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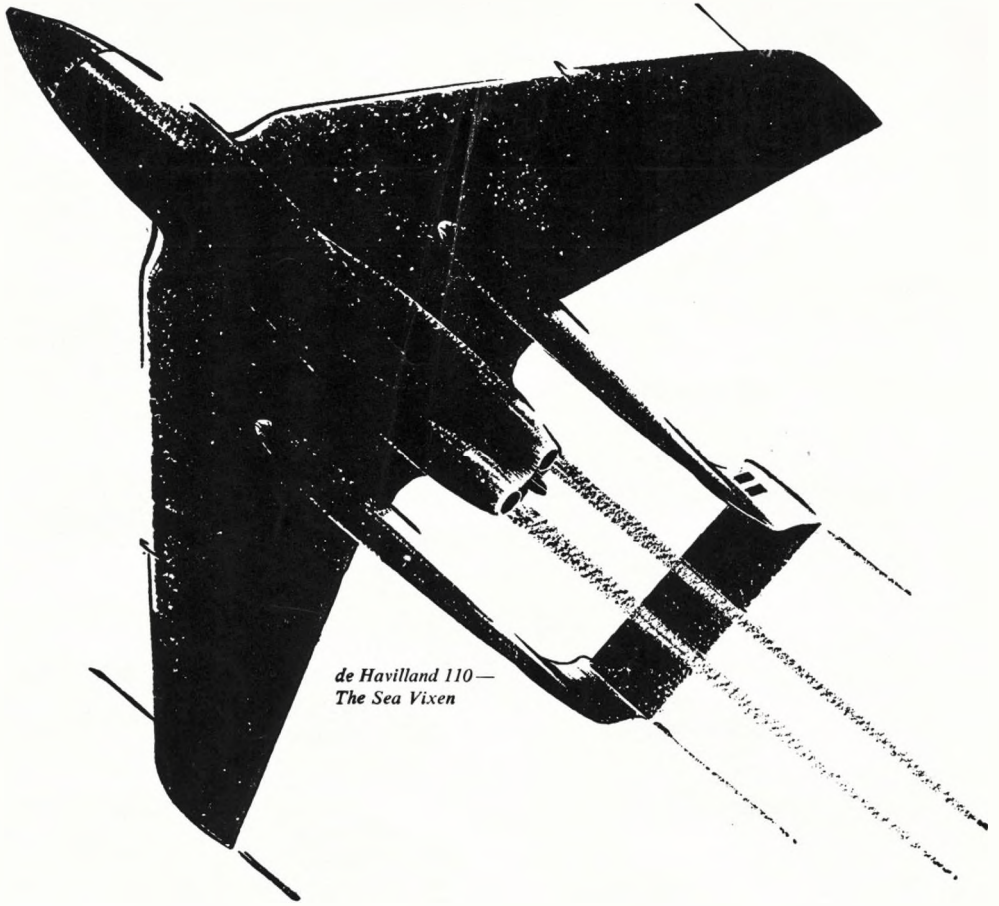
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JULY 1957 1/9



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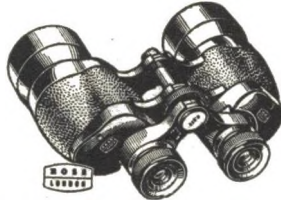


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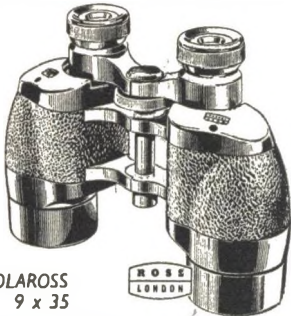
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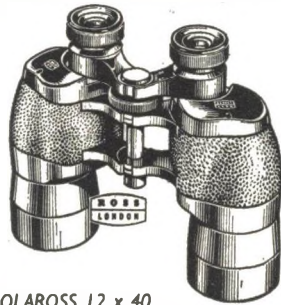
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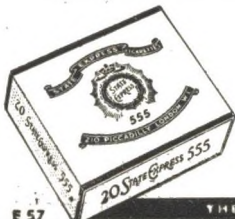
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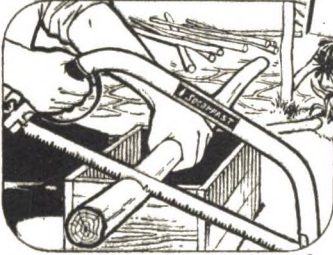
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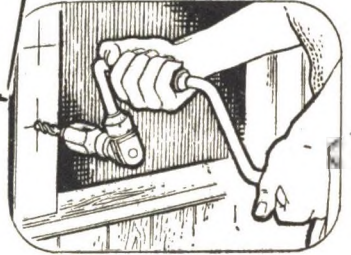
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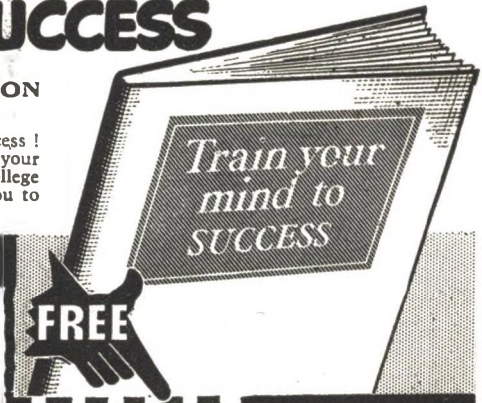
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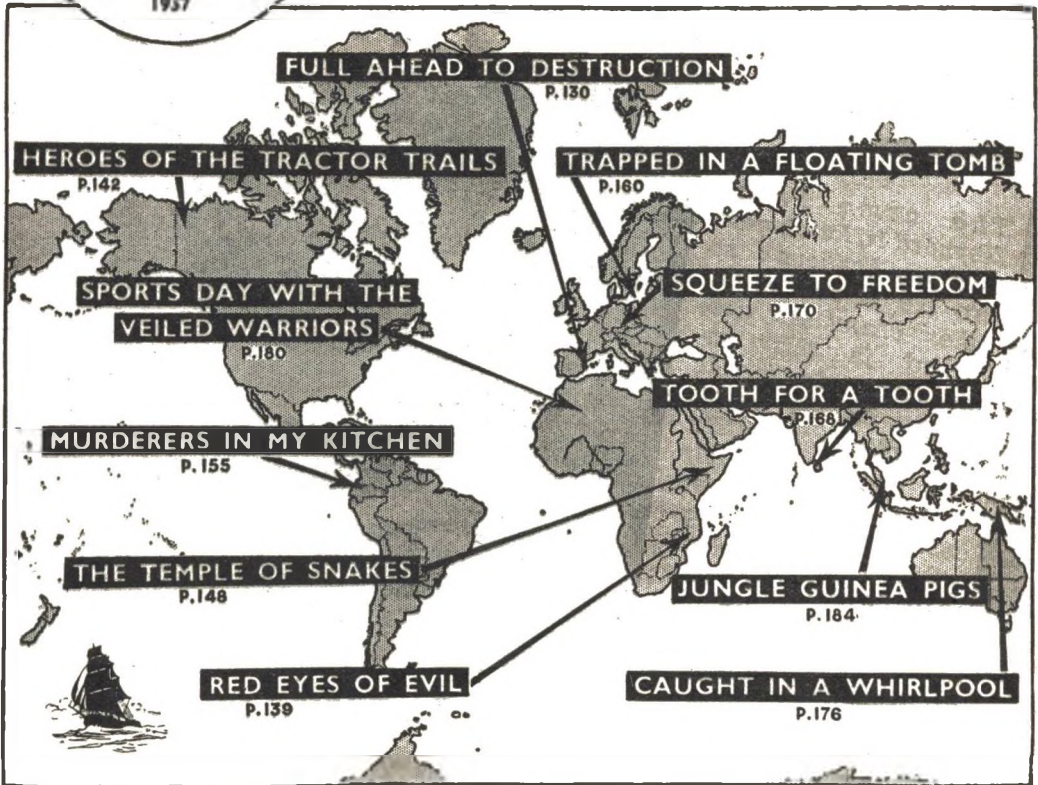
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FULL AHEAD TO

