in time to jerk him back as he fell.

"It broke my shoulder, I guess," muttered Alex, and beads of perspiration from the pain were standing on his forehead.

The storm was abating. Though one of the worst storms in the history of that section, it had wreaked its vengeance chiefly upon inanimate objects—human beings, thanks largely to the cool-headed, unceasing efforts of the showmen, had been, for the most part, almost unbelievably fortunate in escaping serious injury.

A few, however, needed immediate help, and within a few minutes the town's two ambulances were at the lot. One man accused of "assault, with intent to kill," and his chief accuser, occupied the first of them, guarded by two policemen.

That night will never be forgotten by Rann. The entire show—performers, ticket men, canvasmen, managers and bosses—worked until daybreak. The show next day would have to be given in the open air, surrounded merely by a side wall, until the big top could be repaired by the sailmaker and volunteer assistants. Collecting all the complicated equipment of the show, finding it wherever it had fallen or blown, and loading and dragging it off the lot was a six-hour nightmare. And to Rann it was long-drawn-out torture, for he was thinking constantly of Alex—Alex who had risked his life to save the vindictive enemy who was bent on destroying him.

Daybreak, and the two elephants were helping twenty-four horses get the last wagon off the lot. Old Mr. Ironley, veteran of forty-six years of show business, adjustor and part owner of the Selfridge Show, came toward Rann, who was so tired he could scarcely stand. Horse O'Donnell was with him, and Jack Farrell, the manager.

"What about Alex Ray?" asked Iron-

ley leaning on his cane. "Anything we can do—bail him out or something? He's in jail, isn't he?"

"In a hospital!" O'Donnell broke in. "I seen it all."

Rann told them the whole story.

"I'd like to go down and see him if there is time, Mr. Farrell," he ended up.

"There isn't," Farrell told him. "Train leaves the minute it's loaded. But Mr. Ironley is going to stay over here to adjust damage suits resulting from this blowdown, and see to a few other things, and he'll do all he can."

And what he could do appeared to be considerable, a week later.

O'Donnell and Rann had been waiting eagerly for news. The big boss canvasman had not missed the work that Alex and Rann had done in fighting the mob, and he was almost as much interested in Ray as Rann himself. As he told his young friend one night:

"He's a real fellow, that Ray. And I thought he was just a stuck-up dude with no iron in him! I'd like a chance to tell him that Horse O'Donnell thinks he's there, and was mistaken before!"

So when Mr. Ironley rejoined the show and told his tale, there was high revel at the stake and chain wagon. Old Mr. Drew, told by policemen and others of what Alex had done, was now Ray's friend. Instead of using his power to get Alex railroaded to jail, he was doing everything he could to help him.

"Self-defense'll be the plea, and it's the truth, and his acquittal is a certainty," Ironley told them. "Young Drew was just a gunman. As soon as Alex's well he'll rejoin us—we've got bail all posted for him. He'll have to go back for the trial six months from now, of course, but it'll be just a form."

A WEEK later, his shoulder practically healed, Alex did show up. He went straight for the stake and chain wagon, and Horse O'Donnell was first to spot him and first to shake his hand.

Alex was surprised. O'Donnell said simply:

"I'm proud to shake your hand and say that the hatchet is buried as far's I'm concerned! A man's often wrong—I was. And I'm glad you're going t' get loose from that charge, Alex!"

"Looks as though that Braden-Ray show might go out some day," drawled Rann. "Glad to see you again, Alex!"

O'Donnell laughed his tremendous, ear-shattering laugh.

"Figuring on a show already, eh?" he rumbled. "Well, Rann, I can tell yuh this!"

He had become suddenly serious.

"Wait a minute, though—before I tell you two what I've got to say, I want to clear up somethin'. Alex, you got sore as blazes because I licked Big Bill—"

"I know I did," Alex interrupted, flushing. "I guess I shouldn't have butted in. Yet—"

"Yet you feel just the same still, don't you?" And Horse roared. Then he sobered. "I don't much blame you, Alex. I was pretty rough—too rough, mebbe. Still, Bill ain't holding no grudge against me. He knows he had a good dressing down coming to him. You can't be soft with a mob of roughnecks if you're going to be boss, Alex. But a boss needn't be a bully either, and if it'll do you any good to know it, I'm watching myself pretty close these days.

"Now listen. I guess we're all together now and understand each other. Rann, you're making a whale of a salary, and savin' it. So're you, Alex. And both of yuh—Rann especially for a long time—have been watchin' and learnin' show business. So when you talk about your show sometime—yuh never can tell.

"And now I'll get down tuh brass tacks. Give yuh some good news. Rann, I heard the skipper and Ironley talkin', and Jack Farrell says you're the smartest young fellow comin' up in the show business—and when one of the National Circus Corporation says that you've got a future!"

THERE was an instant of silence as Rann strove to take in the meaning of what O'Donnell had said. . . . So he had made good, more than good, in the life he loved! And the years ahead promised him bursting measure of happiness and success. With a staunch friend at his side—his eyes sought Alex's. The response he found there sent his left arm around Alex's shoulders as he held out his right hand to Horse.

"But in case the National Circus Corporation ain't big enough for yuh," laughed O'Donnell, as he gripped Rann's hand in a mighty squeeze, "how about me bein' boss canvasman of the Braden-Ray show?"

"You're on!" shouted Rann and Alex—and only a few years later he was.

The Circus in the Clouds

(Continued from page 23)

do you people think?" barked Ballard, his eyes narrowed to pin points.

"Robbery, prob'ly," stated the detective indifferently. "We're doin' all we can. But it looks bad for Mr. Parsons."

"The chief wants t' see you all, an' as soon as I phone him he'll come out. I said robbery. But, o' course, things that's happened before—"

"Wait a minute," came a quiet voice, and the medium sized man in eyeglasses who had appeared suddenly showed the stout detective his own badge. Streak, alert as a dog who scents danger, knew that he was one of the Federal operatives. The man in the eyeglasses took the stout detective to one side, and left behind him a group of uneasy, troubled flyers who felt that the terror that had been stalking them had swooped for the kill once more.

"Mr. Ballard! You're the director of this picture, aren't you?"

It was the lanky, bronzed flyer, and he stepped forward from the crowd.

"Well, what I want to know is whether you're going to use the Barnes flying circus on this picture?" the airman went on truculently.

Ballard shook his head.

"No, Mr.—er—Barnes?" he said absently. "Planes from this field here will carry camera men, and the Army Circus—"

"Oh, is that so!"

The loose-jointed flyer's long, thin face, with its extended crooked nose, mirrored a spirit of hard mockery, and his narrow eyes were lines of coldly-glinting light in his face. He stepped forward toward Ballard, and Streak, his brain still occupied with the horrid fact of Parsons' possible murder, nevertheless eased forward toward the chunky director he liked so well.

"Yes, it's so!" snapped Ballard. "And I can't enter into any conversation about it, either. Not only are we very busy, but we've just heard that our publicity representative has probably been done away with by—"

"What do I care? That's not getting me my rights! And you will talk about it. Look here!"

He had snatched a letter from beneath his oil spotted coveralls. Streak noticed that Captain Kennard, Little, and Goodhue had all joined the Secret Service man and the local detectives, and were talking earnestly with them. The movie actors and a few hangers-on and mechanics were clustered around the director and his belligerent visitor.

"Know what this is?" barked the man. "Well, it's a final letter to me from the Peerless Picture Corporation, that's what it is. And it tells me that my outfit has been selected for the flying part of your picture, Mister! And it tells me to have my outfit available starting Labor Day, that's what it says. And I been working east with it, making no money whatever, so's to be around for the job—and you tell me—"

"Got a contract?" snapped Ballard.

"No! That was to be signed when we started work—a thousand a day—"

Ballard shrugged his shoulders wearily.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Barnes, but I know nothing about that. The executives of the corporation made arrangements with the

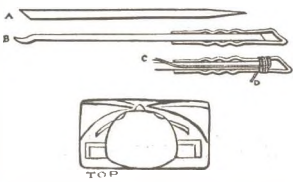
LESSON NO. 19 AN INCA IDOL BY MARGARET J. POSTGATE

Ivory Soap Sculpture

WHEN Pizarro landed in South America, in 1500 A. D., he discovered the ancient civilization of the Indians of Peru. These Indians were known as the Incas, or Children of the Sun.

They had beautiful cities, vast temples and wonderfully built canals, aqueducts and roads. They excelled in metal work, pottery and weaving, showing, in all these, rare skill in design; and as engineers they surpassed the Spaniards, their conquerors.

The idol which we will make this month was copied from a wooden one in the American Museum of Natural History. It wears the huge disc-shaped ear-rings that made the Spaniards call the Incas "Oregoones," or *long-eared*. So heavy were these ear-rings that they enlarged the lobes of the ears until they nearly reached the shoulders.



TOOLS—A large cake of Ivory Soap, pen knife or paring knife. One orange stick with one blade and one pointed end (Wooden tool A). One orange stick to which a hairpin is tied as shown in B, C, D. File bent end of hairpin to a sharp knife edge. (Wire tool).

DIRECTIONS—With *point* of *wooden tool* draw idol on *front* of soap.

With *knife* cut away soap up to dotted line.

Do the same with *sides*.

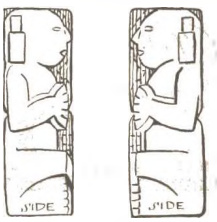
With *wire* tool or *blade* of *wooden* tool, shave or carve down to actual form of idol.

Work slowly, turn model often and compare it with drawings.

Features, ear-rings, fingers and toes should be put in last with point of wooden tool.

REMEMBER—that the shavings from your Inca idol are pure Ivory Soap. Give them to your mother to use for the dishes or to launder her fine things.

AND DON'T FORGET—Ivory is a good friend in the summer time. It gives fine lathery cooling baths when you're at home. And if you go to camp—why then, nothing can take the place of Ivory. When



you go swimming, take your Ivory. When you do a little washing, as every good camper does, use your Ivory. It makes a fine lather even with cold water. And you won't lose it, because *it floats!*

IVORY SOAP

99 44/100% Pure—It Floats

(*Continued from page 45*)

army to have the flying done by this outfit, and I had nothing to do with it, and didn't hear anything except rumors about any correspondence with you. If you've been misled, I'm sorry. But you'll have to sue the company if you think you have a grievance—"

"Yeah, that's easy to say!" bellowed the flyer, leaning over until his face was very close to Ballard's. "And you don't know anything about it—giving me the run-around! Well, you'd better know something about it—"

Ballard's stocky body snapped to its full height, and his eyes grew hard and bright.

"Mr. Barnes, I've told you the truth. And I've told you that Mr. Parsons has disappeared, that I'm upset and very busy, that there is nothing I can do for you—"

"There ain't, hey! There ain't!"

Barnes was shaking his fist in the short director's face, looming above him like a skyscraper alongside a shed. Streak, for the moment, forgot the thoughts that were racing through his brain concerning Parsons, and leaped forward.

"Come on—let's get to work, eh, Ballard?" he said. "It's almost time to take off now—"

"Oh, it's the famous boy wing walker! Stay out of this, Percy, or—"

"Or what?"

STREAK'S question was like the snap of a whip. Barnes' truculence was annoying enough at best. Under the circumstances, it was unforgivable. And Streak was in no quiet and peaceful mental condition. Not only was there the maddening series of insoluble happenings, but, somehow, his ceaseless thinking about it all had caused the germ of a thought to come knocking at the doors of his mind. And until he corralled the elusive something that he felt might explain everything, he would remain a very much wrought-up young man.

Barnes straightened to his six feet three, and his seamed face twisted into lines of bitter mockery.

"Or I'll see to it that the prize infant o' the army won't be taking the contracts out of the hands of those that work for 'em and—"

"Come ahead, if you think you can!" snapped Streak, all the reckless spirit in him aroused. "And by gorry, I've a good mind to try to throw you off this lot myself, if you don't get off pronto!"

"Look here, Mr. Barnes!"

It was Captain Kennard's rasping voice. He had stolen up through the crowd, unseen by the flushed and excited trio who were arguing.

As Barnes whirled on the short C. O., Kennard barked an order to two policemen:

"Officers, I heard this man threaten Lieutenant Somers, here. In view of the particular conditions surrounding this outfit, plus the fact that he's admitted a motive for reprisal on us, plus fact number two, which is that he's creating a disturbance here and won't leave, I demand his arrest on suspicion!"

