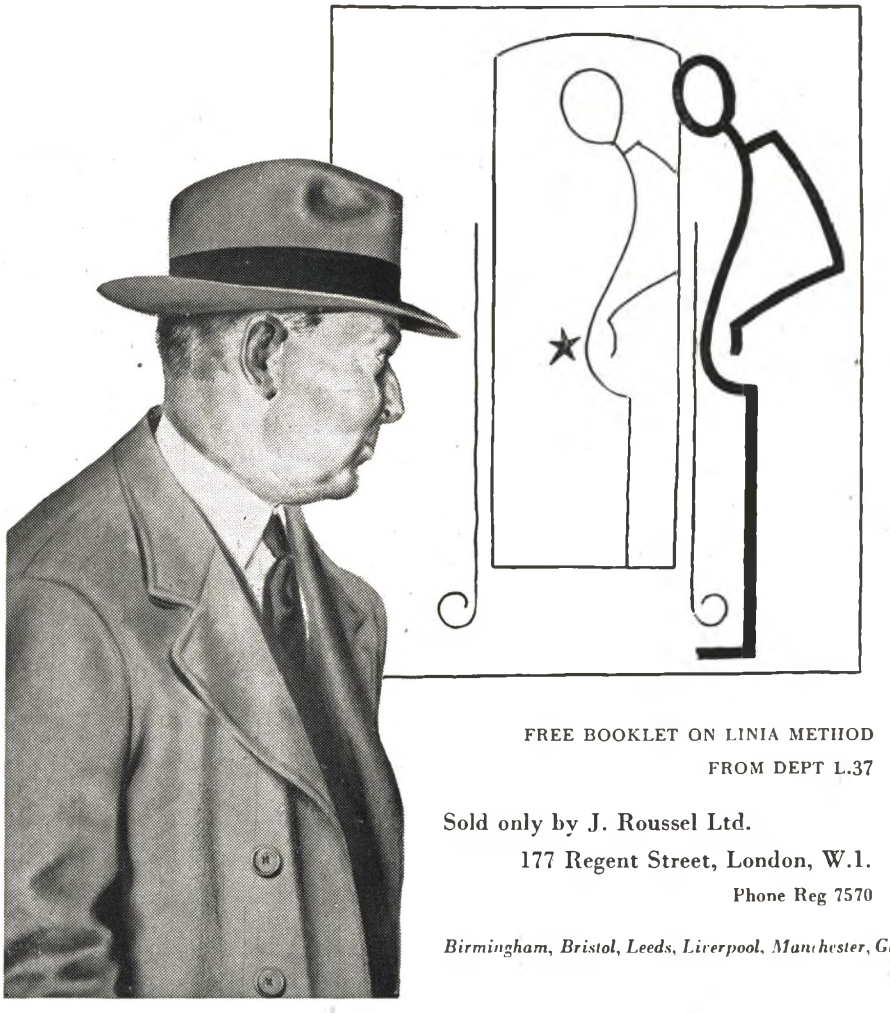

The
WIDE WORLD
THE
MAGAZINE
FOR MEN
FEBRUARY 1950
1/3

I know, I know . . . it's been worrying me too. Bad for one's pride and not so good for health either, all that unsupported slackness. Muscles go soft, tummy suffers . . . Well, at my time of life a bit of help is called for, don't you think? A LINIA BELT, you say? You couldn't be righter! I've come to the same conclusion myself.



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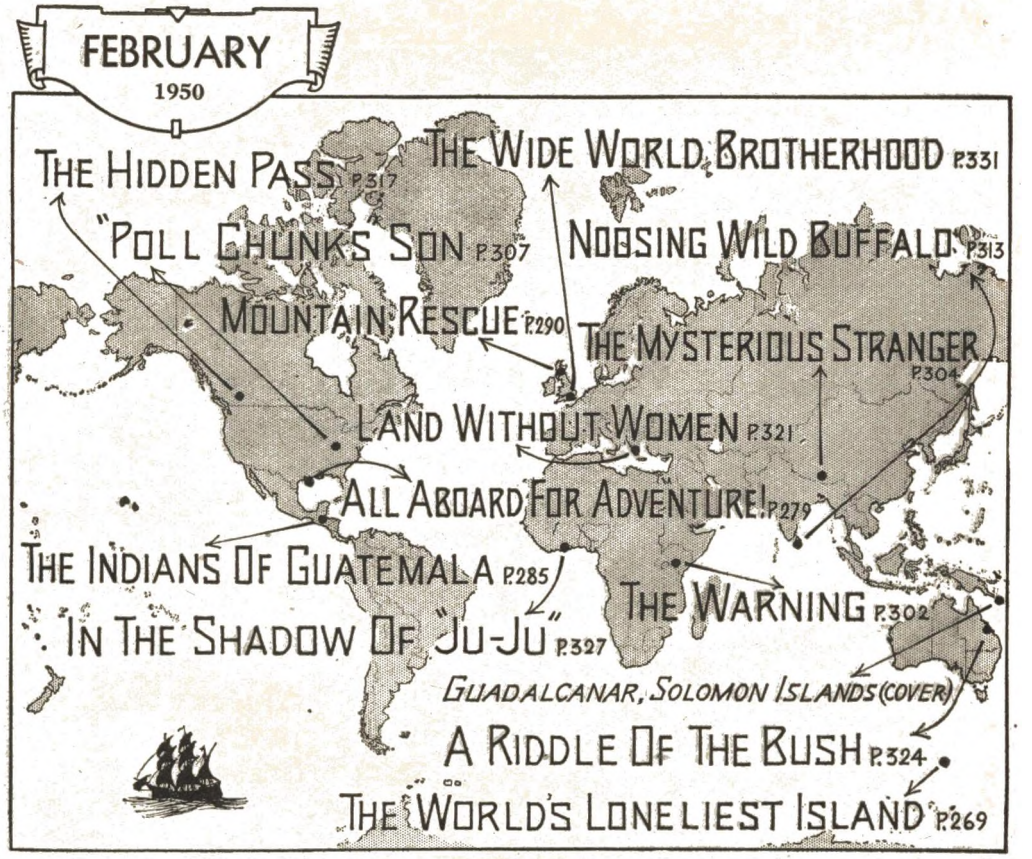

The unique "WIDE WORLD" Contents Map, showing the locality of every article and story in this issue.

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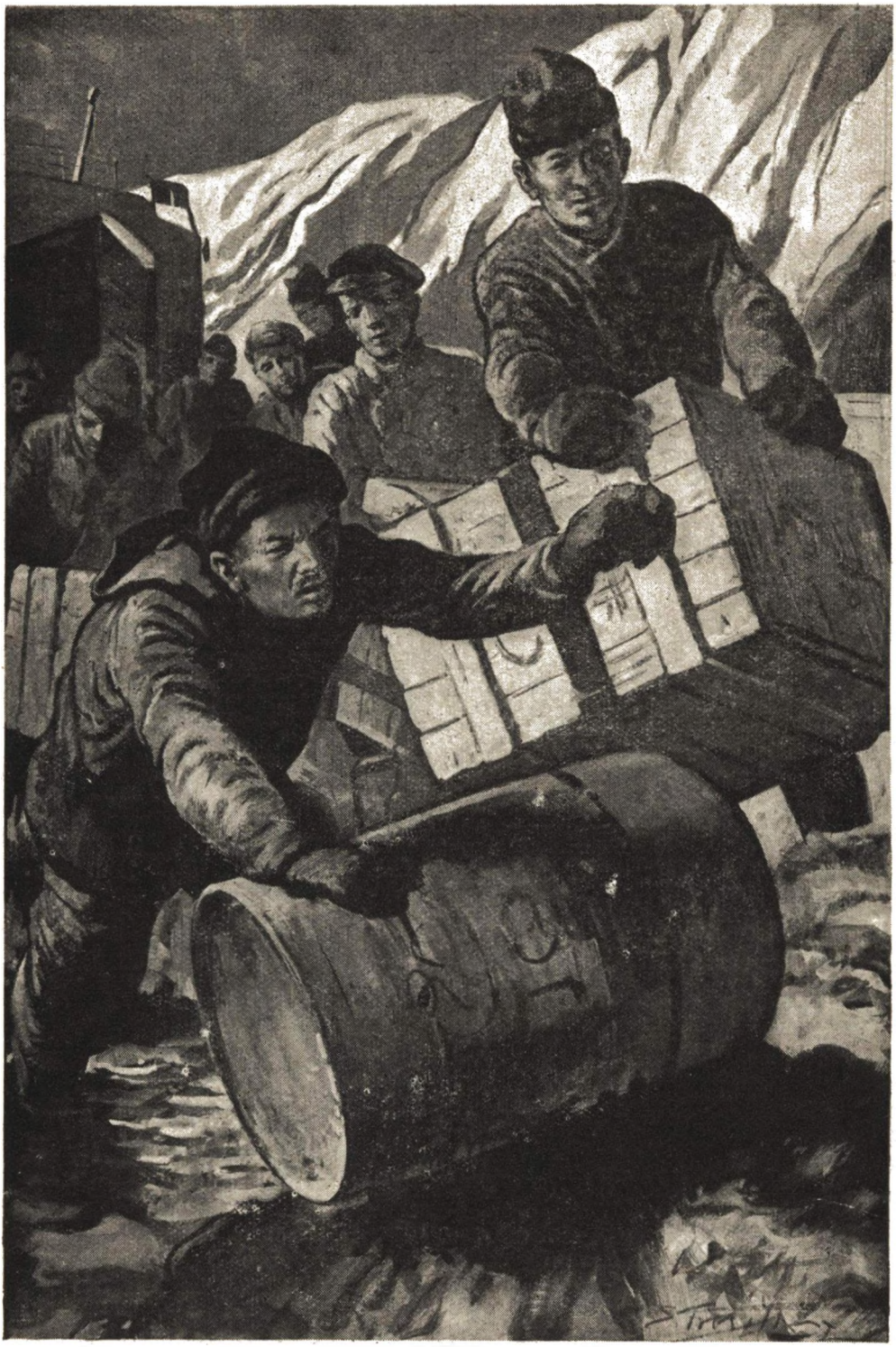


"AT ATLAS COVE WE WERE WELCOMED BY A DEPUTATION OF FRIENDLY PENGUINS."

(See Page 271.)

THE WORLD'S LONELIEST ISLAND

By ARTHUR SCHOLES

Member of the Australian Antarctic Expedition, 1947-1949

Heard Island, which figures in this remarkable narrative, is a grim outpost of Antarctica, three thousand five hundred miles south-west of Melbourne, Australia, and at the very bottom of the globe. Here, in the interests of scientific research, fourteen young men spent fifteen months completely cut off from the rest of the world, under climatic conditions which most of us would consider utterly unendurable. Mr. Scholes's story of their experiences will be found extremely interesting.

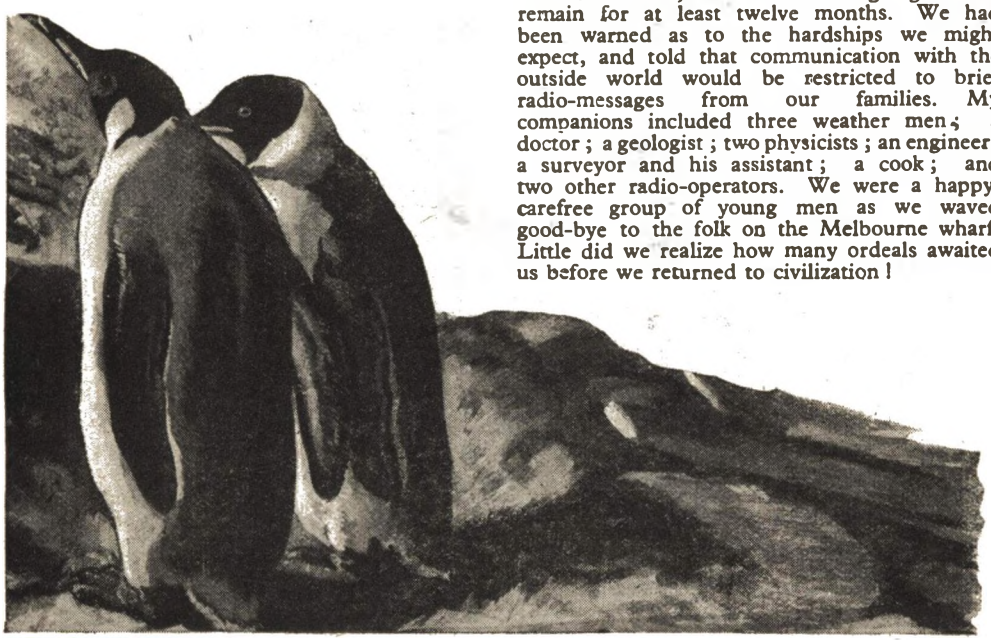
SOME time ago I arrived in England after living for fifteen months on the loneliest and stormiest spot of land in the world—desolate Heard Island, rocky outpost of Antarctica, three thousand five hundred miles south-west of Melbourne.

Discovered in the middle of last century by an American sealer, Heard was for several years a centre of sealing activity, but there is no record of the operations of the men concerned. Only the wooden grave-boards, the rusted cooking-pots and spades, driftwood, and sundry crude dugouts remain as their memorials. We know little or nothing as to how these hardy adventurers from many lands survived the terrible Antarctic winters, meanwhile hunting seals for their pelts or boiling down the blubber.

Heard Island, at the western edge of the Australian Antarctic Territory, was chosen as the base for the 1947 Australian Antarctic Expedition, sponsored by the External Affairs Department of the Commonwealth Government.

Normally a journalist on a Sydney evening newspaper, I applied, with a colleague, to join the expedition, both of us having been marine radio-operators with the Australian and Allied merchant navies during the war. Later we had returned to our newspaper jobs, but the work seemed humdrum after the adventure and incident of life at sea. Unfortunately my friend failed to pass the medical examination, and I found myself among thirteen strangers when we eventually sailed from Melbourne on November 17th, 1947, bound for the Farthest South.

We travelled down to Antarctica in the Australian Navy's *L.S.T.* 3501, commanded by Lieut.-Commander George M. Dixon, formerly of London. Our party, fourteen strong, was to be landed on the island to establish a permanent weather station, all of us having agreed to remain for at least twelve months. We had been warned as to the hardships we might expect, and told that communication with the outside world would be restricted to brief radio-messages from our families. My companions included three weather men; a doctor; a geologist; two physicists; an engineer; a surveyor and his assistant; a cook; and two other radio-operators. We were a happy, carefree group of young men as we waved good-bye to the folk on the Melbourne wharf. Little did we realize how many ordeals awaited us before we returned to civilization!



Landing stores and equipment in Atlas Cove.

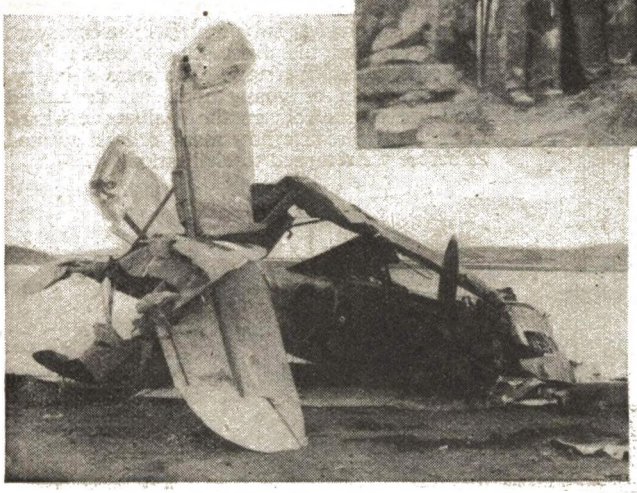
UNRELIABLE CHARTS

Although a carefully organized scientific expedition, we possessed only the scantiest information about our destination; even our chart of the island proved unreliable, for later on we discovered that Heard was actually sixty miles from its recorded position! The rest of our data was equally unsatisfactory. For instance, the height of the extinct volcano known as Big Ben Peak was given as 7,000ft., but when our Walrus amphibian eventually flew over it, close to the summit, the altimeter showed 11,000ft.!

The three-week voyage to Heard was packed with incident. It grew colder every day, and in the "Roaring Forties" our flat-bottomed landing-vessel was tossed about like a cork by huge rollers which dwarfed the funnel and caused the ship's officers to speculate uneasily as to our chances of survival. For four days, under leaden skies and in zero visibility, the little L.S.T. battled her way across the most notorious stretch of stormy sea in the world. All hands were called out to make fast the shifting deck-cargo, which was threatening to smash our 'plane and the ship's boats. Men toiled desperately for hours, at the risk of their lives, while great green seas continually swept the decks. It was a grim struggle, continuing without cessation until we were in the track of the icebergs. Here our radar watch, maintained day and night, gave us a measure of security denied to previous expeditions.

We first sighted Heard Island on December 11th, 1947, the white dome of Big Ben being visible above the clouds at twenty-five miles' distance. Dawn breaks at 2 a.m. in these far southern latitudes, and the awe-inspiring majesty of that white island, glistening in the clear sunlight like some vast iceberg, is something I shall always remember.

One of the huts left by the old-time sealers.



The "Walrus" 'plane after the hurricane had finished with it.

The ensuing four weeks were a period of anxiety and hardship while we laboured to unload the four hundred tons of expedition equipment. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to land from barges,

but the heavy swell threatened to capsize the clumsy craft or drive them against the rugged coastline of thousand-foot rock and ice-cliffs. The only sheltered beach on the whole island is Atlas Cove, and finally we were forced to move up there. It was here that we found traces of the old-time sealers—the hovels they had lived in, the great iron pots in which they boiled down the seal blubber, and the crude head-boards marking the last resting-places of the unfortunates who had perished.

At Atlas Cove we were welcomed by a deputation of friendly penguins and the

An interval for hot drinks and a smoke

The landing ship beached at Atlas Cove to put ashore equipment.

grunting and barking of elephant seals. These extraordinary creatures resemble immense slugs fifteen to eighteen feet long, and weigh up to *four tons*! With the carnivorous birds of the island, they were to be our sole companions during the period of our isolation.

The landing operations proved hazardous in the extreme, and finally Lieut.-Commander Dixon was forced to beach his craft at Wharf Point. Working right round the clock, the crew and the members of the expedition contrived to clear a great portion of the cargo. The tractor was the first thing to go ashore, and was then used to drag oil-drums and food supplies over the rocks and hummocks to the site selected for the establishment of our weather-station.

THE HURRICANE

Before long the unloading was interrupted by the fiercest hurricane yet recorded in these latitudes. Our little ship was compelled to run for the comparative safety of the open sea, where she endured a storm in which the wind reached a peak of one hundred and twenty miles an hour! Half a dozen men, marooned on the island, lost radio communication with her. When they were at last able to leave their hut, two days later, they discovered that a particularly violent gust had turned the Walrus amphibian seaplane upside down and wrecked it! The machine had been left securely moored on the beach at Atlas Cove and had made only one flight—over the top of Big Ben Peak.

I was aboard the landing-ship during that storm, and can testify to the amazing force of the wind. Great waves were literally sliced in half as they reared up, and spindrift flew past

The Author.

A midwinter blizzard strikes the snow-buried camp.

Pontoons were used to float some of the stores ashore.

"The great elephant-seals were very hostile."

in blinding clouds. Birds were observed flying *backwards*, unable to make any headway against the hurricane. It was impossible to stand upright on the boat-deck; I had to crawl painfully on hands and knees. The officers on duty in the charthouse feared the steel deck would be rolled up before their eyes, like the lid of a sardine-tin!

"In all my years at sea I've never seen anything like it," declared the skipper, who did not leave the bridge during the whole two days.

Safe in the lee of the island once more, the weather moderated, and unloading was resumed by scows, pontoons, and rafts which were floated ashore. By the end of December the landing operations were complete and the erection of our permanent camp well under way.

We celebrated New Year's Eve, 1947, and the completion of the first "pre-fab" hut, with a small party. The expedition men, who had hitherto been living in Army tents, were then able to move into more congenial quarters. These insulated huts were quite comfortable, being complete with lighting, shelves, and petrol stoves.

We took no chances with the weather; once we started erecting a hut we carried on until the structure was complete. We tied the roofs down with wire hawsers and built stone barricades all round, just as the sealers had done, for we feared the terrific power of the Antarctic winds might blow the buildings over and wreck our homes.

Heard Island, I should explain, lies in the direct track of the southern cyclones, which are "bred" in the South Atlantic. The cyclone course sweeps northwards towards South Africa, then veers south again past Heard, and finally disappears in the ocean wastes hundreds of miles below New Zealand.

It was our job, during the period of our exile,

to plot these formidable disturbances, studying their antics with the latest meteorological equipment. To undertake any delicate scientific or mechanical work the first essential is to have a solid structure in which to carry out one's task. That is why we spent so much time and labour in erecting our huts, going to infinite trouble to make them safe and snug, and protected by hummocks and stacks of empty oil-drums. We did not know just how severe the Antarctic winter might be, and could not afford to take any chances!

By the time we had completed two huts, the whole of our gear had been put ashore. Masses of hut parts, steel piping, cement, tools, food-cases, oil-drums, and all kinds of other things littered the beach for a distance of three hundred yards. To move all this impedimenta up to the camp-site was a huge undertaking, occupying us for many months. It would have been quite impossible without the invaluable help of the tractor, driven by our engineer, Johnny Abbott-smith, of Kosciusko, New South Wales, who was also a first-class skier. We became accustomed to wading through icy water, shifting great cases, and rolling heavy drums over the rocky shore. Gradually our small settlement began to take shape. Electric light was made available from our mobile power-plant, and work was carried on far into the night by the aid of arc-lights and the tractor headlights.

The behaviour of the island wild life was always worth watching. I remember one mother penguin who made her nest on top of a hummock right in the middle of our beach-head. Day after day the tractor roared past at least fifty times, but the plucky bird stubbornly refused to quit until her eggs had been hatched. At first the great elephant-seals were very hostile, opening their huge mouths and roaring defiance at the throbbing mechanical monster, but they soon altered their tactics and decided to ignore it.

When the time came for the landing-ship to depart all of us left our jobs and assembled on the beach, where we shook hands with Group-Captain S. Campbell, our leader, who was returning to Melbourne to organize the remainder of the expedition, Australia having arranged to send two more parties south that summer.

MAROONED!

Campbell appointed Aubrey Gotley, the senior meteorologist, to take charge during the

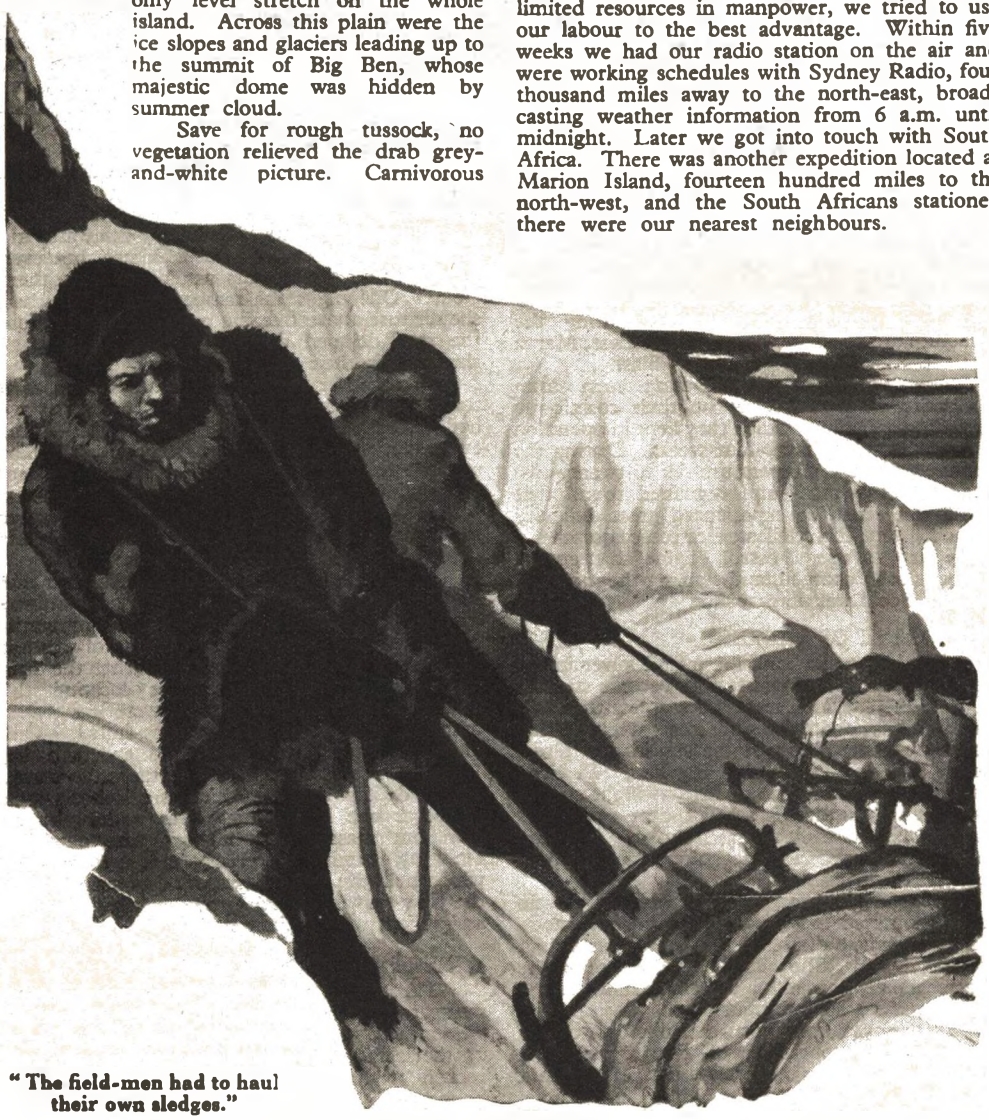
ensuing fifteen months. He gave us a brief farewell address and then stepped into a barge which took him to the ship, riding half a mile out in Atlas Roads. The snow was melting on the lava-covered ground as we stood there, silently watching the vessel—our last link with civilization—preparing to leave. By way of parting salute she fired rockets and coloured Very lights. Unfortunately we were unable to reciprocate, for our signalling gear had not yet been unpacked. And so she presently glided away out of sight, leaving behind on that barren rock the fourteen loneliest men on earth, voluntarily marooned at the very bottom of the globe!

As we plodded back to work over the beach, strewn with the bones of penguins and seals, it struck me that we could hardly have selected a more depressing-looking place in which to spend fifteen months. Our camp-site was located on the verge of a flat, dusty, mile-long plain—the only level stretch on the whole island. Across this plain were the ice slopes and glaciers leading up to the summit of Big Ben, whose majestic dome was hidden by summer cloud.

Save for rough tussock, no vegetation relieved the drab grey-and-white picture. Carnivorous birds swooped and dived above our heads, flying low over the skeletons of earlier victims. It was indeed a grim, prehistoric sort of scene.

My mind was full of questions to which I could not supply the answers. How should we fare during the long period of isolation ahead? How should I get on with my companions, whom I should inevitably learn to know far more intimately than one could ever do in civilization? Dismissing such speculations as completely unprofitable, I returned to the hut-building.

Now entirely dependent upon our own efforts, we had to face the formidable task of clearing the mass of equipment off the beach. Building strong sledges out of driftwood, we dragged it up to the camp by tractor. My principal occupation during those early days was to assist the squad erecting the "pre-fab" huts. None of us, of course, had a set job; we lent a hand wherever it was most needed. With our limited resources in manpower, we tried to use our labour to the best advantage. Within five weeks we had our radio station on the air and were working schedules with Sydney Radio, four thousand miles away to the north-east, broadcasting weather information from 6 a.m. until midnight. Later we got into touch with South Africa. There was another expedition located at Marion Island, fourteen hundred miles to the north-west, and the South Africans stationed there were our nearest neighbours.



"The field-men had to haul their own sledges."

CHESS BY RADIO

With the help of Bob Dovers, our surveyor, I arranged an international chess match with them for the "Championship of the Antarctic." We radioed our move one night, and the following night received a counter-move from our opponents. That first game lasted four months and ended in a draw!

For the first two months I toiled steadily at hut-building; then, with the other two operators, I manned the radio station. At the end of three months—in March, 1948—the dread southern winter was on us, but by that time, fortunately, we had finished most of the outside work. We had erected twenty huts and the four 75ft. radio towers, while the meteorologists had put up a Dynes pressure-tube anemometer for measuring wind-gusts. This 35ft. tower completed the skyline of "Little Australia," as we named the camp.

The fourteen of us, scientists and technicians, shared two sleeping-huts, each fourteen feet in diameter. I slept in a lower bunk, and above me was Johnny Abbottsmith, the engineer. The shift workers—the radio and meteorological personnel—occupied our hut; the others were in the second. Both buildings were warmed by hot-air blowers driven from the camp power-plant.

Construction had its setbacks, being often interrupted by hurricanes. Two of these occurred during our first weeks ashore, scattering hut panels far and wide. Fortunately, the sections were recovered and repaired. Much improvisation was necessary, however, for a lot of material had been unavoidably damaged during the difficult landing operations. Nevertheless, March saw the scientists working at full blast.

Our physicists, both young men from Melbourne University, set up their cosmic-ray recording apparatus, which they kept in operation day and night for forty-four weeks. During the winter, when the temperature fell to twenty-two degrees below zero—and remained round that mark—the scientists experienced great difficulty in maintaining their delicate electronic equipment. They had to use a petrol engine to keep the batteries fully charged, and starting the motor in the bitter cold was no easy task.

THE ONSET OF WINTER

Slowly the sun sank lower and lower in the northern sky; the days steadily became shorter. In June the sunshine recorded was less than half an hour daily, and there were many weeks during which we never glimpsed the sun at all. Great clouds continually shrouded Big Ben. We lived through that period in an eerie, twilight sort of atmosphere, as though some "time machine" had whisked us back to the Ice Age. The sun, when visible, was a mere colourless blob just above the horizon.

Blizzards became so frequent that we no longer bothered to talk about them, and snow-drifts accumulated round the huts to the height of the roofs. Shovelling-out the porchways became a daily occupation; melting snow for the cookhouse was a continuous job.

Under such conditions the members of our survey party, consisting of the surveyor, a geologist, and an assistant, were forced to remain in camp, field operations being impossible. Twice when they ventured out the men lost their tents and spent miserable hours in the deep snow before they were able to struggle back to the base camp. Theirs was the hardest task of all. Such was the nature of the island's terrain that sled-dogs would have been quite useless; the field-men had to haul their own sledges. But they did a good deal more climbing than sledge-pulling, for Heard possesses only a single mile of level land.

The northern section—the Cape Laurens area, covering ten square miles—was so difficult to negotiate that the party considered themselves lucky if they averaged a mile an hour! Those three men—Bob Dovers, Jim Lambeth, and George "Swampy" Compton—lived up to the finest traditions of British exploration in the Antarctic. None of them had any previous experience of life in snow-country; they had to learn everything the hard way. Many times they were forced back to the base camp by roaring blizzards, worn-out boots, or the freezing of their instruments.