The name Frank Maynard is, for obvious reasons, fictitious; so are the names of the other characters described in this immensely dramatic story. But the events are entirely authentic. The author fearlessly tells of a fantastic ten-million-dollar smuggling syndicate which operated in the Mediterranean.

By FRANK MAYNARD

JUST after the war the Admiralty put up for sale as war surplus hundreds of small ships. There were motor minesweepers, sleek 150-ton B-class Fairmiles, rugged little motor fishing vessels and, perhaps the most attractive but impractical of all, the 40-knot motor torpedo boats.

The *Blue Dragon* was an ex-Navy M.T.B., a seventy-two feet long ship with three 1,500 h.p., sixteen-cylinder, supercharged Packard engines which, in favourable conditions, gave the vessel a speed of more than forty knots.

About twenty-five ships, mostly Fairmiles with diesel engines, were, in that late summer of 1947, operating from Gibraltar and Tangier. They were contraband ships owned by syndicates or by former Allied Navy and Air Force personnel who, unable to settle down to the routine of civilian life, had pooled their gratuities and savings, bought their ships and were running cargoes of cigarettes to the French and Italian coasts.

They flew many flags, but the Red Duster predominated, and at night the air crackled with English voices as crews talked to each other on their radio telephones. But they were within the law, these cigarette-runners. For International Maritime Law states that "a ship may trade her cargo on the high seas . . ."; and that was what these men were doing. They loaded cargoes of American cigarettes from the bonded stores of Gibraltar and Tangier, cleared

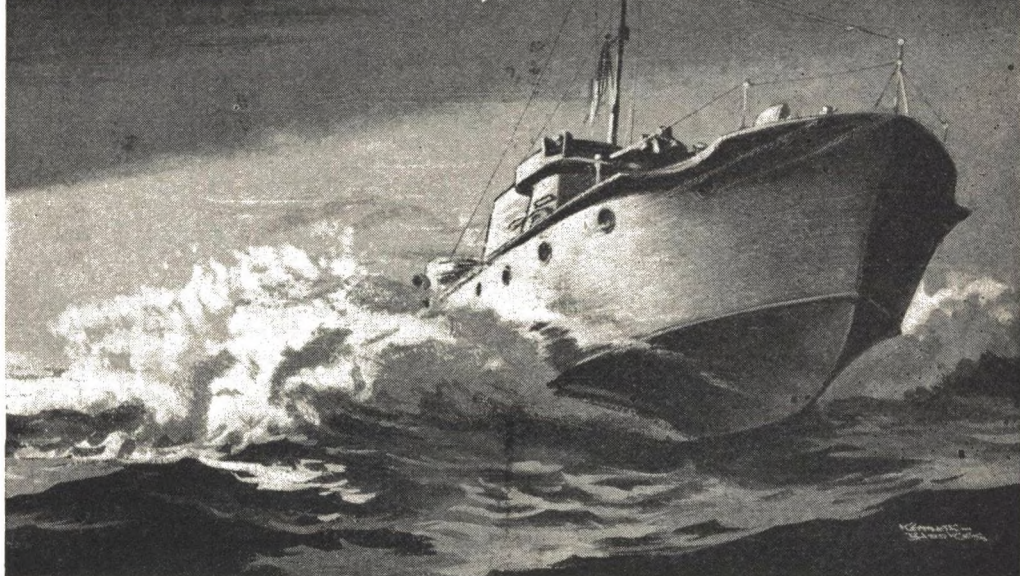
the ship "for sea" or the Syrian coast and off-loaded their cargoes at a rendezvous twenty-five miles off the mainland of Italy. Of course, strictly speaking, they were accessories, for they had no illusions about the fate of their cigarettes. But the launches and fishing boats that received the cargoes were the real smuggling craft.

Nevertheless, the boundary of European Territorial Waters in the Mediterranean was elastic, and any ship with a part-cargo of cigarettes and a manifest stating a full cargo, was liable to arrest even a hundred miles offshore. And arrest meant the confiscation of the ship and her cargo and heavy fines or imprisonment for the crew.

In those immediate post-war months, I had far less knowledge of these smuggling activities than I have now, and when I was asked to deliver a 150-ton Fairmile to the Mediterranean, I agreed without hesitation or question. I had no reason to connect this mission with the rumours I had heard about the building up of a smuggling "industry" in that part of the world.

I was mildly curious when this commission was followed by two more—but I did not pursue the matter for the money was good and I enjoyed the work. In any case, delivering ships was harmless enough; you didn't get shot-up or jailed for that.

DESTRUCTION



But smuggling was an entirely different matter ; I had steamed past the penal settlement on the Isola di Ponza on more than one occasion and had no inclination to end my days there!

