The March American Boy

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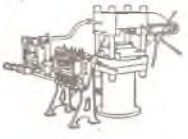

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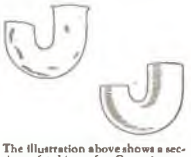

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Volume 27 MARCH, 1926 Number 5

THE SUDDEN SHOWMAN

By Rex Lee

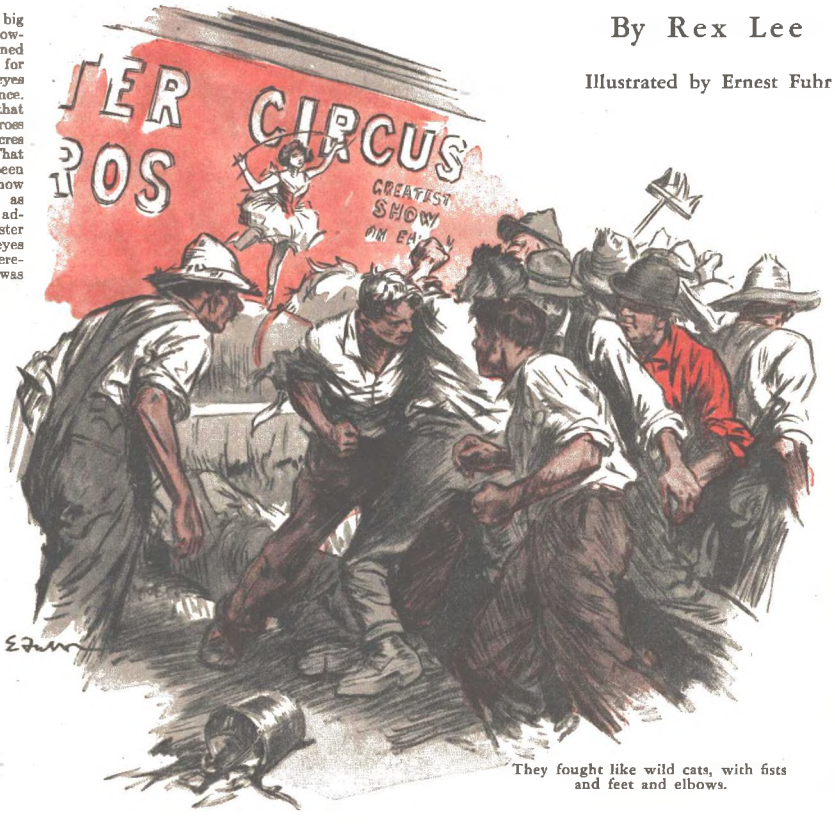
Illustrated by Ernest Fuhr

AS Rann Braden sent the big truck he was driving slowly over the road, his tanned face was melancholy, for once, and his level blue-gray eyes gazed absently into the distance. Half unconsciously he noticed that the big billboard directly across from his employer's rolling acres had gaudy new sheets on it. That made the fourth time it had been changed. First the Selfridge show billing had appeared; then, as though by magic, the flaming advertisements of the larger Brewster Brothers' circus had met the eyes of all passers-by. A week thereafter, Selfridge again—now it was Brewster for the second time.

Rann—short for Randolph—had seen the big white advance car of the Selfridge circus down at the depot weeks ago, and he wondered vaguely why the bills should be changed so often. The two shows were coming into Grayleyville, ten miles away, within ten days of each other, and apparently they were fighting like mad to see which could outbill the other.

Well, it was nothing to him, anyway. Fat chance he would have to see either show, for that matter, as long as he worked for Jarvis. And there didn't seem to be any opportunity for him to work elsewhere.

A cloud of dust became visible, a mile and a half ahead. The next second one of the big busses that plied between Grayleyville and Ponton rushed into sight around the turn, going so fast that the dust billowed up as though in the path of a whirlwind. Must be behind schedule, Rann reflected, and then immersed himself in his bitter thoughts once more.



They fought like wild cats, with fists and feet and elbows.

It had been a stunning surprise he'd had two weeks before. Henry Jarvis, posing as his dead father's friend and then as Rann's own, had proved a snake in the grass. It wouldn't have been so bad if he'd come out in the open, admitted he held the mortgage on the former Braden farm, and foreclosed it like a man. But hidden behind a banker's skirts, sending Mr. Braden into his grave with worry, taking the farm, employing Rann himself afterward "just to give my friend's boy a chance—"

"Just to get a hundred and fifty dollars worth of work a month for forty," the blonde young giant told himself savagely—and he knew it was true.

That onrushing bus was fairly eating up the road, but Rann paid no attention to it. For two weeks his mind had been in a turmoil. Jarvis was a close, hard-fisted, puritanical old man—Rann had always known that. And when Rann's father had died, he owed Jarvis six hundred dollars that Rann had known about. Neither father nor son had known that Jarvis, and not the bank, had also held the mortgage on the Braden acres. Rann was working for forty dollars a month and his board, collecting only ten of it and letting the other thirty apply on his father's debt.

AND he was worth more. Somehow or other he had always been a natural mechanic—handy with his hands, and with a real love for machinery and fine workmanship of any kind. All the machinery of Jarvis' great wheat farm Rann kept in apple pie shape, from trucks and tractors to the great reapers and binders, and in his spare time a hundred repair jobs kept him busy. The electric light plant, wagons, the two passenger cars—he was really boss mechanic of an institution that was large enough to keep a crew of at least three skilled men. And for forty dollars a month! And slaving for a man whom he'd thought his best friend, tied down by an ironclad contract to work until the six hundred dollars had been paid at the rate of thirty dollars a month! Jarvis had tried to say that he'd bought the Braden farm from the bank to add to his own holdings, but Jim Weatherby, the Braden lawyer, had told Rann differently. It was Jarvis who'd held the mortgage all the time, and egged on the banker, his agent, to dun Mr. Braden into his grave.

THAT bus couldn't be overlooked any longer. Its powerful motor roaring like mad, it came thundering down the smooth road at close to fifty miles an hour. Rann got well to the side of the road as he scrutinized it interestedly. It was full of men, and there must be something vitally important ahead to make it go so fast. It was marked "Special," too.

Suddenly there was a report like a cannon shot. The great car veered perilously, and skidded wildly toward the ditch. For a few seconds Rann literally stopped breathing, as he watched the driver right his unwieldy car.

Then he heaved a sigh of relief. The bus came to rest within six inches of the ditch. Dog-gone good driving, Rann reflected. He himself could have done no better, and he was a real driver since he'd been putting in eighteen hours a day for Henry Jarvis.

A swarm of men erupted from the bus as Rann stopped his truck. A tanned, roughly-dressed, competent looking crew, too, in overalls and soft straw hats with the brims turned down. Most of them seemed beyond middle age, and as they shouted and talked there was a strange tang in their speech. There'd been a blowout in one of the rear tires, and they cursed it picturesquely.

"Nope — not a spare on the crate!" yelled a gray-headed fellow to an old man who walked with a cane. "We'll be two hours late unless—"

"Look there!" yelped a high-pitched voice. "That there billboard's covered with Brewster Brothers' paper ag'in!"

Several curses boomed forth, and then the gray-haired man, his bull-dog jaw thrust forward and his white moustache wiggling with wrath, barked orders.

"You, Tampa Slim and Johnny Jumpup, git over there'n and cover quick. And we'll git into Grayleyville if we have to go on a flat!"

As the two men designated leaped into the bus, Rann noticed, for the first time, that there were several long-handled brushes stacked in the rear. A second later, before he had alighted from his truck, he saw three men emerge from the interior of the car, one with a pail of paste, another with brush and great sheets of paper, and a third with two more brushes. This must be the billing crew of the Selfridge show.

Rann's heart jumped a bit, for the inborn love of a circus that seems imbedded in every fellow was unusually strong within him. For the past few months, Rann's life had been just about all work and no play.

Most of the men were grouped about the tire, but the boss billposter and the gigantic old man in a Panama hat were walking toward him. Without thinking he found himself shouting to them:

"I'm going to Grayleyville, suh, for a load of feed in a few minutes. Soon's I load a few things aboard. You-all are welcome to a ride."

His Southern dialect had persisted despite three years in Iowa, and in his softly slurred speech the drawl of the Southland was ever obvious.

"Great! And you'll be paid!" stated the old man, who was the only one in the lot boasting a collar, necktie, and coat. "We've got to be there within a half hour! How about twenty-five dollars for the use of your truck, and you drive it?"

"Yes, suh!"

He wouldn't bother to load up—those tools could wait, anyway. And Jarvis would be tickled to make twenty-five dollars for practically nothing. He didn't think a bit more of his right eye than he did of a nickel.

"Load everything on this truck!" yelled the boss, and the men hove to without delay. There was an air of wild excitement about the gang—bright-eyed and flushed, they seemed to be laboring under some half-pleasant strain. Rann was tingling with an anticipation

which he could not quite analyze. Perhaps it was the thrill of having anything, however slight, to do with a circus—but surely something was up—

"I'll turn her around, suh, and be all ready," he told the old man calmly, and suited the action to the word. As he finished swinging the big truck, he saw a horseman galloping across the fields from the farmhouse. That would be Jarvis. He'd be tickled at that twenty-five dollars. Somehow Rann rebelled against the mere thought of giving the old skin-flint that money. How he hated that granite-faced, hard-eyed hypocrite!

THE three men had covered the Brewster Brothers' paper and were on the truck when Jarvis came galloping up, riding crop in hand. In his wide-brimmed straw sombrero, he was a huge figure of a man as he sat his big horse easily, and his shaded face was thinlipped and impassive as he shouted:

"What are you doin', Rann? What are these roughnecks doin' on that truck?"

Rann leaped lightly from the seat to the ground, and walked toward the cold-eyed Jarvis as he explained.

"These are circus men. Their bus had a blowout, and they're giving twenty-five dollars for the use of the truck to Grayleyville. I told 'em I'd take 'em right in, inasmuch as I was going in anyway—"

"Oh, you did, did you?" barked Jarvis. "Well, you listen to this! I'll tell you who's to ride in my trucks and what they're to do, understand? And no sneaking, thieving showmen'll use 'em, either! Get down off that truck, the hull kit an' boodle of yuh, and git down mighty quick!"

Rann's lean, high cheek boned face colored faintly, and suddenly hazel flecks were dancing in his ordinarily tranquil eyes. His body was afire—the humiliation of this scorching before these men, and the entire uselessness of Jarvis' attitude! It was just because Rann had dared to make a move for himself.

There was a second of silence. Rann's racing mind found one solution for Jarvis' ridiculous raving. He hated diversions of all kinds—said they were inventions of the devil. The real reason he hated them, according to Young, the old foreman, was that it took people's minds off their work. Probably he figured some of his men would want an afternoon off to see the show.

But it was utterly preposterous! The truck was going to Grayleyville anyway, and these men evidently had business which was vitally important. Jarvis simply hated Rann himself because he was the son of his father, hated these men because they were circus men, and, like the old tyrant he was, was delighted to upset their plans.

The outwardly tranquil, contained young Southerner was boiling inside as his face flushed redder. First his father, then he himself, had been oppressed by Jarvis, and now he was being humiliated deliberately—

"We're willing to pay you liberally, sir, for the use—" started the old man soothingly, but suddenly Rann injected himself into matters.

"Don't say a word!" he drawled evenly, and now his face was white and grim. "I'm going to take these men into town in your truck, Jarvis, whether you like it or not! And I'll hand you the twenty-five and your truck and then I'm quittin' an' you can do what yuh like about it, suh!"

"At-a-boy!" yelled some irrepressible billposter. They were like boys as they crowded to the side of the truck, watching.

"You've got a contract, and by gum, you'll keep it!" snarled Jarvis, crowding his horse close to the wide-shouldered Braden. "Get these men off that truck!"

For answer Rann turned, and walked deliberately to the step. Without looking at Jarvis he put his foot on it and started to swing up.

The next second a shout of "Look out!" preceded, by a split second, a quick grasp on his shoulder that sent him spinning down into the dust at the horse's feet.

"Get back to the house, you young whelp!" yelled the infuriated Jarvis. "And, by Godfrey, I'll teach you that you're a hired man and that you'll do what I say, you whippersnapper! Get off that truck, the rest of you!"

As Rann bounded to his feet his brain was white-hot, and it seemed that something must happen to relieve him or he'd go mad. Never in his life had he felt like that before—red spots were dancing in front of his eyes.

"Let's get the old rube!" yelled a scornful voice, and the next second a wave of men rolled over the sides of the truck.

The spirit of boyish zest that had seemed to possess the tanned showmen had changed into something deadly. Before Rann could move, a half dozen men were surging toward Jarvis. The farmer raised his riding whip, and put the spurs into his horse. The big animal leaped forward straight at the billposters.

There was a wild scramble, and one man went down. The next second Jarvis was dragged from his horse, fighting like a wildcat. The men were ugly-faced, and as Rann leaped forward fists were rising and falling swiftly.

With all the strength in his superb body and cat-like muscles, Rann fought his way in. The billposters were knocked aside like tenpins and Rann heaved and threw them out of his way. He reached Jarvis' side just in time to hit the boss billposter squarely in the jaw and send him kicking an instant before his own blow would have landed on the rugged Jarvis.

"Get on that truck!" yelped the youngster as the nonplused showmen stood about in puzzled wonder. "Jarvis, I am through. I'm driving this gang to Grayleyville, and then I'm done, and you can do what you like about it! You'll get the money Dad owed you all right if I have to starve to death myself — but I'm through!"

Abruptly his wild rage lessened — settled down into something cold and hard. He walked to the truck, and got to the seat. The billposters, muttering among themselves, climbed on, throwing occasional jeers at the raging Jarvis.

"You'll be in jail two minutes after you get to town!" Jarvis roared at Rann, but the blonde Braden did not answer. A quick look around to see that everyone was on, and he sent the truck on its way.

THE old man with the cane was beside him on the front seat; the rest standing in the rear. Rann drove with his eyes straight to the front, and his heart was heavy. Jarvis would make good his threat, and Jarvis was powerful. And Rann was in the wrong, technically. He had no right to take Jarvis' truck. But somehow the man had goaded him into madness. He'd even got in bad with the circus men. He'd hit the boss himself on the jaw—and he'd had wild visions of maybe joining the show. Now he had a fat chance—he'd be in jail—

"Good work, son," came a quiet voice in his ear, and he turned to meet the shrewd, wrinkled old eyes beside him, twinkling through the shielding glasses. "You are helping us—and you saved a nasty fight back there."

"The kid's there, ain't he?" came a loud voice. It was the boss billposter. "Just as I was gonna paste this old geezer, the brat hits me, and I'll swear I'm groggy yet. How about it, kid? Thought we was doin' you a favor! What ails the old coot? We just got tuh git to Grayleyville—"

Again the spirit of the gang had changed. As Rann sent the truck roaring over the road, the men behind him seemed to have forgotten all about what had passed. Apparently it was just an incident in their eventful lives—and what was ahead was all that mattered. And the boss hadn't grouched at all about being hit!

"What's up, sir?" Rann finally asked the old man.

"Billing war," he returned slowly. Somehow it appeared to Rann that the circus man was persistently sizing him up. His eyes seemed always on the youngster beside him.

"The Brewster Brothers' show is covering up all our paper—they don't get in until ten days after we do—and trying to freeze us out. We've got a right to the locations, and by the mighty, we're going to keep 'em! And we can't afford to keep our billing men hanging around here until the show comes in, covering and recovering the boards! The big show can. So we're having a showdown to-day! The Brewster crew's in Grayleyville covering our paper, and we'll catch up with 'em, believe me!"

The old-timer said this with a sort of joyous ferocity. It was plain that he must have been a veritable colossus of a man in his youth. Even now, bald and old as he was, his mighty shoulders and huge body, without an ounce of fat on it, had all the earmarks of power. And never in his life had Rann looked into eyes like those. It seemed as though there could be no secrets hidden from them—that wisdom and the insight which makes no mistakes dwelt in them.

Back in the truck the gang were laughing, talking, reminiscing, an undercurrent of excitement running through their words. The boss billposter was saying:

"When I was with the Comanche Bill show in 1905, I tangled with old Roche when he was with the Halebard-Walters show. Butte, Montana, it was, and we kidnapped old Roche for three days and his men didn't know what to do or where to go! When we got out of town, we'd had that town papered for three days from one end of it t' the other, and Roche was so far back on his schedule that he couldn't take five minutes to cover!"

"Roche is pretty smooth, though!" interrupted another voice. "I worked with him with the old Allen show. In Orange, Texas, I'll be dog-goned if he didn't cover the Will Coleman show paper and then get deputies to sit and guard every location until the Coleman crew had to leave town! The mayor in that town was a friend o' his."

"Roche knows pretty near as many mayors as old man Ironley!" laughed the boss. "How about it, Jim?"

The old man beside Rann chuckled.

"Uh huh."

"Look at the kid drive!" shouted somebody as Rann dexterously avoided two bumps. Despite himself, Rann flushed with pleasure, although at the same moment there was something that seemed to stick in his throat. To hear these adventurers of the road talk so casually of robust struggles from Maine to California—to glimpse the two-fisted, devil-may-care spirit that animated them, brought a feeling of hopeless envy to the orphaned Southerner.

IT seemed that he was tied hand and foot—had been ever since his father died and left him in debt. Somehow, within himself, he felt that there were capabilities which had never been brought to light. It was maddening to be frustrated—to sit and watch the world go by without a chance to do more than drudge along.

Then his heart bounded with the knowledge that at last he had taken the bull by the horns. That contract was illegal—he was a minor. He'd intended to live up to it, but surely he had a legitimate excuse to break it. Underpaid, overworked, ill-treated by a man he had just found to be his enemy—that was reason enough to walk out on him. He'd go to jail, if he had to, over that truck business, and then he'd go out and fight the world on his own and beat it. He'd slave at anything to pay off that six hundred dollars, and then, with all the earth before him, he'd wrest from it the education and the experience and the success he felt he had it in him to achieve.

He couldn't get over the sportsmanship of the boss billposter. Rann had knocked him down, and the gray-headed old wanderer was laughing about it! And how those jovial roughnecks looked forward to the coming struggle!

That made him think of something. He turned to the old man beside him, and over the roar of the motor shouted:

"If the locations are yours, I should think the law—"

"Only a few of 'em are regular leased billboards," explained his companion. "The rest are private locations that we get for tickets. The Brewster show comes in and gives tickets for them, too, for their paper. It's not supposed to go up until after we leave, of course. But it always does, when we play close together. And while we were winning a lawsuit their paper'd be up, our show'd have come and gone, and our bills wouldn't be in sight. We've got to depend on ourselves, that's all!"

The truck was entering the outskirts of Grayleyville now, and Rann had to slow down. He knew that Jarvis had called up, and at every crossing he watched the policeman for a signal to stop. Jarvis wouldn't miss the chance — not when he'd been in a temper like that. And the bitter, heart-sick Rann knew in his soul that although he had been technically wrong, he was morally right. His motives had been above suspicion —and Jarvis had had no right to humiliate him—nor to knock him down. It was just his tyrannical, stubborn disposition that caused him to fight the ideas or wishes of anyone in the world. These billposters were in the right, and it had been an opportunity to do

Rann drove with his eyes straight to the front.

them a favor and make money at the same time.

"I'm wrong, and yet I'm right, too!" Rann reflected, but that sickening feeling within him would not down. Jarvis would never let up on him, he knew, and Jarvis was a powerful man — the biggest farmer in the county, a director in the bank, one of the political big bugs of the state.

"There they are—and that there shed's plastered with their paper!" yelled a man they called Fishtail, and Rann's level eyes leaped ahead.

A long horse shed, close to the center of the town, was covered with flaming Brewster Brothers' paper. Just one end of it still held the Selfridge billing, and they were preparing to cover that. And there were fully thirty men gathered around it.

"We gave sixty tickets for that!" came old Ironley's meticulous voice. "Best location in town!"

"And are they expectin' us?" chuckled the boss. "Ask me, Jerry, are they expectin' us? Well, here we come, laughin' and scratchin'!"

And suddenly Rann's heart leaped at the spirit of the crew behind him. It was all in the game, to them—and in place of hatred there seemed to be a boyish zest which would not down.

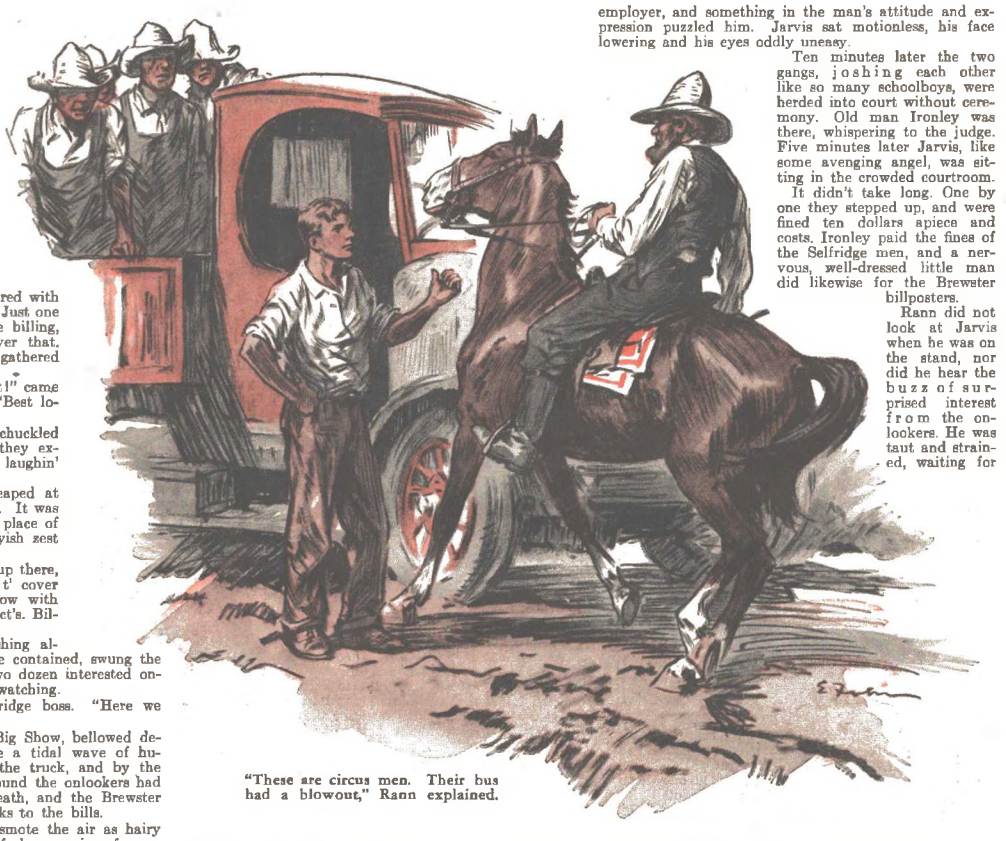
"In ten minutes our bills'll be up there, and they won't have no desire t' cover 'em," grunted a squat little fellow with his hair cropped close as a convict's. Billiard Ball, they called him.

Rann, his blue gray eyes flashing although his face and manner were contained, swung the truck up alongside the curb. Two dozen interested onlookers were on the sidewalks, watching.

"Hi, Roche!" roared the Selfridge boss. "Here we come, big boy!"

Roche, boss billposter of the Big Show, bellowed defiance but come they did. Like a tidal wave of humanity the billposters were off the truck, and by the time Rann had leaped to the ground the onlookers had melted to one side, scared to death, and the Brewster men were fighting with their backs to the bills.

Shouts and laughs and curses smote the air as hairy arms rose and fell. Soon a half dozen pairs of men, locked together, were writhing on the ground. They fought like wildcats, with fists and feet and elbows. Rann, on the outskirts of the melee, saw Ironley clamber down from his seat, cane in hand.



"These are circus men. Their bus had a blowout," Rann explained.

FROM all directions came people—in cars, in wagons, on foot, to watch. Rann saw two policemen galloping toward the fight, blowing their whistles frantically. His powerful body at ease, although his eyes were like stars, Rann watched, aching to join in and help the outnumbered gang who were trying to capture the location to which they were entitled.

Suddenly a stunning blow hit him on the side of the head, and he stumbled to his knees. Like a flash he was up to meet the charge of a big, bearded fellow who was weilding the broken handle of a brush. Pantherlike, Rann slipped his head aside and took the blow on his shoulder, and then leaped in. They went to the ground in a flash—and the bearded Brewster man did not arise for the moment.

Then two men rushed him, and he struck out with fists that darted through the air like twin rattlesnakes. Years in the "Y" gym back home, before he had come North, had made of Rann a perfectly controlled man of muscles, and the last three years on a farm had filled him out and given him strength. With a fierce joy in the battle he was soon in the thick of the melee, fairly mowing his antagonists down.

"The kid's in again—watch him go!" came a stentorian bellow sounding plainly above the motors of automobiles, the screams of women, the shrill of policemen's whistles.

Suddenly Rann found himself at the board, and turned with his back to it. A heaving, kicking mass in front of him parted, and the disheveled boss came catapulting through.

"Hi, Kid!" he roared breathlessly, an instant before he went down from a blow that caught him from behind.

Quick as a cat Rann stooped and grabbed him, warding off a punch with upraised arm. The next second he had thrown the unconscious boss close to the fence, and with legs spread wide over him was fighting a ring of gleaming-eyed enemies. He alone of the whole Selfridge crew had reached the board, and suddenly that stable wall became a symbol of victory which must be held at all costs.

It seemed that the Brewster men felt that way too. Six of them, jammed together, strove to drag him down. Quarters were too close for real fighting. What advantage there was in the massing of the men was in Rann's favor, for his short-arm jolts had the effectiveness of the trained boxer's, whereas the others seemed lost if they could not swing. His blonde hair, glinting in the sunshine in wild disarray, his shirt torn from his back and bronzed shoulders showing the rippling muscles beneath, Rann jabbed and pushed and heaved. Once two men got to his neck and dragged at him, and as he clawed them off another was kicking at his feet. Staggering, breathless, aware of the wild shouts of his accomplices as they fought desperately to get to him, Rann was like a smiling, indomitable Viking.

Twice he went down, but each time, with gargantuan heaves, he came up again. As though in a dream he could see old man Ironley watching, as he sucked the head of his cane and smiled. Then the wild blare of the police patrols, and he redoubled his efforts. That wall must be held—

The last minute before the reserves came plowing through was a bedlam—a riot. The Selfridge men, shouting like Indians, made a last desperate effort to win. And Rann, with momentary space to work in, sent two men down. For an instant the others gave ground. Then, as they came forward, Rann picked up a little fellow with a wide, set grin on his face and quickly threw him into the middle of his advancing companions.

As the police came charging through, the fighting stopped in a second. Grinning men, nursing bleeding noses and spoiled teeth and tender shins, argued hotly about who'd won. And Selfridge had the edge.

The ferocity seemed to have died with singular abruptness. The police were so surprised they didn't seem to know exactly what to do. The rioters filed into patrol wagons and commandeered cars, and the policemen were actually smiling as they heard shouted remarks like:

"Look at Roche's nose! Who hung it under your ear, Roche?"

"Frisco, if I'd had one more belt at you I'd have knocked a hole right through to China with you, you'd a hit that hard!"

"Where's the kid? Hi, Kid! Why didn't yuh post a few bills when yuh got there?"

Somehow there was a warm feeling in Rann's heart as he climbed in the patrol wagon. It was like a big farce—didn't seem serious. Then a hard, fleshy face leapt up at him from a parked Ford.

Jarvis! He'd taken no chances, but driven in to see that Rann was jailed. He must feel satisfied now, Rann thought grimly. He stole another look at his former employer, and something in the man's attitude and expression puzzled him. Jarvis sat motionless, his face lowering and his eyes oddly uneasy.

Ten minutes later the two gangs, joshing each other like so many schoolboys, were herded into court without ceremony. Old man Ironley was there, whispering to the judge. Five minutes later Jarvis, like some avenging angel, was sitting in the crowded courtroom.

It didn't take long. One by one they stepped up, and were fined ten dollars apiece and costs. Ironley paid the fines of the Selfridge men, and a nervous, well-dressed little man did likewise for the Brewster billposters.

Rann did not look at Jarvis when he was on the stand, nor did he hear the buzz of surprised interest from the onlookers. He was taut and strained, waiting for Jarvis to rise and accuse him of anything, from stealing a truck on. The suspense was maddening—but Jarvis neither moved nor spoke up to the time they all left the courtroom.

Rann found himself beside Mr. Ironley as they trooped out, and that gigantic old-timer said:

"I want to have a talk with you, son, I—"

"Here's the human typhoon now!" yelled Frisco Red loudly. "Typh, give us your fin. You're there, boy!"

The red-headed little Irishman shook hands solemnly, and others crowded around the young Southerner and joshed the Brewster men about what a "sucker," which is the name for all people outside the show business, had done to them. Then a voice from the curious crowd reached Rann's reddened ears, and he stumbled toward Jarvis. For a second he was apprehensive—then that unwonted look in his harsh employer's face brought him a ray of hope. Had some miracle come to pass?

"Rann, you did me a good turn this afternoon," mumbled the farmer. "I ain't gonna send yuh t' jail. And you needn't work no longer."

For a moment Rann was literally paralyzed. What had come over the hard-bitten old farmer? He did not see Ironley smiling gently behind him, nor did he know that during the melee Ironley and Jarvis had held converse together, and that Ironley had talked considerable turkey to Jarvis. The old showman had taken in the situation thoroughly—and Jarvis, who had no desire to have his underhanded meanness and the day's humiliation broadcast through all the neighboring towns, had not been hard to convince when Ironley argued that it would be better for him not to press any charges against the boy.

Rann accepted Jarvis' decision with a nod, his steady eyes probing deep into the older man's.

"Good-by, suh," he drawled gently. "Yuh'll get every dime I owe yuh as fast as I can make it. I know what you did to Dad, suh, and even if yuh did have a right to do it, legally, that doesn't keep me from wanting to keep the smell of such as you out of my nose.

"One thing more. From your skinflint angle, I was wrong about the truck. I apologize."

He'd forgotten, momentarily, that Ironley wanted to see him. When he turned from Jarvis, it was like turning into the unknown. Anything might be ahead. The world was before him, to fight and maybe—

"How'd you like to be a circus man, son?" came the old man's gentle voice, and Rann turned like a shot.

In the momentary silence Ironley looked over the youngster again. Broad forehead and cheek bones above a small, square chin, and *(Continued on page 43)*

The Man Who Fought for Gold

By Laurie Y. Erskine

Illustrated by Frank E. Schoonover

Lyfe would watch him jealously, with burning eyes.

NO one could tell the story of Barto, the black man, better than Renfrew could. It was Renfrew, a constable of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, who had ferreted out the part which Barto had played in the murder of Lyfe at Sagrinay, Alberta. It was he who had run the giant black man to earth and, with Staff Sergeant Deming, had captured him; and, with Deming, Renfrew had sat all night in the bare little office of the police post at Sagrinay listening to the black man's story.

That was the beginning of it. The whole of it, the story as Renfrew afterwards told it to the boys at Walney, was made up of many contributions. There was the many paged report which came from Nome, Alaska, and there were the various documents concerning the origin and the position in life of the boy, Scott McLeod, whom Barto had tried to steal. All these things came afterward; were collected laboriously, with infinite patience, by the police. Yet they were all a part of the black man's story, and Renfrew had a way of putting them together. . . .

"The story starts in Nome," he told the boys, who had been bombarding him with questions. "Barto, the black man, was born in Bermuda, but at the beginning of this story he came to Nome."

"Why?"

"That's the story . . ."

And thereafter nothing was heard but the quiet voice of Renfrew as he rode in his memory, the scenes of past adventure.

BARTO was a black man, and he looked like an Indian; his mother had been a West Indian negro, his father an Aztec. The mixed blood gave him an aspect of resolute but sinister strength of body and intention. Also, he derived from remote forebears a remarkable dignity, so that as he sat in the police post that night at Sagrinay, a confessed murderer, and claimed from both sides of his ancestry the blood of kings, his words carried the sound of truth.

"And my ancestors were kings of civilized people," the black man had said. "When you white men were barbarians, living in reed huts, they dwelt in palaces, surrounded by men of learning. I, too, am a man of learning."

And he was. As Renfrew and Deming sat there in the room with the gigantic figure of Barto making them feel small and fragile in their gay scarlet tunics, they realized that the deep-voiced giant was a man of learning. Yet they realized, too, that the black man's learning, like everything else about him, was fantastic, unfinished, rude with the rudeness of rough, hand-hewn things. Barto had gone to college, and had studied with a mind eager to learn—but something had held him back.

"It's hard to explain," said Renfrew, as he told the boys the story. "But it's something like this: Suppose you desire to travel from here to the city. You can follow the open road and see not only the road itself, but everything beside it and beyond it. Everything that makes up and has built up the road. Or you can take the tunnel; it will get you there just the same, but you won't see anything or hear anything but what is on your train.

"Barto had tried the tunnel route to knowledge. He had learned all right, but his peculiar mind, with its obsession of kingship, had sent him into a tunnel which he followed all through college. And he had learned only what was on his train of thought."

And Renfrew's story went on to show that Barto's train of thought was this: That the white man owed his rise from the reed hut to a civilization which exalted him above the ancient civilizations of Africa and Aztec, to his knowledge of the metals. All through his studies of history, literature, and chemistry, Barto had twisted everything he learned into that mental tunnel—because the white man had conquered the secrets and the uses of metal, the white man had conquered the earth. Barto had left the college at Mexico City with a colossal jumble of facts which he had twisted into proofs of his own ingenious theory. Then he had gone to work.

He had gone to work as a sailor, because that would take him out into the world. His father's means had stopped short of helping him after college, and he had had to make his own way. It had been a hard way, for he had found that the barbarous white men with whom he came in contact had no use for the blood of ancient African kings, save to make it work for them. So he had brooded over the matter of metals, and made his way from one mining community to another, intent on wrestling the white man's secret from him. He had learned long before, of course, that the most powerful of the metals was gold. But he had become aware that he must learn how to get control of great quantities of gold.

You can picture Barto sitting there in the dim lamp light of the Mounted Police post at Sagrinay: explaining all this in the middle of the night to Renfrew and Deming. He explained it very seriously, very deliberately and earnestly. To him it was a reasonable and logical argument for nothing less than murder. Barto was a most remarkable criminal, because in his own dark, straightforward mind, he was not a murderer at all. He was an irresistible force, moving relentlessly toward a goal which had been conceived in heaven knows what remote, jungle conflicts, and his movements were dictated by cold reason.

He must have gold. Surely Renfrew could see that? Could appreciate that? And Deming. Deming was a redcoat, a white man, who was the creature of the white man's law. Couldn't he understand how necessary it was for Barto to have that gold?

Renfrew had made no answer, had merely sat there watching with thoughtful eyes every shade of expression on the black man's face—with his hand on the holster of his revolver.

"What did you do then?" Deming had demanded, plainly eager to hear the black man's story.

"I went to Nome!" Barto had answered—and the story surged on.

BARTO went to Nome, in Alaska, because in those days every man greedy for gold was on his way to Nome. You can picture him there in that grand, rock littered country of majestic distances, a dark and sinister figure, gigantic, in a teaming mob of gold hungry adventurers. He was welcomed there because of his strength, which was equal to that of two or three ordinary men. There were arduous trails to follow, and heavy burdens to transport over those trails. Where other men struggled against the roughest barriers of unpitying nature, and many died from exhaustion on the trail, black Barto came through with a magnificent and invaluable ease. So he carried the burdens of many men, and was richly paid for it. He carried the burdens of Ralph McLeod.

McLeod was one of the fortunate ones. He had been among the first of the gold seekers to find gold, and he had staked out a claim where the yellow metal was rich in the gravel: a fortune at the feet of the worker; a visible temptation, a garden of gold. And to this garden McLeod brought Barto to be his laborer and burden bearer—Barto who must have gold to win the kingship which was in his blood.

Barto came, bearing a great load of provisions and supplies for the lonely, frightened miner. Yes, McLeod was frightened. He had found a rich claim, he had found this garden of gold, and he was frightened, because he knew that Alaska was crowded with men who had staked their lives and fortunes upon finding such riches as his gravel flaunted to the eyes of every passerby. He knew that many of those adventurers would not hesitate to rob him if they could; so the poor fellow, seeing in the mighty strength of the black man a valuable guard against aggression, engaged to protect his gold, Barto, who later was to use his need for that metal as a logical excuse for murder.

That was a terribly ironic thing. And it was pitiful, too, for among the innumerable men who came to the North in greed and for adventure, McLeod was one of the few who had come for a purpose unselfish, even if it was a foolish purpose and a vain one. McLeod had a son. And that was all he had. In the lonely evenings which he and Barto spent in the shack which McLeod had built upon his claim, he used to tell the black man

Barto, the rifle across his knee, took the first watch that night, Lyfe obediently retiring into his sleeping bag.

Barto found McLeod in the snow. He lay beside the trail in his sleeping bag.

about his son. The boy was all McLeod lived for, he used to say for the boy's sake he had joined the gold rush, and for the boy's sake he lived here in squalor and bitter hardship, working his claim and storing his gold in little leather bags. When he had panned the gravel of its last crumb of the yellow metal, he would go back to the boy, and it would give that little fellow a chance his father had never had.

"I want he should be a gentleman," little, red-haired McLeod would say. "Not like me, just a struggling farmer, and a roustabout. He's going to be a gentleman, and go through the colleges with the best of them. When I go back to him I'll be a rich man, and then he can have everything he likes."

Poor McLeod quite overlooked the fact that among the things the boy might have liked was the presence of a father: that an honest farmer could have been a better father for the boy than a wandering gold miner. Perhaps Barto thought that, too. Perhaps he thought that the absent and far distant little white boy was a thing of no importance whatever—if he did, he was to find out his mistake later. Anyway that night at Sagrinay he told Renfrew and Deming quite frankly and openly, in his dignified, deliberate way, that while McLeod talked of what he was going to do with his gold when he'd got it all out, he, Barto, sat there silent, and considered how he was going to take the gold away from him.

THEN Desmond Lyfe came into the story. Barto told how Lyfe came in with the first snow, behind a team of five hungry, savage dogs, cursing and swearing at them in his harsh, cruel voice.

He ran his team up to the door of McLeod's shack, and bellowed for admittance.

"Come on, there!" he yelled imperiously. "Come out there, McLeod! Open up! A man can freeze to death in this cursed snow!"

Black Barto opened the door of the shack, and stood in the doorway. He must have made a startling and impressive figure as he stood there, slightly stooping under the beam which held the door jamb.

"What do you want?" he boomed in his deep voice.

Lyfe stood, surprised, his dogs yelping and snapping about him without restraint as he stared at the black man.

And Barto saw fright in his eyes, for an instant.

Then: "Isn't this McLeod's claim?" demanded Lyfe, and he turned on his dogs with a whip he had in his hand, lashing them into silence.

"It is," he said. "Come in and let us shut this door."

Lyfe hurried in, and Barto, closing the door, saw that it was now McLeod's turn to be afraid—and guessed that his fright was for his gold.

"How did you find me here?" McLeod asked.

"Don't be a fool!" Lyfe swore, jovially. "Your name is down in the land office records at Nome, and they're all talking about your find. You have all the luck, Mack."

"No, no," protested little McLeod. "It isn't a rich claim, Lyfe. It's a disappointment. It's not going to work out, I'm afraid. Not well, anyway."

Again Lyfe swore. He was black browed and bearded, swarthy of face, and harsh.

"Don't lie!" he swore. "It'll work out well enough for us. Who's the nigger?"

And when he said that, Lyfe, in a queer way, sealed his own death warrant. . . . This, Renfrew came to realize as there in the Mounted Police post at Sagrinay he pieced together the things Barto told consciously in words, and the things he told unconsciously in gestures, bearing, and facial expression. . . . With Lyfe's first coming to that shack, Barto had seen in the black-browed Irishman a rival in his greed for McLeod's gold—and you must remember that Barto was rapidly reaching the conclusion that it was excusable to kill a man for possession of that metal. Then Lyfe called him a nigger. The black man never forgave Lyfe for that.

"I am Barto!" he boomed from his corner in reply to Lyfe's question. "You must not call me a nigger. I do not let men call me a nigger."

"Oh," said Lyfe, seemingly somewhat taken aback. "Barto!"

"Yes," said the black man. "Barto is my name. You must not call me a nigger. I do not let men call me a nigger."

All this he probably boomed out in his even, dignified manner, and his gigantic bulk, his savage, resolute face, doubtless gave his words an indescribable weight. Up there in the North, a man feels exceedingly isolated. At that moment Lyfe must have felt isolated with this great black man: a puny, insignificant force ranged against that magnificent, irresistible bulk. At any rate, he capitulated.

"It was just a figure of speech," he said.

"But," said Barto when he told his story to Renfrew that night at Sagrinay, "I knew then that he was my enemy. From that moment it was him or me. I knew it."

McLeod must have known that Lyfe was his enemy, too. Lyfe evidently made no secret of it. In brutal, bullying fashion, he took possession of McLebd, his cabin, and his claim.

"When you left Seattle, Mack, I lent you seven hundred dollars," he said bluntly. "That ought to give me at least a three-quarters interest in your diggin's."

"Why don't you take it all?" cried McLeod bitterly.

"I might do that," mocked Lyfe.

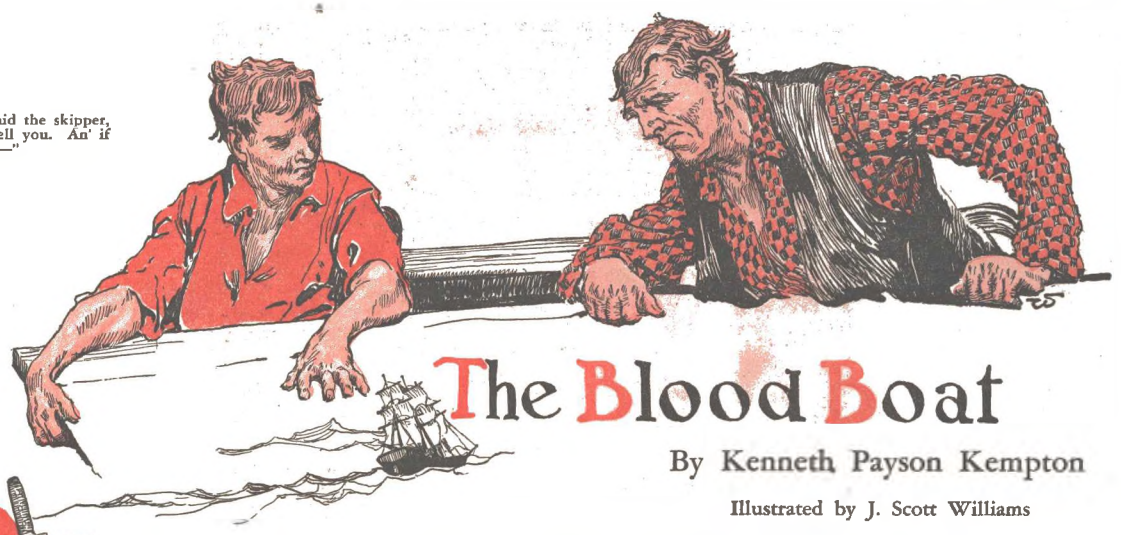
So he joined them there in the shack, an unwelcome guest. And there were the three of them, each greedily determined that the store of gold with which they were isolated in that waste of snow, should be his own.

Barto told Renfrew and Deming how he used to sit in silence and listen to the other two men wrangle over the increasing hoard. From the black man's queerly, almost childishly, faithful report, Renfrew could reconstruct those days: with Lyfe brutally, outspokenly, intent on stripping McLeod of as much as he could take, and McLeod desperately determined to see that the turbulent Irishman got nothing; with neither of them suspecting that the silent black man, greedy for the key that would exalt him above the white men, was planning, while they quarrelled, to outwit them both.

And the gold kept piling up in its little leathern bags in the corner of the cabin. Little leathern bags full of great riches which trickled out in golden streams whenever one burst open. This happened frequently, for neither Lyfe nor McLeod could leave the bags alone. As the winter closed in upon them, they were forced to spend more and more of their time together in the shack. Probably because of the hatred which lay between them, they had little to say to one another, and they turned to the gold as if for companionship; just as, for companionship, a lonely man might turn to a dog.

McLeod used to draw up a stool beside the pile of little bags, and pat them softly, stroke them gently. Then, very gently he would move them, rearrange the pile, so that he might stroke and pat those which were hidden by the bags which lay on top. Lyfe would watch him jealously, with burning eyes; and then, when the rude sewing with which the bags were sealed burst open, he would leap from his seat and swear at McLeod for a fool. McLeod, silent and distressed, would then scrape from the floor every crumb of the precious metal and carefully sew up the gaping mouth of the little bag. And doubtless Barto, black and gigantic, lounged in his corner and watched these things with the sombre gaze that betrayed to neither of the men what was in his mind.

(*Continued on page 63*)



"Listen," said the skipper, "and I'll tell you. An' if you laugh—"

The Blood Boat

By Kenneth Payson Kempton

Illustrated by J. Scott Williams

FOR half a day the wind blew from the northwest, and it blew like blustering sin. Forthwith it slung itself into the south and blew something better than a whole gale for thirty hours. And then it looked over the compass card, selected east northeast as the wickedest corner, got there backwards by the shortest route, and for one solid brutal week tried to blow the poor old Atlantic off its hoary moorings.

And the *Peregrine* weathered it. That is, she kept topside up. . . . With her long white snout hove-to first in one quarter, then in another, with a little rag of a jib set forward and a little patch of a storm trysail clinging to her mizzen, the three-master that had had to be towed out of Cape Coast Castle, for want of wind, fought it out alone there in about seventeen forty-five north and thirty-six west. Her exact position, though, is of no moment; for Thaddeus Horne had seen nothing to train his sextant on for ten days, and the line of pins straggling along the chart unrolled on that doughty skipper's table, which marked her progress northwestward, had therefore ceased to struggle from that time on. Foul weather had in fact struck the *Peregrine* on the very evening that the African coast line, dim on her starboard quarter, had sunk into the sea.

Her timbers groaned piteously. Her seams had started, forward: for she was very heavy with her million feet of mahogany logs—very heavy, very sullen, very tired. And the gray gulls that coasted over her plunging crosstrees looked down to see men with drawn gray faces, driven by Drew, the mate, at the pumps that endlessly gushed white bilge across her swept decks.

Still and all, she was afloat. Everything considered, this was worth gratitude.

In the creation of Thaddeus Horne, however, that humble quality had seemingly been clean forgotten. He was a hard man—hard as flint, and as cold, save when anger took him. Then . . . well, he had half-killed a man in Singapore, for some petty disobedience.

The great gray-bearded skipper's life had been an eternal battle, against long odds perhaps—an endless procession of encounters with sea and men from which, it is true, he had hitherto always snatched victory. But trouble dogged his wake. His iron hand had known mutiny and typhoon, sometimes men screamed to bestiality under his rule: always winds and seas pursued him.

HIS first command had been the *Martha Rowe*: and she was barely fast to the India Dock, home from her first hectic trip, before the water front knew her for a "blood boat." Now he had sailed the *Peregrine* for ten months, and she had for that long been whispered a "blood boat," too; and Horne, finding worthy seamen reluctant to sign articles with him, had been forced to make shift with rabble from the water front hang-outs.

And here he was, three thousand miles from home and just afloat—no more. Running true to form, as you shall see.

But no gale can last forever. In mid-afternoon of the tenth day of bad weather came timorous but certain signs of clearing. The black clouds were breaking, rifting, shredding away from a wan patch on the westerly horizon. The seas were mountainous still: but no longer wore their crests jagged with flying spindrift. The water, glaucous for days, began to look faintly blue. Blocks and stays aboard the *Peregrine* sang a lower tune.

Thaddeus Horne stared sourly, contemptuously, at the breaking sky. Then he laughed shortly—defiantly. Again he had won.

From the white-pillared poop rail he called to Drew in her waist. The schooner was taking less water. He ordered the pump-watch continued till she sucked air: after that, one man was to stand by at the well and report the rate of leakage.

Then he turned his broad back without another word and went below for his sextant. There would be a horizon soon. In another hour he could put the foresail to her. Maybe—

But here's a strange thing. As the sleek blue cap of the skipper disappeared past the cabin transom, Calvin Drew turned to that knot of six men at the *Peregrine's* pumps.

Picture it. The mate was thin and dark as a taut, tarred ratline. His eyes were small and shadowy under heavy brows. A scar, running from the corner of his mouth halfway up his left cheek, gave him a humorous look: but he never smiled. He was stooped, silent—the smouldering sort. And those seamen were pitiful. The fear of death had bunked with them for days. They were water-front scum, riffraff—dirty, haggard under long hours and scant food. Whipped dogs they were—whipped mongrels with bared teeth.

So . . . Drew turned to them. And his right eyelid shut down in a hideous, solemn wink.

The crew of the blood boat rushed... kicking, crowding.

SOME time later the mate followed his superior down the after companion. Horne had shot a misty, rifting sun long since, and established the *Peregrine's* long-lost position. But as Drew's boots appeared on the ladder, the skipper was still bent over the chart on the table.

In his cringing way Drew hesitated. Then:

"She'll stand the mizzens'l, sir. Will I . . .?"

For long Captain Horne made no sign. His eyes never lifted from the chart. At last still without looking up, he said, "Will you what?"

"Will I set it?"

"No, not till I say so." With these words a pair of ebony parallels slapped down on the chart, a pencil traced a thin slick line like lightning from a pin to a green coast line, and Thaddeus Horne looked up.

"We're further south than I guessed," he said. "That's well. Let the mahogany wait. Better to take our time than lose it. I'll trim in and lay a course—so—for Pernambuco. . . . She'll stay afloat that long. If this wind holds, two weeks'll put us there. And we'll overhaul them for'rd seams."

He had been talking as much to himself as to the mate. And when he concluded his eyes went vacant again: he dropped again into his computations.

But Calvin Drew said quickly: "And after *that*, are you goin' to begin givin' me a square deal?" Whereupon, as if frightened by the sound of the words, the mate took a step backward, and his head dropped.

The skipper's gray eyebrows lifted. "What's that?"

The lean dark man beyond the table drew a long breath. His face was in shadow against the hatch, so Horne couldn't see it working. His voice came strangled, whining. "They's not another mate afloat who has to bunk for-rd with the hands, who ain't allowed his way, now and again, on things that are his business. It ain't right an' you know it." The voice broke, then flared up shockingly. "I want to know what's in that-there room! An' whatever's there, I want it moved out right away—so I can be aft where I belong!"

Horne turned his head over his hulking shoulder. There were two stateroom doors leading off the forward end of the *Peregrine's* cabin. The one to starboard lay open, revealing the skipper's bunk, the folding desk at which he sometimes worked, his clothes.

The door to port was closed. There was no key in the lock.

The skipper stood up. With lithe, effortless movements he came around the table and hooked a clamp of fist on the mate's upper arm. His bristling face bent very near. At sight of it the mate flinched, as from a blow.

"It's like this, Mister Drew," Horne said softly. "If I want you to bunk on her *bowsprit*, you'll bunk there . . ." The voice gathered momentum, intensity. "This cabin's mine. The ship's mine. What I got in that room ain't any man's business *but* mine. Maybe I got nothing there. Maybe I just don't want you around. Maybe I got a notion you'd stick a knife in me, or pinch money out o' my clothes. . . . Square deal! Bah! I know your kind, Cal Drew. You sob around and work up a man's feelin's, and then—*errk!* But not with me, you sneakin' cur! Get out! Get up there an' give the helm west sou'west *like I told ye!* An' keep yer whinin' yap tight shut, or . . ."