I well remember one day in June, 1948, when they stumbled wearily in. Compton was completely worn out from toiling over the mountains laden with a heavy pack, tent, and survey instruments. He threw his sleeping-sack down, and to our surprise numbers of great icicles tinkled out on to the floor.

"Last night that sack froze round me," he explained. "In the morning I had to cut my way out."

When their tents blew bodily away the trio built *igloos* of snow, like the Eskimos, but even then the pitiless elements would not leave them alone. One night the temperature inside their shelter rose above freezing point, and water from the roof dripped down on them as they lay shivering in their sacks!

In the base camp work settled down to a routine of scientific investigation. Each day we had several meteorological balloon flights—some even at night—and in the afternoon a "radio-sonde" balloon was sent aloft. From the data thus obtained, automatically flashed back from the balloon by a miniature transmitter, the weather men compiled reports for transmission to their headquarters in far-away Melbourne.

It was essential that the delicate instruments should be examined and serviced every three hours throughout the day, and this all-important work had to be carried out regardless of weather conditions. I can recall many days when the duty meteorologist had difficulty in locating the instrument boxes, though they were less than a hundred feet from the sleeping-huts! One morning, when I rose early for the dawn shift, I had quite a struggle to get to the radio shack. Flying drift swept past, thick as a London fog; wherever one looked there was nothing to be seen but masses of whirling white particles. Only by hanging on grimly to the wire stays which held the roofs down was I able to stagger the few yards to the post in time for my assignment with Sydney radio.

THREE BLIZZARDS A WEEK

Throughout those cheerless winter months we averaged three blizzards a week. Altogether, we endured sixty cyclones during our sojourn on the island, and on twelve occasions our huts rocked to the buffeting of hundred-mile-an-hour gusts. It was an amazing experience to be inside the "wind hut" when those roaring blasts tore through the camp. The noise of the

"A single shot was generally enough to scare them off."

caning aerial masts and down-leads rose to a screeching crescendo, and as the needle of the wind-recorder swung upward to the 100 m.p.h. mark the whole building jerked frantically at its moorings, the windows bulged, and the snow outside swirled madly, completely obliterating the white world all around.

We became so accustomed to these savage hurricanes that by the end of the winter we didn't even trouble to bet on the force of the gusts—formerly one of our pastimes. The worst time was at the end of August, when we registered four cyclones in seven days. My recollection of that period is a confused vista of floundering between the huts through deep snow, dodging the screaming drift, meanwhile fighting for breath, and hoping against hope that I should get into shelter before the whole island was lifted up and hurled at me!

During our off-duty periods we played chess in the recreation hut, read books from our 300-volume library, or sang songs round the piano. Some of my companions developed hobbies to while away the leisure hours. One man made shopping-bags to take home with him; a physicist built cameras and repaired watches; others spent their time studying in preparation for their return to civilization. They were a grand lot of fellows, and we got along splendidly.

The radio news, of course, reached us most days—except when "black-outs" due to electrical disturbances in the atmosphere clamped down on radio communication. Oddly enough, however, we were not interested in happenings overseas. Living in a little world of our own international bickerings were the last things we wanted to hear about. What we were *really* anxious to know was the *menu* for our next meal. Would it be warmed-up bully beef and dehydrated vegetables again, or had the cook hit upon something fresh?

Whenever possible we supp[lemented] monotonous tinned rations with [fresh meat] of the island. Penguin m[eat] be had, but when available weekly. Fried in butter, and laced with thick gravy, this is very tasty, resembling something

Group-Captain Stuart Campbell, leader of the expedition

between beef and steak. Seal meat was also good, but not so nice as penguin. In the summer, of course, we had assorted fresh eggs from all round the island and caught fish at every opportunity. The waters round Heard, incidentally, abound in rock cod; one party hooked fifty-three in a quarter of an hour, and if they could have pulled their lines in faster this figure might well have been doubled.

SEA-LEOPARDS

Toward the end of winter our field-men made preparations for a trip to Spit Bay, at the southern end of the island. To reach their objective it was necessary to establish a temporary camp at Saddle Point, three miles away across Corinthian or Whisky Bay, as the old sealers called it. All equipment, including sledges, food, tents, cooking-gear, fuel, etc., had to be ferried across the ice-strewn bay in a small ten-foot dinghy, our only boat.

These trips were frequently interrupted by inquisitive sea-leopards, the ferocious "killers" of the Antarctic, whose powerful jaws have the vicious snap of the shark. Sea-leopards can swim faster than any other water creature, and they were continually bobbing up round the little dinghy. Our fellows never put to sea without a .38 revolver or a Service rifle, for the monsters would appear without warning, often only a few feet away, but a single shot was generally enough to scare them off. If the brutes had been allowed to approach too closely they could have holed the dinghy with ease. Many of them were twelve feet long, and their threshing tails had the power of an outboard motor.

When the party returned to the Atlas Cove base camp in December of last year they had all but completed the survey of the hundred square-mile island. There remained a gap of eight miles of rugged coastline which will never be surveyed from the land. They made three gallant attempts to find a route over the crevasses which barred their way, but their efforts were constantly thwarted by collapsing snow-bridges and treacherous ice-falls.

In January of this year we heard from Sydney Radio that our relief-ship would arrive the following month, and there was much rejoicing when we eventually saw the landing-vessel appear off the coast. Two of our radio-operators immediately flashed the signal: "This is Heard Island, boys. Don't miss us!"

The reply took the form of a shower of rockets and Very lights, reminding us of the ship's departure fifteen months previously. Men swarmed ashore, and within a few hours equipment was being landed by amphibious vehicles. Before very long the members of the relief party had learned how to operate our Antarctic weather-station; they had also absorbed all the "tips" we could give them as to life on the island. Then, after a little farewell celebration, we bade them good-bye and God-speed. We were going Home!

An inquisitive "Paddy Bird" inspects the stores.

ALL ABOARD FOR ADVENTURE!

Told by E. P. HADDON and set down by JOE AUSTELL SMALL

A rousing story full of the real WIDE WORLD spirit. Five young Americans, tiring of the humdrum daily round, determined to devote a couple of months to an ambitious cruise that seemed likely to provide colourful memories for the rest of their lives. After much planning they set out in a small sailing-boat bound for tropic seas, sun-kissed lagoons, and lands of mystery and romance. The skipper had learnt navigation from a book, and his crew were the veriest amateurs, but all were determined to make the enterprise a success. You will enjoy every line of this vivid narrative, which represents the dream-come-true of thousands of men who, if the chance offered, would love to follow the example of our five stalwarts.

III (*Conclusion*)

Previous instalments described the voyage along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, visits to Tampico and Vera Cruz, and the arrival of the party at Carmen Island, a tropical paradise, where they were most hospitably entertained. Later they set off, with an Indian guide, to explore a jungle river called the Candelaria. Approaching its mouth, they encountered a big dug-out canoe manned by Indians, who shouted wildly and brandished spears. The guide feared trouble. YOU CAN NOW READ ON.

THE dug-out must have been quite thirty-five feet long, yet it was less than three feet wide; at the stern an outboard motor rested on a sort of platform. One comes across the oddest things in so-called "uncivilized" country! In addition to the motor, four of the occupants wielded heavy paddles, so that the clumsy craft travelled remarkably swiftly.

The Indians all appeared greatly perturbed and, putting this down to anger, we looked uneasily towards our guns. As the canoe drew near, however, they started grinning amicably, whereupon we became more comfortable in mind. The natives shouted to our guide, who immediately replied, and soon everything was made clear. They had jumped to the conclusion we were making for their boat landing, where our heavy craft would inevitably have been stranded on the shallows. There had already seen one such accident, and they had hastened out to warn us.

After thanking them warmly, we invited the party aboard for drinks. They lost no time in joining us, consuming their tots with great gusto and much loud smacking of lips. When the bottle was empty they left us, with hearty good wishes, and we set off again toward the Candelaria estuary.

"Come to think of it," remarked Sanford, gazing thoughtfully after our visitors, "that may be a little local racket! Even if you *aren't* heading for their landing, you feel grateful for their kindness. I'll bet they get free drinks every time a boat passes this way!"

I glanced at our taciturn Indian guide; he was smiling. These people aren't quite so simple as they look!

Entering the river just before dark, we moored about a mile upstream. The mosquitoes were terrible that night! But we used a spray-gun liberally in the cabin, closed the screens tightly, and contrived to get a good sleep in spite of the hungry hordes buzzing round outside.

The following morning we woke up in wonderland. There is nothing on earth quite like jungle-river scenery. In the blue haze of early dawn the dark forest shadows were alive with motion and weird noises. There were queer notes from strange-looking birds, a sort of *crawling* sound in the dense vegetation as wild life woke to the new day, and—in the river itself—the hoarse bass call of alligators.

Game and fish, we soon discovered, were plentiful. Deer stood on the banks and watched with interest as we chugged past; there were also monkeys, lazy basking 'gators, and innumerable birds. It was a veritable sportsman's paradise, and apparently quite undisturbed. Making a short excursion only a hundred yards away from the *Fortuna* when we stopped for a while, I killed a wild turkey and two *chacalacas*. We decided to have the birds for lunch.

It was very hot down below, so we stretched an awning beneath the boom to shade both cockpit and cabin. When it came to the cooking, we all offered to help Adrian for once. The skipper stripped to his shirts and started frying the turkey. Suddenly the hot grease caught alight, blazing up furiously. Realizing what a disaster a fire aboard would mean, Strode yelled something, grabbed the flaming skillet, and threw the whole outfit over the side, turkey and all! In his excitement he tripped over a canteen full of water, which followed the turkey and sank immediately.

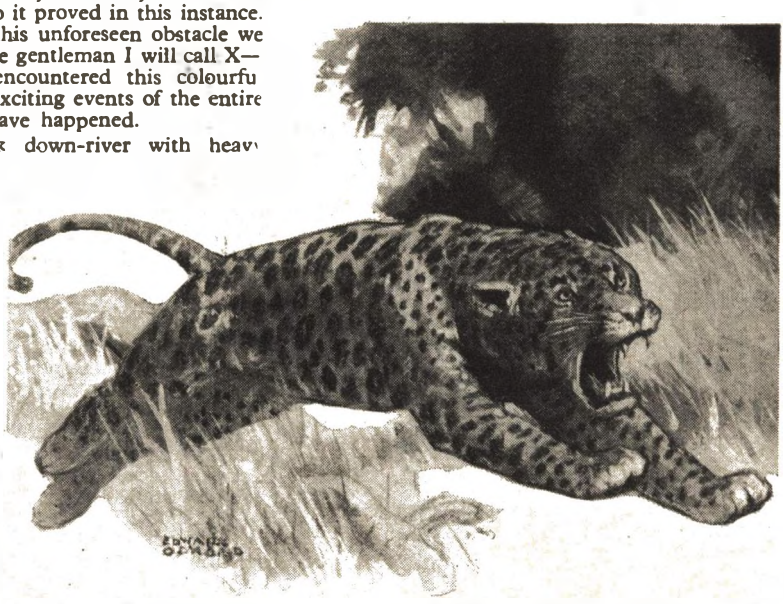
MORE TROUBLE

That skillet happened to be the only one we possessed, so, after rendering first aid to the

skipper, who had sustained some nasty burns, we began to study the culinary situation anew. Strode got an idea and, hunting out a hacksaw, began sawing off the legs of our Dutch oven. Thinking this method much too slow and laborious, Adrian undertook to do the work more quickly. Seizing a heavy hammer, he tapped the leg smartly. Being made of cast-iron, it promptly broke off—taking the bottom of the oven with it! Let me draw a veil over the recriminations which followed and merely state that we lunched on the *chacalacas*—boiled.

By mid-afternoon, travelling steadily upstream under power, we reached rapids which proved quite unnavigable so far as the *Fortuna* was concerned. This was a terrible disappointment, for it meant the end of our trip. Our friend Jerry had suggested we might find the water too low for us, and now his fears were justified. We were reluctant to accept defeat, being eager to explore the upper reaches, but there was no hope of getting past those foaming rapids. Most set-backs, however, have their compensations, and so it proved in this instance. Had it not been for this unforeseen obstacle we shouldn't have met the gentleman I will call X—And if we hadn't encountered this colourfu individual, the most exciting events of the entire cruise would never have happened.

We started back down-river with heav hearts, all our eager anticipations crushed. Noticing a small native village close by the bank, we shut off the engine and tied up at the landing-stage Lively music was coming from a hut nearby, and as we approached, a sturdy-looking Mexican with close-cropped hair and a long black moustache stepped out and, in cultured English, bade us welcome to his humble abode! A long-barrelled Smith and Wesson .38 hung from a wide belt sagging over his middle, and altogether he was a most unusual character.



Informing us that his name was X——, he seated us in home-made chairs and proceeded to pass around a wicker-covered bottle of the inevitable *habanero*. In the course of the ensuing conversation we learned that our host was a rancher and owner of river-steamers in the states of Tabasco and Campeche; he was, moreover, a graduate of Columbia University—which, of course, explained his faultless English. One can never tell what will pop up in the wilds!

I noticed that a large cabinet-model gramophone stood on a table in the centre of the hut, flanked by a stack of records from the Argentine. Presently X—— called his "boy" and instructed him to start playing them. The native's job was to stand there, wind the motor at intervals, and change the records. Even in the poorest dwellings, incidentally, we frequently came across gramophones; when the motor gave out the people contrived to get music by turning the crank—usually with somewhat melancholy effects!

Discovering our new friend was a great hunter, we deemed it advisable to mention our "museum racket"—the collection of specimens. The Mexican immediately became interested, pressing us to stay the night at the hut and then pay a few days' visit to his ranch upstream. He would provide a craft that could negotiate the rapids, and promised us good sport. This was such a wonderful opportunity to carry out our original programme that we had to exercise considerable restraint not to show too much enthusiasm.

Darkness falls rapidly in the tropics. We had an excellent supper; then the servants began to prepare for our night's rest. Hammocks were strung up all over the hut, and we turned in early so as to get a good sleep before starting off at dawn the following morning.

The hut possessed no screens, and the mosquitoes were almost as noisy as the endless tangos which droned out from the gramophone An owl hooted continually somewhere close by; alligators grunted among the reeds. Meanwhile the native "boy" kept that wretched gramophone going; it moaned and groaned for a full hour after we retired! I suppose X—— liked a mechanical lullaby, but so far as I was concerned the thing had the opposite effect.

Breakfast next morning—eaten while the jungle was still in darkness—consisted of a giant pot of steaming coffee, some *tortillas*, and a long platter filled with fried eggs. They were very good, and we were all hungry.

After some discussion a change of plan was agreed upon. Like a good skipper, Strode had come to the conclusion that it was his duty to remain with the *Fortuna*, meanwhile attending to certain repairs that needed immediate attention. Sanford and the boy Holmes volunteered to stay behind and help him. This left Hans Nagel, Adrian, and myself to accompany X——. We wondered just what kind of craft our host

intended to use for navigating the rapids, and cold chills ran up and down my spine when I thought of tackling that formidable water-slide in some primitive native canoe!

Eventually, however, our qualms were set at rest; the rancher's henchmen conducted us to a great dug-out forty feet long, hewn from some monster mahogany tree and equipped, we were glad to observe, with a powerful three-cylinder engine. It was odd to see a boat of this age-old type carrying a modern motor, but we had now ceased to be surprised at such anachronisms.

Bidding our comrades good-bye, we piled aboard, swung out into the current, and headed upstream just as the sun poked its flaming rim above the jungle. Reaching the first stretch of rapids, the dug-out slowed down and eventually stopped altogether, unable to make headway against the swiftly-rushing water. My heart sank; it seemed we were going to be beaten again! But I had forgotten four stalwart natives, who now sprang into action. Two of them hurried

"Instinctively I jumped back, firing as I did so."

to the bow, carrying long poles. Jabbing around on the bottom, one on either side, until they got a good grip, they leaned heavily on their poles, pushed hard with their bare feet, and started moving sternwards. When they reached the middle of the craft the other two boys took over, repeating the performance until they nearly walked overboard; meanwhile the first pair started operations at the bow again. Even with the motor it was slow going, but we made steady headway, and gradually, little by little, fought our way through those foaming rapids. Arrived in the quieter reaches above, progress was quite good, but the course of the river proved so tortuous and the current so swift that it took us three days to reach X——'s ranch.

The jungle alongside the ever-narrowing stream was teeming with wild life. Deer drinking at the water's edge gazed at us without the slightest sign of fear; monkeys crowded the tree-tops, roaring defiance at the intruders. Some of the villagers had told us that X—— was a dead shot with the long-barrelled pistol he habitually carried, and presently Hans determined to test him.

"We should like to see you use that gun," he said, smiling. "Are you good?"

"Pretty fair," answered the Mexican. "I never use a rifle. That reminds me: you want specimens. I will shoot a monkey for you; some of these howlers grow to an unusual size."

THE MARKSMAN

At a gesture from his ham-like hand the dug-out was headed for the shore and we crept cautiously out into the thick jungle. We had brought our own guns, but were intent on witnessing X——'s marksmanship before attempting any shooting ourselves, for all of us were notoriously poor shots.

Monkeys were everywhere. We had expected them to vanish at our approach, but they didn't. The very first round X—— fired—at a big fellow high up in a tree—brought the creature down stone-dead. We imagined the sound of the explosion would send its companions scuttling away in panic; instead, more arrived to discover what was going on. The very sky seemed to be full of monkeys!

One was quite enough, we told our smiling host, so we headed back to the boat. I must admit it was a distinct relief to leave the deep shadows of that twilight jungle and the eerie chattering of the disturbed monkeys.

Adrian, among other things, had been a taxidermist in his youth, and presently he began skinning our prize preparatory to stuffing it. His usual bad luck hadn't left him, for suddenly, while changing his position, he slipped and fell overboard! How those native boys laughed. Adrian scrambled back with most undignified haste, for alligators were exceedingly numerous just there!

We saw those repulsive creatures all along the river—knobby, log-like monsters, lying

peacefully in the sun on some sandbank, half in and half out of the water, or cruising slowly along with only their eyes and nostrils above the surface. Invariably, as the boat drew near, they noiselessly submerged, only to reappear a few moments later at another spot.

Our admiring comments on X——'s shooting had evidently pleased him, and presently he started giving us further demonstrations of his skill. As the dug-out progressed upstream he repeatedly knocked birds from tree-tops along the shore, never once missing. He did this quite casually, dismissing our compliments as undeserved praise. He was undoubtedly the best revolver-shot I have ever met, using his long-barrelled weapon exactly like a rifle.

Camping beside the river at night was a most thrilling experience; we were certainly "roughing it"! I had often wondered what it would be like to explore a tropical river; now I was finding out, and enjoying it immensely. So far as food went, we almost lived off the country; game was so plentiful and tame that it hardly seemed sporting to shoot it. One afternoon, while our native boys were chopping out a campsite from the grudging jungle with their long *machetes*, I heard a noise in the undergrowth. My curiosity aroused, I cautiously investigated. There stood Hans, throwing pieces of rotten wood at a *chacalaca*, which sat calmly on a tree-branch not six feet above his head. He was trying to get the reluctant bird to fly away so that he could shoot it in the accepted fashion with our battered .410!

Our primitive boat stood up splendidly to the manifold hazards of that twisting wilderness stream. Times innumerable we struck submerged rocks or logs, scraped bottom in the shallows, shipped water in rapids, or crashed into fallen trees on sharp bends. Not once, however, did the sturdy craft sustain any real damage. When the natives of Yucatan build a boat, they build for hard work!

Towards the end of the third day X—— began to show signs of excitement.

"Only a few more bends in the river," he told us, his dark eyes sparkling, "and you will see our bamboo landing-dock. The canes grow so big here that we sometimes use them as piles."

At this juncture our host thought it appropriate to drink to the successful outcome of our trip and our own good health. Out came the *habanero*, and we solemnly toasted each other, X——, as the perfect host, consuming three drinks to our one. At intervals he paced up and down the boat impatiently, carrying the wicker-covered bottle in his hand and occasionally taking a heavy draught. The dug-out moved slowly, for the last mile or so had some rough water. By the time a small dock came into view round a bend, therefore, the big rancher was practically intoxicated.

One of the toughest-looking individuals I have ever set eyes on came down to the boat-landing to meet us. Heavily bearded and roughly dressed, he had two big pistols dangling from his belt; he would have made an ideal villain for a Western film.

A STARTLING EPISODE

X—— greeted him, asking several hurried questions in Spanish. The man answered with seeming reluctance. Then, without warning, we found ourselves witnessing a most amazing spectacle. Our host's swarthy face blanched, his lips tightened, and he began to curse angrily. Next moment he pulled out his pistol, levelled it at the other man, and fired six shots as fast as he could pull trigger!

We stood there horrified—too stunned to move or speak. When the smoke cleared away, the bearded man still stood there, legs wide apart, apparently quite unhurt! And he was actually smiling! We couldn't understand what had happened at all. Was this a show put on for our special benefit, or was it the real thing? How could this burly ruffian calmly grin at a man who, to all appearances, had just done his best to kill him?

No sort of explanation of this astonishing incident was vouchsafed to us at the time, but later on we discovered the bearded individual was X——'s ranch foreman, in charge of the whole establishment. He told us—and the ranch-hands confirmed his statements—that the shooting had most assuredly been the real thing. X——, overcome by a sudden fit of rage because the foreman had failed to carry out an important order, had undoubtedly intended to shoot him. But luckily, as it happened, the potent *habanero* had our excitable friend in its grip. "And as everyone knows," the foreman concluded, "a man who sees three targets instead of one shoots very poorly!" Usually a dead shot, the rancher had completely missed with every round, although his victim stood only a few feet away from him.

We asked the man if he felt any resentment over the episode, and the appalling risk he had run, but he regarded us with surprise.

"Why should I be angry now that it is all over and nobody hurt?" he replied. "*Señor* X—— is my friend and my employer."

"But why didn't you run when he started shooting?" persisted Hans.

The foreman shrugged his shoulders in the characteristic Mexican way, holding the palms of his hands out towards us in a gesture of futility.

"Well, no can tell!" he said, slowly. "Maybeso, that way, I run into the bullets!"

The following morning, when X—— was sober again, he apologized to his lieutenant—but he added smilingly that next time he would aim better!

We greatly enjoyed our brief stay on the ranch; I have never met a more gracious and thoughtful host. It was well worth the trip just to observe how these hardy fellows lived and worked in this lonely wilderness outpost. The long rides through dense jungles, over grassy flats, and across swamps and streams were experiences we shall never forget.

THE JAGUAR-HUNT

A jaguar-hunt which started shortly after dawn was the highlight of our visit. A pack of flea-bitten mongrels had been collected and, in charge of two native boys, went coursing hither and thither through the jungle, sniffing and snorting amidst the thick undergrowth. Game is plentiful in this region, and cat-tracks were found within a mile of the ranch-house. Once our assorted "hounds" picked up a hot trial we had our work cut out to fight our way through the tangled vegetation in order to keep up with them. Here and there the natives had to hack a passage with their *machetes*. Meanwhile, voracious mosquitoes were hunting *us*!

Before long a snarling ocelot was brought to bay in a tree, where he glowered at us savagely

" Strode grabbed the flaming skillet and threw the whole outfit over the side."

from his lofty perch. With one accord we left him to our host. X—— pulled a bottle from his hip pocket, took a long drink, and grinned at us amiably.

" Just to steady the hand," he explained. Then his big pistol spoke and the cat tumbled out of the tree, dead. The man's markmanship was amazing.

Almost immediately we struck another trail, and after studying it for a moment the rancher turned to us excitedly.

" *El tigre !* " he cried, and went on to tell us something about the jaguar, the largest of the American cats—the third biggest, in fact, of the entire feline family. There were plenty of jaguars in these gloomy jungles ; we had seen no fewer than nine pelts tacked up in the hut of one of the ranch-hands.

After a hectic hour's chase through tangled vines and undergrowth so dense that it shut out the light, our quarry was brought to bay in the open—a great brute which looked particularly vicious.

X—— smiled at us benignly.

" This time," he announced, " it is *your* honour ! " As he spoke he bowed to Hans, whereupon a most peculiar expression swept over our comrade's face. Hans had fired his Luger at all sorts of small animals, but he didn't seem at all anxious to start on big game.

Nevertheless, he wasn't going to back out, but took careful aim and fired. As his gun roared the big cat recoiled, with a blood-curdling snarl, tensed its powerful muscles, and leaped straight at *me* ! That was a terrifying moment ; I was taken completely by surprise. Instinctively I jumped back, firing as I did so ; then my heel caught on a tree-root and I fell full-length. " This is my finish ! " I told myself.

Very fortunately for me, however, the wounded jaguar had sprung short. Guns cracked all round, the wildly-excited dogs dashed in, and almost before I could pick myself up the big cat was dead. After that narrow shave *I* was the person who needed a drink from our host's bottle !

When the time came for us to leave the ranch I can truthfully say we were exceedingly sorry to go. It was wild, savage, incredibly lonely country, but during our short stay we had come to love it. All the same, we were secretly glad to get out with whole skins ; we were none too sure how long our immunity from accident would last if we stayed ! The local folk didn't seem to

worry much about the ever-present dangers; apparently they attached little value to human life, and we greenhorns were kept in a constant state of anxiety, wondering what would happen next.

The upstream journey had been a slow business, accomplished in laborious stages, but the return trip was very different; with the engine reinforced by the swift current we travelled at a speed that seemed positively alarming. The stream was narrow, and many times, trying to take a sharp bend, it proved impossible to swing the clumsy craft's bow quickly enough; she would plough deep into the muddy bank, upsetting everyone and everything. It was very fortunate for us that we did not hit a rock or a big tree when these incidents occurred.

A MEAL TO REMEMBER

After a while the motor began to give trouble. Tying up to the bank, the rancher started tinkering with it. Meanwhile Adrian took a rifle and went for a short walk, returning almost immediately with a young buck. Our four natives were very pleased; while two of them skinned the animal the others dug a pit and made a fire. Red-hot embers were placed in the bottom of the hole and a thin layer of soil spread over them; then small chunks of the meat were wrapped in banana leaves and laid on top. Eventually the entire pit was lightly covered with earth and a fire kept burning on top for several hours. Some people find venison too dry for their liking, but anyone who has tasted it cooked in this native fashion will agree with me that it is delicious.

X—— had the motor in order again long before that delectable meal was ready, but he showed no anxiety to continue our journey. That is a Yucatecan characteristic which I greatly admire; time means very little to these amiable people, and they have no intention of letting themselves become slaves to the clock.

After a feast I shall long remember, washed down with *habanero* that never tasted better, we returned to the boat and resumed our interrupted trip to the village. We arrived just before sunset, to find the *Fortuna* and our companions awaiting us. It gave us a lot of pleasure to tell them just what they had missed—the most interesting and exciting phase of the entire cruise.

The rancher was obviously delighted to have provided us with so much enjoyment, and readily accepted our invitation to accompany us on our return journey as far as V——, his permanent home, which lay on our course. Arrived back in Carmen, we were rapturously greeted by our friends there; from the fuss they made of us one might have thought we had come back from Darkest Africa! The following morning the laughing native women once again swam round our boat in a state of nature, but we were now getting accustomed to this sort of thing.

After breakfast we set sail for V——, accomplishing the trip without incident. When we edged gently in to the dock we found that the natives were catching catfish—using bananas for bait! The explanation for this was very interesting. The river-steamers, it appears, never carry ripe bananas, which would quickly go bad; all bunches considered too mature for shipment are tossed overboard. The hungry catfish started nibbling at the discarded fruit, and eventually acquired a great liking for it. Several of the men we saw caught fine specimens weighing from ten to fifteen pounds apiece.

The rancher took on a new aspect as he neared home. He stopped drinking, discarded his cherished revolver, and carefully trimmed his moustache. We learned that he lived very quietly as a rule, but when on jungle trips change his ways and liked his *habanero*. His house almost took our breath away; it was a veritable tropical palace, most luxuriously equipped and furnished. There could be no doubt at all that X—— was not only a very fine fellow and the ideal host but also a wealthy and influential man. We took leave of him with real regret, and as the little *Fortuna* moved slowly away X—— stood on the dock waving farewell.

"Come back soon!" he called to us. "So far I have shown you *nothing*!"

That return journey was nothing like so eventful as the outward voyage; we had now learned a little more about seamanship and at least knew what *not* to do. Young Holmes was put ashore at Tampico, hugely delighted with his adventures. Thence, all the way back to Galveston, the weather proved amazingly calm. The air was so still, in fact, that the sails were practically useless; we had to rely on the engine. Every morning we collected flying-fish from the deck and cockpit, and we watched these strange creatures for hours as they skimmed along the surface, evading the larger fish that pursued them.

Chugging along in this quiet fashion, we eventually reached our home port, our dream-cruise ended. During that memorable eight weeks we had achieved our purpose, accumulating a store of experiences that would provide vivid memories for the rest of our lives. We had widened our horizons, toughened our muscles, and acquired a new outlook.

Even now I often go over our trip in retrospect. At night, when sleep proves elusive, I picture myself aboard the *Fortuna* or in the jungle again and hear X—— calling: "Come back soon!"

That's the worst of adventure; once you've had a taste of it you always long to return for more. And some day I will!

The INDIANS OF GUATEMALA

By CRIS NORLUND

Although the Guatemalan Indians occupy a far more advanced position in the life of their country than is the case in any other Central American Republic, they still remain a race apart. Here are some interesting glimpses of these colourful people

DEEP in the highlands of the Republic of Guatemala, hemmed in on all sides by majestic mountains, lies the national pride of the *Guatemaltecos*—Lake Atitlán, a great sheet of dark-blue water seldom rippled by rough winds. Mirrored in its glassy surface are three mighty volcanoes, perfect cones with smoothly-sloping contours. Every now and again they smoke slightly, as if to remind puny man that they are not extinct, but merely sleeping.

Lake Atitlán—proudly (if somewhat erroneously) known as the " Lake Como of Guatemala," owing to the intense blue of its water—is situated at an altitude of more than five thousand feet. It is said to be extremely deep, but estimates as to this vary between three hundred and six hundred feet. In Guatemala, however, figures are perfectly meaningless; distances and time lose all but a fraction of the importance attached to them in other parts of the world. On several occasions I actually heard bus-drivers on the same run hotly disputing the distance between two points, although they cover it several times a day! Nowhere do the local folk seem to have the slightest idea of just how far it is to the next village. Ask ten different persons, and you will receive ten different answers!