My employers paid me £200 and my air passage back to London for each of the trips from the U.K. to Gibraltar. Many of the crew on these voyages were recruited from dockland street corners—they were dead-beats with a bad discharge who could not get a ship in the Merchant Navy, but, happily, they gave me no trouble.

Having delivered the three Fairmiles, my next assignment was to take a motor torpedo boat out to Gibraltar. In this case, it seemed, there could not even be an indirect connection with smuggling since M.T.B.s were entirely unsuitable as contraband boats.

Contraband vessels have three principal requirements ; ability to stay at sea in bad weather ; a good cargo capacity, and a cruising radius of at least three thousand miles. Of these attributes, the M.T.B.s had none. They were enormously fast but had a flat-out range of a mere ten hours, in which time they would devour 3,600 gallons of 90-octane petrol. Below decks they had little room for cargo and they were choosy about the weather. At slow speed they'd shove their bows under in heavy weather ; and at high speed they'd pound themselves to pieces.

Given reasonable weather and bunkers on passage, I knew I could get an M.T.B. out to

Gib. by running her on one engine at a time. So, after a little negotiation with the owners, I agreed to make the delivery.

With two seamen and a former Royal Navy Chief Petty Officer engineer, I cleared the Camber Docks in Old Portsmouth on the last day of July, 1947, and, after an uneventful five-day voyage, we reached Gibraltar Roads.

I gave the *Blue Dragon* a touch astern, let go the anchor and rang-off the engines. The voyage was over. A launch headed out from the Waterport dock and came alongside. A man clambered aboard ; he was a Gibraltar, well-dressed and smelling of perfume. We shook hands and he said, "You are early, Captain, we didn't expect you until to-morrow. Had a good trip?"

"Not bad," I replied. "Had a bit of a blow on the first night out, but it didn't amount to anything. She's a nice ship, but we've used a mighty lot of gas ; that stuff you arranged for us in Portugal was ordinary commercial petrol and the Chief tells me she has been burning sparking plugs."

The agent was looking over the weather-dodger of the bridge and he nodded approval.

"No matter, Captain," he said, "the main thing is that you are here and the ship looks a good one. Now, what about your crew ? I've arranged for your two seamen to travel overland and we can clear them to-day. I'll send a launch out for them, so be good enough to have their papers ready. For yourself and the engineer I have arranged accommodation at an

hôtel. The launch will bring out some men to take over the ship. You'll find. . ."

I interrupted him. "Not so fast. My Chief and I want to fly out to-day."

"No hurry, Captain," he replied. "You must be tired. A bath and sleep will do you good; besides, the London plane has already left. Perhaps to-morrow."

"The customs and police will be coming out, so kindly inform them that the two seamen are leaving to-day, via Spain and France. I'll see you to-night at eight. My car will take you to the hotel."

His accent was clipped and precise, and I didn't like him at all.

When he had gone down into his launch, the Chief joined me on the bridge and together we watched the boat running into the Waterport.

"Fancy a tot, Chief?" I asked.

He nodded, still looking at the Waterport. Then he turned and pointed over his shoulder.

"What do you make of this, Skipper, and that joker with the perfume? I could smell him in my engine-room. Are they going to pay us all right?"

"Sure, but we're too late for to-day's plane and anyway, I could use some sleep. Come below and we'll have a drink."

In my cabin I opened the only bottle of spirits in the ship.

"How much gas have we left, Chief?"

"About seven hundred gallons."

"To hell with it, then. Let's have a smoke."

I found a pack and we each lit a cigarette. The first few drags made me feel dizzy: because of petrol fumes we had never smoked on board.

The Chief was curious.

"What's it all about, Skipper?" he asked.

"What will the ship be used for, you mean? She hasn't the capacity nor range for a smuggler and the guy who has just left didn't volunteer any information. I can't figure it out at all. She's a fine ship but she's useless, even as a yacht, because no one can afford to run her. She needs power, and the cost of that power kills her.

"If she were round-bilge, they could put

diesels into her and run her like a Fairmile; but she's hard-chine (a flattened vee bottom), and without these Packards they'd lose her in the first Mistral."

"That's about the way I reckon it," said the Chief. "She'd make a good houseboat and that's about all. A pity, though; she's a good ship and must have cost the tax-payers about eighty thousand quid!"

"These fellers didn't bring her out here for a houseboat," I said. "They'll have some use for her, but you can bet it isn't smuggling cigarettes. No, it's something else . . . maybe for refugees."

The Chief nodded. "Yes," he said, "that could be it. Refugees. I hadn't thought of that."

He brightened and grinned. "Anyway, it's their business" he added. "Their money's all right as far as I'm concerned. Two more trips like this and I'll be able to buy a pub."

At about three in the afternoon four Spaniards came off in a launch. Three climbed aboard and handed down our grips. The boatman ran us into the Waterport and said, "You take taxi. Hotel. All fixed."

At the top of the steps we could see the M.T.B., her sleek profile black in the sunlight. Already two men were forward, cranking the windlass to shorten her cable and the on-shore breeze carried the clink of the pawls. As we turned away the Chief said, "Yes, she was a nice ship and I'm a bit sorry to leave her. I hope they'll look after her . . . funny how you get attached to a ship, isn't it?" Then he added, "That run paid me one hundred and fifty pounds. Man, that's thirty pounds a day . . .



The harbour at Gibraltar, where the author became involved in a fantastic smuggling plot.



A sleek Fairmile, one of several types of powerful craft which the Admiralty put up for sale after the war.

I was gettin' four-ten a week in the Navy for doing just the same job, and getting shot at besides. . . ."

At the hotel we showered and had a couple of hours' sleep. We were having a drink in the bar when the agent arrived. I began to feel annoyed when he asked, "Do you drink much, Captain?"

"Occasionally, ashore. Never at sea," I replied. "Why? I don't think it's any of your business." As an afterthought I added, "Good evening."

"Ah, yes, good evening to you both. Now, if you are ready I would like you to meet the principals. We haven't much time." He drove us down to another hotel, in Main Street, and left us in the lounge, saying, "A few moments, if you please. Order anything you wish."

NOTE OF URGENCY

The Chief and I sat down. Except for a couple in the far corner the lounge was empty. There was a note of urgency in the Chief's voice when he asked, "What's all this about, Skip? Why do we have to meet this bloke's principals. Couldn't he have given us our money?"