After five seconds' pause, a right knee crooked abruptly. Drew crashed backwards, sprawling upon the companion steps.

Turning quietly, then, Horne settled down again to his charts and papers. The incident was closed. To the skipper of the blood boat, a livid face hanging for a moment in the hatchway, a face beginning to bleed, a face twisted into ungovernable, insane fury — apparently did not exist. Suppose they logged seven and figures didn't lie. . . . Now to Pernambuco it was just about—

Then the thing in the companion was gone. And suddenly . . . Thaddeus Horne lifted a head that was aged unspeakably—lifted eyes that shifted with the look of an animal badgered beyond sufferance, at bay—and lips that came out of the gray beard trembling like a horse's.

Alone, the blood-boat skipper was a worn old man.

He got up cumbrously, sighing heavily, and moved over to the companion. A rusty bolt squeaked, up there. Then he was back in the cabin. One big hand fumbled in his pocket, drew out a key.

With the light of the hatch gone, it was dusk in the *Peregrine's* cabin. He stood there, feeling the long sloping surge of the planking under his feet — hearing the thresh of water past her counter, the tiny chorus of straining fibres as she climbed and fell . . . From overhead, no sound.

Presently he went over to that closed door. Under his hand it swung inward, then shut again behind him. The key clicked.

IN the cabin he had left there was silence—vacant, passive, commonplace. For a brief space—no more. Then came two piping squeaks, as from corroding hinges somewhere; and a locker lid, off there under her starboard timbers, like a square black mouth was inching open . . . and from the black mouth rose a round, white face, peering out into the room.

The skipper's voice blared through the closed door. "Who's there?"

The locker lid went shut with a bang!

The key clicked, the stateroom door flew open. Horne stood on the threshold scowling savagely. His Portland Star match sent its sputtering blue fumes abroad as he lighted the swing-lamp over the table. He glowered round again.

There was nothing. He climbed to the companion doors and found them bolted as he had left them. Not a thing on the table had been touched. He ransacked his own room.

He had no boldness any more, for again he thought himself alone. The bent, shriveled look returned to him. He shot a last furtive look about the place, and then went back to the port room. The door closed smartly behind him. But then it crept open quite silently and stood

Again, after a bit, there in the cabin the locker lid gaped cautiously. Out of the dark interior and into the yellow glow of the lamp there stole a slight, short human figure. White skin—matted and tumbled black hair—dirty white coat—ragged trousers—naked feet . . . the lamplight told no more. This figure slunk toward the companions. It gained the lowest step. It moved to the second—the third—

The fourth step creaked loudly. There was a bull-like rush from that inner room; a guttural roar of triumph. And Thaddeus Horne had this prowler by the nape of the neck, was holding him up to the light.

It was a boy. Out of the paper-white face two black eyes drove unwinking defiance. The lips curled back.

"Who're you?"

"Slops—cook's boy. Leave go my neck!"

"What you doin' here?"

"Come down to tell you somethin'. . . . But mebbe I won't now!"

Horne laughed harshly as the black eyes flashed. "You blasted little spitfire! How'd you get in?"

"Come down whiles you was takin' the sun. Then Mister Drew was here an' I had to hide me. He's goin' to kill me, Cook says . . . because I won't go in with the swine. Then you an' him talked. You got so mad I seen they wasn't any use tellin' you. So I tried to git away." Then suddenly the eyes blazed. "Ah—you're a fool, you!"

From sheer surprise Horne dropped what he held. It slumped to the deck like old rags, then jerked upright with clenched fists, stood glaring, desperately defensive.

A strange look, rather horrible, and not quite sane, twitched across Horne's face. In all his stormy days he had never been so goaded. From all men he demanded abject fear. This miserable scrap — this whelp that all hands down to the cook knocked about promiscuously — had fearlessly defied him! Was it a sign?

The skipper's great ark of a body grew rigid . . . then relaxed. In a low dull voice he said: "A fool . . . well . . . why?"

And the boy went all to pieces—like that! Perhaps he had seen murder leap and die in the bottle-green eyes. Perhaps . . . However, at the word he slumped over the table, whimpering, "Gorry, man—I dunno. What's the use of—anythin'?"

Then Horne smiled.

The body of Calvin Drew crumpled slowly forward.

"Lissen," said he. "I'll tell you. An' if you laugh—I'll wring your scrawny neck." The white face rose off the table to fix its eyes upon him. The skipper sat down.

"Me, I hate the sea. That's no more'n natural. D'you reckon I'm here fur my health? No. I hate every bit of it. I had to go to sea because it was all I knew—all my pa an' his too knew before me. If you laugh, you snipe!—I'll cut your heart out. Lissen, I'm—I'm *scared* of it—*scared* . . . of a gale of wind, of fathoms of green water, of the lonesome sky before dawn, an' of men.

"D'you reckon I'll go on like this forever? No. I've saved money fur eleven years. See? An' all that time I've been a-workin' to fit me fur me, I tell you. It's just one books. An' when I got enough cash put by, an' when I got so's I ain't afeerd any more, of *anything* — why, I'll kiss this rat's life good-by —an' beat it. There's nothin' in it fur me, I tell you. It's just one ruckus after the one before and before the one after. It's knifed me, it's hammered me. Me! I'm a-goin' to stick till I win, an' *then* . . ."

The boy's black eyes were round as buttons; his mouth had slipped ajar. "Wh-what you larnin', Cap'n?" he whispered.

Horne frowned menacingly. "I'll tell you. An' if you so much as let out one snigger, I'll grab my gun outen this-here drawer an' pump you *full* . . .

"Law. That's what, *Law* — see? The port stateroom's durn near full o' books. Me, I've bought second-hand law books out of nigh every pawn shop between the North End an' Suez. There wasn't room for 'em in my own room—an' besides, all hands goes in an' out o' there — cleanin' up, medicines, an' whatnot —an' I couldn't have them see, because—*don't you laugh, you scut!*"

Not the faintest suspicion of a flicker passed the boy's face. He waited — silent, motionless — for more.

"So. You say what's the use of anythin', an' I say *that's* the use. An' now—why am I a fool?"

There was some triumph in that question. The boy seemed not to consider it, for he asked another.

"What's this-here law about anyways, Cap'n?"

That was a large order. For a minute Horne debated something complete and devastating for answer; then saw speed would be better, and plunged.

"About? Why—*men*,' an'—"

NOW the boy laughed. His face broke wide, his head went back, and guileless merriment filled that room. The skipper started up. But the other simply pushed him off with a flood of words.

"Men! An' here I been luggin' your meals down to you three times a day, an' you don't know me from the cat! Men! You studyin' about men! An' I'll lay my soul you don't know one single bleedin' man-jack aboard here, by name nor by sight even, except Mister Drew an' mebbe bos'n! Gorry, sir. Men! If you want fur to know men, fur the love of saints *look* at 'em! Take my job. Git in with 'em. Git kicked by 'em. Laugh . . . curse . . . fight . . . *live* with 'em. Yah! Men . . . out o' books. . . . You, locked in here, larnin' about men! An' yer own mate an' hands layin' bleedin' bloody murder—an' mutiny—"

"What's that!"

"Livin' truth. That's what I come down to tell you. They been pesterin' me to go in with 'em, I say. It's been runnin' the fo'c'sle fur a week. 'Jest wait till this gale blows out,' says they. Drew, he didn't know her position. I reckon you never tell him. All's he was waitin' fur was fur you to fix it. That settled, he's been ready fur a week to give the word an' git you out o' the way—an' me too. He aims to sell her cargo somewheres, refit, change her registry, an' scoot round the Horn fur Japan, or thereabouts—with nobody the wiser. It's a cinch. All's he wanted was her position. An' now you've fixed that—laid a course fur Pernambuco, give it to him fur the helm, an' bust his haid open into the bargain. That's why you're a fool, Cap'n. Because you gone made it two to twenty with yer danged bleedin' law."

In that last word lay scorn unfathomable. Yet Horne's black scowl slipped off into a curious ghost of a smile.

"Two?" he asked.

"Yah! I *said* so. You deaf?" the boy snapped.

For a time the skipper stared into that slight, pinched white face before him. When he spoke, his voice was steady and low.

"That's not bad odds, boy. I misdoubt all them scuttlebutt rumors. But if so be it—well, we'll see. Right here"—he patted the table drawer, his eyes narrowing—"I got the only lead-heaver aboard; that I'll go oath on. However, we'll sit tight an' see. You go 'long for'd an' turn in. If they's any move—"

Something in the black eyes stopped him. Horne had sense enough not to put the question that rose to his lips.

"Cap'n . . . you care if I roll up in that locker again? It's like this. I ain't slep' fur five nights, since they begun pesterin' me. I don't mind goin' when my time comes—an' how don't matter much either. Except—well, I got no appetite fur a knife in my guts—me asleep, *in the dark*. . . . Me, I'd ruther die on my feet . . ."

Thaddeus Horne nodded soberly. Then he jerked a thumb toward the port stateroom. "Bunk in there," said he. "Don't trip over the books."

The boy went. Horne heard him fumbling about. "Swipe me, it's clean!" he was whispering. "Books . . . yah!"

"All right?" the skipper called.

"Hunky dory, sir."

After a bit: "How'd *you* happen to git to sea?"

Sound of brief chuckling. . . . "I run away—to sea."

The skipper grunted. "An' how d'you like it?" he asked grimly.

No more chuckles. One word came stoutly: "Fine."

The old man shook his head with a wry little smile. He got up and climbed to the hatch; pushed back the cover and opened the doors.

The night sky had cleared gloriously. It was infinitely cobalt, star-dusted. Under her lowers, minus the mainsail, the *Peregrine* heeled steadily, lancing through shadowy seas. Blood boat or no, she sailed handsomely, he mused. Out of the tail of his eye he saw the helmsman in the dim glow of the binnacle, slouched over his spokes. Men! Now, there was a man . . . Horne turned about to study him. Unconscious of scrutiny, the seaman spat hugely into the sand-box at his feet.

It was all nonsense! There might have been talk—there always is. Nothing more. However, why not ease up on them? No use overdoing it. Perhaps there was something in what the boy said. Shore leave in Pernambuco. And a word to Drew. After all, there was no reason why the mate shouldn't bunk aft, if he didn't mind the books—was there?

"How's she headin'?" he called to the helm.

The man started. "West sou'west," he mumbled, scowling into the dark.

"Good, keep her there."

Horne pulled the hatch cover shut and went below. He stole into the port stateroom, reappeared with a pigskin-covered volume in his hand. There was satisfaction in his movement. "Fool, says he!" he muttered. "Scared o' nothin', says he—except only a knife in the dark! . . . Man! Man! what a bos'n he'd make—or a mate mebbe—or—"

Sitting down again at the table, the old man opened his book at a mark, got out his steel spectacles, began to read.

His lips moved over the words. Gradually his big head sank lower and lower . . . Until at last the gray beard rested on the page.

Thaddeus Horne slept with a half-smile on his worn old mouth.

THE night crept. Hardly a sound in the *Peregrine's* cabin—hardly a sound save the murmurings of the ship's motion, the eternal tiny song of the clock on the bulkhead, the occasional heavy breathing from a bunk in the port stateroom. The skipper lay sprawled over the table, perfectly still.

Until, not abruptly, a new little noise made manifest in that quiet room. It was overhead—a muffled, shuffling noise, as of padded weight moving across the deck; then a minute fumbling at the hatch.

Hardly audible, these noises, to a man awake, alert. Yet the bottle-green eyes of the blood boat's skipper opened on the instant. His head and body remained motionless. But one of his hands, reaching back along the table edge, opened the drawer away from the companion and rested there.

The lamp had burned low. There was no more than flickering dusk in that cabin. And the scratching, fumbling noise was heard again; and the hatch cover slid back very slowly, as of its own accord, on a patch of starlit sky.

Then something partly blotted out the stars.

It was a long black shadow that began to move into sight down the companion steps—a lean thing coming slowly gray in the lamp's glimmer. It crept on—down. It reached the cabin deck and stood silent by the bottom tread. There was a strip of whiteness crowning it. If the tall thing was a man, that strip might be a bandage round his head.

It was a man. He took two lurching steps forward. The lamp-light glinted on something that swung upwards in his hands. It was an ax. It soared . . . poised . . . and—

The cabin roared. Thaddeus Horne stood erect as a prophet, his blue gun smoking in a hairy fist. But the body of Calvin Drew crumpled slowly forward, doubling at the waist . . . very slowly toppled and so came, with sudden swiftness, whirling to the table-top, and crashed to the floor. Overhead there broke out, as if upon a signal, a confused rumbling murmur, the sound of men's bodies struggling, the stamp of frantic feet.

The skipper's eyes were green slits. Over his shoulder the gray head turned. "Boy!" he called in a great brassy voice. "You, boy! Lock that door!"

Then he stepped over what lay beside the table, and came to the steps. Quietly he looked up. The hatch was clogged with heads, boots, clothing. The mass of it milled and stirred.

Horne spoke evenly. "Men," he said, "get sense. Your boss is gone. Go back to your bunks an' I'll give you my word—"

A very pandemonium of sound drowned that strange new tolerance—snarling laughter that rose to a bellow, an avalanche of stuttering rage. And the crew of the blood-boat rushed . . . kicking, crowding, clutching for that lone figure below.

Four times, then the revolver thundered bravely, spitting white flame. Three deck hands in the vanguard, sprawling headlong down upon the skipper, silenced it. But behind were many more. The companion belched howling flesh. . . . The lamp guttered in blue smoke—went out.

For some reason, in those first few moments of bestial contact the brains of Thaddeus Horne did not function properly. True, the odds were enormous. Still—as never before in the presence of men—he was deadly afraid. Abjectly he longed for flight, for peace at whatever cost. Terror shook him like nausea . . .

And then, like a knife-thrust came the thought of a white-faced boy who did not mind dying—on his feet! Who was not afraid of the truth! Who had stood out against treachery, called these odds twenty to two!

In the darkness Horne flushed to the roots of his steel gray hair. That blasted little fire-eater . . .

Whereupon, unbelievably if you will, he was a lion. Hot blood coursed mightily through his veins. Mad joy buoyed him. He was—he was unconquerable!

He was down, now. There was carrion atop him, smotheringly, and a screaming pile of living above that. But the old battler rose, grunting, to his hands and knees; then stood up on his two feet with a thunderous roar, flinging dead and quick to right and left.

So it was then, if exact time can be laid to it, that the tide of battle swung. From the beleagured, from the besieged, the gigantic carcass of that man sprang into a deadly offensive. His great hands, groping, found something—the flimsy camp-chair on which he had been sitting. He whirled the thing aloft like a flapping flail. It met soft flesh, bone, the lamp with a splintering crash. He was up to his knees in men. More were coming. He found one foot on the companion's lowest tread. Above his head the chair swept, smashing into the choked darkness.

He wondered how soon a knife would find his ribs. . . . And again suddenly—because of that lad who was not afraid of foulness—mighty strength of spirit and flesh surged into him.

His booted toe plunged into a squealing belly. The chair had caught, somehow. In a frenzy he tore it clear; a three-foot length of maple dowel, thick as his forearm, came clear in his hand. This was better—

"Two to twenty," the boy had said.

A naked arm like a snake shot out of the darkness and hooked about his throat. He felt the weight below it, dragging him off the companion. The blood hammered at his temples: the pillar of his neck bent backward, cracked. A hand found his beard. The words were choked out of him. Pain indescribable. . . .

And, far within him, a thready weak voice whispered—"I ain't afraid to die—on my feet . . ."

Ah! Over his head, backward and downward, slugged his wooden bar. Once—twice . . . the hand clawing his beard fell limp. The crook of an arm sagged off, away. Then up again in the whirling, chattering blackness he heaved—to the next step—and the next—

". . . a knife in my guts, *me asleep, in the dark!*" The boy's thready voice haunted the inner man. . . . *Not that, boy! Not that!*

And he was on deck. Below him the companion gaped—a shambles, throttled, quiet. Before him huddled a group of a dozen men, murderously still. Their panting, snarling faces were greenish-white beneath the stars. At least he could see them, now!

"*Two to twenty! I said so!*" bellowed Horne, not knowing he gave voice to that strengthening boyish whisper. And with the bellow, he charged.

They split apart, scattered to dodge forward past the cabin transom. He drove them, shouting. Across the quarterdeck they reeled, toward the ladder down to her waist. At the ladder they bunched again, turned desperately to fight.

It was then that the skipper sensed a presence beside him. A fist had whipped out past him, seeking one of those twisted faces. A thigh was buttressed to his. There was one faced his way, forward, giving blow along with his blow, gasping . . .

Horne dared not turn his head. Like a warm light came the knowledge who it was. He was not alone!

So as a wave breaks they broke over the poop-rail—went dribbling and hurtling down the ladder—staggered through her waist and up her long, broad decks. As they passed the main hatch coaming a man leaped upon it for vantage and threw himself across the moving welter. But he sifted through it, was trampled—lay quiet at its spurning heels. . .

They passed the galley, dark box under the stars. They passed the mainmast, the forward hatch, the slattering foresail. The crowd had thinned. Pace quickened. It was almost a rout.

A white knife at last came gleaming. Horne tried to parry, grunting. But at close quarters his club fouled. A tongue of flame licked his side. Then the club descended.

Why had that steel not found him, below there, in the dark? It would have been all over then. Yet—he could not have left the boy alone—only one of *two*—

Warm wetness seeped through his shirt, dripped slowly down his leg. Faintness swung him. He fought against it, spreading his feet—driving on.

The forecastle hatch! Horne veered. And as if he had spoken his mind, that white thing that had battled beside him now left him—instantly to reappear on the other side of the housing. Like demoniac shepherds those two harried that flock . . . toward the pen.

There was a last stand, trembling, uncertain. Dizziness was creeping . . . A blow shocked Horne to clearer consciousness. His mate was down on a knee, then up with a great yell and fists like hammers. He swung his bar twice. A man tripped backward and dropped into the waiting chasm. A last shove—and the doors slammed. The cover creaked shut. Into the heavy staples the skipper thrust his bludgeon.

There followed a silence like the end of all living.

Feebly Horne swung about to regard that comrade with dulled eyes. Eyes that suddenly lit from an inner glow.

"Boy!" the blood-boat skipper whispered. Then with an aching need of surety—"You?"

The boy smiled. "Me," he said.

Thaddeus Horne opened his mouth. His lips quivered as if upon some sort of answering smile. Then, without a sound, he came toppling like a tall pine to the deck.

HIS eyes opened slowly on a capsized compass-card directly overhead. He stared at it, scowling. The was his room all right. But how could that card read west southwest? Who could have put her on her course again—after—

Ha! Of course. The whole thing had been a dream!

Horne started up. A burning saw-edge ran across his side. His head throbbed. His body was lead. . . . He sagged back weakly on the pillow.

What then? The second thought made his mouth jerk open, like the mouth of a man stifled. They had broken out of the fo'csle—rushed the boy—taken the schooner? That boy had gone under at last, calling for help that would not come?

Out of staring, solemn eyes the skipper saw it—the snarling tangle round one slight white figure. The cry. . . . The thing left hunched on deck. His great hands clenched, his face twisted (*Continued on page 61*)

Tragedy in the Air

Smoke! A dull boom! Then Russ Farrell's great plane reels earthward, struck by a mysterious shot from the mountains below.

At her tail, gathers a tragic knot of struggling humans. Hazard, master mechanic, tries to jump—his parachute catches on the empenage—he swings, precariously suspended. Young Carter, Hazard's ex-acrobat assistant, forgetting his bitter quarrel with the man, risks death to disentangle him. And Russ goes to help the youngster.

Follows, then, a life-and-death struggle — Carter hanging head down, his feet in Russ' agonized clutch, working like mad to save Hazard. A tremendously vivid air scene, a gripping revelation of courage—in next month's Russ Farrell story.

Hazard of the Hills

The Tin Fish

By Warren Hastings Miller

Illustrated by Anton Otto Fischer

Ordered to a submarine! The end of dreadnought promotion, thought Wally.

"AH there, insect!"

"Hello, officer's messenger boy!"

General muster had just sounded, and Wally Radnor hastened up to the saluting deck where mustered the "politician's division." His and 'Stanguey Brooke's commission as ensign, U. S. N., had arrived on the dreadnought *Montana* that morning. It did not make Wally feel a day older. Yesterday a midshipman, with all the doings of graduation at Annapolis; today, at the pleasure of the President of the United States, ensign, U. S. N. Remained but to take the oath in Captain Elliott's office and they would be real ensigns, sworn to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies domestic and foreign.

Wally was beforehand on the saluting deck. The "politician's division" was a very small one, so called because its members allegedly had nothing to do but draw their pay. Wally's forte for gunnery had got him in it. It was composed of a few odd enlisted men and half a dozen officers, the gunnery officer, the A. G. O., the two spotting officers of the fore and maintops, the two lieutenants in charge of plot (gunnery central station down in the bowels of the ship), and Wally himself, who was assistant to the A. G. O. and stationed with him in the secondary gunfire control.

Wally looked down on the main deck, utterly content with his career as it was shaping itself. He would grow up from rank to rank on the dreadnoughts, and in time become gunnery officer of something shimself. His warm brown eyes looked down out of his freckled and utterly commonplace face affectionately upon Ensign 'Stanguey, his chum. The resplendent and distinguished 'Stanguey was J. O. of the first division in charge of number one turret. 'Stanguey and his senior, Lieut. "Stormy" Barnes, were mustering their fifty men in a long double line. With epaulets gleaming on their starched whites and swords cocked up, they marched along in front of their men, eyeing each critically. The stern expression on Stormy's face said that each and every man-jack of them was all-right-all-right; and 'Stanguey's long features, copying minutely the expression of his senior officer's, said that they had darn well better be all right or someone would go to the brig!

Wally smiled indulgently. Command, that was what 'Stanguey was born for. He would become an admiral as sure as he lived! Wally did not feel envy. He was not handsome, as was 'Stanguey, and there was not the sharp bite in his soul and the "Jump, hang you!" acid in his voice that marked a man to command men. He was content to become a gunnery shark. After all, it was the most important job in the Navy, no matter who commanded the ship. The captain, the chief engineer, all the rest of the personnel, had no other purpose than to put him where he and his guns could do damage to the enemies of his country. And the fate of empires would depend on how well he did it, in the last analysis!

BUT both the budding ensigns had reckoned without that distant and impersonal body of officers known as the detail office in Washington. It knew nothing about Wally Radnor and 'Stanguey Brooke, Jr., save their names on the Academy graduation list. And it cared nothing for their private wishes and ambitions.

Wally and 'Stanguey, self-conscious in their one broad gold stripe on the epaulet, gathered in front of the J. O.-country bulletin board after retreat from general muster was sounded. Their names were on it; two inconspicuous lines that were big with fate.

Ens. N. Brooke, Jr., detached U. S. S. *Montana*. To *E-5*.

Ens. W. Radnor, detached U. S. S. *Montana*. To *E-7*.

"Glub!" said Wally, "down 400!" All his world had suddenly been knocked from under him by the hideous detail office! To be ordered to a submarine! The end of dreadnought promotion for *him*, the end of gunnery, the end of everything!

"Boy!" breathed 'Stanguey ecstatically behind him as he read the notice. "Oh, boy!—command!"

Wally turned, growling, upon his enthusiasm. "What's eatin' you, boot?" he demanded. "This man's Navy is meant to *hit* something with a fourteen-inch gun, ain't it?" he asked in a voice of wrath. "Why don't they set us to inspecting pickles!"

"Out, vile ape!" said 'Stanguey grandly. "This man's Navy is made of *ships*, if you ask me! And you got to know how to run them. No more officer's messenger boy on this dreadnought for *me!* Command!"

"Of a spit-kit!" interjected Wally, wrathfully.

"Whereat I gloat!" sang 'Stanguey. "Oh, you *E-5!* Can't happen too soon for this admiral!"

"Gilded popinjay!" snorted Wally, laying eleven-inch hands on him. "Maybe I'll bilge out of it," he continued hopefully. "Then back to the battle-wagons for mine!"

"The deuce you will!" said 'Stanguey, halting the rough-house about to break loose by the serious concern in his voice. This was important! Good old Wally rebelling against the detail office at his very first assignment! And, worse, threatening to bilge, lie down on it, so that the submarine force would *kick* him out and he could get back to the dreadnoughts again. That was not like Wally Radnor!

"Listen to your uncle, hairy ape," said 'Stanguey earnestly. "Nothing like that in this man's Navy! Ships; *any* old ship and independent command, where you use your own judgment and don't wait on anyone for orders—there's the road to getting on! Let me tell you, a destroyer can make or break a man in fifteen seconds. And a sub'll do it twice as quick. You get down on your knees and say 'now-I-lay-me' to the good old detail office for giving you the chance! On your knees, I say!"

The J. O. country roared as 'Stanguey proceeded to enforce his order. They wrestled like bears, for Wally was not convinced of any good fortune.

"I want my money back!" he howled. "I want my little fourteen-inch popguns, an' my directorscopes—an' T. B. T's—"

"Peace, you range keeper!" gritted 'Stanguey. "The tin fish for him, men; do we say so?"

The J. O.'s agreed and fell on him in a body. In an instant Wally was sequestered under the steerage mess table, as the proper berth for a submarine commander.

The rest was routine, and it moved swiftly. They reported to the *Montana's* captain, 'Stanguey's father, Captain Norman Brooke, U. S. N. They held up their hands and took the oath before the old lion. They were detached, got travel orders, took a Pullman north and the night boat to Newport. They reported to Commander "Birdie" Kulm on the mother ship of the submarines. They made the acquaintance of young Lieutenant "Crinky" Burdge, C. in C. of the E-class submarines, and were told to "rattlin' well snap into it."

Joining ship was easy. You simply walked the narrow wooden gang-plank across the iron upper bodies of *E-1* and *E-3*; and beyond them, all moored abreast to the mother ship, were *E-5* and *E-7*.

WALLY took over his first command without enthusiasm. His heart had been set on a gunnery career. He loved the mathematics of it, the fascinating details of bore sighting and co-ordination, the *ong-ong-ong!* of the great shells as they hurtled out to sea after plopping through the target to send out tall shell spouts on the horizon. One hour of accurate gunfire could change the history of the world! And then the old detail office sending him to a spit-kit!

About the only thing he liked on *E-7* was an "izz-wazz," officially known as the "submarine attack calculator, mark II." It was a celluloid thing of circles within circles, a movable pointer, and a revolving silhouette of a black enemy ship in the center. It was a real izz-wazz, the most confusing thing ever put into the hands of man, but Wally mastered it quickly. You estimated the course and speed of the enemy ship, took your own periscope angle and course, moved the izz-wazz circles and pointers to agree, and the answer you read off from it would be your torpedo-firing angle. It had a habit of coming out upside down unless you kept a clear head and knew just what you were doing, but that izz-wazz couldn't lose Wally!

For the rest, the *E-7* was a cute little toy. She was about a hundred feet long, had a narrow, flat deck like the fin of a whale, and a tower rose amidships with the periscopes rising from it and a brass flare around the rim forming a three-man cockpit with the main hatch in the floor. Down this hatch Wally could just squeeze his big body, to arrive in a tiny control filled up with diving-rudder wheels, blow-out valves, depth and pressure gauges, steering gear, and the two periscope sight-pieces with their levers and torpedo-firing keys. Aft of that were his two Diesel engines gleaming with oil, and then the storage battery and motor room. Forward were the eating and sleeping quarters and the torpedo room with its four tubes and their loading gear.

Wally should have been tickled a vivid pink with his command, but he wasn't. He was having a terrific fight with himself. A Navy man has simply *got* to do his level best with whatever he is given to do, and no repinings over what might have been if one had been left in his former berth. But over on *E-5* things went with a snap and go not to be found on *E-7*. 'Stanguey was a little king in his own conning tower over there. Men executed orders on the jump, and, strangely, adored 'Stanguey, who, hopped them with an acid voice that meant Discipline with a big D for him who fumbled. *E-1* and *E-3* were also on their toes, but Wally's people were quick at discovering his easy-going good nature and taking advantage of it. Good nature is sometimes a weak asset in getting things done on a fighting ship!

Matters limped along thus with Wally during the two months of maneuvers and torpedo practice that followed. Wally honestly tried; but his men knew his heart wasn't in it, and they couldn't go at top speed themselves. *E-7* did her crash dives and her surface runs and her firing practice with dummy torpedoes well enough, but the other three did better; and Crinky Burdge, C. in C., was not pleased. The night before the great event of the year, battle practice, when men are made or broken once for all, 'Stanguey came over for a visit with Wally. The "skeeter subs," as the E-class

were called, were all moored alongside the mother ship, the men ashore on liberty. Wally sat on his conning tower flare brooding moodily. He was worried, for he knew that to-morrow the Navy would show him up. With luck he might squeak through creditably; but it was more than likely that those months of slackness would have to be paid for by some unfortunate breakdown at a critical moment. And 'Stanguey did not help much.

"I pin it on you, boot! Lame duck!" he said without formalities.

Wally bowed his head. "Lame duck!" It was true, and it was inevitable. His grouch had come home to roost. He looked at 'Stanguey solemnly. It had been a long while since either of them had heard his famous rat-squeak.

"You think the road to promotion is on the battle-wagons; but I tell you it's right *here*, on this little spit-kit," lectured 'Stanguey with emphasis. "Wally, old skin, don't tell me you don't care," he appealed.

"I do care, 'Stanguey—I care a lot. But I'm thinking it's too late now," said Wally lugubriously.

"Rot!" barked 'Stanguey. "You and your tin fish are going to hop on it and smear 'em to-morrow! Get that! And don't get anything else. *Sit* on 'em, old bone! You let that crew of yours know that you'll rip the liver out of anyone who dares make a bull to-morrow, and there won't *be* any lame duck, that's all!"

'Stanguey's vigor was contagious. Wally, a flash of hope in his heart, bucked up and came back at 'Stanguey with his old-time vim.

"I inspect her, right now!" he said with energy. And in the next two hours, 'Stanguey after him, he went all over *E-7*. He found a careless chip under one of the Diesel intake caps; a broken battery cap never replaced; a loose switch on the main switchboard; a nut off one of the three microphone carbons where they jutted out of the great wrought-iron brackets on *E-7*'s bows. 'Stanguey said nothing; but these things were eloquent! Wally knew that that chip would cost him a gassed battery if he submerged without knowing it; the broken cap would have allowed chlorine to escape and force him to the surface; the loose switch meant no "juice" for the blow-out motor it controlled; the missing nut said that the carbon might or might not work in its all-important part of receiving submarine signals from other boats of the fleet.

"No, I'll stay up all night with her!" he said when 'Stanguey told him good-by.

"That's the stuff! You need to, boot!" grinned 'Stanguey as he left to cross the gangplank to *E-5*. "You're rotten!"

Frank, but salutary! Wally had a busy time, all by himself. He found a dozen more things the matter, all due to nothing else than lax discipline, his own lack of enthusiasm for his ship reflected by his crew. It was three o'clock before he turned in for the night.

THE morning of the Great Day broke fine, with a keen northwester covering the bay with whitecaps. Far down on the horizon loomed the tall tower of *S-47*, the umpire ship. She was a great cruising submarine of six thousand miles radius, commanded by a senior lieutenant, the pride of the sub-men. Wally and 'Stanguey looked at her with awe. She had a lot of stuffy seniors on board, who would show the skeeters no mercy! The kids in their toy boats, their first commands, were to be tried out to-day. It was not only their gunnery with torpedoes—at which Wally was good—it was handling ships in a seamanlike manner with no fumbles or "bones." Wally cursed himself as he eyed the distant *S-47*. Why, it was an *honor* that the detail office had chosen him for command! How many newly-commissioned "insects" had been left on board the battle-wagons, as not yet having shown enough decision and independence to be more than officer's messenger boys! And he had spent his time grousing! Oh, all but fabulous ass!

Crinky Burdge met his commanders for a last conference on the mother ship. "All hands under weigh at eight sharp, fellows," he said. "We run down there on our Diesels. The minute the target motor-sailer starts out from *S-47*, I run up the crash dive cone. I want everyone under in fifty seconds. The first guy who shows too much periscope after that will lose half his score and hear from me besides! I'm making two teams of you. *E-1* and *E-3* work together; and *E-5* takes *E-7*."

Wally winced at that "takes." He was already considered the lame duck, and had been paired with 'Stanguey because his was the crack ship and could pull *E-7* up against *E-1* and *E-3*, both good.

"We attack in double column formation," went on Crinky. "Leading ship fires and then dives to forty feet, so as to let the man aft pass over him and fire. Lower man turns out of formation, and then goes after his spent torpedoes. That's all, except that I'll metagrobolize anyone scoring less than two hits out of four!"

Crinky's eyes twinkled as he said it, but they all knew that if he didn't the commander would. They set off for their various ships and presently the whole fleet was boiling down awash with the white plumes of their Diesels sputtering out astern. Wally watched *E-5* back of him, for Crinky was on board and she was flagship. He was all secure; everything below and nothing to do now but close the main hatch himself as he tumbled below.

Then he saw the gray nose of the target motor-sailer poking out beyond the bows of *S-47*. It hardly needed the glance over shoulder to tell him that Crinky's crash dive cone was up. "Ready below?—Crash her!" he ordered and dropped down the iron ladder. He stopped a moment to look at the rim of the main hatch—and swore. A gob of chewing gum was on it, left there, forgotten, by some heedless anchor-watch man! Wally tore it off furiously and closed the hatch over him. Darn this crew anyhow! The lot of them needed the brig! But it was all his fault, in the last analysis.

He jumped to the periscope. Already, under the diving rudders and filled ballast tanks, she was under. The whitecaps were splashing around the pane of its vision glass and he could see the motor-sailer going across the horizon at full speed, the white caps and blue uniforms of her umpire officers a long bar of color on her gunwale. A white, curling wash abreast of him told that *E-1* was racing him for her. Wally sighted the motor-sailer, guessed her course and speed, and maneuvered the izz-wazz.

"Course 107!" he snapped out at the helmsman. "Lower ten feet."

And then he watched the depth gauge, timed himself with his wrist watch; waited five minutes. All was green through the periscope; they were running entirely on course and distance. He could hear the busy *Toot-toot-toot! Toot-toot-toot!* of *E-3*'s submarine signal sounding over to his left, and the five toots of 'Stanguey astern of him. He and *E-1* were silent as they had clear sea ahead; the other two were the danger and were keeping them constantly apprised of their positions.

"Where is *E-5* bearing now, Briggs?" he asked his electrician at the microphone receiving set, for 'Stanguey's signals seemed to be coming more from the right of astern.

"213, sir."

Wally grinned grimly. "Either he's wrong or I'm wrong!" he thought. "He's working out to starboard. Up, easy now, there!" he ordered his men at the diving wheels.

SLOWLY *E-7* rose for a peek. The periscope emerged. "Stop her!" barked Wally. Through the splashes on the pane he could see the motor-sailer, going like a scared cat. She was well within range now, and with hurried earnestness Wally figured his firing angle on the izz-wazz.

"Stand by!" he bellowed. "Right rudder! Lift, a bit! Left!— That's well!—*Bow!*"

He pressed the firing button. There was a slight shock as the torpedo shot out of their bows. Wally sighted its long white wake as it hurried out for the motor-sailer. A direct hit, at the speed both were going! It would pass right under her, as set for twelve feet depth.

"Right! Right!—*Bow!*" he yelped, pressing the key again. "Shift ports!"

"Shifted, sir!" came the hail from the torpedo room. Wally knew that the caps were shifted to the two empty tubes and his other two were ready for firing. He conned *E-7* back to the firing angle again, and "Stand by!" he yelled.

"*Bow!*—Not so good! Will miss her a hundred yards. Left rudder! Steady! Now a bit right!—Hold her—*Bow!*" His last shot. It boiled out in a white streak. Pretty good. Might count it a wild hit. A streak of foam shooting out near him said that *E-1* had commenced firing.

"Drop to 40 feet!" ordered Wally and abandoned the periscope to watch his depth gauge. The submarine went down without perceptible dip or motion. On and on rumbled the motors astern. Wally felt rather cocky and pleased with himself. Good score, by golly, for the lame duck! He could hear 'Stanguey tooting off astern somewhere, keen to get into it and fire.

"Answer 'duty complete,' Briggs," he said happily.

And then disaster fell upon him like a thunderbolt. There was a moment of silence; then a strained interval; and then Wally bounded into the electrical department: "For cat's sake why don't you signal?" he thundered upon Briggs, who sat hammering a key that refused to spark.

"Outa commission, sir," mumbled Briggs, pounding the key with force enough to break it—as if *that* would do any good!

"Out of comm—get your magneto and ring out, lively now!—Hustle!" shouted Wally in the height of exasperation. The insistent toots of 'Stanguey coming up astern were sounding louder and louder. They came from all over the ocean, seemingly, and there was real danger, deadly and imminent, of collision! Wally left three electricians flinging themselves frantically at the signal circuit and jumped to the steering wheel. These subs were little, but that tin fish of 'Stanguey's coming up right *over* him, and from what direction he knew not, seemed as big as Noah's Ark now! Which way should he go to get out of her way? Down still further would be safe, but one glance at the chart forbade it. The bottom was but ten fathoms here. Might strike some rock down there not on the chart. Only a little tooth six feet high could rip him open!

"*E-7 answer!*"

Those toots were Morse and they came from Crinky himself. They did not know where he was, and would have to come up if he could not work his submarine signal right sudden!

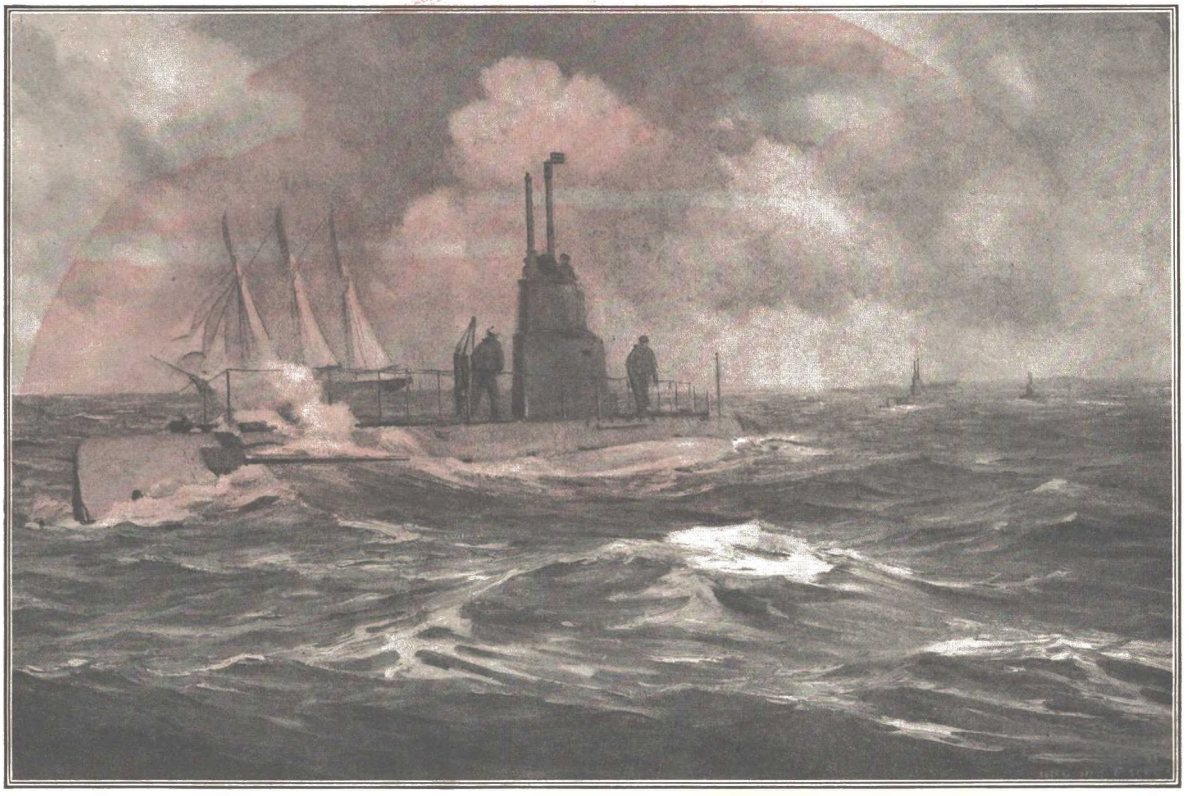
"How about it, there?" asked Wally in an iron voice.

"She don't ring, sir!" came a chorus from the electricians. "Wire's broke somewhere."

"Trace it!" yelped Wally. "How's *E-5* bearing?"

"One-ninety, sir—close astern overhead!"

Wally had an agonized instant, when all that is decision in a man is tested to the breaking point. He had to do the right thing and do it without a moment's hesitation. Their score was nothing at a time like this, when human lives, forty of them, were in danger! He figured like lightning that 'Stanguey would not fire; he would stop and come up. And he himself had no



The morning of the great day broke fine, with a keen northwester covering the bay with whitecaps.

right to take any chances of *E-5* passing over him clear, nor to risk diving deeper and possibly hit bottom. Nor would veering this way or that help any; he might run right in front of *E-5!* There was just one thing to do; come up, *well* up, so that his periscope could be seen instantly—and he did it.

"Up rudders—crash!" he ordered.

His periscope shot up out of the waves. There, not a hundred feet away, was 'Stanguey's, leering at him! Wally could almost feel the cursing of him going on aboard of her! He dived instantly, having seen all that was necessary to know. He could feel the shocks of *E-5* firing as he sank; but his heart ached to its roots, for the last thing he had noted through the periscope was a black cone on the motor-sailer which meant: "*E-5*, half score." They hadn't seen 'Stanguey's periscope, but they *had* seen his, good and plenty! And 'Stanguey was getting all the minus credit for that!

Listlessly Wally drove *E-7* along, came up beyond the motor-sailer, and went with his Diesels after his spent torpedoes. No one signalled him anything from the other boats, nor did Crinky summon him aboard *E-5* for the inevitable post-mortem. That was ominous. It meant he would have to face Commander Birdie Kulm and explain all about it! And Birdie was not nice when things went wrong. He accepted no excuses. There *weren't* any in this man's Navy, reflected Wally lugubriously. The officer was responsible for everything that went wrong under him. It was his business to jack up the enthusiasm and the on-your-toes spirit of his men to the point where there were no mistakes. That electrician, now, should have rung out every circuit in his charge before they started. He should have found that loose wire and fixed it in one grand final test on the morning of this all-important day, and not left anything to chance. *Why* hadn't he done so? And the answer to that was Wally Radnor, captain of this team!

ONE of his torpedoes had aggravatingly gone adrift in a tidal current so that he was a long time finding it and was the last of the fleet to head back for the mother ship. Wally did not care. He felt too miserable for company of any kind just now, and besides wanted time to have it out with himself to a finish over this thing. He decided firmly on one thing; to make a crack ship of anything entrusted to his command was the only ambition worth while in this man's Navy! But would he be allowed the chance, now? There was not much comfort in his thoughts as *E-7* chugged back! He had been indifferent and showed no enthusiasm, no spirit of snapping into it; and now had bilged himself out with finality by this bull that had cost at least *E-5* half her score. His own fault, for it could be traced directly to that loose connection no matter how decisively he had acted afterward. And would he get back to the dreadnoughts with that record against him? He would not!

COMMAND! Not even of a ten-foot launch; he had lost his chance by his failure on *E-7!* Wally was thoroughly disgusted with Ensign Wallace Radnor, U. S. N., by the time his bosun had moored *E-7* alongside *E-5* and he was ready to go aboard the mother ship and report. He found Crinky Burdge in Commander Kulm's office. Crinky nodded to him shortly and looked away with disfavor. He had no use for officers who pulled bulls. Commander Kulm tipped back his cap informally and smiled upon the sober and crestfallen Wally.

"Well, Ensign!" he said cheerily. "Let's hear the worst. They're some huffy down on the *S-47*. All they want to know is, who was the ass who poked up his periscope a mile, near *E-5*, and why."

Wally's heart sank to bottom and stayed there. He told the commander all about it, but it was hard sledding. The answer pinned itself more and more firmly on Wallace Radnor as he explained. That loose wire in his submarine signal circuit was one of those things for which no excuses are accepted in the Navy! The extenuating circumstances, his quick decision when human lives were at stake, did not help much, for they were *post facto* after all. "I could not answer *E-5*," he concluded. "I dared not dive lower, nor stay where I was, nor veer either way because 'Stanguey might bean me with his tin fish. I came up where he could *see* me."

"Exactly," commented Birdie Kulm drily. "He did—and *they* did, and they saw 'Stanguey too. Both ships lose half their scores. You showed decision, Radnor, and the ability to do the right thing in a crisis and do it quick. It is what we want in a commander, something we all expect in any of our youngsters entrusted with a boat, but it's not near enough. That bum connection in your signal circuit. . . . I can explain the mystery of the two periscopes to *S-47*, but I can't explain that!"

Wally knew right then that his doom was sealed. The commander might try to soften things all possible for his officer, but there is no such thing as whitewashing or sugaring-over any mistake in the Navy. After three anxious days of waiting, of hopping his crew and instilling them with a new enthusiasm for pulling the lame duck out of the breakers, advance notice of his new orders appeared on the bulletin board of the mother ship: "Ens. W. Radnor detached *E-7*. To *Peewit*."

Wally trembled and turned green as he read it. He was to be junior officer on a meek and lowly minesweeper, under an old bosun promoted up to lieutenant. He, an Annapolis man! The sweeper service was manned mostly by warrants from the ranks. It was a backwater of the fleet from which there was little hope of escape. A man was buried there. They would never hear of him on the dreadnoughts again!

Wally bit his lip and took his medicine like a man. Out of a porthole by the bulletin board he could see 'Stanguey inspecting the decks of his diminutive command. Something or other on *E-5* was not quite to his liking, and 'Stanguey was raising Cain about it.

"That's 'Stanguey, right enough!" Wally muttered. "Saw he had a job, and stepped in and did it up brown!"

Then he returned to *E-7*—at any rate, he could leave her in good shape. He threatened and cajoled, and poked into corners and ferreted out doubtful connections, and his example and his spirit had their effect. When Birdie Kulm came aboard on a tour of inspection the dubious gleam in his eye soon changed into a grin.

"Radnor, you've got a *ship* here now!" he exclaimed.

That helped. But it was too late, Wally realised glumly. He turned away with a lump in his throat, but with the resolve that he would make a crack ship of the *Peewit* if it was the last thing he did in the service! Perhaps some day the detail office might hear of him again.

Was it good news or bad the detail office was to hear? Don't miss "Efficiency E," the next Wally Radnor story which tells about the young ensign's exciting experiences on the "Peewit." It comes soon.

We trailed down into the Fort Benton river bottom three days later.

William Jackson, Indian Scout

By James Willard Schultz

Illustrated by Frank E. Schoonover

JUST as we were rejoicing over our night escape from the Assiniboin war party, we heard our dogs barking furiously up at our burned camp.

"The enemy! They are up there again!" exclaimed Uncle John.

"Quick! Give Robert and me some caps for our rifles; we wet ours when we swam the river!" cried my young Aunt Lizzie, who would have been a great warrior if she had been a man.

We were all excited at this new danger that threatened us. But even in that moment of excitement, I wondered if my father could be more bitterly depressed than he had been.

"We are ruined! Utterly ruined!" he had declared only a few moments before.

Our new adventurous outdoor life was little to the liking of my father, Thomas Jackson. Of an old Virginia family, he had entered the service of the American Fur Company in 1835, and had been employed for years in the trading post at Fort Benton, at that time the only habitation of white men in the great plains and mountains country now known as Montana.

My mother was the daughter of the dauntless, much beloved Hugh Monroe or Rising Wolf, who had married into the Pikuni tribe, and she loved the outdoor life as much as my brother Robert and I did, but she could not persuade my father of its merits.

When the control of the trading post at Fort Benton had passed into strange hands, my grandfather Monroe, his long term of service with the American Fur Company ended by the change, persuaded all of us, his sons and daughters and grandsons, to join him in a camping and beaver-trapping expedition. And we had done well—had taken many fine pelts. But my father had not been happy.

And now, when the Assiniboins had come upon us in the night, driven off our horses, and burned our camp, my father was in despair. And here, in the barking of the dogs, was indication of the renewal of danger. How would it affect him!

Chapter V

LEAVING my grandmother, my mother, and Uncle John's woman there in the brush, we began sneaking up through the timber towards our destroyed camp. When we were about halfway to it our dogs ceased barking, and a little later we heard the tread of a number of horses out upon the prairies and heard their riders talking as they went back down the valley toward Loud Roaring Creek. Said my brother: "I wonder why they came back here?"

"I don't. I know why they returned: they came for saddles; traps; beaver skins; and other of our things that they were careful not to burn. They are cunning, those Assiniboins; they had their raid upon us well planned," said my grandfather.

We went on. The gentle night wind brought to us the strong odor of burned leather; it turned and blew the other way, and our dogs, getting scent of us, came with a rush, whining their joy at our return as they licked our hands. The fires had gone out; all was dark at our camping place. We stopped near it in the edge of the timber, the dogs went out and nosed about and made no outcry, and we felt sure that the enemy had left there and would not return. Uncle John went back to the ford after the women and by the time they joined us day was breaking.

THE light grew, and we went out to a scene desolate enough. My grandmother sat down and cried pitifully and would not be comforted. Where our lodges had stood were now three little piles of charred leather and lodge-pole ends, and black pieces of tin that once had been cooking utensils and cups and plates. Our enemies had, apparently, carried out from the lodges the things of value that they wanted, and then torn the lodges down, piled upon them our stores of marrow grease and fat dried meat, and fired them. They had carried off all of our beaver traps; our cans of powder and sacks of balls.

And except for four women's riding saddles that had been tossed contemptuously one side, our enemies had destroyed or carried off all that they had found in our camp, and got away with all except two of our horses.

We saddled those two, mounted my grandmother and mother upon them, forded the river and took the trail running south up the ridge.

Near sundown of the following day, we arrived at lower Two Medicine Lodges Lake, and found that the Kootenai Indians whom we had left there, had broken camp and gone down the river. We took their trail the next morning, and late in the afternoon discovered their camp at the mouth of Little Badger Creek. As we neared it, many of the people came out to meet us, and escort us to the lodge of Back-coming-in-sight, waiting outside the doorway to give us hearty welcome: "You are afoot! You have had trouble!" he exclaimed. "Well, my lodge is your lodge; all that I have is yours! Come in and eat, and tell us all about it."

It was a grand feast that his women set before us: boiled buffalo boss ribs; pemmican; stewed *pommes blanche*, and, best of all, large servings of dried camas. And later, when my grandfather had told the whole story of our adventures of the night, Back-coming-in-sight said to him: "Rising Wolf, true friend of many winters back, you came to us—you and yours, on foot to-day, but you shall not go on afoot. You shall learn, to-morrow, the kind of friends that the Kootenai are to you and yours. And I want to say right now that we all feel very grateful to your Pikuni people. We did as you advised; we sent messengers to your chiefs, down on Bear River. They accepted and smoked the pipe that we offered them, and not only gave us permission to move out here and kill all the buffalo that we can use, but asked us to move down and camp beside them. We are going to do that in the next two or three days. We ask that you rest here, and go on with us."

"Good! We will stop with you! You are very generous!" my grandfather replied.