That was all the policemen needed. Captain Kennard's official position was enough for them. If the circus wanted anybody arrested, it would be done.

"Listen, Cap'n, I've known him fur years, an' his bark's worse than his bite!" bellowed Roach, and his face seemed strained and haggard. Streak watched, and wondered as Cocky went on, "He's got a right t' be sore, an' he just went too far!"

All the wind, apparently, had been taken from Barnes' sails.

"I got a show to do up to Lakewood this afternoon!" he stammered. "You can't arrest me—"

"Who says we can't?" Kennard interrupted grimly. "There are entirely too many bums monkeying with this outfit, and, Mister Barnes, when you open your mouth and let a threat fall out, you certainly did put your foot right back in it!"

"But that there's my wing walker, and my ships, and I need the money—"

He was pleading, now, but the savagery was still in his eyes. Funny, Streak reflected—that thin, long-nosed face with its humorously twisted nose and one-sided mouth might have been whimsical and gently mocking, if it had not been contorted with bitter wrath.

"You should have thought of that before you got so uppity," Kennard told him. "You're going to spend a few hours in the hoosegow. Maybe you're the guy who was trying to make this circus quit by killing off Somers, eh? We'll make you prove an alibi a mile long.

"Take him away, officer! And inform Mr. Perkins."

Barnes, throwing a malevolent look at Kennard and Streak, was led away. When the spike-headed captain "got his dandruff up," as Streak expressed it, he was nothing if not a hard-boiled egg. He was accustomed to discipline, and he meant what he said.

Streak scarcely noticed the prisoner as he was led away. A few words from what the captain had said to Barnes stuck in his mind, and he was turning them over and over, digesting their possible meanings. "Trying to make the circus quit." Yes, the Barnes outfit would want to do that, but apparently the spindling civilian flyer had not known, until very recently, that he was not to be in the picture at a big salary—

Yet he might have known it from the newspapers, at that, several days, even weeks before.

"Say, Cap'n," Streak blurted in low tones; "if we'd seen the other flyers in his outfit we might have seen some that looked like those two that tried to run away with me—" There he broke off abruptly with, "But that's foolish, at that!"

"Why?" inquired Kennard, while Ballard delayed his megaphone, halfway to his lips, to listen.

"Well, maybe that alone isn't. But it doesn't explain poor Parsons, does it? And those two smashed elevators way back in Louisville? Furthermore, judging by that ship of Barnes', his outfit's a wreck, and the ship the kidnappers used was a darb. I'm a punk detective, anyway!"

Cocky Roach's sudden, nervous laugh from behind him caused Streak to start slightly.

"Looks like there ain't no good ones!" Roach said quickly, his hand shaking as he lit a cigaret.

"This gang of crooks pulled their stuff right in the middle of a hundred thousand people in Syracuse," Streak said slowly. "And here in Atlantic City, with a swarm of detectives around, they struck again. If poor old Brush Parsons isn't too loosely connected with the outfit to escape—who's safe? And where, and when?"

"The answer," drawled Don Goodhue slowly, his handsome face very serious, "is no one, no where, no time!"

Chapter Nine

AN hour later Streak, in the front cockpit of Captain Kennard's ship, was circling higher and higher above the field below. At eight hundred feet the captain headed the ship down the Boardwalk, which was only a narrow board track at the Inlet. A mile on down it widened, and soon Streak could see the main section of it, five miles ahead. For the first three miles it gleamed white against the green of the sea and the multi-colored city which it separated—and then, for a distance of two miles, it appeared to be painted black.

"Looks like every soul in Atlantic City is packed in there," Streak reflected.

Three miles ahead, out over the sea, the two scouts were stunting wildly. Around them circled two seaplanes from the field, each bearing a camera man getting close-up shots of the single seaters that were performing the dozens of maneuvers which Don Goodhue and Jimmy Little could coax them to do.

The curiously subdued Cocky Roach was flying a bit back of them. His demeanor had been somewhat peculiar, Streak thought for the eighteenth time. And with that thought was the remembrance of bustling, bristling, staccato Parsons, the sense of tragedy pressing on his spirit—

"Got to quit that now!" Streak told himself grimly, and tried to concentrate on the blazing scene below him. The piers with their fanciful superstructures were like fairy castles rising from the cool green of the sea, and on the Boardwalk all the colors of the rainbow shone in the sun. The gilded spires of a great hotel gleamed, dazzling, and on the beach—very wide, now, because the tide was at the ebb—tens of thousands of bathers had left the water to scan the sky.

By the time the Jennys had reached the section of beach adjacent to the Million-Dollar Pier, the two stunt flyers were through. Streak, critical appreciation in his eyes, saw the two sturdy scouts dive madly toward the water. At least two hundred fifty miles an hour when they pulled out—and their landing gears were but a few feet from the low swell of the sea. Then they arched upward in infinitely graceful curves—upward until they seemed to be hanging, half on their backs, a thousand feet high. Then, as lazily and gracefully as one of the sea gulls they had frightened might soar above the sea, they turned, horizontally, right-side up. The true Immelman turn!

As they roared back toward the Inlet, the vast crowd of onlookers moved restlessly, and a half million hands were waving.

The wind was quartering the sea. Captain Kennard swung over land, and then out toward the limitless ocean to get into it. On either side of them the seaplanes appeared—one a bit higher, the other a little lower, than the Jennys.

For ten minutes Streak climbed around the ship, fighting the airspeed confidently. His steel-like fingers never missed a hold, nor did his muscles feel the strain. Below, the horde of spectators was still as death.

Finally, on the third trip over the beach and out toward the sea, Streak was crawling along the upper left-hand wing. Behind him Roach, flying steadily, eased forward and downward. In each seaplane a camera was grinding away without ceasing, catching every move. Streak, his slim body in white clothing so that he might be seen more plainly, waved and smiled at the camera's eye, following Ballard's directions.

Out at the cabane strut, he turned and watched the other ship. No ladder this time. Direct change to the wingskid of Roach's plane—a curved brace on the tips of the bottom wings to protect them when

the ship tipped up on the ground.

It meant wonderful flying on the part of both Kennard and Roach—for an instant the two ships would be less than six feet apart—even a bump would mean a collision.

And Streak must not miss the first try! There'd be just an instant when he could make it—then the ships must separate like a flash, or a tangle would be certain.

WITH his feet separated only by a foot of frail linen to his left, and the same space in front of him, from a fifteen-hundred-foot plunge downward, Streak slowly came upright. He balanced himself easily, and his body seemed to glide to an upright position. A line of white a quarter mile high in the air, his body giving as he balanced to the slight fluctuations of the plane, he waited.

Roach's right wing, under that pilot's master hand, swept down toward him. Streak's whole being was concentrated in his eyes as they glued themselves to the wingskid.

For a tortured second he thought he was gone. The upper ship dropped a bit, and the skid came within an ace of knocking him off. He bent over, until his eyes were peering straight down to the ground over the edge of the wing, and he was actually leaning against the airstream.

As the wingskid swept over him, at slightly higher speed than the lower Jenny, Streak measured it. The thrust of his arms was as sure and quick as the pounce of a cat. Not a finger out of place, not a fumble—

Hanging to it with his hands, his feet were carried from the lower wing, and he was dangling in the air.

He raised himself leisurely, stopping a moment to look about, and then clambered up over the edge of the wing, his body showing in every lithe move the beautiful co-ordination and easy strength of the trained gymnast. Back to the cockpit, where the parachute was waiting for him—

A great kick was in prospect, and his eyes glowed like stars as he strapped on his 'chute.

It wasn't a seat pack, but a regular U. S. Irving type, the pack of which was carried on his back. He glanced back at Roach, and that heavy-set flyer essayed a grim smile in return. Or perhaps it only seemed grim, with the helmet framing that heavy face and the goggles covering his eyes and part of his broad, flat nose. Cocky wasn't feeling quite so cocky these days, for some reason.

And Streak, despite himself, thought he knew the reason. He was going to find out, if he had to turn detective himself.

These thoughts flashed through his subconscious mind while his brain was really concentrated on what he was to do. The speed-boat was ready below, chugging away slowly close to the shore. One seaplane followed the Jenny, and the other was far below, cruising within a few feet of the water. Still a third camera had been mounted on the beach, in a spot that had been cleared of onlookers.

The 'chute jump, alone, was a mere matter of form as far as Streak was concerned. It was what was to follow that sent tingles into the remotest parts of his body as he eased himself to the upper wing and crawled slowly to its tip.

AS was perfectly natural in one whose trained ability as a gymnast was reinforced by perfect co-ordination between brain and body, Streak was an excellent high diver. What he was to do was drop in his chute until he was not less than forty feet above the sea. Then, by a special change in the safety buckle of the 'chute harness, he would release himself and do a dive into the water. At that height, any flaw in the absolute control of his body as he left the 'chute in an upright position, would have extremely unpleasant results. And he'd have a speed of fifteen feet a second, downward, when he started.

Holding to the leading edge of the wing with one hand, he found the big rip cord ring with the other, and straightened up. With the 'chute on his back, he had utter confidence in himself, of course; so he stood on the very corner of the wing.

The jump, he was thinking, was a cinch. A pull-off—it wasn't even a jump.

Balanced perfectly, so that he'd leave the ship in a normal position, he jerked the rip cord ring.

At the instant when he was conscious of the first tug of the small pilot-chute, the ship swerved terrifically to the right. A split-second before the big silk umbrella was pulled from its pack, his body left the ship, spinning to the left as the wing, swerving so powerfully to the right, threw him off.

Poor flying on Roach's part.

Came the shock as the 'chute opened and the harness around his shoulders and body hauled his falling body up short—not the shock he had expected, but an appalling sort of wrench that left him less than half conscious, his brain a red-tinted chaos, his eyes bulging with strain and terror, his lungs laboring for breath!

There was some terrible thing around his neck that had nearly broken it—now it was strangling him to death. Kicking convulsively, twelve hundred feet above the ground, his hands clawed madly at his windpipe, seeking to loosen that maddening thing and relieve the agonizing pressure that had cut off his breath.

But he got no relief. Buried in his flesh, with all the weight of his hundred-fifty-pound body drawing it ever tighter, that terrible thing resisted all his efforts to loosen it. His finger nails tore his skin, and his body writhed with the torture as his protruding tongue seemed to get thicker and thicker and his stunned brain could not comprehend anything save that he was being hung, that death was sure and would be merciful—

Then, from the depths of his being, came that rush of mental and physical power which those who are men can tap when others quit and give up hope. By sheer force of will, the indomitable Streak fought off unconsciousness, and there came a moment of utter mental clarity when his brain was abnormally active, and the torture of his body merely an incident.

One, perhaps more, of the shroud lines from his harness to the edges of the 'chute had been twisted around his neck. And he could not get even one finger under it—

He forgot himself, almost, as he thought of that wild swerve that had thrown him, spinning, off the ship as the 'chute opened. Roach! Incomprehensible as it seemed, Roach, too, was an agent of those who would, for some reason, destroy him, and the circus—Roach behind the trouble with the elevators, with the ladder—maybe even in with those kidnappers—working in the same gang—

He could think no longer. Hot white spots danced before his blood-filled eyes, his body was twisting and turning in its tortured efforts for air. Blessed surcease of pain was coming—the sea was so far below—

There was a distorted ship below him. It was close—why, it was zooming upward, a propeller at least eighty-five feet long was about to hit him—ship had a face like Roach's—

JUST as the last remnants of consciousness were leaving him, his body hit something with a sickening crash. He did not know what—didn't know anything—

But a blessed gulp of air filled his lungs. All the superb vitality in his body rallied to that stimulus, and one hand clawed feebly at his throat. The lines were loose, now, and just as one finger tore them looser, he was pulled clear of whatever he had hit. And something had been pressed into his other hand.

That finger protecting his windpipe was numbing with the pressure when he came completely to himself. Below him a ship was circling, and on the same level was a Jenny and one seaplane. He was five hundred feet high, and that ship below him was Roach's.