Before I could reply the agent returned and we stood up to meet his two companions. We were introduced by the agent. "Captain Maynard, Senor Gomez. Senor Alvarez, Captain Maynard. And this gentleman is the engineer of the ship."

We shook hands and sat down. Alvarez offered cigarettes and ordered drinks. As we waited for the drinks we sat silent, weighing each other up. Gomez was about 35, slim, with slicked hair and an expensive suit and linen. Alvarez was small, fat and smooth. He wore an American palm-beach suit, had gold teeth and a diamond tie-pin which he frequently fingered. He was the talker.

"You may be wondering, Captain, why we are meeting like this. You may not know it, but you have now delivered four ships for us and we've watched you carefully. We've a

proposition to make to you and your engineer, a deal which wouldn't be good to talk about outside of this room. It would, however, pay you more money inside one year than you are likely to make in delivering a hundred ships. Are you interested?"

His accent was American. More curious about the M.T.B. than his proposition, I said, "Let's hear about it; but, frankly, I don't think I'd be interested in going east of the Straits."

Alvarez lit a fresh cigarette from the stub Gomez held over to him.

"Captain, you know what our business is, so we won't go into it, except to tell you about a new deal which we and our Italian clients have discussed. You may, or may not, know that we pay forty bucks a case for bonded cigarettes in this port and in Tangier, and we sell them for about fifty-five dollars a case off the Italian coast—maybe sixty dollars, according to the demand and those Italian customs boys.

"We've had a ship lying off the Gulf of Spezia for as long as a month, getting rid of sometimes only twenty cases a night. That doesn't pay and the risk is too great. The Italians have over-lapping radar from Genoa to Sicily and they're damn' suspicious about any stationary dot showing on their screens. They still haven't the boats and equipment they need to put us out of business, but they are taking too many of our inshore fishing boats because they aren't fast enough to get away. That is where your torpedo boat comes in. . . ."

"And where I go out," I said brusquely, "Delivering boats is one job; smuggling is another. In any case, if you're thinking of sending that M.T.B. over with a cargo, someone has taken you for an awful ride. Why, man, coming out from the U.K. on one engine and at only twelve knots we've used seven thousand

gallons of gas—that's about seven gallons a mile. No, sir, you just couldn't do it. You'd have to bunker at least four times to make the trip and I don't see where you'd get the fuel from. Even then, the cargo space is limited. To cap it all, the M.T.B. is a hard-chine boat and I don't have to tell you what that can mean in bad weather. . . ."

All the time I had been talking I had been irritated by the impatient and humourless smile on the face of Alvarez. He let me finish. Then he said:

"You are wrong, Captain. That ship isn't going to run from here. She'll be making round trips of not more than three or four hundred miles and those trips will pay her skipper two dollars a case, with a buck-fifty for the engineer. She might make five hundred cases a night. Now, are you interested?"

I looked at the Chief and he nodded.

"Let's hear more," I said.

"The ship, Captain," Alvarez continued, "will be based within a hundred miles of the Italian coast. Her engine spares and petrol will be available from the base. She will go out always light, so there'll be no trouble about your clearances and arrivals with the Customs or police. In any case, they'll be taken care of and you won't have to worry about them.

"At given dates you'll leave your radio open in port so that our ships can call you up. You'll have their code for your rendezvous. You can, if you wish, follow them at easy speed to the rendezvous which will be about twenty-five miles off the mainland. A transmitter ashore will give you your instructions . . . the number of cases and the place and time you are to land. If the transmitter isn't on the air it *could* mean that something is wrong. You then tune in to Radio Rome. You know the stuff . . . discs from Aunt Fanny to Aunt Súsie . . . this will be your emergency code . . . a certain disc will mean a certain operation.

"Men and transport will be on the beach to off-load you and it shouldn't take longer than half an hour. You'll have the fastest ship in the Med., Cap'n, and you might earn up to seven grand a month. What do you say; does it interest you?"

Again I glanced at the Chief. He was blowing smoke towards the ceiling and I saw that he was smiling.

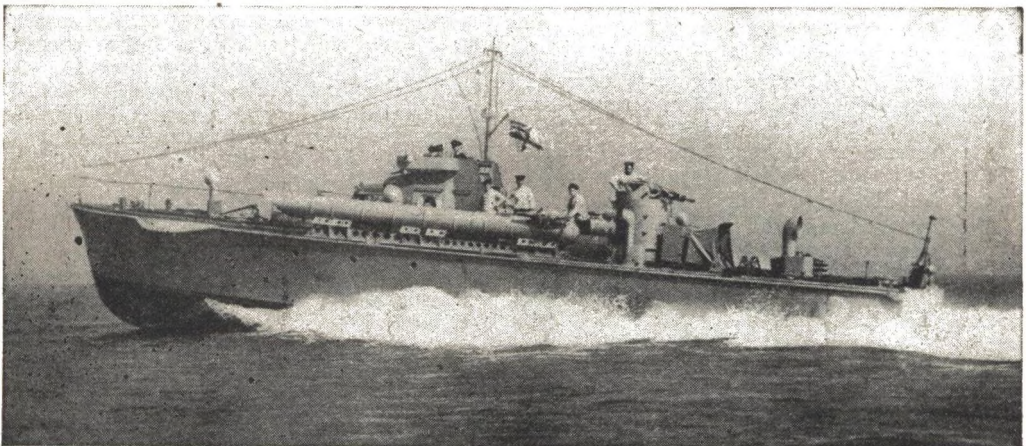
I sat there, turning it over in my mind. So far I had kept within the law. Now I was being asked to work outside it—and somehow the idea repelled me. Oh, I'd broken the law before—I'd like to meet the man who hasn't—but they'd all been trivial and spontaneous breaches which would be hard put to it to trouble the conscience of a parson. This was big-scale stuff; highly organized smuggling involving literally millions of dollars'-worth of contraband.

THE BIG DECISION

My moral objections were considerably strengthened by the thought of that forbidding penal settlement on the Isola di Ponza. If this project misfired I might easily be headed there on a one-way ticket.

I looked at the engineer again. I could see he had already made up his mind and I couldn't blame him. After four pounds ten a week, this offer was too good to miss. I remembered that his family back home were desperately in need of money, that he himself had mortgaged all the money he'd made on the three previous trips to pay off family debts. . . .