NEXT morning, as soon as the early meal was over, the men began to come with horses that they gave us, saddles too, and ropes, until we all had good mounts, and more pack animals than we needed, or so we thought until women friends began to come with furnishings for the lodge, back rests, parfleches of dried meat, bladders of marrow grease, beautiful woven grass sacks filled with dried camas, buffalo robes for bedding, a kettle or two and a few cups; and then we saw that our horses were none too many.

Three days later, camp was broken, and we all moved down and joined the Pikuni on Bear River.

After many talks around our evening lodge fires, in which my father would take no part, my grandfather and uncles decided that we should go in to Fort Benton, to obtain on credit traps and ammunition that we needed, and then cross the Missouri and trap beaver along the streams putting out from the Iyipsach Istukists—the Belt Mountains. So, one morning, we packed up and left the great camp of our people, and our Kootenai friends, and without adventure of any kind, trailed down into the Fort Benton river bottom three days later, and were surprised to see that a large log building was being put up a short distance above the fort. The sight of it made my grandfather furious.

"That marks the beginning of the end for us!" he cried, shaking a fist at the building. "The whites are invading our country; they will build a town here; they will swarm over our plains, and along our mountains, kill off our meat animals, trap out our fur animals. Yes, they will desolate our great country and make beggars of us!"

We found Baptiste Rondin in charge of the construction of the big building; he told us that Carroll and Steell intended to lease or sell the fort to the Government, and that this was to be their store.

We rode on into the fort, and Mr. Carroll gave us hearty welcome, urged us to occupy our old

quarters, and, when my grandfather told him of our losses, said that he would be glad to re-employ him, his sons and my father, or outfit them with all that they would need for another trapping expedition.

"Myself, I have had all of the trapping experience that I want! Never again! Never again!" my father exclaimed.

It was with heavy hearts that my brother and I helped unpack and unsaddle the horses, and carry the packs into our old quarters. As we drove our horses out to the fort herd, my brother said to me: "I don't want to stay here! I don't see any happiness for us, here in this old fort!"

"I don't believe that we will have to stay here; Grandfather will make a strong talk for us to go with him; he knows that we can help him a lot," I replied.

We sought out the old man and begged him to go to our father and get permission for us to go on the trapping expedition. He replied that he would make a talk for us later on. We went next to our grandmother, and our mother, and got them to promise that they would help us. Then we worried through a long afternoon.

Night came. Our father left the supper table, took his favorite buffalo hide covered chair before the fire and got out his pipe. Our grandfather and grandmother came in and seated themselves upon the robe couch to his left, and then my brother asked him to allow us to go on the trapping expedition.

"No! Of course not! You are too young for that dangerous life! And anyhow, you have to study your school books! I am going to see to it that you have some education!" he replied.

"They can take their books with them and study in camp," said my mother.

"I want them to go with us! They can be of great help to us," said our grandmother.

"And lose their scalps! No, they can't go."

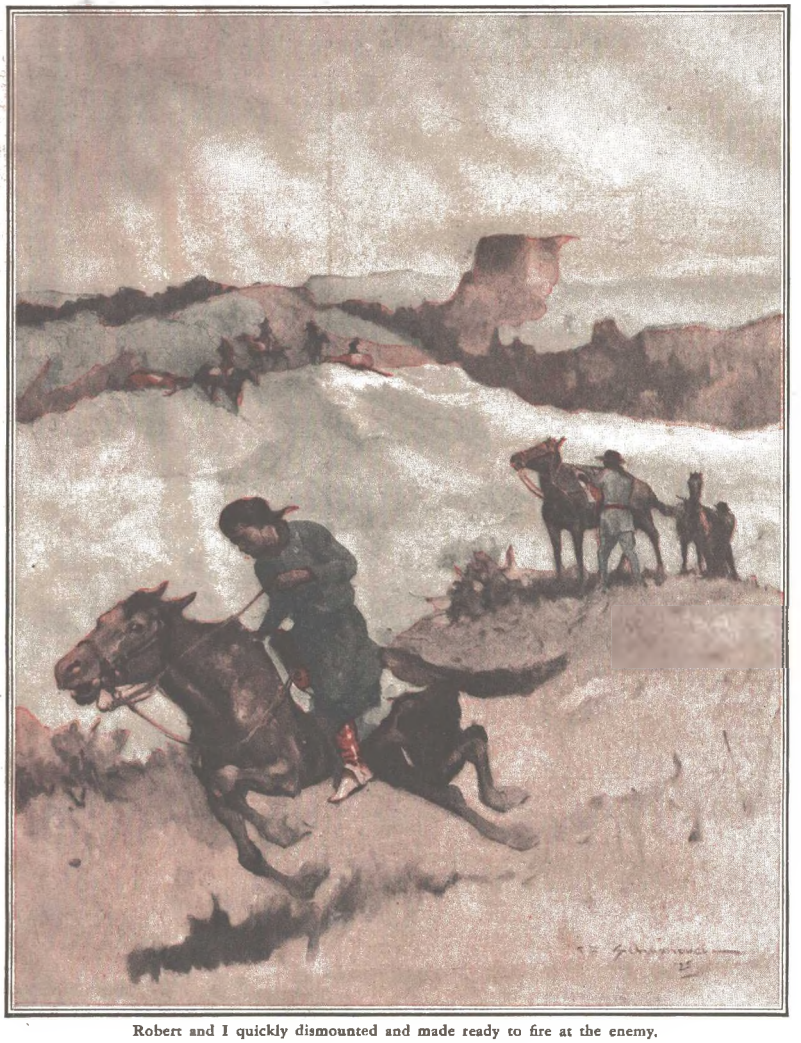
"They can earn by trapping, four times as much as your pay will come to, here!" the old man put in.

"No! Once for all, I say that they cannot go!" our father replied. And at that, our mother motioned to us to cease talking.

He spoke, after a time, of the happenings in the fort during our absence; asked a question or two, to which none made reply. Our continued silence wore upon him; he shrugged his shoulders; fidgeted in his chair; drew great clouds of smoke from his pipe; and at last exclaimed: "Oh, well! Have your way about it! Yes, they may go, but upon one condition, that you will make them study their books!"

"They will do it, or get a real switching every night!" our grandfather promised.

And "Good! Good!" Robert and I shouted, and danced out of the room, and ran to tell our young friends of the fort that we were to be free trappers. How they envied us!



Robert and I quickly dismounted and made ready to fire at the enemy.

THREE days later, completely outfitted, we forded the river and struck off south across the plains for the Belt Mountains.

I am not going into the details of that trip. We trapped along the upper reaches of Deep Creek, the Judith, and the Musselshell Rivers, and in the latter part of November returned to Fort Benton with six packs of beaver skins, each weighing ninety pounds.

We wintered in the fort, and in the spring, struck out again to trap, returning to Fort Benton late in the autumn with all the beaver packs that our horses could stagger under.

So, trapping in the mountains from early spring until late fall, and wintering in Fort Benton, time passed all too quickly for my brother and me. Fort Benton was growing. Soldiers now occupied the old adobe fort, and one by one, a line of log buildings was being erected above the store of Carroll and Steell; other stores, a hotel, several saloons. The one-time engages of the American Fur Company were living in small cabins that they built back of the business houses along the water front, and were none of them any too prosperous. They mourned over the passing of the great company, and bitterly resented the discovery of gold up in the mountains, that was bringing a horde of newcomers into the country.

Grandfather Rising Wolf began to talk about going north to the Saskatchewan country, where we would anyhow be free from the wandering bands of prospectors, and at last, in the spring of 1870, decided to make the move.

My father, however, said he would not go up there for any consideration; that he was going down the river to Fort Buford, where, he was sure, his old friend, Charles Larpenteur, the trader there, would give him employment; and he was not going alone; my mother, brother and I were to accompany him. There were days and days of argument about it, but my father was not to be won over by the others' pleadings, and on a day in early April, our relatives packed up and left for the north, and sadly enough we watched them go. Little did my brother and I then think that we were never again to see our good grandmother; nor any of the others for long years to come.

We had sold all of our horses, and had bought a small bateau, and loaded it with our few belongings. We got into it and set off down the Upper Missouri, my brother and I eager for the long and strange trip by water. I wonder if we would have been so keen for it if we could have known that we were turning our backs upon the dangerous life of the mountain trapper, only to take active part in the war with the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Nez Perces, even then brewing.

Chapter VI

MY father steered our small bateau, my brother and I each worked an oar, and aided by the four miles an hour current we made fast progress down the river.

Occasionally we camped for the night with a party of "woodhawks," men who, at great risk of their lives from Sioux and Assiniboins, got out long rows of cordwood which they sold to the steamboats during the summer. Not a year passed that a number of them were not killed by war parties. Generally we cooked our supper on an island, and then drifted slowly on in the darkness to make a fireless camp for the night on another island.

From morning until night we were constantly passing carcasses of buffalo, lodged upon bars and against piles of driftwood, buffalo that had broken through the ice and drowned during the winter; and we saw many more that had been caught in the quicksands of the river, and were some of them dead, others slowly, surely, sinking to their death. They were a pitiful sight. Wolves, coyotes, foxes, grizzly and black bears, ravens, buzzards and magpies were feasting upon the carcasses along the bars. We saw more than once, a big grizzly gorging himself at a carcass while, at safe distance off, several wolves sat upon their haunches and hungrily waited for him to take his fill and go upon his way.

Early one morning, just after we had passed the mouth of the Musselshell River, my mother said: "The little bighorn meat that we have left is spoiled; we must have fresh meat of some kind for our evening meal."

"We will get it before evening; the later the better, in this warm weather," my father replied. Even as he spoke, several small bands of buffalo were in sight on the shores below, and upon the slopes of the valley, and during the long day, we saw many other bands of them, and numbers of deer and elk. Then, as evening drew near, we seemed to have come into a gameless part of the valley, for look where we would we could see nowhere an animal of any kind, not even a coyote. We rounded a sharp bend and came into a long straight reach of the stream. Pointing to a sharp, high, rocky cone at its lower end, my father said that it was the Round Butte, a well-known landmark of the river, and a favorite lookout place of war parties.

We had gone but a little way down the wide, long stretch of the river, when my father motioned Robert and me to cease rowing, and signed to us to look ahead. Turning about in our seats, we saw three big mule deer on a strip of sandy shore, about two hundred yards upstream from the butte. They slowly stalked across the sands to the edge of the water, lowered their heads and drank. We were just then nearing a partly submerged cottonwood tree, and when we came to it, Robert reached out and quickly tied the bow rope to one of its stout limbs, and the boat swung around and with a sudden jerk came to a stop. There was no need to ask him why he had tied up: from its upper end, all the way down to the strip of shore where the deer were drinking, the edge of the big bottom was a high cut-

bank rising straight from deep water, and unclimbable; our one chance to get shots at the deer was to remain right where we were until they left the shore, and then land there, follow them out upon the bottom.

The deer were a long time in the edge of the water, taking an occasional swallow or two, and then raising their heads to stare up and down the river. At last they turned about, and my mother whispered: "Good! They are going now!"

But they didn't; they lined up at the edge of the willows and stood there, occasionally nipping the new-grown tender shoots of the brush. "They're just playing at eating; but they will stay there until it is too dark for us to see to shoot!" Robert growled.

At last, when Sun was no more than a half-hour from setting, the bucks slowly moved up into the brush. Robert unfastened the tie rope then, and we noiselessly worked the boat downstream and my father steered it to shore. We landed, drew the boat well out upon the sands, and then followed a wide game trail up through the brush and timber slope, and saw the deer at the foot of the high butte; they were moving slowly out through the high sagebrush, stopping frequently to nip off a mouthful of tempting browse.

"Now! Go! You two can easily slip up to them. Your father and I will stand here on watch until you make the kill," our mother told us and as we started to sneak out through the brush, I noticed that she had brought our telescope from the boat, and was drawing it from its heavy rawhide case.

Stooping low, Robert in the lead, we slipped out through the sagebrush. We had about one hundred yards yet to go before we would be within shooting range when we heard our mother and father shouting, and looked back at them. Father was running toward us, brandishing his rifle. Mother was pointing with her telescope to the top of the butte. We looked up at it, but could see nothing that could have alarmed her. All three bucks turned about and stood staring at her, at our running father. Then they suddenly turned their heads and looked up the slope of the butte. We did too, there was an outcrop on it, a mass of big bowlders that prevented our seeing its summit from where we stood.

Said Robert: "Maybe she has discovered a war party up there."

As he spoke, the three bucks started down the slope with the high and short stiff jumps peculiar to their kind. "They heard something up there," I said.

"Yes! Let's go!" Robert replied. We sprang up and ran, and had gone but a little way when we saw that which the bowlders had hidden from us: some Indians, six or eight of them, were coming down the butte with flying leaps, intent upon cutting us off from the river!

Chapter VII

ROBERT and I were nearer our mother and the shelter of the timber back of her than the enemy were, and they soon saw that they would be unable to intercept us. Changing their course, they headed straight toward her. At that, our father turned back to protect her as best he could, and we ran faster than ever, on and on, our hearts heavy with fear for her.

We went to the right and left around a patch of brush, and when I fell in behind Robert, I saw that a rattlesnake had its fangs fast in his left trouser leg and was writhing and flopping at his heels. "You're bitten!" I gasped.

"No! Never touched my skin!" he replied. "Faster! Run faster!"

The snake dropped free from him and I all but stepped upon it as it coiled to strike again; with the tail of my eye I saw it miss my right ankle by an inch or two.

And now, when the enemy were about two hundred yards from our mother, she signed to us to hurry in, and turned and ran into the shelter of the brush, and at the same time our father stopped and began shooting at the enemy, and we did likewise. One threw up his arms and fell. At that, the others slowed up, stopped and fired at our father, failed to hit him, then ran back to their fallen comrade who was yelling with pain, and started off around the butte carrying him. We all three continued shooting, aiming at the close bunch of them. At a shot from Robert, down went one of the wounded man's carriers, and at that, the others dropped him and scattering ran out of our sight down around the lower slope of the butte. We knew that, as soon as they struck the brush at the foot of it, they would come up through it to attack, and would then have every advantage of us.

We ran on, across the last strip of bottom, and down the game trail to the river, and to the boat, which our mother and father had already pushed out into the stream. We sprang into it, seized our oars, and had made but a few strokes, when one and then another shot was fired at us from the brush below and a bullet came through the side of the boat, between Robert and me.

"You boys! Father! Lie down! Let the boat drift!" our mother cried.

"We can't! Snags ahead!" I answered.

"Get down under cover, yourself!" Robert told her, and she shortly replied: "Not unless you all do!"

Two more bullets struck the water close above the boat. We had it well under way by that time, heading it straight for the opposite shore, distant a couple of hundred yards. Several more shots were fired but none hit us. As the bow scraped upon the rocky shore, we sprang out, drew the boat up so that it wouldn't drift away, and scurried into the shelter of the near-by brush, the enemy firing one last futile shot at us before we entered it.

"Kyi! Kitai kamota anan! There! We survive!" our mother exclaimed.

None made reply to that. Safe in our brush screen, we stared out across the river at the butte, all red glowing in the setting sun, and soon saw the enemy, six of them, climbing up it.

"The telescope—where is it?" Robert asked.

"In the boat, of course!" our mother replied, and he ran out and got it, and leveled it at the enemy. Four of them were approaching the first one we had shot, who was sitting up, and presently, as they lifted him Robert said that, as nearly as he could make out, the man's left leg was broken. And then he said that the other one that we had shot was dead. But he had no need to tell us that; we could see, without the aid of the glass, the two that had gone to him take up his shield and his gun, and then start dragging him down the slope to the brush, where they would no doubt bury him as best they could.

"Who are they?" I asked.

"Yanktonnais or Assiniboins, maybe Minnetarees," my father replied.

Little did we then think that we were to know more of them, have another fight with them that very summer, and, years later, meet two of them in dreadful battle.

But from that evening on, as we went on down the river, we kept ever in mind that we were now in enemy country. More than ever, we avoided passing close under cutbanks, and wooded shores. And every evening after our supper on some island, we rowed on in the darkness, no matter what the risk of being wrecked by snags, to camp for the night upon another island.

AT last, a few miles below the mouth of the Yellowstone, we arrived at the Fort Buford landing, made fast our boat and ascended the steep path to the top of the bank, where stood a number of Indians who coldly stared at us, gave us no greeting. Beyond them was a long, low log building of many rooms, which my father rightly guessed was Larpenteur's trading post. Farther out in the bottom was another post, that of the Northwest Company, and then the adobe, rock, and timber fort. At that time, it was under the command of Colonel Morrow.

We went straight to the post fronting the landing, and into the big trade room, where a heavy set, side whiskered man in a big armchair clapped hands together in astonishment, and cried: "Ha! It is you, Thomas Jackson! And you, Amelie! After all these years. You are welcome in my poor home! Such as it is, it is yours! Come shake hands with me. I am crippled—broke my thigh last winter—have to be helped about."

Robert and I were introduced to the kind Frenchman, who told us that all of the Sioux tribes, even the Yanktonnais encamped there near the fort, were in ugly mood, and that we were very lucky to have escaped the many war parties of them that were abroad. Then he said that he was more than glad of our arrival, as he needed a reliable, experienced clerk. He gave my father the position, and within an hour we were comfortably quartered in a room of the post two doors below the trade room.

For some days, Robert and I found life pretty dull in our new home. Every morning, we had to get out our school books and learn the lessons that our father set for us. In the afternoons, we wanted to visit about in the great camp of the Yanktonnais, in the edge of a grove above the post, but the cold stares that we got from those of them who came to trade with Larpenteur were proof enough that we would not be welcomed there.

The first friend that we made was a young man named Bloody Knife, part Sioux and part Arickaree, who, with a half-dozen full-blood Arickarees, was an army scout, who had quarters in the fort. His father had married his mother, in an interval of peace between the two tribes, and she had later returned to her people, and her son had grown up as an Arickaree, and with all that tribe's hatred of the Sioux.

One evening, when we were all gathered in the Larpenteur's living room, Bloody Knife came in and said, Mr. Larpenteur interpreting: "You Pikuni people had a fight when you were coming down from your country; at Round Butte, you killed Buffalo Rib, and wounded Red Star, two of a war party of Uncpapa Sioux."

"Yes, but we have told none, except Mr. Larpenteur. How did you learn about it?"

"Though the Sioux tribes hate me, still I have certain friends among them. I learn all that goes on in their camps. Last evening, that war party arrived on a raft, stopped in the camp above all night, and went on down river at daylight this morning. They told of the fight that they had had with four people of a boat, a man, woman, two boys: and then the Yanktonnais told them that they would find those four right here in this trading post. And at that, Red Star swore that, as soon as his leg became whole, he would have your lives."

"Ha! Let him come! I am not afraid of him!" Robert exclaimed.

"Red Star did not make that vow alone; two of his party, Black Elk and Fox Eyes, cousins of the one you killed, also vowed that they will have your scalps. I advise you to be always on the lookout for them," said Bloody Knife.

"I would not know them if I were to see them again; in the fight, they were too far off for me to see their faces plainly," I remarked.

"I would know them; I saw their faces plain enough, with the spyglass," said Robert.

Bloody Knife got up, shook hands with us all around. "I came to warn you about your enemies and now I have to go back to the fort; the horn will soon blow for us to get into our beds. Let us be real friends. You boys come often to the fort and see me," he said, and was gone.

The very next afternoon, Robert and I went to the quarters of the Ree, (Arikaree) scouts, in the fort, and visited with them. We conversed readily with them by means of sign language, and on that first day learned several words of the Ree language, in which we became fairly fluent before the end of that summer.

The Yanktonnais came daily to Larpenteur's post to trade, and before long my brother and I were playing with the boys of the tribe, at first around the post and out along the river and then right in their camp, in their lodges even, where we were at least tolerated by their elders. Naturally, playing with the boys, we were soon conversing with them in their language, which we found much easier to learn, and speak, than that of our Ree scout friends.

Came August. Back in the breaks of the valley the plums and choke cherries ripened, and when several of the Yanktonnais women came to the post with some of the fruit for my mother, she was more than pleased, and said that she wanted to go out herself and gather several sacks of both kinds to dry for winter use.

ON the following morning, Robert and I borrowed three saddle horses, and with our mother set out for the breaks of the river valley. We crossed the wide bottom, rode up a narrow, bare ridge between two deep coulies, and saw that the cherry and plum trees in them had been stripped of fruit by the Yanktonnais women. Our mother thought we might find an abundance of fruit in the country to the west; so we went back to the bottom land and turned up it, past the Yanktonnais camp in the edge of the timber and the many bands of horses grazing out from it, each one of them guarded by a watchful herder.

As we passed one of these (*Continued on page 48*)

The way we lathered those men with pebbles was lovely. The rush stopped because they couldn't understand what was hurting them.

Mark Tidd in Egypt

By Clarence B. Kelland

Illustrated by W. W. Clarke

JUST two of us, alone in Egypt—surrounded by enemies! Hidden under smelly cargo, sailing up the Nile in the enemies' diabeyah, at dead of night!

I wasn't happy. But Mark Tidd was.

He figured that our dragoman, Mohammed, and our little bootblack assistant would leg it back to Cairo and start a rescue party after us. And he had that rescue party all rigged up—our launch, with Tallow and Binney on it, and the three American sailors we'd hired in anticipation of a naval battle with these antique thieves who were trying to smuggle Mr. Judkins' museum pieces out of Egypt.

We might be all right if nothing slipped. But there were lots of chances for slips. And one of the biggest chances was that some of the chief thieves, Ali or his black Soudanese or the tricky American who was at the head of the thieving, might stumble on us at any minute.

I wasn't happy. Even the thought of winning Mr. Judkins' five-thousand-dollar reward couldn't cheer me. We needed money after Mr. Tidd's losing all our travelers' checks, but I didn't like this way of earning it.

"Maybe," I says to Mark, "it was smart of you to hide from the enemy on their own boat, but were you counting on sailing off with them this way?"

"P-planned it," says Mark. "Now we can signal our n-n-navy, and they'll know this is the right diabeyah to attack."

"Great," says I. "If our navy gets near enough to signal. And if we're still alive to signal 'em. We're making the start anyway."

Chapter XVIII

ON our way we were. Behind us we could see a few dim lights as the shore moved backwards; ahead of us we couldn't see anything at all. It looked as if we were sailing off into a sea of ink. The current made noises against the diabeyah and the mast creaked and everything sort of groaned dismal-like. I felt like I couldn't snuggle close enough to Mark, and he wasn't backward about shoving up to me.

Once a man came poking forward almost over our heads to tinker with something and we held our breath, but he went back again and left us alone.

"How long'll it take to get the navy goin'?" I whispered.

"D-depends," says Mark.

"On what?"

"On how l-long it takes to warn 'em."

"Well," says I, "if our friends run all the way as fast as they started out, they'll be there in ten seconds flat."

"They've got to catch us before we g-g-get to Memphis," says Mark.

"Why?"

"Because this ship'll tie up there and t-take on more cargo, and they'll r-r-rummage around and find us sure."

"And then what?"

"I hain't got as far as thinkin' about that," says he.

"And I don't want to think about it," says I.

He was still a while and then he kind of chuckled.

"What's so comical?" says I.

"I never thought I'd get to be a stowawny on a diabeyah," says he, "headin' for the Sudan and points south."

"If there's a laugh in that," says I, "you can have my share of it."

"You'll laugh when we collect our five thousand," says he.

"I never laugh before the feller comes to the point of the joke," says I. "It ain't polite."

"Won't Mr. Judkins be tickled to death!"

"Won't Wicksville?" says I. "There's folks there'll be bustin' with joy when the news travels home we've been et by cannibals."

"Be you armed?" says he.

"No," says I, "but I'm scairt, if that's just as good. Nothin' less than Big Bertha would make me easy in my mind."

"I can't give you Big Bertha," says he, "but try the f-feel of this."

His hand came out to me in the dark and I felt something in it that had a kind of familiar feel. I took hold and lo and behold if it wasn't my sling-shot, rubbers and all. Until we came off on this globe-trotting expedition I never walked a step without it, and it came in handy in Italy. But I hadn't had it since. But you can believe I was glad to lay hands on it again.

"Fine," says I, "but what'll I shoot in it? Bubbles?"

"I got a pocket full of select, grade A p-pebbles," says Mark.

"Gimme a mess," says I, and he filled my two hands.

I slipped them into my coat pocket, and I kept the sling-shot in my hand and loaded it up ready for action.

"You hain't lost the flashlight," says I.

"Right here in my p-paddy," says Mark. "I wonder where we are?"

"And I'm wonderin'," says I, "what we'll do if the navy doesn't catch up with us."

"I been a-plannin' that out. We'll know when we git close to Memphis where the stuff from Saggara'll be waitin' to be f-f-fetched aboard. When we git where we can s-see the shore, we got to slide off this boat into the water."

"Fine," says I. "But I hope we don't wake up any crocodiles. And after we slide into the water—what?"

"Swim," says he.

"Where? Back to Cairo?"

"Not m-much. Jest swim around idle-like until they git l-loaded. Then scramble aboard once more and keep on goin'."

"I see," says I, "but what do we do when they leave this boat and take to a caravan? I can't figger out how we'd stow ourselves away on a camel."

"We could d-d-disguise ourself as one of its humps," says he.

"And I cal'late you plan on followin' along right to the Red Sea if we have to."

"I aim to follow till I git b-back the stuff," says he.

He would, too. He was that stubborn.

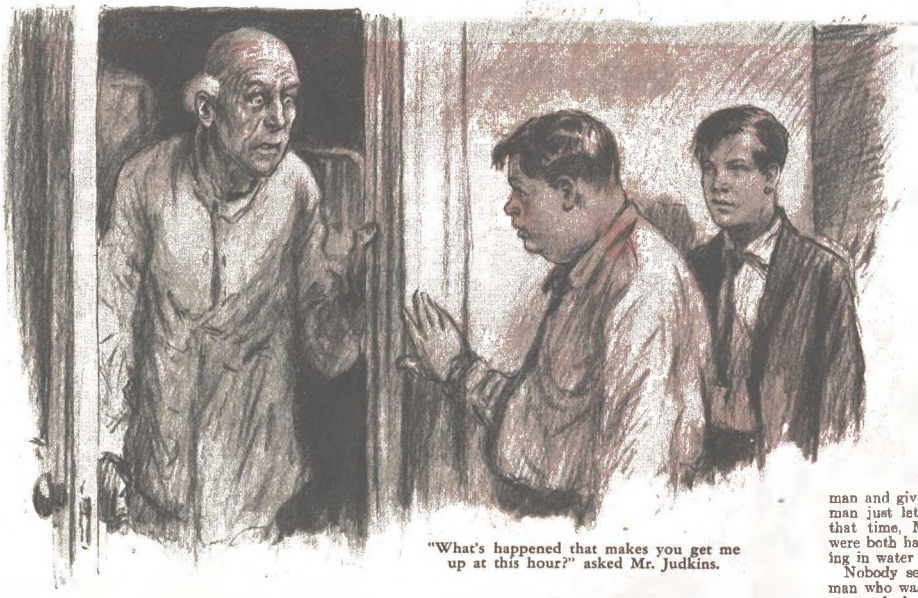
SO I just grunted, and for quite a while we didn't say anything. Then I prodded him and says, "How long we been goin'?"

"Seems like hours," he says.

"The navy ought to be gettin' along."

"It's hard to judge t-t-time," he says. "Maybe it hain't been hours."

"Look at your watch," says I.



"What's happened that makes you get me up at this hour?" asked Mr. Judkins.

"Dassen't t-turn on the light. They might see it."

But he got out his watch in the dark and pried open the crystal so he could feel with his fingers where the hands were. Simple enough, but it took Mark to get the idea. Well, he felt of the watch with his finger and then he let out a little snort.

"What's the matter?" says I.

"We been away from shore l-less'n twenty m-minutes," he says.

IF that was so, Mohammed and the bootblack would not have got back to Cairo yet, let alone warning our navy to get up steam and come after us. It would take anyhow a half to three-quarters of an hour for them to catch us and we were getting farther away all the time. Things began to look pretty scaly.

"I guess," says I, "we'll have to swim with the crocodiles."

"M-maybe we'll have to delay this s-ship," says Mark.

"How?" says I.

"One of us sneak out and cut a rope or s-somethin'."

"You do it," says I. "I'll wait here for you."

"But, on the other hand," says Mark, "m-maybe that wouldn't be a good idee. They might go l-lookin' for who cut the rope."

"I would if I was in their place," says I. "It would kind of provoke me, too."

"We'll t-try to think up somethin' else. And keep that for a last emergency."

But I was worried about it just the same. "Listen, Mark," says I, "you quit plannin'. Things is all right as they be. Just sit tight and wait for the navy."

"Where's the f-fun?"

"Where's the fun bein' et by a Soudanese cannibal?" says I. "I kin feel his teeth sinkin' in now."

"They'd pick me to eat f-f-first," he says. "I'd be more tender."

Well, we didn't take time to argue that, but got to thinking pretty busy about what was going to happen the next minute. This was on account of Ali and the American coming forward and standing right where we could hear them talk.

"All this cargo has got to be moved," says the American. "It's all jumbled up, and we've got a lot more stuff to come on at Memphis."

"We pile it on," says Ali.

"We'll arrange it in an orderly way," says the American. "Now all this stuff forward. It was put on for a blind anyhow."

"We put it ashore at Memphis to make some room," says Ali.

"I think it would be best to stow everything away shipshape, and do it now."

"No good," Ali says. "Mooch work. We do when we land. That better way."

I was all for Ali. If they started pawing around just then, there'd have been nothing for it but to flop over the side and swim.

I sure was glad when the American grunted and says, "Well, have your own way about it," and they moved away again.

I took a long breath. "Gosh," says I.

"A m-miss is good's a m-mile," says Mark.

"Not when it's a mile from shore," says I.

"I wisht I could s-see out," Mark says.

"What I wish is that nobody could see in," I told him.

"How are we goin' to tell when the navy heaves in sight?"

There was something to that. How were we going to give any signals if we didn't know when to do it?

"I'm goin' to t-take a look," says Mark.

"Take it careful," says I, "and don't give three cheers if you see anything."

So he kind of turned and twisted and got his head up above the surface, and he stood there maybe five minutes looking. I couldn't stand it any longer and pinched his leg. He came pretty close to hollering ouch but he didn't and hauled in his head like a turtle and wanted to know what the dickens I thought I was doing.

"See anything?" says I.

"Nothing but Egypt and n-not much of that," he says.

THEN he sat down again like nothing was making him impatient and says, "Say, hain't it k-kind of fascinatin' to think we're goin' to have this n-naval battle right where the ancient kings of Egypt used to hang out with their palaces and armies? I bet none of those old f-fellows ever went on a m-more excitin' expedition than this one."

"I bet if they ever did," says I, "they was sorry."

"Do you know," he says, "they used to use l-l-lions in their b-battles? They would lead 'em out, and when they got in the thick of the f-fight they'd turn 'em loose to chaw the enemy."

"What I'd like to know," I says, "is who told the lions which was enemy?"

"They was trained," says Mark.

"Sure," says I. "I suppose every Egyptian soldier wore a rose in his button hole, and the lions was taught not to bite anybody with a bouquet."

"Somethin' like that," says Mark.

"Kind of hard on a feller that happened to drop his flower," says I, but my mind wasn't on the conversation.

"We're gittin' nearer all the time," says I.

Mark poked up his head again. "No navy yit," he says. "Anyhow," he says, "it's b-better if they don't ketch us before we l-load at Memphis. Then we'll git all the stuff without extry trouble—make a clean sweep."

Well, it looked like that was what we would make, or else nothing. We kept on sailing and sailing and nothing happened. No boat caught up to us, and there wasn't a sign of a light anywhere behind. I got to feeling pretty lonesome.

"Don't l-lose your sling-shot," says Mark. "It may come in awful handy."

"I'm hangin' on like a puppy to a root," says I.

After that we didn't talk much for what seemed like an awful long while. Finally Mark nudged me and says to get ready.

"Ready for what?" says I.

"To duck overboard," says he.

That shook me up, and I stuck out my head, and off in front about a quarter of a mile I could see a few lights wobbling around. I guessed that it was Memphis, and that the lights were the rest of Ali's army with what was left of the things they had stolen from Mr. Judkins.

"We're there," says I.

"All right," says he. "We got to s-s-sneak out cautious and slide over the side."

"Not till we get closer," says I.

"No," he says, "the best time will be when everybody is interested in m-makin' the l-landing."

So we waited till we heard everyone yelling and running around.

Chapter XIX

IT'S quite a job to get one of those clumsy boats where you want it. About eight or ten feet off the bank was the best they could do, and then they chucked planks ashore to walk on. But that's getting a little ahead of the procession.

Both our heads were stuck out to see what was what, and when the shore stuck up in front of us Mark says we better get going. And then along came a man and stood right in front of us. He was poking with a long pole, and I couldn't see how we were going to get past him without being seen. But Mark did. This man was standing on the side near the shore so Mark says to me, "Git r-ready. When I count three, you do a d-dive over the other side."

"What about you?" says I.

"I'll make a hole in the water right beside you," he says, and then he counted, and as he says three I took about two steps and was gone. But not before I heard a holler and a splash where Mark had snuck up behind the man and given him a full-size shove in the back. The man just let out a squawk and went in headfirst. By that time, Mark was in the water with me, and we were both hanging on to the side of the boat and standing in water just up to our necks.

Nobody seemed to pay much attention. I guess the man who was pushed overboard didn't know whether he was pushed or fell all by himself, and we seemed to be all right where we were. We just stood there and waited and wondered how we were going to get aboard again because the side was so high, but Mark said I could stand on his shoulders and scramble up and then help him climb. That sounded fine. I could see myself lifting Mark Tidd up on deck. I might as well have tried to lift a locomotive.

All of a sudden I poked Mark and whispered to look.

"Where?"

"Downstream," says I, for, a mile or two away, there was a light moving toward us.

"I bet it's the navy," says I.

"Hope they don't get here too s-s-soon," says Mark.

Pretty soon he decided things must be nearly stowed and we'd better be climbing aboard. We could do it without being seen, because there was a pile of stuff between the bow of the ship and the stern where all the men stayed.

So I scrambled up on his shoulders, and I could hear him kind of glug-glug where I pushed his head under. But he didn't move and I hurried all I could so he could stick his nose out as soon as possible and not get drowned any more than could be helped. It took about six seconds, and then I lay on my stummick and let my hand down to him. He grabbed it and commenced to claw his way up. Well, for a spell it was nip and tuck whether I'd get him up or he would pull me out by the roots and haul me into the drink again. But at last we made it and scrooched down as close as we could.

We weren't much too soon, for right away the crew began to shove off, and pretty soon we were on our way upstream again.

"Where's the navy?" says I.

Mark took a look. "C-comin' closer," he says. "Wait till we git a l-little f-f-farther along so we won't drift ashore with Ali's caravan there."

"Wait for what?" says I, beginning to feel uneasy.

"Before we take any s-steps," says he, and that was all.

We kept on for twenty, thirty minutes, and all the time the light kept getting closer. It wasn't more than a half mile away now, but there wasn't much chance they could see us at all on account of its being so dark.

"Now's the t-time," says Mark.

"What you aimin' to do?"

"Got a knife?" says he.

"Cal'late to have one."

"Gimme it," says he.

"What fur?"

"I'm a-goin' to s-sneak aft till I can f-find some ropes of the riggin' and cut 'em."

"Alone?" says I.

"Yes," says he.

"Then use your own knife," I says.

"I want t-two. One in each hand."

"Oh, you do," I says.

"Well, you can't have my knife. I cal'late to use it myself."

"How?"

"Now, lissen," says I. "I think this is a dum fool thing, and I'm scairt to death, and probably we'll both git skinned and et raw. But if you're goin' to cut ropes and git scalped, why, I'm a-goin' to cut ropes and git scalped too. Two's company."

"Well," says he, kind of disgusted, "you got your faults, but bein' a q-quitter hain't one of 'em."

Now that made me feel pretty good. When you get anything out of Mark that even looks like a compliment you're lucky.

"Git a move on," he says.

So we scrambled over the stuff as quiet as we could. It was lucky for us there weren't any lights on the ship. It took a couple of minutes for Mark to get on one side of the boat and me on the other.

"C-cut every rope you l-lay hands on," says he.

So I found a rope and cut it, and not much happened, and I cut some more, and I guess he was doing the same. We sure did slash right and left, and then, all of a sudden things happened, and I was like to have my brains batted out. There was a racket above and the big boom, or whatever they call it, began to woggle, and then down it came ker-splash, and everything was topsy-turvy. We were like to be buried in the sail, but we crabbed out backwards and then made for our places up forward.

Then there was hollering and yelling and probably a lot of bad language in Arabic. Ali and his gang swarmed around to see what had hit them and it sure was noisy. Of course the diabeyah quit going ahead and commenced to drift back with the current. I wisht I could have understood what those men said because I know I would have enjoyed it.

NOW the light was pretty close, and all of a sudden there was something that I thought at first was a flash of lightning. But it wasn't. It was Mark signalling with his flashlight. He played it right on the other boat and I saw it was our navy. It wasn't more than a hundred yards off. We could hear a yell and she headed for us.

But there was another yell that came from Ali and they all rose up and started forward, but now there wasn't any use hiding any more; so Mark shone the light full on them and says to me to let 'em have it.

I did. The way I lathered those men with pebbles was lovely. And Mark too. You could hear the stones go spat, spat, spat, and every time there was a spat there came a howl. The rush stopped, not on account of their being hurt so bad, but because they couldn't understand what was hurting them, or how dangerous it might be.

We kept right at it, spatting them as fast as we could. It was good strategy, for it kept their minds on us and made them overlook the navy sneaking up on them from behind. It was lucky for us the navy was coming so speedy, for Ali was rallying his crew fast. But just as they were ready to make a charge, our boat rammed the diabeyah full tilt. It was an awful whallop and knocked every single one of us off our feet ker-flap.

There wasn't any charge, because in a minute those three American sailors boarded us, and so did Mohammed and the bootblack, and a couple more, and Mark and I grabbed up a couple of clubs and did what occurred to us would be handiest. It was considerable of a shindy, but the strategy of it all had been so good that the enemy never recovered from their surprise, and the first we knew men began to jump overboard. It was a circus to see those three sailors fight. They never bothered with clubs or anything, but just stuck to their fists and hollered. Every time they hit an Egyptian on the chin, that Egyptian was through for the night. And then I saw the biggest of the sailors get close to the Soudanese. I was scairt for a minute because the black man had a big club, but the sailor ducked it and came up inside. Then he socked his right fist into the black man's stummick, which made him double over, and then he swatted his left fist under his jaw, which straightened him up again. After that the Soudanese person lost interest and decided to lie down on his back and yelp.

So, when the battle was over we found the enemy was routed. But three prisoners were left in our hands and they were Ali and the black man and the American. And none of them were feeling like any more battles.

And so we tied them up and that was all there was to that.

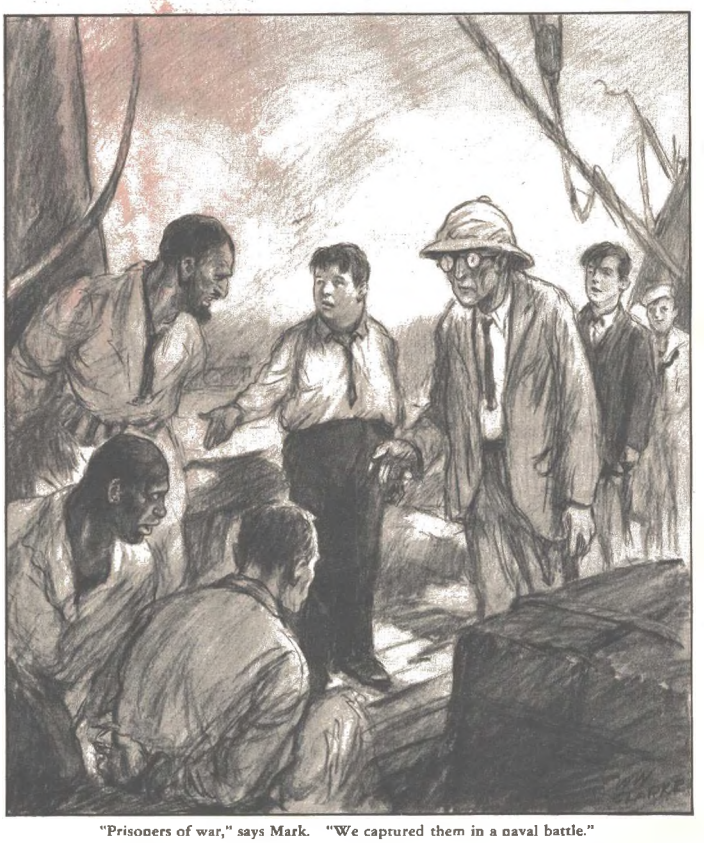
"Now what comes next?" says one of the sailors, grinning.

"Fasten a l-line to this ship and t-tow it back to Cairo," says Mark.

So we did, and spent most of the night wiggling off sand bars and whatnot. But Mark and I had a good time telling the other two fellows all about our adventures.

It was broad daylight when they got down to the first bridge, and there we were saved the trouble of anchoring by running on another bar, and there we let her stay.

We left the three sailors on board and put off in our launch for shore.



"Prisoners of war," says Mark. "We captured them in a naval battle."

Chapter XX

WE made tracks for Shepheard's and right up the stairs to Mr. Judkins' rooms and hammered on the door. He wasn't up yet and wanted to know pretty cross what in thunder was the racket.

"It's Mark Tidd and the f-fellers," says Mark.

"Well, come back in an hour."

"Hain't got t-time to waste. It's suthin' important."

So Mr. Judkins got up and came to the door.

"Well," he says, "what's happened that makes you get me up at this unholy hour?"

"P-put on your clothes," says Mark.

"But why? What's up?"

"Mister," says I, "you'll save a lot of breath if you don't keep on askin'. When he's ready he'll tell you. Jest do like he says, and everythin' will be O. K."

"Oh," says he, "it will, eh?"

But just the same he got dressed and then he says, "Can I have some breakfast?"

"We hain't had n-none," says Mark.

"You're a queer lot," he says, "but I'll take a chance on you. But if you're putting up some sort of a game on me you'd better start to run now."

"We been p-puttin' up a game all right," says Mark. "Got a check book handy?"

"Yes. Why?"

"You're g-goin' to need it," says Mark. "Put it in your pocket."

So, when everything was ready we went down and dug up a carriage and started to drive.

"Where are we going?" says Mr. Judkins.

"Down to the Nile," says Mark.

"I've seen the Nile," says Mr. J., "and I don't need another sight of it before breakfast."

"Mebby," says Mark, "you'll change your m-mind."

"It ain't a crocodile," says Tallow.

"Nor jest scenery," says Binney.

"Nor a boat full of Cook's tourists," says I.

"Then what is it?" he says.

"Suthin' to be s-seen and not talked about," says Mark.

We rode along and along, and you could see Mr. Judkins was bustin' with curiosity but we didn't tell him anything.

Pretty soon we came out by the bridge, and there was our launch waiting for us.

"Git aboard," says Mark.

"Now look here, young fellow," says Mr. Judkins, "I'm not going off on any ocean voyage without victuals. I want food. I want coffee and toast and eggs."

"In five minutes," says Mark, "you won't care if you never see an egg again."

"That's comforting," says Mr. J. "Well, I'm in for it I expect, and I'd better mog ahead. Lead on, Skipper."

We climbed aboard and started out into the river. Then we fetched around sharp and ran alongside the diabeyah that was grounded on the sand bar. Our three sailors and the bootblack and Mohammed were there on guard, and Mr. Judkins could see the three prisoners all tied up and stretched out on deck.

"What's this?" he says.

"P-prisoners of war," says Mark. "We captured 'em in a naval battle."

"Naval battle? What are you talking about?"

"Why, last night there was a naval engagement between this pirate ship and our cruiser there. It was fought up the river the other s-side of Memphis, and we boarded her and made a prize of her and her cargo."

"I haven't got the idea yet," says Mr. J.

"Well," says Mark, "jest pry open that t-t-trunk and maybe you'll git it."

SO Mr. Judkins did, and there was his prize mummy outfit staring up at him. Well, sir! He was like to jump out of his skin, he was so excited. And then we showed him the other trunks and bales and cases, and he opened them all. You never saw a man so tickled!

"It's all there," he says. "Every single article. All of it. This is—it's astounding. How did it happen? Tell me all about it."

So we told him all about how we came to suspect Ali and how we enlisted the sailors, and the detective work we had done, and how we hid on the diabeyah and how the navy had pursued us with the sailors and how we cut the rigging and how the navy boarded us and all about the battle. Well, he could hardly believe it, but he had to on account of the booty all being there.

He just kept going from one thing to another and then back again.

Finally Mark cleared his throat.

"What is it?" says Mr. J.

"Hain't you r-reminded of suthin'?" says Mark.

"What?"

"Seems like your check book is too heavy to carry."

"Too heavy?"

"Eh-yah. You could l-lift it easier if the' was one l-less check in it."

Mr. J. grinned. "Guess you're right," he says, and then and there he drew it out and wrote out a check for five thousand and handed it to Mark.

"I never wrote a check," says Mr. Judkins, "that gave me so much pleasure. Nor one that I got so much for. Fellows, I want to congratulate you. You've done what was impossible. It was smart. And it took a fine nerve to go through with it."

"Oh," says Mark, "'twan't much."

"No," says I, "we've done a heap harder things."

"I wonder," says Mr. J., looking at us sort of funny, "what you boys will be when you grow up?"

"Not Egyptians, anyhow," says I.

"Well," he says,

(*Continued on page 33*)

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

FOUNDED 1899

Published Monthly by
THE SPRAGUE PUBLISHING COMPANY
DETROIT, MICHIGAN, U. S. A.

GRIFFITH OGDEN ELLIS, President.
ELMER P. GRIERSON, Secretary and Assistant Treasurer.

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March, 1926 Vol. 27; No. 5

Friendly Talks With the Editor

A Mystery

WE were talking with some friends the other day about an artist. This artist had gone along for several years, plugging at mediocre stuff, apparently not much good, with neither reputation nor money. Then all in a few short months he blossomed out in the leading magazines with pictures which excited everybody's attention and admiration. He was doing something new and fine, and almost over night reputation and fortune came to him. Our friends were trying to solve the mystery of it. "How did he do it? . . . What hit him all of a sudden? . . . Where did he find it?" It looked like a miracle.

Not a Miracle

BUT it wasn't a miracle, at least we didn't think so, and we told our friends the solution was easy. For years this artist had been working hard and studying hard. The pictures he painted weren't very good, but he was trying to make them good. Every day he learned a little, every day he added to his store of ability. He kept plugging, laboring apparently without success, but nevertheless laboring. . . . And then he graduated, if you get what we mean.

The Graduation

YES, he graduated. All the things he had learned for ten years, the skill of hand and eye, the knowledge of line and form, everything which had been washing around inside of him in a sort of jumble—suddenly jelled. You know about jell, don't you? In other words this artist had been educating himself, and by perseverence and practice he did educate himself until his various sorts of knowledge clicked together into one fine instrument. It was as if a carpenter had a fine set of tools. On one day he could use a saw pretty well, on another day he could plane, next day he could hammer, but he kept his tools scattered all over and never tried to use them at once on the same job. Then, of a sudden, this carpenter buys him a tool chest and puts all his implements together in order where he can use each one efficiently as he needs it. That was the answer.

Educated

OUR artist friend had educated himself at last, and what we saw was not the result of a miracle, but the result of years and years of hard work. It's the sort of miracle that happens again and again, and folks always marvel at it. Almost everybody who amounts to anything seems to arrive suddenly. One day he is just an ordinary dub, and the next day he is quite an astonishing fellow. It comes over night. But he is the same fellow, organized.

Discouragement

LOTS of us get pretty sore when we plug along and seem to get nowhere. Probably this artist did, and lots of other successful men in every line. Quite likely none of them realized what he was doing, or had any certainty he was going to be a big success. But each had determination and courage and the desire to improve. We forget that we cannot do a thing until we have learned how, or be anything until we have built ourselves up to man's size. But we mustn't be discouraged if a few years skip by and the world doesn't stand on its hind legs and give three cheers for us. We aren't entitled to any cheers yet. We've got to wait for our diploma.

Diplomas

WHEN we graduate from school we get a diploma all rolled up and with a ribbon around it. That's pretty slick. When you graduate from the real school of experience and effort in practical affairs, you get a diploma, too. You can't frame it, and there isn't a blue ribbon around its stummick, but it's there. The president of the Bigger Board of Education shakes your hand and says, "Well, young fellow, you're there. You've arrived. Now I can graduate you and give you a diploma that you've earned." And he gives you a diploma and the name of it is Earned Ability, and you can show that diploma anywhere and get a job with it.

Time

SOMETIMES we have to be pretty patient for a long time. There are fellows who get ahead more quickly than others. There are fellows who *seem* to get ahead more quickly than others, and that is something else again. But *everybody* has to learn. You can't *do* until you *know*. You can't ever be a snake charmer until you get acquainted with the snake. You can't get to be an acrobat by rubbing yourself with angleworm oil. Not much. You have to put in years of tiresome training of muscles so they will behave as you want them to. You can't be president of a bank until you've learned how to keep books and count money. It's all a question of learning and training. And that takes time.

Also

ALSO every one of us isn't fitted for the top-hole in the rack. Some of us aren't big enough and we'd be loose in that hole and fall out. But we fit exactly a hole a little farther down. If everybody in the world was a college president, where in tunket would you get students? No. There's no sense in that sort of thing. You're pretty sure to click together sooner or later if you plug. And, after all, what is success? We think it is achieving to the limit of your qualifications. A president of the United States may actually be less successful than some Italian digger of ditches. Why? Well, because the president, great as he is, could accomplish more than he has done. He hasn't realized the extreme limit of his capacities. The ditch digger may be the perfectly successful man because he has achieved the very highest thing of which he was capable.

So—

SO, stick it out. Don't be discouraged if the big thing doesn't come in a year or in ten years. And don't be ashamed if you fail to land in the most important job in the world. The only thing you need be ashamed of is if the job you land in isn't the very best you are fitted to fill. Learn your tools, get them arranged efficiently in one chest—and then slam into the job.

The First Bluebird

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

Jest rain and snow! and rain again!
And dribble! drip! and blow!
Then snow! and thaw! and slush! and then—
Some more rain and snow!

This morning I was 'most afeard
To *wake* up—when, I jing!
I seen the sun shine out and heerd
The first bluebird of Spring!—
Mother she'd raised the winder some;—
And in acrost the orchurd come,
Soft as a angel's wing,
A breezy, treesy, beesy hum,
Too sweet fer anything!

The winter's shroud was rent a-part—
The sun bust forth in glee,—
And when *that bluebird* sung, my hart
Hopped out o' bed with me!

Pretty Fine Prejudice

"THAT kid is the most companionable fellow I know," a big man told us recently, jerking his thumb at a lean seventeen-year-old near us and grinning rather sheepishly. You see the seventeen-year-old happened to be his son. "Maybe I'm prejudiced," the big man admitted, "but I enjoy Ken's company more than any other fellow's. He's thoroughly alive. He's interested in the things that interest me. We don't always agree, but he can argue without losing his head. When he wants to do something, he hunts me up as if I were a fellow of his own age—urges me into doing things with him that keep me young. I guess I'm prejudiced all right, but I can have a better time with that kid than with any man I know." . . . Perhaps there is prejudice in his feeling. But we think it's pretty fine prejudice—with a pretty fine reason back of it. We'd like to get better acquainted with that companionable seventeen-year-old boy whose own dad finds him a Grand Championship mixer.