Then as his brain got clearer, he could visualize clearly what had happened. He had hit a ship—and it must have been Roach's. Captain Kennard had been too far away to have reached him so quickly. And what matchless perfection of airmanship Cocky had shown—so to gauge the rate of descent, and the distance, and the speed of the ship, as to zoom up under his falling body, and allow it to hit the ship. The Jenny had been almost in a stall; otherwise the airstream against the 'chute would have pulled him off sooner—

(*Continued from page 47*)

too soon for him to save himself with that finger.

Streak forgot that he had just escaped death by a miracle, aided only slightly by his own indomitable will. Tears stood in his bloodshot eyes as he thought of the heroism of Roach and what he had done. Had he misjudged in the slightest degree, Streak's flailing body would have struck the tail of the ship, and doubtless left it a tangled wreck, entirely beyond control. And Roach would have shot like a luckless comet into the sea.

Then, with the instinct of the flying corps, which never forgets the duty ahead, Streak remembered where he was, and what he was to do. Couldn't now—not with that shroud line still around his neck.

Just then, for the first time, he became really aware that he was grasping something in his left hand. He could remember, now, that during those brief seconds when his fall had been interrupted by Roach's ship, he had automatically grabbed something.

It was an open pocket knife. Roach had figured that a knife might save his life, and must have got it ready before catching him. He had leaned over and thrust it directly into Streak's hand, which had closed on it automatically.

Weak and shaken, the young pilot did not care for the prospect of making that dive. But he would. Must! Not only because he was supposed to, but because if he flunked it he might get that scared feeling again—go yellow once more.

So, white and drawn, he waited until he was less than a hundred feet high. Then he cut the shroud line around his neck. By that time, dropping at fifteen feet a second, he was down to less than fifty feet above the water. His hand found the special safety buckle of his harness. At thirty-five feet, with the ships circling widely around him and the packed Boardwalk and beach watching, he cast loose harness, parachute, and all.

His body bent, suddenly, and he was in a "layout." Never had he shown his muscular control more perfectly. Feet pointed and together, arms flung wide, his body shot downward in a perfect swan-dive, and clove the water with scarcely a ripple to show where it had hit.

The speed boat, with Ballard aboard it, was beside him almost as soon as he reached the surface. The chubby young director hauled him aboard. The motion picture man was literally trembling with excitement. His face was pale, his eyes staring.

"I've lived a thousand years in the last three minutes, kid," he said chokingly. "It was horrible. But, Streak, we've got a piece of film there that's worth one million dollars if it's worth a dime! It'll put the film into every motion picture house in the world!

"You almost died, kid, but what you've gone through will bring big dividends to the service you risked it for!"

Chapter Ten

AN hour later, out at the field, Streak, who had just arrived, quietly joined the outskirts of a large group of newspaper men, flyers, and actors. From the center of the gathering came a loud voice that never ceased. It was Roach's, and he was in paradise as he talked for publication.

"Yes, sir!" he was saying, "I've done some good flyin' in my time, but never nothin' like that! You see all the things I had to figger on after that dog-gone puff o' wind swung the ship around like that. I had to be right under 'im, I had to be in a dead stall, almost, or otherwise the 'chute'd pull him off too quick—I'll tell you, there ain't another flyer in the world could o' done it!"

"I guess you're right, Cocky!" called Streak, and the group parted like magic to let him through.

Roach, still in his helmet and goggles, grinned broadly and held out one ham-like paw.

"Congratulations, kid!" he bellowed. "Once again I come through, eh?"

Now that he had great personal prominence as a hero, his jealousy of Streak had disappeared. Envy usually disappears under such circumstances.

"It was the most wonderful piece of airmanship and nerve I've ever seen!" Streak told him frankly as they shook hands. "Hard feelings are bygones now, eh, Cocky?" he added quietly.

"Sure thing!" nodded Roach happily.

Streak decided to strike while the iron was hot. So immersed was he again in trying to work out a solution of the long series of events that had culminated in the disappearance and probable murder of Brush Parsons, that he almost forgot what he had experienced that morning.

"Can I see you alone a minute?" he asked Roach.

"Sure thing!" assented Roach, and the two of them drifted over toward the ships, where no one could overhear them talk.

"Listen, Cocky," Streak said steadily. "You and I've had a lot of trouble. To be frank, mostly because you—er—talked quite a lot and made trouble for yourself. But that's past. I've nothing against you, and I'm willing to tell the world you can back up all you say O. K."

"Sure. I got kind o' crazy, Streak. When I come on the circus, I mean. I'd figgered I had a chance t' do some great stuff, and be featured in this here picture, and make myself for life. Get me? And when I found out a little army squirt that I didn't think could do anything was gonna bury me, I got sore. And I'm sorry. Furthermore!" went on the naive stunt man magnanimously, "I'll say you're there!"

"Thanks!" returned Streak with a grin. "Now listen. You won't get sore at what I'm going to say?"

"Nope."

"Cocky, all the things that've been happening 've got me nuts. That's a fact. Seems like every time I go up something goes wrong—and all the other rotten things happening, right under our noses and all—you can't blame me for feeling as though I *had* to find out something, or quit!"

Roach's face was suddenly downcast. The happy grin and sparkle in his eyes disappeared. His head bent, his eyes on the ground, he said:

"Well?"

Streak had decided to hurl his damaging belief straight at the man.

"Cocky, I'll hold whatever you answer as confidential if you say so. But I'm going to let you have this straight. You smashed the elevators back there in Louisville, and I know you did!"

It was like a stunning physical blow, the way Streak said it.

FOR what seemed like a full minute Roach did not say a word. Then, as though throwing off a burden, his great shoulders squared and his anguished eyes were glaring into Streak's. The slim army man had chosen the right time.

"Yes, I did!" Roach said, and his voice was trembling. "And it's been makin' a crazy man out o' me ever since! And I'm gonna tell 'em all!"

So quickly that the dazed Somers scarcely knew what was happening, Roach dashed toward the slowly disintegrating group he had been boasting to when Streak had arrived.

"Wait a minute, you reporters! And where's a cop and anybody else interested?"

Roach's theatrical instinct—his never-submerged desire to dramatize himself—was in full sway. If he must confess, he'd do it magnificently.

"Might just as well clean it up publicly," Streak thought swiftly. "Boy, he fell quick!"

Streak found relief from strain in the assurance that he had been right in his deductions. But he was not surprised. He had never been quite certain that Roach had not kicked in those elevators back in Louisville. And there were several reasons for his deductions. One lay in the strength of circumstantial evidence. Another was that the elevator smashing had not endangered anyone's life, and could not—while most of the other attempts had. He had wondered whether or not Cocky had any connection with the sawed ladder and the kidnapping—but now he had proved, beyond the peradventure of a doubt, that he was not interested in harming Streak. Not only that, but he had shown that he would risk his own life to save his enemy's. It all meant, to Streak, that a little bit of the mystery could now

be cleared up by Rosch's open explanation of the elevator incident, and that this would clear the decks for action on the other incidents.

Streak was sure, now, that when in the first days of the flying circus he had suspected Roach of trying to kill him while he was out on the wing during that loop, he had been wrong. He felt certain that Cocky had saved him then, too.

"Listen, all o' you!" the blazing Roach was saying, his eyes on the Federal man at the field. "I kicked in those elevators down in Louisville that yuh all read about. I done it because I was awful sore, and wanted t' crab this circus every way I could. I'd thought I was gonna be the head cheese, get a lot o' publicity, and make myself solid for life in my profession! Then I was so sore when I joined up and found I wasn't that I went crazy and done what I did. And tried to pin it on Streak here, bum that I am!

"I'd o' owned up long ago, honest, when I got friendly with these army flyers and got to know 'em—but I couldn't. I was scared to, with all these other things happenin'. I knew I wouldn't have a Chinaman's chance. Everybody'd think I was in on all of 'em. I'd be ruined fur life.

"Now I can tell yuh, because everybody knows I saved Streak Somers this mornin', like I done before and got no credit for. That's proof I ain't tryin' to harm him, or anybody. So help me—yuh can take me t' jail or anything you want—I kicked in those elevators, but I don't know nothin' whatever about that ladder, or the kidnappin', or Parsons, or anything! I was a fool, I went wrong, and I'll take my medicine, but I had nothin' to do with anything more than what I said!"

THE auditors, silent as the grave, were listening with all their ears as the big fellow bellowed his story. Streak watched the detective from Washington closely, but could discern no change in his expression. And to Streak one thing was certain—that naive, crude braggart who was talking there was entirely sincere. He was telling the truth. The superficial hardness was gone, and the childlike man beneath stood out for all to see.

The newspaper men were firing questions at Roach, and the other people conversing excitedly, when Captain Kennard was called to the telephone, in the field office. Don Goodhue and Jimmy Little joined Streak, and neither of them seemed greatly surprised at the revelation.

"I can imagine how good Cocky felt, when he found other hands in the game playing for higher stakes," Don drawled. "He'd figured on a little fun, and all of a sudden he felt a noose tightening around his neck, eh?"

"Here's news," called Captain Kennard, coming toward them.

The three flyers went to meet him. Streak knew from the expression on the captain's face that important information was about to be broadcast.

"Some kid, a newsboy, who's a great admirer of Brush Parsons, is swearing that last night he saw Parsons swing up on one of the flat cars of a freight train that was just pulling out," rasped the captain. "Kid fashion, the boy decided to keep still about it, wasn't going to start talk about Parsons. But all the hullabaloo about Parsons' being missing got him rattled, and he's spilled what he knows. He's dead certain he saw Brush. Maybe he did. Maybe he didn't. What do you make of it anyhow, Watson?"

He made a dive for the Secret Service man, while twenty throats started discussing the news excitedly.

The only tongue on the field that was not working belonged to Streak. That slim youngster was too busy thinking. Suddenly it seemed that many things which had been merely blurred speculations in his mind had become clear.

If the gaunt, nervous Parsons had planted his coat, ripped and torn, where it would be found near suspiciously trampled ground, and then disappeared completely, it meant that he wanted it to appear that he had met with foul play. A hundred details seemed to click into place in the flyer's mind. Things that had made him wonder about the men who had tried to kidnap him in Syracuse; where Fulz entered the picture; Parsons' overwrought efforts to tell him something that he could not bring himself to say—

"I won't say a word until I make sure," Streak decided swiftly. "I may be wrong—but I can find out whether I'm right or not before I spring it!"

In the first flush of joyous relief, he felt as though all trouble were over, as though long weeks of terror had ended forever. It was lucky for his peace of mind that he could not foresee what was ahead of him before the day came that he thought had already arrived.

(To be concluded in the September number of THE AMERICAN BOY.)

The Sheriton Eight

(Continued from page 11)

Bradley croaked. "Let's get going."

He buried his oar, quiet as you please, but in his eagerness Red didn't dig deeply enough, and scraped the water till it splashed like Niagara Falls.

"This way," someone shouted, and men came plunging toward us.

"Steer out!" Bradley hissed at me, and to Red, "Let's pull together. Drive! Drive! Drive!"

Red had control of his oar now, and as the frantic footsteps brought up at the water's edge we glided ghostily out upon the calm waters. We must have been invisible. Yet it was a good ten minutes, during which time Red and Bradley bent strong backs to the task, before anyone dared to say a thing.

"How's the steering?" Red inquired.

"Easy," I said. "The highway runs along the edge of the estuary and I'm steering by the row of lights above it."

"Let's row," Bradley grunted, and there was silence again.

About a half hour later Red spoke, sharply.

"Hold up," he exclaimed. "This is an eight mile row. Bradley mustn't do it. It will ruin him for the race to-morrow!"

"So that's occurred to you at last, has it?" There was the old sarcasm and bitterness in Bradley's voice, but so much weariness too that I glanced quickly at the big fellow, who for a moment seemed to droop. And then he straightened.

"I had that in mind all the time," he said quietly. "Don't I know that an eight mile row will finish me, so far as the big race and my Berkeley jersey are concerned? I wouldn't have done it if—if—if I didn't know there was a good man ready to take my place. Let's drive ahead, and get this shell to the crew house before dawn. Nayle can stroke that bunch to victory."

We rowed on in silence, after that, but I for one was doing a heap of thinking. Meanwhile the water, miles and miles of it, streamed behind us.

Presently the moon poked her head through the clouds, and revealed a great shapeless mass dead ahead of us.

"What's that?" I asked. "Mount Vesuvius?"