Of course, my thoughts had occurred in the wrong sequence. I'd begun by being moral and finished up being sentimental. It should have been the other way around—then maybe I would have saved myself a lot of worry, trouble and upheaval. Had I been able to foresee what I was letting myself in for, I should have been out of that hotel and at the



A fast motor torpedo boat similar to the *Blue Dragon*, the craft in which the smuggling syndicate planned to pull off a million-dollar coup.

As he went to pass I swung a punch
at his grinning face ; I felt his nose
crunch under my fist.

airport faster than a sailor going on shore leave. But I couldn't know . . . so I said:

"Sounds all right. How many runs do we make from the ship to the beach in a night?"

As I asked that I realized that I had made up my mind without positively telling myself so. "In any case," I thought, "you know enough about their activities to have them jailed for life and if you turn down the offer, I can't see them letting you go without a hole in your head." I was committed.

"The moon and the weather will have to be right," I said. "The round trip from the ship to the beach would be about fifty miles. With half an hour for off-loading, I reckon it could be done in about two hours—or from the base and back to the base in about seven, allowing a couple of hours for loading at the ship and discharging on the beach. . . ." I was almost talking to myself.

"She'll need about five feet of water off the beach," I went on, "to clear her propellers, and she'll need a hatch to get the cases out quick. There'll have to be fenders, too, if there's any rolling alongside the parent ship. . . ."

Alvarez broke into my train of thought. "Yes, Captain. We are aware of these things—but I am glad to see you are thinking about them. I gather you agree?"

"Yes, it sounds all right. But I'd like the gen on the base. How do we fuel and how do we get paid?"

ABOARD THE BLUE DRAGON

"We have an ex-R.A.F. refuelling barge in Naples. It will be towed over to you full and replaced when empty. The supercargo on the parent ship will pay you in cash after each run—in dollars, or by cheque on the *Crédit Lyonnais*."

"Thanks," I said. "We'll take cash."

The next day we moved back aboard the *Blue Dragon* and my cabin, no longer a place in which to catch an hour or two's sleep, became my home. This time I unpacked my grip and hung up my clothes in the locker.

While the Chief was busy in the engine room, I cleaned out the chartroom, corrected compasses on shore bearings and worked out the index error of my sextant.

Shore electricians installed a new trans-



mitter and the carpenters supplied by the Alvarez outfit cut a five-foot square out of the foredeck, fitted a hatch coaming and gutted the crew mess-deck for cargo space. From truck to boot-topping the ship was painted a dark, blue-grey colour and each port-hole was blacked-out with paint and dead-lights.

Two crew arrived, both Spanish-speaking Gibraltarians, and on our last day in Gibraltar a Swedish mechanic, an assistant for the Chief, reported on board.

The agent gave me my last instructions. "You are to proceed to Palma, in the Balearics, to pick up petrol, Captain. Keep over the Straits until you've passed Almeria. In Palma you'll receive instructions about your base. Here are the crew's passports and your papers ; and remember, Captain, if any ship calls you up on the air without the proper call-sign do not reply. I don't have to tell you about hi-jackers."

"Hi-jackers?" I asked. I was startled. "What's this about hi-jacking?"

"A dirty business, Captain," said the agent. "Nothing to worry about, but it's been known to happen. Just keep off the air and steer clear of any ship attempting to intercept you. Good luck and *bon voyage*." We shook hands, and I never saw him again.

I rang "Stand by" on the telegraph and when it was answered from the engine-room

I gave the signal to start heaving the cable. No shipping moved in the bay and the sun was already dropping behind the hills beyond Algeciras. I heard the starter grinding on the centre engine and suddenly it coughed into life.

A seaman for'ard signalled that the cable was up-and-down and a few moments later he waved quickly, indicating that the anchor was clear. I spun the helm to starb'd and rang "Slow ahead." The gear-lever went home and the ship began to slide over the calm water. A seaman came on to the bridge and I gave him the helm.

"Steady as she goes," I said.

"Steady as she goes" came the answer. Funny, I thought, how almost every foreign seaman understands a lot of English helm orders and other maritime vocabulary.

We ghosted past the Admiralty docks and I rang "Half ahead." Off Europa Point I saw the quick flashing of a car's headlights and knew it was Alvarez wishing us a good trip.

We soon settled down into the unhurried routine of a seagoing ship and rolled easily through the night at a steady twelve knots.

Just before dawn we had the light of Cape de Gata abeam, about twenty miles distant. I swung down into the chartroom to work out the night's run. Before I could find the chart-table lamp switch the helmsman began calling.

"Capitan, capitan, there is a ship off to port and she has no lights!"

I hurried on to the bridge and scanned the dark sea with the night glasses. Yes, a black shape lay motionless on the sea, just forward of our starb'd beam. No smuggler would lie-to within twenty miles of the Spanish coast unless she was broken down and there had been no call over the radio.

I took the wheel and said, "Tell the Chief to come up on to the bridge."

"How long will it take to warm up the outboard engines, Chief?" I asked, when the engineer appeared beside me.

"Few minutes. I was just going to change over to the port engine so she's all ready to turn. Anything wrong, Skipper?"

I pointed into the darkness over the starb'd beam.

"A ship without lights. Can't make out what she is but I don't want to be caught cruising around off the Spanish coast. Sure, our papers are in order, but you can bet this ship has already been photographed a dozen times in Gib. and I don't want my photograph added to the collection. Besides, those Spaniards could keep us tied up for weeks while they checked our papers. No, Chief, stand by all three engines, and if she tries to

intercept us, we'll run for it. This baby will need aircraft to catch her!"

I signalled the engine-room for bridge control and eased the three throttles into "Slow ahead." The port and starb'd outer engines spluttered into life and three lights winked on the control panel. We were ready to move. Now controlling all three engines from the bridge, I moved the levers into "Ahead" and, still at low revolutions, the M.T.B. began to surge forward.

I called to Miguel, the seaman. "Here, George! Keep an eye on that ship. If she starts moving tell me at once." I handed him the night glasses.

I found the switch for the navigation lights and doused them. Almost at once a searchlight flooded us with bluish-white, blinding light. I ducked below the dodger, out of the glare, and gave the M.T.B. the gun.

Four thousand-five hundred wild horses suddenly shattered the night as the big Packards revved up to their peak. The *Blue Dragon's* bow began lifting, and as she gathered speed the seas crumpled under her chines and fled past her in acres of white. The six eight-inch exhausts through the stern pounded out a shuddering symphony of unleashed power.