The most interesting feature about Lake Atitlán is its almost uncanny " liveness." It constantly grows and diminishes, apparently not in the least influenced by seasonal changes. At the end of the dry season, for instance, the water-mark around the lake may be ten yards higher than after the heavy rains! The water-circulation is kept up by subterranean inlets and outlets, but their exact location has never been discovered, although the local Indians avoid a certain spot near the town of Santiago, where canoes are known to have capsized and been

Lake Atitlán is surrounded by majestic mountains.

sucked down. This would seem to indicate the presence of a strong outgoing current, but the calm surface in no way betrays its existence; there are no eddies or whirlpools, and the traveller can paddle all unsuspecting into an area where death may very well be lurking.

All along the periphery of Lake Atitlán lie Indian villages—thirteen of them, to be precise—some clinging precariously to steep cliffs, others sprawling comfortably at the mouth of narrow valleys which lead down to the water. The latter habitations invariably nestle among a variety of trees and flowering bushes, while the "cliff-dwellers'" eyries cling for dear life to the dry shrubbery covering the mountains. Most of the village names are Spanish, with the New Testament a favourite source. The Apostles must have appealed strongly to the original name-givers, for six of them are commemorated by Atitlán villages—San Antonio, San Lucas, San Pedro, San Pablo, San Marcos and San Jorge. The remaining six Apostles have not experienced similar popularity, for their places have been taken by other and lesser personages, some of Indian origin.

All the communities, oddly enough, speak different dialects; there is sufficient similarity between them, however, for the people to understand one another with ease. Zuduhil, spoken in Santiago, at the southern tip of the lake, and Cachicail, in Panajachel, on its northern shore, are the two most important. The Zuduhils and the Cachicails, together with the Quichés (living in territories north-north-west of Lake Atitlán), were formerly powerful tribes—probably offshoots of the Mexican Toltecs—just as all Guatemalan Indians are descendants of Mexican tribes which, ages ago, invaded and took possession of what is known to-day as Guatemala.

Some Guatemalan authorities on Indian affairs—actuated, I suspect, by political jealousy—maintain the reverse; that all Mexican Indians originally came from Guatemala!

Misguided patriotism quite apart, the present-day Guatemalan Indian is a colourful, hard-working and thrifty person, with quite a lot of intelligence and a flair for humour. Various trades are followed in different parts of the country, one region being the centre of the pottery industry, another of weaving, and so on. Lake Atitlán is no exception; while San Pedro and Santa Clara produce rope, bags, mats and hammocks (made of *maguey*-fibres), other villages specialise in pottery or weaving.

In all the communities, however, women make clothes for the entire family; if there are any surplus skirts, blouses, shirts, and trousers, they are sold in the market at Santiago, which is the largest of the thirteen villages and the natural centre of the region. Exquisite designs and colours, varying with each locality, characterise both men's and women's apparel. The dyes are made from plants growing in the Lake Atitlán area, but their manufacture is a closely-guarded secret. They are marvellously pure, and neither fade nor wash-out. Unfortunately, here, as every-

"Indians laden like pack-mules."

These pedlars carry 100lb. loads a distance of twenty-five miles !

where, international "civilization," with its ready-made products, constitutes a strong competitor to the native process of dye-making, which is both difficult and time-consuming.

When the women are not busy spinning or weaving, the kitchens occupy their time, or they may go down to the lake to fetch water or wash the family clothes—and themselves. The Atitlán Indians are fairly clean as to their persons and clothes, but their ideas of hygiene leave something to be desired. Pigs, chickens and flea-ridden mongrel dogs wander about completely unrestrained, both in the village streets and in the courtyards of houses. To enter an Indian home you have often to step over sleeping pigs or chase

away a flock of chickens. Not one single dwelling possesses sanitation in even the crudest form.

Several times a day small crowds of vividly-dressed women and girls go down to the shore and back, shuffling along with huge water - containers gracefully balanced on their heads. Returned to the kitchens, they set about the important task of cooking food for from ten to fifteen hungry mouths — those of husbands, children, grand-children, and "in - laws." All morning one can hear the clap-clap of their hands, patting *tortillas*—flat, circular pancakes of sour corn-flour. The food of these Indians wouldn't exactly tempt our palates, and their diet is poor, consisting mainly of the ever-present *frijoles* (black beans), sundry other long - boiled vegetables, some fish, a little meat, and *tortillas*, sometimes rounded off with a couple of bananas. The latter, however,

Native children in a San Pedro clothes-washing pool

are very scarce in the highlands, and fruit in general is expensive.

While the women, as befits them, take care of the home, the men tackle the job of providing a livelihood for their families — which, with their meagre resources, is certainly not an enviable business. Some of them tend cattle, others cultivate the soil, while yet others earn a living from the lake, which is rich in fish. About ten yards from the shore the fishermen make little enclosures with walls of weeds and water-plants, leaving a narrow opening. The fish enter to bask in the warm, shallow water, and when the trap is full the opening is closed. The fishermen then move the wall nearer to the shore by rolling it in the water, until finally the enclosed area is literally solid with squirming fish, which are easily scooped up into flat baskets.

For some very peculiar reason Lake Atitlán contains not a single large fish, but abounds in smaller varieties. Several of them would delight the admirer of tropical fish.

There is a little cichlid, for instance, white-and-black striped, which loves to "graze" on flat stones, where it nibbles algæ in company with tooth-carps of the genus *Limia*. Another dainty little creature, possibly a characid, darts in and out between the boulders in schools. All these species are so small that nobody would bother to tackle them with fork and knife, but the Indians solve the problem neatly by sun-drying and salting them and eating them whole—bones, eyes, fins and all!

The various village products, representing the combined efforts of husband, wife and children, are sold at the Santiago market, which is held several times a week. Male Indians from all over the countryside stream into town laden like pack-mules. Some of them carry absolutely incredible loads—wooden racks weighed down with several rows of large earthenware jars and pots, great cases of vegetables, or huge baskets packed with live chickens or turkeys. Many of them cover fantastic distances on foot; they come down to Santiago from the other side of the lake, a tramp of about twenty-five miles, often with as much as 100 lb. on their backs. Their burdens are held in place by a broad band around their foreheads, and it is really wonderful to watch their muscles bulging under the heavy strain. The

Market-day in Santiago.

Preparing an enclosure of weeds and water-plants for catching fish

more prosperous Indians take their goods to market in *cayoucs*—large canoes, paddled by five or more men, which ply regularly between the villages and Santiago.

Market-day in Santiago is a merry affair, and provides a veritable feast of colour. The villagers are easily recognized by their different costumes. The Santiago women wear white blouses and red skirts; the men and boys from San Pedro sport dazzling shirts and white trousers, decorated with multi-coloured polka dots; while the men from Panajachel stand out in their jazz-patterned shirts, often worn under a dark-blue jacket.

When all the goods have been sold, the newly-acquired wealth quickly transforms itself into some badly-needed article, either for the home, field, or for the womenfolk. In some cases part of the profits goes into *Aguardiente Solola*, a horrible-tasting concoction suggestive of denatured spirits. In this potent poison the Indian's troubles are quickly drowned and the daily grind temporarily becomes a joyful dance.

Market day, however, is not the only excuse for a little rowdyism; innumerable *fiestas* provide excellent opportunities for merry-making. Many of these festivals have their origin in religion, and long processions, in which elaborate wax representations of the Saints figure prominently, wind their weary way along dusty streets lined by enthusiastic crowds.

Officially, the Indians of Guatemala are Catholics. Although they go piously to church on Sundays, it is the colourful pageantry connected with the Catholic faith that mainly appeals to them, and centuries-old pagan ideas prevail to a very large extent. In secluded spots, such as hidden caves, etc., well away from the villages, stand small altars and sacrificial stones that non-Indians are seldom allowed to see. In the bad old days the Atitlán Indians sacrificed young maidens to the San Pedro volcano by hurling them into the crater, but to-day their blood-thirsty tribal gods have to be content with a scrawny chicken or even fruit and flowers. The witch-doctor still exercises a certain influence amongst the unsophisticated, although to what extent it is difficult for outsiders to determine.

A GUATEMALAN REVOLUTION

WIDE WORLD "sequels" continue to turn up in ever-increasing numbers and from most unexpected sources. Mr. Norlund's article was hardly in type before Messrs. William Heinemann, Ltd., the well-known publishers, kindly sent us a copy of a report from their representative, Mr. Grepe, who lately paid a visit to Guatemala. The following extract will be found of interest.

"I arrived in Guatemala City two hours before a revolution—an activity which, during recent months, has achieved considerable popularity in Central America. There was a lot of wild shooting in the capital for twenty-four hours, and a few bombs were dropped. The casualties were mainly among disinterested civilians.

"It is impossible for the Anglo-Saxon to understand the political factors in Latin America, but, generally speaking, the higher posts are extremely lucrative, and the only qualifications for candidates . . . are that they should not be hampered by such scruples as honesty, consideration for human life, etc. To be able to read and write is an advantage! The population are merely pawns in the political game, and are easily swayed by soap-box methods.

"In this Guatemala revolution, 99 per cent. of the people could not even suggest who was leading the rebels, who consisted mainly of the *Guardia de Honor*, the President's personal troops. Casualties might have been greater if the Air Force, which happened to be on the Government side, had not kept their bomb-fuses in the barracks of the *Guardia de Honor*. Owing to this fact they had to buy fuses from El Salvador before they could drop any bombs!

"The effect of the revolution was two days wasted."

MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Told by PETER BIRRELL and set down by DAVID MARTIN

Overseas readers sometimes get the impression that "nothing exciting ever happens in Britain." This vivid story should go some way towards disillusioning them. It deals with a night adventure on Bidean nam Bian, the loftiest mountain in Argyllshire, Scotland, and the scene of several climbing fatalities.

IT was the end of December, 1946, and I was sitting in the 9.15 a.m. bus to Arrochar, at the head of Loch Long, Dunbartonshire, feeling life was pleasant indeed. I was going back to scramble about my beloved Scottish mountains, accompanied by Doris, my sweetheart, and my bosom friend Rossi. Moreover, I looked forward to meeting another good comrade, David Martin. He was rumoured to be at Arrochar, and would certainly join us on our climbs.

This trip of mine, being totally unexpected, had been arranged very hurriedly. The large engineering firm in Sheffield for which I worked was not in the habit of giving its employees "buckshee" leave in addition to their holidays, but a wrenched back-muscle—and possibly a shrewd suspicion that I was homesick for my native hills—had induced a kindly Welfare nurse to sign a *chit* suggesting I should have a week's rest. This was duly granted, much to the disgust of my foreman! Forthwith I fixed up a little winter excursion, with some easy climbing in view by way of healthful exercise.

"Floundering back to one another, we met on the peninsula."

Arrived at Arrochar, we stepped out into the keen, frosty air to be dazzled by the magnificence of the snow-covered Cobbler (2,891ft.)—a miniature Jungfrau, Monch, and Matterhorn rolled into one.

We went along to see the Youth Hostel warden, Bill McNeil, who would know the whereabouts of David Martin. He met us with his usually cheery smile and, in reply to our inquiry, led us out of his office into the sunlight. Pausing to accustom his eyes to the brilliant light, he gazed keenly out over the hills.

"There he is," he said at length, pointing. "Just beyond the Forestry fence. See—on the snow-line."

We all shouted loudly, and were rewarded by seeing three black specks turn round, wave to us, and then move on. We couldn't blame them, for it was a glorious day, and if Doris and I hadn't been weary after our long overnight journey from Sheffield we should have joined them. Rossi suggested this, but was voted down by two tired lovers who spent the rest of the afternoon sitting in the winter sunshine, muffled up in mountaineering kit, reading the Sunday papers. Meanwhile Rossi stripped to the waist and worked off some of his superfluous energy by sawing logs for the warden's stove.

At 4.30 p.m., David Martin and his companions returned, glowing from exertion and sunshine, and delighted to discover that Doris had thoughtfully made tea for them. Much to our mutual regret, however, David was unable to accept our invitation to accompany us to Glencoe.

"My boots are being re-nailed at Timpson's," he explained; "you can't mess about Glencoe without nails." Half an hour later Alan Gardner, another possible recruit, ruefully announced that *his* boots had been stolen! That was that; our party would have to consist of just the three of us—Doris, Rossi, and myself.

Before we left I persuaded David to lend me his ice-axe, and later that evening, as you will presently learn, I had good cause to bless his good nature.

At six o'clock we boarded the connection for Glencoe, our earlier high spirits somewhat damped because Martin and Gardner weren't with us, added to which the wind had swung to the north and was blowing pretty strongly.

This, in Argyll, usually means a storm and bad climbing weather. The irrepressible Rossi, however, remained as light-hearted as ever; minor disappointments never seem to affect him.

By the time we disembarked at Glencoe it was almost dark. The black buttresses of Aonach Dubh loomed above us, their snow-grizzled crown and gullies towering starkly against the inky sky.

"Ooh!" whispered Doris, greatly impressed, "Aren't they *big*?" They certainly looked enormous after the gentle eminences of the Peak District, to which she was accustomed, but Rossi—who had climbed in Switzerland—merely snorted "Pimples!" and forthwith ushered us into the Clachaig Inn.

Here we found ourselves greeted with unaccustomed warmth.

"Jist the fellows we were looking for!" cried the barman, in relieved tones. "There's a puir lassie up the hill with a broken leg. She's been there since four this afternoon, and we've seen nae sign o' the rescue-party yet!"

This was a challenge, of course, that simply *couldn't* be ignored, and we immediately got busy. First-aid equipment was quickly selected from the hotel store—a large sheet of sail-cloth; a sleeping-bag; a hypodermic syringe and sedative; sulphanomide powder; bandages; some sandwiches and other necessities. Rossi, with characteristic thoroughness, soon eliminated everything superfluous and divided what was left into two parcels, thrusting the heavier one—likewise characteristically!—into my rucksack!

We were told we could get full details as to the situation from a girl at the Youth Hostel who had witnessed the accident, and someone took us down there to interview her.

In course of conversation with the young lady we soon discovered that the mishap was the not-unusual result of an over-confident student climber, G—— by name, escorting some totally-inexperienced girls up to the peak of Bidean nam Bian (3,766ft.). By the time they started to return the snow had frozen, and the girls—whose boots were not nailed—found it increasingly difficult to maintain their footing. Had G—— been roped to his party he might have given them enough confidence to stand upright, which is the only way to preserve one's equilibrium, but unfortunately he hadn't a rope.

Suddenly one poor girl slipped, hurtling away down the slope and crashing some two hundred feet below. There she still lay apparently very severely injured, with the anxious G—— on guard in case she became delirious and tried to crawl. The rest of the girls, badly shaken, had somehow made their way down the mountain without a leader, lucky to escape further accident.

Our informant was obviously unused to mountains or climbing, and naturally somewhat vague in her topography. I deduced from her description, however, that the injured girl must be on the *col* between Bidean nam Bian and Aonach Dubh.

By this time poor Doris was looking rather worried; she didn't like the idea of Rossi and I scaling the stark heights of Glencoe on such a night. It was certainly not a particularly auspicious start for our little holiday! But she made no attempt to dissuade us; she realized where our duty lay, and told us she would be waiting for us at the hostel.

Presently a police-car arrived, with Sergeant Swinton driving, and Rossi and I clambered in, thankful to be saved the two-mile trudge to the feet of the "Sisters of Glencoe." Once out in the open we soon became aware the threatened storm had arrived. The night was so black that the headlights seemed ineffectual; sleet lashed noisily against the windows, and every now and again buffets of wind shook the car angrily.

Nobody spoke much—not even my usually-exuberant friend. Reaching the gate of Elliot's farm, we reluctantly stepped out into the gale. Sergeant Swinton yelled something, but the wind carried his words away. Nodding silently, we trudged off.

During the three-hundred-yard walk to the farmhouse we got thoroughly soaked, but realizing grimly that if we weakened now we should never make the climb, we strode doggedly on past the lighted windows, with their tantalizing suggestion of warmth and comfort. We stumbled forward for another seven hundred feet, negotiating precipitous screes by the light of our torches, and then mine suddenly gave out!

We speedily discovered it was hopeless to proceed with only one light and so, cursing our bad luck, we turned round and slithered down the screes back to the farm.

Here the fault was diagnosed as a burnt-out bulb, which was replaced as we stood dripping in the kitchen. Already, I noted uneasily, we were being treated as potential heroes! There could be no retreat, and once again we scaled those toilsome screes.

Two hundred feet higher the going levelled-out somewhat and, splashing across the many tributaries of the main stream, we began to feel a little more comfortable. Soon, however, the ground

David Martin (left) and Rossi.

"There was something waving two hundred feet higher up."

became broken again, and the wind rose to gale force. Flurries of hail stung our faces, turning us off our course. Here and there we struck patches of wet snow, through which we plunged knee-deep, using our ice-axes to steady ourselves.

In the middle of one of the squalls of hail and sleet a black chasm suddenly appeared in front. I recognized at once that this must be the course of the main burn, which hereabouts split into two branches. Clambering down to the shallow stream, I splashed through the icy torrent, too wet now to trouble about stepping-stones. Avoiding the point of the triangle that divided the two brooks, I clambered up the left-hand bank of the Aonach Dubh burn and, somewhat out of breath, turned to look for my companion. But he had vanished!

Yelling was pointless in such a gale, so I swung my torch in wide circles, finally switching it off. Far away up on the right-hand bank of the other burn I caught a glimpse of Rossi's torch, frantically waving. This was certainly no place to be alone!

Floundering back to one another, we met on the peninsula separating the two burns. Here, when the wind and sleet allowed, we proceeded to engage in a heated debate as to the correct route! The strained back responsible for my holiday was now beginning to ache, and I was in a distinctly bad temper.

I carefully explained my own theory as to the streams, adding that I could prove my statements if we could only get a glimpse of the Diamond Buttress, for we both agreed the injured girl must be lying to the left of that rocky eminence. The point in dispute was as to exactly where we stood in relation to this landmark. Rossi was convinced we were too far to the left. The mountain, he stressed, had a thousand brooks which—after three years' absence from the district—we could not distinguish from one another in the darkness. This was a good argument, and eventually I reluctantly gave way, although I *knew* I was right.

Rossi started off again at a great pace. In my weakened state, with a sore back (and what I felt sure was the heavier pack!) I was frequently forced to stop in order to recover my breath. Whenever I did this Rossi, not wishing to be left alone in a blizzard, promptly retraced his steps. During one of these halts I was sitting down when the snow (which had gradually replaced the sleet as we got higher) suddenly stopped, and simultaneously a bank of black cloud blew away from the face of Bidean. My heart jumped—there was the Diamond Buttress!

"Look, Rossi!" I yelled, exultantly. "Look!"

There was no room for argument. The blackest of rock, hung with icicles and crowned with virgin snow, that unmistakable landmark stood out forbiddingly against an indigo sky. And we were to the right of it, as I had claimed!

Silently, and at a slightly slower pace, my

companion started to traverse to the left. I swung in behind, planting my feet in the holes left by his boots in the snow, which was now quite deep. Presently we crossed a gully of soft avalanche snow, chest-high and floury. Halfway through I could have lain down and slept; I was so dreadfully tired. On the other side we struck something much worse—a patch of crusty stuff that gave us many nasty falls. At last, however, we reached "good" snow and crunched on fairly happily, the wind being now behind us and helping us a little.

All too soon that snow-slope grew steeper and harder; Rossi's axe carved steps so far apart that I couldn't use them, but had to make my own. But I didn't mind; the exertion warmed my hands, which had been alternately frozen holding the torch. I thought enviously of Martin's headstrap light, and wished I'd borrowed it as well as the ice-axe.

Higher and higher we climbed. . . . Surely we must be near the place now? We stopped for a parley, agreeing that a cast to the right ought to bring us very near our objective. While we talked the sky cleared again; we straightened up and peered anxiously aloft. For the second time that night the weather had given us a lucky break. The beam of Rossi's big torch stabbed far out into the gloom like a miniature searchlight, illuminating grotesque rocks and icicles. Higher yet it swung, to the utmost limit of its range. . . What was that? Again the beam swept to the extremity of its perimeter. . . . There was something waving two hundred feet higher up, directly above us—an arm!

Using his last reserves of strength, Rossi plunged ahead, relying entirely on his ice-axe. I followed more soberly, but what with falls and sliding back my friend lost so much ground that we reached our goal together.

We knew, of course, that young G—— had remained with the injured girl, but we had been so full of the "maiden in distress" idea that now we were quite surprised to come upon him.

The poor fellow looked haggard and ill—as well he might, after his trying ordeal.

"Did you no' hear me shouting?" he asked.

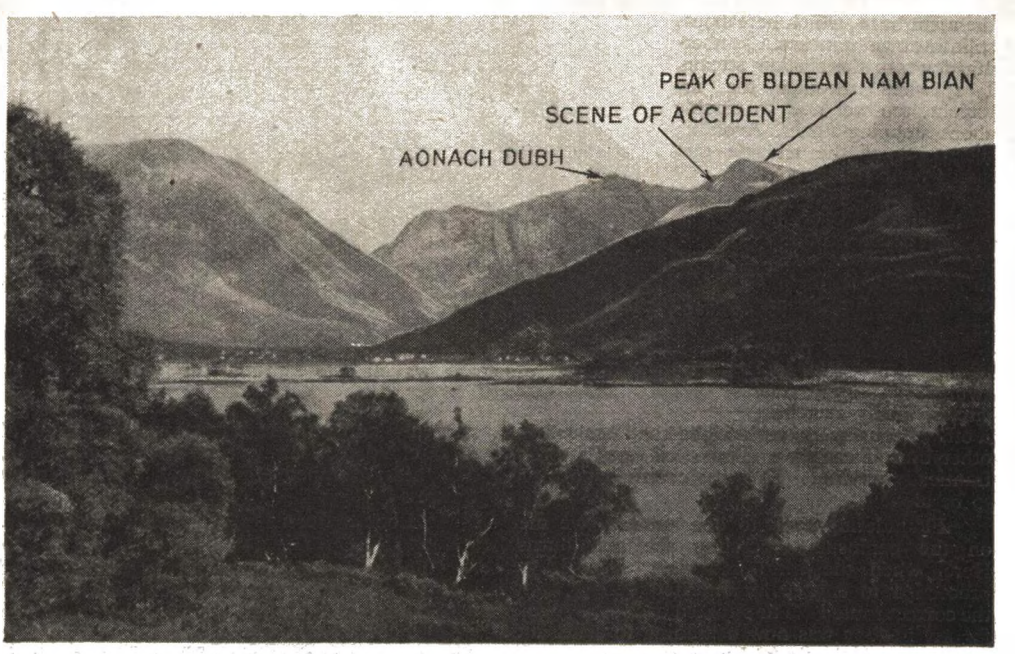
If we'd had any breath left we should have laughed, for in that howling gale an air-raid siren would have been a mere whisper.

Viewed in the light of our torches, the unfortunate girl resembled a surprisingly small bundle of rags. The pair of them were huddled behind some boulders—the remains of an old sheep-shelter. When Rossi swept the beam across the patient's pallid face she smiled up at him wanly. "She's pretty," I thought, "but not so sturdy as Doris."

"What time is it?" she asked, though we knew she didn't really care any longer now that rescue was near.

Rossi, luckily, was an acknowledged expert at first-aid. He passed me his torch, and I directed the beams of both torches on to the bloodstained scarf wound round the damaged leg. Then, slowly and tenderly, he uncovered the injured limb—a dreadful sight. . . .

Though I felt horribly sick, I could not tear my eyes away as my companion methodically laid out the bandages, scissors, and sulphanomide powder, heedless of the snowflakes that drifted down around him. Very skilfully he administered the sedative with the hypodermic; then he quickly got down to work and soon, as it seemed, the shattered leg was neatly bandaged. Our patient was then edged, little by little, into the eiderdown sleeping-bag, and the sailcloth erected tent-fashion to protect her. I was so absorbed that it was some minutes before I became aware of the fact that Rossi had crawled



The mountains which figure in this story. They present a very different picture in winter-time.

under this extemporized shelter at one side while G—— was already ensconced on the other, leaving me—literally—"out in the cold, cold snow."

Rossi grinned up at me. "Better toddle off down and guide the stretcher-bearers up, Peter," he said. "As the first-aid man I've got to stay here and look after the patient!"

There was nothing more to be said, so I turned wearily away and began to edge down that steep snow-face. The wind, taking advantage of my weakness, proceeded to buffet me mercilessly. The increasing discomfort made me reckless. So far as I could remember, this snow-slope levelled off about three hundred feet lower down. Why the blazes shouldn't I slide the distance? Thrusting the torch into my pocket, I sat down, tucked David's ice-axe athwart my body, under one arm-pit, and, using it as a brake, glissaded off through the whirling snow-flakes. It was a suicidal thing to do, of course, but just then I suspect I wasn't quite myself.

Quickly gathering speed on the steep slope, I hurtled down fast, occasionally striking projecting rocks. Very soon I lost control and started rolling, the boulders now hitting my head and elbows and rousing me to full consciousness of my peril. I jabbed with the ice-axe and kicked with my toes, desperately anxious to halt that headlong rush. Eventually I was able to pull up and, leaning heavily on the axe, scraped the clinging snow from my neck and ears.

The rescuers climbed this rugged snow-covered mountain by night, in the midst of a winter storm.

The torch, fortunately, was unharmed, and I started off again very warily, trying to locate our upward tracks as some sort of guide. But I couldn't find them; new snow lay everywhere, and all I could do was to continue the descent, facing a blank wall of falling flakes which the beam of the torch could hardly pierce. Crunch! I sank up to my waist. This, I thought, must be the crusty snow we had crossed coming up; I must turn sharp right to avoid that gulley of avalanche stuff, and then left until I hit the burn.

I reached the watercourse more quickly than I had anticipated, for by this time all the black patches round the burn had been obliterated by fresh snow; even the boulders protruding from the water had white wigs on their brows. The bitter cold was now beginning to tell upon me, and I had developed a shiver, but nevertheless I waded the burn rather than risk falling headlong off the icy stepping-stones. Scrambling painfully up the steep bank on the other side, I stumbled over the final patches of broken ground to a level sheep-track, exceedingly thankful for the easier going.

Was that a light? Yes, it *was*, bobbing up and down two hundred yards away. Behind it, still further distant, were six or seven other lights. The stretcher-bearers! Greatly heartened, I broke into a sort of trot, and was soon talking to Dr. Duff, describing exactly where the poor girl lay and offering to guide the party.

The Doctor eyed me keenly; he must have realized I was just about "all in."

"No, laddie," he told me. "Nothing

can be done until daylight, anyway. Hurry along down and get some rest."

Secretly much relieved, I continued my descent, keeping to the left of the burn and thus missing contact with the stretcher-bearers, whom I could hear alternately cursing and singing somewhere on the right bank.

Reaching Elliot's farm, I imbibed lashings of hot tea and nibbled a few biscuits. A policeman gave me a welcome cigarette, but after I'd smoked it I hurried out into the night again and made good time to the Youth Hostel. Doris was waiting there, and I knew she'd be getting worried.

If I had ever had any doubts as to the wisdom of marrying her, they were dispelled when I entered the hostel. Everyone else was in bed, of course, but there she was, with her quiet Yorkshire efficiency, keeping soup hot for me on the stove! In less than no time she had my frozen outer garments off, my shivering form swathed in a lovely warm blanket, and was ladling delicious broth into me. Between gulps, I told her of my adventures and my decision to take sandwiches and coffee up to the stretcher-party at dawn.

"I jabbed with the ice-axe and kicked with my toes."

Her eyes danced. "Oh, Peter!" she cried. "Can I come?" I nodded drowsily as I lay down on the bench in front of the stove. For a while I watched her cutting sandwiches; then I drifted off to sleep.

When she shook me gently I realized to my surprise that night had passed. A cold grey light permeated the room, making me shiver. "Rossi came in about an hour ago," she whispered. "He went straight up to bed." I grinned to myself; I knew that fellow! He would sleep for about twenty hours on end and then wake up as fit as a fiddle.

Doris handed me a cup of tea; then, without further ado, she swung on my pack, containing everything we needed for the trip, and we stepped out into the cold light of early morning.

Overnight the snow-line had descended to the 600ft. mark; the sky was battleship-grey, with great leaden clouds racing overhead, hiding the summits of the peaks. As we trudged along

in the chilly air I could sense Doris thrilling to the magnificent panorama of the hills; they had obviously won her heart.

Reaching Elliot's farm, we encountered a number of Pressmen, whose eager inquiries I answered with the advice: "Come up and see for yourselves." I even offered to carry one of the cameras, but they shudderingly declined. I was considerably worried to discover that Rossi had already given them my name; if they published it I could see trouble looming ahead when I returned to work.

Taking the screes very slowly, I was not surprised to find my legs a little stiff; I was glad Doris had the pack.

Up into the bleakness we trudged, completely happy in each other's company. We scarcely stumbled at all, for the snow was now firm and the way plainly visible.


That was at **4 p.m.** Help was on its way by **11 p.m.**, when Peter Birrell, of South View-road, Sheffield, and David Rossi, of Camp-road, Glasgow, expert climbers, started off with light-weight sleeping bags and a first-aid outfit.

Part of the newspaper account of the rescue which got Mr. Birrell into trouble with his employers.

At the fork of the burn we met the returning stretcher-bearers, tired and spent, and Doris proceeded to hand out the sandwiches and coffee. Dr. Duff was there, and looked at me searchingly.

"Come on," he said, briskly. "You're fresh, young man. Take a strap here!"

Yard by yard we man-handled the awkward, bier-like contrivance over the burn, up the further bank, and along the boulder-strewn wastes of the Corrie. Well muffled up, the patient fortunately felt little of the occasional bumps we were forced to inflict upon her. Not a whimper escaped her colourless lips; I felt ashamed of myself as my strained back began to pain again. Once more Dr. Duff's shrewd eyes scanned my face.

"What's your name?" he asked, presently.

"Birrell, sir," I answered.

"Ah! Of course! You were up here last night. Take a spell!"

I gladly did so, but the others were so weary that I had to help again from time to time. Out of the corner of my eye I could see Doris, laden with odds and ends contributed by the rest of the party, picking her way gallantly over the rocky, snow-covered mountainside. Her cheeks glowed pink and her blue eyes sparkled with the thrill of this novel experience.

At last we left the difficult terrain and approached the scree. Here we were reinforced by Mr. Elliot, the farmer, his son, and the police-constable, and progress greatly improved. In what seemed no time at all we were once again drinking tea made by the kindly Mrs. Elliot, while the newspaper men hovered round gleaning details of the rescue and taking pictures. An ambulance was waiting, and promptly whisked our plucky patient away on pneumatic tyres which, after her arduous journey down that icy peak, must have given her the sensation of being airborne.

As for me, I slept, ate, and slept again. Doris always seemed to be around. . . . It was very comforting.

When I arrived back in Sheffield I found to my dismay that the local journalists had made a pretty thorough job of reporting the rescue, and accordingly approached the works full of dire forebodings. At 9.30 a.m. the Chief Engineer sent for me; I entered his office with a queasy feeling in my stomach.

The Chief was studying the previous day's paper. Spelling out the upside-down headline he was staring at, I read: "SHEFFIELD YOUTH IN MOUNTAIN RESCUE."