"Must be the railroad bridge," Bradley answered. "If so, we're just about crossing the finish of the big race. We row under the bridge with a quarter-mile to go."

Well before dawn we sighted the crew house, and brought the new shell quietly alongside the float. A solitary tall figure was pacing it—Callison.

"So," he exclaimed, icily, when he saw Bradley. "That's why your bed is empty. A little thing like the varsity race doesn't matter in your young life, does it?"

Red took Callison by the arm, led him a few steps away, and whispered to him. But Bradley, without bothering to explain, stalked abruptly off.

SHARP voices outside the little room in the crew house where I'd thrown myself down to sleep wakened me. It was the varsity, boating themselves! They

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were laughing and joking, and delighted to row in the new shell. Going out for a little warming up spin, apparently. And at stroke, looking very happy and determined, was Rusty Nayle! I was mighty proud to see him there, but still I felt, in spite of everything, sorry for Bradley.

Red and I lunched with the crew at noon. The race was at 3 o'clock, and it was on everybody's nerves, you could see. We had the best meat soup, and chicken, in the world, but the varsity men toyed with their food as though they were playing jackstraws.

Two o'clock found the varsity rowing easily toward the starting point. Red was running the Sheriton crew launch, which loafed along behind the oarsmen. Callison stood straight upright in the bow of it, like Washington crossing the Delaware. Except that Washington didn't carry a megaphone. And I was wedged in the back seat, tickled pink to have the chance to see the race from such a vantage point, and at the same time about as fidgety and nervous as a championship race can make a fellow. The lucky varsity had eight oars to work off their excitement with, but I could just grip the side of the launch.

The shore, as far as we could see, was black with people, and on the boulevard which rims it were sightseeing buses loaded with the folks who would follow the race that way. The railroad, too, was running a special train, with seats arranged in flat cars. Behind the starting point were dozens of pleasure boats, brightly pennanted, and loaded with rooters. They would follow the racing shells.

We arrived at the rendezvous fifteen minutes early. There was the Berkeley shell, its crew resplendent in gold jerseys, practicing starts. Sheriton did the same, until the two crews were called to the line.

Two stake boats were anchored on a line with each other. The Sheriton shell backed up to one, and a man in it held her stern, with her bow pointed down the course. At the other stake boat was the Berkeley shell. The Berkeley coach came very close to his men, and we could hear him delivering a regular sermon to them. Callison's advice was short and to the point.

"I guess you know we have to take this race," he said, "to win the championship. As I've told you, the front crew sits on the world—it has the tail-ender fighting at a disadvantage. So get out in front, and stay there." And then the starter, a large gentleman in white clothes, began to speak.

"If any accident occurs to either boat in the first ten strokes," he said, "I'll fire a gun twice, and both crews are to return for a new start. Otherwise, keep going.

"When I've got you lined up, I'll say, 'Get ready!' and when I find you're all right I'll fire my gun to start you."

There was a deep silence, except for the impatient wheezing of a big pleasure boat outside the course. The two crews sat in their shells like statues, oars at ready, awaiting the gun.

Crack!

Eight Sheriton blades bit the water as one. Three short jabs, scarcely using the slides. Fourth a little longer. The fifth almost a full stroke, the sixth full, and then the long, sweeping drive toward the finish.

A dull roar, like faint thunder, came from the people on shore. The train and the buses began to crawl forward. And a hundred feet behind the shells the spectators' boats took up the chase. The championship race was on!

I LOOKED to see Sheriton forge into the lead at once, and so did the Sheriton cox, for he drove his men at a forty stroke for a full minute. But Berkeley, stroking even faster, held her own. And so it went for a good long stretch, until our cox, realizing that no crew could stand that killing pace very long, dropped the stroke a bit. Berkeley did likewise, but not so soon, and took a half-length lead.

After that the two crews, moving like centipedes on parade, glided down the estuary at precisely the same speed. But not at the same beat. For Callison's men were rowing the famous Sheriton stroke, which gave so much power to the oars that other crews must row faster—two or three or four strokes to the minute—to keep up. That, apparently, was why our cox was willing to lag behind a little—he figured that the terrific power behind the Sheriton oars would make up the distance without a spurt.

At the half-mile point, and again at the mile, Berkeley was holding her lead. A moment later Sheriton shot up the stroke, but Berkeley, alive to the challenge, raised hers, and Sheriton lost the few feet she had gained.

Rusty was rowing like a veteran—no weakness there—and I swelled with pride as I watched him throw his weight against his oar. But my anxiety grew as the water streamed by, and Berkeley kept ahead. A half length, when you get close to the finish line, is a tough lead to overcome.

I saw Rusty say something to our cox, and I heard the cox barking to our men. Faster their straining bodies moved, and faster. The Berkeley cox half turned his head, then in his turn barked to his men. Up went the Berkeley stroke.

Thirty-eight for Sheriton. Thirty-nine!

Forty for Berkeley. Forty-one!

The two shells fairly shot across the water. And then two hundred yards farther, the stroke dropped again. Berkeley still held her advantage.

I thought of what Callison had said, before the race. The crew in front has a big advantage. The tail-enders are nervous, worried. Gnawing at them constantly is the knowledge that they are losing the race. Was Sheriton breaking down?

Callison looked back. His mouth was set so tightly that his jaws seemed about to burst his cheeks. And Red looked back at me, too, with dread in his eyes.

Dead ahead was a towering mass, the great railroad bridge.

Just a quarter-mile, after that! Just about a minute's rowing!

The sun was behind the bridge, and it cast a long, gloomy shadow toward us. Ahead of me I could see a huge arch, under the middle of which the Sheriton crew was to pass. Beyond, under the next arch would go that iron Berkeley eight.

An exclamation from Red made me look up. Our cox was splashing water in Rusty Nayle's face. My heart stopped still. Was Rusty exhausted? Was he giving out? It didn't seem possible, for his stroke was as fast and clean and vicious as ever. Then I noticed that, between splashes, Rusty was saying something to our cox.

Was there something we didn't see? Were they trying to fool the Berkeley crew?

And then, as the two crews flashed into the dense, enfolding shadow of the bridge, I saw the Sheriton stroke quicken. And I almost shouted with joy to see that the Berkeley crew, just disappearing behind the bridge foundation, was rowing the same old stroke.

"Give 'er ten!" our cox was shouting. "Ten smashing ones! A Sheriton ten! One! . . . Dri-i-i-ve'er! . . . Two! . . . Le-e-egs! . . . Three! . . . fight 'em! . . . Four!"

The Sheriton oarsmen responded as though they were fresh and untried. That shell shot out of the shadow almost level with the flying Berkeleyites, and before the startled enemy cox could get his own spurt organized it was Sheriton that held the half-length advantage.

After that the two crews fought like supermen. Sheriton met the Berkeley drive with another of its own. And at last, with the finish close, our cox shouted through his megaphone:

"Let's lift 'er out of water! Another big ten! A *Sheriton* ten!"

Smack! . . . Smack! . . . Smack! . . . The Sheriton oars drove the water behind them. Our shell, secure in its half-length lead, began like some irresistible monster, to increase it.

Berkeley, spurting gloriously, was too late. Sheriton flashed across the finish a good three-quarters length ahead. The championship was ours.

Amid the shrieking of a hundred whistles, and the shouts of Sheriton rooters in the boats and on shore, the Berkeley varsity—good losers all—rowed over to the Sheriton boat. According to time-honored custom each stripped off his jersey and tossed it to the victor—the Sheriton man who rowed the corresponding oar in the Sheriton boat.

THAT night we held a big victory banquet, and after a cracking good meal and the usual horseplay we had some speeches. Callison was called on, and paid tribute to the hard work and fighting spirit of his crew in a way that abruptly silenced everybody. And then he went on and told the story of the kidnapped shell, and Red's and my ride to Summerville, and how we found Bradley, and how we got the shell to crew quarters.

"And now," he said softly, "I'm going to call on Bradley. There's some of the story none of us understand, though we know that everything is all right. If he wants to tell us something, fine. If he doesn't, we want to have a look at him, anyhow."

Bradley got awkwardly to his feet. For a moment his face worked oddly, and the old sullen look dominated it. Then he threw back his head.

"It's this way, fellows," he began, in a queer, choked sort of voice. "I got off on the wrong foot when I first came here. I haven't had an easy time—I've been working my way through, just as I worked my way through high school. It's a tough grind, and somewhere I picked up the idea that the rest of you fellows had no sympathy for chaps like me. It made me so all-fired mad that I wouldn't have anything to do with anybody.

"I earn my money by typewriting—I can make pretty fair money that way, provided I can keep supplied with work. The business college people down in Summerville send me lots of jobs by mail, and so when we were so near I thought I'd slip over and see them before the race. That was where Red and Flip found me.

"Of course I should have explained things, and been decent—"

Right here he stopped, for the good reason that everybody, having heard the rest of the story from Callison's lips, began to sing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." Bradley sat down, blushing like a red hot stove.

As the song finished Rusty Nayle jumped up and waved a package over his head.

"If I offered this to Bradley myself," he said, "I know he'd refuse it. So I want you all to *vote* it to him."

We guessed what was up, and we voted "yes," with much gusto.

Then Bradley, his fingers fumbling a bit as he bent over the package, untied it. Inside, and belonging to himself henceforth, was—the gold jersey that the Berkeley stroke had tossed, three hours before, to Rusty Nayle.

His Tiger Won the Prize

"THE best child artist in New York" was the title given Duncan Campbell, 10 years old, when he took first place in the John Wanamaker Store competition recently. Paintings and drawings were submitted by 8,000 boys and girls. Duncan's prize-winning painting was a big picture of a tiger—he has been specializing in animal life. The judges—public school drawing supervisors and professional artists—who awarded Duncan the gold medal think he has a bright future as a painter.

Under the Bilge

(Continued from page 27)

will stand tender for me. That guy's in a jam down there, and I'm going down!"

I buckled him into the spare suit and down he went—no ladder for him, just stepped off the deck, kerplunk, salt-water style. I watched his bubbles, saw them move toward the others, reach them, saw them pause while the two lines of bubbles mingled in a single stream—a minute—two minutes—four minutes—five. Then yank-yank on the life line and Bud came to the surface. We ripped off his face plate.

"Fright, probably," he said. "Bewildered. Happens often under water. He's down there under the *Farwell's* bilge—yes, under her bilge!—trapped in one of those devilish pits. And I can't get him loose. Blackie, get this suit off me!"

Half numb, I was, but I helped him strip off that suit. His red hair flamed in the sun. He turned to the man at the pump and said, "*Keep that pump going!*" Then to the other man I had called, "And you take this air hose and life line and stand tender for that man down there."

Then to me: "Blackie, we can't get him out from under her; but we can take *her* off *him*—I think. See those railroad tracks across the river? See how they curve straight away from the *Farwell's* stern? C'mon! We're going somewhere."

Up the bank he led the way, up to that caved-in garage at the *Farwell's* bow. In front of the place stood a service car. To the garage man Moody said, "We're going to borrow that Ford."

And borrow it we did, with Moody behind the wheel, before the garage man could open his mouth. We headed south, Moody giving her the gas.

"Where to?" I asked him.

He jerked the answer at me over his shoulder: "Continental Railroad offices."

We crossed Erie Bridge at thirty-five an hour, took River Avenue southward at forty-five and fetched up with a shudder at the old brick Continental Building. Then out over the side, both of us, and into the building. At a railing in a corridor we were stopped by a clerk.

"Crandall!" said Moody. "We want to see Mr. Crandall."

"Sorry," the clerk said, "but Mr. Crandall is engaged."

"Where?"

"In there." And he nodded toward a door beyond.

"Uh!" said the redhead. The clerk, impelled by two freckled and red-haired hands on his shoulders, suddenly sat down; and Bud and I went on through.

In his private office, Crandall, cross-legged in a huge armchair, was dictating to a stenographer. He looked up, puzzled, then thrust his square jaw at us and asked: "Well?"

"My name's Moody," Bud said. "I work for John Strang. I want ten locomotives."

"You want *what?*"

"Ten locomotives."

Crandall snorted. Then slowly he smiled. "Ten locomotives, eh? Couldn't you use an even dozen?"