For a moment I glanced aft, beyond the pale column of light from the engine-room hatch, already gemmed with flying spray, to our narrow, veed wake bursting white from under us. Twenty-five knots . . . thirty . . . thirty-five. . . . She was flying over the sea, leaping from crest to crest, and she smashed flat the short seas that tore under her reaching bow.

Far on either beam, and luminous in the dark, the sea dissolved in white explosions and great curtains of misting water stormed high and out from our quarters. She thundered into the outer dark, no longer lifted by the seas but pounding through them, and

her hull trembled to the enormous thrust of the Packards.

Forty knots! I straddled bent-knee'd behind the wheel, to absorb the shock. In seconds we had fled from the glare of the searchlight into the friendly dark. Twice more the beam raked us, but already it was becoming ineffective, serving only to throw rainbows about our stern and to jewel the spray that poured in a torrent of air over the top of the windshield.

The sudden noise and speed had awakened the watch-below and the men sat crouched on the bridge, staring aft into the dying light. No voice would carry in this wind, but I could see they were jubilant and laughing as they pointed astern.



A shell screamed over us and into the water some seconds before we heard the "crump" of the gun.



I eased the throttles forward, slowing the boat down to about twenty knots. On the speaking tube to the engine-room I called the Chief. His voice came through thinly, diluted by the mechanical roar of his engines.

"Chief, can you hear me okay?" I yelled.

"Okay, Skip. Anything you want?"

"Close down your outer engines, Chief, but stand by for a while. We've lost that ship astern of us, but she might still be after us. It'll be daylight soon so she won't get close to us again."

The outer engines were killed and the centre engine throttled back to give us our economical twelve knots. With the daylight only an eastbound tanker could be seen, and behind it the faint smudge of the North African coast.

Kurt, the Swedish mechanic, brought a gallon-flask full of coffee on to the bridge and poured drinks for all hands. The Chief, sitting with his feet in the engine-room hatch, shivered and went down a couple of steps to be closer to the engine warmth. He rested there, blowing into his coffee and staring over the rim of the mug into the brightening east. Overhead the stars flew down to the west in the track of the night as the early mist thickened on the surface of the sea. The vapour pearled our structure and my duffle was damp and heavy.

"Miguel," I called, "get for'ard. Juan, go aft. If you hear anything give a shout . . . no, belay that, if you hear anything report to the bridge." They nodded and took up their stations.

The weather closed in and visibility was reduced to a few yards. I eased the ship down to five knots and we wallowed on the dark, glassy swell. The pulsing of the engine and every creak in the ship was amplified by the ambient stillness. The Chief returned to the bridge. He was anxious.

"How long'll this last, Skip.?"

"Can't say. This weather isn't usual so far east of the Straits. It's that cursed ship I'm worried about . . . if she has radar she'll see us but we won't see her. We're steering east-nor'-east now but when we lost her we

Tangier—hotbed of Mediterranean smugglers.

were on east-a-half-south. That might put her off, if she hasn't radar."

The mist darkened into fog and it swirled over the top of the windshield, whorls of heavy vapour anchoring our noises about us and engulfing us in a grey, damp obscurity. No sound penetrated the blanket, not even the blowing of the far-off tanker, and we, too, remained silent. I stopped the engine and we came beam-on the swell, rolling heavily.

"Stand by all three engines, Chief, and put her on bridge-control. We'll have to assume she *has* radar and *was* a gunboat."

Half an hour passed. I rang down for the centre engine and put the helm over to port. I stood with my back to the wheel, holding on the port helm, and listening for the first rumble of the engine. The three lights on the control panel glowed, the centre one winked twice and there was the grind of the starter.

SCREAMING SHELL

Then, off to starboard, a faint wailing noise became audible. It rose high and streamed over us seconds before we heard the "crump" of the gun. Juan came running from aft, shouting, as the centre engine roared into life. High above all the shipboard noise another shell went screaming. The ship gathered way, coming up out of the trough, and when the two outer engines cut in, she surged forward.

I gunned the three motors, right up into emergency throttle, and for a moment she seemed to pause, hanging on top of a swell; then she shuddered through her length as the enormous thrust took hold. She leaped; she bounced from a wave-top, crashed through the next and then stormed into the fog, her bow high as she hammered flat the seas beneath her. I brought her round to south, heading for the North African coast, and pulled her out of emergency throttle.

So there *was* radar . . . the *Blue Dragon* was showing as a thin white line on their screen.

I held her south for about four minutes, then swung east again. The ship answered the helm immediately, heeling over to the rudders. Miguel came on to the bridge and Juan's head was framed in the chartroom door. He held a light machine-gun and the nasty end was pointed at me.

Miguel put his mouth close to my ear and yelled above the storming noise, "She isn't a Spaniard, Captain; she's a runner out of Ceuta, and she's after us. They're on the air now, telling you to heave to. Keep going, Captain. They're afraid to damage the ship."

It was a long time before I realized he had spoken in perfect English. I took my eyes from the compass and really saw him for the first time. He didn't look like a low-grade Spanish seaman any more. I put my hand to the throttles but Juan nudged me. He held the machine-gun up, shook his head and yelled, "Keep going, Captain!"

We kept going. We kept going for an hour; we burst from the belt of fog on to a quiet and empty sunlit sea and laid a white trail across the water. Miguel and Juan stayed on the bridge and when I glanced aft I saw Kurt squatting on the engine-room hatch. He was smiling—and holding a heavy automatic. Miguel pointed to the throttles and nodded. I eased them forward slowly and our speed began falling away. He lifted one finger, so I killed the outer engines. Then he said, "Kurt will take the wheel, Captain. Give him the course. I wish to talk to you in the chartroom—you and the engineer."

In the chartroom I saw Juan at the radio; he was talking in Spanish. The Chief, perspiring and surprised, came in, followed by Miguel. Juan continued speaking for three or four minutes, then he switched off the set, sat on the chart table and offered me a cigarette. The machine-gun had vanished. I waved the cigarette away. "No smoking aboard this ship," I said.

Juan shrugged. He was grinning. He said, "You did all right, Captain. We got away. No damage. Good."

Miguel cut in, "Captain, there are two ships looking for us and if they can get within range they'll use small arms to try to stop us. Discount the gunfire this morning because that was merely an attempt to make us heave-to. Those shots were deliberately fired high. They want this boat, Captain, but they certainly won't get her. I'm part owner of this vessel—in fact, I'm part of a syndicate which has several million dollars invested—and if I can help it, no one is going to hi-jack us."

He finished speaking and waited for my reply. He was now sitting on the

short ladder to the bridge, composed and confident.