Looks

YOU can pick your friends for their looks, or you can pick them for what they are. You'll have better luck if you stick to the second way of picking. Not that a fellow can't be worth knowing if he wears his clothes well and his hair immaculately slick. Not at all. But if you pick him as a friend for any such picayunish reasons, you've no right to expect much more than a picayunish sort of friendship. And meanwhile you'll have missed getting well acquainted with that awkward, homely chap who is, after all, a lot of fun to know—bright, keen, quick to see a joke, always eager to dig into things, generous and loyal, a mighty fine all-round sort, who would make you the kind of friend that, deep down, you've always ached to find. Shucks! Are you going to miss him just because his coat gets wrinkled and his hair gets wild?

More Looks

BUT now let's talk about your own looks. Maybe you're the fellow with the wrinkled coat and the wild hair. Shucks! Aren't you foolish? Any fellow can learn how to press his coat and tame his hair. Why don't you spruce up so that people won't be tempted to undervalue you? As long as humans are humans, looks are going to count to a certain extent. The fellow with good sense and good pluck makes the most of what he has.

Short-time Success

QUICK success isn't always so good as it looks at first glance. We know a high school boy who is so good at the drums that a traveling orchestra offered him seventy-five dollars a week and his traveling expenses if he'd join them. He traveled with them for three weeks. Then he came home to get the rest of his education. He'd thought it out. There was no future in his orchestra job. Nowhere to get. In ten or fifteen years, as far as he could see, he'd still be a roaming orchestra man, and his pay would still be the same—if it didn't get less. It might easily get less. Styles change in music. Popular orchestras occasionally get less popular. Then pay drops. And roaming can get pretty tiresome. The boy didn't like the looks of things: A short-time success! That was all he could see ahead of him. So he came home to finish school, to lay the foundation for something better. Couldn't be stopped by short-time dazzle.

Dignity and the Job

ANY job, from sweeping out a grocery store to being president of a bank, is a dignified job if you do it right. The worker and not the work supplies the dignity. Not long ago, we spent two nights and two days in Pullmans. In the first one, our porter was a lazy, reluctant chap who slowly made up the berths, did as little else as possible, and did that little peevishly. He was nothing but a shiftless chambermaid on wheels. In the second Pullman, our porter was a quick-moving, courteous man who was continually looking out for the comfort of his passengers. We saw him do, unasked, a baker's dozen of little kindnesses for different ones. And we heard several people speak most appreciatively of him. He was more than a Pullman porter; he was the fine, gentlemanly host of that car. He put dignity into his job. You can put dignity into any job by giving it the best you have.

Whistling Jimmy

By William Heyliger
Illustrated by Courtney Allen

"COACH won't know the difference," argued Billy Wimple, captain of the Applegate High team. "And besides your brother Arthur ordered me to play any system to-night against Johnstown I want to—"

Billy Wimple stopped at the sudden steely look that came over Jimmy Gaynor's face. Whistling Jimmy, they called him—but he wasn't whistling now. Orders—from Arthur Gaynor! Of course, Arthur was president of the Alumni Association, and had got Coach Carter his job. And Jimmy worshipped Art, too, and suffered like fury over a clash with him. But—

"Art had no right to give orders," he declared. "Cart is coach, and he wants us to play five-man defense. We've got to do it, Billy."

It was Jimmy's opposition that astounded Billy. Like Arthur, Jimmy had believed in the man-for-man defense; like Arthur, he'd fought the coach's new system. And here, when there was a chance to go back to the old—Carter hadn't been able to come with the team, and Mr. Harper of the Board of Education was making the trip—Jimmy refused to do it.

"Maybe the five-man won't w saying, "and maybe—just maybe for-man will. But do you think want us to win that way, even if cost him his job? Billy, that shooting square with Coach. W the team pick the system we'll pla

"Why not? I know how they' not the only one Arthur's spoker getting yourself in a jam, Jim. will think you're cracking at Ca to make him lose just because yo him."

"I'll risk that," Jimmy win thought of all it meant. "Art's thority to give this team orders," in a voice he tried hard to keep st he opened the door behind which l Kipps, and Palmer, and the subs, ing.

LANGER, scowling over an diagram a basketball play on hotel stationery, looked up as opened, nodded to the captain an to go on with his attempts at stra he caught a glimpse of Jimmy G The diagram was cast aside.

"What's the matter?"

Langer's voice drew the atter other players. Kipps jumped

"Hi, fellows! Something's bro

They came crowding over, fill the door and the bed. Mr. H looked on with mild interest.

"They're shifting Herrick to the captain.

Langer grinned. "Afraid of ot Cart was right about winning t no answering smile from the fo ger sobered. "What's the bad n

"There's no bad news," said th

"There's plenty of it," said J shifted Herrick to guard, Billy w man defense. I've told him shooting square with Cart."

The captain felt that he had defensive. "I'm acting under or

"Whose orders?" Palmer dema

"Arthur Gaynor's."

A stir ran through the team. eyes taking him in, and turning in again. He had a feeling that in the situation. The Gaynor b school basketball! A choice bit to Applegate.

"You haven't heard it all," Ji wanted to get the torture of re we lose to-night's game, Cart is lose his job."

"I got that from Arthur, too teered. He wanted them to kn behind it. "With Herrick again defense—well, you all know ho shot to pieces." It was a stran "I want to switch to man-for- leave it to the team."

"And if we lose to-night, Cart' thoughtfully.

Palmer gave a little laugh tha

"Time for you boys to be getting to the game," came Mr. Harper's voice.

"Just a minute," called Jimmy. But the team melted to different parts of the room to drag out satchels and slip into overcoats. The boy spoke against the confusion of departure. "We've got to admit that Cart knows this game, and knows what he's doing."

"We must be moving on," said Mr. Harper.

"But, fellows—"

"Oh, come on," cried Palmer.

BILLY WIMPLE opened the door, and the players crowded out. It seemed to Jimmy that they were trying to get away from him; as though they had their minds set and wanted him to be done with arguments. Yet, waiting for the elevator to carry them to the ground floor, he continued the attack.

"That's the reason Cart has been rigid against any shifting to old stuff. He's afraid of destroying everyone's confidence. He's not thinking of this one season; he has his eye on the future of Applegate High."

"Oh!" said Billy Wimple, and gave startled look. The clock in the lobby warned them that they have to hurry. Across the street he high school building a stream omobile traffic momentarily halted

an see why Cart told you and tell me," said the captain. "He's inking of this season, and this is st year. You'll be back. You'll ext year."

ouldn't think much of a captain ought only of his own chances," said in his slow drawl.

flushed. "You know I don't it exactly that way. But it gets my skin to think that my team be picked to be the sacrifice am."

"But that's just what Cart didn't ant you to think," Jimmy cried in espair. "He was afraid—"

"Come on," called Mills, one of ie substitutes; "we can get across."

They darted through the lane at opened in the traffic. A Johns- wn student met them at the high ool entrance, conducted them to e dressing room, and told them ey had ten minutes to get to the or. Kipps shed his coat and vest d began to unbutton his shirt.

id of?" Langer asked. "You be-

lmer protested. "I guess we all play to-night."

id calmly, and turned to Jimmy t afraid of?"

got thinking 'sacrifice team' we e. If we got thinking we had to

lmer threw in.

ice team," Jimmy argued desper- ry first team with a new system fellows waste their energies fight- I did."

d his head slowly. Jimmy's heart first convert? Billy Wimple gave

it, Jim, that there's something of this. Cart has been asking this chance."

hance he's running?" Jimmy de- g his own medicine. Suppose the cks him out of his first try at l he get another coaching job?"

e want to help him," Billy Wim- ht we'll play our old game and

t Cart to thank you for winning ked them in scorn.

d to see this team win any way,"

be?" Jimmy asked. He saw, in t, that the shot had gone home, but to all the team. Palmer thought better of it. Billy Wim- d looked down at the floor.

Mr. Harper.

rd the door. Jimmy sprang for- e doorway.

of here with this thing up in the

air," he cried. "You can't save Cart by ditching the system he's stood for. He'd hate it. He'd rather go down fighting. We can't go back on him."

The dressing room was silent.

"Well, what is it?" the captain demanded. "We've got to make up our minds to something. What do we play?"

"And how do we go back to Applegate?" Jimmy insisted. He did not want that thought to get lost. "Do we go back with our heads up or do we go back skulking?"

Another silence. Jimmy was sure that the others could hear the agonizing throb of his heart.

"One minute," said Mr. Harper.

It was Langer who voted first. "I'm with Jim," he said simply. "I'm going home like a white man."

The tension broke; the scales swung over. Kipps gave a cry of "The five-man defense for us," and two of the substitutes took it up. The captain hesitated for only an instant.

"All right," he said; "let's go."

The team went out into the hall and up the stairs to the gym floor. Palmer, shrugging his shoulders, came last. He was just in time to hear a flood of jubilant melody break out ahead.

Jimmy Gaynor was whistling.

THERE is something about a test of loyalty that draws men together and knits them as a unit. Every land that has ever fought for freedom has found something of this truth. The Applegate team found it that night.

An air of inspiration ran through the practice. Even the reluctant Palmer was swept out of himself and lifted to rare heights of basketball effectiveness. When Johnstown took the floor with five boys who were later to be acclaimed state champions, she met a quintet that had suddenly gone long jumps ahead of its real form. The great Herrick, who had expected rather a personal tussel with Jimmy, found himself hustled and harried by a team that wasn't thinking in terms of personal opponents, but was thinking only of the ball. The Johnstown galleries expecting to see the home boys perform a slaughter, sat chilled and stricken. For at the end of the quarter the score-board gave both teams 9 points.

Billy Wimple throbbed with a marvelous hope. "We can beat these fellows."

"Sure," said Kipps, and nonchalantly licked his lips. His mouth had come into contact with some player's elbow and was bleeding.

The second quarter found Applegate running wild. Johnstown won the ball on the jump and tried a trick play, only to find the Applegate defense swarming over the leather. A dozen passes got Johnstown no place. Then Herrick, badgered into taking a chance, tried a long, difficult shot for the basket. The ball went out of bounds; the whistle shrilled a change of offense.

Jimmy flashed the signal for one of the four plays that Carter had given them for such a moment as this. It was the play that had brought Carter's anger down upon him, but that did not cross the boy's mind. All he remembered then was that Carter had stressed speed. He prayed for it—such speed that would bring them into control of the situation before Johnstown could untangle itself and form a defense.

The team remembered what it had been taught. Speed! Kipps, standing to one side of the back-board, threw a quick, diagonal pass to Palmer at the side line. Jimmy had already gone racing down the floor. An instant later he saw Palmer's long, high pass to him start on its way.

That day in the gym he had spilled the play. To-day he was sure. The ball fell into his hands a scant twelve feet from the basket. He heard Herrick's desperate feet drumming behind him. One quick look over his shoulder and he dribbled. Four feet nearer the goal! Then, as Herrick drew even with him and threw out frantic arms, he tossed—and saw the ball drop through the netting.

Applegate went into the lead by two points, and those two points electrified the team. Langer's jumps overshadowed the rival center. Jimmy, tipping the plays, developed an uncanny sense of what would go best on the next toss of the ball. Teamwork, long in a fog, came out into a clearing of fast and accurate passing, steel-ribbed guarding, and deadly basket-shooting. When the half ended the panic-stricken galleries stared at a score board that read:

Johnstown, 15; Opponents, 21.

Jimmy, whistling and glowing, led the panting, sweaty team back to the dressing room. It was characteristic of him that, while the others babbled joyously, he thought of Cart. He had now no doubt that Applegate would win. What a fine plum to bring back to the quiet man to whom to-night's game meant so much! The boy did not see the ugly head of danger. Cart would have recognized the threat of disaster and would have tried to guard against it—but Cart was not there.

For the intermission that had sent the team down to the dressing room had taken it away from the full sweep and current of its newly-found power. Into that period of idleness crept a sly and stealthy reaction, a slow let-down of tired and strained energies, a gradual dwindling and banking of the fire. No one was on the watch for it; no one recognized it; and no one saw it.

And so, when the third quarter started, something was gone. Jimmy was the first to feel it; Billy Wimple must have sensed it, for his cheeks turned ashen. Johnstown called for time out.

"Pep 'em up, Jim!" the captain begged.

Jimmy tried: He led the attack; his voice cried calls of encouragement. And yet the attack lacked the flashing speed of the second quarter. Kipps made a bad fumble and Johnstown got the ball. The defense that had been so stiff grew over-anxious, and over-anxiety led to fouls. Johnstown picked up five points from the foul line, and sunk three goals. The end of the third quarter found the teams deadlocked again, 26 to 26.

FOR just a moment, at the start of the final period, it seemed that Applegate had rekindled the fire. Langer, at the jump, reached the ball and tipped it to Jimmy, and leaped toward the basket. Jimmy shot it back to him. Billy Wimple, running across the court, took the ball from the center as he passed him. It looked as though the captain would try for the basket. The man guarding it pressed in, arms upflung. "Sink it!" cried Jimmy. Herrick, guarding Jimmy, turned his eyes to follow the shot. Instead he saw that the Applegate captain had slipped the ball away. His startled gaze saw it pass him; his ears heard it reach Jimmy's hands. He whirled and threw his body to the left. It was a wrong guess. Jimmy, having pivoted to the right, scored the goal clean and true.

"We're off again!" cried Kipps. "Everybody in the game."

But it was the last flash—the end. Within a minute Johnstown had tied the score. Billy Wimple sagged. Jimmy fought on, and Kipps kept making strange noises in his throat. Another Johnstown goal widened the gap between the teams.

Applegate was whipped. Yet it had caught something of Carter's spirit. It never cried quits. The final whistle found it trying desperately to stem the tide. The score was 36 to 31.

The same team that had talked of victory during the half came back to the same room to dress in a deadened silence. Jimmy wondered what was in their thoughts. If they were thinking that they had played the wrong game, something more than the Johnstown battle would have been lost.

"Any regrets?" he asked. "Any alibis?"

"Not from me," said Langer, and looked at Palmer. Palmer shook his head.

"Not from me," said Billy Wimple. "I wish we could play Johnstown again a month from now. I saw to-night that Cart has us coming."

So it was a victory, after all! All the way to the railroad station Jimmy swung his grip in time to his whistle. Billy Wimple sat with him on the way home.

"You'll have a time with Arthur," the captain said.

"Arthur?" Oh, yes; he had forgotten Arthur. For the rest of the ride he answered in monosyllables and kept staring out of the car window.

Only three persons met the team at the Applegate station. One was Carter. Jimmy knew that he would be there. He recognized the second as Ivins, editor of the *Weekly Herald*. The third — his heart sank. The third was Arthur. He was not surprised to find that it was his brother, and not the coach, who asked how the game had gone.

"We lost," said Billy Wimple, and told the score. "We gave them a fight they won't forget."

Carter's head lifted. This was not the talk of a beaten team.

"What did you play?" Arthur demanded.

"The five-man."

"What!" Arthur's voice shook with wrath. "I told you—" (*Cont. on page 30*)

The Combat in the Clouds

By Thomson Burtis

Illustrated by Fred C. Yohn

LIEUTENANT RUSTY FARRELL'S freckled face was stretched into a reminiscent grin as he sent his brand-new Curtin observation plane spiraling down over the Harwoodstown fair grounds. His helmeted head was poked over the side of his ship as his eyes, shielded by huge goggles, surveyed the busy scene below. Once before in his flying career he had been assigned to give an exhibition at a County Fair, and it had proved to be an exciting experience. That had been down in Texas, long before, and his present location was five hundred feet above the soil of Kentucky.

The carnival midway—there never could be a fair without a carnival—was jammed, although it was only one o'clock on Saturday afternoon. The race track was immediately south of it, and at present was deserted for the packed Ferris wheel and the gaudily decorated tents and wagons. He was to land on the interior of the track, which he perceived was plenty large enough. One bad feature of it, though, which his flyer's mind immediately noted, was that between the carnival tents, some trees, and permanent fair buildings it was completely surrounded with barricades of one kind or another.

He turned to give his whole attention to the landing, after a last squint downward at the solitary ship which was squatting on the ground. Perhaps some Goddard Field flyer was visiting the fair, although it seemed peculiar that an army flyer would use one of the obsolete old Jenny training planes. Perhaps it was a civilian passenger-carrying ship.

"Don't do that. I—" the boy started, his voice breaking with excitement.

The wind was from the east; so he dropped downward over the thoroughfare on the western edge, skimmed the telephone and electric light wires, and landed toward the big exhibition building. He sideslipped a trifle, "fishtailed" the ship with full rudder to kill speed, and at the last moment of hovering jerked back on his stick. He landed lightly on three points, and taxied along the ground toward the weather-beaten Jenny. He turned his ship with rudder and motor, and ended up fifty feet to one side of the Jenny. He saw a tall young fellow in helmet and goggles, accompanied by a boy, standing close to the other plane. The man had on breeches and boots and flannel shirt—evidently he was not an army pilot.

Russ ran out his motor as people came scurrying from the midway to have a look at the glittering new ship, so much bigger and better looking than the one already there.

"Get the powder mechanism ready," he told Jackson, the mechanic from Cook Field who was with him. "I understand we're due to kill some insects before two-thirty some time."

He got out, and stretched his long legs comfortably. He'd just finished a two-hundred-and-eighty-mile trip from Dayton, and a stretch was luxurious.

"Wonder what's the matter with that other chap?" he reflected casually, as he saw that the other flyer had not moved a step to greet him or look over the ship. "Gosh, that's a rickety looking boat he's got."

HE noted with surprised approval that the growing gathering of onlookers stopped at the outside fence of the track. Evidently the orders had gone out that they must not come into the interior. That would save a lot of trouble for Russ and Jackson. They wouldn't have to watch the ship to keep amateurs from playfully stepping through a wing.

He saw a few men coming toward him to whom the rules evidently did not apply.

"Might as well see who this other duck is," he decided, and strolled toward his fellow airman.

The man was tall and well-built, with a square, deeply tanned and much begrimed face from which a pair of steady brown eyes gazed out at the army pilot beneath frowning brows. The boy next to him was a lithe youngster of eighteen or so, with light hair and face nearly as freckled as Farrell's own. Somehow Russ was conscious of a feeling of hostility, particularly on the part of the boy. The youth was gazing at him with utter dislike mirrored on his thin, eager face, or Russ was badly mistaken.

Not a word was spoken as he approached them, and held out his hand.

"My name's Farrell," he said, grinning widely.

"Roberts," grunted the other man. "My hands are too dirty to shake hands." His tones were very deep, and his speech slow and deliberate.

"Passenger-carrying ship?" queried Farrell, slightly embarrassed. What in the world was biting these fellows?

"When they'll let me!" snapped Roberts, biting off his words vindictively. "In this tank town I've got to have the permission of the famous Russ Farrell to fly!"

"Huh?" gulped Russ, staring in utter surprise into the sultry eyes of the other man.

"Oh, yes," sneered Roberts. "I guess this here fair couldn't run without you, according to the billboards. I should think it'd be enough for you to come down here and carry up all the thousand or so prize-winners, keepin' me out of that much business, without me havin' to have your permission to fly myself!"

For a second the red-headed young pilot's ever-ready temper flared in his wide-set blue eyes at the implied insult in the other man's words. His face was set as he looked the other man straight in the eye and said slowly:

"Don't start panning me, Roberts. I haven't the slightest idea what you're talking about. One of the things I'm supposed to do is carry up a lot of people who've sold tickets for this show, yes. That's because it's partly for the benefit of disabled soldiers. If that cuts into your trade, I'm sorry. But as for your getting my permission to fly, I don't know a thing about it."

"This Lieutenant Farrell?" a hearty voice interrupted, and Russ turned from the sulking civilian flyer to greet an impressive-looking gentleman in a wide black hat and a frock coat, who was hiding somewhat behind a huge and flowing set of brown moustaches.

"I'm Senator Garret, and I'm supposed to run this shindig," chuckled the portly, red-faced man. "We're glad t' see you, suh. Your comin's done a heap for this fair, suh. Meet the rest o' the fair committee."

Russ shook hands with the half dozen other leading citizens, and then asked:

"Just what's my schedule this afternoon, sir?"

"We've scheduled the demonstration of spraying bugs from an airplane for two o'clock, in Stetters' potato field over there about half a mile. Then there's ten young felluhs and girls that sold three hundred tickets apiece for the whole week that are expecting to be taken for a ride, and 're scared to death about it, to say nothing of a lot more for Monday and Tuesday that've done their stuff up to scratch. Then we've advertised you're going to stunt some this afternoon, too, as per our request. You will be a pretty busy young flyer, Lieutenant."

Russ grinned at the genial politician.

"Is that all?" he inquired, partly with humorous interest, and partly because he was curious to know just what lay behind the words of the civilian pilot who had now, with the boy, wandered over for a look at the shining Curtin plane.

AS though their heads had been jerked by one string, the committee looked around at Roberts. Then Garrett said confidentially:

"We got one more job, which we'd sure be thankful to yuh if you'd do it. This felluh is with the carnival, taking up passengers. Atkinson, the owner of the carnival, owns half the ship and gets half the profits, I understand. We got a tip from Hartford, where this carnival was last week, that some fellows up there who'd been in the army said that this ship here ain't safe to fly—too worn out. So we told 'em they couldn't fly the dozen or so people they'd already lined up for flights until you army experts said the plane was safe. There's nobody here knows anything about planes. The outfit got pretty nasty about it—it's a big money-maker for 'em, and already, I suppose, the rumor around'll scare off a lot of customers even if you say O. K. Kind o' rotten on you, but do yuh mind, suh?"

"Sure, we'll look her over," nodded Russ. It wasn't a particularly pleasant job—if the ship wasn't all right. "I'll be ready on time for the bug massacre. Where'll I report my findings on the ship to you?"

"Main office, up there in the exhibition building," the unctuous Kentuckian told him. "I hope you find her all right. These shows are hard to keep acting pretty, being hard-boiled like, and in addition we've got a lot of boys, and men old enough tuh know better, that're crazy tuh go up.

"Well, we'll start for the field. You can't miss it—half mile due south, and it's a potato field covering fifteen acres. All the tobacco growers and farmers in the country will be planted over there. Good-by, suh."

Russ got the wizened Jackson, one of the best civilian mechanics at Cook Field, where none but the most expert is welcome, and explained their duty. Jackson had the powder-scattering mechanism ready, and accompanied him immediately. Roberts fell in alongside Russ, with the silent, brooding boy with him, and said awkwardly:

"Farrell, I'm sorry I spoke to you as I did—it ain't your fault. But I'm worried. Business at the last town was nothing, on account of this report, and I got to have the dough, that's all. And the ship's all right. It's old, but all right for straight flying. Why, I'm going to stunt her this afternoon as part of the free show—that shows what I think about her. Help me out, will yuh? And I ain't askin' you t' do anything crooked, either. I know she's all right."

Russ nodded, saying nothing. Somehow he dreaded what was ahead—there was something so pleading in

the other flyer's voice and attitude that it almost seemed as though the man were desperate. To change the subject he asked:

"Who's the boy? Help you, does he?"

"Nope. He's an acrobat in the vaudeville show—'The Venturis.'"

"I fly with him, though," the youngster put in eagerly. "Don't I, Frank?"

Russ realized, as he watched Roberts' face and the boy's, that the younger one possessed a vast admiration for the grimy flyer. He wondered how the youngster happened to become an acrobat, and asked Roberts. The boy was now watching Jackson's inspection, and there was a taut, fearful expectation in every line of his slender body.

"Wandered into the show five or six years back—ran away from home, and Venturi made him a swell acrobat," Roberts told him absently. "He was a tough egg when I met up with him. Couldn't say a word without swearin' and he's around a tough gang all the time. He and I got to be pretty good buddies, though."

It was plain that the flyer could not talk about anything right then; so Russ joined Jackson, who was thumping the wings of the ship.

"Hear them wires rattle," whispered Jackson. "And I found a fray on the elevator wires where she comes through the fuselage, and the stabilizer is awful rickety, Lieutenant."

TEN minutes' silent work simply confirmed Russ's opinion that he simply could not accept the responsibility of letting ignorant civilians fly in the plane. It was a hundred to one shot that it would fly all right; a frayed control wire was not serious. In Roberts' ship one of the dozens of wires which were twisted into the heavy cables was frayed—but that meant, to a careful pilot, an immediate change. And interior bracing wires were loose and rattling, the propeller ends somewhat chewed, and various other things were not quite up to scratch.

The warm-hearted army man dreaded what was to come — not because it looked as though there would be trouble in it for him, but because of the strained look in the other pilot's eyes. However, it had to be done. Throwing back his broad shoulders, he walked toward the silently waiting pair.

He saw Roberts' fists clench, as though the man read the news in his face. The civilian's mouth thinned, and the rugged jaw set like a vise.

"Roberts," he said slowly, "while I'm not saying the ship couldn't fly without an accident, I couldn't say it was perfectly safe to fly it in the shape it is in now."

The Jenny tried to escape the faster ship that was always above it, ever forcing it down.

He could see both men stiffen as he catalogued its weaknesses. Hating what he had to do, and yet realizing that he could not take any chance of jeopardizing a life, he went on remorselessly.

Suddenly the boy, like a sinewy, blazing-eyed tiger, threw himself at the powerful airman. As Russ staggered back under the onslaught, the youngster's hysterical denunciation of him was not nice to hear.

"What do you know about it, you—" he was yelling wildly. Russ, shielding his face with one arm, got hold of one of the boy's wrists. Then while the boy raved incoherently, Russ got hold of his other wrist and in a second had him helpless.

"Be yourself, son," he said steadily. "Now I'll let you loose—"

"Get back, Dan!" Roberts ordered the boy, and it seemed that in his deliberate words there was concealed something deadly.

He jerked the flushed young acrobat from Farrell's grasp, and swunk him out of the way.

"How often have I told you to be a man and not a kid?" Roberts arraigned the boy wrathfully. "And you will cuss, will you? Get out of here, right now! If you can't act like a man, I don't want you around! You had your orders, didn't you?"

The youngster wilted before the blazing eyes of his older friend. Certainly Roberts' control over him was uncanny—in a flash he changed from a raving young maniac to a tearful, ashamed boy.

As he shuffled off, throwing one more look of hate at the embarrassed Farrell, Roberts took a step toward Russ and his eyes bored down into the pilot's with something in them that made Russ step backward.

"Because I stopped the kid, don't think I don't agree with him!" he said, so low that not even Jackson could hear. "Want to hog the spotlight, don't yuh? Come down here with your fine army ship, ready tuh knock the town dead, and hate t' have me flyin', do yuh? What do you know about whether that ship can fly or not? I'll out fly yuh, I'll tell you more about a ship or a motor than you ever heard, and I'm telling you that for just about one nickel I'd lambaste the tar out of yuh, you smirkin', red-headed, upstage smart guy! Take away a man's living, would yuh, when—"

"That's about all out of you," snarled Russ, tensed for the onslaught. "So you'll get me, will you? Can't take the penalty of your own mistakes, huh? Why don't you put on a new control wire, and keep that old lumber wagon of yours so it'll hold together? Just because you don't know enough to keep from taking a chance, you want me to back you up—"

"Shut up, you shavetail, or I'll—"

"Come ahead, big boy, come ahead!" Russ exhorted him, the fierce joy of battle leaping into his eyes.

FOR a second Roberts' big body was in a half crouch, and his face contorted with fury. Then his hands suddenly dropped to his sides and his body slumped. In that second, Russ, comprehending the beaten look on the man's smudged face, was infinitely sorry for his own tirade.

Dropping his own hands, he said gently:

"I'm sorry, Roberts, I—"

"Who gives a tinker's dam whether you're sorry or not?" Roberts burst out, and deliberately turned and walked swiftly toward the midway.

Russ's afternoon was spoiled for him, and he was far from happy as he and Jackson went to the exhibition building to make their report on the carnival ship. Russ was glad he had Jackson along, for Atkinson, the owner of the carnival, a tough-looking, bullet-headed man of fifty, was there. Atkinson launched into a profane tirade that was only stopped when the rotund little fair secretary ordered him to keep still or get out. Jackson's expert detailed report clinched the decision against the ship, and Atkinson left in a rage before Jackson had concluded.

Russ saw the boy Dan appear at the fence dressed in a bathrobe as he warmed the big twelve cylinder Z-12 motor. The youngster's face was bleak, and as Russ gave his ship the gun before a thousand interested onlookers he was thinking little about flying and much about the gripping tie of friendship between Roberts and Dan. It did not make him feel any better, either.

His ship, equipped with every modern improvement, left the ground like a shot and zoomed upward at so steep an angle that the onlookers gasped in astonishment. Then Russ went roaring across the midway and on to the huge potato field where several hundred expectant agriculturists were waiting.

A few hundred feet back of the field Russ turned on the air pump that blew the powder from the powder tank and to a tube underneath the fuselage, and flashed up and down the rows of green plants. The heavy powder was forced out in a cloud, and in less than fifteen minutes the field was covered with it as it settled on the plants. And it had already been proved by the Cook Field pilots that every living insect on the plants would be thoroughly dead as a result of it. Already the Department of Agriculture was adopting it and the day was not far off when the Department's own planes and pilots would be roaring along over the fields in all parts of the country, waging war on parasites—the boll weevil in the cotton fields of the South, the scourges of tobacco through Virginia and Kentucky and Connecticut, and all the other pests which were the nightmares of the farmers—and some of the reasons why the cost of living was so high for everyone. Flying was taking another step forward toward its rightful place.

Back on the track, Russ and Jackson filled the tank of the Curtin with the high test gas that had been provided by the fair committee. As they did so, Roberts started giving his stunting exhibition. In less than thirty seconds the two army airmen forgot their work to watch breathlessly and marvel as Roberts threw that rickety ship around in the air. It was wonderful flying—loops, spins, rolls, falling leafs, even upside down work—and Russ mentally doffed his plumed chapeau to his rival.

"Jackson," he told the mechanic, "that fellow is doing more with a Jenny than most flyers can with a scout!"

And it was true. As the Jenny straightened out and started northward, Russ knew that he had never seen a training ship so well handled.

"Kind of makes us look like bums, doesn't it?" he asked Jackson, and that wrinkled old mechanic shook his head.

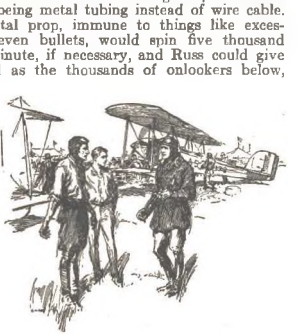
"He's cuckoo," he opined, "but how he can fly! Wonder where he's goin'?"

"Search me. Wants to avoid us, maybe—or maybe he's lighting out to pick up business in some other town. Let's warm her, eh? Gosh, I hate to stunt even a powerful ship after that baby has performed! I can do more than he can, on account of having this ship, but I'll be ashamed of myself at that!"

"You don't need to be ashamed o' nothin'," Jackson told him as they prepared to start the motor.

He didn't expatiate further, but all Cook Field men insisted that Russ was the finest stunt pilot in the army. The eager, impulsive young flyer seemed to excel at that branch of flying, possibly because in the wild acrobatics he found a natural outlet for his wild exuberance and never-weakening love for flying and the flying service.

ORDINARILY, he would have looked forward to going up there and throwing his beautiful craft around. It was of duralumin construction throughout, even some of the controls being metal tubing instead of wire cable. And the all-metal prop, immune to things like excessive speed or even bullets, would spin five thousand revolutions a minute, if necessary, and Russ could give himself, as well as the thousands of onlookers below, the thrill of a lifetime.



Now, however, as he gave the Curtin the gun and sent his craft roaring across the field, past those banked spectators along the rail, he had a distaste

(*Continued on page 46*)

The Zulu Trail

By Major Charles Gilson

Illustrated by Ernest Fuhr

IN the midst of that terrible battle in the African forest, I caught sight of Richard Tregenza carried shoulder high in his bath-chair, bellowing commands. Then I saw him jump, probably as a bullet whistled close, and lay his slave-whip across the backs of the poor wretches who carried him. They bore him swiftly out of sight—and the battle raged on around me.

Even as it raged—as I shouted to my men and loaded and fired, point blank, time and again, into the mass of infuriated, fanatic Arabs and blacks who hurled themselves at our stockade—I found myself thinking:

This is the end! Right here, Crouch and Cotton and I will all perish with our loyal native allies. And Tregenza will triumph. He will go on, unchecked in his murderous career, and gather the wonderful medical leaves Doctor Cotton has discovered—make another fortune through his black treachery to a scientist who has risked all to help humanity.

Bitter thoughts, these. But it seemed that the monstrously fat, crippled tiger of a man must surely win. True we were three white men against him, and no mean enemies: Crouch, tried and intrepid explorer; Cotton, dauntless scientist; and I, who, though a mere boy, had been tutored in Africa's grim school. But our strongest ally, the chief Umgobatali, with his fierce Mazitu warriors, was evidently hopelessly cut off from us, and even though we had entrenched ourselves in the stronghold of the friendly chief Makuta, there seemed no hope that we, with Makuta's warriors, could repel the great numbers attacking.

Tregenza, with his allies—Suleiman, cunning Arab slave-trader, and Chibanda, treacherous chief — had brought overpowering forces against us.

I loaded and fired, loaded and fired—and the world looked black . . . black . . .

Crouch now stood with his back to the wall.

XXI—Umgobatali to the Rescue

THROUGHOUT the whole of that day, the combat raged without ceasing with such ferocity on both sides that I am not able to describe it.

If Suleiman captured the town, those of our party who were severely wounded, and on that account of no use as slaves, would be butchered in cold blood; whereas the rest, men, women and children, would be taken into slavery, to be transported to Ujiji, to the slave-market.

Throughout that fearful day, I had a staunch second-in-command in Peter, the Makololo, whom we had brought with us from the Zambesi. The man was ever in the very thick of the fray, discharging his musket into the mass of white-coated Arabs that time and again strove to rush the palisade. There were times when the fighting was at such close quarters that we were forced to use our firearms as clubs and even lay about us with our fists.

After a while, the ditch in my quarter of the defense was choked with dead. In two or three places the palisade had been broken down; and in these breaches I stationed picked men who had already proved their worth.

The most fierce and determined assault of the whole day was delivered about three o'clock in the afternoon. This attack was led by Suleiman in person. Having weakened the defense on all sides of the town, they endeavored to break through in my sector, bringing every available man into the forefront of the fighting. Fortunately, I guessed in time that the decisive blow was about to fall—for I had seen the Arab leader himself, on the outskirts of the forest, giving directions to his men—and therefore, fearing that my party would not be able to withstand a main attack upon so small a frontage, I immediately sent messengers to both Makuta and Crouch, whom I asked for reinforcements.

And these came to our assistance in the very nick of time. Many of the enemy were across the ditch, and several yards of the palisade had been destroyed when help arrived at the eleventh hour. For a few minutes the issue was in the balance; and then, after terrible loss on both sides, the Arabs were driven back into the forest.

Soon after that, night fell, when we had little reason to suppose that the attack would be renewed until the following morning.

In Makuta's hut, we held another council of war. The chief was a brave man, and so was Crouch, but we were now come to such a pass that it seemed that no courage could save us from extermination. The enemy had certainly suffered more severely than ourselves; but then, they were in far greater numerical strength, and in no want of supplies, since they had possession of Makuta's plantations and the surrounding villages from which the inhabitants had fled. For all that, had it not been for one salient fact, we might have been more hopeful than we were—for we had plenty of time in the night to repair the breaches in the stockade and fill the gaps in the fighting line with our reserves; our ammunition was very nearly all expended.

I remember, when I lay down that night, I believed my last hours were come. I was not afraid, but I was exceedingly depressed. It seemed a tragedy to me that Tregenza should triumph, that the slave-traders should be encouraged in their wickedness, that a villain like Chibanda should become the paramount chief in the central Loangwa Valley.

I could hope for nothing more than that we might sell our lives as dearly as we could. Every assault that was repulsed meant that the world was quit of so many black-hearted, half-caste Arabs who oppressed and terrorized those who had never harmed them, who thrived and grew fat upon the misery of others. I prayed that night not that my own life might be spared, but an unchristian prayer of vengeance: that I might live to send a bullet into the heart of Suleiman himself.

And then, telling Peter to awaken me before daybreak, I lay down upon a strip of elephant-hide in the rude hut that sheltered me, and slept like one who was utterly exhausted, as in very truth I was.

Sunrise was a repetition of the day before. We watched the blue light of dawn spreading in the woods, and heard the Arabs summoned to their morning prayer. And then, silence—a silence of suspense, disturbed only by the thumping of one's heart; for our nerves were strained to the utmost.

Again, it was my part of the defense that was called upon to bear the brunt of the attack. Without a word of warning, with neither war-cry nor a drum-tap, the enemy rushed forth from the cover of the forest, firing as they came.

But we were ready for them. To a man, we stood firm as rocks. And then the two forces clashed together, and all was confusion, turmoil, slaughter and savage madness.

In that crush of infuriated men, I was lifted bodily from off my feet. I had no room to strike, for my arms were pinned to my sides. I was seized by the throat, and saw that I was in the grasp of a powerful bearded Arab. As he tried to strangle me, an assegai from over my shoulder stabbed him to the heart, so that he went down, to be immediately trampled underfoot.

How long this nightmare lasted I am quite unable to say. I was dizzy and amazed; and I believe I had caught something of the very madness that was in the atmosphere and in the eyes of all.

They drew off in the end—such as had life and strength to crawl to safety. And then did we behold the peril of our situation, the conclusion of our hopes.

THE palisade was no more. The ditch had been trampled in, and was half filled with the bodies of those who had fallen. Of the gallant fellows who had been with me at the first, not one half remained, and of these there were more wounded than not.

Crouch came to me again. He told me that all was well in other parts of the town, where the palisade was still intact and the issue of the day had never been in doubt. He was as self-possessed as ever, and seemed to have lost nothing of his old energy and enthusiasm, though I knew that in his heart he never thought that day to see the sun go down.

"They'll give us no time to repair the stockade," he told me; "and it would be dangerous work in daylight, in any case, for they would open fire upon us from the woods. I had best remain here myself, and send for reinforcements. Makuta has men to spare on the north side of the town."

There is no doubt that we might have held out for several hours, had our enemies not been under the leadership of two exceptionally able men. Suleiman, like many Arabs, had a natural genius for command, whereas Tregenza was a man of very unusual capabilities who appeared able to turn his hand to anything. At this juncture, in order to prevent the reinforcement of that part of our line of defense that was most seriously imperilled, two simultaneous assaults were launched towards the north and east.

These attacks, though driven back with loss, succeeded in their object; for Makuta hesitated to send us the men that we had asked for. And therefore, when we beheld the alarming spectacle of the enemy again advancing, led by Suleiman himself, upon our quarter of the town, where there was neither a palisade nor sufficient men to hold their ground, we knew that we were lost.

That they were as sure of success as we were certain of disaster was proved, I think, by the circumstance that at that moment Tregenza himself appeared upon the skirting of the forest.

He was carried, as always, upon his litter, borne upon the shoulders of four powerful slaves. The climate of

Africa seemed to have affected him in a very marked degree; for he was not so fat as he had been and his skin was the color of parchment. He looked more flabby and unhealthy than ever, and there is no doubt he felt the heat extremely, for even at that moment he was wiping the perspiration from his face. By the side of the palankeen was Crake, his clothes reduced to rags, his trousers so torn at the knees that his thin bones protruded; and by the way the man shivered and rubbed his hands together, I could see that he was racked by fever.

Though I stood, as it were, upon the very threshold of the tomb, awaiting death at the hands of men without humanity or justice, I could not but be conscious of the incongruity of what I saw; that fat cripple, and the death's head of a man who was his servitor, had seemed in their own element in that great, dusty, haunted house amid the wilds of Cornwall; but, here, surrounded by white-coated Arabs and armed and savage Negroes, before a background of the luxuriant foliage of the tropic forest, they looked strangely out of place.

It was all like a nightmare—a senseless, hideous dream. And yet there was enough of truth in it for me to realize that I had but a little while to live.

Suleiman had wisely disposed his men in three lines; and I observed that each of these was composed of alternate parties of Arabs and Negroes. The reason of this was obvious: the Arabs alone being armed with muskets, he desired to distribute his firearms at equal intervals upon his front.

I could not fail to see that this attack was about to be delivered in a more deliberate manner than the frenzied savage assaults we had withstood upon the previous day. We were now threatened by an organized, well-planned attack, and nothing short of a miracle, it seemed, could save us from destruction.

I looked at Makuta's warriors to the right and left of me, and I saw that never a man flinched. Assegais and bows in hand they awaited the ordeal. I looked, too, at Captain Crouch. His teeth were tight clenched; but beyond that, there was nothing about him to suggest that he stood face to face with death. Except for his leopard skin, and his face more tanned than ever, he was the same man with whom I had first talked in a railway train, many months before. He feared nothing.

On a sudden, a runner came from the forest, one of Chibanda's warriors, carrying assegai and shield. He went direct to Suleiman to whom he spoke, wildly excited, pointing frantically towards the west. The Arab raised his hand to his beard, which he stroked in a thoughtful and deliberate manner.

I know not why, but then it was that the firing ceased. There followed a few seconds of silence, to be broken presently by a dull, confused roar that was like the sound of a distant, angry sea.

I could not think what this was, at first; and looking at Crouch, I saw that for the moment he, too, was mystified.

And gradually, that roar grew and swelled into something savage, terrible and weird. I had heard often, in the heart of the forest, wild beasts at night, lions hunting for their prey or caught in the swamps and unable to escape. And that noise was like all these, only a hundred times greater in volume, and it became louder and louder, like the rush of a tidal wave.

On a sudden, Crouch gave a cry, and clutched me by an arm.

"*Umgobatali!*" he shouted. "*The Mazitu!*"

As a flash of lightning illumines the darkest night, I realized the truth, and my heart bounded within me.

I had been told that the Bantu go forth to war after the manner of no humble Negro tribe. Amazing to behold in the garb they wear in war, heedless of all danger, slaughtering those they conquer in a kind of savage glee, they seem most terrible of all by dint of their unearthly battle cries. As they approached, like a thousand charging, maddened bulls, though I knew they came to our deliverance, for a moment it was as if my very blood ran cold. Fiendish yells I heard, savage groans, snorting and shrieking not to be described. It was pandemonium let loose.

The Arabs wheeled about, but a large force of men can not change front in the space of a few minutes. And seeing that they were already in some confusion, Crouch immediately ordered us to open fire. I could see that Suleiman himself, though still dignified and calm, was more excited than he cared to show. As he hastened to the left flank, he unslung the rifle he carried upon a shoulder.

Standing at his full height upon some rising ground, he shouted his orders to his men, telling them to gather about him with no delay to repulse the Mazitu attack. And then it was that a great figure, moving with the swiftness of an antelope, sprang forth from the darkness of the forest; and in the sunshine I recognized Umgobatali himself.

Suleiman was the first to fire, but he had time to fire no more than once. The Mazitu king sprang at him as a tiger charges; and I saw that dreadful assegai pass clean through the Arab's body as if he had been but a man of slender straw.

And then a wave of warriors burst into the open. The glittering blades of their assegais were like lightning in the air. Their shouts and yells were like a tempest. No mercy they gave, and none was asked. They swept our enemies away like chaff. They swept around the stockade, leaving in their track none but the dead, destruction, the trampled corn and crops.

XXII—The Journey Northward

I TURNED away, for I was sick of the sight of slaughter. I could look no longer upon that butchery. None but those who have seen such sights can realize the terror of it all, the amazing brutality of men. These people lived lives such as the wild beasts live. Neither man, woman nor child was ever safe. For them Death lurked in every thicket—at one moment, a free man; at the next, a slave.

I then suffered some kind of physical reaction which I do not pretend to understand. I was over-exhausted; the excitement had been too much for me; the heat and dampness was oppressive, and I had beheld horrors of which I do not like to think.

"We are saved!" said Crouch.

"Saved," said I; and I fainted.

I remembered nothing more until I opened my eyes and found Doctor Cotton bending over me. He gave me something to drink from the spare medicine chest we had left at Makuta's; and in a minute I was on my feet again, calling myself a fool.

"No fool, by a long way," said the doctor. "Crouch tells me you have done splendidly these two days."

"Have the enemy retired?" I asked.

"Those that managed (*Continued on page 36*)

I was seized by the throat and saw that I was in the grasp of a powerful bearded Arab.

130,000 times better

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Getting Ready for Track

By J. E. McFarland

Track Coach, St. John's Military Academy.

EVERY fellow who wants to be a track athlete will profit by studying the training of Paavo Nurmi, the Finnish record-smasher.

Nurmi went through twelve years of the hardest kind of training and a series of Olympic Games races in which he was only an also-ran before he had built himself up to the point where he could break, in one of the most amazing careers in track history, almost every distance record from one to five miles. Those 12 years sound like a long grind, and they were. But it was because of them that Nurmi was able to run race after race, clipping seconds off records time and again. They had put him in nearly-perfect condition.

Some fellows think they can get in shape for track athletics by exertion in the last two weeks before the big meet. They can't. As a matter of fact, the last two weeks should be devoted to a kind of loafing training, idling along on stamina built up during preceding months.

The last part of February is about the time for high school or prep school track men to begin their conditioning exercises. The wise track athlete spends the winter in outdoor sports, with not too much hard-floor athletics; then, as track season begins to approach, he sets in to get himself ready for intensive training. He won't bother much with indoor track meets, for he'll know that the average high school fellow is likely to burn himself out by trying to go through two track seasons in a single year.

He won't make any error, though, by spending a month limbering up and conditioning himself long before he can get out onto the cinders; that is what I always have my St. John's teams do, and that's what I'm going to describe.

First comes the establishment of regular habits — wholesome, plain meals at regular hours, nine to ten hours of sleep every night. Then exercise should be started slowly, in a well-ventilated gym or large room, with warm clothing if there isn't enough heat to chase early-spring chill from the air.

I frequently have to argue with boys to persuade them that their goal is not to become professional strong men. Quick, supple muscles that respond rapidly and forcefully are the kind you want, not great bulging biceps and leg muscles that you can't control. About the first thing to learn is that speed and whip, together with relaxation, are the qualities track-muscles must have. Don't strain too much, don't do things tensely.

A Track Man by Accident

J. E. McFARLAND, whose St. John's Military Academy track teams won two of the last three national prep school championships, became a track man by accident. "I was an anaemic, underweight boy at Iowa State College," he says, "when I got to tutoring a varsity track man who was below grade in physics. This fellow persuaded me to go out for track—and a sad picture I made! I was 5 feet 10 inches tall and weighed 117 pounds, and I had conditioned myself by reading the sport page. But I set in to learn how to hurdle, and when the first class meet came around the other three men in the hurdle race fell down and I finished first!" McFarland gained 13 pounds in the first month, and by careful conditioning and rigorous training he became a hurdler and jumper of varsity calibre. He was on the Iowa State team for three years, high jumped 6 feet 1 inch and ran the 120-yard high hurdles in 15⅘ seconds.

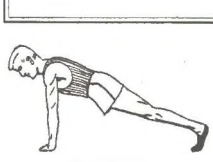
"Any boy can develop himself into a passable athlete—if he goes about it right," McFarland says. In this article he tells you how to get into condition. Next month he will describe the secrets of form—of track efficiency—for all the important events.

Start Work Slowly

I'M going to tell you about special exercises for track fellows—the ones we use at St. John's. The first three are for everybody — runners, weight men hurdlers and all — and should occupy about the first ten days. Remember to start them easily, and to increase work gradually, never overdoing.

The first is "11 Up"—the high knee action that you see a sprinter doing when he's warming up. It's a kind of fast running motion, except that you stay in one place; knees come way up, and arms swing rapidly. Take it high on your toes, beating a tattoo on the floor, and keep your body relaxed. The exercise is good to "let down" a strained muscle, or one that has been subject to a heavy pull. You'll develop some variations to "11 Up" that will make it more interesting and more valuable.

No. 1 ~ "11" UP.



No. 2 ~ PUSH UP

No. 3 ~ LEG LIFT

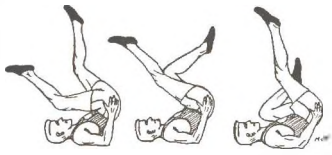
Number 2 is the everyday push-up. It looks easy, too, but just try it! Get on hands and feet as in the diagram, and lower your body entirely by elbow bend—don't "break" at knees or hips — until your chest touches the floor. Then push up to the first position. Do this only three or four times at first, but increase it to 12 or 15 after a couple of weeks. It strengthens neck, arms, shoulders and the immensely useful chest and abdomen muscles.

A good variation is to take the Number 2 position, then lift the feet alternately as high as possible. Another — jump from the starting position to a squat, feet between hands, and back again.

No. 4 ~ KNEE UP

No. 5 ~ ARM SWING

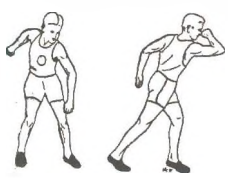
Number 3 builds up trunk muscles, also. It consists simply of raising the legs, straight with toes pointed, from the floor to a vertical position, then lowering them slowly to the floor again. Five times at first is enough, but later you should do it 20 times. You can make it harder by putting your hands back of your neck.



No. 6 ~ RUNNING IN THE AIR

All of these are general, and should be continued all through the conditioning work, even after specialized exercises have been commenced. You will know of other useful exercises of the same nature, or learn of them from gym instructors and athletes. Watch for some of them.

Sprinters will want to devote a lot of time to Numbers 4, 5 and 6. Number 4 is an aid to getting the knee-lift so important in developing speed; it stretches hip and thigh muscles and makes them supple and strong. Bring your knee up tight against your chest, hold it there momentarily, and lower it; then repeat with the other knee. It's simple, but effective.



No. 7 ~ THE ARM WHIP

Develop an Arm Swing

NUMBER 5 teaches the arm swing that every good sprinter must know. Arm swing means a lot, of course, in giving a fellow that last ounce of speed and strength, and can't be given too much thought. Take the exercise with your shoulders dropped low, and your arms swung as though on pins driven through at the shoulders. Remember to keep your elbows at a right angle, and to keep your body relaxed. Gradually increase the speed until you're swinging as fast as you can.

These exercises are good for all hurdlers and runners. Number 6 is good, too. Charlie Paddock, the sprinter who has so many records to his credit, made it popular. It's nothing but "inverted running," and it quickens leg action and loosens up joints generally.

No. 8 ~ HIP STRETCH

No. 9 ~ HURDLE STRETCH

Jigging, rope skipping and high kicking are good exercises for sprinters. Short-distance men should remember that all of their work should be done high up on the toes.

Distance men will want to pay more attention to general body-building exercises —abdomen and trunk muscle developers

(*Continued on page 30*)

A Buick Stays Out of Trouble

BUICK is the car that stays out of trouble—that doesn't need constant repair-shop help to keep it running sweetly. It goes and gets back, on time, every day, every month, every year.

Motor car registrations show that there are more Buicks now running than any other car except two very low priced ones. This indicates that many owners are still driving old cars that wouldn't be running at all if they were not Buicks, built as only Buick builds.

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WHEN BETTER AUTOMOBILES ARE BUILT, BUICK WILL BUILD THEM

The Better BUICK

Getting Ready for Track

(Continued from page 28)

—than sprinters; they'll want to do a lot of fast hiking, and a little non-competitive cross country running, too—particularly in the fall. I don't think a fellow less than 16 ought to try to run a race of more than 220 yards; sprint work like this for young runners is the best kind of training for distance work later.