Suddenly the Chief looked up.

"How's your back, Birrell?" he demanded, brusquely.

"I—I'm afraid it didn't get much rest, sir," I replied. "I didn't expect to get roped in for that job."

He frowned; then he went on accusingly: "You were supposed to be suffering from a strain. Why couldn't they get someone else?"

I stammered something about nobody else being available, trying to explain that climbers consider the saving of life on the mountains a plain duty, and my friend Rossi and I happened to be the only people on the spot equipped for such a task. But I'm afraid I rather bungled it; anyway, the Chief soon cut me short.

"Well, Birrell," he said, rising to indicate that the interview was over. "The next time you're supposed to be ill and I hear you've been mountain-climbing, you needn't trouble to come back. Understand?"

I retired feeling distinctly aggrieved. Before my mind's eye was a picture of a poor girl who had lain for hours on a snow-covered mountain with a shattered leg, exposed to the fury of a freezing gale. I could see her pale face, lit up by the torch, her brave smile, the blood on the snow. . . . The Chief was a townsman; he knew nothing about the call of the mountains or the climbers' code!

Narrator's Note

There is a pleasant ending to this story. Peter and Doris are now happily married, and live in the delightful little town of Fort William, whence, any evening they choose, they can wander toward the rocky heights of Ben Nevis. Some time after Peter's return to work the Lord Mayor of Sheffield presented him with a Carnegie bronze medal and certificate inscribed: "For saving life on a dangerous mountain." This is no over-statement; life *was* saved, and Bidean nam Bian *is* dangerous, for not very long ago my good friend David Hastie was killed while sliding on snow less than half a mile from the scene of Peter's helter-skelter glissade, and six other fatalities—one of them quite recent—have occurred in the Glen in spite of numerous warnings.

Birrell is now an official member of the Fort William Mountain Rescue Service, and has assisted in several sensational rescues on Ben Nevis.

As for young G——, who looked after the injured girl until help arrived, I believe he has learned his lesson; he is now inseparably attached to the very largest rope I have ever seen a climber carry!

MORE WIDE WORLD "SEQUELS"

THANKS to the kind co-operation of enthusiastic readers, we are kept liberally supplied with interesting "sequels," each representing a striking parallel, corroboration, or development in connection with some WIDE WORLD narrative—and yet another jolt for the doubting Thomases! This month we are able to offer you a remarkable selection from all parts of the globe.

Riddle of footprints and an empty boat

AN empty sailing boat and footprints leading to a boggy island were found by Essex police last night while searching for two business men, who have disappeared after a week-end cruise.

The footprints were found on Bridgemarsh Island in the River Crouch (Essex) in a search for Derek Howlett, 36, a company director, of Park-road, Hampton Hill (Middlesex), and Ralph Hawthorne, 37, of Herschell-road, Leigh-on-Sea (Essex), who were last seen sailing on Sunday afternoon.

They had motor-cycled from Leigh to Burnham-on-Crouch, and then set off for a five-mile cruise to North Fambridge.

Early on Sunday morning their boat ran aground three miles from Burnham, but was refloated.

All yesterday police joined in the down-river search, going through creeks and woodlands.

Bridgemarsh Island, uninhabited and two miles long, has 30ft. ravines, bogland and marshes.

Gangs of volunteer searchers and police gave up the island search late last night, after finding no trace of the men.

"It's nearly impossible to do anything there at night," said one police officer.

A woman friend of Mr. Hawthorne's said last night that Mr. Hawthorne had only just bought the yacht.

He intended to bring it round the coast to Fambridge. It was in good condition when found yesterday by Maldon police, and the footprints led to the foreshore.

The island on which the yacht was found is notorious for its mudbanks, which are so deep that when German rockets dropped there they were mostly completely engulfed.

Wolf Boy" Under Medical Observation

LUCKNOW, July 25.—A 12-year-old "wolf, boy" has been under observation of a team of medical experts at Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Lucknow, for the past two months.

The early childhood of the "wolf boy" is wrapped in mystery, but it is believed that when only one year old, he was carried away by a wolf and brought up in a dense jungle.

Details regarding his rescue also are not available, but it is surmised he was rescued by some hunters.

Dumb and emaciated, the "wolf boy" crawls and cannot chew his food. He has scratches all over his body and has developed canine habits.—PTI.

Strange story of a Zombie

A priest cursed him

By Daily Mail Reporter

THE Rev. Arthur Turnbull, home last night for the second time in 47 years in sweltering, mysterious Haiti, told the story of a Zombie (man resurrected by black magic).

He was (said Mr. Turnbull) a general in the Haiti Republican Army, and I heard him cursed by a Voodoo priest he had insulted. The priest told him he would die within 10 days.

Nine days later I saw the general dead, and I buried him.

The next day the grave was empty.

Four days later military patrols at the approach to the mountains in the lonely forests came upon a party of men who bolted, leaving a captive.

They brought him back to Jacmel, where both his wife and myself recognised him as the general.

I think he recognised us, though he could not speak and his mental powers seemed to be dulled. He was undoubtedly the man I had buried, but he was just an automaton—a real Zombie.

I believe the Voodoo priests are able to impose cataleptic trances which give the appearance of death, and then to reanimate the victim, with reduced mental powers.

"Black magic still exists," said Mr. Turnbull, 73-year-old missionary, who is staying at Buckingham-road, South Woodford, E.

You may remember the "Out of the Past" story; "A Race with the Tide," appearing in our issue for July, 1949. This described how two Essex cyclists, riding across the miles of mudflats which at low tide separate Foulness Island from the mainland, had a narrow escape from being caught by the returning tide. Above, from the *Daily Mirror* of April 5th last year, is an account of a search for missing men, in the same part of England, which brings the Foulness experience vividly to mind. One shudders to think of the fate of anyone trapped in the fathomless mud-sloughs of those lonely Essex creeks!

Many years ago, under the title of "Sanichar, the Wolf-boy," we published an account of an unfortunate creature, half animal, half human being, who had been discovered in the Indian jungle and brought to civilization. It was

Kuantan Tigers Chase Bus

From Our Own Correspondent

KUANTAN, Monday.

TIGERS in the jungle close to Kuantan have killed all 23 dogs in one village, have chased a mail truck and a bus, carried away stray cattle and even run under villagers' houses while hunting wild boar.

So far only one tiger has been killed. It was shot by angry villagers who waited for it beside the carcase of a cow it had killed at Kuala Kenau, three miles from Sungei Lembing.

The cow belonged to the Penghulu, Kuala Kenan.

Kampong Belukar, four miles from Kuantan, where all the dogs have been killed appears to be the centre of the local tiger-land.

A retired postmaster who lives there has kept a diary of the tigers' exploits under and around his house which is on the main road.

The following are some excerpts from his diary:

Jan. 27—8.30 p.m. tigers chasing wild boars passed under my house.

Jan. 28—9 p.m. tigers chased the mail truck, stopped, and then gave chase to a passenger bus for a short distance. Bus driver shouted out: "Don't come out of house. Big tigers about."

Jan. 29—Tigers prowled around the houses and along the road.

Feb. 2—Tigers roaring behind my house from 2 a.m. till dawn.

April 14—Tiger killed dog belonging to haji living opposite me. The haji had bought a dog licence today.

April 15—Tigers prolowing underneath house. Killed dog belonging to Agricultural Department employee.

claimed that the child had been reared by wolves, with whom he had lived for a lengthy period, and the case aroused much interest in medical circles. Now the *Statesman*, of Calcutta, in a recent Overseas edition, prints the paragraph reproduced on p. 298 proving once again that history has an odd way of repeating itself.

Commencing with an article publiished some three decades ago under the title, " The Graveyard of the Atlantic," we have made several references to Sable Island, a notorious menace to Atlantic shipping lying off the southern tip of Nova Scotia. This island has lately come into the news again, as witness the extract on p. 300 from a London newspaper, for the odd reason that, according to the geologists, it is likely to disappear before very long! Meanwhile we imagine it will be scant consolation to mariners driven ashore on its treacherous shoals to reflect that, if they could only have postponed their arrival for another fifty years or so, their ships might never have been wrecked!

From time to time we have published stories concerning " Voodoo," that strange, bloodthirsty cult which—although officially banned—is still believed to be secretly practised in the remote interior of the Negro Republic of Haiti and sundry other places in the tropics. One of the legends associated with this sinister form of devil-worship is that its priests possess the power of turning people who have incurred their displeasure into *zombies*—hapless automata, without reasoning power, who passively obey any orders they may receive. On p. 298 is a cutting from the London *Daily Mail* in which a returned missionary describes an extraordinary encounter with one of these alleged *zombies*, or " living dead."

Regular readers may recall the fact that we have printed several striking narratives concerning the " lost " Dutchman Mine, in Arizona, U.S.A., and the strange fatality which has attended all attempts to rediscover it. Below, from the New York *Sunday Mirror* of May 2nd, 1948, is an account of the latest tragedy—the mysterious death of an old prospector who was sufficiently up-to-date to use a helicopter to assist his investigations. According to a Dutch newspaper which a correspondent at the Hague has been kind enough to forward, Cravey's end has not deterred other searchers for this elusive bonanza. Under the heading, " The Richest

'Lost Dutchman' Mine Claims Its 20th Victim

PHOENIX, Ariz. (INS).—The ghost of the "lost Dutchman" gold mine still grins while natives of Phoenix, Ariz., relate the death story of the 20th victim who searched in vain for the fabulous pit of virgin gold.

The death-studded secret of the legendary gold mine is still locked in the awesome Superstition mountains. The latest victim was James A. Cravey, 62.

Cravey, a retired Phoenix photographer, set out last Summer for the location of the mine he said he had seen "in a dream."

Lt. Cmdr. Wilton S. Clements, 42, of Chicago, and Capt. R. S. Perin of Seattle, Winter visitors at Phoenix, recently found a skeleton believed to be that of the missing photographer.

They said they discovered a pair of trousers which contained a billfold that had Cravey's name and $4.84. In a jacket they found another billfold that contained Cravey's name and a $5 bill.

Phoenix natives said Cravey hired a helicopter to take him into Superstition mountains, 40 miles east of Phoenix. Last June 21 the pilot set him down in a deep canyon and left him with provisions for eight days.

Late last Summer a four-day search by air and ground was conducted in an effort to find the over-due prospector. The searchers only found his base camp.

Cravey finally was found by the two men who went for a walk through the mountains. Only his skeleton remained as the 20th person who died trying to find the gold.

The Superstition range contains a labyrinth of canyons in which many prospectors have lost their way and died. Its precipices are treacherous and its caves occupied by wild animals. Indians have long regarded the mountains with awe. Many men have disappeared into the mountains, never to be seen again.

The legend of a mine of fabulously rich gold ore, with death the only reward for those who hunt it, has been growing for more than half a century. It began with death of Jacob Walzer, known as the "Old Dutchman," in Phoenix in 1891.

STUDENTS 'CHUTE TO FIRE —12 DIE

Express Staff Reporter

NEW YORK, Sunday.—Fifteen college students were parachuted to help fight a forest fire in Montana today. Twelve of them died.

The "smoke-jumpers" made a successful descent into the rugged terrain in one of Montana's most beautiful areas.

But the wind veered round and sent the flames towards them. Most of them scrambled up the cliff where they were trapped.

The other three burned a safety zone round a pile of rocks. There they crouched all night while the fire burned around them.

Five hundred men are fighting the blaze, which began last Thursday and has destroyed 6,000 acres. River boats are bringing up reinforcements.

Wild life is fleeing to the safety of the Missouri River.

Treasure on Earth," the Netherlands journal reported in April, 1949: "Full of high spirits, a party of eight men, equipped with maps, has just left for the mountains of Arizona to search for the legendary Lost Dutchman, a gold deposit which is believed to be the richest and biggest in the world. They will have to cover a distance of some hundred and seventy miles through the wildest mountains. The secret of the location of the mine, according to all accounts, was lost many years ago after the death of the original discoverer, a Dutchman named Jacob Walzer."

The cutting on p. 299 reproduced from the *Bangkok Post*, of Siam, dated July 12th, last— takes us to Malaya. The correspondent who sent it writes: "You have often featured stories of wild elephants, tigers, and other big game in the wilds of Malaya, but this paragraph refers to Kuantan, which is a town of some ten thousand people, boasting the possession of electricity, paved streets, and various other amentities of modern civilization." Can it be that the Malayan "Stripes," tiring of the jungle, is becoming conscious of the call of the cities and the lure of bright lights, or has he merely discovered that town-bred dogs are easy prey? Meanwhile, it looks as if the local busmen must be undergoing an unpleasant ordeal. A hungry tiger joining the queue is calculated to have a shattering effect both on *morale* and the time-schedules!

GRAVEYARD OF SHIPS

Disappearing Into Sea

Montreal, Monday.—A shrinking 20-mile lump of grey sand, called the "graveyard of the Atlantic," where more than 200 ships are known to have been wrecked, may soon disappear beneath the ocean. Geologists believe that Sable Island will be almost completely washed away by water within the next century. The turbulent seas surrounding it are among the worst in the Atlantic, and that, accompanied by the thick fog, has caused many a ship to be blown on to the Sable's lengthy sandbars.—B.U.P.

During the past few years we have published several stories concerning the remarkable exploits of Mounted Constables belonging to various Australian police-forces. Below is an account, from a Sydney journal, of the wonderful feat performed by a young officer, Constable Stuart Berman, who, accompanied by two black trackers, rode for five hundred miles through practically unknown country—of most sinister reputation—in order to hunt down and arrest an aboriginal murderer. These "outback" upholders of the law are usually very fine types, and Australia has every reason to be proud of them.

"The Smoke-jumpers," in our September, 1949, number—a description of the parachutist-firemen who are now being trained to tackle outbreaks of fire in the vast American forests—has not had to wait very long for the inevitable "sequel." Above, from the London

Arnhem Land arrest

Darwin.—After a 500-mile horse patrol to the Goyder River in the heart of Arnhem Land, young Constable Stuart Berman, of the Roper River Police Station, has brought back a nomad native who murdered his wife with a shovel spear.

The native, Meetpoonoong, will appear in Darwin Court later today charged with murder.

The Goyder River country has rarely been visited by white men before.

Constable Berman, who has been at Roper River for only 11 months, rode 500 miles in 35 days with a packhorse team and two native trackers.

They entered Arnhem Land through Mainoru Station, crossed the Wilton River, and found the dead woman's body at Bruru waterhole on the Phelp River.

Constable Berman also found native witnesses here who told him that the murder had been committed on the Rose River, many miles away, and that the dead woman's body had been wrapped in stringybark and carried to the waterhole by other members of the tribe.

The patrol pushed on round the rough Arnhem Land escarpment and eventually sighted the murderer at a billabong on the Goyder.

As soon as he saw the police patrol, Meetpoonoong cleared out in a dugout canoe. He was chased by one of the trackers, who swam the river and brought him back.

Meetpoonoong was then within easy striking distance of the Arafura Sea.

Constable Berman said today some of the country over which he rode was indescribably rough. At one stage he had been forced to dismount and pull his horse up the steep mountain grades.

Daily Express, is a brief account of the terrible fate that befell a party of university men who volunteered to help in fighting a forest fire in Montana. It is not clear whether this tragedy was due to lack of experience or pure mischance, but one realizes, as the author of our article pointed out, that however carefully one is trained, "smoke-jumping," from its very nature, must remain a most hazardous profession.

Just as references to poor old Louis de Rougemont continue to crop up in the most unexpected places, so we are constantly being reminded of "Kruger's Millions"—the vast treasure in gold which the old President is alleged to have concealed somewhere or other at the time of the Boer War to prevent it falling into the hands of the British. We have printed several accounts of this legendary cache and the various unsuccessful attempts made to locate it, but after all these years, in spite of many disappointments, the hunt still goes on. Above, from a South African journal, are some details of the latest expedition. The official attitude, as we have mentioned more than once, is that the golden hoard never existed, but hosts of South Africans refuse to accept this view. And, as everyone knows, the lure of buried wealth is well-nigh irresistible.

In March last year we published a striking story entitled "My Escape from Hong Kong," by Lieut.-Colonel Arthur Goring, setting forth how his party eluded the victorious Japanese and got safely away from the captured island during the late war. The success of this daring feat was partly due to a very gallant little Chinese sailor, Admiral Chan Chak, who, although sorely handicapped by the fact that he had lost a leg, gave a wonderful exhibition of pluck, cheeriness, and thought for others. He did not long survive that eventful journey, however, for in September, as the annexed newspaper paragraph recalls, the Admiral died in his home city of Canton.

HIDDEN GOLD IS THE PRIZE

NEW SEARCH FOR LOST TREASURE

JOHANNESBURG, Friday.

A TREASURE hunt with a magnificent prize is being organised by Mr. J. G. Davel, of the small town of Springs, near Johannesburg.

He claims to possess new evidence of gold hidden in the Eastern Transvaal during the Boer War, and he is being financed by a syndicate of local residents to further his hunt.

100,000 Ounces

After years of investigation Davel says he has information about more than 100,000 ounces of bar gold taken from the Robinson gold mine during the Boer War and delivered to the Treasury of the Old Transvaal Republic of Paul Kruger in Pretoria.

Davel says the gold was forwarded to Komatipoort, on the border between the Transvaal and Mozambique, for export to Holland. But he has never been able to find any trace of the gold having crossed the border.

The Cache

He has a page from an old notebook giving a description of the vicinity where the gold is supposed to be buried, and he thinks he knows to within 300 yards the whereabouts of the treasure cache.—Reuter.

JAP WAR RECALLED

China's One-legged Hero Admiral Dead

Knighted for war services to Britain, Admiral Sir Andrew Chan Chak, K.C.B.E., one-legged hero of the war-time evacuation of Hong Kong, died in Canton on Tuesday night. He was 56, says a Reuter message from Hong Kong.

Admiral Chan was Canton's first post war Mayor and a former Commander South China's Navy. He was knighted for his services in leading the escape of Colonial Sec., Brigadier David Mercer MacDougall, and other British officials after the colony's surrender to the Japanese.

Treasure—or just a boy's joke?

By Daily Mail Reporter

MIDDLE-AGED Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Higginbottom, of Gubbet-street, Halifax, Yorkshire, refused to give up hope of digging up a fortune when they heard yesterday that their treasure hunt may have been started by a schoolboy's joke.

A month ago the Higginbottoms, with four helpers, spent three days in the grounds of a ruined hall at the village of Mixenden, three miles from Halifax, hoping to dig up the family fortune.

Yesterday Mr. Russell Ian McFarlane, 23-year-old science master at Newport Grammar School, Isle of Wight, wrote to his father in Halifax, revealing that the "ancient" document which started the Higginbottoms digging, after it was found in a fireplace at ruined Mixenden Hall, was probably faked by him.

'DOCUMENT'

Mr. McFarlane wrote: "Years ago I took delight in producing 'documents.' One, carefully printed in Gothic characters, garnished with seals, and smoked to give it an antique appearance, I placed among the stones of the fireplace in the ruined Mixenden Hall."

The document that raised the Higginbottoms' hopes was believed to be a codicil of a will concerning the family of Mrs. Higginbottom, whose ancestors had lived at the hall long ago.

Mrs. Higginbottom said yesterday: "Mr. McFarlane could not possibly have known or written the names listed in the document."

The Sellington Treasure," published in December, 1947, related the curious story of an English village which was abruptly shaken out of its normally peaceful existence by rumours of a buried hoard, concealed by an old-time highwayman. Just when the excitement reached fever-pitch, the whole business was discovered to be an ingenious hoax perpetrated by a resourceful local artist.

This incident is recalled to mind by the cutting here reproduced from a London daily, outlining what appears to be a very similar state of affairs. It would be interesting to know if any developments have occurred in connection with this episode.

SHORT STORIES

THE WARNING

By G. E. G. PLANT, F.R.G.S.

Whether you believe in premonition or whether you don't, there is little doubt some people occasionally get an idea that "something is going to happen," as in the case here recorded

READING the interesting story "Premonition" in the July, 1947, issue of the WIDE WORLD, I was strongly reminded of a similar and very disastrous experience which befell me in 1922. At that time I was employed on the Uasin Gishu Construction, an extension of the Kenya and Uganda Railway which was ultimately to connect Kampala, the capital of Uganda, with Mombasa, on the coast.

Although the work was arduous and the conditions often extremely difficult, the free life far from civilization amply compensated for the many hardships, and I enjoyed it immensely until sent far beyond railhead, to a place called Maji Mazuri ("Good Water") near Eldama Ravine, with instructions to clear the dense primeval forest from a rocky spur and drive a cutting through it.

No sooner had I arrived on the actual site, however, than a feeling of cold dread came over me, and with it a compelling urge to quit the vicinity without delay. It was quite different from that "sixth sense" of imminent danger which the dweller in the wilds acquires, and though I instinctively scanned the green depths of the surrounding forest I somehow knew there was nothing there. This chilling sensation, I clearly realized, was a warning—some kind of foreknowledge of impending disaster—but one cannot apply for a transfer on such grounds. In any case, one's own self-respect would not permit ignominious retreat, and I determined (though rather hesitantly) to see the job through.

Soon the age-old forest resounded with the rasping of saws, the ringing of axes, the shouts of the workmen, and the rending crashes of falling trees as we toiled to clear a two-hundred-foot-wide passage for the right of way. The tough masses of undergrowth had to be chopped up piecemeal and stacked ready for burning when dried out; the trunks and larger branches were cut into manageable lengths and rolled to the limits of the clearing.

The job was rendered considerably more difficult by the extreme steepness of the slopes on which we were working, great care being necessary to prevent the huge trunk-sections from breaking away and rolling down amongst other labourers below. But eventually the ground was clear, save for a few extra-large logs that we left to the last; a gang tackled them while I pegged out a considerable area on which to start the actual excavation on the morrow.

Suddenly warning shouts from above caused me to look up in a hurry, when I saw a giant log rolling down towards me, slowly but irresistibly, and making straight for a most important reference-peg. Anxious to save the marker, I picked up a wooden lever, thrust it beneath one end of the advancing log, and applied all my strength, hoping to slew it round; but the lever unexpectedly broke and I pitched forward, right under the great mass of timber!

Instantly my premonition flashed through my mind, and even as I fell I thought: "This is it!" Most luckily for me, however, I had fallen into a slight depression in the ground which saved me from almost certain death. Although it felt as though I was being crushed to a pulp and driven into the soil, the rolling log straddled the hollow with just sufficient clearance to enable my body to withstand the pressure. But it was touch-and-go, and although I managed to drag myself back to the camp and get on my bed, within half an hour I was unable either to move or breathe except with extreme pain and difficulty. For about a week, moreover, I could not sleep or find any posture which afforded any relief from the universal ache.

I was greatly perturbed to discover, when I resumed work again, that my feeling of foreboding was stronger than ever! After the accident I had naturally expected it to leave me. It was not with me continuously, but whenever it recurred it did so with considerable force. Nevertheless, as week followed week and nothing untoward happened, I began to discount it, dismissing it as a silly fancy.

As a matter of fact, it would have been hard to feel depressed for long in such surroundings. We were about 8,000ft. above sea-level; the clear, sparkling air filled one with energy and the joy of living, while the beauty of the mountain and forest scenery was a perpetual delight. It was not the type of dense, unrelieved forest which oppresses one with feelings akin to claustrophobia, but abounded in wide grassy clearings, affording excellent buck-shooting. From the heights above the rock-cutting a stupendous view was obtained of the Great Rift Valley, with Lake Baringo gleaming beneath its frowning eastern rampart.

The work, too, was progressing excellently. The air resounded with the musical ring of the sixteen-foot jumper-drills as the drilling-gang toiled to complete their daily quota of dynamite holes, while on the opposite rock-face labourers armed with crowbars and sledgehammers cleared away the tons of loose rock resulting from a previous days' blast.

There were the inevitable accidents, of course; on one occasion a driller, seeing a hole which had survived the explosion, and thinking to save himself toil, inserted his drill and began deepening it. But, unfortunately for him, it contained a partially unexploded charge, which promptly went off! The drill was never seen again, and the unfortunate worker, as he lay in

the field hospital, had ample opportunity to regret his labour-saving ideas.

The shining copper detonators, too, struck our primitive helpers as being just the thing for ear-ornaments, and despite all our precautions three of them were stolen. Attempting to scrape out the filling of highly-explosive fulminate of mercury, however, the thieves speedily landed in hospital minus several fingers—to reflect bitterly, no doubt, on the evils of vanity and the peculiar inventions of the white man.

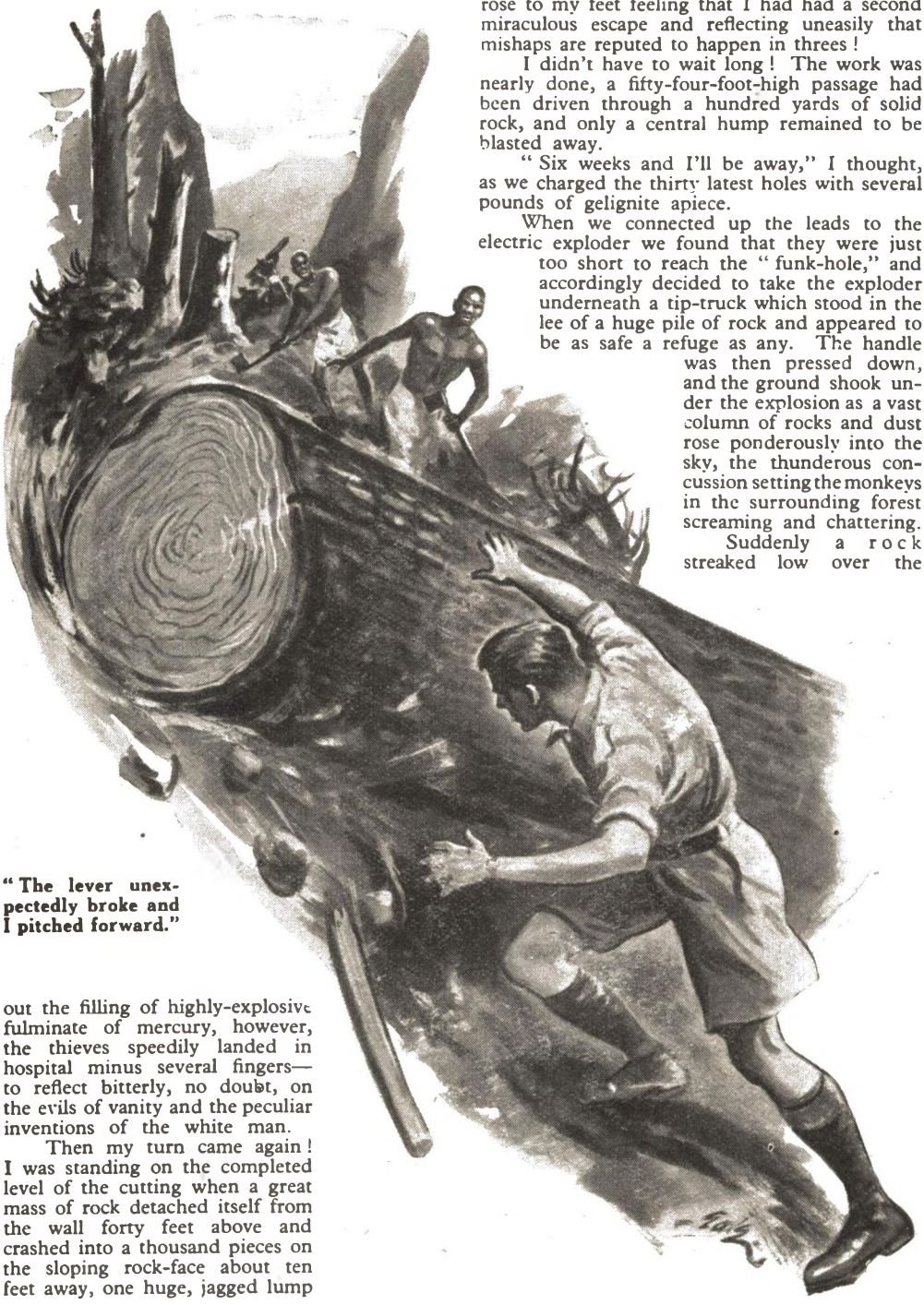
Then my turn came again! I was standing on the completed level of the cutting when a great mass of rock detached itself from the wall forty feet above and crashed into a thousand pieces on the sloping rock-face about ten feet away, one huge, jagged lump ricocheting and hurtling straight at my head with terrific velocity. How I escaped it I do not know; I have a dim recollection of flinging myself to the ground and feeling the wind of its passage a fraction of an inch from my ear. Then I became aware of the rest of the great mass bounding towards me along the ground, and avoided it by a desperate sideways jerk and roll. Covered with dust and rock-splinters, I rose to my feet feeling that I had had a second miraculous escape and reflecting uneasily that mishaps are reputed to happen in threes!

I didn't have to wait long! The work was nearly done, a fifty-four-foot-high passage had been driven through a hundred yards of solid rock, and only a central hump remained to be blasted away.

"Six weeks and I'll be away," I thought, as we charged the thirty latest holes with several pounds of gelignite apiece.

When we connected up the leads to the electric exploder we found that they were just too short to reach the "funk-hole," and accordingly decided to take the exploder underneath a tip-truck which stood in the lee of a huge pile of rock and appeared to be as safe a refuge as any. The handle was then pressed down, and the ground shook under the explosion as a vast column of rocks and dust rose ponderously into the sky, the thunderous concussion setting the monkeys in the surrounding forest screaming and chattering.

Suddenly a rock streaked low over the



"The lever unexpectedly broke and I pitched forward."

pile of boulders ahead, and before I could make a move to save myself struck me squarely on the left knee, shattering the leg horribly, plucking me from the shelter, and exposing me to a storm of falling debris—none of which hit me, by great good fortune, though it thrashed the ground into an impenetrable fog of dust.

The plight of the man injured out in the wilds is never pleasant; in this case it involved a journey of a hundred and sixty-seven miles, first by stretcher and bearers, then by motor-car, and finally by train, in order to reach Nairobi, at that time the nearest place with facilities adequate to cope with such a mishap.

It was three years before I fully recovered the use of my leg; that it was saved at all was sufficiently remarkable. Within eight months, however, I was able to resume work and, by a strange chance, was with the platelaying gang which laid the first rails through the cutting. Here I discovered, to my relief, that the apprehension with which the place had hitherto inspired me was now almost non-existent; evidently the "hoodoo" was satisfied so far as I was concerned!

Can you wonder, after such an experience, that I cherish a deep respect for what we call premonition?

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

By LIEUT.-COLONEL F. MACKENZIE

A very remarkable little tale from the wilds of forbidden Tibet. The Author writes: "The facts are accurate, but I have changed certain names."