I said, "Look, mister, let's get this straight from the start. If that gorilla ever points a gun at me again he'll go over the side. Next . . . this ship; if your outfit is so big, why shanghai me aboard? Yes, I agreed to run your darned cigarettes, but I'm having no part of this hi-jacking business. Anyway, who's hi-jacking who? Maybe we are going to do a little of it, huh? Perhaps all that stuff about running the cases inshore was so much baloney. I don't know; but I do know this—I am Master of this ship until I get her to Palma, so you can tell that buzzard to start on the R.T. again and call up your outfit. They can fly another skipper up to the Balearics, and another engineer, too, I guess."

"You're staying with the ship, Captain," Miguel replied firmly. He emphasised "staying."

"Before we considered you for the command we tried every skipper we knew, but none of them knows the torpedo boats. You'll stay. You'll be well paid for it and you may take my word that all you'll be asked to do is to keep the ship out of trouble."

"I'm leaving at Palma," I said. "Running cigarettes was maybe okay, but I'm not having any part of this strong-arm stuff; nor am I going to jail for toting characters like you around the ocean. And don't forget

this: until I leave this ship, every man aboard will do as I say."

"I'd want it no other way, Captain," Miguel replied sweetly, "except, of course, that we shall use the radio and it will no longer be available to you. Be advised, don't try to use it. . . ."

He returned to the bridge and Juan started to follow him.

I still chafed at the thought of Juan having pointed a gun at me, and when I detected the slightest suggestion of a sneer on the man's face, as he made to pass me, I felt my blood run hot.

I spun him round by the shoulder and swung a punch at his grinning face.

It felt as if his nose was crunching beneath my fist. He reeled and would have collapsed in a heap, but the Chief leapt forward and caught his sagging form. Without gentleness he lowered the Spaniard to the deck.

I looked up, rubbing my knuckles and saw Miguel silhouetted against the sky beyond the doorway. There was an ugly look on his face. In his hand he held Kurt's automatic; it was pointed straight at me.

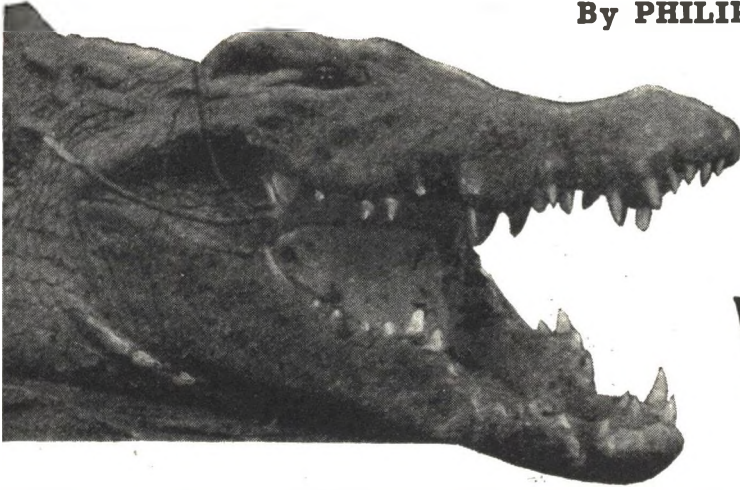
"You should not have done that, Captain," he said grimly. "Now I shall have to kill you."

(To be continued)



Miguel held Kurt's automatic—and it was pointed straight at me. . . .

By PHILIP CONWAY



RED EYES OF EVIL

The three of us had hunted crocodiles before, but it was the first time we'd sought one particular brute, writes the author. This was a killer—it measured more than fifteen feet from snout to tail—and attempting to harpoon a maddened monster in pitch darkness on the Zambezi is asking for trouble. We got plenty.

IT was only when the crocodile took one of old Bill's dogs that we began to be seriously worried about it. Crocodiles will often attack dogs, but this one was getting altogether too audacious. It came into the garden in the heat of an August afternoon, when the boys had gone off for an hour, and the dogs were dozing in the grass. No one saw the crocodile take the dog, but there was no doubt that it did, for there were drag marks in the mud at the river's edge.

Unless the brute was dealt with it would be taking a piccaninn, or even an adult. It may already have done so.

Tim, Jack and myself went into conference. Tim is a tough character of about twenty-six, well-versed in river lore, short, rugged and tanned. Jack is tall, slim and wiry. He was born in the bush country of Barotseland, and is twenty-three. As I am the oldest, I usually take charge on these occasions. It wouldn't be the first time we'd been on a crocodile-hunt together; but it *would* be the first time we'd gone after one particular crocodile.

It wasn't going to be easy either. By the marks of its feet, the crocodile was an enormous brute.

It is only in the dark that one can effectively hunt crocodiles with any hope of success. A moonlight night helps the crocodile but not the hunter. We decided to try that same night, as it would be almost pitch dark.

We cast keen eyes over the boat, a twenty-foot, flat-bottomed vessel which was sturdy and well-made, and checked the 25 h.p. outboard motor and laid in extra fuel. We sharpened two barbed spears and tied them at strategic points, one on each side of the boat, with a

quarter-inch manila cord—a strong rope is most necessary for crocodile-hunting. The rope was about thirty-five feet long.

A check was made on our lamp which was needed to pick out the red eyes of the monsters as they lurked, watchful and wakeful, among the tall reeds along the river bank. It was not a powerful light, for a strong beam will dazzle a crocodile and make it submerge.

I checked my .303 rifle and filled my ammunition belt.

Three is an ideal number for a crocodile hunt. More *can* be taken along, but there is always a tendency to get in one another's way, and when an infuriated monster in its death agonies is thrashing about in the bottom of the boat, one can quite easily be swept overboard into the murky water.

On our hunting trips Tim operates the engine, Jack holds the spear and the light, for the two are better operated by the same man, and I shoot.

Once a crocodile's eyes are caught in the beam, Tim speeds the boat towards them, Jack shines the light steadily into the eyes and, when we are about two or three yards away, I shoot. Jack strikes with his spear whether or not the crocodile has been hit. If the bullet has missed the beast the spear embedded in its body will usually hamper it momentarily so that I have time for another shot.

We set out at about eight o'clock, pushing the boat slowly away from the reeds and out into the darkness of the Zambezi. In August the floodwaters are less turbulent than in July. The river is swift and deep, however, and full of fish which have returned from the *malapas*

(backwaters) at the end of the breeding season. And when the fish return, the crocodiles follow them.