"All right!" Bud shot back at him. "Make it a dozen. I want 'em at the bend opposite where the *Farwell* lies. But I need 'em *now*. Your son, Mr. Crandall, in a diving suit, is trapped in a pit under the bilge of that freighter. I aim to get him out."

Well, mister! A railroad office can *move!* Bang, bang, bang—like that! Crandall, firing questions at Bud, was punching push buttons at the same time and shooting orders.

WHERE those engines came from, I don't know. But Old Man Crandall got them, two strings of six big freight engines each. And down through the yards, in ten minutes, went roaring the queerest pair of trains that any railroad man ever saw. One of them carried the division superintendent.

Moody and I, we piled back into the Ford and sprinted her back to the *Farwell*.

That speed! While the air pumps droned on, sending atmosphere to that fellow under the *Farwell's* side, we shifted everything clear of the freighter's stern, then sent two tugs across the river, each one dragging six hundred feet of steel cable, which the rigging gang linked to the *Farwell's* steel harness; and over on the other side, a half dozen brakemen linked each cable to the rearmost of a battery of six locomotives. Then the tugs! Each one backed down and caught a side-hold.

Bud Moody climbed into the rigging of one of the derrick scows, shouted to me—"All right, Blackie, give 'er the jacks!"

Boy, oh, boy! Sixteen steel bearcats, twelve of them on land and four of them in the river, moved ahead against that cable and up it came, straightening out, dripping water tight, twanging with the strain! Moody, shouting, sawed the air. And sixteen throttles swung open. Sixteen funnels belching fury. Sixteen sweating firemen, heaving in the coal!

And the *Farwell* moved. Squealing a little as she let go her hold on earth, she shivered, jerked a little, jerked again, then began to slide sternward. And sixteen grinning engineers kept her sliding until, at last, out of her long, shiny, muddy, sloping channel into the river bank, she floated free and the tugs whipped her after end upriver.

Bud Moody, when I reached him, was at the edge of the derrick scow, hauling in, hand over hand, on a life line and air hose. Up came a helmet. Four men it took to lift out that helmet and what was under it—just limp weight.

I twisted off the face plate. Crandall, his face white as steam, grinned at me and asked, "What happened?"

A hand touched my elbow. Beside me stood Old Man Strang. He had just arrived. "Perhaps," he said, "perhaps one of you can explain where those locomotives came from. But what I want to know first is: Who on earth is this diver?"

"Name is Crandall," said Bud Moody. "He wrote a piece about you in this morning's paper. I thought maybe you'd like to sort of reason with him. And besides—well, I kind o' like the guy!"

No, there weren't any lawsuits—not against anybody. Even the garage man called it quits. He moved. The *Sentinel* explained and apologized. And Old Man Crandall, demon railroader, tried his darnedest to give our outfit a private car!

The Man Who Was Wanted

(Continued from page 10)

before he'd seen either of them more than ten minutes."

That turned all eyes on the embarrassed Scotty. Mr. Ranney gazed at him with especial interest.

"You're the man who made Dick's grey devil of a mare eat out of his hand, aren't you?" he said.

"Well, it's just that I understand what horses need," said Scotty, blushing.

"I'm mighty glad to meet you," said Mr. Ranney. "We're going to raise horses here, and you're just the man we want. Will you take a job with us?"

Scotty looked up quickly, his eyes alight with pleasure. Then he remembered.

"Why, no, I'm afraid I can't," he said. "Why not?"

"I've got to prepare for college. I've got to go to school." Scotty desperately tried to make his voice steady, but he failed.

Mr. Ranney laughed.

"Bless you!" he cried. "That's luck. Dick's got to prepare for college too, and we're getting a tutor to do the trick for him. You come here and use the same tutor. We want you to. It'll make it better for Dick. Competition—best thing in the world. Will you do it?"

"Of course he will," said Renfrew. He grinned broadly at Scotty. "That's what I mean by earning it," he said. "Giving a bigger value than you get."

Mrs. Ranney put an arm about Scotty's shoulders. She did it in the most graceful, companionable manner possible; like the best mother in the world.

"Of course he will be giving a bigger value," she said.

Ballooning With Pilot 13

(*Continued from page 19*)

pilot was managing to keep awake and at intervals to glance at his instruments.

Finally after I had spent nearly an hour over one farm, idly drifting a few feet one way and then another without making any progress, I stirred up my companion. How he did grumble! He could see no reason why I couldn't let a fellow sleep a few minutes. At last, I convinced him that it was half past four and that he had been asleep more than seven hours, and we swapped places.

I did not sleep more than a few minutes at a time but I did rest my eyes and as much of my back as I could get to touch anything. By the time the sun came into view at 6:30, I had "got up." I never shall forget the grandeur of that early morning scene.

Eagerly we searched the limitless horizon for signs of another craft. We were first up. We called 7:30 the breakfast hour and were making quite a respectable meal of it, seated on our hammock seats idly talking and looking out over that illimitable tumbled mass of rolling, glistening-white clouds. Suddenly to the east of us another balloon pushed her nose up through the clouds, slowly and majestically rising into full view. Miles farther distant to the north we picked up another, and eventually that morning had five in sight. Up to five o'clock that afternoon we could account for all of them. After that time we began to lose them, one after another, as pilots changed from one altitude to another, until at 6:30 the *Belgica* had been for some time the only one in sight. It was then very high, while we were drag roping, trying to ascertain our whereabouts, for we had changed hours before to a westerly direction and that meant the open sea.

We had begun drag roping shortly after four o'clock in the afternoon, calling down whenever we saw an individual to know where we were. Most of them had merely bellowed back "Balloon!"

FINALLY, Hewat set himself the task of settling our exact whereabouts. He opened his cherished phrase book to a page on which appeared in English, "What town is this?" Then with an eye on the German equivalent on the opposite page, he waited patiently to sight someone within hearing distance.

We passed near a group in a field. Calling down through a megaphone improvised from a newspaper, he asked his question. He claimed he asked it in German. Eventually to our straining ears came the magic word, "Balloon!"

"Yes, I know it's a balloon. What I want to know is what's the name of this blankety-blank place. Can't you understand that?"

It relieved his mind but didn't aid us any.

With variations this was repeated several times. Finally, his patience utterly exhausted, as was his vocabulary—English, Scotch, and German—Hewat hurled his precious phrase book far into space.

"Why did you throw it away?" I demanded.

"What good is it?" he asked. "The blamed fools over here don't know their own language."

That ended our attempts at conversation. We decided to depend on our eyes and our instinct. And we resolved to keep the balloon at a low level at all costs, for something told us that we were getting into dangerous territory.

All the night before and until well into that afternoon we had used no ballast. Our balloon envelope was tight and we had lost practically no gas. We had been in the air some 25 hours and were in wonderful condition. The endurance record then was 44 hours and some minutes. We took account of our stock and found that we had exactly half of our ballast. With any sort of luck, we decided, we were going to break the time-in-the-air record if—

That was the trouble. IF we didn't run up against the North Sea. I argued with Hewat that by staying low, if we suddenly came upon the sea, we had a chance to hurry down. He agreed.

So we set ourselves to a double watch. We strained and strained our eyes, trying to make out something of the physical aspect of the land below us. 'T six o'clock we had passed over a sizeable place. Hundreds had seen us and each one had shouted, "Balloon!" or something else. I have always liked to believe that the "something else" was a warning that we were approaching the sea. It must have been. The wind had increased and we were traveling at the best rate yet, slightly north of west. In time that certainly meant the open sea. The question with us was—how long a time? We wanted to go the limit—over land.

Presently, we casually agreed that whatever might happen we would stick together. Neither would leave the basket until the other was ready.

The lights of a large city came into view to the southwest of us, twinkling in the crisp fall air. It was colder that night than the first.

The next thing we knew we were sailing over and across a river. We could see that it was not very wide, and we decided that we could not be near the mouth. Hewat made an entry in the log book at 10:15 that we had crossed a river while traveling very low. We redoubled our vigilance.

Seven minutes later he made another entry—the last in that log book. It was, "Light mist below us." He read it to me and dropped the book in the pocket in the lining of the basket in which we kept it and again resumed his watch. If we only could have seen through that mist!

Nine minutes later it broke, but neither of us thought of the log book. The open sea lay beneath and beyond us, white-capped waves rolling along and breaking as if dissolving in tears at the failure to reach us. It must have been a minute before either of us moved. I know I was trying hard to adjust myself to a condition I had rather expected to face, but not quite so abruptly. I had banked on a chance to drop hurriedly down on the shore.

After that stunned half minute, we both stood up, as if at a given signal, and each unfastened an end of his swing seat to make plenty of room in which to work. Hewat reached over and carefully drew in the life preservers while I reached up and took from the bags in which it was kept the slack of both valve and rip cords and brought them down to where I could reach them readily.

When I turned from my lines, Hewat was holding a life preserver out to me. For a minute, each was busy getting into his preserver. I do not remember that a single word had been spoken up to that time from the moment we had both sighted the sea beneath us. I do not think either of us hurried. But we didn't waste any time.

An electric lamp was tied in the rigging. Hewat snapped it on and looked at his watch. "Ten thirty-three," he said half aloud as if about to make another entry in the log book. Then we both paused to survey the situation.

THERE wasn't a thing in sight that called for cheers just then. The shore had disappeared but there were plenty of whitecaps in every direction and we were making the only real speed of the 30 hours we had been in the air. Away off in the distance almost dead ahead was a beacon light of some sort. Still farther off to our left was another gleam of light, and well to our right were two other tiny lights.

I reached up and took hold of the valve cord. Hewat was studying compass and map.

"Iceland first stop," he said, "if we keep this direction."

"I'm going down," was my reply. "We'll try to get our water anchor to hold us inside those lights until daylight. It's our only chance."

Hewat dropped the compass and map in a pocket and switched off the light once more. He picked up a bag of ballast.

"Let 'er go."

I hesitated to pull. I didn't have much faith in that water anchor. Why go down?

We had a tight balloon, a lot of ballast and we certainly were traveling fast. Yet Iceland, 1,200 miles away, looked impossible. Better drop.

"But once we're down, we may regret it," I said, even as I began to pull on that valve rope.

"Let 'er go," was the laconic response from the young fellow who said he had been ready to quit. Sounded like it.

I opened the valve determinedly and held it open. Moonlight is deceiving, but by some stroke of luck I made the easiest sort of landing.

We certainly were two busy young men for the next few minutes. Of course water soaking into the sand ballast added to the weight and the basket began to settle more and more. The more it settled, the higher up the waves slapped us, an occasional one breaking clean over us, always when my mouth was open.

We finally got hold of one of the sandbags inside of the car and lifted it up to where I could dig into it. I dug out handfuls of the wet sand and put it where it would help to make the water shallower. I was parsimonious. Sand was our salvation; that and gas. It had got to last quite a while.

Soon we decided to try the water anchor, which had been fastened to the rear of the basket, and was by that time under water. We both fumbled with the ropes in the darkness, and finally freed something we supposed was the anchor.

Pup: "How do you know that the trolley has gone by?"
"Because I see its tracks!"

I returned to my urgent task of redistributing sand. It was a job that kept me under water most of the time. Hewat continued working at the anchor. Suddenly there came a jerk. Then: "Quick! My hand's caught!"

I wore a long, open knife in a sheath at my belt. I grabbed it and turned. Hewat was leaning far out over the basket edge, one hand clutching a suspension rope.

I reached farther than I ever had before or since and slashed under water. By some stroke of fortune I got beyond his hand and hit the rope with my knife the first time. The balloon seemed to spring ahead as we both drew back into the basket and Hewat, clasping his hand with the other remarked: "That hurt."

He pawed in the rigging for the light, and for a minute or so we stood nearly to our hips in water, with waves breaking over us every few seconds, and inspected his injuries. The rope, which had caught around his fingers close to the palm, had sawed the flesh off to the bone on three of the four fingers. They certainly were ugly looking wounds. And constant application of salt water did not ease his pain any, he remarked.

I tied up his hand as best I could and suggested that he climb into the ring with the light and wave it. Someone might see it and save us from putting in the rest of the night taking baths with our clothes on. Up he climbed, while I returned to my job of reducing our quantity of sand ballast.

"I see a boat. She's coming for us head on. I see both lights, red and green," he shouted.

I wanted to share that spectacle, and sprang to the rear edge of the basket, holding on to the rigging above.