IT was a crisp, clear morning at the beginning of September, 1939; fresh snow had fallen on the 17,000ft. peak just above our camp at Gyantse, in Tibet, and from the temple-fortress half-way down the slope came the booming note of *tonshens* calling the *lamas* to prayer. On the other side, beneath a row of poplars skirting the river-bank, a string of laden yaks was passing, led by a large black bull bedecked with bell and scarlet tassels. A hundred such caravans of yaks and mules were trekking over the mountains, as they had done from time immemorial, heading for the high passes of the Himalayas, beyond which lay the plains of India and world-markets for their loads of wool and hides.

I was in command of a company of Indian troops, including some mounted infantry, officially known as "Escorts in Tibet," which Britain was allowed by treaty to maintain in the country for the protection of our Trade Agents. As I walked up the steps of the little building that served us as a mess footsteps sounded behind me, and I turned to find a young orderly holding a slip of paper in his hand. Taking it from him, I read the brief message: "*Britain has declared war on Germany.*" Suddenly, for the first time in this isolated spot, I felt very lonely.

There could be little doubt, incidentally, as to our isolation! Our nearest road-head in India was Gangtok, thirteen days' march distant over two lofty passes, the Nathu La (14,200ft.) and the Tang La (15,200ft.), the latter taking one across the watershed of the Greater Himalayas. Gyantse itself—the third most important city in Tibet—stood at an elevation of over 13,000ft.

For several days messages were frequent; then, one morning, an urgent query came through: "*Has a stranger reached your camp, or passed through Gyantse?*" The answer was in the negative; no stranger had been seen by us or the local authorities. No clear description of this individual was given, but apparently he was travelling light, with one servant and a pack-pony. I learned further that, by a mixture of bluff and luck, he had crossed the frontier from India and traversed the watershed. After this, according to our information, he had "left the trade route." There was the rub, for in jealously-guarded Tibet it is a serious offence to quit the recognized trade route. What our people were anxious to discover was whence this mysterious individual had come and whither he was bound.

Rumour had it he was a German, and immediately there arose visions of a secret agent—a Nazi spy making for China on mischief bent. Where was his rendezvous, and who were his confederates? It was vital to find out more about him.

It would, of course, have been a simple matter to send mounted patrols out to locate and round-up the intruder; but that was not our method. The terms of the treaty which sanctioned our presence in the country did not entitle us to make arrests outside our camp; therefore we waited. After a few days news came that the "wanted" man was on his way to Lhasa, the capital. Thoughts of a Nazi emissary with a mission to the Regent crossed my mind, but what could one man hope to accomplish with the Tibetan authorities? More delay and speculation followed; then, one Sunday morning, a messenger arrived to report that the stranger was actually approaching our camp!

It was my duty to receive him, and as I strode toward the gates I pictured a bearded Teuton, probably sullen but still arrogant, and quite possibly truculent. Imagine my surprise, therefore, to see a little rat of a man, dirty and dishevelled, come limping up the path. His name had been given as "Monz" or "Meinz," and so, after the manner of H. M. Stanley, I addressed him curtly: "*Herr* Meinz, I presume?"

He nodded, looking round him in a dazed sort of fashion. A Union Jack was floating over Headquarters, and the sentries were at their posts. He had imagined, it appeared, that he was calling on the Tibetan Governor, and discovered his error too late!

Accommodation was very limited in barracks, but we made our unwilling guest reasonably

comfortable in the Quarter Guard. After a search for arms and documents—which revealed nothing—we turned to his kit, consisting of a valise and a suitcase. The valise was full of blankets and soiled linen, but when we opened the bulging case the first things to fall out were a dinner-jacket and a pair of patent leather shoes! What on earth could a man want with such articles on the "Roof of the World"? Of the other contents, quite 50 per cent. were utterly useless for a mountain journey, but there were a few papers, some letters, and a map which had obviously been stolen from a *dak* bungalow.

Up to that moment Meinz had said very little, but as the documents were removed for examination he became very angry, challenging our authority to meddle with his property. He got very little change out of *that* attitude, however, because—quite apart from the fact that he had crossed the frontier by a trick, waving a German motor-licence in the face of an ignorant guard—he had also broken the law by leaving the route prescribed for travellers. Moreover, we were dealing with him at the express request of the Tibetans.

I explained all this briefly, adding: "In any case, the declaration of war has automatically made you an enemy." The words were hardly out of my mouth before Meinz leaped to his feet, his face working spasmodically, and shouted: "What is that you say? Britain and Germany at war? Thank God, thank God! I am a Jew!"

Then, much to my embarrassment, he seized my hand and shook it violently.

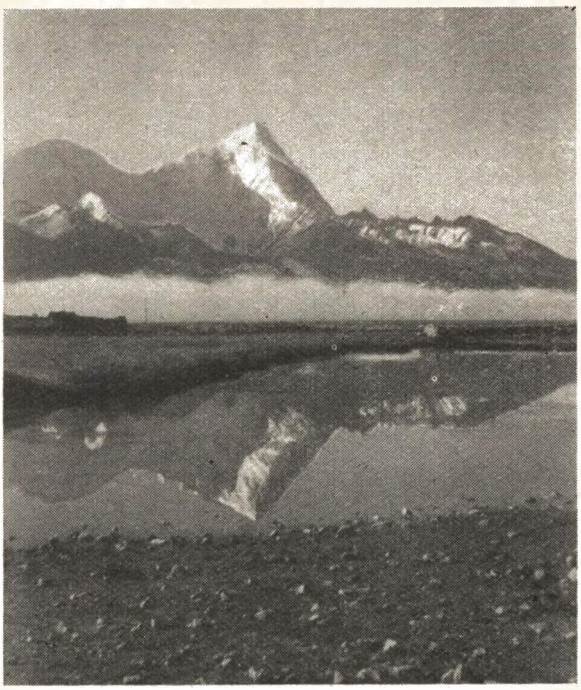
His nationality, it speedily transpired, was the key to the mystery which had surrounded him. When he had calmed down, and was once more seated on his camp bed, he told me the following strange story.

"He seized my hand and shook it violently."

"My parents lived at Cologne, on the Rhine, where my father had a small chemist's shop. For a time I worked in the shop, but as Hitler's power grew, and persecution of the Jews increased, I determined to get away. I possessed a good knowledge of French, and my English was not bad. With these assets, and the help of a German doctor who was well-disposed towards our family, I eventually secured a minor post in the German Intelligence Service, being employed on the Belgian border.

" For some months life was tolerable, but in the spring of 1938 the Gestapo carried out a rigorous ' purge ' in our district, and amongst those who were removed to an unknown destination was my father. Shortly after this I received the tip from a friend that my own movements were being carefully watched. It became obvious to me that it could be only a matter of time before I, too, would be arrested and thrown into a concentration camp—or worse! Next time I was on duty near the frontier, therefore, I made a pretext to cross into Belgium, making up my mind never to return.

" But Belgium was too near the Reich for safety, so I went on to France and thence to Egypt, where I got a job with a Jewish doctor in Cairo. One evening a friend of the doctor's came to the house. He was a trader in carpets, and in the course of conversation disclosed the fact that he was soon starting for Iraq and Persia, where he intended making trade contacts. This was the very chance I was seeking—to see something of the world and at the same time get farther away from the shadow of the Axis. It was arranged that I should travel with this trader and make myself generally useful to him."



Chomolhari, the 24,000ft. peak on the borders of Tibet and Bhutan

Meinz gave very few details about his journey through the Middle East, but we gathered he had left the trader when the latter was due to return to Cairo. He himself had crossed the border into India in August, 1938, making Quetta his first halting-place. About his subsequent move to Calcutta, his sojourn in that city, and his reasons for leaving it, he was still more reluctant to speak, but later on information gathered from various sources enabled us to fill up some of the blanks in his story.

The winter in Quetta is distinctly cold, so 1939 found the wanderer again on the move, this time heading for Calcutta. There, amongst the teeming millions of India's largest city, he set up as a " doctor," and might well have continued unmolested had he not fallen foul of the police. A matter of unpaid debts, coupled with the more serious offence of beating an Indian, was said to have brought him into court.

As an alien, travelling on a Luxembourg passport, he had only been granted a one-year permit to stay in India, and when August drew to a close the self-styled " doctor " found himself in a decidedly awkward situation. Having got into trouble with the British, he knew his permit would not be renewed, while to turn for help to the German Consul would be to walk straight into the lion's den. Without a country, cash, or credit, he conceived the truly fantastic plan of scaling the mighty Himalayas and traversing the mountainous wilds of forbidden Tibet in a desperate attempt to seek safety in China! The reader knows the upshot.

After this extraordinary little man had been with us for three days orders were received for his return to India. He was provided with a saddle-horse, his scanty belongings were loaded on a pack-animal, and the escort was all ready when, at the last moment, he calmly announced that, owing to the state of his health, he could not ride! One could not help smiling to think of a man unable to ride trying to get from India to China.

The camp Medical Officer examined him, discovering some minor trouble, but suggested he could manage well enough if provided with a cushion. This was duly supplied, and instructions given to reduce the speed and distance covered in order to make the daily journeys less arduous. On leaving us the " Doctor " was profuse in his thanks for the hospitality he had received; he appeared genuinely pleased to be under British protection.

A week later, after a good rest at the half-way camp, the Indian officer in charge of the escort reported that Meinz refused to go any farther.

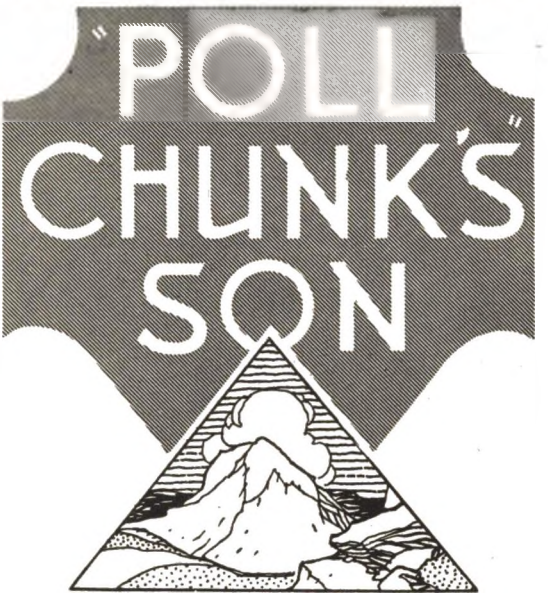
He stubbornly declined to walk, and was accordingly tied on a stretcher, but one mile of this form of transport was apparently quite enough for Meinz; from then on he willingly trudged the rest of the four-thousand-foot climb.

At the summit of the Nathu La pass, police from British India met the escort and duly took charge of our very first " prisoner of war; " we heard later that he had been placed in a concentration camp. Existence there may have been boring for him, but his life was safe, and when 1945 came he at least found himself on the winning side.

I never learned what happened to him afterwards.

OUT OF THE PAST

"POLL CHUNK'S" SON



By H. M. SUTHERLAND

When this narrative was first published, in 1925, Mr. Sutherland wrote: "I am sending you the story that lies behind a trial I have just witnessed. The facts seem to be so pathetic, so poignant, that I have added nothing and subtracted nothing. Even the names are correctly given. The whole narrative is a drama of real life as lived to-day in the mountains of Kentucky."

"SHORTY" HOSTEND was swearing luridly, as only Shorty *could* swear when he felt that the occasion called for it. His vituperative vocabulary was not directed at anyone in particular; he seemed to be aiming a steady flow of crackling phrases at the ditch in the street. Just behind him a half-dozen Kentucky hillsmen and townsfolk lounged along the railing, leading up the steps to the court-house door. Shorty's explosion caused the less indolent to transfer their attention to him; a few of them even stopped their absorbed whittling.

"What's the matter," Shorty?" drawled one man, grinning.

"Some—son of a horse-thief——" Shorty paused and glanced up. "Why, they'll unscrew the knobs from your doors while you sleep! Thieves? This burg ain't got nothing else!"

"Somebody steal somethin', Shorty?" queried the first speaker softly.

"Steal? No! They jest borrowed twenty joints of this pipe I was goin' to lay to-day. I reckon they wanted it fo' the baby to cut his teeth on, an' they'll bring it back after a while. Like Hades they will, the glue-fingered sons of grave-robbers!"

The outburst attracted the attention of Deputy-Sheriff Joe Horgan, who was standing in the shade of a tree on the opposite side of the street. Walking across to Shorty, he glanced keenly over the ground where the piping had been partially embedded in the soft earth.

"See any tracks, Shorty?" he asked, in a low voice.

"Tracks?" Shorty literally bellowed his reply. "Sure—a million! Half the town was settin' on them pipes yesterday watchin' me sweat in that ditch. Help yo'self. Thar's plenty of tracks!"

"What do ye reckon they wanted it for?" inquired another of the loungers on the steps above.

"That's what I want to know." Shorty turned angrily on the Deputy-Sheriff. "What can anybody do with six hundred feet of two-inch water pipe? He can't lay it without bein' seen, an' he can't eat it."

"Keep quiet about it, Shorty," cautioned Horgan, "I'm goin' to look around a little, and maybe I can locate it."

Shorty grunted in disgust and shouldered his kit of tools. The men on the steps sank back into their former listless attitudes, each seeking a shady spot out of the glaring rays of the sun. It was early in the afternoon, and, with the exception of the idlers at the court-house, the streets of Elkhorn were absolutely deserted. Despite the fact that the little town was almost on a level with the crests of the Cumberlands, only a few miles distant, the heat was oppressive and the dust lay thick on the court-house square.

Horgan gazed thoughtfully at Shorty's back until the latter disappeared down a side street. Then a lank, gloomy-looking hillsman detached himself from the railing and came down to the sidewalk. Seeing that the man wanted to speak to him, Horgan led the way to a bench under a maple tree.

"Whoever stole that pipe had to haul it away, don't ye think, Horgan?" The hillsman thoughtfully flicked the legs of his overalls with a switch as he asked the question.

"I reckon he did," replied Horgan. "What's on your mind?"

"Nothin', 'cept I seed Poll Chunk's oldest boy, Mel, drivin' a wagon down the back street about 'leven o'clock last night as I went to put up my hoss."

"What have you got against Mel?" Horgan asked the question in a tone which carried a plain implication of suspicion.

The hillsman shrugged. "Nothin' against Mel, but I have against his liquor. Thar'd be a sight less trouble on Hick'ry Ridge if ye had him under lock an' key. Thar ain't none of us wants to run him out, but we could git along without him and——"

"Let's see," interrupted Horgan, "what's your name? Hartley, isn't it?"

"Jason Hartley," replied the mountaineer. "Mel's stillin', isn't he?"

The hillsman nodded.

"All right, Hartley," said Horgan. "I'm comin' down to have a look for Mel. But I don't know that Hickory Ridge country. Think you could take a day off and show me around a little?"

"Sure; any day you want. Come to Dick Branham's store; they'll know whar to find me."

Without another word Hartley turned and strode away.

About a week later Horgan rode up to Branham's store on Trace Fork, near the foot of Hickory Ridge, and found Jason Hartley sitting on a box talking to the storekeeper. The hillsman came out to the platform in front.

"Kinda thought you'd be along to-day," he said. "I was waitin' fo' ye."

Leaving his horse in the care of the merchant, Horgan with difficulty kept pace with Hartley as they swung back through several fields toward the Ridge. In a short time they entered an almost illimitable forest, through which they plunged rapidly with the noiseless, ground-eating stride peculiar to the mountaineer. They climbed swiftly to the top of a high peak, where Horgan stopped for a minute and unlimbered his field-glasses.

"No use lookin' for smoke," declared Hartley. "Mel won't burn nothin' but dried white oak, an' that don't show in this hazy weather. Come on! I know whar he ought to be, anyway."

"Ever see Mel's still?" questioned Horgan.

"No, but I've talked to them as has, an' they say she's a wonder—seventy-gallon boiler, an' outfit to match. Some say it cost eight hundred dollars." Walking over to the edge of a precipice, Hartley pointed in the direction of a clearing a quarter of a mile away. "That's Poll Chunk's farm," he continued. "We'll find Mel somewhar back in them creeks across thar."

It was almost sundown when the hillsmen turned into a ravine down which ran a small stream. Horgan followed without comment, for he knew that the stills were invariably set up near running water in order to save the effort of carrying it. Cautiously they climbed upward, picking their steps to avoid making any sound that would betray their presence. At the head of the runlet they came upon a miniature spring partially hidden in a clump of wild gooseberry bushes. A single glance at the ground was sufficient to tell Horgan that either a man or some wild animal had disturbed the leaves over the tiny glen, and an instant later he and Hartley were bending low, searching the bottom of the tiny pool of water.

Reaching beneath the surface, Horgan removed a handful of leaves which had become lodged against some rocks. Lifting a small flat stone, he exposed the end of a two-inch water-pipe, covered with a piece of screen wire.

"So *that's* the idea of the pipe!" he chuckled. "He figured he'd pipe the water out on a point where nobody would ever think of lookin' for a still. That's what I call clever!"

"Mel's smart all right," agreed Hartley, in a whisper. "But he should have ordered his pipe or else got it in another county." He glanced across toward a heavy tangle of undergrowth to the left. "The still's over thar, I reckon."

In a laurel-darkened covert—a "swag," in the parlance of the hills—they found the still, with everything ready for a "run." The vats and tubs of mash and beer were standing close to the giant copper boiler, firewood had been gathered for the furnace, and the jutting end of a line of pipe dripped water into a tub at the edge of a large boulder near by. But the owner had fled. Fresh tracks and a splash of water on one of the tubs showed that he had been there that morning, but evidently he had heard the approach of the raiders and had quietly slipped into the bushes.

Removing a small hatchet from his belt, Horgan methodically chopped gaping holes in the boiler. Then he cut the "worm" into six-inch lengths and knocked the bottoms out of the vats and tubs, allowing the beer to run out in a stream down the gully.

"It's a shame to ruin that still," declared Hartley, as he watched Horgan finish the job. Then he plunged silently into a thicket in the direction of Branham's store, with the Deputy-Sheriff at his heels.

The following day Elkhorn was stirred to its depths by two exciting events—unusual occurrences for that sleepy little hill-town—and a large crowd hung about the court-house and discussed both incidents interminably. In the first place, Shorty had returned with his twenty joints of pipe, and his story of its recovery and the destroyed still spread rapidly up and down the street. A score of citizens gathered along the ditch, asking innumerable questions, and Shorty took time from his shovelling to reply with a detailed account of everything he knew in connection with the theft.

About three o'clock that afternoon Dick Branham, the Trace Fork storekeeper, rode swiftly into town and drew rein at the edge of the crowd.

"Anybody seen Sheriff Calvin or Deputy Horgan?" he asked.

"What's wrong, Dick?" the question came from more than one source.

"Poll Chunk's boys, Mel an' Dave, killed Jason Hartley about a mile from my place to-day. My little gal was out huntin' for a calf, an' saw 'em."

"Fight?" queried someone.

"No. Jest shot him down an' then run for the bushes."

Deputy Horgan shouldered his way through the crowd, and Branham repeated his news. It was but the work of a few minutes for the deputy to saddle his horse, and before the sun had reached the top of the mountain he was in the same area of woods he had searched the previous day. He spent a long hour on top of Hickory Ridge, watching Poll Chunk's log cabin, for he was almost certain the two men would return for supplies some time late that day. This surmise proved partly correct.

The shadows were beginning to lengthen when Horgan dropped down to the edge of the clearing above the house. Taking up a position behind a fence, he lay watching the kitchen door. About five-thirty Old Poll herself emerged from the house, carrying something in her apron. She climbed quickly toward the point where Horgan was hiding, and for a minute he thought that he would be forced to change his position in order to keep her from running directly into him. When she got within twenty feet of him, however, she swerved to the right and passed him, swinging around the hill toward a row of precipices at the edge of the field.

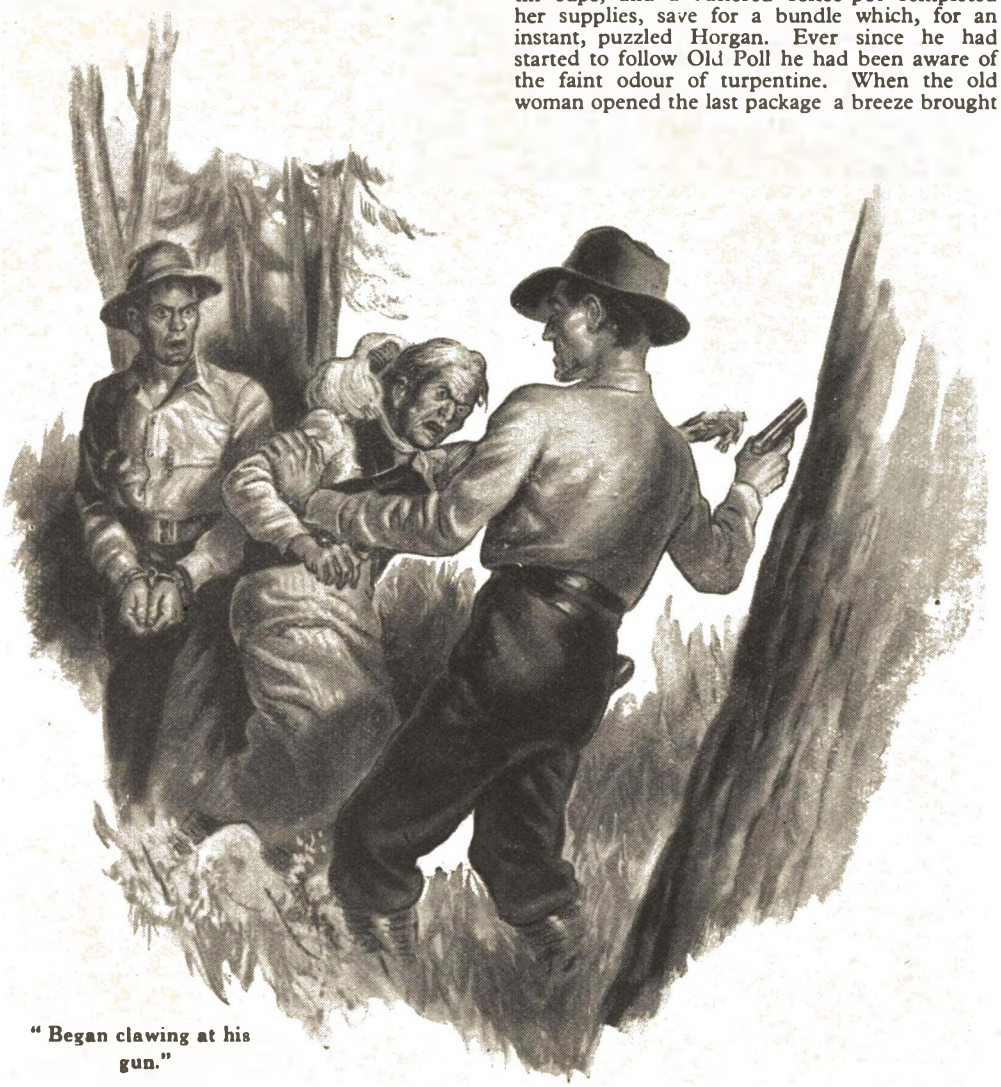
She was mumbling to herself, her lips moving continuously as she clumped along the path, and Horgan wondered what was going on in that queer old brain of hers. She was a strange creature, this old hillswoman, and known to everyone in the county as "Old Poll

Chunk." She had been the wife of "Chunk" Vinters, who, a number of years previously, had frozen to death beside the road while in a drunken stupor. None of the neighbours were ever able to find out whence the couple came when they suddenly appeared about a decade previously, and it soon become noised about Hickory Ridge that "Old Poll was queer in the head." Many stood in superstitious awe of her, and frankly leagued her with the devil, attributing to her many supernatural powers. Others, less ignorant, pitied her, repeating the rumour that her brain had been impaired by a blow from her drunken husband.

Horgan had seen her a number of times selling ginger-cakes in the streets at Elkhorn on court-days. She was small and bent, and always wore a long poke-bonnet pulled so far over her face that it was impossible to see her features. She was continually talking to herself, even while she sold the squares of crude sweets to the hungry men and boys. Oftentimes she seemed to be humming some mountain chant, in words which were unintelligible. Only once had Horgan obtained a good look at her, and somehow Old Poll's wistful face had haunted him ever since.

Softly the Deputy-Sheriff stole from his cover and followed Old Poll around the edge of the field, keeping well under the protection of the bushes above the fence. Reaching a gap in the corner of the clearing, she climbed with extraordinary speed straight up the mountain side, never pausing until she reached a "bench" near the top. Horgan maintained the pace, remaining within fifty yards of her until she halted. Then he crawled to a fringe of bushes not thirty feet away and watched her as she sat on a moss-covered log—waiting.

Suddenly Mel stepped through the thicket behind her and drew close. She glanced at him, and immediately began to remove several packages from her apron. Some of these proved to be large "pones" of cornbread, with a cut or two of meat. A small frying-pan, a couple of tin cups, and a battered coffee-pot completed her supplies, save for a bundle which, for an instant, puzzled Horgan. Ever since he had started to follow Old Poll he had been aware of the faint odour of turpentine. When the old woman opened the last package a breeze brought



"Began clawing at his gun."

a strong whiff of it to his nostrils. The bundle, apparently, contained a number of old rags.

"Wrap 'em 'round your feet, Mel," ordered Old Poll. "Then the hounds can't foller ye. They can't abide the smell o' turpentine!"

As Mel obeyed her Horgan slipped through the undergrowth and broke into the open. Covering the mountaineer with his revolver, he started to creep a little closer in order to make the surprise more complete. But he stepped on a dry twig, and at the crackle Mel sprang to his feet.

"Put 'em up and keep 'em there!" ordered Horgan sharply, and the hillsman sullenly obeyed. Walking over, the Deputy-Sheriff removed a pistol from the other's armpit and then clicked the handcuffs on him. Through it all Old Poll sat motionless, apparently stunned, gazing at the officer as though he were some fearsome apparition. Her bonnet had fallen back, and her ash-grey face seemed to grow paler every moment. Then a look of hate crept into her eyes, and her gnarled old hands clenched. Slowly she arose to her feet and, with a quick movement, rushed toward the Deputy-Sheriff and began clawing at his gun. He pushed her away, and Mel stepped between them.

"Don't, ma!" he said; "it won't do any good now. You'd better go home."

She obeyed him without a protest, going slowly down the hillside. Mel watched her until she disappeared; then he turned and strode off to the left, in the direction of the road—and jail—while Horgan followed in his footsteps with his gun ready for instant use, for at any minute Dave, the other brother, might appear or open fire from ambush. His fears were groundless, however. Soon after dark the prison door clanged on Poll Chunk's son, and Elkhorn had still another excitement to gossip over before it went to bed.

A posse searched the hills for Dave Vinters, but apparently the mountain fastnesses had swallowed him. Horgan himself investigated three separate reports that the fugitive had been seen in certain wild sections of the Cumberlands; the stories proved to be groundless. A close watch was maintained on Old Poll's cabin for a time, but even this was abandoned when it became certain that Dave had left the hills.

It was December before Mel's trial came along in the regular term of the circuit court. Unusual interest had been created in the case—more through sympathy for Old Poll than for any other reason. Quite recently she had found a purchaser for her little hill farm, and, with the proceeds, had employed one of the best-known criminal lawyers in that section of the state. Roswell McSell had gained an enviable reputation, and his list of convictions and acquittals was an imposing one.

When court convened, another murder trial preceded that of Mel Vinters, but it caused not a ripple of excitement. The hillsmen and townspeople impatiently awaited the Thursday docket, when McSell and Waters, the prosecuting attorney, would clash with their old-time fury. There was an ancient feud between those two men, and personal enmity urged them to efforts they never attained in other cases.

The preliminaries were soon over. The court-room was crowded with bearded hillsmen and their wives, while a large proportion of the townfolk were scattered behind the railing. A low buzz of conversation droned monotonously; the Sheriff beat a staccato protest on a table with his gavel to restore order.

Mel sat in the prisoner's box, exhibiting only slight interest in his surroundings. Once or twice he whispered replies to questions asked by his counsel, but for the most part he remained hunched in his chair, staring at the floor. He was tall, slender, and thin-visaged, like all his kind throughout the hills, and in his black eyes there was a glinting hint of the untamed, somehow mixed with an expression of placidity.

Near him, but behind the railing, crouched Old Poll, her bonnet pulled still lower over her face. She leaned forward, and never a movement inside the railing seemed to escape her. Her gnarled, red hands clasped and unclasped convulsively as the preparations got under way. For long intervals she would gaze at Mel with a fixed expression, and then turn toward Deputy-Sheriff Horgan, who sat beside him. Several times Horgan was certain he saw a look of unutterable hate in her eyes as she peered malevolently at him.

Throughout the first morning of the trial Old Poll sat there immobile, save when she occasionally turned her head as the fight waxed warm between the two lawyers. At the noon hour she walked the streets mumbling, studiously dodging those who approached her. Scorning the sidewalks, she plodded through the mud with half a dozen curious children trailing at her heels.

The storekeeper, Dick Branham, was on the witness-stand that afternoon, as were four or five of his neighbours, but none of them could give any direct evidence except that they had heard a number of shots and, on arriving at the scene, had found Hartley's body lying in the middle of the road. Branham had seen Mel and Dave Vinters go up the road a scant half-hour before the shooting, and fifteen minutes later Jason Hartley had walked past. Knowing the part that Hartley had played in the capture of Mel's still, said Branham, he hurried out to warn him of the presence of the Vinters boys, but when he reached the door Jason was so far away that it was almost useless to try to call him without following. The questions and wranglings of the opposing attorneys were never-ending, and the spectators and court attendants welcomed the end of the session, which came late in the afternoon.

That night Old Poll walked the streets for hours, and the townspeople pitied her as she passed their doors, but to every invitation to come in and sit by the fire she shook an impatient head. She had not eaten during the day—everybody was certain of that. Twice she tramped the length of the street before Horgan and a hillsman brought her by force into a restaurant and set food before her. She ate mechanically, and then obediently followed them to the hotel, where they locked her in a room.

Soon after the trial was resumed the following morning the state's star witness was called to the stand. Branham's eleven-year-old girl, Florence, had been the sole eye-witness to the killing, and, although thoroughly frightened, she told a succinct story, which the astute McSell entirely failed to change after an hour's furious effort.

The child, as she took the stand, looked appealingly at her father, who nodded his head

encouragingly. The judge smiled kindly at her, and her lips quivered as she kissed the stained Bible.

"Now tell us just what you saw, Florence," said Waters, gently. "Begin at the beginning and don't leave anything out. Just describe what you saw when you were in the field above the road on the day Jason Hartley was killed."

The crowd about the railing leaned forward breathlessly to catch each faltering, half-whispered word in the girl's evidence.

"I—I was huntin' for the calf up in the fields. It had broke out of the pen the night befo', an'—an'——"

"The child stared at Old Poll, plainly frightened."

"Yes, go on!" encouraged Waters, while McSell sat waiting, tense and expectant.