For hurdlers, in addition to the sprinters' exercises, Numbers 8 and 9 will help a lot. One boy whom I coached a few seasons ago, and who had plenty of speed and endurance, was kept from successful hurdling simply by the fact that he could not get the long, rapid stretch over the bar. He spent hours one spring practicing those two exercises; that year he made the team as our best hurdler.

Both are intended to give flexibility to the hip joint, and to make the leap over the hurdle more natural. Number 8 is for the high hurdler particularly, as it gives the position of the second leg over the stick; Number 9 is almost exactly the position of a hurdler going over a low barrier. It's hard to attain, even on the floor, and it requires a lot of practice to touch your toe.

A good variation of Number 8 is to stand beside a chair and bring your leg up over it into position and down again, as rapidly as you can. To vary the hurdle stretch, learn to touch your left elbow to the floor beside your left knee.

Weight Men Should Box

WEIGHT men need different special exercises. Shot putters and javelin throwers should box a good deal to develop foot-work and to build strength, and shot men will find a lot of the drive they'll need in their arms will come from bag punching. Twisting and gripping devices are excellent for developing the strong grip required; clenching the hands 20 or 30 times tightly is good for this, too. Weight men get fun and strength out of trying to twist a broom stick out of the hand of an "opponent," using hands and wrists only.

Discus throwers should work on the arm whip, Number 7. At the start the shoulder leads the arm, but as the arm is swung around it comes across the body with a sharp whip. This should be practiced with both arms; it can be extended to include some of the pivoting whirl of a discus thrower, too. Try to learn to get a smooth whirl with gradually increasing speed.

I want to caution javelin throwers against early work, even more than other men. They are the last ones to begin outdoor work, and should go very slowly. They should never try to throw in cold weather.

Jumpers do everything that sprinters do as preparatory work, with emphasis on rope work, jigging and quickening exercises. High jumpers in particular should guard against early overwork and against exercises which merely strengthen, without helping leg-spring. High kicking is very good; deep knee bending exercises, and others of this type, aren't of much use to any track athlete.

A pole vaulter needs just about everything—physique of a weight man, spring of a jumper, speed of a sprinter and a special coordination and timing. He can use every exercise I've mentioned; he should supplement them with hand balancing, chinning and a lot of work on a rope—a pole vaulter can go through every necessary motion while he's swinging on a rope.

There's one thing that I tell my fellows to keep in mind during this month of preliminary training as well as during the month of outdoor work that follows, and I'd like to tell it to every track man in the country. It's simply this: "Don't overstrain. Remember that you're aiming to build up not prodigious strength, but facile speed. And always keep in mind that it's a lot easier (and a lot more harmful) to overdo than to under-work."

Whistling Jimmy

(Continued from page 22)

"I know; but we decided not to do it."

Carter leaned forward. "Do I understand that the team was told to desert my coaching? Who gave that order, Art? Did you?"

"Art may have given the actual order," Ivins said angrily, "but the entire Alumni Association is behind it. We're tired of getting licked here, there and everywhere. The school's a laughing stock."

"Billy," Carter asked, "did you notice Johnstown laughing?"

The captain grinned. "We gave them heart failure."

"You said something about deciding not to shift from my game. Does that mean that *you* wanted to drop me?"

Billy Wimple gulped. "Yes, sir. They had shifted Herrick to play against Jim. I said we'd go back to the man-for-man just for to-night. Jim Gaynor wouldn't listen to it. He said we knew what you expected and had to shoot square with you. He talked the rest of us around to his way."

Of the three men, only Carter realized the triumph.

"What did you meddle for?" Ivins demanded of Jim.

His tone nettled the boy. "What right has the Alumni Association to meddle?"

"What right?" Ivins seemed dazed by the question. "Don't we pay Carter's salary?"

Arthur took up the cross-examination. "Jim, did you know Billy was acting on my orders?"

"He told me."

"And yet you—"

"I—I had to," Jimmy said miserably. "It wasn't meddling." He shrank from this public quarreling.

"No," Arthur said with sarcasm, "you were helping." Abruptly he turned away. "I'll see you about this to-morrow," he said, and went up the street with Ivins at his heels.

"Jim," said the coach in an undertone of sympathy, "I'm afraid I've thrown you into a jam."

The boy, staring up the street after his brother, shook his head passionately. The man gave his shoulder a pressure of understanding. That helped.

JIMMY went home and to bed. Some time later he heard the street door close, but Arthur did not come to his room. Next morning he went down to breakfast with apprehension. He expected his brother to lash him with bitter words. Instead, Arthur gave him a sour look, ate in silence, and hurried from the house when the meal was over.

Jimmy was both relieved and distressed—relieved that breakfast had passed in peace, distressed that the ordeal was still to be faced. When he came home from school at noon Arthur was pacing the dining room with an air that Jimmy had come to associate with a Gaynor triumph.

"Kid," said Arthur, "I don't suppose you knew exactly what you were doing when you went tearing into my plans. I suppose you didn't stop to think."

Jimmy would have been glad to let it go at that, but he was wise enough to see the futility of any such plan. Every time the Alumni Association interfered with Carter, he would be with the coach. He and his brother had to understand each other now or be forever wrangling.

"The trouble with fellows of your age," Arthur said expansively, "is that you think you know it all."

Jimmy's chin stiffened. "I'm not backing what I think I know. I'm backing what Carter knows."

"Meaning that I know nothing."

"I don't mean that, but—"

"I don't care what you mean," Arthur exploded in a temper. "If you had any sense you'd have followed me. Pretty picture I'll cut when it gets around that you fought me. But there'll be no more of that. I've attended to Mr. Carter. He's through. He's going to go. Pretty independent last night, weren't you? Well, it didn't get you anything and it didn't get Carter anything. He's out."

That afternoon Jimmy counted the minutes of his three periods. When the dismissal bell rang he hurried down to the gym. Carter was on the floor. Relief ran through his veins. So Arthur had merely been blustering! If the coach were out, would he still be coaching? The boy began to whistle.

"That sounds joyous, Jim," grinned the coach.

"It is," said Jimmy.

The joy was soon routed. After the practice he found that week's issue of the *Herald* on the streets, and bought a copy to read the account of the Johnstown game. Even as he thumbed the paper to find the sports page, he suddenly stiffened. For there, on the first page, was a brief story that stopped him short:

CARTER OUT

Frank Carter, executive secretary of the Applegate Chamber of Commerce, has been removed as coach of the local high school basketball team. Carter's appointment to the position was in the nature of an experiment, and the appointing body no longer feels justified in continuing it. Carter will give up his coaching work in two weeks.

So Arthur had told him the truth! And it was like Carter to go quietly on with his job. After what had happened last night, this blow left Jimmy limp. He wondered dazedly why Carter hadn't "resigned," as usually happened in such cases; then he realized with a flash of pride that Cart *wouldn't* resign—he was right, and game to stand by his decision.

All at once Jim's numbness was gone, routed by a surge of indignation. The raw injustice of it stung him. How did they dare imply so openly that Cart had failed when they had not given him a chance to finish?

Back in Johnstown, between the halves, he had thought only of the coach and not of his coming meeting with his brother. He thought of Carter now, and not of the fact that this was Arthur's doings. The process of trying to think, to reason, drove the heat from his blood. He knew the team; they would want Carter to stay. There must be some method—

He had been roaming the streets; and now, come to his house, he opened the gate and stood with his hands upon the pickets. He was whistling softly, abstractedly, after the fashion of one whose thoughts were digging deep. Presently his face began to clear. He had stumbled upon an idea. It was just a chance, of course, but perhaps— He closed the gate sharply and walked into the house.

The telephone was in the hall. One by one he called the members of the team. He had just finished with Langer when the front door opened and Arthur stepped across the threshold.

"Hello!" Arthur's tone was jovial; he was well-pleased with his world. "Did you see the *Herald*? Didn't believe me, did you?" Then he caught a full view of the boy's face. "What are you doing there?"

"Telephoning to the fellows."

"For what?"

"We're going to try to save Cart. We want him."

Arthur Gaynor's cheeks took on the color of a burned brick, and Jimmy had a momentary fear that he was going to burst. It was the first time the boy had ever seen a strong, self-willed man fight to control himself and the intensity of the struggle frightened him, even as it gave him a new respect for his brother.

"Where are you going to make this fight?" Arthur demanded. "Before the Alumni Association?"

"No."

"I didn't think you'd go so far as to make a fool of me there. There's no use talking to you. You've got the bit in your teeth and you'll run until you crash into a wall or grow tired of it. I'll say

(Continued from page 31)

this, for you, though: you've told me frankly just what you thought and were going to do. Well, have your fling. It won't do you any good. Carter's goose is cooked. He's fired—and fired hard."

THAT night, the team, led by Billy Wimple, went to the home of Arnie Schalk, president of the Applegate High School Athletic Association. And yet, though Billy led them in, it was Jimmy who did the talking.

"How much is in the A. A. treasury?" he asked abruptly.

Schalk told him.

"Can you — will you, rather — call a special meeting of the A. A. for to-morrow noon?"

Schalk looked doubtful. Special meetings at noon were a bit out of the ordinary. They required the use of the auditorium, a privilege not easy to secure in the middle of the day.

"If it were something really important —" he began hesitatingly.

"It's about Carter," said Jimmy, and told him the plan. Arnie, dubious at first, at length began to glow.

"That's real shooting" he said. "I'll see what I can do."

Next morning, before the first period bell rang, he had arranged for the auditorium. Billy Wimple, Kipps and Jimmy working hurriedly, scratched off notices for the bulletin boards. This done, Jimmy fell into that old, abstracted whistle.

"The trouble is," he said, "that A. A. meetings are usually poorly attended. We have got to get a crowd. Suppose we circulate around and promise some excitement."

"A little dynamite," said Kipps. "That will get them."

It did, for the basketball team was made up of students of prominence, students to be taken seriously. When Arnie Schalk arose to rap for order, the auditorium was nearly full. Jimmy, looking out at them, wondered if they would see the justice that was about to be asked.

Arnie knew that the story to be told was not his story. He presented Billy Wimple in a dozen words and went back to his seat.

"Fellow students of Applegate—" The captain faltered. The trick of oratory was not his. "Fellow students, I don't know how you feel about Carter—you haven't had any close dealings with him, you do not know him. The Alumni Association has handled him. As I said before, I do not know how *you* feel about him, but the team feels that the Alumni Association has cut the coach's throat."

A subdued hum arose from the floor. Jimmy held his breath! What might that sound mean?

Billy Wimple was speaking again. "Oh, I know it's a strange thing to have the Alumni Association attacked from this platform, but the Alumni Association has done some strange things. It has kept spreading the information that the five-man defense could not win. All the while Cart knew we'd have trouble at first because it was new to us. Cart didn't tell that. He was afraid we'd get thinking we'd have to be a sacrifice team. He had to ignore the alumni and take a chance on losing his job. He took that chance. Now he's lost his job, and I want to tell you that we don't like the way he's lost it.

"Do you know the real story of the Johnstown game? I got alumni instruction to ditch Cart's system and play the man-for-man. Do you get that? The Alumni Association tried to run the team over the coach's head. Some of us were willing to follow the Alumni Association, but Jim Gaynor saw it straight and fought us out of it. We played Cart's game, and it was a real game. The team will tell you that it is almost ripe, almost ready to rip things open with what Cart has taught us. He's taught us more about basketball than we ever knew existed. He's made this team. He's the man the Alumni Association wants to ditch because he won't say, 'yes, yes' to everything they tell him. Well, this meeting was called to-day so that the basketball fellows could tell you they won't stand for it."

Billy Wimple made a stiff bow and was done. A scattering volley of applause ran through the hall. Jimmy was disappointed. He had expected more than this.

"Do they look as though they're warming up?" Kipps whispered anxiously in his ear.

He did not know. Arnie presented him as the next speaker, and he walked down to the front of the stage. Billy Wimple had paid him tribute as a fighter, and at the moment he wore a halo of romance. A gale of applause came up from the seats. Jimmy wished he knew whether it meant approval of what he had done. The wall clock warned him that in ten minutes the first period bell would ring. There was not much time left. He fretted at the delay, and shook his head impatiently as the hand-clapping continued. Abruptly he began to talk, and abruptly the plaudits ceased. It was a sign, at least, that they wanted to hear him.

"I HOPE," he said, "that none of you has the idea that we're standing by Cart because we think he's a good fellow. This is no cheap popularity stuff. Cart hasn't tried to be a good fellow. Cart has tried to be a good coach. Every moment, since this season started, he has known just what he was doing. He's been building this year's team and next year's, and the years' after that. And because he hasn't gone out to boost his stock by trying for victories that wouldn't mean anything next year, the Alumni Association has given him a black mark. He's done more than teach us basketball. He's taught us that if you value the game you have got to learn it, and grow with it, and develop patience, and take your bumps cheerfully while you're learning—and they throw him out because he's too big to surrender his judgment. What did they think they hired, an office boy or a coach?"

Somebody giggled, and Jimmy grew furious. What did they think this was, a joke?

"All right," he cried, "laugh!" The giggling stopped. "If that's how you look at this you deserve to lose Cart. He hasn't been trying to build up a tricky record; he's been working for the school. He's stood by us, and if there's any sense of fairness in this Association it will stand by him. We can do it if we want to. We can wipe out part of the black mark by announcing that, in the eyes of the A. A., the coach has made good. We can do it, we can let him know what we think of him, before we leave this auditorium."

Arnie Schalk had had a year's experience in presiding at A. A. meetings. He could read signs. "I think he's got them," he said in an undertone to Billy Wimple.

"How can we do it?" came a curious voice from the seats.

"By hiring Cart for what's left of the season," Jimmy shot back. "By paying his salary."

"That-a-boy, Jim!" shouted a voice. A girl waved an agitated hand from a side-aisle seat.

"How can we raise the money?" she asked in an excited treble.

"We don't have to raise it," cried Jimmy. Oh, this was the big moment! "We've got it. It's in the A. A. treasury. We can pay Cart out of our athletic fund."

The noise gave way to an abrupt, astonished silence. Here was a proposal unparalleled in the history of the school. Jimmy could almost feel the doubt, the perplexity, the indecision. Seconds passed, and his courage, his hopes, began to ooze away.

Then, suddenly, a boy sprang to his feet. Another stood up; another. It was a sign of approval. The girl who had waved the agitated hand stepped out into the aisle. There was a flurry of scattering applause. Jimmy could sense that the crowd was gathering itself to swing one way or the other. Which way? If some leader would arise—

The president of the junior class climbed onto a seat. "Mr. Chairman!" he roared.

"Mr. Joyce has the floor," said Schalk.

"Mr. President, this association was organized to see that Applegate teams are kept supplied with the necessary equipment. Isn't good coaching part of the equipment? I believe this association owes Cart a duty. I see this just as Mr. Gaynor sees it. I move you that we engage Carter and—"

And then the storm broke. Nobody ever knew who seconded the motion, for next

day more than thirty boys proudly claimed the honor. There was a roar of cheers, a whirlwind of hand clapping, an uproarious stamping of feet. Jimmy was utterly unconscious of the fact that he put his fingers in his mouth and shrilled a piercing whistle.

An unemotional janitor, who knew that the first afternoon period bell would ring in a moment, began to open the auditorium doors.

"We made it!" Billy Wimple exulted.

Jimmy did not hear him. His pulse was racing; his heart was singing. Through one of the open exits he caught a glimpse of a familiar figure in the corridor. In the general rejoicing nobody noticed him as he slipped from the stage and hurried out a side door.

Back in the auditorium Kipps was asking: "Where would we have been without Jimmy?" But Jimmy was not giving a thought to the part that he had played. He was not even thinking of how Arthur might take the news. All that was in his mind was the wish to be the first to tell Carter.

And the tune he whistled as he dashed through the halls was no funeral march.

Mark Tidd in Egypt

(Continued from page 19)

"I'll take charge of these prisoners, and see that they're turned over to the police. And now, boys, didn't you have any expenses?"

"Sure," says Mark, "quite a lot. We got the price to pay for it now we got your check."

"But that," says Mr. J., "was just reward. I want to pay the expenses outside of that."

And he did. He paid the sailors and he paid the bootblack and he made a fine present to Mohammed and our crew, and squared up everything like a gentleman. When he was all through, we took his stuff ashore in our launch. Then we got some wagons and carted it all back to the hotel.

Mr. Tidd was up on the piazza waiting for us, and he says he was tired of waiting, and anyhow he didn't think he wanted to stay in Egypt any more.

"Seems like I'd like to see Jerusalem and Palestine and Damascus and Baalbec and them places. And maybe Acre where Richard the Lion Hearted fit with Saladin the emperor of the Saracens and all. But I cal'late we hain't got the money."

"I guess we kin afford it, Dad," says Mark.

"But we lost our money," says Mr. Tidd.

"We f-found some more," says Mark. And we had found some, for in addition to Mr. Judkins' five thousand, we had four hundred and eighty-six dollars we'd made with our launch, and five hundred and twenty-three dollars from the other business. This was over and above all our expenses. So right at that minute we had considerable more money than we left America with. And of course the travelers' checks we lost weren't gone for good. They'd be paid back to us in time.

So we packed our baggage and said good-by to Mr. Judkins and the sailors and our crew. But we didn't say good-by to Mohammed till we got on the train for El Cantara.

He almost cried, and each one of us had to write a letter to him telling him he was the best dragoman in the world and that no American traveler could see Egypt with any other guide, and that we loved him like a brother. He was a nice fellow, Mohammed was, but that was because he was an Arab and not an Egyptian.

So that's all of that. We're on our way to Palestine. I hope we have a quiet time there. I've had excitement enough. But, somehow, I got a feeling in my bones. I got a feeling in my bones.

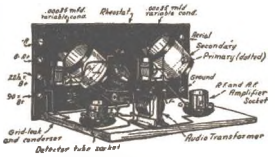
THE END.

Palestine is a funny kind of place. Mr. Kelland knows—he toured there himself. And he says that Mark Tidd and his three friends aren't going to have any quiet, restful time there—not by a jugful. The next Mark Tidd story will commence late this year.

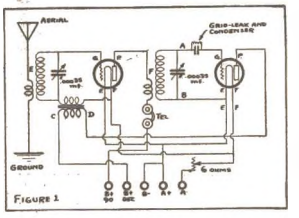
How to Make a Progressive Radio Set

By Millard F. Bysorg

YOU fellows who own one tube reflex sets and would like to advance them by adding other tubes can easily do so by placing a tube ahead of your reflexed tube to give one more stage of radio frequency and another on the other side to increase the signal strength through additional audio amplification.



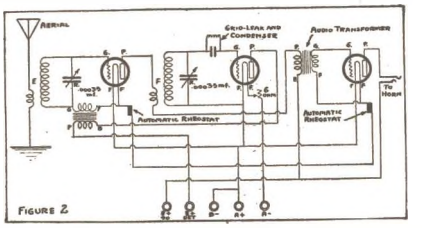
Rear view of the two-tube set.



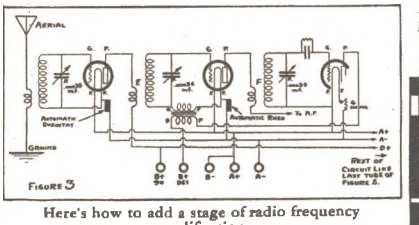
Sensitivity is increased by substituting a tube for the crystal detector.

Those of you who made the one tube reflex set described in the November issue of THE AMERICAN BOY, will remember that a crystal detector was used which, with the reflexed tube, gave you the equal of about two and one-half tubes. But you probably realized that the crystal is the weak link of this type of set and unless a particularly good one is used, the set does not function properly.

So what must be done to offset this weakness, is to work in another tube to replace the crystal detector. Since a vacuum tube is approximately thirty times as sensitive as the detector, its advantages are apparent.



Addition of the audio amplifier on the right makes the set more powerful.



Here's how to add a stage of radio frequency amplification.

This substitution is really a simple operation for the main part of the circuit does not have to be changed The change is made in the circuit where the crystal detector is located. At the points A and B (Fig. 1) connect into the tube detector circuit rather than into the crystal detector circuit employed in the original one tube reflex set. The same thing is done at C and D. You will remember that in the original one tube set, B was connected to D and A to C with the crystal detector between.

The A battery wires are lengthened to permit the lighting of the filament in the detector tube and an additional binding post is provided for the low voltage B battery tap for the detector since most detector tubes work better with this voltage somewhere below that of the amplifiers. The exact voltage is found by experiment—it may run 18 volts or it may go up to 45 volts but in any case it will be on one of the positive binding posts of the B batteries.

The tuning elements remain the same and you are certain to be pleased with the results for this set, with the tube substituted for the crystal, will work as good as or better than any three tube set. The tuning is particularly gratifying for the dials will always read the same for a given station.

I have found that adding a few more turns of wire on the primaries of the E and F helps a great deal. You know the primary windings are the small coils and if, instead of the four or five turns called for in the one tube set, you use eight you will notice a decided improvement. Fig. 5 shows how the coils are made. No. 22 wire is wound around cardboard tubing about three inches in diameter. Make certain the windings of both the primary (4 to 8 turns) and the secondary (50 to 65 turns) windings run in the same direction. In placing the coils in the set they should be located as far apart as possible and should be turned at right angles to each other. However, they may be placed parallel if they are mounted at an angle of from 45 to 57 degrees. Notice, too, that the rotary plates of the variable condensers are connected to the filament side of the circuit in each case.

In making the coils do not use varnish or any other binding material to hold the wires in place. Wind the wire tightly and

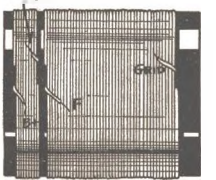
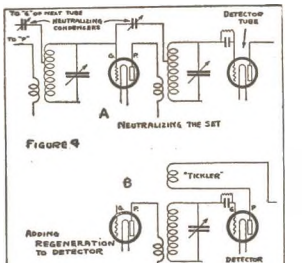


Fig. 5

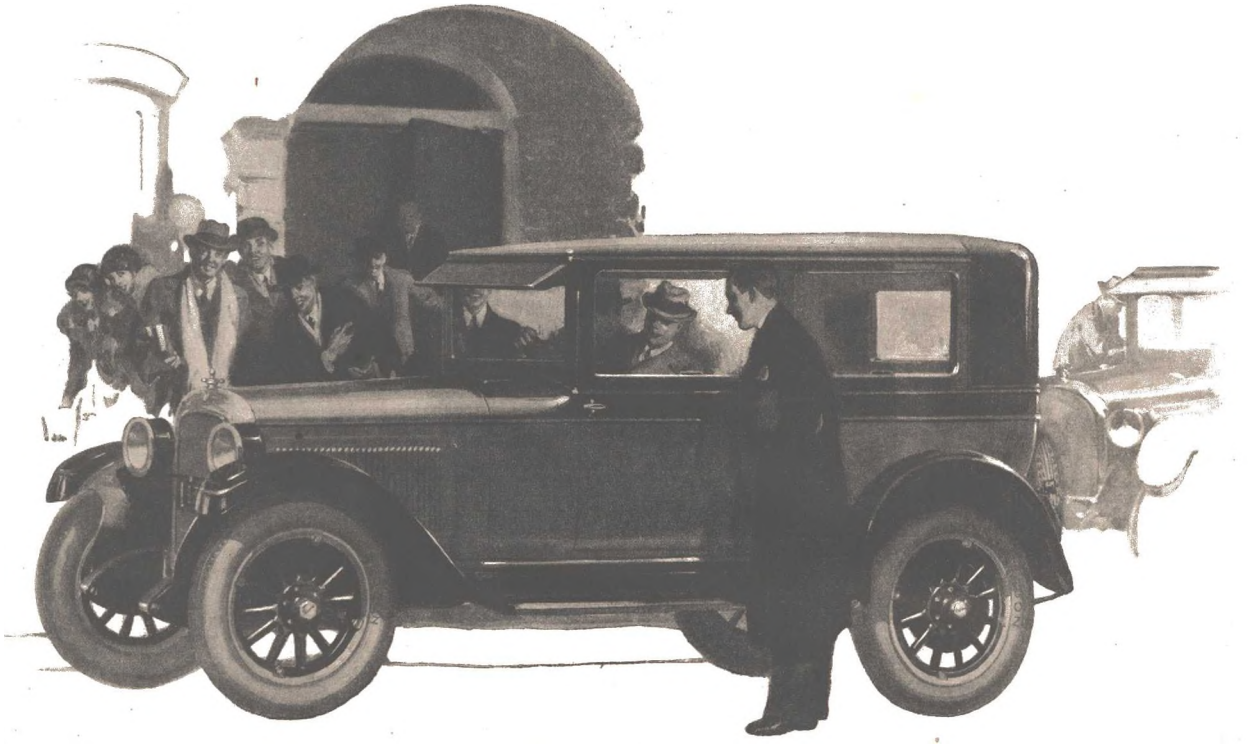
Wrap the wires tightly.

nothing else is needed. The wire itself should not come in contact with the baseboard. In mounting the coils it is best to raise them from the baseboard by means of small brass "angles." Do not run wires through the centers of the coils.

(*Continued on page 67*)



This calls for skill.



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OVERLAND SIX

The Zulu Trail

(Continued from page 26)

to escape are by now well away in the forest," replied the doctor; "but, I should think, more than half of them have perished. Suleiman himself is dead; and these barbarians have carried his head upon a stake to the palaver-ground, where, like mad men, they dance and sing around it."

"And what of Tregenza?" I asked.

"Crouch is now searching among the dead in that part of the battle field where he was last seen. They should experience no difficulty in finding him, if he has fallen, since the palankeen upon which they carried him is sure to be close at hand."

Whilst Doctor Cotton was speaking, Crouch himself entered the hut, the threshold of which was darkened by the tall form of Umgobatali who remained standing in the doorway.

I looked at the Mazitu king and shuddered, for I had seen the savagery of his men. His black, glistening skin was so running with perspiration that he looked as if he had just emerged from a shower-bath. When he saw me, he grinned in a friendly fashion. Which caused me to shudder a second time.

"Have you found Tregenza?" I asked of Crouch.

The little captain shook his head.

"Not a sign of him," he answered. "Though how he managed to get away is the next thing to a mystery. The Mazitu followed up the retreat along every path and track where they could have carried his litter. The man was in luck's way, for they would have made short work of him, had they found him."

I was silent a moment, whilst my thoughts went back to the circumstances of our deliverance.

"And how did the Mazitu get here?" I asked. "I thought Umgobatali was cut off from us on the south side of the Bembe?"

Crouch glanced at the king.

"As Umgobatali himself will be the first to tell you," said he, "you may capture a lion alive, but not a Mazitu army. All the reports we heard were true. Suleiman may have been taken by surprise in the first place; but he was clever enough to see that he could turn defeat to his own advantage. He must have sent back word to Tregenza to lie in hiding in the forest to the north of the river on both sides of the sponge, whilst he himself fell back slowly, retiring inch by inch, luring the Mazitu into a trap. When Umgobatali was across the Bembe, Tregenza seized the ford."

"All that we knew," I answered. "But what happened then?"

"Umgobatali was surrounded," said Crouch. "He had enemies before and behind him, and he had the sponge to his right and left. However, he had more than life and freedom to fight for: the Mazitu women and children were at Makuta's, and would become Chibanda's slaves if he could not escape. On the spur of the moment, he resolved to take a desperate course. He gathered his head men about him, and explained what he intended to do. Realizing that his left flank was not so threatened as the right, since on that side lay the Loangwa River, he came to the conclusion that he would have the better chance of escaping if he attempted to break through towards the west. You yourself have seen the Mazitu charge; and as you may realize, Chibanda's warriors could not stand before them. Late that night they found themselves outside the cordon that had been drawn around them on the banks of the Loangwa."

"Was the retreat not followed up?" I asked.

"CHIBANDA, who was in command," Crouch continued, "had a natural desire not to come to close quarters again with Umgobatali. He preferred to take up a position to the northwest of his stockade, and there await reinforcements from the Arabs. He believed he had the Mazitu force safely bottled up; and indeed, it was only reasonable that he should have thought so. The Mazitu found themselves jambed into the angle formed by Loangwa on the one hand and the mouth of the Bembe and the sponge upon the other. It looked as if escape was impossible. Chibanda counted upon Suleiman's taking Makuta's stockade at the first assault, and then returning south to assist in the destruction of the Mazitu. Indeed, we have taken prisoners who have told us that Chibanda sent runners to the Arab, reporting that Umgobatali had escaped from one trap only to find himself in another; in other words, he had jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire."

"And how did he get out of it?" I asked.

"He first tried to cross the sponge," said Crouch, "but found that, after the heavy rains we have experienced, this was impossible. The whole of yesterday was thus wasted. Then the king, hearing heavy firing in the direction of Makuta's, desperately anxious in regard to the fate of his women and children, ordered his warriors to swim the mouth of the Bembe. They had to wade through thick mud that rose above their waists, and several perished in the swamps. The greater number, however, reached the deep water of the river, though they were half eaten alive by leeches. Beating the surface of the water as they swam, to scare away the crocodiles, they arrived in driblets upon the northern bank. This they did last night, for they had no desire to be observed by Chibanda's scouts. The whole operation was conducted with the greatest secrecy.

"And then," Crouch continued, "Umgobatali again mustered his warriors in the dead of night, some miles to the southwest of this. He gave them a long rest, for they were all exhausted; and disgusting as it may seem to you, since they had had no food for more than twenty-four hours, each man devoured raw the leeches that he tore from his body. Realizing that they had already wasted much valuable time and Makuta's might have fallen, they were on the march again long before daybreak. And the rest you know. Umgobatali, arriving at the eleventh hour, took Suleiman wholly by surprise, coming upon him from the very flank that the Arabs thought the most secure."

I turned to the king. I had picked up a few words in the Mazitu language, and was well able to make him understand.

"We owe our lives to you," said I.

He grinned again. The coal blackness of his skin made his teeth appear as white as chalk. I never saw finer teeth in all my life.

"To-morrow," said he, "we plunder Chibanda's."

I could say nothing to this. I knew that no power on earth short of a military expedition on no small scale, could prevent the Mazitu from following their usual practices. Pillage was their one and only trade.

Umgobatali, it was evident, relished the idea, for he smacked his lips with a noise like the drawing of a cork.

"There will be loot," said he. "Chibanda was a rich man, and he made his people work hard. At Chibanda's we will find cassava, dura, pumpkins, melons and ground-nuts in plenty."

The whole of that day we were occupied in burying the dead and repairing such damage as had been done to the stockade. In the evening there was a festival, or feast, which lasted nearly the whole night long; and although this performance was at first interesting to watch, I found it very boring towards the end, when it was all that I could do to keep awake—for Crouch insisted that we three should attend, lest Umgobatali and Makuta should take offense.

The proceedings began with the ceremony of blood-brotherhood between Makuta and the Mazitu king. Then followed a long oration from the head witch-doctor who worked himself into such a frenzy of excitement that he eventually collapsed from pure exhaustion, having danced at breakneck speed round and round the palaver-ground for more than half an hour.

A great bonfire was lit, and about this there were savage and indescribable dances, and drinking of much native beer.

Next day, however, they seemed none

the worse for their debauch. They assembled at daybreak upon the palaver-ground, and then, led by their king and accompanied by their women-folk, they set forth towards the south.

That day, we arranged with Makuta to hire six of his men as porters; for we intended to go north to where the *aristolochia* was to be found and were anxious to take with us all the barter goods we had left at Makuta's on our previous visit. Crouch, in token of friendship, presented the chief with a watch, the use of which he explained; and Makuta was so pleased with this that he could not refrain from winding it up, whenever he looked at the time—which, to tell the truth, he did not understand in the least.

Our party now numbered thirteen in all: three Europeans, Cavemba, who continued to cook for us, the three Makololos who remained and six of Makuta's men. With these, bidding farewell to the chief, we set forward towards the north.

TWO days later, when we were camped in the forest, we were overtaken by runners sent to us by Umgobatali. The Mazitu had reached Chibanda's late on the afternoon of the previous day. Save for a few stray pigs and fowls, they had found the town deserted. After hearing of the defeat of the Arabs and the flight of their chief himself, the inhabitants had fled into the woods, where there was no chance of the Mazitu finding them.

We were glad enough of this; for though Chibanda himself was a man whom I would have shot without the least compunction, we bore no malice towards the unfortunate people whom he ruled.

But, Umgobatali's runners had far more important and surprising information to give us. Friends of theirs, hippopotamus hunters, were camped at no great distance from Chibanda's. These people declared that, three days before, two white men, with a strong party from Chibanda's, had gone up-river in four large canoes.

From the description the hippopotamus hunters had given of these two Europeans, we could no longer doubt that Tregenza and Crake were still in the land of the living. They must have obtained their canoes from one of the villages further to the south; and knowing that there was little time to lose, and still determined to carry out his project, Tregenza had gone north in search of the *aristolochia*.

It looked now as if, after all, we were to be forestalled. Certain it was, in any case, that Tregenza would be there before us. Since he was in possession of the doctor's map, he would have no difficulty in finding the place. He had three days' start of us already. Through that part of the forest we could not hope to cover more than five or six miles a day; and as the hippopotamus hunters had described the canoes as having twenty paddles each, it was safe to presume that Tregenza, in spite of the velocity of the current, could travel twice as fast as we could.

The following morning, we marched in the direction of the river, hoping to find in one of the fishing villages a canoe in which to follow Tregenza. But, all that day and the next, we searched in vain. Every village we came across was deserted, the inhabitants having fled in panic on hearing of the approach of the Mazitu.

One day, when we were sheltering in the forest from the violence of a storm, we were overtaken by a messenger who had been sent post-haste from Makuta's. Saluting, he informed us he had an important announcement to make to us from the chief himself.

Thinking that the man had come with a proposal that might solve the riddle of our difficulties, we gathered round him and eagerly asked him what he had to say. And thereupon, he informed us, with a gravity that was ludicrous to behold, that Makuta had overwound the watch that Crouch had given him!

I knew not whether to burst into tears or laughter. The runner was wholly serious when he suggested that Crouch should return to Makuta's at once in order to repair the watch, which was described as making a noise like "beans in a gourd" when the chief shook it in his hand.

From this Crouch, inferring that the mainspring was broken, explained that he was not able to repair watches, even if he had the necessary tools. If Makuta had

(*Continued from page 37*)

broken the watch, it was his own fault, since he had been shown how to wind it up and had been told repeatedly not to do so more than once a day.

At that, the man made a wry face.

"Makuta will be very sad," said he.

"Then, let him know," said Crouch, "that I am still his friend. A white man never forgets those who have been kind to him."

Crouch then turned to me, and asked me if I would give my watch to Makuta, to take the place of the one the chief had broken. I willingly consented.

"Tell the chief," said I, "that I would give him ten watches, if I had them."

"And tell him also," added Doctor Cotton, "that the one thing in all the world we want is a canoe, in order to proceed upstream towards Cazembe."

The man shook his head.

"There are no canoes on this side of the river," said he. "All the people have fled downstream from the Mazitu, who are still at Chibanda's. They will not return, until Umgobatali has crossed to the other side."

This incident did not serve to encourage me. Day by day, we struggled on. The heat was insufferable; and we all shivered from fever, even the natives themselves. Nevertheless, in spite of all our difficulties, we held more or less to the course of the river, still hoping that we should come across a village where we could purchase a canoe.

And then, three of Makuta's men deserted us, though they had been paid the greater part of their wages in advance. This made it necessary for us to leave some of our baggage behind; for the country was exceedingly difficult to traverse, there being large areas of sponge which were impassable owing to the excessive rains. These had to be circumvented, with the result that there were days when we did not make more than two or three miles as the crow flies.

Lions were everywhere, and we frequently came across the tracks of elephants. In the marshy soil the feet of these great beasts had made holes several feet in depth. As these holes were invariably full of water, we could never tell where they were, and frequently stumbled into them.

The more shallow pools abounded with an extraordinary animal half fish, half lizard, called the lepidosiren. At first, I would not eat these reptiles on account of their repulsive appearance. But, after seeing the meat, which was both soft and white, and much relished by the natives, I was disposed to try it; whereupon for the future I ceased to be so fastidious.

XXIII—We Find Tregenza

IT took us ten days — if I remember rightly—to negotiate the sponge district, when we gained a part of the river where the banks were sandy; and though the forest was not so dense, the country appeared to be wholly uninhabited. We were beginning to fear that by now Tregenza might have collected all the *aristolochia* leaves he could take with him, and gone down-river on his way to the Zambesi. Fortunately we succeeded in bartering with some hippopotamus hunters for a canoe which enabled us to proceed considerably faster.

In four days we had left the mountains on the western bank of the river far behind us, and were approaching the thickly wooded country that a few years before had been explored by Doctor Livingstone.

Early one morning, on rounding a sharp bend of the river, we came on a sudden upon the place where Doctor Cotton had first discovered the *aristolochia*. And there to our surprise was a veritable settlement, consisting of some half dozen huts, constructed of wood, with roofs of interwoven grass and palm leaves.

Hoping that we were unobserved, Crouch ordered the men to paddle towards the left bank where the forest trees came down to the water's edge. The *aristolochia* was growing in the valley of a small stream. It was Crouch's intention to land, hide in the woods, and observe Tregenza's movements.

In this, however, we were foiled. Being many hundred yards from the eastern bank, we failed to reach cover before a bullet came whistling past our heads, and we saw an Arab running towards us on the river bank. Clearly, we were not yet out of our difficulties and dangers.

Judging by the number of the huts, Tregenza had many more men than we; and moreover, a very large proportion of these were black Arabs who carried muskets and knew how to use them. We paddled desperately for the left bank, and in a few minutes were sheltered by the intervening trees.

Crouch tugged at his beard. This, I knew well, was a sign that he was thinking; and presently, he gave us the benefit of his deliberations.

"We'll land and risk it," said he. "Whatever else may be said of him, the man's worth his salt. He might have fled downstream; instead of which, left to his own resources, he has penetrated further into the interior, leaving the Mazitu between him and the Zambesi. The moment I first saw the fellow, I knew that I had found an enemy who could never be deepised."

"The plantation's stripped!" cried Doctor Cotton. "Tregenza has gone about the business in the right way. Fool that I was to tell him all I knew!"

"I saw nothing of that," said Crouch. "I had no time to do more than count his guns."

"And I," replied the doctor, "had no eyes to see anything but those boxes he has brought with him all the way from St. Swithin's Priory. The *aristolochia* leaves are all picked, and spread upon the sand-bank to dry in the sun. He has enough there to fill every box. No doubt he would have finished the work many days before, had it not been for the heavy rains. He knows well enough that, if the leaves are not properly dried and get damp, they will lose all their valuable properties."

If the truth be told, I was not so interested in this information as I should have been. I had once publicly declared that I desired a life of adventure in which danger was essential; but, by now, I had had as much of it as I cared about. I saw that, if we disembarked, we were asking for trouble. Tregenza's party and ourselves would have to fight it out.

"What are you going to do?" I asked of Crouch, who was still tugging at his beard.

"Land," said he.

I said nothing. I was neither pleased nor sorry. Whatever else may be said of me, I was an obedient and willing follower of him whom I have always regarded as one of the greatest of living men.

"On this side of the river?" I asked.

Crouch nodded.

"There'll be a fight," said I.

His answer surprised me. "I'm not so sure of that," said he. "I've an idea that I may be able to persuade our friend, Tregenza, that the game he's playing is not worth the candle. If he wants to get out of this continent alive, he had better shift, whilst there's time. And I'm willing to give him a chance, for the man has

Kelland's Picture for Every Boy

EVERY fellow who has laughed with Mark Tidd or solved an Egyptian mystery with him, or puzzled through a problem with Catty Atkins, has wanted a picture of the author, Clarence Budington Kelland. Here's your chance to get one. Send in the "Best Reading" ballot on Page 42, and in return, without charge, a special sepia printed picture of Mr. Kelland will be mailed to you. You can paste it in your scrapbook, or frame it, or pin it on your wall. And best of all, your ballot will help THE AMERICAN BOY editors pick the stories you like best. Mail your ballot today and Mr. Kelland's picture should reach you within two weeks. No return postage required.

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grit in him, and he has proved it. He's surrounded by enemies, deserted by his friends, and he's suffering from fever. And yet he sticks to his guns. He may be a scoundrel, but he's brave."

We disembarked in a narrow creek, and hid our canoe in shallow water amid rushes.

Carrying our baggage and provisions some distance into the woods, we selected a camping place under a gigantic tree; and leaving Peter and Cavemba in charge of the stores, the rest of us set forth towards Tregenza's settlement, which we reached late in the afternoon, when not more than an hour remained till sunset.

Lying down amidst the shrubbery, we could see everything without being seen. The settlement was about half a mile away and considerably below us. We counted four natives and twenty Arabs, as well as Crake and Tregenza himself, and there may have been others within the huts. The Negroes, no doubt, were the four men who carried their master upon his litter, and the Arabs those who had been with him from the first.

They had, therefore, at least a score of firearms, whereas we had but seven. And moreover, we were almost destitute of ammunition, having expended so many rounds during the fight at Makuta's stronghold.

Close as hares, we lay amidst the underwoods for ten minutes or more, and never a word was said. At last Crouch rose to his feet.

"Monkhouse," said he, "I leave you in command."

"What do you mean?" I gasped, for his words astounded me.

"Just as I say," he answered. "I leave you in command. I'm going down to Tregenza's, to talk to him as one man to another."

"You can never trust him!" I cried; Doctor Cotton said the same thing, even more emphatically than I. But Crouch was not the man to change his mind.

"Let me be the best judge of that," said he.

And then he did a strange thing which —when you come to consider it—was a noble thing, as well. He emptied the pouch in which he carried his revolver ammunition. There remained no more than a dozen rounds. Of these cartridges he gave eleven to the doctor and to me, keeping but a single round for himself.

"If the worst comes to the worst," he said, "this may be of use to me. I keep it for Tregenza. But I expect to be back in little more than an hour. In the meantime, make no fire; avoid being seen; have a sentry on duty to keep a sharp lookout. And if by any chance I do not return, send back word to Umgobatali that his blood-brother is no more. Then shall I be avenged."

XXIV—The Whip Hand

HITHERTO I have related, as faithfully as I can, my personal experiences throughout that memorable expedition. But now it is necessary to tell the story for a space from the point of view of Captain Crouch. Not that I intend to describe in the bald, simple words of one of the most modest of men the extraordinary events of that night; but, rather, knowing well both Tregenza and Crouch himself, I can imagine the scene more or less as it must have occurred.

When Crouch left us, as I have said, it was almost dark; and we soon lost sight of his slender and heroic figure in the mist that was gathering in the valley. In silence we watched him vanish like a ghost, setting forth with steps that never faltered to what we looked upon as almost certain death.

In those latitudes the sun sets with extraordinary rapidity. In a few moments it was dark. Crouch, as he approached the settlement, lay down in the long grass, biding his time until the stars were out and he could see the camp-fires burning around Tregenza's huts.

Then he went on again, but this time veering to the left towards the river. He advanced cautiously, as a man stalks game, creeping a little distance, and then lying still to listen.

At the top of the sand bank, not a hundred yards from the nearest hut, there ran an irregular bluff—a little cliff, worn by the high water of the river at flood-time. Crouch, wriggling like a worm, worked his way along the base of this, where he could not be seen from the settlement itself. He never moved his eyes, as he advanced, from the white-coated figure of an Arab sentry, seated cross-legged by the river bank.

This man, keeping a sharp lookout upon the river itself, had his back turned to Crouch, who crawled silently to within a few feet of him, and then sprang like a leopard.

A single blow, Crouch told me, did the trick. He struck the man upon the back of the head with the butt end of his revolver; and he just rolled over without cry or groan, and lay in the soft sand with his long gun by his side.

For a moment, Crouch never moved. He sat listening, eager to learn whether or not he had been observed, his sharp eyes glancing to right and left—for, I believe, he could see in the dark like a cat. In a moment, assured that no alarm had been given, he hastened to the river bank, to the place where Tregenza had moored his four canoes.

These were tied together by the bows, secured to a single stake by a painter; and they looked like a bunch of bananas. In a trice, Crouch with his jackknife had cut the painter. And downstream upon the current went Tregenza's only means of escape.

And then Crouch retraced his steps towards the settlement. As he passed the motionless, unconscious figure of the Arab sentry, he stooped down, picked up the man's rifle, drew his knife from his belt, and threw both of these into the river. Then he went on, climbed the bluff and boldly approached the camp-fires of our enemies.

He had not gone twenty yards before he was challenged by another sentry, who on a sudden loomed forth before him in the darkness.

Crouch threw up his hands, and spoke to the man in Arabic—or rather the barbarous dialect that is spoken on the East Coast from Somaliland to Mozambique.

The Swahili, who no doubt knew Crouch by sight as well as by reputation, thinking he had captured a prisoner of more value than a dozen slaves, was careful to make the little captain walk before him on their way to Tregenza's hut.

Crouch never hesitated. He walked straight through the open doorway. And there was that great, bloated rascal still in his bath-chair in the wilds of central Africa.

He was eating from a plate upon his knee, whilst Crake was seated cross-legged on the ground.

Crouch told me that, when Tregenza saw him, he came out with a grunt like a pig and his eyes looked as if about to spring from his head. But the little captain doffed the battered sun-helmet he was wearing, bowed to Tregenza, nodded in a friendly way to Crake, and thus greeted both.

"A sultry night," said he.

"You!" burst from Tregenza with a noise like an explosion.

"Myself," said Crouch. "I trust, Mr. Tregenza, I find you in the best of health?"

There was a pause. And then Tregenza spoke again.

"What, in the name of all that's mad, are you doing here?" he roared.

"Scarcely the way," said Crouch, "to greet an old acquaintance! I would look upon it as a favor, sir, if you could see your way to oblige me with one of those excellent cigars of yours. I assure you, I've not had a smoke for a month, with the exception of a little hemp, which ruins the digestion and burns the tongue."

It took Tregenza more time than this to recover from his amazement. He sat in his chair, gaping, gasping, like a fish high and dry.

"You have not yet answered my question," he asked. "What business brings you here?"

"Sir," said Crouch, "I'm an honest man. I believe in honest dealings. From the first I asked you to be frank with me, and you refused. I am now in a position to compel you to fall in with my ideas. I have come to make you a fair offer—

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which is more than you ever did for me."

Tregenza now grew purple in the face. He made an effort to rise from his bath-chair.

"Explain," he thundered; "or you're a dead man, here and now."

"I am about to do so," said Crouch, quite calmly. "You came into this country to plunder and to murder. You have thrown in your lot with slavers. You have stolen the brains of another man, and would make yourself richer than you are by means of robbery, falsehood and violence. And yet, in spite of all this, there's something to your account on the credit side. You have proved yourself a bold man, Mr. Tregenza. After the fight at Makuta's, since you had canoes, you might have escaped; and when you returned up-river, you must have known that you did so in peril of your life. You were, and are still, surrounded by foes of a type who are not likely to show you mercy. The Mazitu lie between you and the Zambesi. You can never get through alive."

At that, Tregenza burst into his boisterous laughter.

"I have canoes," he said. "I go down the river to-morrow."

"I think not," Crouch answered. "Your canoes have gone downstream before you."

Tregenza straightened like a man shot. He stared at Crouch as if he beheld a ghost. And then, there was a quick movement of his right hand towards the pocket of his coat — but not quick enough to deceive the little captain.

"Hands up!" cried Crouch. And the barrel of his revolver darted backwards and forwards, from Tregenza to Crake, with the rapidity of an engine valve.

A Modern Dinosaur

A GOOD look at this prehistoric monster on a dark night is guaranteed to give any boy a first-rate thrill and a couple of shivers, residents of Seaside, Oregon, say. The monster is very dead—it's only an overturned tree trunk—but when there are shadows around, and shrieky winds sweeping down the near-by Necanicum River, it's easy to believe it's a dinosaur, with its big head and neck, and its dinky forefeet, and powerful hindquarters.

Crouch had by now advanced into the hut, where he stood with his back to the wall, for he had no wish to be stabbed in the back by a Swahili cutthroat. He played a bold card and won the trick; for Tregenza knew him to be a dead shot and little suspected that there was no more than a single round in the chambers of Crouch's revolver.

"I give in," said he, at last. "The game's up. To admit defeat is less easy than to profit by success. Since you are master of the situation, it is for you to dictate your terms."

"That is why I'm here," said Crouch. "You yourself have seen something of the Mazitu. I tell you frankly, had you not enlisted the services of bloodthirsty Arab slave-traders, I would never have formed an alliance with Umgobatali. As it is, I would save you from being butchered. Give up this project, deliver into Doctor Cotton's hands what is his by right, and I promise you I will obtain from the Mazitu king, who is my blood-brother, permission for you to pass in safety to the more civilized countries to the south, whence you can find your own way back to England as you like. That is my offer. There is no question of compromise. It rests with yourself whether or not you ever get out of this land alive."

Tregenza made a wry face. He sat in his bath-chair, screwing his lips, his eyes darting here and there as if he were thinking. Then, on a sudden, he shrugged his heavy shoulders.

"I have no choice," said he. "I accept. Still, you must give me time. Clearly, if I must travel by land and not by water, word must be sent at once to the Mazitu to let me pass."

"That shall be done," said Crouch. "I give you my word, and I am prepared to take yours, that our compact will be carried out to the letter. My camp is but half a mile away. To-morrow morning I send a runner south to Umgobatali who is in Chibanda's country."

"Can he be trusted?" asked Tregenza quickly.

"A Kaffir," said Crouch, "would rather die than break the bond of blood-brotherhood. Umgobatali may be a robber, but he is a king."

"Indeed," said the other. "Indeed."

And he went on repeating the word to himself, in a low voice, as if all the time he was thinking of something else.

After a while, he spoke again.

"Captain Crouch," said he, "just now, you called me a bold man; but I am thinking I'm no bolder than yourself."

"We are not here to pay compliments," said Crouch, "but upon a matter of business of no small importance. I demand, as one of my conditions, that to-morrow you pack up whatsoever belongings you think it necessary to take with you to the coast; that you evacuate this settlement, and leave in our hands the *aristolochia* leaves you have already picked."

"You have the whip hand of me," said the other. "I have no choice in the matter. However, you are not wholly reasonable. I shall want three days, at least, in which to prepare for so long a journey. You know yourself, I can expect little hospitality from the natives, until I am far to the south. As it is, we are short of food. Game must be shot, and I must purchase such crops as I can find from a friendly village some distance away."

Crouch shrugged his shoulders.

"I agree to that," he answered. "You may have three days' grace; but, I warn you, to mind your own affairs."

Crouch trusted to the word of honor of a man who was without all sense of obligation; and that was the only mistake he made. And on the morning of the third day, when we looked down upon the settlement, we saw that Tregenza and all his men had gone, taking with them the boxes filled with *aristolochia* leaves. He had fled like a thief in the night.

XXV—Nemesis

CROUCH, in his own account of his interview with Tregenza, had been most emphatic upon the subject of the man's altered appearance. He was no longer white and flabby. His complexion wore a healthy glow, and his eyes were bright and clear. Also, the change in Crake was no less marked. When we had seen him before Makuta's, Crake had been a tooth-shattering, fever-stricken wreck; but, a few weeks later, he had struck Crouch as being almost robust, virile and more active in his movements.

When we discussed this amongst ourselves, it was Doctor Cotton who offered the only possible explanation. Tregenza and Crake had been eating the dried leaves of the *aristolochia;* and this we afterwards discovered to be the truth.