NOT far away was a small motor boat with a man standing in the bow steering. I could see his body bend and sway as he kept his foothold. Back in the boat I could see another, apparently tending the engine. But in a minute we seemed to be the only thing moving. The boat was standing still. In vain did we shout.

I watched wrathfully as that boat receded in the distance. Then I dropped back with a splash into the basket, and we made the water around us fairly boil with our red hot opinions about sailors, and motor boat men especially. They might at least have wished us good luck.

I began cautiously dispensing ballast once more. Hewat kept on swinging his lamp and grumbling.

Presently he let out another yell: "I see a light, a boat—a white boat and six men rowing. We're saved. They're coming!"

No other man ever got into the ring of a balloon in the time I made then. I particularly wanted to see a white boat and six men. But there was nothing to be seen.

I sat down on the ring beside him while he eagerly pointed ahead and to our left.

"It's right there," he insisted. "There were seven men, six rowing and one standing up in the stern and steering," he explained. He had added a man since he first announced his discovery.

I put one arm in fatherly fashion around him, not forgetting to hang on to a rope with the other. I spoke reassuringly to him, advising him to be calm.

For an instant, he didn't realize that I thought he must have cracked under the strain. But when he did realize it, the things he said and the manner in which he said them convinced me that he was still in his right mind, even if I couldn't see the boat.

I couldn't stay away from ballasting any longer and back I plunged into the basket. I hadn't been there a minute when he shouted again:

"Here they are. See 'em? They're right here for us."

I straightened up just in time to see the tag end of a flare of light and glimpse a big white rowboat with six men rowing and one steering.

They were then very close to us and crossing our path. I heard a gutteral command and could hear the oarlocks grumble.

Hewat came plunging down from the rigging and both of us mounted the back of the basket, peering off into the darkness at our rear.

From the distance came one word in German.

We shouted.

One other word was shouted.

Again we answered.

Then:

"If you've got on life preservers, jump. We can't catch you."

As if we had been practicing a duet for weeks, in perfect unison we sent back over the rolling, whitecapped waves:

"All right!"

HEWAT was standing on the right rear of the basket, holding with his undamaged hand to the ring. I was standing on the left rear, holding on with my left hand. In my right hand I held the rip cord. As I jumped, I was going to rip the envelope and save the balloon.

"Are you ready?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Jump!"

That was my first experience in jumping into deep water. I cannot swim a stroke. I started taking a long breath about the time I hit the water, but I didn't get much air. There was, however, the lowest tide in the history of the North Sea before I stopped inhaling water.

The next thing I knew, I was bobbing around, buoyed up by my life preserver, shoulders out of the water, spouting water like a sperm whale, if that's the particular breed that "blows." I know just how they must feel after coming up from half a mile down and unloading a few barrels of salt water. My feet showed a strong tendency to come up where the rest of me was, and I bobbed helplessly.

But I felt no fear. I had seen and heard the sailors, and I had found that my life preserver was correctly named. I did wonder, however, how long I'd be left there bobbing.

"Keep up a minute more. We're coming. We see you." From out of the dark Hewat's voice came to me several times.

(Continued from page 53)

I tried twice to answer and shipped water each time; so I decided to keep my mouth shut. Suddenly someone hooked a powerful hand in the back of my collar.

"Give me your hand," he said. "I've got you."

It certainly felt as if he had; I gave him my hand. The next instant I had been yanked out of the water like a fingerling trout and landed in my stocking feet plump in the rear of the boat.

Hewat says the first remark I made, as I tenderly held my right hand in my left to nurse it was: "You blamed near broke my wrist." That was true enough, but I managed to make it plain to them later that I really was grateful.

They bent to their oars without asking us any questions. The moon again came through clear and bright, and Hewat nudged me, pointing ahead.

Just rising from the water was the basket of the *St. Louis II*, water pouring from it in streams. I had not ripped the envelope! Probably in the haste with which I'd had to tug when I heard that command "Jump," I had tangled the rope.

"Never mind, old man. We're here," said Hewat, clapping me on the back. "And you did your best to save it."

How that boat was pitching and tossing! The wind must have been blowing more than 30 miles an hour. I shivered. The man rowing stroke promptly yanked his oar in and peeled off his pea jacket. He tossed it to me. "Put that on," he ordered.

I protested, but it was no use. I noticed then that Hewat already had one on. I didn't know where we were, where we were going, or to what. I don't remember that I cared then. I couldn't help thinking about the balloon I ought to have ripped. I never should have left it until I was sure it was going to stay with us.

For forty minutes they rowed through the roaring gale, and for forty minutes my sole desire was to be warm again.

Suddenly a little schooner appeared right beside us. I've never been able to understand why they didn't wait until the right wave came along and let it carry us, boat and all, and land us on the deck, for there were times when we were half as high as the top of the mast.

But, instead, they maneuvered for some time.

Finally the one man on the deck stepped back from the rail and acted as if he were about to catch something. A minute later he caught Hewat as he went flying through the air. Two of the crew had pitched him like a sack of meal.

I went next. Then two of the boat's crew landed on board. One grabbed each one of us and ordered us to come with them.

We were hustled down a companionway. They ordered us to strip. It was some job. Our clothing stuck, and we were shaking so that we could not make much progress with buttons.

Finally, with considerable assistance, I managed to get all of my clothing off. Without warning, someone from the rear soused a bucket of salt water over me and two husky, well muscled members of that boat's crew attacked me with a curry comb, misnamed a bath towel. They didn't let me do a thing. They proposed to dry me and warm me at the same time. I never was so filed in my life.

Then they provided dry clothing for us. I received a pair of gigantic woolen drawers. They came up to my arm pits and wrapped around me about twice. Long, spindling Hewat got the shirt that went with them. He resembled nothing so much as a male Topsy.

Gorgeous, blue woolen socks, blue trousers, ending well above my ankles, a pair of rubbers, and a light brown overcoat completed my attire. Hewat drew a pair of huge slippers that he tied on with string, a pair of generous trousers that he had to turn up at the bottom despite his length, and a snug fitting reefer.

Eventually we found ourselves seated about the long table. We learned that the crew were all naval pilots or apprentices and that the craft was the pilot schooner *Wangeroog*, anchored on the Wangeroog sands, a mile from Heligoland.

They brought us boiling hot stuff to drink, and we sipped it while one of the pilots inspected Hewat's right hand and applied first aid dressing. With the exception of two apprentices and the captain of the craft, every one spoke and wrote English.

Quietly, one of them, who did most of the talking, told us that the watch on deck had seen Hewat's light. He had puzzled for a few minutes over its peculiar actions, and then called others of the crew. They decided that someone was in distress, dropped into their longboat, took with them a huge flare light, which they showed twice to give cheer to the distressed, and rowed with the strong tide but against a thirty-mile wind until they reached us.

The spokesman, having reached that point in his explanation, asked with just the suspicion of a twinkle in his eye if either of us spoke German or French. When we said shamefacedly that we did not he quietly remarked: "I thought not."

A great light dawned on us. "You called to us in both those languages to 'jump,' didn't you?" we asked. He said he had and added that he did not know what he would have done if we had not understood English for that was the end of his list of languages.

WE sat around that table for an hour or so, telling them of the race and of our own general course, and learning just where we were and what they would be able to do to get us back to land.

Incidentally, we told the pilots of the motorboat and its two men who had made no effort to give us aid. Our new friends were obviously disturbed and consulted among themselves, sometimes in English and then again in German, until one of them with a shout of comprehension sprang up. In another minute they had spread a most detailed map of the waters of that vicinity on the table.

The chief spokesman put a stubby forefinger on a spot and said quietly that we were exactly there. Then straight and true his finger followed back on our course as we had described it, and stopped near a peculiar mark.

"That was your boat," he said with a slow smile.

"Well, if it were anchored there, why didn't the crew try to help us as you did?" we demanded.

Then they explained that it was not a boat but a buoy that marked a turn in the narrow channel at that point. It carried, that particular buoy did, a red and a green light; and because of the pitching and tossing, the faint moonlight, and the distance between us and the buoy, we had managed to make ourselves believe that we saw men where no men were.

Having convinced us of that, the pilots put us to bed in bunks, and I promptly went to sleep and slept until they shook me awake in the morning to ask if I did not want to send messages to my friends.

Hewat and I wrote cable messages to the folks at home, "Rescued at sea." To the Berlin Aero Club I cabled, "Lost all but lives in North Sea last night." This reached Berlin minus "but lives" and caused some speculation among friends and acquaintances, who wondered from just which quarter of the hereafter I was cabling.

After one of the pilots had rowed to Heligoland and sent the cables for us, they weighed anchor and started for Wilhelmshaven, their headquarters, although they were not due to return for five days.

In due course of time we crept up to the Wilhelmshaven wharf, and two uniformed individuals leaped down to our deck. One was a messenger boy with a telegram from the *Lokal Anzeiger*. The message congratulated us on our "fortunate escape"

and requested "a complete account of the trip from the nearest telegraph station."

The other was an aide of the commanding officer of the port, who inquired solicitously after our health and asked whether there was anything his chief could do for us. If ever a man strove manfully to keep his face straight, that aide was the individual as he took in the details of our comic opera costumes.

We thanked him, explained that I had to get back to Berlin at the earliest possible moment, and that our most crying need was sleep. He said that he would at once arrange for quarters for us at the Loheyde Hotel.

After we had shaken hands with each of the crew, the officer bundled us into a carriage and speeded us to the hotel, where we certainly got service.

Money was our great concern, for we had left nearly all we had safely tucked away in the balloon basket. But Mr. Loheyde, the proprietor, assured us that we need not worry about our accommodations, and we found our slender resources would just about cover the separate trips we had to make immediately. Hewat wanted to get to Scotland to a surgeon brother and I had to get to Berlin. Once there I knew I could borrow enough somewhere to get me to London to await Hewat's return from Scotland, where he could temporarily replenish the treasury.

Mr. Loheyde steered Hewat to a local surgeon who inspected the hand and said that he would do nothing more for it; that the care it had received would serve until Hewat got to his brother. I wrote a fairly long message to the *Lokal-Anzeiger*, and spent most of the rest of my time at a stand-up telephone in the main office trying to satisfy newspapermen who seemed insatiable.

WE finally arranged that I was to leave on an early morning train for Berlin to make my report, while Hewat would leave an hour or two later for London. Mr. Loheyde himself awakened me, went with me to the station, and saw me in my compartment.

The train had barely got under way before I realized that, like a lion in a menagerie, I was on exhibition. Everyone on that train except, possibly, the engineer walked by the door of my compartment and a considerable percentage stopped to stare. I could not understand their comments and they did not get good connections with my inmost thoughts.

Finally we pulled into the station at Berlin. As I stepped from my car, two newspapermen dashed for me, and circling behind them was a crowd. Two photographers set off flashlights. I was rushed out of a side door and into a taxicab and away we went to the hotel, both men firing questions.

IT seemed that all sorts of tales had been told and retold in Berlin about us and others and that I was the first of those who had "hit the water" to get back. Hewat and I hadn't broken the 44-hour endurance record, as we had hoped to do, but we drew as many congratulations as though we had. And being first on the ground, I skimmed, with some dismay, the cream of the glory. In the immense lobby of that magnificent hotel, men rushed at me, slapped me on the back, shook hands; women fluttered handkerchiefs at me from the outskirts, and children were held high as if I had been a celebrity instead of a North Adams newspaper man.

I was pushed and shoved into the courtyard of the hotel, where a battery of cameramen were waiting. It was a good deal like being backed up against a wall to be shot, only it was not sunrise and I was not blindfolded.

Then I was taken up to my room, which turned out to be a private suite, in which my trunk and Hewat's had been placed. Piled high on our table was a quantity of congratulatory telegrams, cards, notes, flowers.

The newspaper men pleaded their deep desire to catch the cables in time for papers in America and while I undressed, climbed into a tub, dressed and generally got back to earth, seven correspondents followed me around, making me talk. They ripped open my telegrams and cablegrams, notes and cards, and read them aloud to me. I never have known how much of the cabled accounts of that interview were what I said and how much was what they thought I should have said.