"I heard somebody cussin' down on the road, an' I saw Mel and Dave standin' at the side of the road. Hartley was walkin' towards them on the other side."

"Who was swearing, and what was he saying?" queried Waters, gently.

"It was Mel. He said, 'You —— spy!' An' he took two or three steps towards Hartley, an'——"

The child broke off suddenly and stared at Old Poll, plainly frightened. The red-rimmed eyes of the aged woman were fixed balefully on the witness and seemed to fascinate her. The judge was forced to speak to Florence before she could bring her mind back to her story.

"Mel an' Dave both drawed their guns an' started shootin'," continued the girl, almost in a whisper. "I reckon they must have shot about three times apiece, an' Jason Hartley doubled up an' fell. Mel walked over towards him an' shot ag'in every time he took a step. Then I turned an' run home an' told Ma what I saw."

"Did Hartley shoot at all during this time?" questioned Waters.

"No, sir. His hands was hangin' down at his sides."

Waters smilingly turned the witness over to the defence, and McSell tried every trick he had ever known to discredit her story, but Florence remained adamant. Never once did she vary from her original recital, and the jury and spectators knew that she was telling just what she had seen. Finally McSell shrugged his shoulders and permitted the girl to leave the stand. He realized that the case was lost. Nothing in his power could stop the conviction of Mel Vinters, and he knew that his final appeal would be so much wasted breath. When the arguments were ended and the case went to the jury late that afternoon practically every spectator remained waiting for the verdict, knowing the jury would require little time to reach its decision. There was but one course open; Florence's testimony had closed all others.

After half an hour's deliberation the jury filed slowly down the stairs and resumed their seats.

"Have you reached your verdict, gentlemen?" asked the judge.

The foreman arose in a manner that betrayed his self-consciousness and answered: "We have."

The clerk crossed the room and took a slip of paper from the foreman's hands.

"The prisoner will please stand," ordered the judge.

Mel obeyed mechanically, and when he straightened he seemed to tower over everyone in the room.

"'We, the gentlemen of the jury,'" intoned the clerk, "'find the defendant, Melvin Vinters, guilty of murder in the first degree.'"

Not a sound broke the stillness of the room for a long minute. Mel stood perfectly still—not an eyelash flickered. Old Poll half rose in her seat and then sank back again with a low groan.

"What a nerve? Don't he take it calm?" whispered a spectator to Horgan, across the railing. "Look at him. He never flinched!"

"I don't think he understands," replied Horgan. "He's the most ignorant man I ever met. He hasn't understood half of what's been goin' on since the trial opened."

At a gesture from the Sheriff Horgan stepped over to the prisoner, and the two officers quickly rushed him through the crowd to the jail. They feared a sudden outbreak on the part of Mel's friends, and Horgan breathed a sigh of relief when the key turned behind the condemned man.

Mel had said not a word as they left the court-house, but once inside his cell, he turned and caught the bars with both hands.

"What did they mean?" he asked, dully.

"They sentenced you to die," replied the Sheriff, bluntly.

"No! No!" Mel sank to a chair, cowering in abject fear and unbelief. "They couldn't do that. Can't they vote ag'in? They've got to. . . . They can't——"

"Pull yourself together, Mel!" urged the Sheriff, not unkindly. "It won't do any good carryin' on like that."

"Do ye mean I've got to die?" Mel's voice was filled with trembling incredulity.

The Sheriff nodded.

"Good heavens! Not that! Not that!" Mel threw himself on the iron couch and covered his face with his arms.

When he started toward the hotel, Horgan, deep in thought, almost fell over Old Poll at the jail door.

"I want to see Mel," she begged. "I've got to pray for him. He ain't never prayed yet. Kin I go in?"

"Not to-night, Poll," replied Horgan. "Let Mel rest to-night. You can see him to-morrow."

He watched the old woman walk slowly out to the street and falter uncertainly at the corner. Hurrying his steps, he caught up with her as she was apparently trying to decide which way to go.

"Come on into supper, Aunt Poll," he suggested. "It's about ready now."

But she shook her head vaguely and stalked stiffly away.

That night, once again, she tramped the streets like a lost soul, her bent form showing wraith-like and shadowy as she trudged through the broad bands of light from some window. At irregular intervals she burst into song, sometimes varying this by shouting phrases and sentences originally from the Bible, but warped and misquoted in her crazed thoughts.

Soon after nine o'clock the following morning Horgan and Sheriff Calvin went to the jail and found Old Poll sitting on the steps waiting for them. They permitted her to follow them to the cell door, where she leaned weakly against the wall while the jailer turned the key in the heavy lock. When Mel appeared she clutched him by the arm.

"What are ye doin' hyar, Ma?" he asked shortly. "Ye'd better go back home."

Old Poll laughed a trifle wildly, but the cackle was cut short by a tremulous sob as she replied:—

"We ain't got no home—'cept Heaven, Mel!"

She clung to his arm as the two officers led him down the corridor and out into the jail yard.

"Whar we goin'?" he demanded, truculently.

"The judge has to pronounce sentence on you," explained the Sheriff. Unlocking one of the wristlets from Mel's right arm, he started to fasten it about his own left to safeguard against any attempt at escape. At that instant, however, Mel saw his chance. With a single mighty bound he leaped to the top of the wall along the court-house square, and the handcuffs jangled at his wrist as he darted toward the street. At his first movement Old Poll had clutched frantically at Horgan, effectually preventing him from drawing a gun. Flinging her off, he finally succeeded in snatching an automatic from his holster, but before he could level it at the fleeing man, Sheriff Calvin fired three times—so swiftly that the explosions sounded like a continuous roll.

Mel had reached a pile of lumber at the corner of the court-house, and was leaping for cover behind it, when one of the Sheriff's bullets caught him. Sagging to his knees, he threw his arm across the top of the boards. In this position he remained, although Horgan and Calvin watched him for several seconds, wondering whether it was some trick.

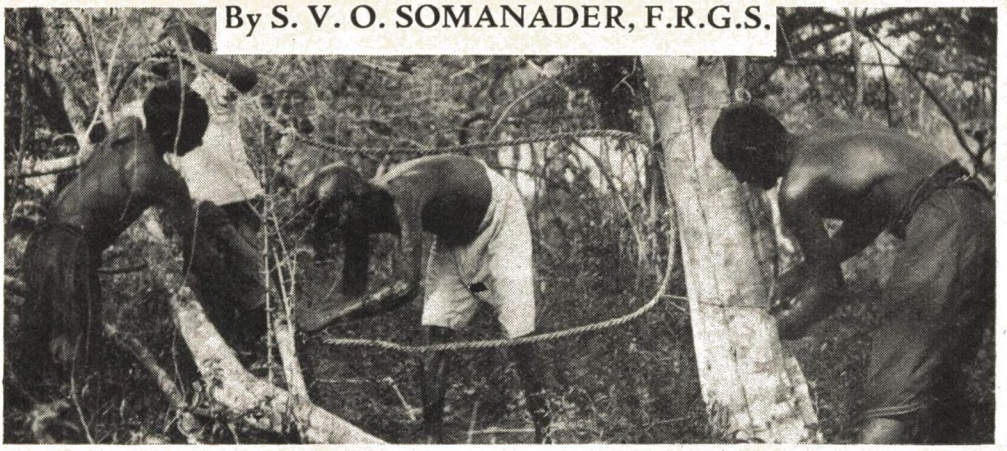
Old Poll was the first to reach him and put her arm round his shoulders. His head dropped to one side, coming to a rest against a plank. A glance told Horgan that he was dead.

"Thank God!" cried Old Poll, and with that the tears streamed down her cheeks. She arose and clasped her hands in an attitude of prayer. "My boy! My boy!" she sobbed; "ye died on yo' knees. That's all I want to know. Ye died on yo' knees. The Lord will understand!"

The people of Elkhorn took up a collection, and two days later Mel was buried in the town cemetery. That same day Old Poll disappeared, and Elkhorn knew her no more.

NOOSING *wild* BUFFALO

By S. V. O. SOMANADER, F.R.G.S.



Arranging a noose across a track used by the wild buffalo.

The wild buffalo is a formidable beast, as many big-game hunters will agree. Certain daring natives of Ceylon, however, follow one of the most hazardous and difficult occupations imaginable—stalking these fierce creatures through the jungle and noosing them with ropes, preparatory to taming them for work on the land !

CEYLON possesses numerous herds of wild buffaloes, which are found not only in the island's many game-sanctuaries and reserves, but also in the irrigation-tank areas and forests of the "dry zone" and the northern and eastern jungles.

Although these big animals abound in the more remote and sparsely-settled regions, they never take to the hills like the wild elephants.

When tamed, of course, the buffalo is of great value to the cultivator as a beast of burden and periodically, on payment of a small fee, the Government grants permission for a number of the wildlings to be caught for this purpose. The business of catching buffalo alive, as practised in Ceylon, is a highly-specialized undertaking, involving great danger and skill of the highest order. It is in the hands of certain gaunt and muscular countrymen known locally as *panikkans*, with whom the chase is an hereditary vocation. These men are extraordinarily agile and fearless —and they need to be, for they secure their formidable quarry by stalking it through the jungle and lassoing it with ropes !

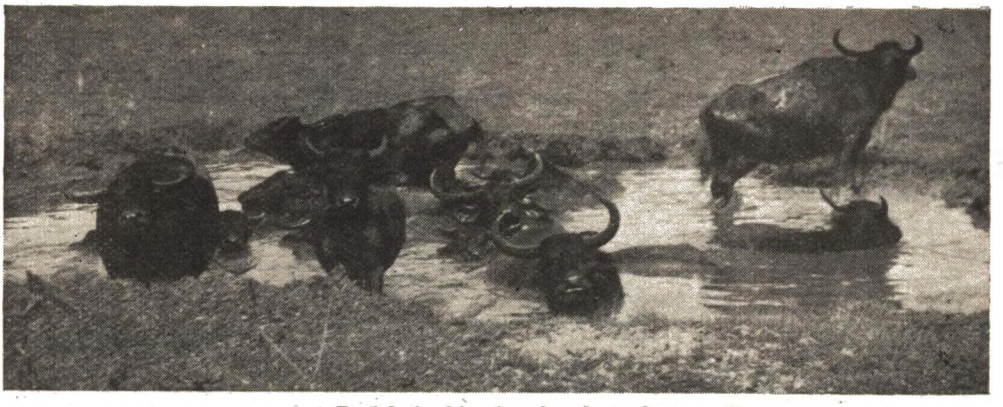
Rounding-up the herds by means of an army of beaters and driving them into enclosures is not favoured for several reasons ; the erection of the stockades is laborious and expensive, the provision of the necessary labour is difficult, and many of the stampeding animals are likely to sustain injury. Moreover, the wild buffalo is a very wary creature, liable to become exceedingly suspicious when he sees an enclosure taking shape in the jungle.

The animals have been known to leave a district *en masse* directly such operations commence and not return for several years.

The pitfall method, in which a deep hole is dug and concealed by a frail framework carefully covered with leaves, is regarded as cruel, since there is grave risk of the quarry breaking its legs. Probably the most ingenious and successful way of capturing these fierce beasts and domesticating them for man's use is " noosing," as carried out by the *panikkans*.

Before the hunt commences, the noosers get various articles of equipment ready, the most important item being the noosing rope—as important to the *panikkan* as his lariat is to the cowboy. This is not made of hemp or coconut fibre, like ordinary ropes, because these materials would not be strong enough to hold such powerful animals. The hunters, therefore, cut thin strips of deerhide, dry them in the sun, and carefully twist them into ropes, an inch or more in diameter, which possess immense strength.

The *panikkans* next establish a camp in some forest clearing not far from a large water-hole the herds are known to frequent. Three or four picked men, with a veteran leader, act as an



Buffalo bathing in a jungle pool.

Nearly trapped! The buffalo steps into the noose.

Directly the great beast feels the rope settling round its neck it makes a dash for freedom, striking the ground with its hoofs, making savage sweeps with its enormous crescent horns, and snorting furiously. But the *panikkan* is prepared for all this! Taking a quick turn of his line round a convenient tree-trunk, he brings the animal to a standstill with a violent jerk. Thus checked, the maddened buffalo kicks, rears, and bellows, meanwhile struggling desperately to free itself from the choking rope. Thereupon the reserve hunters approach, deftly throwing more nooses around the captive's horns or legs until it is helplessly trussed up.

An interesting variation of advance-guard, their companions remaining in hiding ready to hasten to their aid when needed. A large party, it should be explained, could not stalk such suspicious animals without being detected almost immediately.

When the buffaloes eventually approach the water-hole, each of the carefully-concealed *panikkans* selects a particular victim. Moving with the utmost caution, and taking every advantage of cover, they silently close in. Then, at a signal, all the nooses are thrown simultaneously.

A newly-captured buffalo in the "stocks." Note the formidable horns.

The prisoner is tethered to a domesticated buffalo until its ferocity lessens.

A village hunter with his well-trained gun-buffalo.

this method consists of fixing a score or more of deer-hide ropes, in the form of dangling elliptical loops, between tree-trunks in the vicinity of water-holes used by the buffaloes. The upper ends of the loops are held by men hidden among the branches; their comrades remain under cover close by.

When the hunters on the ground see a wild herd approaching along the track on which the snares are set they let them pass and then raise a sudden turmoil in order to scare them. In their fright, as they lumber blindly forward, a dozen or more of the animals may thrust their heads or legs through

the loops, which are immediately hauled tight by the alert watchers above. The men below, skilfully evading the lunges of the infuriated brutes, then throw more nooses until the victims are firmly secured. These tactics are repeated at different water-holes—often over a period of months — until the required number of buffaloes has been captured.

When bull - buffaloes only are needed, for breeding purposes, a domesticated female is used as a decoy, tethered at the foot of a tree in which an expert *panikkan* lies concealed. Scenting the lady's presence—and the buffalo's sense of smell is extraordinarily acute—the wild suitor cautiously approaches. While he is nuzzling round the cow the man aloft drops his noose over the bull's head and draws it taut. Helpers rush in from all quarters, and the struggling wildling is soon under control.

Buffaloes noosed by these methods are first of all taken to the clearing where the camp has been established, firmly lashed to a stout wooden framework, and fed only sparingly. When they have become somewhat subdued, the taming process begins. Moving with the utmost circumspection, for an angry wild buffalo is a dangerous beast indeed, a man speaks soothingly to the prisoner, strokes its muzzle, pats its flanks, and feeds it with tufts of succulent grass. Within a few days the creature becomes noticeably more docile, accepts these attentions quietly, and is eventually considered ready to be transferred to the nearest village. At this stage, however, it is not thought advisable to take any chances ; the animal still feels the call of the wild and is liable to attack its captors without warning and make a headlong dash for liberty.

The same precaution is therefore adopted as with wild elephants. Tame buffaloes are yoked to the captive, one on either side, and thus escorted it is finally persuaded to approach the haunts of man. Once in the village, the animal is kept tied to a domesticated beast for several days until consistent good behaviour indicates it has become resigned to its fate.

Then, little by little, the new recruit is gradually broken in to render various useful services, the process taking about six months. The buffalo draws the cultivator's plough and cart, and teams of them are employed in the rain-soaked paddy-fields to trample or puddle the soil ; they also thresh the harvested grain by plodding patiently round and round a floor built in the open, to the quaint music of the peasants' songs.

Occasionally selected animals are trained *thavalam* (pack-bull) fashion, carrying on a species of caravan-traffic between the *chensi* cultivators living in the depths of the forests and the village traders. This is a form of barter. Gunny-sacks of local produce are loaded on the buffaloes' broad backs — limes, oranges, wood apples, the honey of wild bees, and forest-grown grains such as *kurakkan*. In exchange the animals take back cloth, salt, sugar, coffee, and materials for the inevitable curries.

The last service. A buffalo-skull makes a useful scarecrow !

It is particularly interesting to note that buffaloes are sometimes taught to act as four-legged *shikaris*, assisting hunters to stalk game ! This is a really remarkable example of animal training, the results attained being well-nigh unbelievable. The buffalo's education begins while it is still a calf, for it takes about four years to produce the *pukka* article. First of all the youngster is gradually accustomed to the discharge of crackers and fire-arms and to respond instantly, like an experienced gun-dog, to certain signals and body-touches. From this stage its training progresses to more difficult feats, the tutor always showing the utmost patience, until the degree of proficiency attained finally satisfies him.

The main function of the animal is to act as a screen or stalking-horse for its master, browsing apparently aimlessly onwards through the jungle while the hunter creeps silently along behind it until he arrives within range of his unsuspecting quarry. The buffalo also learns to turn, at a touch, to any required angle, standing perfectly steady even when the man uses its broad back as a rest for his gun ! Whatever game the hunter is seeking—deer, leopard, buffalo, or pig—the trained beast invariably scents it long before its master, its reaction giving him timely warning. Well-trained stalking-buffaloes are in great demand in the jungle districts, and usually fetch about a hundred rupees apiece.

Eminently useful throughout its working life, the domesticated buffalo continues to render service after death ; it not only supplies the countryfolk with meat but also several valuable by-products. Its horns, for instance, are utilized by village artisans in the making of combs ; its hoofs provide excellent glue, while the tough hide is made into leather. Even its skull, planted on a stake in the middle of a cultivation, serves as a most efficient scarecrow, keeping off predatory birds and destructive wild animals such as the elephant and wild boar. All things considered, the agriculturists of Ceylon have every reason to be grateful to the buffalo !

The HIDDEN PASS

By C. V. TENCH

A weird story of the early days of Canadian railway-development. British Columbia joined the new Confederation on the understanding that a trans-continental line would be built, but the surveyors couldn't find a practicable route through the mountains ! Hoping for rich reward, a nameless man set out to locate a pass, and duly discovered it—at a terrible price !

BACK in 1871 British Columbia joined the Canadian Confederation with the proviso that railway-connection with the Eastern provinces would speedily be provided. This promise was readily given, but sixteen long years passed before the Federal Government found itself in a position to bring the eagerly-awaited line to Vancouver, Pacific terminal of the great trans-continental system.

Building the railroad across the prairies was comparatively easy, save for an occasional skirmish with hostile Indians, but the difficulties of the Rocky Mountain barrier proved well-nigh insurmountable. As year after year went by, and no railway came through the passes, the settlers beside the Western sea became very impatient. They doubted if locomotives could ever be brought through the wild canyons and round the vast glaciers which blocked the way. Their continued isolation worried them, and feeling grew so strong that British Columbians openly threatened to secede from the Confederation unless their dream-railway soon became an actuality.

The line-builders redoubled their efforts, importing great numbers of Chinese coolies to labour in the heart-breaking mountain fastnesses. The maze of gorges and glaciers around Revelstoke, B.C., presented most formidable obstacles ; it seemed impossible to make any headway. The Canadian Pacific Railway sent out party after party, endeavouring to find a practicable route through the Selkirks. Solitary scouts likewise started forth, dreaming of fame and fortune if they discovered a suitable pass. But success continued to elude the searchers.

One spring day there wandered into the construction-camp a huge, bearded white man who towered above the Chinese coolies like a buffalo bull in a herd of cows. A flintlock rifle was slung over his mighty shoulders ; a heavy blanket coat reached to his knees. His luxuriant black beard was of such tremendous proportions that the railway workers regarded it with amazement. The stranger had little to say, and looked so fierce and primitive that men hesitated to address him.

When the giant applied for work his obvious strength obtained him employment as a labourer. In this capacity he lifted railway-sleepers as easily as others handled stove-wood ; he rolled heavy boulders aside and deftly up-ended the slabs of fir used for the long stretches of snow-fence. All the time, seldom speaking himself, he listened avidly to the talk of his companions. Apparently the surveyors were in a quandary ; they couldn't find a way for the line through the glaciers and gorges of the Selkirk Range, where towering peaks, their summits wreathed in cloud-wrack, formed a rampart against puny man's advance. Nevertheless, the Canadian provinces must be developed and linked by rail ; it was absolutely essential to locate a practicable route. Time and again search-parties went out, made up of experienced mountain-men and skilled surveyors, but they invariably returned completely baffled ; whichever way they turned they found themselves confronted by rock, ice, and yawning precipices. A big reward awaited anyone who could solve the problem !

Time passed, and one morning the work-gangs noticed that the big stranger with the black beard was missing ; apparently he had departed as silently and mysteriously as he had arrived. Nobody knew who started the story, but gradually word passed round that "Blackbeard," with a rich reward in mind, had gone in search of the long-sought passage for the railway. And his chances appeared very promising, for the few men who had talked with him declared he knew the mountains like an open book, having lived among them for years.

The surveyors were naturally interested, but they didn't at all like the idea of Blackbeard setting off alone. The quest was strenuous enough for a well-equipped expedition ; for a solitary man it was hazardous in the extreme. He might easily become incapacitated or lost, perishing miserably in that trackless wilderness. Supposing he actually made the great discovery and was killed on the return journey, taking his precious secret with him ! This thought worried the chief surveyor so much that he decided to have the man shadowed, though without any attempt at interference. If Blackbeard could locate a right-of-way, good luck to him ; but a rescue-party would be close at hand if, as seemed only too likely, he got into difficulties. Forthwith four picked men and an Indian

ALPINE ICE PRESERVES MAN'S BODY 39 YEARS

ALESSANDRIA, Italy, July 25—(BUP)—The body of Giuseppe Garrone, 34, an amateur mountain climber, was brought here by customs police Sunday after having been found perfectly preserved in ice for 39 years.

Garrone, a school teacher, vanished in July, 1910, in an ice hole on Mont Blanc. His body was found Friday, fully clothed, within a cake of ice.

A recent newspaper cutting which recalled this strange story to the Author.

tracker were dispatched to find and follow the stranger's trail.

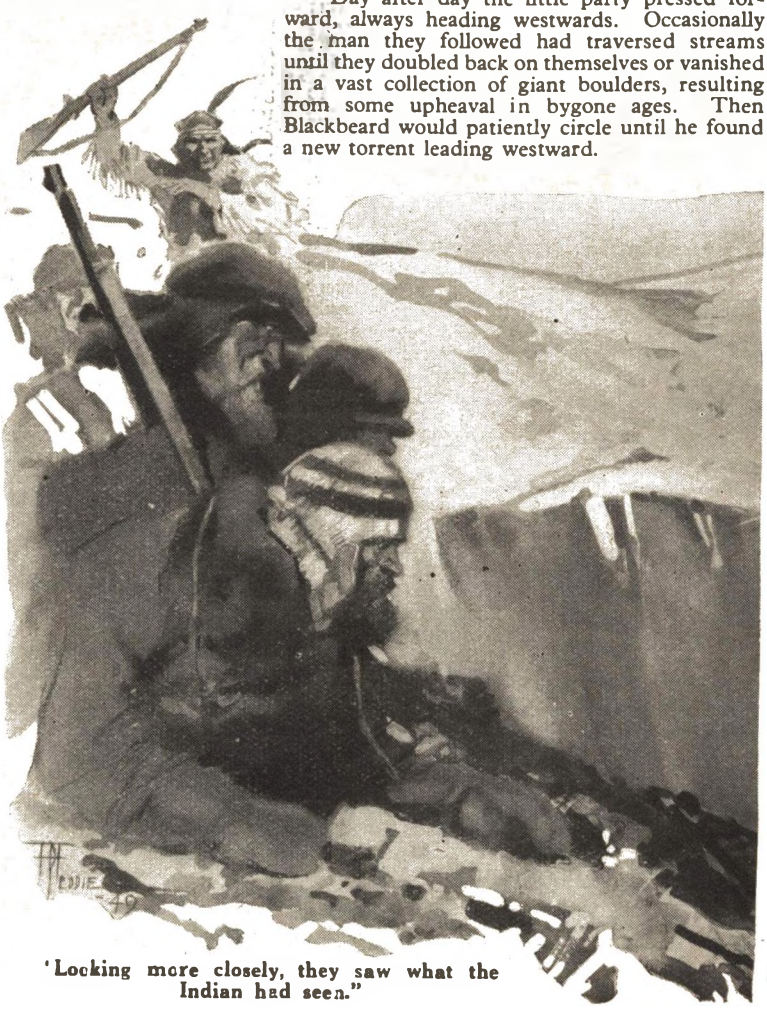
The Red man soon picked up the tracks of Blackbeard's great feet, which led away across tremendous valleys, gloomy with prodigious growths of virgin fir and cedar. The forest floor was a tangled mass of fallen trees, in places almost impassable. Frequently the men sank from sight amidst these "dead-falls," constantly calling to one another to avoid becoming separated.

One by one they came upon Blackbeard's camping-places. He seemed to be following a south-westerly route, penetrating into the little-known Arrowhead country. His pursuers were surprised, for in this direction lay some of the most forbidding mountains, range towering above range until the summits of the loftiest were almost continually hidden by swirling masses of vapour.

As they struggled on after the solitary pioneer the five searchers marvelled at his amazing endurance; they couldn't keep up with his rate of progress! In spite of their utmost efforts, they fell farther and farther behind. They had no desire to overtake Blackbeard, or even let him know they were following his trail, but they were anxious to be within striking distance if accident befell him.

The gorges proved extremely difficult to negotiate; although narrow, they were of tremendous depth. Standing on the brink of one of these stupendous ravines, the roar of the stream far below reaches their ears only as a faint murmur. Descending the precipitous sides—often at great risk—the party would search for the lonely explorer's tracks. Scouting around in the dim half-light, the keen-eyed Indian eventually came upon broken twigs, dislodged stones, and various other significant signs which told him all he wanted to know. Each camp-site they reached, however, was older than the previous one; they were still losing ground.

Day after day the little party pressed forward, always heading westwards. Occasionally the man they followed had traversed streams until they doubled back on themselves or vanished in a vast collection of giant boulders, resulting from some upheaval in bygone ages. Then Blackbeard would patiently circle until he found a new torrent leading westward.



'Looking more closely, they saw what the Indian had seen."

Toiling doggedly on, the men found well-nigh perpendicular rock-walls stretching endlessly across their line of advance; it seemed hopeless to imagine that a railway could be built through such country. Yet Blackbeard had forged steadily ahead as though making for some definite objective.

Then, without warning, the miracle came to pass! One day, trying their utmost to extricate themselves from a seeming *cul-de-sac*, they found that two gigantic masses of grey mountain-side did not quite meet. So cunningly did one enfilade the other that, from a distance, no opening was visible, but close approach disclosed a cleft wide enough for a railway, looking as if some gigantic convulsion of Nature had split the peak in twain. Following laboriously on Blackbeard's heels, they had finally located the long-sought gateway which would enable the line to penetrate the mountains!

Forthwith the weary men made camp, awed by the importance of their "find." Good old Blackbeard! Thanks to him, an ocean-to-ocean railroad could now bind together for all time the far-flung provinces of this vast country of Canada. All the credit was due to him; his tracks led on through the gloomy defile, and they decided that, on the morrow, they would push on after him, probably meeting him on his way back. Then they could all return to the construction-camp together in comparative comfort, their anxieties at an end.

During the night, however, while the party slept, the man of mystery all unknowingly passed by on his homeward journey, having probably made all the investigations he needed. The Indian was the first to discover the fresh tracks leading outwards, whereupon they hastily broke camp and moved eastwards again, hoping to overtake Blackbeard. This time there was no seemingly-aimless following-up of mountain streams, no painful groping for easy routes. Apparently the giant was intent upon reaching railhead with all possible speed in order to give the surveyors his valuable information.

Reaching the edge of the tremendous Begbie Glacier, now forming part of what is known as the Columbian Icefield, bordering on Alberta and British Columbia, the tracker announced he had lost the trail, but there could be no doubt that Blackbeard had started to cross the lower tongue of the vast ice-river. Taking a distant peak as a landmark, the party began to make toward it in a straight line, but soon found this could not be maintained.

The mighty river of ice swept down from the upper levels in massive convolutions resembling hardened lava. Here and there were enormous fissures; the "apron," by its own weight, appeared to be breaking away from the parent field. The men had to use the utmost care when skirting the rims of these crevasses, which had almost perpendicular sides and dropped away to appalling depths.

As they cautiously advanced the Indian remained in the lead, although he seemed none too sure of himself on this unfamiliar terrain. Now and again, coming upon particularly dangerous stretches of ice, he would signal to the white men in rear to make a wide detour. When the peril had been surmounted he took a fresh sight on the guiding peak and trudged ahead once more.

Suddenly the quartet observed the Red man halt abruptly, gazing horror-stricken at something almost beneath his feet. Then, without a word or a cry, he turned and fled away across the glacier, continuing his headlong flight until he vanished from sight.

Creeping warily forward, his astonished companions presently reached the

spot where the guide had stood. They gazed awestruck at the great crevasse they found yawning before them; then, looking more closely, they saw what the Indian had seen.

In the depths below, at a point where the walls closely approached one another, stood Blackbeard, his rifle still slung across his shoulders! He was staring upwards, as if seeking some means of escape from his icy prison, and looked uncannily life-like, although it was only too obvious that he was dead. Examining the surroundings, the deeply-shocked men found it easy to picture what had happened. Coming suddenly upon the treacherous lip of the crevasse, the poor fellow had slipped and plunged, feet first, down the steep slope. His speed had been so terrific that his heavy boots had wedged him immovably at a point where the V-shaped sides of the opening came together. There was no chance of extricating himself, no hope of outside aid. Life without movement could not long exist in such a fearful natural refrigerator; before many hours had elapsed he had frozen to death. And there he was, entombed in the great glacier, where they had to leave him, for it was quite impossible to reach the body.

Canadian Pacific Railway

Part of the great Begbie Glacier

Shaken to the core, the party eventually reached timber-line and camped for the night. Horror sat heavily upon them; they spoke in hushed tones, unable to forget the man they had followed for so long and who now gazed sightlessly at the world above his icy tomb.

Making their way in safety to rail-head, the quartet gave the surveyors news of the great discovery and the dreadful fate of the lone explorer responsible. Steps were immediately taken to verify the report, and in due course a route was mapped out leading to the hidden pass and beyond. For many decades since those far-off days the narrow defile has reverberated to the thunder of trans-continental C.P.R. trains, and engine-whistles echo and re-echo eerily amid the desolate peaks and valleys which surround it.

Amazing to relate, the nameless stranger who first found the pass and made this achievement possible still remains entombed in the great Begbie Glacier, looking exactly as he did when he first glissaded to his death! The ice, it must be remembered, is always creeping downwards, its rate of progress varying with the weather. Crevasses open and close, the convolutions change shape, and huge masses continually break off at the base to melt and feed innumerable mountain streams. During long periods Blackbeard vanishes, hidden deep in the heart of his ageless tomb; then some obscure glacier movement brings him near the surface again. At such times chance mountaineers, glancing fascinated into the crevasse, glimpse through the clear ice the blanket-coated figure, gazing eternally from its frozen sepulchre.

Many years have now elapsed since the corpse was last seen, but a party of American scientists who hurried out to inspect it on that occasion stated that, in their opinion, thirty years may elapse before glacial action will bring Blackbeard near enough to the surface for his body to be recovered and given decent burial. Climbers in the neighbourhood of the Begbie, however, still keep a look-out for the hapless "Ice-Man of Revelstoke."