As a matter of fact, they overdosed themselves with a drug which, containing poisonous properties, should be administered with the utmost care. The result of

this was to key up the nervous system to an abnormally high pitch. They were supplied with vitality sufficient to enable them to throw off the fever from which both were suffering; but, at the same time, they were like men over-stimulated to a dangerous degree. They believed themselves to be capable of doing more than was physically possible. Exhilarated to an unusual degree, they were sanguine of success; and moreover, realizing the extraordinary and valuable properties of the drug, they were more determined than ever to steal it.

Doctor Cotton, who had seen his cherished *aristolochia* leaves stolen under our very noses, could not conceal his disappointment, and in regard to the future was most pessimistic.

"We ourselves have prepared the way for the man to escape!" he declared. "Peter travels three days in front of him, procuring for the scoundrel a safe passage through both Makuta's people and the Mazitu. Mark my words, he'll return to England before us!"

Captain Crouch shook his head.

"I believe nothing of the sort," said he. "Remember this, Doctor, we follow in pursuit, and we travel lighter than he. I am prepared to wager, Doctor, that we overtake them before they reach Makuta's."

"If we could follow them down the river, all might be well," said the doctor. "But, how are we to find them? The forest is a wilderness!"

"You forget the sponge," said Crouch. "I propose to go downstream in the canoe as far as the marshland, across which we are bound to strike their tracks. In all probability, we will get there before them. They will not be able to journey more than a few miles a day."

Events, in fact, turned out just as Crouch had predicted. We journeyed rapidly downstream assisted by the strength of the current, and in three days we came to the sponge district north of Makuta's, where we had been so plagued by mosquitoes and frequent attacks of fever.

We camped by night upon the river bank; and the following morning, after hiding our canoe in a safe place, we set forward in a due easterly direction, crossing the sponge at right angles to the course of the river.

It was a perilous journey and by no means a pleasant one. We advanced in single file, Crouch leading, picking his way across the death-trap of a marsh, in the very midst of which we spent a miserable night.

Late in the next afternoon, we reached the other side of the marsh, a woody ridge rising about twenty feet above that water-soaked plain. As we had marched only by day, and had found no trace of Tregenza's party, we were inclined to believe that we had headed him off. One chance remained that the man might still escape from us; it was possible that he had made a wide detour to the east in order to avoid the sponge. This, however, was unlikely, since the Arabs with him must have warned him that the forest that extends toward Lake Nyassa is not only extremely dense and difficult to traverse, but is almost destitute of both inhabitants and food.

For a whole day we remained upon the ridge, glad enough of the rest after a sleepless night. On the afternoon of the second day, both the doctor and myself were sound asleep, when Crouch awakened us both.

"Doctor," said he in a quiet voice, "you may set your fears at rest. Tregenza's as good as caught."

Doctor Cotton, who a moment before had even been snoring loudly, sat bolt upright.

"What do you mean?" he cried.

"Look there," said Crouch, pointing towards the north.

Sure enough, far in the distance, more than a mile away, we saw some white figures issue from the forest and begin to cross the marsh. These were followed, after a brief interval, by a large object which even at that distance we could not fail to recognize as Tregenza's palankeen.

Crouch glanced at the sun.

"Get a move on!" he cried. "There's time before dark to overtake him. Leave

(*Continued from page 41*)

everything in camp but our guns and ammunition."

Again, Crouch led us in single file into the very heart of that steaming marshland. We were in no haste. Caution was the order of the day. It was our object to get as near our enemy as we could before we were seen.

IN the meantime, Tregenza and his Arabs blundered on, walking—though they knew it not—into a very trap. They were in all haste, as we could see, to reach Chibanda's. They must have guessed that we were following in pursuit, though they never suspected that we had already cut them off.

When we were about six hundred yards away, one of the Arabs caught sight of us; and presently I experienced the old sensation of leaden bullets, in quick succession, whistling past my ears. This was enough to tell me that we were in for a hot time, that Tregenza had been wise enough not to throw away his ammunition.

It was a quick, breathless fight. We had the advantage, inasmuch as Tregenza's men had heavy loads strapped upon their backs, and on that account they sank knee-deep in the marsh. On the other hand, they outnumbered us, and we had to be so sparing of ammunition that we fired not one shot to ten of theirs.

The end came quite suddenly by the Negroes who carried Tregenza himself floundering in the marsh. We saw them sink to their waists, cry out in panic; and then, throwing up their hands, they dropped the litter they carried, and scrambling to safety, took to flight.

Seeing their leader in such dire straits, and little suspecting that we were already out of ammunition, the Arabs took to their heels, scattering in all directions and throwing down their loads. Each man had no thought but to save his own life, if he could. And thus it came about that Richard Tregenza was left shamefully to his fate, and found at that most crucial moment but one faithful servant. Crake who was some hundred yards from the litter, at once hastened back to his master's aid. Crouch rushed forward, his boots making a sucking noise in the sponge in which he sank ankle-deep, the black mud squirting upwards at every step.

"Surrender!" he cried. "The game's up! You're a lost man, and you know it."

I was not five yards from Crouch. I saw Tregenza's face, and I have never seen anything more awful. He had always given me the impression of being a man of super-abundant energy and strength, both moral and physical. He was now a Titan, a veritable giant. He was not pale, but purple, in the face. His eyes shone like those of a serpent; and I could see he was trembling in every limb of his body.

His bath-chair was half buried in the mud; and with a superhuman effort he rose to his feet, and staggered towards us like a wounded buffalo.

Almost at once, he went straight into a quagmire. His great weight sank like lead. The revolver he carried in his hand went off, before he flung it away. And then, he came out with a kind of roar, which was the most terrible thing that I have ever heard.

Crake—to do the man full justice—was the first to try to save his master. Tregenza was waist deep in the bog, when Crake himself was caught. He screamed and flung his arms above his head.

"Join hands!" cried Crouch — for, by then, all of our party had hastened to the scene.

We joined hands as he told us, and hauled Crake back to safety.

The man lay upon the ground, panting, smothered to the waist in black mud.

And then there followed an incident which was terrible and tragic. For five minutes, at the least—though it seemed to us an hour—we fought and struggled to save Tregenza from the awful doom that threatened him.

And we struggled in vain. He was in the worst part of the quagmire, and the great weight of the man was far too much for us.

Crouch who was at the end of our line, was chest-deep in the sponge before the end came, and I know that the mud was far above my knees.

We beheld Richard Tregenza buried alive before our very eyes; and I can see now the look of terror stamped upon every feature of his face. Slowly, but surely, he sank by inches, the earth swallowing him up. From the waist to the chest, until at last nought but his horror-stricken face remained in sight. And then that, too, went down. The end was come.

OF the remainder of my story there is little to relate that is not already known to the world. Doctor Cotton's discovery is universally administered by the medical profession, though on account of the recent regulations restricting the sale of poisons, the drug is no longer accessible to the general public. For all that, rightly prescribed, it has proved itself to be everything that Doctor Cotton claimed for it.

As for Richard Tregenza, better for him a thousand times had he never risked life and limb upon an enterprise so dishonest and so dangerous, had he dealt fairly with Doctor Cotton from the first. None the less, the man—great rogue though he was—must be given full credit for the great capacity that was his. It must be remembered that, when he first landed in the continent, he knew nothing of Africa; he knew nothing of the Negro and he could speak no native dialect. Yet he was quick to see that he could never hope for success unless he made friends with the slave-traders. Although Suleiman was a powerful and influential enemy it was Tregenza, and not the Arab, who was the real leader of the great force that opposed us. Had we not joined forces with the Masitu, there is little question that not one of our party would have survived to tell the tale—that I have now concluded.

THE END.

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The Sudden Showman

(*Continued from page 5*)

level eyes that gazed steadily at the world below straight black brows—it was a strong face. And it topped off a spring-steel body that tapered from powerful shoulders to narrow hips and long, sinewy legs.

"I'm adjustor for the Selfridge show—and I own ten per cent of it," Ironley went on casually. "I was here to fix up the legal end of this fight. I tend to all legal matters and arrangements for the show. See this thing here to-day? It was all in the day's work. Go up to the hotel and you'll see the two crews playing cards together this evenin'. To-morrow they'll be fighting again. We won this—got an injunction out against 'em interfering with our boards. Somewhere else they'll beat us—and we'll all stay friends and both sides'll know the other's just waiting to put something over. Enemies to the death in working hours, and friends when the whistle blows. That's show business. Funny, eh?"

Rann grinned—the slow, ever-widening, sunny smile that made his eyes glow and seemed to make his blonde hair lighter and more full of sunshine.

"Yes, suh," he admitted.

"Think you'd like to be a circus man?"

"Yes, *suh!*"

The old man smiled.

"Don't be under illusions. Do you remember what Garibaldi said to his men when he formed his army in Italy, to fight for what he conceived to be right and good for his country? He said something like this: 'I call on you to serve not for glory or honor or for the benefits of the future that may come to you. I call on you to fight against overwhelming odds, to bleed and die and suffer the tortures of the damned; to go barefooted and in rags through hardships that will break most of you. If without thought of honor or gain you want to die with me, come!'

"Getting a man into the circus business is something like that.

"I've been a showman forty-six years. I love the show business. I can't leave it. Thousands of years of tradition are behind it, and it gives happiness and is honorable. But it's hard and it's difficult—your home is a Pullman berth, the money you make very little, the joy of the wandering, adventuring game all that compensates for many things you'll miss.

"You'll be underpaid and overworked, and you'll start at the bottom. As a property boy, probably, working under the big top while the show is on. If you're the man I think you, though, you'll have a chance to learn the game from every angle, with a view of being a manager perhaps when you're ready. If you can work and sweat and love the game for its own sake, I think you've the making of a showman. I'll see to it that you get what you deserve, neither more nor less. You can handle your body and your tongue, stand on your own feet, and have the courage of your convictions. Odds don't daunt you. And the show needs the kind of men of which you have the makings.

"Want to try?"

The old man handled his heavy cane lovingly as he waited. Then he said casually:

"I've gone without food three days in this business—and King Edward of England gave me this cane at a command performance of the old Beeson and Burrage show when it toured Europe. There are two sides—"

"I can stand 'em both, and like it, suh," drawled Rann, his eyes alight and his heart pounding below his peaceful exterior. "When do I join?"

"At Davenport, Iowa, to-morrow. Ready?"

"Right now."

"Come on, and we'll get our tickets. You can have your clothes sent to you. Never mind how you look. You're a showman now!"

Treachery — wild beasts — gangsters — hurricane — these are a few of the obstacles Rann Braden must face to make good with the circus. Thrills a plenty! Learn from forthcoming Rann Braden stories what happens "behind the scenes" at the circus.

Getting Off the Ground

SUPPOSE a flyer—Russ Farrell, for instance—is scheduled for a flight at two-thirty o'clock on a summer afternoon. Just what procedure would the young flyer go through to get into the air?

At about two twenty-five his ship—say it is a standard De Haviland plane—would be on the line, its wheels held by wooden blocks, and its motor turning over slowly in the warming-up process. The crew chief would be in the cockpit, handling the throttle, and one crew man would be holding each wing tip and another one sitting on the tail to keep the ship on the ground when the motor is opened wide.

At this time Russ would be in flying headquarters donning his flying clothes. He'd strap his close-fitting leather helmet under his chin, after putting cotton in his ears, and then put on a big leather coat, or a suit of coveralls. Coveralls button closely around the neck and down the front, and the trouser legs are equipped with a strap to bind them closely around his ankles. This is to prevent their catching in the controls.

Then he'd put on his goggles, strapping the elastic down with little button-straps on the helmet. Probably he'd put on leather gauntlets, and if it was cold or he was going very high he'd wear a chamois face mask.

Then he'd adjust his parachute, putting his arms through the canvas arm straps and buckling the two legs straps around his thighs. This brings the 'chute-pack closely against the backs of his thighs.

Meanwhile the crew chief has been opening the motor wider and wider, testing it out as he warms it, and Russ walks awkwardly to the ship as the mechanic gradually decreases the speed of the motor down to idling.

The crew chief has seen to it that the ship is full of gas, oil and water, and thoroughly ready, but the careful pilot makes his own inspection. As the motor idles along Russ starts his inspection at some given point, like the tail surfaces. He thumps the linen surfaces, examines the tail-skid, tries the rudder and elevators, looks at nuts and bolts to see that they are "safetied" with cotter pins, proceeds to the wings and tries the tautness of landing and flying wires, looks at the places where the struts connect with the wings, watches for cracks in the struts, tries the aileron action and looks at the connections, and goes on around to the motor and drift wires running from nose to wings. The other wings get the same inspection, and thence he goes down the other side of the fuselage briefly and ends up where he started.

THEN the crew chief scrambles out of the cockpit, and Russ climbs in. Seating himself comfortably on his seat-pack—the seat is made low to allow for the pack—he straps over his waist the heavy canvas belt, snapping the big catch and probably securing it by means of a leather or rubber band over the buckle to prevent its snapping open.

This done, he sees that the spark lever is all the way advanced. This lever is on the left side of the cockpit, next to the throttle lever. Then he pulls the stick back with his right hand, out of habit and for additional safety in case the motor should accidentally start at full speed, and starts to survey his instruments while the motor idles. He looks at the thermometer first, probably, and is satisfied if it is between seventy degrees Centigrade and ninety. Then he glances at the tachometer to make sure his propeller doesn't idle too fast. If it did, a landing would take up too much space. He sees to it that his battery is charging with the needle at zero or one—it'll charge more with the motor wide open. Then oil pressure. That should be around ten when idling—not more than twenty-five in full career. Russ sees that his air pressure—which forces the gasoline through the feed-lines—is at least three pounds.

This done, he listens for a moment to the motor. Finding it to be firing perfectly, he tests out each switch. Most motors have double ignition — two complete sets of spark plugs for each cylinder. Finding the motor to be firing without a miss, he snaps off one of the switches, and makes sure that the first set of spark plugs is working perfectly. Then he reverses the two, and tests out the other.

Finding that both sets work, and that either one of them, alone, could fire the motor perfectly, he puts them both "on," and gradually eases forward on the throttle, holding the stick all the way back. Very gradually the motor speed increases, and his eyes sweep ceaselessly from instrument to instrument, watching them at all speeds. At least three or four times, as the tachometer needle crawls from 350 r.p.m., say, to 1600, he tries his switches again, and at every point charging rate, oil pressure and air pressure must correspond to speed.

FOR a moment he holds the motor wide open, as the man on the tail fairly leans against the terrific air blast and those on the wings hold desperately. Then, just as gradually as before, he eases back on the throttle, until the ship is idling again.

As he pulls his goggles down over his eyes; he takes a last look around. Possibly the motor shutters are still closed, to make the motor heat up more quickly. If so, he opens them. He looks at the gas gauge, to make sure he has enough gas. He looks at the dial on the instrument board to make sure it points to "main tank" and that he is not feeding gas from his reserve, or gravity tank. He looks back at his stabilizer, the device which helps to hold a plane steady. Probably he'll turn the stabilizer wheel in the cockpit a bit so that the stabilizer will angle upward to help his climbing. He'll straighten it out after he gets his altitude. A last look at the instruments, a glance backward to see that his passenger is ready, and a last look at himself to see that his belt is all right and the ripcord ring of his 'chute is in a convenient place, and he nods to the mechanics.

The man hops off the tail, and the others release the wings. They grab the wheel-block ropes, and pull the block free.

He wants to turn right toward the field. With the man on that side pulling on the wing to help him around, he opens the throttle as much as is necessary, puts on full right rudder, and the ship turns on a dime. Straightened out for the field, the wing man releases his hold, and with his hand on the throttle Russ gives the ship enough gun to taxy along the ground toward the edge of the field from which he can take off into the wind. He had looked up, as he taxied out, toward the big wind bag, set on top of a hangar, which indicates wind direction.

As he gets toward the edge of the field, he increases his speed. He wants to turn left. He jams on full left rudder, and to help him around more safely uses right aileron by pushing the stick over to the right. The ship turns rapidly, and he brings it to rest facing into the wind.

Right then Russ would take a look into the sky to fix the location of other planes, and to make sure none was landing at the moment. Then a look ahead to make sure that he has a clear field.

Everything is ready. With his left hand he pushes slowly forward on the throttle. His right hand has the stick pushed way ahead, and his right foot is applying a little right rudder to make up for the tendency of the ship to twist in the opposite direction to the rotation of the propeller—called "propeller torque."

With the stick he holds the ship level, tail in the air. His flying instinct tells him when he has picked up flying speed—about 80 miles an hour. He eases back on the stick with infinite delicacy. The D. H. answers, and starts upward in a gradual climb.

Russ is in the air.

Safe by a Hair—and a Grin

By Major A. W. Robins

(Major Robins is a West Point man, transferred to the Air Service at the start of the war. At present he is commanding officer of Wilbur Wright Field, which includes one of the great Air Service supply depots.)

MY most thrilling experience was combined with one of the biggest laughs I ever had, which is quite a fortunate combination, from a flyer's viewpoint.

Major Robins.

I was an army officer in another branch of the service, and transferred to the Air Service when the war opened. My position was unusual—I was executive officer at Park Field at Memphis, Tennessee, at the same time I was learning to be a flyer.

We had several hundred cadets at the field. The life of a flying cadet was not what one might call peaches and cream. The training was both arduous and dangerous at that time, and a very small percentage of men was able to qualify in mental and flying tests, both very severe. Every one of those boys had his heart set on being a flyer, and the knowledge that the slightest slip-up meant discharge as a cadet, and a lost opportunity to be a flyer, worried them all greatly.

I was taking dual instruction with Captain Arthur Richmond, my instructor, at the time this happened. We were flying 'round and 'round the great aviation field, making a landing each time around. There were dozens of other ships carrying instructors and cadets, and some cadets who were flying alone for the first time.

I was flying our ship. We came down the line of hangars, about two hundred feet high. I was picking a clear spot in the field to aim at for my landing. Finding one, I banked the ship, turned its nose toward the field, pulled back the throttle and started into my dive for the landing. A few seconds later, I looked down and saw about ten feet below me another ship gliding for a landing. The cadet in it had not seen me. Suddenly he looked up and saw me. In his surprise at the close proximity of another plane, he lost his head and pulled back on the stick, zooming right into my plane. The most dreaded accident of the air had occurred—a collision.

My thoughts are not very clear about the next few seconds. We immediately started into a spin and crashed. Fortunately we landed on one wing, which broke the fall and both Captain Richmond and myself were unhurt. We climbed from the plane and ran over to the plane flown by the cadet, which had crashed near-by.

As we approached the cadet emerged from the tangled heap of linen, wire and wood. He hadn't been hurt very seriously—a broken nose, and several gashes about the face. Blood was running down his cheeks.

As he saw me, an army officer, and realized who I was he snapped to attention and stammered:

"Sir, I apologize!"

That remark, made the moment after he had escaped death by a whisker, became a byword about the field. It was such a joke that when he was placed before the discharge board for his careless flying the grinning officers gave him another chance, and he turned out to be a fine flyer.

The Combat in the Clouds

(*Continued from page 24*)

for what was ahead. It seemed unfair to follow that wonderful pilot and his down-at-the-heels ship—it smacked of some of the things Roberts had accused him of. Circumstances had conspired to make it appear that he was the whole show. And there was not a drop of conceit in the big pilot's body to make him enjoy the prospect of outdoing the other man, when he had the advantage or forget the little tragedy of which the other man was the victim. Then that pale-faced young fellow, Dan—

Almost savagely Russ jerked back on the stick, then held his ship level for a moment, and finally lifted it in a mighty zoom as his motor bellowed along wide open. Up and up went the over-powered ship, right over the towers of the exhibition building and the hundreds who had poured out of the different displays. It seemed as though the ship would never stop going up at an angle so steep it did not appear possible that it could keep from sliding back on its tail. Ahead was part of the midway and scraggly trees. He must level out, turn, and circle the field for altitude—

At that second the motor sputtered. Instantly Russ leveled out, and his eyes took in the terrain instantaneously. Not a chance to land if the ship did not cut in again.

And it did not. The sputtering became so bad that it did not sound as though more than two cylinders were hitting. In a flash Russ had made one of those split-second decisions on which the life of the flyer so often depends. In a slight dive he turned his ship back toward the field, fighting it for every foot of altitude. As he got it straight, sudden hope surged in his bosom. He had planned to crash on a wing on that widespreading roof—planned that because there was no place within gliding distance where he could land without endangering the lives of other people. In the creed of the airmen, their own safety comes last.

He was heading on a straight line between the towers. The roof came to a point in the middle, and he knew he could not get over that ridge—he did not have altitude enough. But maybe he could save his ship, at that.

Instead of remaining in his shallow dive, he nosed down a bit more, the throttle all the way on, as the crowd watched him fight his sputtering, backfiring motor. As he was about to hit the slightly sloping roof, he used the tiny extra speed to pull back, and bounce on it as the ship started upward. A terrific bounce sent his ship skyward twelve or fifteen feet, and momentarily he was stalled almost directly above the ridgepole. Instantly he nosed down, and started to glide. There was not room enough to pick up flying speed, but under his skillful hand the ship did not bounce off the other side of the roof until it was close to the eaves. Another shock, and again the ship went into the air. The building was high, and the ship did not bounce again. It was only ten feet from the ground before it picked up flying speed, and the taut young pilot floated it over the fence to a safe landing in the race track.

GARRETT, Jackson, and others were running toward him as he landed, but the white-faced Farrell had no time for congratulations. That motor action had been very peculiar, to say the least. Together he and Jackson took out the jets, and the mechanic took a look through them.

"Enough water to drown you!" he stated, and Russ, looking through the needle-like carburetor jets, nodded.

"There was water in that gas—plenty of it. Funny it didn't plug the things, or show some way, before I got off," he said. "Senator Garrett, where did the gas come from?"

"From town, high test, and was strained through chamois into those cans before you came, as we promised," stated the Kentuckian.

Russ was almost ashamed of himself for even thinking of it, but there had been some peculiar facets to the situation, and there was a possibility that had occurred to his excited mind.

"Senator Garrett," he said swiftly, in his excitement talking loud enough so that the crowd, which had broken all bounds, could hear him, "will you please get some more high test gas and a chamois from town? I want to strain the gas in my ship again — and I want some more ready in case anything happens! Does anybody know where Roberts was going when he left here?"

The second he asked it he bit his lip. But then, if anybody did know, it was better to find out now before anything happened.

From the silent, eager listening throng, there leaped a slim figure—Dan, Roberts' friend.

"I know! To Goddard Field to get his ship fixed up!" he said, his voice breaking with excitement and his eyes wild—so wild that Russ looked at him curiously.

"Why are you going to strain your own gas, and why d'yuh want tuh know where Frank is?" gulped the boy, white-faced.

"Because if I find a lot of water in the gas in my ship, I'm going to chase him!" Russ told the boy, and suddenly the flyer's blue eyes were shadowed too. For he was ready to stake everything he knew that the boy was dreading the very thing Russ was driving at.

"Here, now, let's get at this," blustered Senator Garrett as a murmur went through the crowd. They scented something, although they had not heard Russ's half-whispered sentence.

"Don't do that! Why? I —" the boy started, and then his voice rose to almost a scream.

"I filled your gas with water so you couldn't get off the ground!" he raved. "Don't chase Frank—"

"Why, you blankety blank little liar!" roared a raucous voice, and a tall, powerful, foreign looking man pushed his way forward from the crowd. He was dressed in a bathrobe over tights. Immediately Russ realized that he was probably the owner of the acrobatic act.

"You was right in the tent up to the time you heard this here motor goin' and ran out on me!" raved the carnival man. "And I know you didn't do nothing before the 'scrap, and you know it! Now get back—we're due for another show. And what d'yuh mean leavin' the tent—and pretendin' to've done somethin' yuh could not have done just to save that Roberts guy?"

Dan, out of blind loyalty to Roberts, had taken the blame for what his idol

Form Wins Track Meets

HAROLD OSBORN jumps higher than any other man in the world—he has form. So has Frank Hussey, champion sprinter, and "Bud" Houser, California collegian whose weight throwing has been so phenomenal. Every fellow who wants to improve his record in the weights, or the height he can jump, or his time over a quarter, must teach himself the *right* way to leave the ground, to start from a mark, to put a shot. Next month in THE AMERICAN BOY you'll find the pointers that will make it easy for you to do these things. They'll come from J. E. McFarland, author of an article in this issue and coach of the St. John's Military Academy championship teams. McFarland has a novel way of illustrating his suggestions to track men, and his tips will help you, whatever your event. You won't want to miss the article, whether you're a track man or not, for it's jammed with interesting

Tips That Tell How

THE NATION'S SPORTS

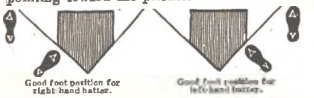
Published by A. G. Spalding & Bros. in the interest of Athletic Sport

HOW TO BAT

A YOUNG ball player should try to face all kinds of pitchers to improve his batting. The slow-ball pitcher customarily uses a curve, and the pitcher with good change of pace always has speed, so the curve pitcher and the pitcher with speed give the player the greatest work to overcome. If the first trials against speed are not successful, never get discouraged. Keep at it until you are positive that speed is something which can be overcome. Never give up.

Position at the Plate.

If you are a right-hand batter a good foot position is one in which your right foot, which will be to the rear of your left foot, will be almost at right angles to the plate. Your left foot will be about twelve or more inches in advance of it, turning at a slight angle toward the diamond, with the toe pointing toward the pitcher.



Good foot position for right-hand batter. Good foot position for left-hand batter.

If you are a left-hand batter a good position is that with your left foot almost at right angle to the plate, the toe turned a trifle toward the pitcher, with the right foot in advance of it, but behind it. The distance behind should not be too far. The batter must feel that his weight inclines him forward rather than backward. The right foot, if you are a right-hand batter, is your pivot foot. The left foot is the leader. The left foot is shifted here or there, as the eyesight is concentrated on the ball which is approaching from the pitcher. The right foot turns on the sole—don't dig your heel into the ground—heel-digging retards your agility—and the lighter you are of foot the better you will be able to shift. Remember that you cannot hope to stand in a rigid position and be a good high-class batter.

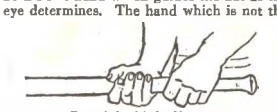
Getting a Quick Start

If you are a left-hand batter, the right foot is the guide and the left foot the starting foot. When you meet the ball you have made some turn toward first base. It may be a quarter or a half turn. It will depend greatly on whether you tapped the ball, took a long swing or a wrist swing. In any event you have the better of the right-hand batter in the fact that all the start you have made is toward first base, with a step less to go. Your position has been that of timeliness as well as correctness, because upon batting the ball you turn immediately and have advanced a full step toward first base.

Gripping the Bat

A naturally easy position for either right-hand or left-hand batter is to grasp the bat, in the case of a right-hand batter, with the left hand a few inches above the end of the handle and the right hand a few inches above the left hand. If a left-hand batter, simply reverse this by placing the right hand a short distance from the handle end of the bat and the left hand above that. This grip gives the batter better control than any which he may assume. If he is a right-hand batter, it is his right hand which will act as the pilot when he attempts to meet the ball. If a left-hand batter, it will be his left hand which guides the bat as the eye determines. The hand which is not the

To Cobb's "handy aspect" grip, which gives him good command of the bat.



Easy grip for right-hand batsman.

pilot hand is an auxiliary to steady the bat. The force to meet the ball is, of course, supplied by the muscles of the arms. These muscles never can act to their best advantage and with the most telling results unless they are properly assisted by the grip of the hands.

(*Continued from page 45*)

had done. Probably he had known that Roberts planned to do it.

In ten minutes the chamois skin, the function of which is to strain any water from the gas, had arrived and had proved that the gas in Russ's ship had been almost one quarter water. The motor had been warm, and the pilot had not run it up further before taking off. The good gasoline in the float chamber had been sufficient to keep the motor going until the takeoff. While the hysterically crying Dan was led off to work, cleared unmistakably in spite of his confession, Jackson and Farrell, working like mad, had filled the ship with the new gas and in twenty minutes from the time they had landed Russ was in the air, flying a beeline for Goddard Field at a hundred and fifty miles an hour.

CONSTANTLY his eyes scanned the sky ahead—it should not take over twenty minutes to overhaul the lumbering Jenny. Evidently the gas had been watered for purposes of revenge, plus the possible opportunity for making additional money. Roberts would have his ship tightened and new control wires put on it over the week end, and then come back. Probably he had some friend at the army field. Had the Curtin crashed, no one could have known the reason for the motor failure. The gas tank would have burst, and all evidence been destroyed.

Finally he caught sight of the other plane—but it was ten miles west, and *not* flying directly up the railroad to Camp Henry, where Goddard Field was. Roberts was not going there.

This complicated matters considerably. As the roaring Curtin overhauled the smaller ship, Russ was wondering what he should do. Perhaps Roberts was trying to get somewhere where he could hide in case of trouble. If he was not going to land at Goddard, but was going to keep on as long as he could fly, it meant hours in the air, flying over those Kentucky mountains—and Russ, aflame as he was, was not the kind of man to wait patiently for what might happen.

He flew up alongside Roberts, throttled, and motioned backward toward Harwoodsville. The other pilot stared, and then motioned derisively with his hand. He did not seem scared at all—was he heading for some landing where he had friends who could attend to Russ and allow Roberts to make good his escape, now that he must be certain that he had been discovered?

Instantly the raging Farrell decided on his course. There were isolated fields below now—he'd ride down that sneering civilian, who'd tried to kill him.

Flying with all the skill the years had given him, the army flyer brought his ship down over the slow Jenny. Inch by inch he came closer, until ten feet back of it he was less than five feet higher. As his Curtin came over the Jenny he nosed down a trifle. They were only two thousand feet high—it wouldn't take so long.

Exultantly he saw the Jenny dive to escape the collision. That had lost his victim some altitude. He could see Roberts' contorted face as he looked back, and a grim smile played around Farrell's tight mouth. Again he tried it, and again Roberts, looking up at the undercarriage above him, had to dive to escape.

Then started the real combat—a combat although it was without guns. The Jenny dived and banked and tied itself in knots to escape the faster ship that was always above it, ever forcing it down. The ships roared all over the sky, but always the Curtin was hurtling down at the Jenny, and always Russ held his nerve and never wavered—and made the Jenny dive out of the way. And every inch of altitude lost by the slow ship was lost forever—its ninety horsepower motor could not regain it quickly enough.

Head stuck over the side, the blue eyes holding a cold flame in their depths, Russ rode his opponent down. At eight hundred feet Roberts gave up the unequal struggle, and went into a straight dive for a large stubble field. Russ thankfully eased up on his bellowing motor, and followed him.

As Russ landed, Roberts was waiting and ran swiftly toward the Curtin. He stood beside the ship as it came to a stop, and there was murder in his eyes. Above the whisper of the idling motor, he shouted:

"Before I make you into mince-meat, what do you—"

"So you'll put water in my gas, and make me miss killing myself and about twelve innocent bystanders—"

"Atkinson!" roared Roberts, and suddenly the menacing fists and crouched body straightened. "Let me in this ship, and fly me back to the murdering hound! He did it, did he?"

Russ leaped out of the cockpit.

"What are you talking about?"

He was interrupted by the big civilian, who now talked more slowly and collectedly. It was a brief tale. Atkinson had wanted him to put water in the army ship's gas, for two reasons: revenge, and because the fair committee had promised the lucky contestants in the ticket selling contest that if for any reason the army ship could not take them up, the committee would spend the five hundred dollars necessary to hire flights in the civilian ship—if the plane was pronounced okay for flying. That was just five hundred extra—if they fixed up the plane. And the carnival had done poor business for weeks, and in Harwoodstown had been denied the use of their crooked gambling wheels and other shady means through which they made most of their money. So Atkinson had been desperate when the use of the ship had been stopped. And Roberts himself had been almost beside himself—he supported a mother and sister, and had been able to send them nothing for nearly two weeks. He had been on his way to Frayley, Ohio, where a friend of his who also ran a passenger carrying plane had some spare parts. He was going to try to buy new controls, and also tighten up his ship preparatory to returning to Harwoodstown. He had thought of going to the army field, but had given up the idea.

"I will say that Atkinson didn't figure you'd ever get off the ground or take any chance of killing yourself," he stated. "But I bawled him out for even thinking of that dirty work. He's a tough oyster—a guy that rules with fists and double-crossing. I'll cook his goose!"

"What about Dan?"

"The young hot-head! I told him about it, just to point out to him what a rotten gang he was working for and trying to persuade him to get out of it. Pretty white of him, wasn't it?"

"And maybe we can do something for him," said Russ, his face one wide grin now. He had been wrong about Roberts and was tickled to death to find out that the tanned flyer was on the level. "He's in love with flying, isn't he? Well, he can enlist at Wilbur Wright Field, near Dayton, and I'll see to it that he gets flying lessons. He'll be a lot better off. As for you—I've never seen a better man on a Jenny, and if you can fly other ships that way I know about fourteen civilian airplane companies building ships for the army that'll jump at a test pilot like you! Now let's go!"

The transfigured pilot leaped into the back cockpit, forgetful of his own ship, and thirty minutes later they were back on the carnival grounds. Before the crowd could gather they were safely secluded in the office—and Atkinson was already there. Senator Garrett had figured that the owner was probably an accomplice, and had been quizzing him, without success.

And he refused to weaken under the searing indictment of Roberts—even when Roberts proved an alibi and he, Atkinson, could not. Senator Garrett took Russ and Roberts to one side and whispered:

"We can arrest this bullet-headed, hard-boiled egg, but there's nothing but circumstantial evidence against him—and we couldn't convict him."

Russ thought a minute. Then he said: "I'll tell you what we could do. We could make a lot of trouble for him by arresting him, making him put up bail, and bringing him back. How about making him buy out Roberts' half of the ship—and letting him go free?"

He explained the pilot's financial condition, and then asked directly:

"Are you satisfied of Roberts' innocence—and Atkinson's guilt?"

(*Continued on page 48*)

Membership Drive

for the

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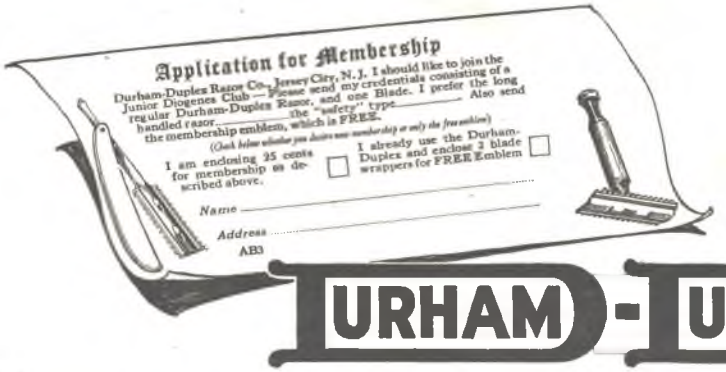
Diogenes was an old Greek philosopher who traveled for centuries with his quaint lantern, in search of an Honest Man. At last, after traveling all over the earth, Diogenes found his honest man making the famous Durham-Duplex Blades—The Blades Men Swear By—Not At. But then he was out of a job, so the Durham-Duplex Razor Co. asked Diogenes to take his lamp and search for men who want an Honest Shave. And now the old philosopher is joining all these men into a giant organization called the Diogenes Club, with more than 13,000,000 smiling members already.



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The Blades Men Swear By-Not At

The Combat in the Clouds

(*Continued from page 46*)

"Thoroughly! We all are!" responded the senator heartily.

"Will that money fix you up, Roberts?"

"Fine! And we won't be even rookin' Atkinson, either, and he'll be lucky."

The stocky, shifty-eyed carnival man accepted the proposition immediately, and there was relief in his harsh countenance as he forked over two hundred and fifty dollars.

"I'll fly you up so that you can get the ship back here," Russ told Roberts. "Well, I've got to get to work flying these prize-winners. Stick around, and leave for Dayton when I do. I know you'll get a job all right—they're always after the army test pilots to get out and take a good salary testing for some factory. Do you think the kid'll like the prospect of lessons in the army?"

"Will he—I'll tell him now and you can see!"

About two hours later Russ saw. He went to watch the show in which Dan was performing for the last day. The blonde youth spotted him with Roberts, and threw a grin of pure happiness at them. Then he worked off his exultation by the fastest series of back flips Russ had ever seen.

Russ turned to Roberts and grinned:

"He ought to make a flyer! He can do more stunts on the ground than we can in the air!"

William Jackson, Indian Scout

(*Continued from page 16*)

bands, Robert suddenly called to us to stop, and pointing to a big, black-and-white pinto in it, cried: "That one, there, surely it is Uncle Three Sun's pinto buffalo horse!"

It was; there was no mistaking it, though it was miserably thin and its back was raw. We then saw that all of the other horses of the band were in like condition, and we recognised two more of them; there could be no doubt that they were all Pikuni horses that had been recently stolen, and ridden bareback all the way down from our far country.

"They shall not keep my uncle's buffalo horse. I am going to take it, right now!" Robert fiercely exclaimed.

"You will not! Are you crazy? Stop! Put that rope back on your saddle!" cried our mother.

We had not noticed that there was a herder with this band. He had been lying in the sagebrush, a little way out from the opposite side of the grazing animals; but as Robert unfastened his lariat and set wide the noose in it, the man got up, rifle in one hand, with the other holding the corner of his wrap across his face so that it was all concealed below the eyes. He was tall and powerfully built; a grim, menacing figure, standing there glaring at us. He had seen, of course, that we recognised the horses that he was guarding. There could be no doubt that he would shoot if Robert attempted to rope one of them.

Again our mother said to Robert: "Put up that rope!" And as he obeyed, she started on up the bottom and we close followed her, angry enough that we were powerless to recover for our uncle, for our people, the horses that had been taken from them.

Said Robert: "That man is not a Yanktonnais! Although he concealed his face, I am almost sure that he is one of the party that we fought at Round Butte."

"He has made me terribly uneasy! Let us turn about, go home," said our mother, bringing her horse to a stand. But Robert and I were eager for the ride, for the day out in the breaks; we had our way about it, and went on. As we rounded the point of timber we looked back and saw the herder driving the band of horses in toward the camp.

It was near noon when we again turned from the bottom up into the breaks and following an old trail up a bare ridge, found in the coulies upon either side of the ridge, plenty of trees loaded with fruit. We rode into the right hand coulie, tethered our horses, and began stripping branches that we could easily reach, putting the fruit into sacks.

We had about half-filled our sacks, when a coyote came tearing through the brush from the east, ran between Robert and me without noticing us, went on to the top of the ridge, paused, looked apprehensively back, and went on out of our sight. We knew that only the sight or scent of man could cause a coyote to flee as that one had. Robert snatched up his rifle, told us to remain where we were, and started up the slope of the ridge. Without a word to one another, Mother and I followed him. We overtook him in the upper edge of the brush, and from there all three carefully looked over the breaks to the east; there was nothing moving on any of the ridges, the parts of them that we could see.

"It is likely that some Yanktonnais, somewhere off there gathering fruit, frightened the coyote," I said.

"Yes. They scatter out up in the breaks every day to gather it; their women will do no camp work until they strip the very last patch of trees," our mother agreed.

"Oh, well, we will chance it, let's go back and finish our work," said Robert. However, we had gathered but a little more of the fruit when he tossed his sack to me, took up his rifle, and started off east through the brush, saying to us as he went: "I feel uneasy. I am going to have another look at the country." He disappeared, but a little later we saw him, over the tops of the brush, climb upon hands and knees to the crest of the bare ridge to look over it. We watched him for a minute or two, and then, as he did not move, gave no sign of having discovered anything alarming, we turned to strip a fresh tree of its dead ripe plums.

Time passed. We had stripped the lower branches of the tree, and I was bending down a high branch so that my mother could reach it, when we heard Robert shout: "Enemies! Enemies coming! Quick! Get on your horses!"

As we turned to run to them, I saw him pointing up to the head of the breaks, and then running to join us. I untied his horse, turned to help my mother; she was trying to fasten her half-filled sack of plums to her saddle. "Drop it!" I cried.

"No! I've worked hard for those plums! I just will not—"

"You will leave them!" I broke in, tossed the sack aside, forced her up into the saddle. Then, as I was mounting my horse, Robert came tearing through the brush and sprang upon his animal, saying to us as he gasped for wind: "Five of them! They were sneaking down upon us until they saw that I had discovered them; now they are coming fast. Quick! Follow me!"

Chapter VIII

THE horses that we had borrowed were lazy and slow gaited; we had great difficulty in making them break into a lope up the steep side of the ridge; the one our mother rode was not only slow but mean; every time she quirted it, it humped its back and kicked out with both heels. I got close up and with all my strength lashed it with the end of my tie rope until it was glad enough to close follow Robert's horse. As we neared the crest of the ridge, we saw the enemy coming down it, five of them riding fast. We turned into the old trail, went down it as fast as we could, and soon saw that the enemy was gaining on us.

Robert cried back to our mother: "You go on as fast as you can! Brother and I will stop and stand them off, and then follow on."

"No. If you stop, I shall too," she replied.

"But you have the slowest horse! Our only chance of escape is for you to do as he says!" I cried.

"Well, I'll go on, but oh, do be careful!" she replied. And at that Robert and I quickly dismounted and made ready to fire at the enemy, by that time no more than three hundred yards from us and coming fast. Then for the first time, the appearance of the leader of the five struck me as familiar; even at that distance there was no mistaking his painted wrap. "Ha! The herder of this morning! Stealer of our people's horses!" I exclaimed.

"Yes! We must get him! Do your best!" Robert replied.

We fired again and again as fast as we could work the levers of our rifles and brought down two horses. By that time the three remaining riders were within two hundred yards of us. Above the crack! crack! crack! of our rifles, we heard their leader, one of the men now on foot, shouting to them; they suddenly swerved from the crest of the ridge off into the brush and timbered coulie to the east of it, and from there fired at us as we sprang upon our horses and went on down the trail. Before we overtook our mother, they were on the bare ridge across from us, swiftly going down it with the intention to head us off.

"How is it—what did you do?" our mother asked, after making sure that we were unhurt.

"Only shot two of their horses, bad luck!" I replied, as Robert forged on to the lead crying, "Now then, we have to ride faster than ever. Do your best, Mother! Lash her horse, Brother! Keep lashing it!"

Over on the other ridge, the three riders gradually drew abreast with us, and then took an ever widening lead that, we feared more and more, would enable them to reach the bottom land long before we could get to it; were they to do so, they could turn up onto our ridge and doubtless ambush us. But again luck was with us. A quarter of a mile below, the ridge on our right was petering out, ending in a deep narrow coulie coming in from the northeast, and there, and above and below that point, the bottom of the main coulie was a cutbank wash of great depth that they could not cross. That they were going on at full speed was proof enough that they were not familiar with the lay of the land and therefore were not members of the Yanktonnais tribe. They were, some of them, members of the Uncpapa war party that we had fought at Round Butte. That is what we told one another when we saw them suddenly halt and look down upon the cut coulies that blocked their way. As one man, they slipped down off their horses and began firing at us, and we quartered off down the west side of our ridge out of their sight, and went on. When we again topped it, and looked back, they were trailing up to rejoin their two comrades whom we had set afoot.

A couple of hours later, when we arrived home and told of our adventure, we created no little excitement. A couple of soldiers went to the fort with the tale, and the commander ordered out the Ree scouts and a company of mounted infantry to go in search of the hostiles. But they returned to the fort at midnight without having seen anything of the enemy.

THE next morning about ten o'clock, Bloody Knife came into the post and said to us, Mr. Larpenteur interpreting: "Well, Pikuni friends, yesterday you again met two of your Uncpapa enemies, Black Elk and Fox Eyes. But perhaps you recognized them?"

"We suspected that some of them were the men we had fought at Round Butte," Robert replied.

"Had I been home, you would not have met them," Bloody Knife went on. "Early yesterday morning, our soldier chief sent us on discovery down the river, and soon after we left a certain one came from the Yanktonnais camp to tell me that Black Elk, Fox Eyes, and three others had arrived in the night with a band of horses that they had taken from the Pikuni—"

"We saw the horses! The man herding them had a painted leather wrap! He held a corner of it across his face and stared at us, his eyes like fire!" my mother interrupted.

Bloody Knife laughed. "Yes," he continued, "I know all about it; my good friend of the camp up there found me at home this morning. That herder was Black Elk himself. He saw that you recognized the horses, but did not believe that you knew him, as he carefully concealed his face.

"As soon as you three went on up the bottom, Black Elk drove his stolen herd in close to the camp, went to his friends, resting in a certain lodge, told them to get ready to go with him to trail and kill you; he invited the man of the lodge and several other Yanktonnais to go along and take part in the killing. They refused, they were afraid of the soldiers here, but they wished him and his men success in going after your scalps."

"But they did not get them!" Robert exclaimed. Then, little by little—Mr. Larpenteur still interpreting—Robert told how we had succeeded in escaping from the enemy.

When he had finished, Bloody Knife looked us over very soberly, and finally said: "Let this be a warning to you never again to go by yourselves out in the breaks of the valley, nor even up and down this great bottom. Black Elk and his men will come up here again, and again, and again, to try to waylay you. Be careful, my friends, be careful."

"You are very good to us. We take your warning," my mother replied.

No longer allowed to play with the Yanktonnais boys up in their camp, Robert and I frequented more and more the quarters of the Ree scouts in the fort and became very friendly with them, particularly with Bloody Knife. In September, some of his relatives came to visit him and gave him two good horses, which he at once gave to us. Our father then got for us from the quartermaster of the fort two condemned Army saddles and bridles, and we began riding with the scouts when they went out upon their rounds.

By the time that winter came, we had decided upon our life vocation: we were going to be Army scouts. On a bright December afternoon, carefully washed and in our best clothes, we went to the fort, asked for audience with the commandant, and were ushered into his quarters, where we found him smoking and chatting with several of his officers. He asked what he could do for us, and smiled when Robert replied that we wanted to scout for his command. We were not a little surprised when he asked us for our names—we had thought that, seeing us about almost every day, he well knew who we were. And then, when we had given them, one of his officers explained that we were the boys who, with our mother, had escaped from Black Elk and his party of Uncpapas when they had attacked us one day in the past summer.

"Oh, yes. I remember. That was good, brave work that you did. But of course you are too young to enlist. Three or four years from now, come to me again about it and very likely I can take you on," he told us.

At that, Robert replied that, while we were young, we had had more than one fight with enemies, and so could do as good work for him as any of his Ree scouts. That interested him, and in reply to his questions, and others by his younger officers, we gave a pretty good account of ourselves, of our trapping life along the Rockies with our grandfather, Hugh Monroe, our great-uncle, the great Pikuni chief, Three Suns, and finally our fight at Round Butte. And when we had finished, Chief Constable exclaimed: "Would that I could write! How the boys in the States would enjoy reading the story of these youngsters' lives, just as they have told it to us!"

"They come of good fighting stock," said another.

"Yes," the commandant, Colonel Gilbert, agreed. He turned to us: "I wish that I could enlist you but I don't dare do it, at your age. Positively, I cannot do it."

"But you don't object to our riding out with your scouts, now and then?" said Robert.

(*Continued from page 49*)

"Glad to have you go with them, if your father and mother are willing," he replied.

AT this time, the Sioux tribes below were quiet, the Yanktonnais were away to the south hunting buffalo, and the scouts were doing no riding, other than to hunt deer in the vicinity of the fort. That was tame sport to Robert and me, but better than being shut up in the trading post; so we often went with them on their hunts.

Although Mr. Larpenteur and the Northwest Company, too, were licensed traders on the Fort Buford reservation, they were notified in January of 1871 to wind up their affairs and leave the reservation, as Congress had passed a bill allowing but one sutler to each military reservation, and Alvin Leighton had been appointed sutler at this place. This was a sad blow to our good friend; he wilted under it. But with all his troubles, he had our welfare in mind. In the spring, when the new sutler, Mr. Leighton, arrived on one of the first steamboats of the season, our good friend went to him and induced him to give our father employment as one of his clerks. When Robert and I learned that good news, we ran as fast as we could go to our Ree scout friends, to tell them that we were to remain at the fort. A few days later, despondent and sick, Mr. Larpenteur and his family embarked upon a down river boat, for a farm that he had in Iowa, and we never saw him again. He died in the following fall, as my father said, of grief.

Came the spring of 1873, and with the arrival of the steamboats enroute to Fort Benton, we heard that the railroad, then running from St. Paul to Bismark, was to be built farther west, and that surveyors were soon to look out a route for it across the plains to the Yellowstone. This was good news to the officers and men; it meant, they said, the settlement of the country and the end of troubles with the Indians. But Bloody Knife declared that it meant the beginning of real war with the Sioux tribes, the Cheyennes, and probably others; they would, he said, fight to the best of their ability to keep the whites out of the only buffalo country that they had left.

We learned, too, that the Seventh Cavalry, under the command of General Custer, was now at the new Army post, Fort Abraham Lincoln, situated a few miles below Bismarck, and that this regiment would furnish the escort for the railroad builders with, perhaps, several of the companies of Infantry at our post.

More than ever, Robert and I were eager to enlist with the scouts and take part in this field work. Our old friends of the Seventh Infantry had been replaced by six companies of the Sixth Infantry, under Lieutenant Colonel Hazen, and as he barely knew us, we feared that he would not take us on; we realized only too well that our age and our appearance were against us: Robert was only nineteen, I seventeen, and we were, though fairly tall, of very slender build. So, after much talk, and without mentioning our plan to our father and mother, we got Bloody Knife and Frank Girard—old-time fur trader and now post interpreter—to go with us to the commandant and talk for us. They did it so well that he at once replied that with the consent of our parents, he would enlist us. We hurried home and told our father what we had done, asking him to go with us to the commandant, and tell him that he would let us enlist. He stared at us, frowning, and replied, shortly: "No! That is too dangerous work for you youngsters!"

We then went to our mother, and after she had heard our plea, she stood for some time in deep thought, then called our father in. "Thomas," she said to him, very solemnly, "the wild blood that is in these boys, blood of Hugh Monroe and his fighting Scotch ancestors, blood of generations of Pikuni warriors, that blood is not to be denied: you will go now, right now, to Colonel Hazen and tell him that they may join his scouts."

"No. You know as well as I do, that they are too young," he replied.

"Young they are, but of much experience; they are fully able to do scout work—you know that they are."

"But think of the danger of it."

"I do. But they will survive it. That I know. With the powerful helper that I have, with my prayers to protect them, they will make their way all right! Go, now, do as I say."

"Well then, as you say, Amelie. You always have your way," he muttered and told us to follow him. As we left the room, we heard our mother begin, with trembling voice, the song of Ancient Coyote, our sacred helper. And at that, we went sort of trembly in our legs, and did not get over the weakness until we again stood before the commandant, and were enrolled as United States Army Scouts.

That night we slept in the scouts' quarters in the fort. So began a new life for us.

Chapter IX

WHEN we awoke soon after dawn, we wondered for a brief moment where we were, and then remembered: we were in the scouts' quarter in the fort, we were ourselves scouts. We sprang up and dressed and washed, and joined the others at breakfast, which their women had cooked. Bloody Knife, leisurely slivering and eating the meat of a boiled buffalo boss rib, thoughtfully looked us over and said: "Yes. You two White-Blackfeet, you are now white soldiers' scouts, but only half-scouts: to be complete, you must have, each of you, at least three horses, a many shot pistol, water can, and several blankets. The horses you will have to buy; the other things will be issued to you by the Army store man. You should get all these things as soon as possible, for we may be ordered any day now to go with the soldiers out upon the plains."