Later I told our story to Mr. Dozier, who had the appearance of having lost some sleep, and after one day of straightening out our affairs there, with a loan from Mr. Dozier, I went to London. Hewat joined me there, and we finally sailed for home, second cabin, on the *Lusitania*—mighty glad not to come as stowaways, and wondering when we'd get our next chance to go ballooning.

We'd helped arouse interest in travel in the air, and we'd had a good time doing it, even if we did get all wet.

Barto Got Away!

MANACLED, he was—manacled to a constable of the R. N. W. M. P. And guarded by two other men, one of them Renfrew.

But that did not stop Barto, for the man had the strength of a bear, the courage of a lion. "The Man Who Followed Through," next month, is an amazing tale of escape and a chase—a tale of suffering and endurance and surprising, thrilling plot-quirks. It's one of Laurie Y. Erskine's best. Another Renfrew story.

The God of 2.5

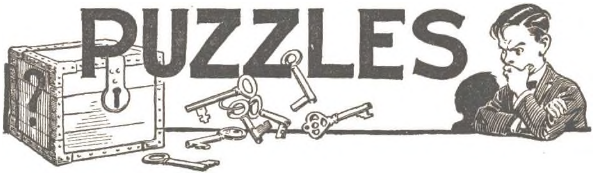
ON the days that "the god of 2.5" at United States Naval Academy is in favorable mood, the middies will tell you, examinations are likely to be passable. But if this stiff old wooden Indian is grumpy, woe to those with exams to take!

"The god of 2.5" is really a wooden statue of Tamanend, or Tammany, the celebrated ancient chief of the Delaware Indians. In 1821 the statue was placed on the ship of the line *Delaware* as its figurehead; when the *Delaware* went out of commission old Tamanend was mounted on a brick pedestal facing the entrance to Bancroft Hall at Annapolis.

Since Tamanend, as chief of the Delawares, was noted for his wisdom in council, his statue is looked upon as a symbol of learning and, therefore, deserving of tribute.

Now midshipmen call the old Indian "Tecumseh" and religiously, as they march past him on the way to exams in the Academic Building, salute him as a mute prayer for good luck in their work. The passing grade in Annapolis classes is 2.5; hence "Tecumseh" is known as the god of 2.5.

Not long ago a middy conceived a notion that tossing pennies to the statue might be more effective than saluting; but it didn't prove to be so! Students at Annapolis call the Academic Building "Satan's Palace" and Stribling Walk, leading to it, the "Devil's Highway."



No. 685. Rebus.

If you've studied biology, I'm sure you will see
A part of the canal called alimentary.

Cleveland O. TRIUM ALL.

No. 686. Word Hunt.

Find as many five-letter words as you can which, when continuously beheaded, make a new word each beheading, up to the final letter, thus: Wheat, heat, eat, at. A special prize will be given for the longest list. Five words will be counted a correct answer, but will not win the prize.

NORMALITE.

No. 687. Linkade. (7 letter word)

Fill the blanks with words which when put together will make the word designated "Complete." The words must dovetail together, like past, to, or; pastor.

While on my European vacation last summer at a ——, I used all my —— in trying to attain a coat of ——, so I sat in the sun every day, bearing the pain like a COMPLETE of old.

Maysville, Ky. THE OWL.

No. 688. Two-State Towns.

Find as many towns as you can situated on the border of two states and named for, both of them, like Texarkana, named for Texas and Arkansas. The towns need not be in both states. The author wishes to get a complete list. Five names will be counted correct, but there are several more. A prize will be given for the most complete list of such towns.

Mt. Vernon, Ill. FLO BALLWOOD.

No. 689. Charade. (5 letter word)

("First" and "next" (by sound) together make "whole.")

My First presents an honored female name,
But lovingly abbreviated.
My Next, a man's, and treated just the same.
Now if these two were only wed
(To the altar duly led)
They'd be My Whole, it might be said.

Chicago, Ill. KING O' FOOLS.

No. 690. A Puzzle to Con.

(Example: Add "con" to a part of a shoe and make to comfort. Answer: Console.)

Add "con" to a den and make hollow. To an island and make a compound or mass. To a dog and make to agree. To a string and make a city prominent in the Revolution. To good and make to shut up. To solid and make to verify. To the past tense of find and make perplex. To a hunt and make subjection. To the past tense of send and make to agree. To annoy and make arched up. To a poem and make to talk with. To entice and make disdain. To a shelter and make satisfied. To a place for live stock and make an officer of the law.

Cincinnati, O. W. M. Q.

Prize Offers.

Best complete list, $1. Best list of five, four, and less than four solutions, 75c, 50c, and 25c. Two special prizes for best answers to Nos. 686 and 688. Honorable mention for all lists of four or more correct answers, and credits for as many as answered; twenty-five solutions earns a book. Vote for the puzzle you like best in this issue, and the author of the most popular puzzle will be given a prize. Contests close at the end of this month. Address Kappa Kappa, care THE AMERICAN BOY, Detroit, Mich.

Answers to June Puzzles.

673. Ayeaye, berber, bonbon, bulbul, cancan, chocho, digdig, dikdik, dumdum, geegee, motmot, murmur, pawpaw, pompom, tamtam, tartar, teetee, tomtom, tootoo, tumtum, wou-wou, wow-wow, zoozoo.

674. Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, Wisconsin.

675. Two flocks of wild swans, 131 in all, flew over here on April 21, 1925.

676. Dressing.

677. Lottie, the tattle tale, told thirty tales to Etta.

678. Author, baker, banker, barber, barker, brakeman, butcher, caterer, carter, chef, "cop", dancer, doctor, farmer, financier, interpreter, lawyer, lumberman, notary, orator, painter, piper, player, plumber, poet, porter, priest, printer, racer, rancher, reformer, sailor, soldier, tailor, tamer, technician, tuner, violinist, waiter, writer.

May Prize Winners.

Best complete list: Elm Burk, Sanborn, Ia.
Best five solutions: Kak, Rexville, N. Y.
Best four solutions: O. Boy, Fairview, Kans.
Best less than four: Fred Wegl, Shawano, Wis.
Best list of radios: A. Q. Cumber, Farmington, Minn.
Most popular puzzle: Aewa, Ada, O.
Books for 25 solutions: A. Q. Cumber, Minn.; C. A. Longaker, Calif.; Charles Powell, N. C.; Dan Banta, Wis. (7th book); Don Key, Mo.; Essel Doubleyou, Pa.; Eureka, Mass.; E. Z. Dunn, Mich.; Fatty, N. Dak. (13th book); F. E. Bruary, Ia. (7th book); Harry Vetch, Mich.; Ic Ive Von, Kans.; Ike N. Hunt, N. J. (7th book); I. R. Ishman, N. Y. (13th book); Iva Rived, Minn.; Jack Canuck, N. Y. (12th book); Jeebi, Ill.; James III, Calif.; Kelly Lagle, Ind.; Lightnin', N. J.; Lloyd C. Haley, Me.; Miss Teerie Mann, Kans.; Monroe Cooling, Mo.; Moron More, N. Y.; Mun Kee, Va.; O. G. Re, O.; Osaple, Tex. (16th book); Percy Verance, Alta.; Robert Downing, Mo.; Robert Howes, Wis.; Skip, Vt.; Suey Side, Ont.; Tryem All, O.; W. Francis Stevenson, S. C.; William Neely, Pa.

Honorable Mention.

Completes: A. B. C. D. Goldfish. Albert Bond, Alexander McIver, Ambitious, Archer & Nasmith Ltd., Aunt Tena, Blockhead, C. A. Longaker, C. I. Dunham, C. L. Spears, Craig McGinnis, Dan Banta, Darling, Don Key, Dub-el-Chyn, Ed U. Cation, Elm Burk, Elsie, Eustace L. Fish, E. Z. Dunn, Fatty, F. E. Bruary, 5Arn, Geo. Metry, Harold C. French, Harry Vetch, Henry Overholt, Herbie, Iam Rite, Ike N. Hunt*, Ima Jean Yus, I. R. Ishman, Ivan Itch, Iva Rived, Jack Canuck, Jack Halpin, James III, Jay Kay, Justa C. Ker*, Kelly Lagle, Lee Van Avery, Leo Kahn, Lester F. Brewer, Lightnin'*, Lloyd C. Haley, Miss Teerie Mann, Mun Kee, Osaple, Paul Boulon, Ray D. O'Bugg, Robert W. Downing, Sam U. El, Sara Swift Walker, Seaweed*, Seedy Ell, Shep, Suey Side, Taki Ali Kahn, Tee N. Tee, The Gink, The Wise Fool, U. Neek, Watchama Callet, Wendell Crawshaw, W. F. Stevenson, William Neely, Wolf Cub, XKZQPT.

Five Solutions: Akie Jew, A. King, A. Q. Cumber, Art Knopinski, Augustus II, Ban Anna Earl, Baron Braynes, Baron Waiste, B. Swaks, Bull O'Knee, Charles Powell, Colonel, Desperate Ambrose, Dray, E. Hart Ford, Erle C. Edington, Flo Ballwood, Frederick E. Wirth, Gar, Harold Crowder, Howard Zettervare, H. S. Zuckerman, Ic Ive Von, Ima Lone, I. M. Crazy, Jeebi, John Child, Kak, K. G. Malone, Laurence Gibson, Leroy Jacobs, Marvin Pountney, M. E. Carpenter, M. I. Init, Monroe Cooling, Moron More, M. Scott Hunter, Nala G. Nol, Noah Count, Norma Felszli, O. G. Re, Old Black Joe, Onyx, Paul Clark, Percy Verance, Prof. Pieface, Ralph Hannah, Ray Zinn, Robert Howes, Robert Wooley, Sakr-el-bahr, Sir Cumference, Solv M. Awl, Thos. J. Perkins, Tryem All.

Four Solutions: A. P. Rill, Blackstone, Boyer W. Voisard, Carl Castellan, C. S. Betts, Jr., C. U. U. Aitch, Dent, Donald Stirtz, Ed Bowen, Edwin Butner, Essel Doubleyou, Flying M., Fysterious, I. Kan Duum, Im A. Skunk, I. M.

Rite, Ina, Iver E. Soap, Jadie, John A. Baumann, Ketch Up, Knor Tweasy, Lewis J. Verburg, Maurice Roberts, M. W. Whidden, Normalite, O. Boy, Oley, Paul L. Davison, P. K. Boo, Ptah, Ralph E. Theobald, Ray D. Um, Raymond R. Travis, R. Jay Ess, Robert Hegman, Robert Tracy, Ronald D. Pickett, Safe T. Pyn, Sambo, Skip, Sosure Oldman, So Ur Wun, Wilkinsburg, William O. Lay Jr., X. Y. Z.

261 solvers in all, and 36 original puzzles received.

* Signifies two honorable mentions.

Puzzle Talk.

Kappa had several critical letters because the answer to the triangle puzzle was given "1554 or thereabouts." The Gink assures us that the correct number is 1882, and that surely is not "thereabouts" to 1554. To tell the truth, Kappa is not a mathematician, and those 1554 triangles were laboriously counted out. We are glad to be corrected. . . . . A letter addressed to Marbury Raymond was returned unclaimed. Please send your correct address, Marbury. . . . Will Normalite and Prof. Pieface please send us their real names, so we can give them proper credit?

—*Kappa Kappa.*

The Cub Dives In

(*Continued from page 17*)

The man knocked on the shack door. After a short pause he was admitted. And sixty seconds later Tatum and Lanaha slipped from the dark tunnel that was Pier 6, walked quietly and rapidly to the door. From under the drawn shade peeked a tiny plane of brilliant light. Joe put his shoulder to the door, gathered himself, hurled his weight against it.

A revolver was in his hand as he and Tatum flung into the room. He did not need it. On the far side of the table in the center of the office stood, unarmed, two sullen, astounded men—the pilot and his boatman. On the table was a sizable pile of red and black tins—tins that looked for all the world like tobacco boxes. But what Tatum saw first was on the near side of the table. There, his hand still outstretched to the other two with a little packet of green bills, his thin face ashen, his mouth jibbering and his eyes wide with fear—stood Andrew Crosby, commissioner of ports for the Territory.

Two days later Tatum and Whiting were on the customs launch, waiting to board a vessel from San Francisco. Tatum was flushed, a bit embarrassed. For Whiting had just asked him, as he had asked him once before, "Well, old man, when are you going to spring another big story? An opium story?"