PHASES of LIFE
FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

LAND WITHOUT WOMEN

By GERALD V. KUSS

Vivid little " close-ups " descriptive of manners and customs and prevailing conditions in various parts of the globe. We welcome contributions to this feature.

DOWN in the south-eastern corner of Europe, washed by the waves of the Ægean Sea, there is a little country whose soil has not been trodden by women for close on a thousand years ! You will seek in vain for housewives, girls, or female babies ; the orchards and olive groves, and the streets of the villages, have never echoed to the laughter of a woman. Indeed, it is seldom that laughter of any sort is heard.

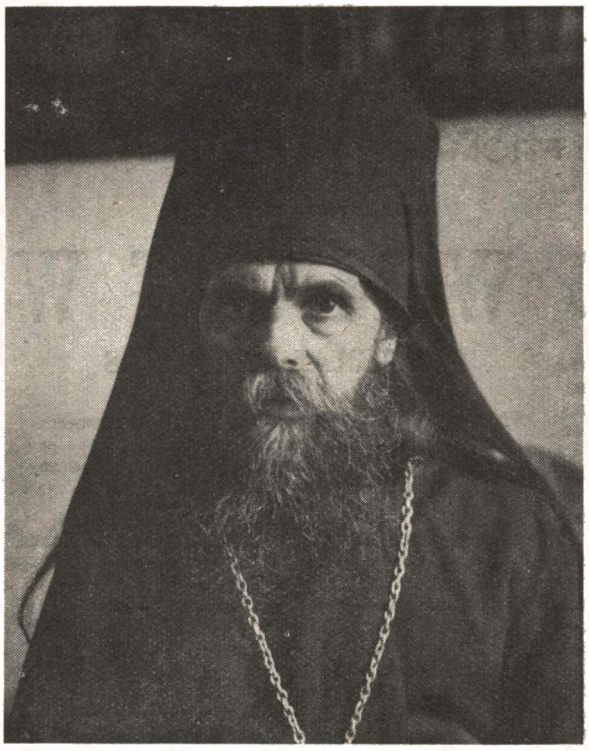
Lest it should be thought I am writing about some practically uninhabited wilderness, let me hasten to add that the population of this strange region numbers some five thousand—all of them males ! It might be called, more correctly, the " Land of Male Creatures," for the sheep in the fields are all rams, the cattle all bulls, the swine all boars, the felines all tomcats ! Only the wild birds, which still dare to build their nests in the topmost branches of the trees—sufficiently high to be inaccessible to the human inhabitants, who would otherwise pull them down and destroy them —continue to produce representatives of the female sex.

This extraordinary place is called Athos, its official title being " The Holy Community of Mount Athos." A country within a country, its possesses its own government, which has been in office longer than any other ruling body in the world. It also has its own frontier police, whose duties include preventing the entry of " Mohammedans, wolves, and women " into their sacrosanct territory.

The great monastery of Simonpetra, on the summit of a towering crag.

There is no national income beyond voluntary cash contributions from the outside world. No work of a remunerative nature is undertaken by the majority of the inhabitants, yet Athos is fabulously rich — a thousand times richer, proportionately speaking, than any other country on earth!

If you study a map of Greece and the Ægean basin you will observe, about a hundred kilometres east of Salonika, three long, narrow peninsulas projecting into the waters of the Ægean. Athos is the easternmost of these, and measures some forty kilometres in length by seven in breadth. The isthmus is flat, but the southern portion rises to a height of two thousand metres, taking the form of a spectacular mountain of pure marble. Round this peak is to be found some of the most rugged country imaginable.



The Lord High Abbot Tjeromin, ruler of Athos

Dotted about the mountainside are some twenty or more communities of monks of the Eastern Orthodox Church, dwelling in mediæval monasteries, massively built, and battlemented like feudal fortresses, which they formerly were. These buildings are of huge dimensions, one of them being eight storeys high, while another measures nearly two miles around its outside walls. They were all erected between the years A.D. 900 and A.D. 1100, and represent the outpouring of vast riches from the coffers of the Emperors of ancient Byzantium. One of the largest of the monasteries, that of Simonpetra, rises sheer from the precipitous summit of a mountain peak, its roofs wreathed in cloud.

Here, completely detached from the outside world, both physically and in spirit, dwell the long-bearded monks who form the bulk of the population of this strange land. Ever since the tenth century these ascetics have isolated themselves, sworn to obedience, chastity, poverty—and the eradication of the very *thought* of anything female! Successive generations of Lord High Abbots drew up the inexorable laws which bar any creature of the female sex from profaning the sanctity of this purely masculine stronghold.

The story of Athos and its survival as a monastic state throughout so many centuries is one of the marvels of human history. In A.D. 900 Byzantium—now represented by modern Istanbul—was one of the most important cities in Christendom. Its inhabitants were extremely religious, but not sufficiently so for certain zealots who, forsaking the world and its temptations, betook themselves to the rocky wilds of the Athos Peninsula, where they set about the creation of a new state, based on the practice of piety, which should endure for all time. These pioneer monks proceeded to erect monasteries which were architectural wonders. Much of the gold and treasure Byzantium had wrested from various conquered nations went to enrich and beautify these amazing structures. Candelabras of solid gold, studded with priceless gems, swung from the decorated ceilings; elaborate altars blazed with jewels. Wealth—literally by the shipload—was poured into this remote wilderness. The early monks, moreover, brought with them other priceless treasures—Biblical manuscripts of the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries. Much of the knowledge and culture of the Europe of those far-off times is enshrined in the writings preserved by the devoted monks of Athos.

All that vast hoard of gold and gems; all—or nearly all—of those irreplaceable manuscripts, still remain in Athos to-day, vigilantly watched over by the monks. During the fourteenth century Ægean pirates succeeded in doing some looting on the peninsula, but in proportion to its total very little of the material riches of the territory was lost. During the late war, by a subterfuge, the Germans likewise attempted to lay hands on the treasures. The extent of their success in this direction is not accurately known, but it is believed they did no better than their fourteenth-century predecessors.

And what of the monks themselves? How have they fared after more than a thousand years of an entirely masculine atmosphere, lacking the society of women or children? It is very difficult to answer this question without full knowledge of the type of men who bury themselves here. Some of them are genuine religious recluses, seeking sanctuary from a sinful world; others have retired to Athos from a variety of motives, but all, apparently, are united in an abhorrence of females.

The writer visited the peninsula one winter shortly before the outbreak of the late war. Special *visas* were necessary, and the Greek

Government respected the strange laws of Athos—as it still does—by refusing to entertain any applications from women.

Arrived at the frontier, I was subjected to a very thorough examination. Not only was my person inspected, but my luggage was carefully gone over lest it might contain anything of a female nature! Eventually I was allowed entrance and reached Karyes, the little capital. This place, somewhat surprisingly, is not unlike other Greek towns of the same size; it possesses shops, stores, warehouses, and even a post-office. There are horses and carts in the streets, and policemen direct the traffic.

Everywhere, however, one sees the bearded monks in their long, flowing robes. Either alone, or perhaps in groups, they trudge hither and thither, never laughing, and hardly looking at one another. If you happen to catch their eyes they regard you with such an entire lack of interest that you get the idea they are not really alive as the rest of us understand the term! I mention the fact with due hesitation, but it is said that for thirty generations these bearded women-haters have never profaned their bodies by bathing them!

I was conducted round several of the monasteries, and can testify to having seen, in a space no larger than an average room, sufficient wealth, in the form of pure gold and precious stones, to finance a major war. Every church, when the innumerable candles are lighted, gleams like some legendary treasure-cave; almost every object one sets eyes on is worth a King's ransom.

"They regard you with an entire lack of interest."

The monks spend most of their days and half their nights in prayer and elaborate rituals. Many students of humanity who have investigated conditions at Athos claim the monkish state has degenerated, pointing out that its five thousand males lead a most unnatural existence. This last is true enough, from the ordinary man's standpoint, but personally I do not presume to pass judgment. My own reactions were such that, almost from the moment I crossed the frontier, I became eager to return to the workaday world, however corrupt it might be. Within a surprisingly short time I found myself longing to set eyes on a woman, hear children's care-free laughter, or even catch a glimpse of a hen and her chicks.

Despite its religious atmosphere and fabulous wealth, Athos impressed me as a land of the living dead. And the survival of such a community—even for a thousand years—can mean little or nothing to those who do not appreciate the full meaning of life!

A RIDDLE OF THE BUSH

By GLENVILLE PIKE, of Mareeba, North Queensland, Australia

WHAT is known as the "Min-Min Light" and similar strange phenomena have been the subject of many heated discussions wherever Australian bushmen foregather, and they interest me particularly because I have been privileged to see one myself. Some years ago, in the marshy country about forty miles from St. Lawrence, on the central coast of Queensland, I camped for the night near a hut occupied by an old man. His sole occupation appeared to be looking after a herd of goats, but what he did with them so far from any settlement I don't know.

We were sitting by my dying campfire, enjoying the cool air after the heat of the day, when suddenly, away out in the darkness of the surrounding bush, I observed a light. At first I thought someone was waving a lantern, but presently it rose in the air and danced about. After this it resumed its hovering, apparently some fifty yards distant.

"See that?" asked the old man, uneasily. "That's what they call the Min-Min Light—a kinda ghost thing."

I laughed derisively; I'm not in the least superstitious. "Ghost be hanged!" I told him. "I'm going to have a look and find out what it is."

As I spoke, I moved forward to investigate.

"Come back, you fool!" yelled my companion. "There's a swamp out beyond where that light is, and it leads right into a chasm with a drop of a coupla hundred feet."

Taking no notice, I strode on into the darkness. I had arrived within perhaps twenty yards of the mysterious light—which was still hovering seven or eight feet above the ground, looking like some huge, glowing ball—when it glided abruptly to one side, dancing over ground that I found to be decidedly boggy. Thereupon I halted, noting that the queer radiance was drifting out above the abyss my companion had mentioned.

As I watched it the light seemed to hesitate; then it floated a little nearer, as though tempting me to follow. Finally, sweeping back over the chasm, it sank from sight.

When, decidedly puzzled, I returned to the fireside, the old fellow told me the light always appeared when a stranger turned up. I asked bluntly what he *really* thought it was. He shook his head doubtfully, but I gathered he believed the local legend—that it was the spirit of a man who had been murdered years previously by being pushed into the chasm. Now, apparently, he was trying to lead others to a similar fate! I didn't try to argue with the ancient; I was too puzzled.

In another part of Queensland, a similar mystery-light is also associated by superstitious folk with various tragedies, but a satisfactory material explanation seems to be lacking.

This phenomenon is often seen near the remains of an old shanty — formerly an inn—on the lonely Winton-Boulia road, far out on the treeless plains. Near by are the graves of several men who died raving maniacs after "knocking down" their wages for the fiery home-brewed liquor sold at the shanty. In the 'eighties this house was one of the most disreputable places in the west of Queensland, and many unfortunate stockman, shearers, and drovers were robbed of their hard-

"'Come back, you fool!' yelled my companion."

earned pay while incapacitated by drink.

One night, several years ago, a young stockman received the scare of his life when riding past the ruins of the old "pub." He saw a ghostly light—like a ball of fire—alternately advancing and retreating, but always returning to approximately the same spot.

Pulling up, he watched it intently for a few moments. Finally, seeing the weird radiance coming in his direction, and suddenly remembering the evil reputation of the place over which it hovered, he lost his nerve and galloped away, nor did he slacken his pace until he reached Boulia. There he related his story to the local police-trooper, who took it as a great joke.

For a long time the stockman's story roused much merriment; he was chaffed about it unmercifully. Later on, however, several other people saw the uncanny light. A motorist claimed to have chased it in a car at forty miles an hour, but he vowed that it always kept just ahead of him, eventually disappearing near the old shanty.

A bushman acquaintance of mine who possesses some scientific knowledge is convinced that these lights, like the well-known *ignis fatuus*, or will-o'-the-wisp, observed elsewhere over marshes and old churchyards, is produced by emanations from decomposing matter escaping from beneath the surface and ignited by the powerful rays of the sun. He points out that the phenomenon is only observed during the summer months—usually between the hours of 9 p.m. and midnight—but is of the opinion that it is also present in the daytime, although invisible to the naked eye.

Some people who have been close to these "balls of fire" declare that they give off a smell resembling escaping gas; others suggest the odour reminds them of petrol. Is it possible, I wonder, that the phenomenon is due to gas given off by deposits of petroleum, indicating the existence of hitherto-undiscovered oilfields?

One of these puzzling "ghost-lights" is seen during the summer on a stock-route leading out of Bourke, in northwest New South Wales, and experienced drovers will not camp in the vicinity, for their horses and cattle invariably stampede on catching sight of it.

Another "Min-Min Light" is frequently observed on a station in north-western Queensland; the squatter there told me he has become so accustomed to seeing the unearthly thing hovering around the horse-paddock slip-rails, about a hundred yards from the homestead, that he takes little notice of it! Nevertheless, he has had to make a new entrance for the horses, which refuse to use the gateway over which the light dances.

Still more mystifying is the awe-inspiring "Quinn's Light" which has been seen at regular intervals for years in the lonely region at the head of the Murrumbidgee River, in New South Wales. This weird radiance first appeared on the grazing property owned by John Quinn, a man of considerable standing in the district.

The light, which was of great brilliance, was often seen floating, several feet above the ground, among the trunks of the tall gum-trees.

"The policeman's horse reared and plunged."

Sundry bold spirits attempted to approach it closely, but it always eluded them; others repeatedly shot at it—entirely without effect. Many people visited the area especially to view the phenomenon. Folk who had seen other "lights" declared it was something quite different, being shaped like a huge eagle with outspread wings and giving off a most powerful glow. All who saw it were greatly impressed, but, as in other cases, no one could offer a plausible explanation.

A newcomer to the district was so terrified that he actually abandoned a property he had just bought! He told the local policeman that one night the light glided right over his homestead and hovered there for ten minutes, its eerie radiance making the place as bright as day. He "reckoned it was time he packed up!"

In the same district another light, known as the "Ghost Fire," was occasionally seen, and W. G. Noble, a police-trooper, later wrote an account of his strange experience with it.

Riding along the stock-route, miles from any habitation, an hour before daylight, the

trooper observed what appeared to be a campfire. Curious to discover who might be camping there, he rode closer. As he drew near he saw that the fire seemed to have been kindled against a fallen tree; it was "shooting up spires of flame and emitting a kind of sulphurous, incandescent glow."

The policeman's horse refused to approach the blaze, showing every sign of fear; it reared and plunged, and finally stood stock-still, trembling violently. Although the trooper "coo-eed" and circled, searching for signs of a camp or a human being, he found nothing. Returning to where the fire had been, he was amazed to discover it had vanished!

There was no trace of ashes or burned wood; the old tree-trunk against which the fire had appeared to be burning was not charred or even warm! There were no footprints anywhere near. The trooper was greatly bewildered, but firmly convinced he had seen the "Ghost Fire." He had often heard about this, but had never believed in its existence.

It would be interesting to know the origin of these mysterious lights which, although seen by hundreds of responsible people in various parts of the Australian bush, have never hitherto been properly investigated. Who can say what secrets this vast country may yet reveal to the inquiring scientist?

The "ROBIN HOOD" OF SICILY

By LEE F. JOHNSON

In view of the interest aroused by our account of the remarkable career of the Sicilian bandit Giuliano, now being hunted by an army of soldiers and police, we asked the Author to keep us informed of developments. Here is Mr. Johnson's latest report from Palermo. The large forces arrayed against the outlaw, of course, make his capture or death likely at any moment, but so far he has succeeded in eluding his pursuers.

Understandably enough, Giuliano found considerable difficulty in carrying out his threats of far-reaching reprisals unless his mother and sister were released from jail. He did his best, however; within the following two months he captured the wealthy Duke of Pratomeno and a handful of Parliamentary deputies, likewise increasing his "ransom fee" per victim to £50,000. The bandit carried out these activities in the face of an enormously-intensified campaign, including the formation of the "C.F.R.B." (Expeditionary Force for the Repression of Banditry), of which Colonel De Luca was put in charge. By this time General D'Antoni, who had rashly declared that he would go into the mountains single-handed and personally capture Giuliano, had been relieved of his Sicilian duties.

"C.F.R.B." consists of 2,000 police (all bachelors) sent from the mainland; parachute troops; tank squads; special agents; and infantrymen—a veritable miniature army.

When this formidable force had been organized and posted at strategic points throughout Giuliano's territory, with an elaborate network of radio communications, the bandit chief evidently decided that energetic counter-action was indicated; his men made a direct assault on the police-barracks at Bellolampo. When some twenty C.F.R.B. men rushed to the scene in a lorry they were blown sky-high by a land-mine, seven of them being killed. A staff car containing high officials hurried to Bellolampo to ascertain what had gone wrong. They soon found out, for they were bombarded with hand-grenades and their car riddled with bullets.

After this outrage Giuliano withdrew to the hills and sent one of his characteristic letters to the *Giornale di Sicilia*, demanding a general election at which the people of Sicily could either choose him as their leader or vote for the Government in Rome! He would abide by their decision, he added, and give himself up if the verdict went against him. He also informed the police that, so far, they had "seen nothing," so to speak; if they *didn't* hold the election he would inaugurate an all-out war against them!

No election ensued, of course, and shortly afterwards the bandit destroyed the police station at San Giuseppe Jato. He also stepped up his propaganda campaign, manifestos appearing mysteriously on walls all over Palermo. Couldn't the police realize, these posters asked, that Giuliano was merely fighting for the sake of his unjustly-imprisoned mother?

In this emergency the C.F.R.B. acted very quickly, and presently chalked up their first real success: Captured, one bill-sticker, complete with paste-pot, brush, and ladder.

Fearing an attack on the prison where she was incarcerated, the authorities later released the outlaw's mother, but nevertheless the bandit's campaign continued. The nobility of Palermo continued to disappear one by one, kidnapped by his emissaries, and policemen were killed at intervals.

Meanwhile, Giuliano was having his own troubles, for once the anti-banditry brigade got going they started to round up outlaws with some success. To date about twenty have been arrested. The most important of these was Giuseppe Cuccinella, one of Giuliano's aides, recently captured after a dramatic gun-battle in the heart of Palermo. He and his lady-love were surprised in a Palermitan flat. Both of them exchanged a brisk fusillade with the police, the girl throwing hand-grenades with the *sang-froid* of a past-master. Finally, however, both were wounded and taken into custody, and later Cuccinella had to have a leg amputated.

Another Giuliano lieutenant, Andrea Asaro, was arrested as he was embarking for America with a large sum of money in his possession.

It will be seen, therefore, that the bandit chief is being kept pretty busy; nowadays, it appears, he finds no time to write letters to the newspapers. Once more—perhaps for the last time—he has laid down the pen and taken up the sword, but at the moment of writing it is impossible to prophesy the outcome.

IN THE SHADOW OF "JU-JU"

By ALAN J. ELLIS

Europeans who have studied *ju-ju* are sharply divided. One school declares it is merely superstitious nonsense; the other is inclined to believe certain natives possess powers beyond our ken. Looking back over many years' residence in West Africa, the Author narrates some remarkable cases which occurred within his own experience. He vouches for the facts, but adds: "I do not pretend to offer any explanations."

CARL VON MERKEL, a German trader of Accra, deliberately offended a witch-doctor—commonly known in West Africa as a *ju-ju* man. Not content with flouting the wizard himself, von Merkel also insulted his tutelary god; he strode into the sacred "fetish grove" and spat contemptuously upon the idol there. After which the outraged witch-doctor cursed Carl von Merkel in many West African dialects and "put the *ju-ju* sign" on him.

The angry trader laughed, swung his great fist to the unfortunate African's jaw, upsetting him into his own cooking-pot, and departed for Ussher Town, where he lived. Arrived at his bungalow, he ordered his "boy" to bring gin, limes, and the swizzle-stick. Making a cocktail, he drank to the utter confusion of all witch-doctors and then went to bed. This was on a Tuesday.

On the Wednesday morning von Merkel was found dead in his hammock, the contorted attitude of his body showing that he had died in great agony.

"Peculiar!" remarked the English doctor who had been hastily summoned by the trader's frightened servant. "Most decidedly peculiar! Looks as if he'd been bitten by a particularly poisonous snake!"

He turned to the wide-eyed native at his elbow.

"You bring dem Massa Merkel's chop (food)," he ordered.

When the boy had produced the remains of his master's last meal the medico made a thorough examination. Everything seemed to be quite in order. He tried another tack.

"Dem snake t'ing," he said. "He lib for dis place?"

"No lib," replied the boy, emphatically.

"You lie past fish!" growled the doctor, accusingly.

"No lie!" retorted the African, stubbornly. "Dem snake t'ing *no* lib for dis place. Dem Massa Merkel, he catch *ju-ju*!"

"Oh, he did, did he?" said the medico, the light of understanding breaking over his face. "That makes a difference! I told the foolish fellow scores of times he'd get it in the neck one of these days if he didn't leave the natives alone! Well, it's no use holding an autopsy; we shouldn't find anything."

The doctor had lived in Africa too long to smile at the mention of *ju-ju*, and he presently went off to make out the usual certificate.

On the West Coast, indeed, *ju-ju* is accepted almost as a matter of course in connection with death. It may take the form of poison, snake-bite, ground glass in your food, or merely the obscure operation of a curse. Whatever shape it assumes, however, it *works*; there can be no shadow of doubt about that!

The von Merkel tragedy was the subject of a routine investigation by the authorities, of course, and it was conclusively established that the witch-doctor concerned had never been near the trader after their encounter, but had remained quietly in his hut. According to native testimony he had certainly been remarkably busy over some sort of incantation. We moderns, however, attach no importance to that sort of hocus-pocus; we know that witchcraft and wizardry are all nonsense. Moreover, it is extremely difficult to use them as evidence in a court of law! "Native superstition" explains a lot of things, but in this case it didn't account for the undeniable fact that von Merkel had died quite suddenly from some completely-unascertainable cause.

Whatever their nature, the various forms of *ju-ju* are often startlingly effective in operation; one sometimes wonders whether certain primitive races possess knowledge which "civilized" folk either forgot ages ago or else never acquired.

I have had porters with me on *safari* who, after being cursed by a *ju-ju* man, suddenly dropped their loads and threw themselves down under a tree. The only explanation they had to offer for their collapse was a fatalistic "lib for die"—and die they did, in every case. Witch-doctors, as a rule, are very chary about putting a curse on a white man, for almost invariably, if anything happens to the European, the wizard is arrested and severely punished. Once in a while, however, under great provocation, the "doctor" may take the risk, as in the case of the luckless Carl von Merkel.

On one occasion a friend of mine named Ritson, who had lived in Africa for many years and should have known better, made the same mistake as the German trader and violated a fetish grove which was considered particularly sacred. There was no excuse for his action; the path leading to the place was festooned with familiar *ju-ju* signs forbidding entrance to strangers, and Ritson's body-servant, after warning him, flatly refused to follow.

The white man persisted in going on. In the depths of that sinister grove he was met by several members of the witch-doctor fraternity

—guardians of the fetish—who angrily ordered him to depart. Losing his temper at being addressed so peremptorily by "natives," Ritson retaliated by knocking down two or three of the old men. Then he retired, feeling he had vindicated the prestige of the white man. I repeat: his behaviour was quite inexcusable, and he could expect nothing but trouble to result.

That evening his little son, a child of seven, fell very ill with sudden violent convulsions. The mother and father went nearly mad with anxiety. Two white doctors, hurriedly summoned, worked on the poor boy for hours, but when morning dawned it seemed only too obvious he was going to die. The curious thing was that the physicians could not discover the cause of the trouble; only a few hours previously he had been in excellent health. The child's food was examined, and likewise all the dishes and pans, for poison was the first thing they thought of, but no trace of anything harmful could be discovered.

At this critical juncture the worried Ritson recalled the incident in the fetish grove, which he had regretted the moment it was over. Remembering the fantastic stories he had heard about the alleged powers of *ju-ju* men, he suddenly became fearful. Surely those old ruffians could have nothing to do with the boy's illness? Such an idea was preposterous! And yet. . . .

Ritson's pride was great, but his love for his little son was infinitely greater. Hurrying to the fetish grove, he asked the priests if they had put misfortune upon him. They answered, very frankly, that it was the work of their offended god. Thereupon Ritson begged them to save his boy, offering to do anything in his power to atone for the insult he had unwittingly offered to the fetish and its custodians.

"Leaned over the smoke and began to inhale it."

Finally, after consulting among themselves, the witch-doctors instructed the white man to fetch his wife; when she arrived, and had carried out their instructions, they would do their best to appease the god's anger. Hastening home, Ritson explained the position to his distraught wife, who readily agreed to submit to any ordeal rather than lose her child. When the couple arrived at the *ju-ju* hut the wizards began certain incantations, accompanied by the monotonous thumping of drums. Presently they gave the white man a piece of ordinary calico cloth, telling him to place it on his wife's chest, next to her skin. This done, the principal witch-doctor resumed his spellbinding, eventually ordering the visitors to go back home and lay the cloth across the sick boy's head.

One rather hesitates to tell the rest of this

story to people who do not know Africa, for it sounds exactly like a fairy-tale. It is a stone-cold fact, however, that the moment the cloth was placed on the little lad's forehead the dreadful convulsions ceased! Within a few moments his breathing became regular, colour flowed back to his ashen cheeks, and he fell into a deep sleep. When he awakened again he was well! I do not mean he was better; he was *quite well*, recovering just as suddenly and dramatically as he had fallen ill. How does one account for it? I haven't the slightest idea! But it happened; I saw that little boy come back from the very jaws of death.

Everyone of us, at some time or other, has been anxious to know what the future holds in store, and the black man is no exception to the rule. Whereas sophisticated whites pay fees to clairvoyants, palmists, astrologers, fortune-tellers, and similar soothsayers, the African seeks out his *ju-ju* man. I have personally known many Europeans who—half in jest, half in earnest—have endeavoured to persuade witch-doctors to "dream" for them. In the ordinary way these gentry are reluctant to exhibit their supposed gifts to unbelievers, being extremely sensitive to ridicule. Incidentally, the genuine *ju-ju* man—in contrast to the occasional charlatan—firmly believes in the mystic arts he practises.

Early in my career on the Coast I had a rather remarkable experience with a *ju-ju* man which I shall remember for the rest of my life. It happened when I was on an expedition into the interior, where conditions were still pretty lawless. Vernon, my partner, and I had halted for the night at a village where a big festival happened to be going on in honour of the local deity. As a token of good will we summoned the head witch-doctor—a huge old man—and presented him with six chickens and a small pig, which he accepted with every sign of pleasure.

Later that evening, as Vernon was standing beside the glowing embers of the camp-fire, the *ju-ju* man strode into the circle of firelight and squatted down on his heels. I was some distance away, and presently my companion came over and told me our visitor wished to speak to me. In accordance with African custom I kept him waiting for a while; if you don't do this the native immediately puts you down as a person of no importance.

Eventually I approached and asked the wizard what he wanted. Answering in Swahili, he explained that the god was very pleased with our offering and, in order to show appreciation, had ordered him to come and "dream" for me—in other words, tell my fortune.

Endeavouring to appear suitably grateful, I told him: "Very good. Go ahead!"

"*Jambo, bwana*," replied the *ju-ju* man, and forthwith started his preparations. First he built a small fire. When this was well alight he threw some sort of powder on it, producing a dense smoke. The witch-doctor next discarded the leopard-skin that covered his shoulders, and, standing naked save for his breech-cloth, leaned well out over the smoke, and began to inhale it.

Suddenly he fell down and rolled on his side, to all appearances dead; his face turned a pasty grey, his limbs stiffened, and he seemed to have stopped breathing! After some minutes of this he sat up, extracted his snuff-horn from the lobe of his ear, took a huge pinch, and then started to speak.

His "snake," he announced, had told him that, upon my return whence I had come, I should find a talk-talk paper containing bad news. I should leave Africa and go home across the water in the big canoe that smoked. There I should meet a woman from another country whom I should take to wife. Finally, I should go away across more great water to a place where it was always summer.

Greatly interested, Vernon asked what the *ju-ju* man could "dream" for *him*, but the wizard didn't seem at all anxious to oblige. My partner persisted, however, and finally the soothsayer gave way. Vernon, he declared, would *not* go home; he would die within a moon from that time, by the hand of a woman!

When I got back to my bungalow after our trip, I found a letter awaiting me, informing me of the death of my father. Getting my things together, I left hurriedly for England, where I met a French girl who later became my wife. After our marriage I proceeded to California, where I remained for some years.

Just before I quitted the Coast I had warned Vernon—not for the first time—about his unfortunate *penchant* for native women. Apparently it did no good, for when I returned to England I received word that he had been fatally stabbed by a half-breed Gabunaise girl, his latest fancy! Two pretty accurate bits of divination by an ignorant savage, weren't they? That old witch-doctor would have created a sensation in London!

Another odd affair that came under my notice—an example of "good" *ju-ju*—concerned a young fellow named John Norris, who hailed from Reading, Berkshire. Norris came out to work for a trading firm, arriving on the Coast with no experience whatever. He had unbounded faith in the supremacy of the white man and a huge contempt for all natives.

One day, far up country and miles from medical aid, Norris stepped on a venomous snake just as he was climbing into his hammock, and got badly bitten. Almost at once his foot and leg began to turn purple and swell. The poor fellow had abandoned hope, when his boy ran in with the local witch-doctor. The wizard examined Norris's foot, anointed it generously with saliva, mumbled something or other, and took his leave. Within three days the limb was normal again! No medicine, lancings, or injections, mark you—just the application of saliva and some mumbo-jumbo by a dirty old man smelling of palm-oil!

A tragic case in which I played a small part was that of a missionary who came out to West Africa full of zeal to convert the benighted heathen. His name was Redman, and he had lived in Surrey. One night he slept at a village where a feast was in progress. The young missionary was only just recovering from his first attack of fever, and was still a sick man. Hearing the thudding of the drums, he got out of his hammock to investigate, observing, to his horror, that the natives were doing obeisance to a hideous wooden idol. Rushing into their midst, the foolish fellow shouted to them to cease worshipping wooden images and acknowledge the God he had told them about.

No doubt the fever had a good deal to do with what followed, but Redman's next proceeding might well have signed his death-warrant. Angered because the villagers studiously ignored him, he leaped forward, seized the image, and

"He seized the image and hurled it into the fire!"

hurled it into the fire! While the rest of the people stood aghast at such sacrilege the chief witch-doctor quickly rescued the badly-scorched god. Recovering their wits, the crowd advanced threateningly upon the offending white man who, tardily recognizing his peril, fled to my camp nearby. Had it not been for my bodyguard and the sight of their weapons I think he would have been torn to pieces, but eventually we managed to pacify the mob and induce them to go away.