Our friend's advice was law to us; we hastily ate our meat and hard bread, and ran home and asked our father to buy the horses for us, and he made no objection. We got within an hour four good ones from a band of Red River half-breeds who had just come in to trade their furs, and so, with the horses that our Ree friends had previously given us, we now each had three good mounts. We then went to the quartermaster of the fort and got the accoutrements that we needed.

On this very day that we completed our outfit, the steamboat *Far West* arrived, with General Forsyth and other officers, and took on board the officers and men of two companies of our post for an exploration of the Yellowstone River. If found to be navigable, steamboats were to take up it supplies for the troops that were to accompany the surveyors for the railroad.

We soon learned that the *Far West* had brought orders for us scouts to embark on the first down river boat and go to Fort Lincoln, where we were to join the military escort that was to start west with the railroad surveyors. That was good news; exciting news.

Day after day, we scouts kept our horses close to the fort, our outfit in readiness, and one afternoon, about a week after the departure of the *Far West* for the Yellowstone, the steamboat *Luella* arrived from Fort Benton.

Bloody Knife and the other scouts had several times traveled on steamboats, but to Robert and me this was a new and thrilling experience. We marvelled at the swiftness with which we glided down the stream. We spent long hours up on the hurricane deck, rifles in hand, scanning the shore of the river, the bottoms and slopes of the valley, longing for sight of some war party sneaking out to attack us, but none appeared.

When darkness came, the boat was tied to the bank of the river, a watch was set, and the night passed without incident. At dawn, we were under way again, and eventually we arrived at Fort Lincoln.

Soon after our arrival, all of us scouts were ordered to report to Fort Rice, a small post a few miles below, from which the expedition was to start. When we arrived there, we learned that the famous Seventh Cavalry, then enroute to the fort, was to form the main part of the escort. There were more Ree scouts at Fort Rice, and as soon as we arrived at their quarters, Bloody Knife had a long talk with them, and then, looking very solemn, he said that he was going to talk with the chief of the fort, General Stanley. When

he returned, Robert and I asked what was troubling him, and he shortly replied:

"Sitting Bull has sent messengers to all the Sioux tribes, and the Cheyennes, and Arapahoes, asking them to meet him and his band up in the Elk River (Yellowstone) country, to take with them all the cartridges that they can get, and help him wipe out the soldiers and prevent the railroads being built up into that great buffalo country. My friends, maybe we are going to have soon one big fight."

In touch with the overland advance of the Seventh Cavalry were three steamboats, the *Key West, Far West,* and *Peninah,* carrying supplies for the regiment, and the wives of some of the officers. We had heard much about the bravery of the commander of the Seventh, General Custer, and eagerly looked forward to his arrival. The Seventh arrived near night; so we did not get to see him until the next day, when the regiment was paraded.

"Hey, Bill! Let's hang around and catch the worms that are boring all these holes!"

When he appeared, riding a horse of great beauty and wonderful spirit, the Ree scouts one and all clapped hands to mouth and gave quick exclamations of pleased surprise, for they saw that he wore a fringed buckskin coat, fringed buckskin trousers, boots with red leather tops, and a wide brimmed soft hat, instead of the regulation officer's uniform. He rode his spirited horse with grace and ease. His yellow curly hair hung down almost to his shoulders.

Bloody Knife, standing beside me, exclaimed: "That long, yellow-haired one, he is a real chief; of all white chiefs, the greatest chief!"

From that moment the scouts fairly worshipped him, were eager to carry out his every command. Right there they named him Long-yellow-hair Chief, which they soon abbreviated to Long Hair. In the evening of that day, General Custer sent for Bloody Knife, and had a long talk with him—my brother interpreting—about the hostile Sioux, and their probable location up in the Yellowstone country; and from that time, of all the Indian scouts with the Seventh Cavalry, Bloody Knife was always the general's favorite one.

With the arrival of General Custer and his regiment, preparations were hurriedly made for the start west to the Yellowstone, and on June 20, we left Fort Rice. In all, we numbered 80 officers and nearly 1500 enlisted men, and scouts. The three steamboats left the fort at the same time that we did, with supplies that they were to deliver to us somewhere up the Yellowstone.

The railroad surveying party had started some days before, and now General Custer, with his Seventh Cavalry and some of us scouts, pushed on ahead of the Infantry and supply train to overtake them, which we did some distance east of Heart River.

Of all the men of this expedition, we scouts were, in our own estimation anyhow, the most fortunate, for, instead of riding in the line of the column under the scrutiny and the orders of the officers, we were free to scatter out and keep well in the advance of the cavalry. So it was that, while keeping a sharp lookout for signs of the Sioux, known to be gathered in large numbers somewhere ahead, we had plenty of time to hunt.

ABOUT three weeks after leaving the fort, we came to the edge of the badland slopes of the Yellowstone valley, and there, leaving the main column, General Custer, with two of his companies and some of us scouts, set out to find a route by which the wagon train could be brought down to the river and then to find the supply steamboat, *Key West,* which had been ordered to remain in the Yellowstone, as aid to the expedition. We marked out a good trail for the wagons, down through the badlands to a well-timbered bottom of the river, and then, leaving one of his companies there, General Custer went down the valley with the other company, and us scouts, in search of the steamboat. We found it at the mouth of Glendive Creek, at which place the other two boats had unloaded their cargoes, and then gone back down river. We all got aboard the *Key West,* went back to the point where the other company of cavalry awaited us, and that evening we were joined by the rest of the cavalry, and by the main column on the following morning. There we rested for a few days, while the steamboat was bringing up the cargoes of the *Far West* and *Peninah* from Glendive Creek.

When all the supplies had been boated up from the mouth of Glendive Creek, the *Key West* ferried the expedition across the river and the survey for the railroad was continued on this, the west side of the Yellowstone. A strong escort accompanied the surveyors in the valley; the wagon train with the infantry and several companies of cavalry traveled out on the plain just back of the valley slopes; and General Custer, with the remainder of the cavalry and several of the scouts, went well in the advance, looking out the best route for the wagons.

Now, more than ever, we scouts kept sharp watch for signs of the Sioux, for Bloody Knife was more than ever insistent that they were somewhere ahead of us in great numbers and that they would use all their cunning to make a surprise attack upon the troops. When we were almost opposite the mouth of Powder River, two scouts reported that they had found fresh trail of six horses up in the breaks of the valley. They were sure that these riders had seen us, and that they had gone on up river to warn their camp.

We moved on up the valley, and on the 4th of August, near the mouth of Tongue River, General Custer and about one hundred of his cavalrymen, riding in advance as usual, met the surprise attack foretold by Bloody Knife. As they were resting in a small grove at noon, a half-dozen mounted Sioux appeared right in the grove and attempted to round up their horses and drive them off. These daring warriors were trying to draw Custer's men on to the place where a large body of Sioux waited in ambush. When the ruse failed, some three hundred Sioux dashed out of cover and came charging down the valley, shouting their terrible war cry.

But Custer and his men defeated them, and that without the loss of a single one of Custer's men. Two white men were lost, however. While the fight was going on, the Sioux had discovered two white men coming up the valley, and had killed them. The men were Doctor Honzinger, the veterinary surgeon, and Mr. Baliran, the sutler of the Seventh Cavalry. Heedless of the warnings of the scouts, they had frequently set out by themselves to overtake General Custer and his men, and had done so once too often.

Four days later, some sixty miles farther up the valley, the scouts found the trail of a large camp of the Sioux that had gone on up the river, and when the expedition came up, General Custer obtained permission from General Stanley to take four squadrons of the Seventh Cavalry and all of the scouts and follow the trail, which was about two days old. After we had had our supper, seven days' rations were issued to us, and late in the evening we saddled up and went on, well knowing that, somewhere ahead, we were in for a big fight.

(To be continued in the April number of THE AMERICAN BOY.)

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How often you have asked yourself that question!

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The Man Who Fought for Gold

(Continued from page 7)

One day, McLeod and Barto being busy at the wood pile, Lyfe, alone in the shack, must have placed his own hungry hands upon the gold. Perhaps he started picking up the bags and hefting them in his hands, guessing at the weight of each tight little sack of rawhide. Then, it may be, a passion took possession of him, and he began taking up one after another, handling them with frenzied fervor, avidly desirous of having each and every sack in his two hands—turned them over and over, tore open one after another, and bathed his hands in the golden gravel they contained. However all this may have been, he was found upon the floor, fairly wallowing in a fortune of loose, yellow gold. Found by another of the three crazed gold seekers.

This is what happened, as Renfrew patched it together:

Outside, it occurred to Barto, as he stood brandishing the ax above his head, while McLeod stooped near-by, lugging the heavy wood to the chopping block—it occurred to Barto how easily he might let slip one of his great blows, and split the skull of McLeod just as he split the crisp and frozen billets of wood. And McLeod, looking quickly up, must have seen something in the black man's face which betrayed what was in his mind, for he stood suddenly erect, and then, without a word, but with a face as white as the snow, he wheeled and hurried into the shack. He flung open the door and came as suddenly as that upon Lyfe, with the gold piled up about him.

Poor McLeod let out a cry of anger, of horror and of fear, and Lyfe, off his guard, sprang up with a curse to meet the other's attack; for the frenzied McLeod leapt at his unwelcome guest like a madman.

Barto, who had continued with his wood chopping while his mind worked fast upon the query of whether McLeod had read his murderous thought or not, heard McLeod's cry, heard Lyfe's cursing, and heard the crash which the two bodies made as McLeod hurled himself upon Lyfe and bore him to the floor. Barto, flinging his ax aside, leaped for the cabin door.

When McLeod leaped upon him, Lyfe went down among the gold bags, with the other man's hands at his throat. Immediately Lyfe grasped McLeod's body in a bear hug with one arm, while he twisted his other arm behind him, reaching for his knife. His fingers closed upon the hasp of it, and he whipped it out, drawing back his arm for the thrust. At that instant Barto sprang forward, and before the knife plunged home, he had whipped the body of McLeod out of Lyfe's embrace, flung the little miner to the other side of the room, and picked Lyfe up to shake him like a child until the knife clanged to the floor.

"Ah!" cried the black man in disgust. "You are like children!"

Lyfe cursed at him with a passionate fluency, and McLeod picked himself up, dazed. Then there was a moment of silence. Barto found himself gazing fascinated at the gold that littered the whole floor of the little shack. He looked up and saw them standing there—staring at him.

"Are you going to leave—it—like this?" he asked. And he was conscious, as Lyfe, too, doubtless was conscious, of the fact that he had looked upon the gold for over long.

"Get out and chop that wood!" growled Lyfe suddenly; and he fell on his knees, gathering up the scattered gold, sweeping it up as a man might sweep up an accumulation of dust on his parlor floor. McLeod came over and helped him.

"Go on," he said to Barto. "Go on out and chop that wood."

Barto went out and chopped the wood, occasionally, however, feigning errands that took him past the cabin window; and all that afternoon McLeod and Lyfe sat together with bowed heads, restoring the gold to its bags and sewing them up.

AT supper time the three sat down to a silent meal, which was served only because Barto had prepared it without regard for their preoccupation. They had nearly finished supper when McLeod suddenly pushed back his chair and started up with an expression of desperate resolution.

"You have gone too far, Lyfe!" he cried. "It's all over, now!"

Lyfe leaned back in his chair and stared at McLeod as if the miner had gone crazy.

"What're you talking about?" he demanded.

"It's mine!" cried McLeod, in a tense and high-pitched voice. "Mine! All mine! Mine, and my boy's! You haven't got a share or a right in it! Every grain of that gold belongs to me!"

He paused for an instant and gulped, as though his words choked him. Then, forestalling Lyfe who, his face scarlet with anger, would have interrupted, he rattled on:

"I starved for it! Grovelled for it in the dirt! I ate dirt, and worked like a dog 'til I found it! Then I worked like a dog to pan it out! Like a dog! And I'd do it again for the boy! It's his! For him! His only! His alone! That little kid of a boy! And you won't have it, because to-morrow I take it down to the bank, Lyfe, and you don't get a shred of it! Not a grain of it!"

It was Lyfe who leaped to his feet, then.

"I don't, don't I?" he swore. "You little miser, you! You little rat-faced thief! Do you think you can hold back from me what's mine by right of good money? Do you suppose I can't break you with my two hands, and take your dirty gold to the last grain of dust? Who is it you think you're dealing with?"

"Barto!" cried McLeod; and hope flooded his eyes, his voice. "That's who I'm dealing with! And when you speak of breaking a man, it's him *you've* got to deal with, too! I can depend on Barto! The boy can depend on Barto! And the two of us play together. Together we're protecting this gold for the kid, and together we're taking it to Nome in the morning. When will you start to break us, eh?" He snarled into Lyfe's dark, furious face.

Lyfe, whose anger had nearly had him at the other's throat, drew back at that, and he turned, ever so slightly, to face Barto who stood at the stove behind his left shoulder. Lyfe gazed at him curiously; and Barto stood there, staring into Lyfe's angry eyes. You can picture the giant black man standing there as if he had been carved from granite—like an ancient idol, filled with the sombre and unyielding mystery of the jungle.

"Barto," murmured Lyfe, as though to himself. Then he burst out with a rasping bellow of sound, as though to force into speech the graven image which stood so darkly regarding him.

"Is that true?" he roared. "Are you two lined up against me? Are you going to Nome with him in the morning?"

Barto looked at his employer. McLeod was gazing at him with a mute and unmistakable appeal.

"Answer me!" roared Lyfe. "Answer me!" That seemed to be all he could say, although in his eyes was a depth of passionate anger.

"Yes!" said Barto. And the booming dignity of his great voice must have filled the little cabin like the utterance of an ancient oracle, uncompromising and unquestionable.

There was a little silence.

"You see?" sneered McLeod, triumphantly.

Lyfe stood staring at him, panting, tense, in an extremity of futile rage. Then, abruptly, and without another word, he turned to the door and flung himself from the cabin. . . . When he returned, shivering, forced back to the warmth of the cabin by the deadly cold outside, it was to seat himself morosely beside the stove and play his part in the profound silence which pervaded the little room.

But Lyfe, being a relentless fighter, could have had no intention of surrendering without a struggle. He must have realized that whatever plans he made must be executed within the passing of a single night. And he must have sensed fully that circumstances were against him;

(Continued on page 54)

(*Continued from page 53*)

for McLeod and Barto were two, while he stood all alone. Throughout the night they could watch—indeed, even as he sat there brooding, they made their plans to watch, turn and turn about, with rifle between them. No man, surely, could have been more impotent to do evil than Lyfe was that night in the tiny cabin. And yet he did it.

Barto took the first watch that night. Lyfe obediently retired into his sleeping bag at the black man's suggestion, and McLeod turned in gratefully, for he was very tired. As a matter of fact, it is probable that even that night he was far from well. Hard work, poor food, and deadly cold, and constant, torturing worry, must have greatly exhausted him. He rolled up in his sleeping bag and almost immediately fell asleep.

OUTSIDE the wind was blowing a gale which roared and whined about the cabin in weird discords. Barto, the rifle across his knees, sat beside the stove and gazed into the red glare which was revealed by the open top, for he had removed the cover to obtain a greater heat. You can picture him there, a gigantic form in the little room, with the flame reflected in his eyes, painting the high contours of his black face a fearsome red. And you can picture Lyfe, rolled up in his sleeping bag, peering out at that Satanic figure with sleepless eyes, until, the night half gone, Barto awakened McLeod to take his turn.

McLeod must have made a far less heroic picture as he huddled near the blaze, clutching his rifle tightly to his worn frame. He was only to watch two hours, and he may have sat there for the better part of the first hour before he became conscious that Lyfe was staring at him with unblinking, watchful eyes. We can't be sure how long it was before Lyfe bestirred himself, any more than we can be sure of anything which followed that bestirring. Barto was able to tell Renfrew only what McLeod was able to tell, later, as Barto bore him to the hospital at Nome. And that is all anyone in the world knows of what took place.

Anyway, Lyfe bestirred himself. And when McLeod, presenting the gleaming barrel of the rifle, would have awakened Barto, Lyfe anxiously reassured him. You can picture that for yourself.

"Don't wake him," Lyfe must have pleaded. "He's treacherous!" Something of that sort he must have said, bringing the little man to a dreadful, horrified attention.

"Treacherous? Barto?"

"Yes, treacherous! Didn't you see him look at that gold when he stopped our fighting? I tell you he'd commit murder for it!"

And poor McLeod must have remembered, too, the look he had seen in Barto's eyes when the black man brandished the ax aloft. And his heart doubtless fell terribly. Put yourself in his place. Alone in the wilderness with those two men. Hopeless of assistance, seeing only greed and murderous greed at that, in these two companions who, each fighting the other, were both arrayed against him.

You can picture the little man, huddling there, almost distracted. Not quite, for he told Barto later that, suddenly suspicious, he asked:

"Why are you telling this to me?"

Lyfe shrugged his shoulders.

"We are two white men," he said. "I couldn't sleep for thinking of it. I'll admit I'm no angel, and I ain't concealing the fact that I want a share of your winnings. But one white man can't see another one taken in by a black."

McLeod confessed to Barto that then he began playing nervously with the rifle, turning toward the sleeping black man. Then, he said, Lyfe gently seized the barrel of the gun, whispering:

"No. That would be murder."

And poor McLeod turned back to Lyfe, hunted, at bay, not knowing where to turn, and asked:

"What shall I do? What shall I do?"

Lyfe frowned. "Shall I tell you?" he asked.

McLeod nodded.

"Run for it," said Lyfe.

McLeod stared at him, turning this over in his mind.

"Get out before the coon wakes up," advised Lyfe. "Take the dogs now, and go. Now! Don't you understand? That black giant will murder both of us!"

McLeod still stared, not trusting Lyfe.

"Why do you tell me that?" he asked. "What will *you* make out of it?"

"Nothing," Lyfe said harshly. "Nothing—now. I'm just saving you and your gold from Barto. That doesn't let you out. But we can make peace for the present and settle between us later."

All that passed between them, Renfrew, or anyone else in the world, will never know. But it is certain that they said this much in their own way, and it is certain that Lyfe, that sinister and greedy spirit, persuaded poor McLeod to take the dogs and go. There was something else which passed between them before his going, and Lyfe must have handled that part of it with an iron nerve, for, while Barto slept in the same small, squalid room, he pervailed upon McLeod to draw up and sign a document which, if Barto had awakened, would have been sufficient to bring down upon him then and there the black man's deadly vengeance. But Barto did not waken, and Lyfe, in the ruddy glow of the open stove, saw his victim scrawl the words which were to lead, years later, to that murder which brought Barto face to face with Renfrew, to pour out his story with child-like earnestness across the table in the police post at Sagrinay.

Ol' Skipper Owl: "Gee! fellows, I'm sorry I can't make the harbor to-night. Since the government has installed firebug lighthouses I'm blinded so that I can't pick up my course."

Then McLeod fled for Nome. He fled with his dogs and a sleigh load with little else but gold, into a particularly bitter gale, which before morning was to sweep down upon him, a white and suffocating storm of snow.

BARTO, whom McLeod was to have called when his two hours were up, slept on until dawn. When he then drew himself from his sleeping bag, he saw only Lyfe in the room with him, sleeping peacefully in his corner.

Mystified, Barto lighted a lamp, and discovered immediately that the gold was gone. With a bound he was out of the cabin, and in a moment had confirmed his suspicion. McLeod with the dogs and sled, with the gold, and with insufficient food, had fled in the night. Made furious by this discovery, Barto flung Lyfe out of his corner and out of his sleeping bag with a single sweep of his arm.

"Where is he?" he roared; and doubtless Lyfe, staring up at him, saw death gleaming in the black man's eyes. Like a frightened animal he wriggled into a corner and struggled to his feet.

"What's the matter?" he gasped.

"McLeod! The gold! What have you done with him?"

Of course it was Lyfe's part to seem surprised. To be as much amazed by McLeod's disappearance as Barto was. He may have found it difficult in the face of the giant's anger to play his part well, but he did it well enough. Barto's anger became tempered with bewilderment.

"How do I know where he's gone?" cried Lyfe. "How do I know it isn't a trick of yours to cheat me?"

The black man stared at him suspiciously.

"Listen, you!" he boomed. "Before you came to this place, I, too, wanted the white man's gold. That is what I came for. That is all I desired. And McLeod had the gold, and I wanted it. But when you came here, you showed me how mean and low that was. To want another man's gold. The gold of a little, unprotected boy. You are something lower and dirtier than dirt, Lyfe, and I could not be like you. I could not be as low as that. So I said that I would protect this foolish McLeod from you. I said that I would see his gold safely into Nome. I would see that you were put in your place; in the gutter. I am going to do that."

He pounced suddenly forward, and with one hand took Lyfe by the throat. Lyfe shrieked, but the hand of the black man stifled the sound of it.

"I am going to do that!" he boomed again. "And you will not stop me. I could kill you now, and this is to show you that I speak the truth!"

He closed his great hand and Lyfe's face turned purple. Then with a jerk, he flung Lyfe away.

"Like that!" cried the black man. "And now I am going to follow him. If he has suffered—if you have tricked him, I am coming back. Then I shall kill you! And you cannot escape me, because I shall follow you to every place you go. I shall follow you. If you have the gold, I shall take it. And your life I shall take as well! Your life!"

He turned away from the wretched man and tore from the nails upon which they hung, his parka, his snowshoes. He dressed rapidly, and having dressed, having made a pack with his sleeping bag of what provisions he required, he opened the door and left the cabin without another glance at his fallen enemy.

Barto found McLeod in the snow. The little miner was covered by it, and hedged about in it. He lay beside the trail in his sleeping bag, having crawled into it when he had fallen exhausted and overcome. Barto took the unconscious form from its covering and strove heroically to bring it back to life. This much he did by dint of his great strength. He brought McLeod back to life, and whilst he fed him hot food, listened to his tale of how Lyfe had used the hours while Barto had been asleep. Only McLeod made no mention of that document; for the gold was piled up on the sleigh near-by, and McLeod probably did not trust the black man enough to tell him everything.

"Take everything to the bank. Put everything in the bank!" he pleaded weakly. "I'm sick, and while I'm sick, I want everything kept safe. Everything I'm carrying with me. My papers!"

Barto promised this, and then accomplished the impossible.

By his great strength he bore McLeod alive to the hospital at Nome, and he brought the gold in with him. Even as he had promised, everything belonging to McLeod was placed in trust in the bank, and everything done to make him comfortable. Then Barto set out again for the cabin in the gold fields. He did not tell the authorities at Nome about the part which Lyfe had played in bringing McLeod to the hospital, because he was determined to settle with Lyfe himself. And while he traveled the trail back to the lonely cabin, McLeod died of pneumonia at Nome.

ON his arrival at the cabin, Barto found that Lyfe had flown, and he had to return again to Nome with his deep and smoldering vengeance unsatisfied. Discovering that McLeod was dead, he approached the bankers, curious as to the disposal which was to be made of the gold. They told him that among McLeod's papers had been found a document which bequeathed the entire sum to his five-year-old son, Scott McLeod, to be held in trust for the boy by whoever was appointed the youngster's guardian. And Barto discovered that he was disappointed. He was bitterly disappointed, for in his heart he had always desired that gold, that yellow metal, which made the white men kings.

Thereafter, Barto devoted himself to an unending search for Desmond Lyfe. He had to invoke great patience for this, because Lyfe had left Alaska, and Barto had no money to follow him, even if he had known where he was.

You see, Lyfe had laid his plans quickly, that night in the cabin, but he had laid them cleverly, too. He knew that the boy, Scott McLeod, had been left in care of some farmer folk in McLeod's old home at some Alberta village. So he prevailed upon McLeod to make that will, putting the gold in charge of whoever was named the boy's guardian. Then he came down to Alberta, adopted the boy in his role of the father's only friend, the man who had lent him money to go North—and settled at Sagrinay.

He gained possession of enough of the treasure in that way to set himself up as a successful farmer, and then set about getting his hands upon the rest of it. It was slow work, but finally Lyfe lost patience with legal technicalities and demanded that the entire fortune be placed in his hands as the boy's guardian. To do this, legal papers had to be filed at Nome, and to see the papers properly executed the authorities had to get in touch with none other than Barto who still worked out his unhappy destiny as a dog driver in the gold fields.

So, in the end, you see, Barto learned that Lyfe was to have all the gold; and also he learned where Lyfe was to be found. But you must remember, he knew nothing about Lyfe's guardianship of the boy.

All this Barto told the two redcoats at the police post at Sagrinay.

"And what did you do then?" asked Renfrew. For the black man had come to a pause.

"I came to Sagrinay," said Barto grimly. "I came and found him there: 'I have found you at last, Lyfe,' I said to him; and he was frightened. 'Now,' I said, 'you must give it all to me.'

"I think he would have done it, too, but you," he grinned sombrely at Renfrew, "you came along with that grocer, who had a grievance against Lyfe because Lyfe desired to take his home away from him. I rode back to town with that grocer, that Murdock, and he said to me, 'If you will kill this man, Lyfe, I will see that you are not punished for it.' So he promised, and we rode quickly out to Lyfe's farm. He was standing on the porch when we drove in through the back road, and I called to him. 'You are a dead man, now,' I called. He turned to me, and he was afraid. He ran toward me, and I shot him with the rifle which the grocer had given me. That is all."

"That was enough," said Deming.

"If you had not come back again to Lyfe's house, you would still be free," said Renfrew. "Why did you come back?"

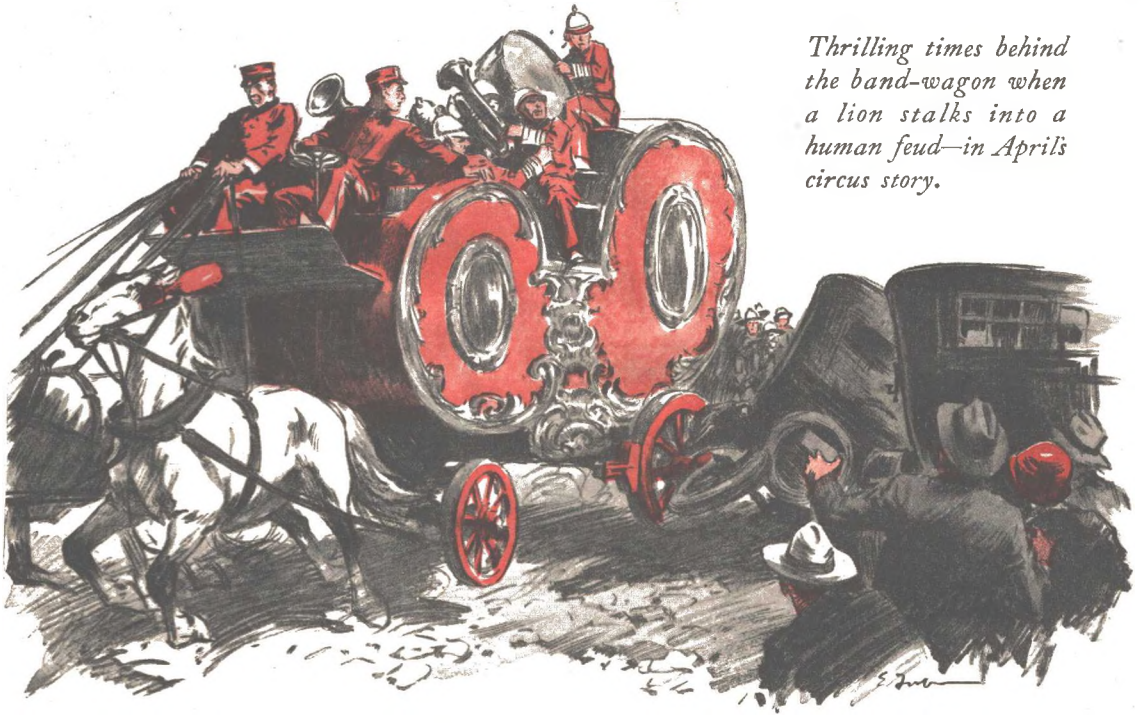
The black man shrugged his shoulders.

"For the gold," he said simply. "I came back for the gold, and all I found was papers—papers. I read them, and those papers told me that whoever desired the gold must have the boy. While I was reading them, the boy came. He came into the room like a fool, with a gun in his hand, and then I said, 'This is funny. I must have that boy, and here he comes to me.' So I tried to steal the boy. That is how you caught me."

And, you know, he spoke the truth. That simple giant, with his learning and his fixed, determined mind, really believed that by stealing the boy, Scott McLeod, he could gain possession of the yellow metal which the unfortunate McLeod had grubbed out of the Northern gravel to be a curse and a temptation to these passionate and ambitious men.

Of course, when Barto had tried to steal the boy, Renfrew and Deming had been there to seize him. But that story you know, as an adventure that led to still another adventure—this, the unraveling of the mystery about black Barto.

"A CIRCUS FEUD"



Thrilling times behind the band-wagon when a lion stalks into a human feud—in April's circus story.

ALL THESE COMING IN APRIL

HAZARD OF THE HILLS, another of Thomson Burtis' exciting stories of airmen's cool courage. Russ Farrell and a master mechanic and an ex-acrobat assistant settle a bitter quarrel as, struggling, they swing from their plane over threatening mountains. . . . More good air stories coming all through spring and summer: A gripping new air serial about a high-strung young "stunter"; a special Fourth of July flying story; a fascinating fact article, "Ballooning with Pilot 13."

EFFICIENCY E—that's the rating every man wants. Ensign Wally Radnor of the mine sweeper *Peewit* ached to get it. Yearned for a chance to make good. And deep under water, down near the mines, Wally found a dangerous chance. Other stirring Navy stories coming in summer issues.

CONROY OF C-BAR RANCH is young, but he's a rider and a scrapper. You'll find laughs and thrills in this cowboy's hot battles with a fat joker and a hard-bitten bunch of horse thieves. Thrills, too, in your April number's cover picture—a Western blinger of cowboys and campfire and coyote, by Harold Sichel.

TIERNEY MEETS A MILLIONAIRE. And the two play tricks on a crook who thinks he's clever. Another sidesplitting Detective Tierney story! . . . Others later —for warm weather reading.

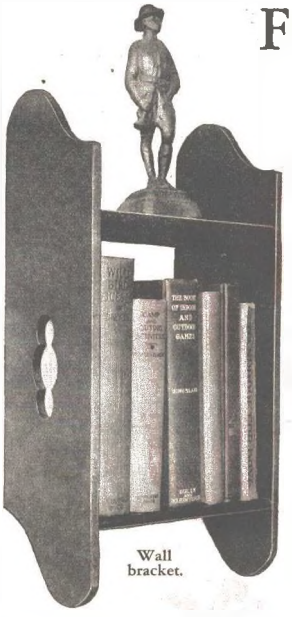
WHISTLING JIMMY knew the star half-miler had no right to run in the big meet. But Jim was sewed up to secrecy. What could he do? You'll like square-shooting Jim and the unexpected turns in William Heyliger's April track story.

BIG ATHLETIC ARTICLES: Chic Fraser, scout for the Pittsburgh Pirates, will tell you how men are picked for big league baseball. J. E. McFarland, track coach at St. John's Military Academy, will give you the sort of pointers that have helped St. John's men win national championships. . . . Coming later: valuable tips on tennis and swimming; more baseball.

For the Boys to Make

By A. Neely Hall

Author of "Boy Craftsman," "Homemade Games," etc.



A Wall Rack

YOU can use a rack like the one shown in the photograph to advantage in your own room, and since this style of rack is the popular fancy, there is opportunity to earn money making racks for your neighbors and neighborhood dealers.

Figure 1 of the diagrams shows a front view of the wall rack, Fig. 2 a detail of the side pieces and Fig. 3 a detail of the shelves. Stock ⅜-inch thick is not available at all lumberyards. If you are going to use it in quantity, however, you can have thicker stock resawed; indeed, since the pieces are narrow, you can easily rip ⅞-inch boards yourself, if you own a hand ripsaw. Another source of supply is the shop dealing in material for radio cabinets, still another, a carpenter shop. Then, there are box boards, easy to obtain and many of good quality for working material.

First, square up a pair of boards 5½ inches wide for the sides of the rack. Then lay out the curve for the ends. To assist you in drawing a good curve, I have ruled off the upper end of the pattern into squares, each representing a measurement of ½-inch across. Lay out a similar series of ½-inch squares upon a piece of paper or cardboard, and it will be a simple matter to draw the curve upon them in the same relative position it occupies upon the small squares on the pattern. With the curve completed, trace it off upon the wood. Notice that the bottom curve is the same as the top, but inverted.

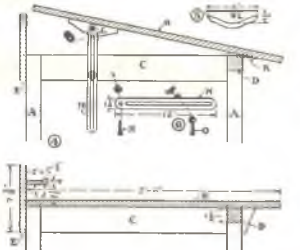
Lay out the pair of grooves for the shelf ends where indicated, and halfway between them locate centers for the three ornamental holes.

Cut the curved ends with a coping saw, and finish the edges with file and sandpaper. Use a ¾-inch chisel for cutting the rabbets. This work must be done carefully that there may be no danger of splitting the boards. An expansive-bit that can be set to bore 1-inch and 1½-inch holes is the proper rig for boring the holes. Lacking one, you must bore a series of small holes, cut out the wood between with a chisel, and trim up with files and sandpaper.

Figure 3 shows the width and length for the shelves. The ends must be rabbeted as indicated, to fit the grooves in the side boards. Rabbet them just enough so that they will drive snugly into the grooves, with allowance for glue, of course. With the shelves and sides properly glued, nailing is not necessary, but unless you have had experience in using hot glue, you had better reinforce with finishing nails.

You will find vermilion or turquoise blue satin finishes at your paint dealer's. Tell him what results you wish to obtain, and follow his suggestions.

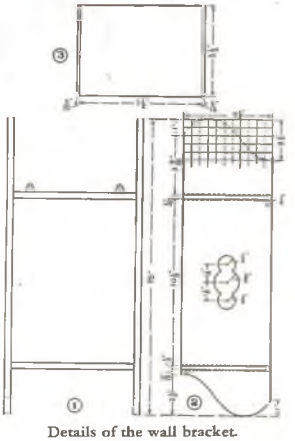
When the woodwork has been sandpapered, then finished to your satisfaction, attach a pair of brass hangers to the back of the top shelf, as shown in Fig. 1.



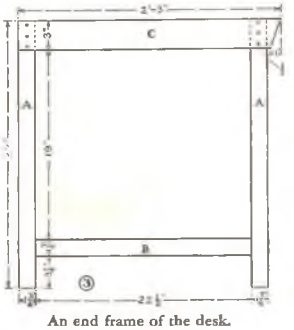
Showing a cross-section of the flat-top desk.

A Flat-top Desk and Drafting Table

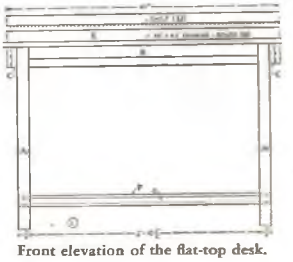
THE photograph shows a flat-top combination desk and drafting table that will serve excellently for home study and model planning. As its construction is simple, it can be built easily and quickly, and the cost of material will be nothing as compared with prices of flat-top desks in the furniture mart.



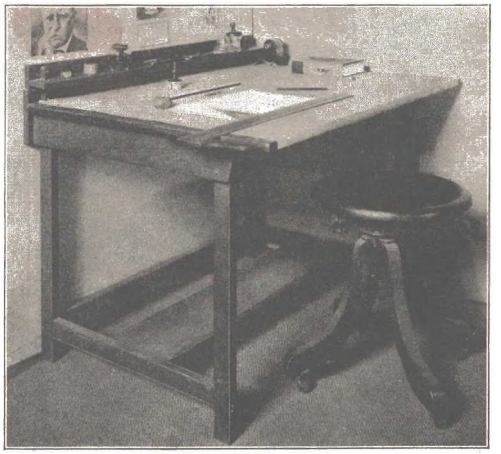
Details of the wall bracket.



An end frame of the desk.



Front elevation of the flat-top desk.



A handy flat-top desk.

In the matter of size, you may alter the given dimensions as you please. Let the space you have for the desk determine the width and length. You will want the height 28 inches, table height.

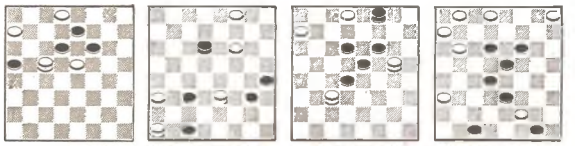
If you decide to build the same size of desk as that in the illustration, you will find the length dimensions on the front elevation (Fig. 1), and the width dimensions on the cross section (Fig. 2), and end-frame detail (Fig. 3).

The kind of wood to use is optional. The desk in the photograph is of oak, always desirable for furniture building, but pine will serve the purpose, inasmuch as

(*Cont. on page 63*)

More Fun and Tricks in Checkers

By Newell W. Banks, Match Checkers Champion of America.



131—Black to move and win. 132—Black to move and win. 133—Black to move and win. 134—Black to move and win.

I'VE put an easy one this time just to get you started. Number 133 doesn't call for much brainwork but it's a situation you might easily run up against in a real game so be sure to remember the winning combination—after you've found it.

No. 134 is a block play—you'll have to do some figuring for this one but you'll get it. Nos. 135 and 136 are lots of fun, too. Don't let them stump you.

Here's how the board is numbered.

Lots of fellows who failed to get a copy of THE AMERICAN BOY checkers booklet last year have taken advantage of the same offer this year and have found the booklet a mighty big help in solving these tricks. If you want one of the books—it'll help you beat your dad—just send four cents in stamps to Checkers Editor, THE AMERICAN BOY, 550 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Mich.

Now for the Answers to Last Month's Tricks

No. 129—Positions, Black 19, 23, 27, king 18. White, 10, 13, 28, king 11. Black to move and win. Solution: 19-24, 28-19, 18-15, 11-18, 27-31, 18-27, 31-6. Black wins.

No. 130—Positions, Black, 3, 8, 12, 17, 23, king 29. White, 14, 19, 21, 31, kings 6, 15. Black to move and win. Solution: 12-16, 19-12, 3-7, 12-3, 7-10, 14-7, 29-25, 21-14, 23-26, 31-22, 25-18. Black wins.

No. 131—Positions, Black, 11, 16, 19, 22, king 26. White, 9, 10, 17, 18, kings 7, 12, 21, 27. Black to move and win. Solution: 22-25, 21-23, 19-26, 12-19, 26-31, 7-16, 31-15. Black wins.

No. 132—Positions, Black, 6, 10, 11, 15, king 32. White, 7, 8, 24, kings 4, 12, 13, 23, 31. Black to move and win. Solution: 6-9, 13-6, 15-19, 6-15, 11-27, 24-15, 32-28, 31-24, 28-3. Black wins.

How to Make a Progressive Radio Set

(Continued from page 34)

Now let's go to work on the other side of our original reflexed tube and provide an additional stage of audio frequency amplification. Although this makes three tubes in all, the first circuit is not changed the slightest since the additional tube is added where the head phones are connected.

Instead of going direct to the head phones, the wires are carried to the primary or input side of another audio amplifying transformer where the signal strength is stepped up and passed through the audio amplifying tube shown on the right-hand side of the drawing (Fig. 2). The loud speaker is plugged in on the plate circuit of this last tube. Outside of these few changes, the entire circuit is the same as that of the two tube set. Yet, it is far more powerful since the second stage of audio amplification has tremendous step-up power.

There is still a further improvement that can be made to this set. It consists in providing two stages of tuned radio frequency. The whole can be arranged on a panel only seven inches wide and eighteen inches long.

As shown in Fig. 3, this set has an extra stage of radio frequency amplification ahead of the reflexed tube so that by the time the signal reaches the detector tube it has been amplified at radio frequencies twice and a signal which might ordinarily be too weak to actuate the detector, will be amplified sufficiently to give a strong input to the audio amplifiers.

The second tube of this set is our old friend the reflexed tube used in the original set and the last two tubes are just like the last two in Fig. 2. It is necessary to add another coil to the set when this new radio frequency amplifier is used but its construction is just like the others and all should be turned at right angles to each other. Keep the coils as far apart and as far from the panel as possible. This is very important.

There are just two more possible operations to improve the power of this set. These are shown in Fig. 4. In order to stop any squealing which may occur, neutralizing condensers may be connected between the grid of one tube and a tap taken off about one-third of the way down on the secondary of the following inductance. (See top diagram Fig. 4). Place the condensers between the grid of the tube and the coil, inside the set. Adjust them once and then leave them alone. This is accomplished by tuning in a broadcast station and making the set whistle, then adjusting the condensers until the whistle disappears. Of course, if the set does not whistle there is no advantage in introducing these condensers.

The final touch that can be put on this set is the addition of regeneration to the detector tube. (See Diagram B, Fig. 4). This is a difficult job and unless you are thoroughly familiar with radio you had better not tackle it. The regeneration is accomplished by making up a small coil of ten or fifteen turns of number 22 insulated wire and placing it inside at the filament end of the inductance which is between the tube detector and the reflexed tube. This should be adjustable and preferably of the rotor type so that the regeneration can be controlled. The control must be placed on the outside of the panel for with the changing wave-lengths, it is necessary to change the adjustment. The neutralizing condensers mentioned above should be installed if regeneration is used.

Of course each of the sets described in this article requires an outside aerial and the regulation ground connection. Storage battery tubes will give the best results with about ninety volts of B Battery.

You will have lots of fun building these sets and, what is even better, you will gain sufficient knowledge of radio to continue experiments yourself and, perhaps, discover unknown methods for improving your equipment.

What is the meaning of "dyne" as used in so many radio names?—S. V. C., Virginia.

Power, or energy. For example: neutrodyne, neutralized energy; solodyne, single source of energy. Comes from the same root as "dynamo," "dynamic," "dynamite."

Are any broadcasting stations transmitting on low waves? What is the advantage of low waves?—F. A., California.

Yes. KDKA, Pittsburgh, and KYW, Chicago, are transmitting on waves of less than a hundred meters, and there may be others. The advantages are: less interference from static and from other stations; greater range; less fading; daylight range approximately equal to night range.

The American Boy Contest

The Most Interesting Character in Town

"FUNNY that no one wrote about me," sniffed Pluto, the Office Pup. "Let me look at those prize-winning letters, will you? I'd like to see what these fellows pick as interesting."

So we let him have the letters, and went to lunch. When we came back, he was thumping his tail, his hurt feelings all forgotten. "Say!" he yapped. "These are good, aren't they?"

We thought so. And here they are:

A Man of Power

By "C" (14), Illinois.
First Prize Letter.

SOMETIMES he wears a brown suit; sometimes a black one. Invariably a large, red Windsor tie is tied neatly beneath his chin. A surprisingly heavy shock of white hair falls back from his forehead in poet-fashion—surprising because this little old man is ninety-seven years old. What tales couldn't he tell if it weren't that he is so modest and quiet?

He was one of the first settlers in a little, old-fashioned town not far from America's second largest city. Moving from Massachusetts, he has spent seventy-five years of a life of work in this same town. He lives in an old wooden house, square, like a box, and covered with trailing green vines.

Every day he commutes to the city, always faithful to his position and as pleased as any young office boy at a raise in salary.

If a man's character may be judged by the way in which he spends his spare time, consider, then, the character of this man.

For years and years he has spent his spare moments in performing the work necessary for the conduct of a library in the little town where he lives. Long ago, when he was comparatively young, he carried a market basket filled with books to the church on the corner every Sunday. There he permitted anybody who cared to borrow his books to do so. From this humble beginning he has developed a library of 5,000 volumes, gathered, labeled, kept in repair, and indexed all through his efforts. Still he is master of this library, a quiet, dignified master.

His life has not been one of adventure, of varied experience, but rather one of plodding usefulness in devoting years to an institution which certainly has had a considerable influence in the upbuilding of the little town. Some day he will retire; some day he will die and when he dies the community will lose one of its greatest powers for good. He has spent a quiet life but spent it well.

Once an Apache Captive

By Charles F. Mitchell, Jr. (14), Temple, Okla.
Second Prize Letter.

A FEW weeks ago I spent the night with an old Mexican who was wrinkled and dried-up, but who got around exceedingly well for a man of his age. His house was simple and commonplace with no suggestion of the strange life he had lived among the Indians.

He was a Mexican of good family, by the name of Carlos Diaz. At the age of nine he and his small cousin, Pedro, went out into a pasture to herd cattle. A little before noon they were captured by a band of Apache warriors and taken away. Carlos' father, Juan Diaz, pursuing the marauding band, could not trace them as they had crossed their own path.

In the meanwhile, Carlos and Pedro were bruised and bleeding. Little Pedro became sick and unable to go another foot; then his cruel tormentors put an end to his suffering by thrusting a spear through his body.

Carlos was later sold to the Kiowas. An old Indian woman, who had lost a son, adopted him and he lived with her until he was grown. In this time he learned many of the customs of the Indians and led the different dances that the Indians participated in.

A little while after he was grown, the United States soldiers began to capture the various Indian tribes and he was taken to the reservation with the Indians.

He had lived with the Indians for nearly twenty years and had forgotten his Mexican name. One night, however, he remembered it and was afraid to go to sleep again for fear he would forget it. The next morning he went to the United States physician and requested him to write to his elder brother, Andres Diaz, at Las Vegas, New Mexico. An answer came, reporting that his mother was still living and Carlos visited her and Andres.

But he did not stay long with his mother, for he felt that the Kiowas were his people. He came back to the reservation and became interpreter to the Indians in government affairs and is a minister in the Methodist Mission situated at this town. He married, built a home here, and settled down. He never tires of telling this story to his youthful listeners.

Not Great Nor Gifted But—

By York B. Castle (16), Evanston, Ill.
Third Prize Letter.

HAVE we a celebrated man in our midst? Well, I suppose everybody will concede Vice-President Dawes is one. I had the pleasure of hearing him notified of his election to the second highest office in the land. No seat had been reserved for me through some oversight, but I secured one for myself on the edge of a huge flower vase, quite close to all the speakers. I could write some of the things I hear about our Vice-President, but I decided to attempt an interview, hoping to secure something new to give to THE AMERICAN BOY readers, but the great man was only in Evanston a few days and I was not able to secure an audience.

I next tried to negotiate a meeting with James Patton, the wheat king, but the high wrought iron fence, surrounding his palatial home, barred me out physically and spiritually. I enjoyed the two outdoor Christmas trees of Edward Hines, the lumber king, but their owner was safely entrenched behind their gay lights. I hoped to see Mrs. Lucy Fitch Perkins, the author of the famous Twin Books or Mrs. Louise Ayres Garnett, the poetess, but it seems to me most celebrities must spend their waking hours in a never ending series of teas like the members of the Mad Hatter's Tea-party in "Alice in Wonderland." I had no better luck with Edward Balmer, author of "That Royle Girl," with Lew Sarett, or with Walter Dill Scott, president of Northwestern University.

Starting home discouraged, I spied on the corner of Main and Sherman an old acquaintance, whom I have known since I came to Evanston at the age of four, and whom I had not seen for months. He was pushing his cart in front of him, stopping now and then to spear pieces of paper or other trash. The day was cold and a sharp wind was blowing from the north, but his kindly old face was lightened with a cheery smile. He had been working in Florida. What had brought him back to the snow and ice from that warm and sunny land?

"I missed my friends—the people I had met daily for years and years as I worked here on the streets in heat and rain and snow. "I missed the 'Good Morning's' of the business men hurrying to their trains, the minute's chat with passing ladies, the pleasant talks with the children. Down there I had warmth and flowers, but strange faces and loneliness; here old acquaintances and warm hearts temper the snow and the wind."

This kindly soul, resembling Toby Veck in appearance and largeness of heart, would have talked to me for an hour. I started out with the hope that I could send a message from the great and gifted, but perhaps I could have received no better thought than this homely wisdom of Evanston's cleaner of streets.

What's Best in the Circus?

"My biggest thrill in a circus," reported Rex Lee, AMERICAN BOY writer who traveled a month with the Sells-Floto show just to get material for the Rann Braden stories—the first one is in this issue—"comes when those chaps on the flying trapezes start twisting and jumping and risking their necks—" He got into trouble there, for none of the editors agreed with him. One said there was nothing like the clowns and their tricks, and another upheld the ball-balancing, firebrand-juggling seals, and Pluto the Office Pup growled noisily that what *he* liked best was the dog-faced boy in the side show!

What do *you* think? What's your favorite? The big parade in the morning, or the wrestling bears, or the bareback riders with their airy skill, or the grand pageant? Or perhaps the unloading of the elephants from their traveling palaces in the early morning, or the raising of the big top, or one of a thousand other things? Write down what you like, and why you like it, and you'll have a chance to win.

PRIZES! A first prize of $10 (enough for a summer's supply of pink circus lemonade); a second of $5; a third of $3; special prizes of $1 each. Just a few rules—you're eligible if you're under 21. Try to keep your letter under 250 words, and write name, age and address plainly on your letter. Use ink or a typewriter, on one side of the paper. And get the letter to the Circus Editor, THE AMERICAN BOY, 550 Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Mich., by March 15.

Why not send in your "Best Reading" ballot (it's on page 42) with your circus letter—and kill two birds with one stamp?

A Millionaire Chicken Raiser

By Curtis M. Oakes (14), Tulsa, Okla.
Special Prize Letter.

MR. GEORGE S. CARTER is the most interesting character I have ever known. To look at the dignified old bachelor one would think that he would never stoop so low as to raise chickens, but, oh, boy! Just show him a prize rooster or a poultry magazine.

Mr. Carter is a millionaire, but as his desire for companionship is very great, he contents himself with living at the "Bachelor's Inn." This gentleman makes his money in the oil business around this city, and as a consequence has become quite a civic leader and notable character in Tulsa. He has a very pleasing personality, and to the average person appears to be exceedingly formal, dignified, and precise. He holds his head up like the prize horse you have seen at the state fair, his clothing is the best money can buy, and he is the proud possessor of a "Pierce Arrow" and an African chauffeur.

But I suppose it is natural for all of us to have our hobbies. And Mr. Carter has a weakness for chickens. He has a chicken farm about thirteen miles out of the city, and this is the place where he can be found from Friday evening until the following Monday morning.

Upon arriving at his farm, Mr. Carter immediately gets into a pair of old begrimed overalls. He then goes out to the

(*Continued on page 66*)

Boys Who Used Their Brains

The Boy Who Learned About Stamps

WHEN Warren L. Babcock was a boy, back in the tiny town of Eden, Erie County, New York, ten cents for a batch of second-hand stamps looked like a lot of money.

Ten cents meant a dozen eggs, or the best pair of woolen mittens in Erie County, or enough candy to keep Warren sick for a week.

But when Warren saw, on the back page of his parents' farm magazine, an ad that promised "One Hundred Assorted Stamps for Ten Cents," he made up his mind.

"I'll get 'em and find out what it's all about," he told himself. "Might be something to this stamp business."

Warren wasn't a stamp collector—knew nothing about the "stamp game." But he was curious, and he thought he could learn. So he ran errands, did chores, scrimped and saved, penny by penny—back in 1885 a penny was good payment for an odd job. At last he had ten of them, and he sent for the 100 varieties.

Then he began to learn about stamps.

What he has learned has brought him a lot of fun, an eminent place among philatelists (there are more than a million stamp collectors in this country alone)—and three trips to Europe, one with each of his three sons!