And there had been no light of derision in his smile.

Stamps in the Day's News

By Kent B. Stiles

Reading from left to right: 1. Juhaland map stamp. 2. Malta pictorial. Design, Publius. 3. Malta pictorial. Design, Malta harbor. 4. Malta pictorial. Design, Neptune, with trident, overlooking harbor. 5. Malta. Design, King George's head and Malta's coat-of-arms. 6. Turkey. Design, white wolf and blacksmith. 7. Turkey. Design, Sakaria Gorge. 8. Turkey. Design, Angora, Turkey's capital, with Angora Fortress in background. 9. Turkey. Design, Mustapha Kemal Pasha, Turkey's President. 10. Turkey postage dues. Design Kizil Irmak bridge. 11. Egypt. Airmail stamp. 12. Poland. Design, Holy Gate at Vilna. 13. Union of South Africa. Design, orange tree. 14. Syria. Pictorial overprinted for Druze warfare refugees and thus converted into a charity stamp. 15. Syria. Pictorial first surcharged to convert it into a Druze warfare refugees charity stamp and then overprinted with an airplane device to make the stamp postally good on airmail. 16. Greece. Stamp commemorating centenary of final siege of Missolonghi. Design, Victory mourning for fallen soldiers.

ITALY is now using the postage stamp as one medium of letting the world know where her colony called Jubaland —or "Oltre Giuba"—is located. See the accompanying illustration of Jubaland's new adhesive—40 centesimi rose—with a map of this Italian possession in Africa. A person studying this stamp learns Jubaland's geographical position—to the north is Ethiopia; to the east, Italian Somaliland; to the southeast, the Indian Ocean.

The seated figure on the 1 shilling 6 pence green and black of Multa's new series is Publius. Who was he? Let us turn to the Bible. In the Acts we learn how Paul was shipwrecked—in the 28th chapter we find the following verses:

"And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Malta.

"In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously.

"And it came to pass that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

(*Continued on page 58*)

(*Continued from page 57*)

"So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed."

Thus is the postage stamp once more associated with religion—illustrating anew why philately is such a fascinating hobby. Incidentally St. Paul is shown on the 10sh stamp of the new series, just as he was on the 10sh of the 1899 set.

If you will look at the 1sh value, gray—here reproduced—of Malta's new set you will see what Malta's harbor looks like. Neptune, with his trident, stands overlooking the harbor, on the 3sh ultramarine and black. The set's lower values—¼, ½, 1, 1½, 2, 3, 4, 4½ and 6 pence—have as their uniform design a small head of King George in the upper right-hand corner and Malta's coat-of-arms in the lower left.

Turkey: The mythical blacksmith and white wolf are illustrated on the 10 paras sepia, 20pa gray and 1 grouch orange; the "smithy" and the beast are reputed, in Turkey's legendary history, to have assembled the country's scattered tribes in the early days and to have welded them into the unified nation that is now the republic. The Sakaria Gorge, where Turkish forces were victorious over the Greeks in war, is pictured on the 2gr green, 2½gr gray-purple and 3gr copper-red. Angora, the Turkish capital, with the Angora fortress in the background, is depicted on the 5gr purple-blue, 6gr scarlet, 10gr blue and 15gr orange. A portrait of Mustapha Kemal Pasha, the republic's president, appears on the 25gr green and black, 50gr carmine and black, 100gr sage and black and 200gr brown and black. The design of the postage dues—20pa yellow-bistre, 1gr red, 2gr green, 3gr brown violet and 5gr lilac—is the Kizil Irmak bridge, a Turkish engineering achievement.

Egypt: One of the first stamps issued after the Land of the Nile recently began printing its own postal paper is an airplane adhesive—27 milliemes, purple—with a "flying machine" as the central design.

Poland: A view of the Holy Gate—"Ostra Brama"—is a design new to Polish philately; the Holy Gate is at Vilna, and it is shown on the 1 grozy brown. A vessel at sea with all sails set is pictured on a new 45gr value.

Union of South Africa: What philately will consider one of the most beautiful and artistic stamps ever issued is a newcomer from the Dark Continent—6 pence orange and green with a design notable for its simplicity and coloring: a tree with oranges nestling among green boughs. This adhesive has also been overprinted for use in South West Africa, over which the Union of South Africa holds a mandate as a World War aftermath.

Syria, Lebanon and Alaouites: The 2, 3, 5 and 10 piastres denominations of each of these States of the Syrian Federation have been overprinted with an airplane in deep red, thus providing twelve new airmail stamps. In addition, eight more airpost adhesives have been created in this way: 16 values of Syria's current stamps and 16 of Lebanon's current stamps have been overprinted "Secours aux Refugies," thus converting them to charity (or semi-postal) adhesives, some of these surcharged stamps bearing also overprinted new denominations and being sold to aid refugees from towns which suffered from the Franco-Druze warfare in Syria. Of these 32 stamps, 10—that is, 5 each from Syria and Lebanon—have been given a second overprinting—the deep red airplane. The two stamps illustrated will give you the idea: the 50 cents on 1.50pi, rose in color, is one of Syria's regular pictorial set surcharged to help the refugees; the 3pi Syrian stamp, brown in color, carries *two* surcharges—first, to convert it into a charity label, and, second, to make it postally of use on air mail.

Greece: The Greek stamp here shown commemorates the centenary of the final siege of Missolonghi. The design represents Victory mourning for the fallen warriors. Of 25 lepta in value and of dull mauve in color, this adhesive was for compulsory use on letters for a period of three months. If you will turn to your history you will find that the Battle of Missolonghi took place during the Greek war of independence, which began in 1821 and culminated, in 1827, in Greece attaining liberty from the yoke of Turkey.

FUNNYBONE TICKLERS

A Good Reason

"Julius Caesar didn't have a hair cut for ten years."

"I didn't know he was eccentric."

"He wasn't. He was bald."

Interpreted at Last

A teacher conducting her pupils through an art museum stopped in front of Rodin's famous statue, "The Thinker." She asked them what they thought he was thinking about. "Oh, I know," replied one little boy. "He's been swimming and can't remember where he put his clothes."

Now You Tell One

A mule and a Ford are said to have met on the highway.

"And what might you be?" asked the mule.

"An automobile," answered the Ford; "and you?"

"I'm a horse," replied the mule.

And they both laughed.

Come to the Point

"David, ver are my glasses?"

"On your nose, fadder."

"Don't be so indefinite."

Page Mr. Mussolini

Frosh (rushing into library): "I want the life of Caesar."

Librarian: "Sorry, but Brutus beat you to it."

Static's Ancestor

But how do the scientists hope to conquer static when after all these years they can't make a fussy steam radiator shut up?

Improve Your Aim

"I see you have a sign in your store, 'We Aim To Please'," remarked the irritated customer.

"Certainly," replied the proprietor, "that is our motto."

"Well," retorted the I. C., "you ought to take a little time off for target practice."

A Mere Detail

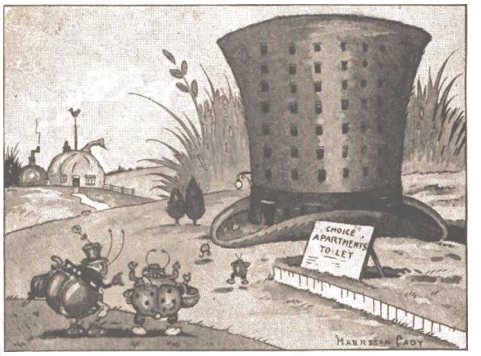
We hear that it was so foggy during a recent football match that the game went on for half an hour before it was discovered that the ball was lost.

'Twould Require Tact

Simmons had returned from his vacation.

"I certainly enjoyed the husking-bee," he said to a friend. "Were you ever in the country during the season of husking-bees?"

"Husking-becs!" exclaimed the girl; "why I never heard of that! How do you husk a bee, anyway, Mr. Simmons?"



Ol' Mr. Bug: "It certainly does beat all, Ezra. There was a time once when plain old punkin houses were good enough—but now everyone must live in one of these new-fangled sky-scrapers, by heck!"

Ties Up Tongue Traffic

Professor: "What's the most common impediment in the speech of American people?"

Freshman: "Chewing-gum."

Correct

George: "Well, I answered a question in class to-day."

Fred: "What answer did you give?"

George: "Present!"

Call the Manager

A Berlin faster claims to have gone forty-four days without food. It is our opinion that he should have either given his order to another waiter, or tried a different restaurant.

And Plug the Keyhole

"Doctor, can you cure me of snoring? I snore so loud that I awaken myself."

"In that case I would advise you to sleep in another room."

A "Shiner"

Father (reading a letter from his son at sea, to mother): "Myopia says he's got a beautiful lamp from boxing."

Mother: "I just knew he'd win something in his athletics."

Biting the Pebbles

Nowadays, when a local boy hits the grit, he may be burning up a gravel highway or he may be working on his daily assignment of spinach.

The Saying Proved

"Man wants but little here below"—some people are even satisfied with themselves.

Or Cooking 'Em

Tommy and Willie, observing man in barber shop having hair singed:

Tommy: "What's that man doin'?"

Willie: "He's huntin' for 'em with a candle."

Saving

"What's a saving sense of humor, pa?"

"I suppose, my son, it's the kind possessed by some people who always want the joke to be at the other fellow's expense."

To the Pearly Gates

Famous last words: Watch me do sixty miles an hour!

Gets the Right of Way

The man who toots his own horn soon has everybody dodging when he approaches.

Least Resistance

"When I was twenty I made up my mind to get rich."

"But you never became rich."

"No, I decided it was easier to change my mind."

Contents for August

Cover drawing by *J. Scott Williams.*

You'd feel bad if they thought it about *you*

When Lifebuoy's on the job, you don't have to worry

EVER notice how, with some of the fellows, you're always ready for a good catch-as-catch-can wrestle? Get all mussed up, sweaty and have a whale of a good time?

But you never somehow like to tackle Jim. You're a match for him, of course. But to be frank, Jim *smells.* You just don't like coming to close grips with him.

You'd feel mighty bad, wouldn't you, if people felt about you—even to a slight degree—the way you feel about Jim.

Yet this business of body odors is something *every* youngster has to get wise to himself about, sooner or later. And the best way is to understand the *cause.*

What causes body odor

Just so long as you're leading an active life, you're bound to perspire pretty freely. If your pores stay clogged up with this perspiration, it forms acids—and *that's* what causes the unpleasant odor.

Bathe daily with Lifebuoy and you remove the *cause.* Ordinary baths help, of course, but their effect is soon lost unless Lifebuoy is used. It's the *antiseptic* in Lifebuoy that gets way into the pores—floods out these odor-making poisons—*purifies* the pores and skin so that no odor is possible even on the hottest days.

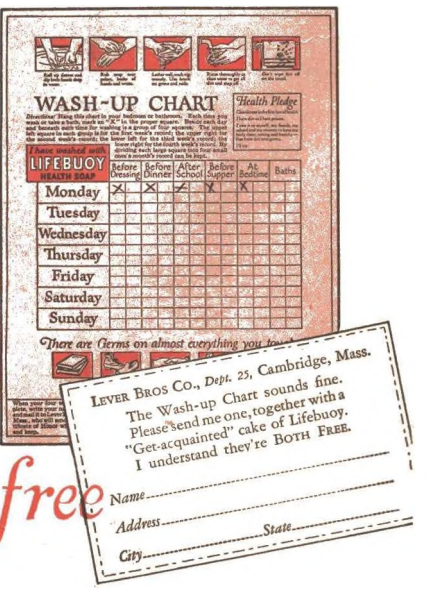
Your mother and father will tell you this. Your coach will tell you the same thing. Ordinarily, people don't like to talk about such things and that's why, perhaps, so many youngsters never realize that there is this disagreeable drawback about them.

Be on the safe side

Don't just wonder if you're like that. Get a cake of Lifebuoy and hop into a tub with it every morning. Then you'll *know* you're all right.

Lifebuoy has a clean, antiseptic odor which rinses away completely. Its orange red is the color of its pure palm fruit oil.

Millions of boys, by the way, are using the Lifebuoy Wash-up Chart as a convenient check-up on themselves. Why don't you send for it? It's free.



free

LIFEBUOY

HEALTH SOAP