Within an hour the misguided Redman was seized with violent internal pains. These grew steadily worse, in spite of all I could do, so at last I sought out the head *ju-ju* man and asked if he was responsible. He replied that he was, whereupon I begged him to be merciful and spare the missionary. My pleadings were of no avail, however; the witch-doctor declared stonily that nothing could be done, and no bribe or peace-offering would be considered. Only the death of the white man, he announced, would satisfy the enraged deity.

I returned to Redman—who was now in dreadful agony—feeling very depressed and helpless.

Outside the tent where the poor fellow lay writhing everything was dark and silent, only pin-points of light from the dying native fires twinkling through the intense gloom. Suddenly the stillness was broken by an agonizing cry from the sick man. I sprang to his side, but he was dead! Simultaneously, from the village, there came the booming of the drums, the chanting of many voices, and—rising above everything else—the weird yells of the *ju-ju* men. Their god had been satisfied!

I have spent practically the whole of my life in Africa, but I do not pretend to offer any explanation of *ju-ju*; no white man who is perfectly honest with himself would attempt such a formidable task. "Educated" people in civilized countries, who have had no experience with it, smile in superior fashion and murmur platitudes about trickery, superstition, and so forth. They will assure you, furthermore, that such incidents as I have related never happen; they simply *couldn't* happen! All I can say by way of reply is that everything here set down is perfectly true, and many responsible old-timers on the Coast can testify to similar episodes.

THE WIDE WORLD BROTHERHOOD

By THE EDITOR

"PASS IT ALONG!"

THE energetic manager of our W.W.B. department—who must surely count badges instead of sheep when he happens to suffer from sleeplessness!—puts forward an eminently practical suggestion. It is that every Brother should now make it his immediate business to recruit at least one other local member, male or female, thus providing himself with a nearby comrade and incidentally doubling our strength. I commend this excellent idea to your attention. As already pointed out on several occasions, the greater our numbers the greater our influence and power to do some good in this sorely-troubled old world. There is no necessity, of course, to limit yourself to *one* recruit; the more the merrier. Many husbands and wives have already enrolled, brother has nominated brother, and in numerous cases whole families have joined, thus constituting ready-made working centres for the district "lodges" which, one of these days, we hope to see established. The occasional Brother who laments that, so far, he hasn't discovered another member in his own home town has the remedy for his "isolation" ready to hand. In the words of the old catch-phrase, "It's a good thing, pass it along!"

BROTHERS' MEETINGS

A New Zealand Brother living in a particularly isolated part of the country tells me that when he visits the nearest township he invariably keeps a vigilant look-out for fellow-members. So far he has had no luck. "But when I *do* meet one," he adds, "there is going to be a slap-up celebration!" This is exactly the right spirit, and we shall be glad to hear of such encounters.

The following story concerning another chance meeting comes to us from Lancashire. "I run a small business of my own," writes a correspondent, "and some time ago I had an unfortunate dispute with a customer in a neighbouring town. Correspondence only seemed to make matters worse, so eventually I decided to visit him and have the matter out. Arrived in the place, some twenty miles from my home, I asked a man to direct me to X—— Street.

"'As it happens, I'm going there,' he told me. 'Who is it you want?' 'Mr. Z——,' I answered. 'That's mighty odd!' he remarked. 'He's my brother! I haven't seen him for a couple of years, and, being on holiday, I thought I'd run over and look him up.' While the stranger was speaking I noticed he was wearing the W.W.B. badge, and immediately produced my own—which, I am ashamed to confess, I was carrying in my pocket. 'Splendid!' he cried, and shook hands heartily. 'Come on; we'll go along together.'

"By the time we reached Mr. Z——'s house the brother and I had become great friends, and so much good feeling was engendered by my guide's introduction that Z—— and I settled our little dispute with no trouble at all."

"SHOWING THE FLAG!"

Mention of the badge reminds me that quite a number of Brethren have made heated comments on the "cowardice" and "lack of

The W.W.B. staff dealing with the day's applications for membership.

APPLICATION FORM

To the WIDE WORLD BROTHERHOOD, Tower House, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2. I wish to join the Brotherhood, and enclose herewith 2s. 6d. (50 c. U.S.) for Buttonhole Badge and Certificate of Membership.

(Block Letters, please.)

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

American readers can apply to our New York office : George Newnes, Ltd., 342, Madison Avenue, New York, 17. If you do not wish to mutilate your copy, this application may be made in letter form.

imagination" displayed by those sensitive souls who tell us that, although in full sympathy with the scheme, they fear they won't be able to display our emblem because they don't like attracting attention to themselves. "The badge is our uniform," one enthusiast points out, "and the man who is ashamed to wear his uniform is not worth bothering about. No matter how simple you try to make things there is always some fool ready to drop a spanner in the works!" Other writers point out, rightly enough, that by refraining from wearing his badge a Brother defeats one of our principal objectives—meeting good friends in strange places. Fortunately, only a very few people have indicated such reluctance, and we trust a little reflection will induce these timid folk to abandon their hesitation and boldly sport our emblem. After all, why on earth shouldn't they? Thousands of fine fellows everywhere are proudly wearing the little token that enables them to recognize one another instantly, thus forging more links in that great chain of comradeship which runs right round the world.

QUACK DOCTORS IN BURMA

THE thrifty peasantry of Burma do not believe in wasting anything, and when they catch a lizard it quickly finds its way into the cooking pot. A syrup distilled from these reptiles is also made into medicine, popularly believed to possess valuable tonic properties. Native quack doctors—a couple of whom are seen in the photograph here reproduced—prescribe mixtures of varying strengths for almost every ailment, and their patients somehow contrive to survive! These kerbside medicine men, however, do not rely entirely upon lizard specifics; the miscellaneous array of bottles they exhibit contain some very curious "cures"!

"PIRATE TREASURE"

By CAPTAIN F. CORDNER

One doesn't usually associate Newfoundland with pirates, but apparently these gentry were not unknown in the "Oldest Colony" at the time of the American War of Independence. Here is a queer tale of a recent hunt for their hidden loot

IN July, 1948, my grown-up son and I started building a log cabin near a small settlement called Chapel Arm, in Trinity Bay, on the east coast of Newfoundland. My wife and I wanted peace and quiet; we were also anxious to investigate certain stories we'd heard concerning treasure alleged to be buried in the vicinity.

We erected our little home on high ground close to a swift-flowing river. The area is heavily timbered, but the trees are mostly small spruce and huge dead birch, neither of which is suitable for building. I was fortunate enough to purchase ninety ten-foot fir-logs for $36, which considerably simplified our task. It was a formidable business transporting them to the site; long hours and hard work, however, eventually enabled us to get a 24ft. by 10ft. shack roofed and floored within two weeks. We then divided the interior into a living-room and sleeping quarters for myself and my wife, my son, and our two kiddies. I also built an old-fashioned open fireplace of local rock, and installed a small wood-burning stove and oven to keep the place snug and enable us to bake bread during the winter.

The sea lies only about a mile away, and abounds with fish, while the river and neighbouring lakes are well stocked with trout and—in season—salmon and sea-trout. We are not so lucky with other game; save for a few partridges and duck there is nothing to be found. The nearest bear and moose are some ten miles away, lurking in thick timber, dense undergrowth, and among trackless swamps. For fruit we rely upon the wild raspberries, blueberries, and marsh-berries which grow almost everywhere in great profusion.

Our search for the treasure we meant to seek was delayed by the fact that we were unable to purchase or hire a suitable motor-boat in which to explore certain islands and deserted coves along the coast. Winter closed down on us unusually early, heralded by a heavy fall of snow that put an immediate stop to our activities in this direction.

Meanwhile my son had gone to the west side of the island to test the authenticity of a story told to me—and sworn to as the truth—by an old seafaring friend of mine whom I will refer to as "Joe." This was his tale:—

In 1932 he had been a member of a survey-party on the west coast. One night when they were alone together an old guide, named Pete Doubois, related a strange story concerning buried pirate loot, offering to take him to the place where it was hidden. The man appeared to have been drinking and at first, in consequence, Joe didn't pay much attention to his yarn. This guide was what is known locally as a "Jack-a-tar"—a half-breed of mixed French and Micmac Indian ancestry. These Jack-a-tars, incidentally, are a curious race, and fast dying out. His statement, in substance, was as follows:—

Living close by was a very old fellow, likewise a Jack-a-tar, with whom Doubois had been close friends for many years. Quite recently the patriarch had told him about the buried hoard, giving him full details as to its location. Being exceedingly superstitious, however, the guide was afraid to go and dig for it, the old man having declared the cache to be under a curse.

According to Joe's informant, the ancient said that when he was a youngster of about eighteen he had a peculiar dream which recurred in exact detail for three nights in succession. In this dream he saw a certain place beside a river where pirates were bringing their loot ashore and burying it. With the treasure they also interred a comrade murdered for the purpose; he explained that it was the invariable custom of the old-time buccaneers to kill a victim and bury him with the spoils on the assumption that the dead man's restless spirit would guard the hiding-place against intruders.

The old man declared that he saw three trenches packed with loot, carefully filled in, and finally left looking like three large grave-mounds; into a birch tree close by the freebooters drove a brass ring-bolt, such as was used aboard ships.

This thrice-repeated dream made a deep impression on the simple Jack-a-tar, and several years later he determined to investigate. He had a shrewd idea as to the whereabouts of the cache, having noted certain landmarks which he recognized. In due course he found the place—exactly as he'd seen it in his vision—only nine miles from the little settlement where he lived. The three "graves" were there right enough, and also the ring-bolt in the tree, but he was afraid to attempt any excavating for fear of the guardian spirit. Returning home, he never even mentioned the business to a soul until, late in life, he eventually divulged the secret to his friend, Doubois.

That, in broad outline, is the story as it reached me—at third hand. As "evidence," of course, it was practically valueless, and had it not been for the facts I shall now relate I should probably have dismissed it as sheer nonsense.

Having set forth the guide's tale, Joe went on to tell me that, three years after his previous visit, he had gone to that part of the country on another survey-trip. Seeking out Doubois, he learned from him that the old Jack-a-tar who claimed to have found the "graves" was now dead, but Doubois explained he knew just where they were. For the second time my friend heard the story recapitulated; there were no variations of detail of any importance. Pete Doubois declared emphatically that he would take no part whatever in seeking the treasure, but had no objection to giving Joe all possible help short of participation in the search. He was so greatly

scared of the supposed " curse," however, that he refused to accept even a small reward in the event of Joe finding anything of value.

Forthwith, decidedly impressed by all he had heard, my friend made preparations to go treasure-hunting, but when these were almost complete the accidental discharge of a gun filled his leg with buckshot, and he had to be rushed to hospital. The wound, unfortunately, turned gangrenous, and finally the limb had to be amputated. This calamity caused him to abandon his quest; and he added ruefully that he still hadn't got the particulars as to the exact situation of the " graves." He had intended to obtain a detailed description from the guide prior to setting out, but his accident prevented the visit.

Joe seemed so much in earnest about the affair, and so firmly convinced of the genuineness of his informant, that my interest was aroused. Making cautious inquiries in the region, I obtained positive proof that at least two families had discovered pirate treasure in the vicinity of their homes. Most of this loot was believed to have come from intercepted merchantmen or raids on coastal villages during the American War of Independence (1775-81), when much lawlessness prevailed. Many war-vessels patrolled the seas, looking for freebooters, so it is not surprising these ruffians found it advisable to get rid of their booty as quickly as possible, the deserted inlets and coves of sparsely-inhabited Newfoundland offering ideal hiding places.

Continuing my hunt for information, I came across an aged fisherman who narrated a rambling story, handed down from his grandfather, which gave me a distinct shock. The tale was none too clear, but it concerned three mounds, great quantities of pirate loot, and a brass ring-bolt fixed in a tree! Here, it seemed to me, was some sort of corroboration of Pete Doubois' account!

Nevertheless, all the data I had gathered remained very vague—mere hearsay stuff, based on the misty recollections of old and uneducated men. All the same, it was undeniably interesting, and late in the fall of the year my son travelled westwards again to seek out Doubois—if he was still alive—obtain the necessary pointers to locate the " graves," and perhaps do some digging there. He took with him a letter from Joe asking for the guide's co-operation.

" Realizing he couldn't read, I offered to translate."

The remainder of this story being mainly an account of my son's doings, I will endeavour to tell it more or less in his own words.

I had no difficulty in finding Pete Doubois, living in a dilapidated old shack about three miles north of X——. When I showed him Joe's letter of introduction he started to study it upside down, meanwhile nodding his head with an air of wisdom and jabbering some French *patois*. Realizing he couldn't read, I offered to translate.

He well remembered Joe, and immediately understood what I'd come for. "You Joe's boy?" he asked. I thought I'd better say "Yes," so I nodded. Then he told me to show him my hands. After turning them over, and examining them intently, he said: "You *no* Joe's boy!" I replied I was Joe's friend, not his son.

For a while he seemed to look right through me; then he suddenly grunted: "O.K. You come sunrise; I take you close by. I no' come all way."

I thanked him, and offered him a drink of "Screech" (Newfoundland rum), but apparently he doesn't drink nowadays, which is decidedly unusual with Jack-a-tars. He smokes heavily enough, though; he cleaned me right out of tobacco and cigarette-papers.

I reached his shack again almost at the crack of dawn, and found old Pete awaiting me. He said nothing at first, but handed me a mug of strong, sweet tea, which went down very well, the air being very cold at that hour. When he was ready we tramped for about seven miles along an old trail till we came to a fine little natural harbour—very much like Conception Harbour, but not quite so big.

Turning east, away from the sea, we followed a river which got narrower, swifter, and deeper as we moved inland. Presently the old guide stopped. "I go' no more," he announced. "You find way back." He indicated I hadn't much farther to travel, and then left me. Looking round after he had gone some distance, he nodded and called out: "You be very careful, Joe's friend!" I laughed, waved my hand, and went on upstream.

Well, I found the place—about a mile beyond, at a point close to the river where the bank was low and grassy. There were three mounds, just as he'd described, and a number of old birch trees, but I had to make quite a lengthy search before I located the one with the brass ring-bolt. I was looking for a tree of ordinary size when I spotted the bolt in a huge old dead birch in line with the centre mound. I'd forgotten that the tree must have grown quite a lot during all those long years since the bolt was placed there; the bark had almost covered it. You can bet I was excited; I was sweating profusely. I wished you'd been there with me, Dad, instead of back in the cabin with Mother and the youngsters!

I couldn't start any digging, because I hadn't brought any gear with me, for to tell the honest truth I hadn't really expected to find the "graves"—at any rate, not so soon. Even then I could hardly believe I'd been successful; everything seemed so easy!

I just stood there, staring around me, recalling the guide's yarn and trying to imagine what those old pirates must have looked like, pulling up the creek against the current, landing their treasure, burying it, and then killing the poor wretch thev'd chosen as a victim. By this time it was about noon, and I was beginning to feel hungry, so I started back. I covered the distance more quickly than I'd expected, and decided to buy a spade and pickaxe and return to the mounds forthwith. It had been raining hard ever since dinner-time, so I took with me a light bivouac tent and a supply of food.

When I reached the river again it was nearly dark and, feeling pretty tired, I determined not to commence operations till the morning. I pitched the little tent and got a fire going, but then the rain started pouring down in real earnest, so I crawled inside and prepared to sleep. But somehow I couldn't rest; I guess I was too excited. I kept getting up to look out; I could have sworn I heard men's voices, but I never found anyone. Somewhere about three o'clock I must have dozed off, and I didn't wake until close on 7.30 a.m. I can't be sure of the times; my watch had stopped.

Crawling out, I got a great surprise. Where the mounds had been, on a grassy bank, there was now nothing to be seen but water! The rain had ceased, but the river had flooded during the night, and was still rising fast. This meant, of course, that I couldn't do any digging, and I cursed myself for not having tackled it the previous evening. Finally, as the water continued to creep up the bank, I packed my kit and cleared out.

I called on old Doubois to tell him what had happened, and he explained that, now the stream had flooded, it would probably remain swollen until the snows came; early summer was the best time to start excavating. Just as I was leaving, after bidding him goodbye, he looked at me searchingly and asked: "You see anyone around there?" I said I hadn't. He went on: "You no hear voices, eh?" I told him "No," although it wasn't true, meanwhile wondering if he had ever had a similar experience to my own, which might account for his marked reluctance to go near the place again.

Later my son went to Vancouver Island, British Columbia, where I shall shortly join him. When we return in about six months to fetch the family, however, we intend to have another crack at exploring those mysterious mounds. It's probably just a wild-goose chase—but one never knows! Meanwhile, I've sold the cabin; my wife refused to remain there alone with the two kiddies. Although the situation is very beautiful and peaceful, and she loved our little home, she had a hunch there was something uncanny and "spooky" about it. Remembering those grisly pirate legends, who am I to laugh at her fancies?

In conclusion, I should explain that although this little story is perfectly true, and the cabin, as stated, lies near Chapel Arm, I have, for very obvious reasons, carefully disguised the whereabouts of the spot where my son came upon the three mounds and the ancient ring-bolt. If there *is* treasure there we want it for ourselves!

Address all communications for this department to "The Captain," c/o THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE, *Tower House, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and send stamp if a reply is required.*

Your Hat

HAT-MANUFACTURERS, I gather, are distinctly perturbed; people who should know better still persist in going without headgear, and the rising generation shows little interest in their products. The hatters have been spending a lot of money on a national advertising campaign to combat these alarming tendencies, but now they can't make up their minds as to whether this has been effective or not. Although some shops report increased sales, a recent "quiz" revealed that the majority of retailers considered the publicity had not helped them noticeably. Meanwhile the makers are continuing their praiseworthy efforts to attract the younger men—their main target, seeing that most of the oldsters (luckily for the trade) remain confirmed hat-wearers. Specially-designed models are appearing in "new" colours, such as green, tan, and maroon, with "raked" crowns and broader brims, and seekers after headwear novelties will not be disappointed if they study the hatters' windows.

"Two-way"

One of the headgear novelties, I am informed, is a kind of "two-way" hat, temporarily known as the "bowler-Anthony-Eden." This has a soft crown and a stiff brim; when you push up the former, the hat is a bowler, when you dent it you have an Anthony Eden. "A special advantage," says the inventor, "is that it can be crashed against the roof of a car without being ruined." Which sounds very plausible, but it seems to me that one would need to inspect the result of the "crash," otherwise one might alight from the

car with a crushed-in bowler or a half-pushed-out Anthony Eden ! Much the same idea, of course, was enshrined in the rather full-topped Trilby which could either be worn with the normal dent or, carefully manipulated with the fingers, converted into a " pork-pie."

The Economic Angle

As a mere hat-wearer, contemplating the thorny problem now facing the trade, it seems to me that the hatters' best course at the moment would be to try to produce much cheaper hats while continuing to maintain quality—no doubt very difficult under present-day conditions ! A decent Trilby at about half-a-guinea would have a strong appeal. Quite apart from fashion trends, this " no hat " business, like the abandonment of gloves, umbrellas, formal clothes, etc., etc., has a definite economic basis. It costs so much to merely live that most men are compelled to cut *something*, and they discard the "trimmings" it is easiest to do without.

Waterproof Headgear

While we're on the subject of hats, a reader sends me a question addressed to the trade in general. " For many years past," he writes, " I have been working outdoors as a surveyor, but have never yet come across any form of headgear which, while reasonably smart in appearance, is also *waterproof*. Sou'-

westers and similar things are excellent in the wilds, but you can't make a business call in a sou'-wester ! Nevertheless, one doesn't look very impressive in a sodden Trilby which becomes shapeless, sending icy trickles down one's neck and, on removal, shooting water all over the floor. Why don't the makers evolve hats and caps that look normal but are actually proof against rain ? " Speaking again as a mere

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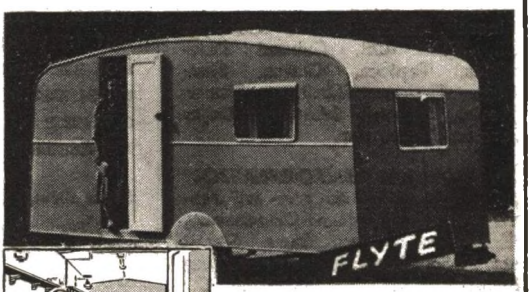

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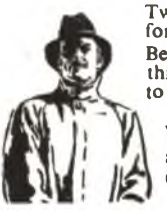

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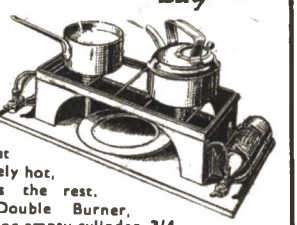

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layman, I imagine this is not quite so simple as it sounds. In my time I have had two examples of " waterproof " headgear : a cap and a tweed " fishing " hat. Both looked "normal" enough, but in wear they proved hot and inclined to cause perspiration — no doubt owing to lack of ventilation.

Sharp Practice

You may remember that, a few months ago, we published several letters concerning novel uses for discarded safety razor-blades and the safest methods of disposing of these dangerous little articles. A reader in Malaya now sends me an account of the very grimmest use for old blades that I have ever heard of. He says : " I once made some quite effective ' man-traps ' from discarded blades. I was living in a bungalow at the time, and anyone walking along a cement path could easily get into my bedroom window. After having suffered from several night thefts, due to the activities of some bare-footed burglar whose footprints were visible on the concrete below the window, I decided to do my best to discourage these nocturnal raids.

The Trap Works

" Collecting as many old blades as I could find, I t them firmly, at an angle, in various small pieces of wood from a broken-up box. Then I daubed them over with mud by way of camouflage, placed them in strategic positions below and near the window, and awaited results. The very next morning I realized the ' trap ' had worked, for I picked up the major portion of a coloured *human toe* and discovered a trail of blood leading away from the scene ! Never again was I troubled by burglars ! "

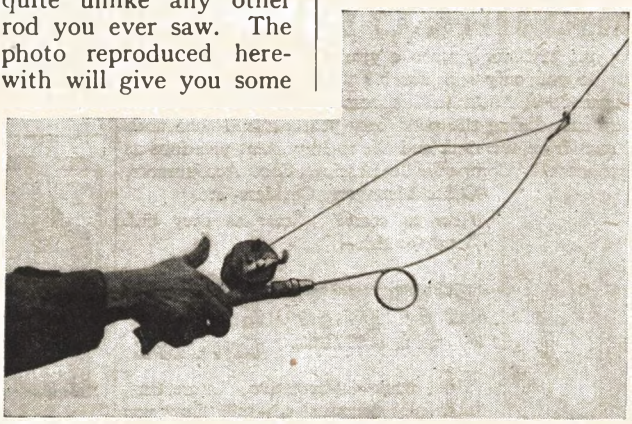
Care of the Hair

Most men will agree that nothing spoils one's appearance more effectively than untidy, uncared-for hair. The difficulty is to discipline it in such a way that it will " stay put," and also reveal a pleasing sheen, without giving a sort of glued-down impression. There is a well-known dressing on the market which fulfils this function most admirably, keeping the hair soft and glossy without any suggestion of stickiness. The makers have recently added to the attractiveness of their product by marketing it in a new tub-shaped glass container which fits comfortably into one's hand ; you can get a finger down to the very bottom and reach the last vestiges, so that waste is completely eliminated. Used in conjunction with regular scalp-massage, this excellent dressing not only controls the hair but will be found to assist healthy growth.

A Revolutionary Invention

Wonders never cease ! Here's an invention so revolutionary, and yet so breathtakingly simple, that anglers will wonder why it has never

been thought of before. The answer to every fisherman's prayer, it is an all-purpose rod at a reasonable price—and yet quite unlike any other rod you ever saw. The photo reproduced herewith will give you some idea of its appearance, but the details of its construction are well worth studying. It combines immense strength with remarkable handiness, flexibility and lightness.



Though it only weighs 1oz., its *interchangeable* spring-steel coiled joints will easily withstand strains of 1oolb. for coarse fishing and 2oolb. for deep-sea work! Only *thirty inches* long overall, it breaks down to twenty, and is so small that it takes up practically no room at all. Every part is impervious to moisture, guaranteed non-rusting, and virtually unbreakable.

Beginners Become Experts

This novel rod is so easy to use that, in a matter of hours, it will convert beginners into casting experts, the short length enabling one to avoid brush and overhanging trees and giving better control. Its handy size, moreover, means more fish safely landed, for the catch can be brought close in for netting. The rod consists of a central aluminium frame, solid cork butt and trigger-grip, and two interchangeable coiled spring joints, each with a semi-agate top ring bound with silk. The aluminium rings holding the reel are placed so

conveniently near the butt that the movement of the line can be constantly controlled with thumb-pressure, and tension on the springs can be accurately adjusted to the need of the moment. The price is £5 5s., including P.T., and I advise every angler who aspires to be up-to-date to have a look at one.

A Proud Record

Many WIDE WORLD readers, scattered as they are all over the globe, have found it advantageous to be tutored by post. These, and others, will learn with interest that the kindly old man who urged everyone to "Let me be your Father," celebrates an important birthday this year. The well-known correspondence college which uses this now-familiar slogan has been established since 1900, and this month it celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. This is indeed a record of which it may be proud, but it is prouder still of the successes achieved by its many thousands of pupils.

More About Braces

My recent remarks about braces (and the abuse which my defence of these useful articles brought down upon me from sundry non-wearers) have induced a large number of readers to rally round in loyal support of both braces and myself. "Is this another example of totalitarianism?" asks a Glasgow correspondent. "Surely a man is at liberty to wear braces, or *vice-versa*, without having to get anyone's permission? A very disturbing characteristic about some of the people one meets nowadays is their utter lack of tolerance; they demand that anything *they* don't happen to approve of should be immediately abolished. Nevertheless, they are the first to rebel against being 'regimented.' What we badly need is more good humour and kindliness." I don't think I need add anything to *that*! Incidentally, two odd little notes in connection with braces may amuse you.

Whimsical!

The first takes the form of a cutting from a newspaper referring to an individual who was

acting so suspiciously that a policeman arrested him. When searched, he was found to have half a dozen pairs of brand-new braces tucked away in one of his pockets. Asked to account for them, he made the brilliantly-illuminating reply: "I like to have something to carry!" The braces proving to be stolen property, an unsympathetic magis-

trate provided the prisoner with several weeks of enforced leisure, during which time he probably came to the conclusion that he would have done better to stick to a belt.

The second quotation —from a skit on fashions in the Oxford *Isis*—is so true to type that it might well be taken seriously. It reads : " N E W S T A - U P TROUSERS. Gone are the days when men had to be contented with the old clumsy buttons and fastenings. No more restraining belts, pins, and braces. The new STA-UP top is guaranteed against all mishap. Lightly boned (this helps to flatten that tummy, too !) and with neat elastic gussets at each side, they are so scientifically balanced that they will stay up whatever happens. No ; they simply cannot slip ! Ideal for sportsmen and country-lovers. At all the leading fashion houses."

A Novelty in Shirts

I have recently come across a bright idea in connection with the popular collar-attached shirts. As most people know, these are very comfortable, but there is one serious snag about them : the life of the collar is the life of the shirt. Once that solitary collar is worn out—and the collar, of course, gets most of the wear—you have " had it," in the vernacular of the day. The inventor of the shirt we are discussing, realizing this serious drawback, set about circumventing it in a very ingenious manner. Collar and shirt appear c o m p l e t e l y normal, but underneath the former, at the back, you find a loop. A pull on this, and off comes the collar, revealing a groove in the neckband. Into this you fit the patented collar supplied with the shirt, first tacking it into position and then sewing it with a single seam. Care should be taken, of course, that this " spare " has been washed and ironed before you place it into position. Once this simple operation is completed you are equipped with what is practically a new shirt ! I might add that these garments are beautifully made and finished, in the latest patterns and colourings, and represent

the acme of comfort, while the "double life" notion makes them even more attractive.

Club Ties

Men who make a study of club and regimental ties, telling you with pride that they can identify surprising numbers of them, will be interested to learn that several new "colours" have recently appeared upon the male horizon. One of these, it seems to me, needs to be worn with the utmost discretion on licensed premises, for it is a maroon affair emblazoned

with *silver rats*! It appears that certain members of that fine music-hall charity, the Grand Order of Water Rats, were getting tired of their old tie—a gay affair embodying a maroon ground with green, orange, white and red stripes—and so something rather more chaste was evolved. Another newcomer is dark-blue ornamented with winged bullets in silver—the official insignia of the newly-formed Air Gunners' Association, which eventually hopes to enrol 100,000 members. A third novelty is likewise dark blue with a pale-blue stripe and many tiny golden eagles. Intended to be symbolic of freedom soaring beyond confinement, there are not a great many fellows entitled to wear it, for it is the tie of the R.A.F. Escape Society.

"Symbols"

I note that most of the societies which have lately issued ties have followed the very sensible plan of adopting appropriate "symbols" instead of trying to invent distinctive colourings. So many bodies now sport official neckwear that it is practically impossible to select colours, or arrangements of colours, that are entirely original and not likely to be confused with some existing combination. A tiny emblem on a plain ground, however, not only gives you a neat-looking tie, but — provided the "symbol" is well chosen—is almost self-explanatory. The greatest care, of course, must be given to the choice of the "sign." Police clubs, for instance, would recoil in horror from a handcuff *motif*; pawnbrokers' societies would have no use for the three golden balls; and the members of the banking fraternity, offered an arrangement of £-signs on a demure black background, would unanimously give it the "R.D." Some emblems can be *too* distinctive!

Bouquets

Sending me a nice letter in acknowledgment of a small service we were able to render, an Australian reader

winds up with a rather quaint remark. He writes : " I don't know whether you are a man, a woman, or a whole department, but I want to thank you for your courtesy." You are very welcome, J. S. I may add, for your information, that (unless I have been completely misled !) I *am* a man. I have an excellent staff to help me, but at times, when difficult queries rain upon us thick and fast, I sometimes wish I *could* be a " whole department."

Another correspondent —this time a New Zealander—pays us a very flattering tribute : " I always start by reading ' Man and His Needs.' The feature is unique ; I have never discovered anything that comes within shooting distance of these interesting columns. . . . As for the old Magazine, there's nothing to touch it for real human interest; it stands alone and unassailable." Such praise is indeed a tonic, bracing us to renewed efforts.

The Captain

F. J. S., Auckland, N.Z.— Here are the dates you ask for to fit in with your London holiday. Horse Guards' Parade " Trooping the Colour " Ceremony, June 8th. Jubilee Royal Horse Show, Richmond, June 8th to 10th.

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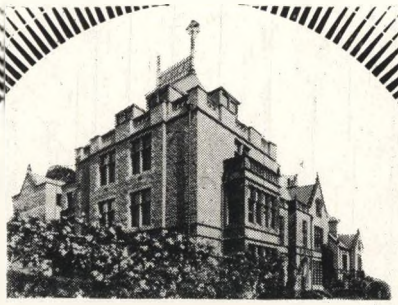

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