Young Warren Babcock sorted and classified and examined and traded those first 100 stamps. He saved more pennies and bought more stamps. He got an album, and learned to use hinges and stamp tongs. Sometimes the boys he knew poked fun at him.

"What good are a lot of old used stamps?" they scoffed.

Warren Babcock kept on collecting and kept on learning. By the time he got ready for college he had a pretty good general collection of stamps. His medical studies in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, in Baltimore, didn't allow much spare time for the pursuit of his hobby; but he found that a few minutes a day were enough to catalog his new stamps and to keep him in touch with a few other collectors and dealers. In 1893, in his twenty-first year, he was graduated from college as a physician.

He kept on learning, in spare time, about stamps. He learned not only such things as the value of various cancellations, and the rarity of early U. S. provisional stamps (issued by post masters) but also that stamp collecting was well worthwhile as an investment.

Fun in Stamps—and Profit

"MY first reason for collecting stamps is the recreation I get from it," Dr. Babcock explains. "When I come home from a hard day at the hospital"—for 22 years, except when he served with distinction in the Medical Corps during the war, he has been superintendent of The Grace Hospital, Detroit—"it's pleasant and restful to sit down for a few moments and work with my stamps.

"And the second reason is that I have found stamps, carefully selected, are about as good an investment as I can make. Their value is always increasing; they 'work for me' just as surely as bonds would, if I've bought them wisely."

Dr. Babcock will tell you, with a grin, that the first 20 years of collecting are the hardest. His first 20 years were spent in acquiring a big general collection—in learning enough about stamps to become what philatelists call a "specialist." Then he started again in learning about stamps, but he confined his investigations to United States stamps, and particularly to special types of cancellations.

When the World War came along, Dr. Babcock went to France with the United States Army Medical Corps. He served for six months with front-line troops; for eighteen months he was attached to various base hospitals in Paris and Bordeaux. His services won for him the French medal of honor and the coveted Order of Officer of the Legion of Honor.

And all through those two years Dr. Babcock found chances to learn more about stamps!

Dr. Warren L. Babcock.

"Where there is one stamp collector in this country, there seemed to be ten in France," Dr. Babcock explains. "Even the *poilus* in the trenches were enthusiasts—they seized eagerly for every stamp they could get. Here,"—he displayed a remarkably colored French rooster, made entirely of brilliant stamps pasted in intricate design on a postcard, and standing proudly on a German helmet—"is one bit of their work." Another shows the famous Arc de Triomphe in Paris, and a third, made of United States stamps, is a string of gay Christmas bells ringing a holiday greeting!

"A collector can learn a lot about stamps from his own country by talking to foreign collectors," he says. "Naturally the English and French and other Europeans have many valuable United States stamps, for they save specimens from this country just as boys here save foreign stamps. I have obtained a good many rare stamps in Europe."

"On Cover" Stamps Are Valuable

DR. BABCOCK'S most valuable single stamp he bought in Paris. It is the only 1869 90-cent Lincoln portrait stamp "on cover" in existence, as far as philatelists know.

"On cover" stamps of the early American issues are eagerly sought by collectors—that is one of the things Dr. Babcock has learned. A stamp "on cover" is one on the original envelope with the postmarks and cancellations intact.

"There are a lot of things that increase stamp value," Dr. Babcock explains. "An 1869 red and black 90-cent stamp, singly, is worth about $40; a block of four will sell for $600 at a stamp auction."

So Dr. Babcock has learned to look for blocks of stamps, as well as singles. On Paris's famous "stamp bourse" where collectors and dealers meet to bargain and exchange and sell—Dr. Babcock visits the bourse on each of his European trips—he bought an unusual vertical pair of the 1857 Thomas Jefferson 5-cent brick-red stamps.

"That purchase shows why stamps are so good an investment," Dr. Babcock says, "and why they make possible my trips to Europe. I paid the equivalent of $18 for the pair, and now they are worth $100. Take this block of ten 1851 George Washington 3-cent stamps—I obtained them in Switzerland for $55, and they're worth $250 here. A strip of three 5-cent 1851 stamps, bought in Paris in 1918 for $20, is worth $200 to-day.

"Another thing that increases stamp values is cancellation. Before I knew much about stamps I had the idea that cancellation simply blurred up a stamp. Now I know that when I get a stamp with a carefully carved pig, or a horse, or a

(*Continued on page 61*)

Get Ready Now for Spring Sports

Let THE AMERICAN BOY Give You What You Need

YOU want to make the ball team, go fishing, become a crack shot? Here are just the things you need. Tell your friends what a whale of a good magazine THE AMERICAN BOY is. Show them your copies. Make them want to subscribe. Then collect $2 from each, send us their names and addresses, with the money, and the premium is yours. Specify both name and number. Your own sub. or one for your family won't count.

No. 30

Fielder's Glove

Here's a glove that will stop and *hold* the stingin'est liner, grounder or fly. It's made of the best of leather to stand hard wear. It has a ready made pocket to hold the ball and is already broken in and waiting to be used. An ideal glove for the infield or out-field. It will help you make the team.

Yours for just ONE, new subscription for THE AMERICAN BOY. Ask for number 30. Retail price $1.

No. 29

Babe Ruth Bat and Booklet

Every batter that amounts to anything owns his own bat. The "Home-Run" Babe takes mighty good care that his particular favorite is always ready for use. You can have one made along the same lines as the famous Louisville Slugger that Babe Ruth uses to knock the ball out of the lot. It is slightly smaller—you wouldn't be able to swing it otherwise—but the balance and general shape is the same as the Babe's own. An illustrated booklet, "The Winning Punch," giving the batting records of famous stars, is included with each bat.

The bat and booklet will be sent to you postpaid on receipt of ONE new yearly subscription for THE AMERICAN BOY and 10c in cash. Ask for No. 29. Retail price $1.00.

No. 31

First Base

You have to have a special glove to hold the throws that come to the first sack. Here is just the one you need. It is made by Thomas E. Wilson Co., one of the largest manufacturers of sporting goods in the country. The mitt is broken in, ready for use and has a comfortable pocket to hold the ball when caught.

Yours for only ONE, new yearly subscription for THE AMERICAN BOY and 35c in cash. Ask for No. 31. Retail price $1.25.

Steel Rod Outfit

Take this AMERICAN BOY fishing outfit and go fishing. It's complete. There is a three-piece, flexible steel rod, thirty feet of line, a three-colored bobber, a sinker and a Kirby hook. Everything is there but the water and the fish.

Yours for THREE, new yearly subscriptions for THE AMERICAN BOY, or two and 50c in cash. Ask for No. 34. Retail price $2.50.

No. 28
One sub

Regulation Ball

Here is an AMERICAN BOY official baseball. It is regulation size and weight and will stand the hardest of hard usage. It's a lively ball, has a center of pure rubber, wound with stout wool yarn. Just the ball for club teams.

One of these balls will be sent to you on receipt of ONE, new yearly subscription for THE AMERICAN BOY. Ask for No. 28. Retail price 75c.

No. 36

Daisy Repeater

Here's a large size Daisy that will shoot 350 shots without reloading. It has an automatic lever action, is accurate and effective in operation and a rifle you will be proud to own. Shoot, pull down the lever and the gun is loaded and ready to shoot again.

Sent postpaid on receipt of TWO new, yearly subscriptions for THE AMERICAN BOY; or for ONE, new, yearly subscription and 50c in cash. Ask for No. 36. Retail price $2.00.

Easy To Earn

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

Well Worth Having

(Continued from page 58)

man's head as its cancellation mark I have something valuable."

The Postmaster Who Whittled

AND he shows examples of these cancellations. "It was a postmaster at Waterbury, Connecticut, in the early sixties, who seemed to be an adept at whittling," he continues, "who made many of these unusual cancelling devices. In those days each small town postmaster made his own, and this man is known to have used more than 80 varieties. A Marshall, Michigan, postmaster used a replica of the old nickel—the one with a shield on its reverse side—as his cancellation mark. The Canton, Mississippi, postmaster carved out of wood a perfect lyre to cancel stamps—and stamps worth 25 cents without that mark, are worth $10 with it!"

Dr. Babcock has learned to look for differences in shade of stamps, too. One early issue, intended to be brown, paled off to a mustard color when the printer allowed the ink to weaken. That printer produced stamps worth 25 times the value of the same stamp properly colored.

In the field of supplementary mail cancellations Dr. Babcock is a leading authority. For years he has studied the special postmarks used for supplementary mail cancellations—the postmarks used on letters mailed at outgoing steamship docks in New York, and on those intended for the "fast" trains between Chicago and the East in the early days of railway mail—and his investigations have added considerably to the modern knowledge of the postal methods of past years.

In the coming summer Dr. Babcock is to ride his hobby to Europe again—this time it will take Mrs. Babcock and their daughter Margaret as well.

He is going to learn more about stamps!

The Blood Boat

(Continued from page 10)

pitiably. For the first time in his life this man knew black shame.

But no! If they had killed that boy, they would have killed him. How had he got here? Who had bandaged him, put him to bed?

Summoning every ounce of his strength he called. His voice leaked out of his chest in a thin trickle. "Hillo!"

Immediately the door opened. The boy came in, bearing a smoking bowl. He was in a clean white jacket, but one of his eyes was a bloated purple welt.

"Boy, boy!" the old man stammered. "Talk—tell me!"

The boy stood straight by the bunk edge, the bowl in his hands, and told. "Aye, sir, Chips an' me, we got it down in the log. I found him trussed up in the paint-locker. Seems he wouldn't join in with 'em neither. . . . Good man, Chips.

"Well, Mister Drew an' three others—they went overside at dawn, all weighted proper an' the service read outen your Book. Two more we got bunked in the galley, too hurted to move. We talks to 'em and dresses their hurts, an' they take both as meek as lambs! Chips set a leg on one. 'Bout all's I kin do is cook. . . . The rest is below where you an' me stowed 'em. They been quiet, but I dunno. Some on 'em must be hurted. Chips an' me, we thought it was takin' too big a chance to go there. . . .

"So we sot her on her course. Short-handed, see? But we'll make out, sir. Loggin' better'n seven these twenty hours. I've sort of kep' her position, by daid reckonin', Chips an' me stands watch an' watch, all regular. Another week'll see us there, if it don't come on to blow. You will want to refit? An' git you some new hands, an' a mate—in Pernambuco? I got it all in the log. Don't you fret, Cap'n. You jest lay quiet an' rest up. We're doin' fine . . ."

The skipper's eyes narrowed. Some measure of the old manner returned to that big recumbent frame. His forehead rumpled into the familiar scowl.

"Good," he pronounced firmly. "All good but one thing."

The boy's smile faded. "Sir?"

"Me, I don't figure to take on any new mate. All but the license I got one aboard. An' we'll fix—"

With a crash the bowl of soup hit the deck.

"Now clean up that mess. Mister—Mister Boy. An' fetch me somethin' to eat. I'm dying of starvation. No slops! Meat. An' look,"—the boy was half out of the room, his pale face transfigured—"Hand me that big book offen the cabin table. It's called 'Torts.' Got it? Now my specs. Good. I'll just be passin' the time . . ."

With the book opened on bent thighs, the spectacles adjusted, Horne settled himself to read.

"Gorry, sir," came the boy's voice. "Wh-what's that word mean?"

The skipper looked up. "What word? Torts? Oh. Well, see here. Suppose I should go up and paste you a socker in the eye, all unprovoked, see?" He smiled benignly. "You'd have a right to bring me to law. That's torts—unprovoked injury . . . that's all it is." He paused, somehow unsatisfied. Added soberly, "Of course, I dunno a whoppin' lot about it, yet. Me, I aim to learn . . ."

"Aye, sir." Again the boy made to depart. On the very threshold he stopped, gasping. A heavy object had whistled across the room and crashed into a corner. The skipper's roar blazed out as of old, gigantic, thunderous:

"But that ain't the way! *Bring me my pants!*" . . . . . .

"Why, sir—"

"There's men below decks, for'rd—sick, hurt, with murder in their souls, shut up like hogs! Men . . . because o' me! Men, I tell you! Now that shirt. Them slippers'll do. Now. Give me an arm. Easy, there. Now."

"Cap'n! You ain't goin' to—"

"Silence!"

Up on deck those two crept, the big one all gray, with twitching face, with set lips. At the wheel Chips smiled and touched his cap, then stared. The old man had gone mad. He had nodded at the helm, and said solemnly, "Mornin', bos'n."

Down the poop ladder, step by painful step. Up the long, clean, vacant deck. Past the hatch coaming. Past the main mast. Past the galley; and, "I'll view them later," muttered Captain Horne. Past the foremast. All the route they had traveled together the night before, so differently . . . to the forecastle hatch.

"Ease that bar out o' the staples, Mister. Now the bolt. Sway them doors wide."

The doors swung open without a sound. From the darkness below there came a little shuffling; then dead silence.

Horne bent to whisper. "Now you stand by. I'll be back—"

"No, Cap'n! Leave me—"

"I said stand by!"

"Aye, sir."

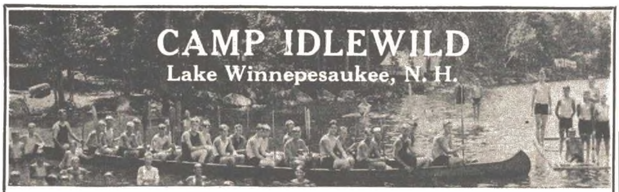
The gray figure seemed to gather strength. Two deliberate steps it took to the break of the companion, and paused a bare second. Then rapidly descended.

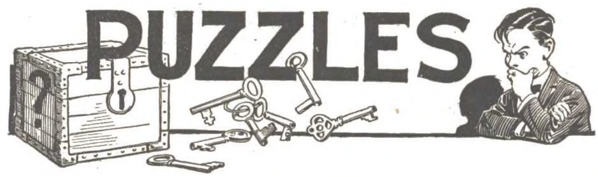
On deck in the bright sunlight the boy stood braced as if for some terrific shock, his hands clenched, his face drawn and stiff. The skipper must have reached the forecastle, he must be standing down there at the foot of the ladder, peering, half-blinded by the sudden gloom. What a chance. . . . The boy closed his eyes tight.

But from below there came at first no slightest whisper of sound. The dead stillness under that black hatch mouth was thick—soft—pregnant. . . .

Until, of a sudden, some man was speaking. His voice was low, too low to catch the words. It was even, and assured. It was somehow friendly. It went on and on, like a lesson well learned. And it was humble . . .

The boy drew a long breath of sweet sea air. He knew that voice: it belonged to the skipper of the *Peregrine*, the blood boat. And yet it was a new voice—it was the voice of a leader of men.





No. 655. They'll Sound Alike.

Our word hunt this month is finding triplicate homonyms. A homonym, if you don't know, is a word that sounds like another but is spelled differently. "Triplicate homonyms" are three words sounding alike but spelled differently—pear, pare, pair.

Five such triplicates will be counted as a correct answer, and a special prize will be given for the best list.

Sharon, Pa. NEE LEE.

No. 656. A Hunt for Fur Bearers.

Sort out these chopped-up animals and list them alphabetically. There are twenty fur-bearing animals.

Mu — we — sk — sq — op — fo — ra — wo — be — ly — co — mi — be — co —er — wo — ba — pa — ca — fi — av — nk — mi — yp — dg — lv — sh — ta — nt — sk — un — as — os — ui — cc — x — ar — lf — yo — nx — ra — k — el — su — rr — oo — te — er — ne — u — er — er — er — mo — he — t — m — el — n — in — un — e — r — t —.

Letters are not to be reversed. Words are of uneven length.

Schwenksville, Pa. PUZZLETHIS.

No. 657. Hey! Baseball Fans!

The initials of seven well-known baseball players are used to head words descriptive of the men. Who are the players?

Reputable Hitter; Glorified Home Runs; Energetic Chicagoan; Washington's Joy; Hits Heavily; Delights Boston; Great Catcher.

Four correct answers will credit the solver with a solution to this puzzle.

South Orange, N. J. RAY D. O'BUG.

No. 658. What Is "Blank"? (4 letters)

The little girl in the *blank* dress asked for a *blank* from the garden. "We've nane left," said the Scotch gardener, "but you can see a *blank* where the light streams through the keyhole, and hear the wee brook *blank* as it tinkles down."

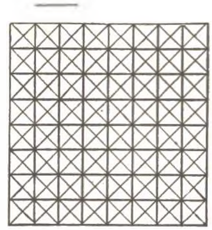
"I used to go out in the bay in a little *blank,*" said English Tom, "and catch plenty of *blank* for dinner. Or I'd see the Squire's eye *blank* as he listened to a *blank* singing in the wood."

"My mother often *blanks* the shelf-paper with a *blanking*-iron," said the little girl.

What is *blank?*

Head Tide, Me. AKIE JEW.

No. 659 Count the Triangles.



How many right-angled and equilateral triangles are there in this figure?

East Lansing, Mich. JOG.

No. 660. Baseball Conundrums.

The answers to the following questions are all baseball terms:

Example: What is a popular type of automobile body? The coach.

1. Who is the meanest man? 2. The most domestic man? 3. Used at afternoon teas? 4. Most susceptible to contagious disease? 5. The best navigator? 6. What flies by night? 7. What hit is an insect? 8. What do manufacturers dread? 9. Who keeps coolest? 10. Why is baseball an extravagant game?

Harwich, Mass. CAPE COD.

Prize Offers.

The usual prizes will be given; see list of prize winners. Send answers and original puzzles to Kappa Kappa, care THE AMERICAN BOY, Detroit, Mich.

Answers to January Puzzles.

643. Aiaia, aiaiai, aye-aye, ayuyu, euouae, eyey, etc. Kappa found 65 words composed entirely of vowels in the New Int. Dict.

644. Bonbons.

645. Caution, auction.

646. Paavo Nurmi.

647. Healthy.

648.

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        D
      C O T
    T A M E D
  C A N I N E S
D O M I N A N C E
  T E N A N T E D
    D E N T I N E
      S C E N E S
        E D E S A
```

December Prize Winners.

Best first class list (six solutions): Ban Anna Earl, Hoboken, N. J., $1.00.

Best second class list (five solutions): Kid Peewee, University City, Mo., 75c.

Best third class (four solutions): Y. I. De Clare, Lake Como, N. J., 50c.

Best fourth class (less than four): Luke Lively, Metuchen, N. J., 25c.

Most popular puzzle: Foo Lish (642), Florence, Ala.

Six consecutive completes: Bob Zante, Athens, Pa.; Essel Doubleyou, Lansdowne, Pa.; Wise Bug, New York, N. Y. These get the "Key to Puzzledom," and this offer is withdrawn. Seven solvers have won "Keys" in this way.

Books for 25 solutions go to A. A. A., Aiken Du Mall, Akie Jew, Albert Bond, Albert Lewis, Alexander McIver, B. B. W. Axe, Bill, Cambala, Count Meowt, C. U. U. Aitch, Earl LeMorn, Ed U. Cation, Fatty, Foo Lish, Francis Headley, Franklin W. Dunbar, Jr., Frizzled Poodle, Geo. Ruhlen 4th, Harrod, Henry Overholt, H. Kay, I. D. Clair, Ike N. Hunt, Ima Bug, Ima Tyro, Jay Alden, Kee Lee, Know Me Al, M. E. Carpenter, Nee Lee, Night Hawk, Odie, Percy Verance, Ptah, Raymond McCreary, Ray Zinn, Robert D. Porter, Sara Swift Walker, Si, Snoozer, Sol Vemalle, Tecumseh, The Gink, Wise Bug, X. L. C. Orr.

Honorable Mention.

First Class Solvers: A. A. A., A. K. J.*, Albert Bond*, Alexander McIver, Amos Quito*, Arja Dee, Ban Anna Earl, Baron Braynes, Bob Zante, Cal I. Fornia, Canuck*, C. L. Spears, Comet, Count Meowt, Craig McGinnis, Crane*, Darling, Don Key, Dub-el-chyn, E. Hart Ford, Eldo, Elm Burk, Erle C. Edington, Essel Doubleyou, Essel G., Eureka, Fatty, F. E. Bruary, Foo Lish, Francis Headley*, Franklin Dunbar, Jr., George Ruhlen IV, George S. Kyllo*, G. H. Ropes*, Harley Pierce, Harold Ringgenberg, Harrod, Hawkshaw, H. Kay, Ic Ive Von, I. D. Clair*, Ima Bugg, Ima Lone, Ima Tyro, Ina, I. R. Ishman*, Jack Canuck, James III, Jay Alden*, John C. Gale*, Julius Caesar, Justa C. Ker, Leo Kahn, L. M. Enopee, Lynn C. Doyle*, Minn E. Apolis*, Munkee, Nala G. Nol, Night Hawk*, Odie*, O. G. Re*, Ohio Kid, Oley*, Osaple, Otis Wingo, Percy Verance, Pete, Ptah, Puz LeDur, Rabbit, Ray D. O'Bug, Ray Zinn*, Rev. O. Lushin, Robert D. Porter, Robert Howes, Robert Stanton, Sara Swift Walker, Sherlock, Si*, Sigh N. Tifik, Simja Smaad, Snoozer*, Sol Vemalle, Suey Side, The Duke, The Gink, The Owl, Thos. J. Perkins, Tom E. Catt, Tryem All, Virgil Shepard, W. E. Kelley, W. F. Stevenson*, Whirl S. Phan, Wise Bug*, Wm. Neely.

Second Class Solvers: A. B. C. D. Goldfish, Aiken Du Mall*, Am I. Wright, Arry Zona*, Bar Knee Google, B. B. W Axe*, Bill, Billie Loudermilk, Blockhead*, Bob Pruyn, Bull O'-Knee, C. A. Lamity, Cambala, Clabra, Colonel, C. U. U. Aytch*, Dan Banta, Della K. Tessen, Earl LeMorn, Ed U. Cation*, Eleanor Friese, Flo Ballwood, Frank Bateman, Frank Brown, Frizzled Poodle*, Hafta B. Rite, Henry Overholt, Ike N. Hunt*, Ima Jean Yus, Insane Feline, Iva Rived, Jack Pine, James Isaac Brown, Kelly Lagle, Kid Peewee, King Cotton, Know Me Al, Lek Trik Lite, M. E. Carpenter, Moron More, Mort, Mose Keeto, Nellie Norwood*,

Onk! Onk!, Paragon, Phil A. Mint, Polarite*, Ray, Raymond McCreary*, Revlos I*. Richard McKirdy, Shep, So Ur Wun, Spaghetti, Tecumseh*, Top Notch, Toute deSuite, U. Betti Khan*, Who's Yer Boy, X L C. Orr*.

Third Class Solvers: Aitch Aitch, Albert Lewis, A. P. Rill, Art E. Choke, A. V. Ator, Bernard Smith, Boyer Voisard, Cafany, Carl Frye*, Charles Powell, Dick Shun Ary, Donald Manley, Frederick Wirth, Got M. All, Harold E. Burdick*, Im A. Skunk, Jacobowitz, Johnjo, Kee Lee, Kenneth Scholl, Laurence Gibson, Lester Brewer, Mebbe I. Kan, Meno, Mi O. Mi, Miss Teerie Mann, Noah Count, Nog, Old Black Joe, Onyx, Oowah Tagoo Siam, Ory Ental, Perk O'Later, Raymond Badger, Red Duck, Robert Roba, Robert Tebeau, Sagebrusher, Sambo, Try N. Winn, Wes from Wis, Y I. deClare.

Puzzle Talk.

Not much space for talk. . . . Many thanks for all your good wishes. . . . In the Geographical Word Hunt, No. 641, we mentioned that no names were to be repeated, so several very good lists had to be thrown out which contained duplication of names. The prize winner, D. V. Walters (address unknown), had 883 Christian names of U. S. towns. Special mention is given to those having over 500, as follows: Allen K. Jewett, 725; F. E. Bruary, 669; Robert D. Stanton, 667; Elm Burk, 629; Comet, 614; Ptah, 584; Nellie Norwood, 545; Bernard Ketter, 543; Robert D. Porter, 513. . . . The commonest names found were Franklin, with 33 towns bearing the name; Florence, 31; Chester, 30; and Marion, 29. Then came Hope, Alma, Sidney, Viola, and Clyde. . . . Be sure you find all the triangles! There are a lot of them. . . . Remember that even if you send in but two or three correct answers, you may win a prize in the fourth class. Nothing venture, nothing have. . . . The largest number of solvers we've ever had is 2500; see if you can't break the record in March.—*Kappa Kappa.*

For the Boys to Make

(*Continued from page 56*)

it may be stained, or finished any way wanted.

The first pieces to prepare are the legs (A, Fig. 3). These are 1¾-inches square. If you are building the desk of pine, you can rip pieces of 2-by-4 in half. Cross rail B of the end frames is also 1¾-inches square, and top rail C is ¾-inch thick by 3 inches wide. As you will see by the end frame detail (Fig. 3), the parts are not mortised and tenoned, but butted together and screwed. Buy blued iron round-head finishing screws 1½-inches and 2½-inches long. The diagram shows the relative positions of the parts and screws.

When the pair of frames have been assembled, cut front and rear rails D and F out of 1¾-inch stock, by the length given in Fig. 1, back board E and foot board G out of an 8-inch board ¾-inch thick by the lengths shown in Fig. 1, and fasten the four between the end frames in the positions shown.

A large drawing board makes an excellent desk top. That of the model measures 30 by 42 inches. If you cannot obtain one, it will cost little to have one glued up at a local planing mill. Another way is to make a top of tongued-and-grooved boards.

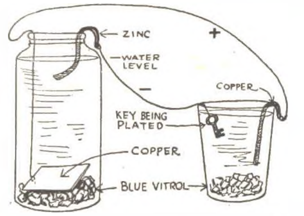
A narrow shelf fastened to the back board makes a handy rack for ink bottles, pens, pencils, drawing instruments and erasers. A strip ½-inch thick and 2 inches wide is large enough (I, Fig. 2). A second strip (J) is nailed to the edge of I to form a ledge to keep articles from slipping off the rack.

The desk top may be screwed to the legs, but it is convenient to have a tilting top for a drafting table, and you might follow the plan shown in Fig. 4, suggested by one of our readers, Lawrence Brown of Roanoke, Virginia.

As you will see by the detail drawings, the tilting top is pivoted to rail D with hinges (K) screwed to rail D and the underside of the top. The adjusting device consists of a pair of blocks (L) of the dimensions given in Fig. 5, screwed to the under side of the top, a pair of slotted bars (M) pivoted at one end of blocks L with a bolt (N. Fig. 6) and fastened to rails C with a bolt and wing-nut (O) at a point which will give the amount of tilt wanted. Figure 6 shows the bar, which you can prepare yourself if you own a drill and hacksaw, or have a blacksmith make. Lid supports and casement or storm-sash adjusters are also adaptable.

When you have assembled your desk-table, finish the woodwork by staining, shellacking and waxing, or varnishing, or by painting, or by enameling.

Do Your Own Electroplating



COPPER plating is a winter sport that is useful and lots of fun besides. It's simple too—no intricate technical process, but an easy electrical operation that you can perform any time.

First thing needed is a battery to furnish the power for the plating process. A couple of dry cells will do the work; but it's more fun to make your own battery. Materials needed are a pint fruit jar, a dime's worth of blue vitriol from a drug store, a two-inch square of copper with two feet of copper wire attached, and a piece of heavy zinc an inch wide and four inches long, also with two feet of wire attached.

In the bottom of the jar put about a handful of the vitriol. Fill the jar with water, nearly to the top, then put the copper on top of the vitriol, and bend the zinc into a crook so that it will hook over the edge of the jar, with one end in the solution. That's your battery. It's of the closed circuit type, and the zinc should be removed from the solution when it's not in use—otherwise the solution will act on the zinc pole. This is the negative pole, corresponding to the center pole of a dry battery.

The actual plating apparatus is very similar to this battery. For small objects, a common water glass with half an inch of vitriol on the bottom, nearly filled with water, is large enough. A small strip of copper is hooked over the edge of the glass, like the zinc in the battery, and attached to the wire from the copper in the battery. Then the object to be plated —say an iron key—is attached to the wire from the zinc, placed completely in the solution—and the plating begins!

In a moment bubbles will form on the key, and a dark coating will appear. This is copper—taken by electro-action from the copper strip, the positively charged element, to the key, attached to the negative element. When there is a good coating of copper on the key, remove it, let it dry and rub it with a cloth. You'll find it covered with pure, shiny copper.

Lots of things you can electroplate in this way. Don't try it on mother's silver teaspoons or father's penknife. But you can do it on plenty of other things—things the appearance of which will be improved by the plating—and enjoy it a lot, too.—*M. P. Kwapil.*

An Amateur Mail Carrier

I LIVE in a small town where many mail deliveries are made at boxes located at a distance from the houses. Some people found going for mail inconvenient, and I decided I could help them as well as earn pocket money. I asked them if they would like mail brought right to their front doors; they all said "yes." Now I deliver mail and Sunday papers, and average ten "customers" at 35 cents each a week. It's easy to make daily deliveries, and the $3.50 a week is mighty welcome.—W. G., New Jersey.

Stamps in the Day's News

By Kent B. Stiles

Of the above illustrations three are of Holland's child welfare set. Three are of Germany's tuberculosis set. Three are of Switzerland's "For the Children" set. Three are of Russia's 1825 revolution commemoratives. Three are of Russia's 1905 revolution commemoratives.

ANOTHER stamp has been added to the current series of our own country. On Jan. 11, the Government placed on sale in Washington, D. C., and in Indianapolis, Ind., where Benjamin Harrison died, a 13c stamp, green, bearing a portrait of that President—the same likeness used on an adhesive of the same denomination in the series of 1902. The new stamp is of the same size as the other values of the present set.

The use of a 13c stamp was discontinued after the regular letter postage was reduced from three to two cents when the World War ended. The value was dropped, a few years after 1902, because there was little actual use for it. In 1917 it was reintroduced to serve as combined postage for special delivery and the new postal rate, three cents, occasioned by the action of Congress to raise revenue. The 13c put into circulation in January is for use mostly on parcel post mail.

Russia's Revolutions

IF you have read the history of the land which the Soviets now control you know that in 1825 a revolution took place. It was unsuccessful and some of the leaders were executed and others banished to Siberia. The insurrectionists were called Decembrists and they sought to place on the throne Constantine, elder brother of Nicholas I, then the Emperor. Constantine had previously renounced his privilege to be the ruler.

Commemorative stamps issued by Russia late in 1925—3 kopecs green, 7k brown and 14k red—carry designs significant of the rebellion of a century ago. On the 3k is shown the burial of some of the victims; on the 7k, peasants battling near the statue of St. Peter the Great, in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad); and on the 14k are portraits of five of the ringleaders.

Turning the pages of Russia's history we come to the revolution in the closing months of 1905. Japan had just defeated Russia in war. The Russian government was virtually paralyzed. Rebellion existed in all parts of the empire.

This revolution, finally quelled after much bloodshed, also has been philatelically remembered by stamps issued late in 1925. Values and colors are the same as those of the other series, but the designs of course differ. A crowd of revolutionists, marching, is depicted on the 3k. A leader haranguing a mob is shown on the 7k. And peasants fighting in a public square are pictured on the 14k.

Child Welfare

SELLING postage stamps, in excess of face value, in order to raise funds with which to finance relief for suffering children, is becoming popular in Europe, as is evidenced by a deluge of charity adhesives during the past few months.

In Switzerland appeared once more the Christmas set of "Pro Juventute"—"For the Children"—stamps. These, as in the past, carry the coats-of-arms of various Swiss Cantons, together with the Swiss coat-of-arms on one value, as the designs. Denominations and colors of this new set are 5 centimes plus 5c deep purple, black and green; 10c plus 5c, green and black; 20c plus 5c, red, black, blue and yellow; and 30c plus 10c, deep blue and red.

In Germany somewhat similar stamps have appeared, the designs being the coats-of-arms of Prussia, Bavaria and Saxony. As in Switzerland, the revenue raised is devoted to reducing tuberculosis among children. Values and colors of the German series are 5 pfennigs plus 5pf, green, yellow and black; 10pf plus 10pf, red and light blue; and 20pf plus 20pf, dark blue, pale brown and black.

In Belgium stamps have appeared also with abatement of tuberculosis as the objective. The uniform design is a nurse holding a shield on which are appropriate inscriptions indicating the purpose of the adhesives. Values and colors are 15 centimes plus 5c, lilac; 30c plus 5c, slate; and 1 franc plus 10c, blue, with a cross in red

on each stamp.

In the Netherlands the money raised through the sale of charity stamps is turned over to the Dutch Societies for Child Welfare. On the 2 centimes plus 2c, white, green and yellow, are lilies and the coat-of-arms of the province of North Brabant. On the 7½c plus 3½c, purple and blue, are the medlar flower and the coat-of-arms of the province of Gelderland. On the 10c plus 2½c are the coat-of-arms of South Holland and a rose in the colors of red and yellow merging into the orange that is significant of Holland's flower, the orange blossom.

In France charity stamps have appeared through the sale of which will be financed the building of a tuberculosis sanitorium. Values, 15 centimes plus 5c, 30c plus 5c, and 1 franc plus 10c.

In Spain is being placed on sale on March 1, 2 and 3, a series the proceeds from which will be divided between the Spanish Red Cross and the Spanish Postal Workers' Orphanage. The values correspond to those of the country's current regular set.

In the South Seas

DETAILS regarding New Zealand's commemoratives of last November are now available. These stamps were issued in connection with the holding of the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition, in Dunnedin, and the values and colors are ½ penny, green; 1 penny carmine, and 4 pence, mauve.

The uniform design is a view of the Grand Court fronting the Festival Hall, with hills in the background, all within a Maori frame in which Teko-Teko faces are shown in the upper corners. What is a Teko-Teko face? It is a little carved image which the Maori tribesmen like to place above the doors of their houses—to keep away evils from the homes.

Notes

RUSSIA is to have a new general series. The current designs — soldiers, peasants and workmen—will give way to the Soviet coat-of-arms on some values, and to a portrait of Lenin, Russia's Premier at the time of his death, on other denominations.

A new set has appeared in Italian Somaliland with the values expressed in the centessimi and lira of Italy instead of the besa and anna which are the native currency terms. More than thirty varieties have been created either by surcharging new values on stamps of the colony's present series; or by overprinting "Somalia Italianna" and new values on various Italian adhesives.

The seventh centenary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi will occur next Oct. 3, and, long in advance, Italy is issuing commemorative stamps with designs recalling incidents in the life of the Saint—his vision on Mount Alverno, the Convent of the Franciscans, and so on.

Color changes continue to take place in the stamps of various French colonies. Recently these have affected values in French Equatorial Africa, French Sudan, Guadeloupe, Madagascar, Martinique, New Caledonia, Niger Territory, Upper Volta, and Wallis & Futuna. Within the past few years literally hundreds of French colonial adhesives have been issued, due to postal rate alterations attributed to the depreciation in value of the French franc.

To the King Gustav V portrait type of Sweden of 1920 have been added three new values — 85 ore steel blue, 115 ore brown and 145 ore green.

Tunis is putting forth a new issue, the uniform design being a native woman with a water pot.

Mozambique has issued an entire new series with the designs somewhat similar to the pictorial and ethnographical ones of the series of 1918-'21, except that it includes the following new designs: on the 24 centavos, blue, a negro's head; 25c, brown, a view of Beira; 5 escudos, brown, rubber trees; 10e, carmine, native laborers overseered by an Englishman; 20e, the Zambesi River. There are sixteen other denominations ranging from a quarter-centavo to 2 escudos.

The American Boy Contest

(Continued from page 58)

pen of three-hundred prize chickens, and picks each fowl up in turn to examine it for bad health. If a fowl happens to be ill, it is placed in a separate pen where it is watched very vigilantly until its recovery or death. Mr. Carter then spends two full hours, at least, feasting his eyes upon those precious fowls. All of his dignity has left him by this time, and instead of the polished millionaire you see a typical old farmer viewing his chickens. And he winds up by entering the farm house and going to his trophy room to examine the latest collection of ribbons and prizes which his chickens have won.

A Traveler Teaches History

By Robert Baker (13), Idaho Falls, Idaho.
Special Prize Letter.

THE moment I read the article in the last magazine offering a prize for a letter on this subject, I thought of Mr. B— as the most interesting character I know.

He is an aristocratic old gentleman, not a day under sixty-five. He is a history teacher in the high school and I'd be willing to wager that he knows more history than any other teacher in the United States. His students claim he spends one-fifteenth of the period on history and the rest in Rome, Paris, London, the South Seas, China, or some other place. They know history though because the time he does spend on the lesson is made so interesting. You can hear a pin drop when he talks because everybody in the class is so quiet.

He has been to every place in the world but South America and he plans to go there before he dies. Traveling is his hobby and football runs a close second.

He has told us Boy Scouts about his adventures and many of the strange sights that he has seen. I shall tell you briefly of some of these sights.

While in the South Sea Islands he saw a basket of human heads. Pagan native huts decorated with heads are not unusual sights up in the more remote corners of the islands. On some of the islands he has seen men who live in trees and are no bigger than four feet high. He has a head axe, which is their chief weapon. With one blow they can take off the head of their enemy. The native who has the most heads is chief.

He has looked down into the smoking mouth of Mt. Vesuvius and waded in ashes knee-deep around the crater.

He has been through old Christian catacombs hundreds of years old. These catacombs are miles and miles of passageways under ground where the Christians buried their dead in the days of Caesar and Nero.

He has seen the wall of China; he has been through the London tower and seen the block with the head axe that English people were beheaded on; and he has seen surf-riders in Hawaii.

These are only a few of the many sights he has seen. If you knew him you would agree with me when I say he is the most interesting character I know.

Honorable Mentions go to Nelson R. Miller (19), Bainville, Montana; Gordon Mork, (15), Lakota, N. Dak.; William Kostka (20), Galesburg, Ill.; H. D. Miller, Cleveland, Ohio; Wilbert Whitfield (19), Fremont, Neb.; Bruce S. Noad (20), Smiths Falls, Ont.; William Heitler (16), Bronx, N. Y.

Words of Wisdom

The part of an auto that causes more accidents than any other is the nut that holds the steering wheel.

Then Skate Away

Notice in exchange: "To the skating public—Please co-operate with us by not skating on our ponds until all ice is cut."

Old Enough to Shave?

Mrs. Bing: "Oh, I wish these receipts would be more definite."

Mr. Bing: "What's the difficulty, my dear?"

Mrs. Bing: "This one tells how to use up old potatoes, but it does not say how old the potatoes must be."

A Misplaced Letter

Diner: "Waiter, there's a button in my soup."

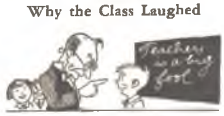
Waiter (ex-printer): "Typographical error, sir; it should be 'mutton.'"

His Nose Knows

Waiter (solicitously): "Something wrong with your egg, sir?"

Breakfaster: "Wrong? I ordered a three-minute egg and you've brought me a three-year one."

Why the Class Laughed



Teacher—"So you admit that you wrote on the blackboard that I'm a fool. Well, at least, I am glad that you are truthful."

Preference and Passion

Teacher: "Do you understand the difference between liking and loving?"

Willie: "Yes, ma'am; I like my father and mother, but I love pie."

Only Fatal

Doctor (to Atchison Dinge): "What did your father die of?"

Dinge: "Ah don't know, boss, but it wasn't nothin' serious."

The Truthful Camera

Another reason why we hate to have a photograph taken is because it makes us look like we were having a photograph taken.

An Unpronounced Opinion

"What do you know about metempsychosis?"

"It is hard to say."

Lucky

Drowning Man: "Help! Throw me a life-saver."

Old Lady (on wharf): "Now ain't it lucky I didn't eat that whole package of mints. But I don't see what good they can do him."

A Perfect Illusion

"Yes, Jeremiah, Alice said that last night she dreamed she was dancing with you."

"You thrill me all to pieces, Hezekiah."

"—and then she woke up to find her kid brother pounding her feet with a flat-iron."

"Please, Teacher, may I change my seat? You've given me a place next to Willy Waterbug and the dampness has taken all the curl out of my antennae."

No Rapid Transit

A few days after a farmer had placed his two children in a school a book agent called on him and said, "Now that your children go to school you ought to buy them an encyclopedia."

"Buy them an encyclopedia? Hanged if I do," was the reply. "Let them walk, like I did."

Eggs for All Tastes

Customer: "Have you any eggs that have no chickens in them?"

Grocer: "Yes, ma'am; duck eggs."

Resiliency on the Screen

In America, a golf ball was dropped from a twelfth-story window in order to ascertain its bouncing properties. We understand that aspiring film comedians are tested in the same way.

With These Few Remarks

Parson Johnson: "De choir will now sing, 'I'm Glad Salvation's Free,' while Deacon Ketcham passes de hat. De congregation will please 'member, while salvation am free, we hab to pay de choir foh singin' about it. All please contribute accordin' to yo' means an' not yo' meanness."

The Day After Christmas

"Could I see General Blank?"
"No; General Blank is sick."
"What made him sick?"
"Oh, things in general."

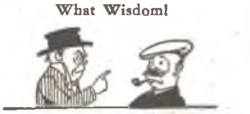
An Unpopular Invention

A chemist has invented a process by which gold can be spread out more thinly. Shucks! It's spread out much too thin already.

Beats Methuselah

Illustrating his lecture with stereopticon slides and motion-pictures, Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews, Gobi Desert explorer, yesterday showed an audience of 400 at the Long Beach Ebell Club just how he and members of his staff dug out dinosaur eggs, 10,000,000,000 years ago.—*News item in a California paper.*

What Wisdom!



Pat: "That was a foine sintiment Casey got off at the banquet last night."

Mike: "What was it?"

Pat: "He said that the sweetest mimories in loife are the ricollictions of things forgotten."

Logical

Teacher: "Use the right verb in this sentence: 'The toast was drank in silence.'"

Pupil: "The toast was ate in silence."

Getting Into High

Teacher to seven-year-old: "So you have broken off a tooth, have you? How did you do it?"

Seven-year-old: "Oh, shifting gears on a lollipop."

A Successful Translation

Tourist (paying his bill): "Well, I'm square now."

Hotel Keeper: "Yes, sir, and I hope you will be round again very shortly."

Contents for March

Cover drawing by *Paul Branson.*

ATWATER KENT RADIO

Two boy explorers in a radio factory

CHAPTER VI: *The Cabinet Makers*

DEAR DAD:—

WE THOUGHT we did pretty well when we made our first set out of a soap box in the woodshed, didn't we?

Well, you would have blinked if you had been with Howard and me today and seen them making cabinets in the Atwater Kent factory.

The woodworking department alone is as big as Spiegel's old brewery that they use for a pickle factory at home. It has to be, because several thousand cabinets for Atwater Kent sets are made in it every day.

The solid mahogany for the cabinets comes from Mexico. If the grain in any plank isn't just right, or if there's a knot, the plank is junked.

When a good plank has been sawed into pieces the right size for the cabinets, the next step is to saw grooves in the pieces, so they can be fitted to each other. Men measure the grooves with steel gauges to make sure they're accurate to the 1000th of an inch.

"We might clap an ordinary ruler on them and the average man wouldn't know the difference," a gauger said. "But that wouldn't satisfy Mr. Kent. He says: 'You've got to make every cabinet so perfect that if the fussiest cabinet maker in the world came in here he'd tell you, "That's a good job."'"

After the grooves are cut, the pieces are sanded, first by machinery, then by hand. I couldn't see how wood could be made any smoother, but, would you believe it?—it has to go through four more sandpaperings before they'll admit that it is smooth enough for an Atwater Kent cabinet. The factory must use up a lot of sandpaper in a year, but I forgot to ask how much.

In the place where they fit the pieces of mahogany together, cabinets were being turned out so fast you could hardly see what was going on. Yet no one seemed to be in a rush.

Well, in the next room, which is the finishing department, we came to a big tank full of a liquid which they call the Adam brown water stain. It would cost only half as much to use an oil stain, but the cabinet wouldn't be quite as good looking.

Each cabinet is dipped in this tank and then wiped with a cloth to make sure the stain is evenly distributed. The drying is done in a monstrous oven, with machinery inside to keep the cabinets moving up and down in the warm air.

And when they come out, dry, the men go to work and wet them all over again! There is a row of booths, like caves, with a man in every cave holding a hose nozzle and spraying cabinets with orange shellac. Then they are sprayed with three coats of lacquer, with a drying after every coat, of course, and a sandpapering, too!

And just when you're ready to say, "There's nothing more they can do," another set of men rub the cabinets down with pumice-stone and water and then with pumice-stone and oil.

When I told the finishing-room superintendent that we had an Atwater Kent set at home, he said "Well, after what you've seen today you can tell your Mother that you not only have the best set, but the cabinet will look just as well when you're a grandfather as it does now."

Will you break the news to Mother?

Your Aff't Son, Jack

For Mother and Dad: In the Atwater Kent factory, Jack and his brother Howard have been finding out what makes Atwater Kent Radio so reliable as well as so good looking that it has been accepted as *the* Radio in hundreds of thousands of homes.

May we remind you that broadcast programs have been vastly improved this winter, and that reception is now at its best?

If you haven't already placed an Atwater Kent Receiving Set in your home, for yourselves and the children, there is no better time to do it.

And be sure and insist upon an Atwater Kent Radio Speaker, too, for the best set cannot do itself justice if the speaker is inferior.

Write for illustrated booklet telling the complete story of Atwater Kent Radio

ATWATER KENT MFG. COMPANY
A. Atwater Kent, President
4706 WISSAHICKON AVE. PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Radio Speakers $12 to $28

Model 20 Compact, $80

Prices slightly higher from the Rockies west, and in Canada.

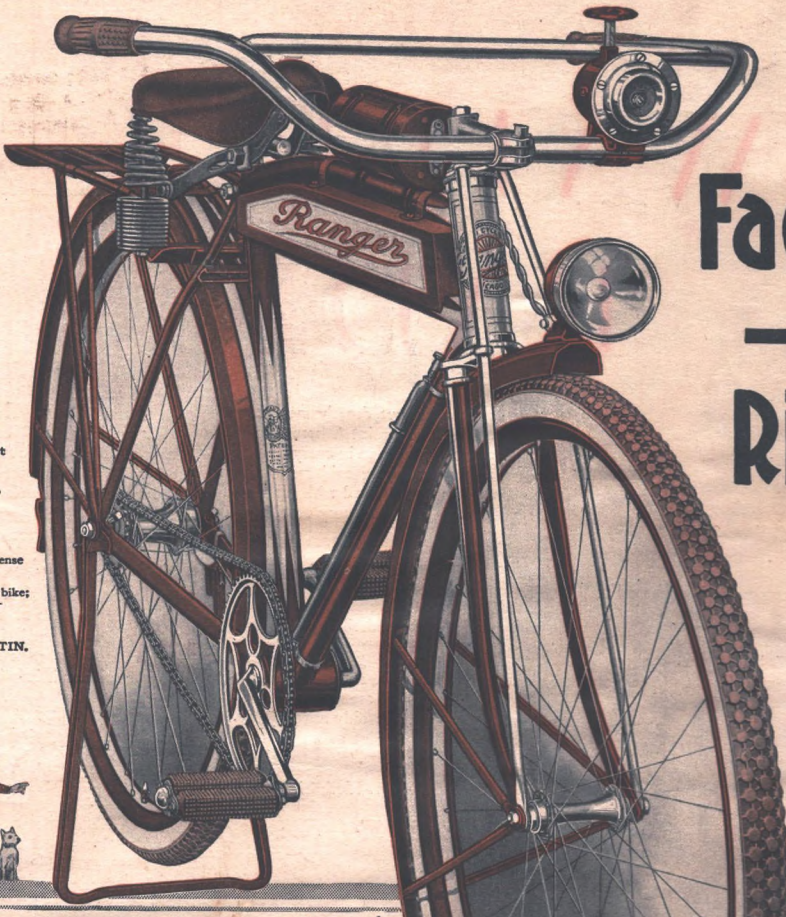
Spraying the Cabinets. Many men with brushes couldn't apply the lacquer as fast or as evenly as this one man does with his spray gun.

New Ranger BICYCLES

Golden Brown with Ivory White Trim. A model to suit every taste and any pocket book—Roadsters, Racers, Motorbikes, Camelbacks, Double Bars, Scouts, Juveniles—Girls' and Ladies' models, too. The free Ranger Catalog offers you

44 Styles Colors Sizes

Prices from $21.50



Factory -to- Rider

My Ranger Bike

What is a boy without a bike
How does the youngster feel
Who misses the fun he OUGHT to get
A-riding his RANGER Wheel?

What is a boy who doesn't know
He must balance himself or FALL?
It's hard to make a man of such,
For he isn't a boy at all.

The wit and balance of boys to-day,
Spread out in a wholesome span,
Will make the balance and common sense
Of a straight and wholesome man.

So here's to my bike—my RANGER bike;
And here's to the spinning wheels—
For it makes a man of a normal boy,
From his head to his happy heels.

JOHN MARTIN.

We Ship On Approval

It is very probable that you know the "Ranger" and have always wanted one, but we ask you to prove it best by personal use, in a *thirty day free riding test.* So just select from our big Ranger catalog, the one you like best of all. Enjoy its marvelous beauty, marvel at its many features of equipment and convenience, thrill at its speed, and try its comfort and ease of running. If, at the end of 30 days, you find any cause for dissatisfaction, ship it back at our expense and the trial will not cost you a cent. We mean this and back it by a $5,000.00 cash deposit guaranty at the First National Bank of Chicago.

Delivered to You Free

Direct from the factory, carefully assembled, oiled and inspected—encased in a waterproof paper bag and packed in special crate, we will ship the Ranger bicycle of your selection *by fast prepaid express* and guarantee quick delivery in perfect condition. In this way we can serve you as we have millions of other bicycle riders during the past generation. In the busy season we ship as many as three thousand bicycles in a week direct from the Factory to the individual rider in this way, so you can be sure of prompt, careful treatment for your order. The big free Ranger catalog tells you just how to choose. Your Ranger will be delivered *to your home* in the larger towns *anywhere* in the United States. You call for the bicycle at the express office in the smaller places. In either case the delivery charges from Chicago will be fully prepaid by the Mead Cycle Company.

Girls' and Ladies' Models Also.

100% Equipped

The Ranger "*Motorbike*" models is the most completely equipped bicycle in the world. (See illustration.) Many other models are also equipped with new and exclusive features found on no other bicycles.

$5.00 a Month

If you do not find it convenient to pay cash for your Ranger bicycle, we are prepared to ship it to you at once and permit you to pay for it in Five Dollar monthly payments. Owing to many economies (possible only because you are doing business direct with the maker) the extra charge for extended payment is only slightly higher than our factory-to-rider cash prices.

Rider Agents Wanted

Thousands of boys and young men in the smaller cities and towns and in the country are making big money acting as Rider Agents, exhibiting and taking orders for "Rangers", from their friends and neighbors. If you want to be a Rider Agent so state when sending for your catalog and we will enclose full details of this famous money-making plan.

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at money-saving Factory Prices, are also illustrated and described in our big Ranger catalog. Millions of riders have saved money on sundries at our Factory Prices. These hundreds of accessories that add to the comfort and convenience of any bicycle—lamps, luggage carriers, horns, tires, bells, sirens, pedals, chains, handle bars, locks, rims, built-up wheels, hubs and spokes—are carefully selected by our buyers in Chicago and Birmingham, England, from the leading parts makers of the world. Looking through this catalog is just like taking a trip through the largest and greatest bicycle store, seeing bargains, new ideas and conveniences that you never saw or heard of before. There is *no* equal for Mead quality, style and price.

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$5.00 Premium Free

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