Our destination was about five or six miles down-river—not a great distance for our fast boat. We were in no hurry, and we cruised slowly along, swinging the lamp in a wide arc, lighting up every inlet and the overhanging trees.

Once I almost knocked my head against a mamba, as it hung, sound asleep, on a branch over the water. I jumped aside just in time, for even a newly-awakened snake moves far more quickly than any human can. I would have made a perfect target for its annoyance at being disturbed!

We glided on, keeping to the bank and swinging the lamp back and forth. Suddenly the light picked up a pair of red eyes, and we turned the boat towards them.

Only its red eyes could be seen, not its body. As we drew nearer we saw it was only a small crocodile, about five feet long. Minutes later it was shot, speared and in the boat. A crocodile less is always a good thing.

The search for the big brute was resumed, and as we rounded a bend in the river our flashlight picked out the great body of a hippo about five yards away. It was feeding on the bank, its back legs in the water.

We knew it would be foolish to try to pass the hippo, for we were too near to be able to give the boat sufficient outward swing. When a hippo plunges into the river it makes straight for deep water, and overturns anything which might be in the way.

The boat was stopped just as we were about to draw level with the huge animal. Then the hippo, with a terrific splash which soaked the three of us and sent the boat rocking, submerged into the river and was lost to view. Jack swung the light across the water and we saw the hippo bob up a good distance away.

Starting off again, the boat had not gone twenty yards when we saw another huge blob on the near bank. On the other side of

the boat, in the shallow water, was another, smaller, blob.

"Hippo and calf!" yelled Tim. "For heaven's sake look out!"

The hippo on the bank had seen us, of course, and had also seen that we were between it and its baby.

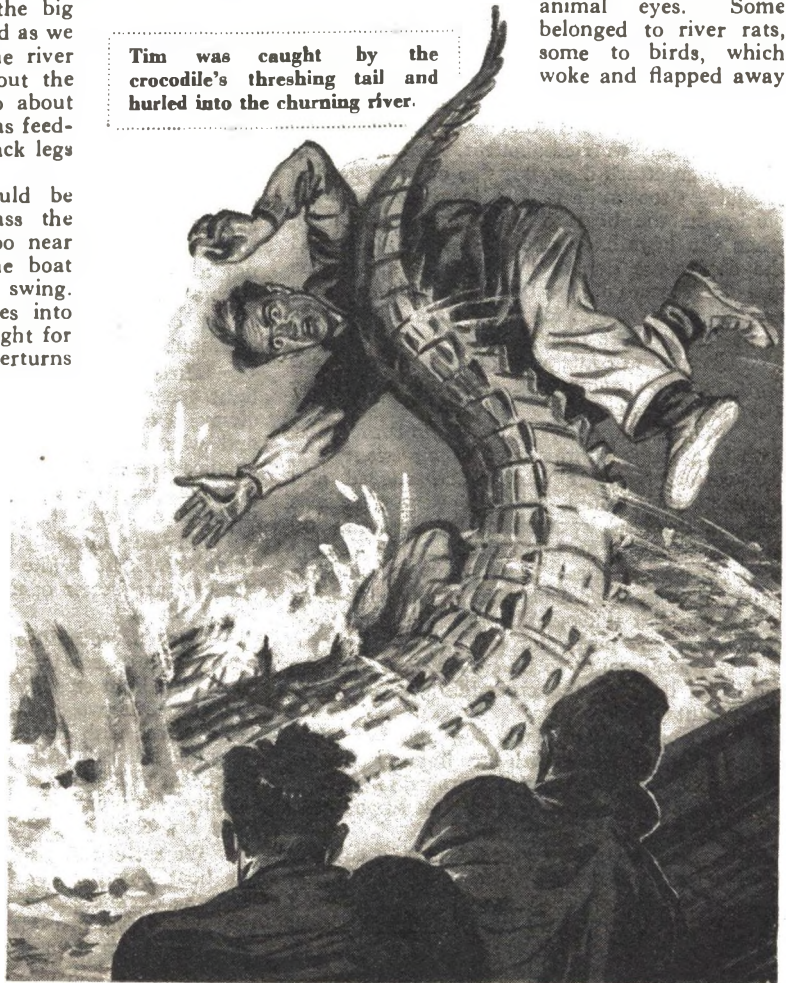
There is nothing more terrifying than an angry mother hippo. It charged at the boat, and we narrowly escaped being overturned. The boat sped by, avoiding the enraged cow by inches.

The hippo made straight for its calf, swam quickly round it, then came after us. The speed of a hippo when it's really annoyed can be quite alarming, and this one kept level with us, although we were going flat out.

For a moment we caught a glimpse of its huge, open jaws, and I thought it was going to try and bite the boat in half. But, at last, Tim managed to pull away, leaving the hippo glaring after us, its angry little eyes gleaming in the light of the lamp.

As the boat cruised on, the lamp constantly picked up the gleam of animal eyes. Some belonged to river rats, some to birds, which woke and flapped away

Tim was caught by the crocodile's thrashing tail and hurled into the churning river.



in a panic. Others belonged to leguvaans, those great lizards which the newcomer to Africa often mistakes for crocodiles. The leguvaan is much greener than the crocodile and has smaller and less horny scales. It is also harmless under normal circumstances.

We were now about seven miles down-river and had so far seen no sign of the monster we were seeking. There were many backwaters here, and the beast could be lurking in any of them, but some were too small for us to turn the boat effectively. We'd need plenty of room once we had the brute on the end of the harpoon line!

GLEAMS IN THE DARK

A little farther we stopped the motor and drew out our packets of sandwiches without which no crocodile hunt is complete! We drank hot cocoa from a flask, had a smoke, then decided to go down-river for another mile or so. It was still fairly early.

Slowly we made our way through a small inlet which opened out into wider river, and it was as we were coming into the broader stream that we saw the eyes.

"There!" I said, and I knew the others had seen them, too.

The eyes shone like two red orbs, unwinking and unmoving, seemingly hanging in mid-air. Jack kept the lamp on them and tightened his grip on the spear in his right hand. We knew that if this was the crocodile we were looking for, it was certain to put up a tremendous fight. If our aim was not true, we would possibly be fighting with it for hours. It might pull the boat for miles before we could give it the finishing shot. It might even get away altogether.

The eyes remained. Red, evil, menacing.

The boat speeded towards them. When we were within five yards, the reptile sank.

"Hell!" I said feelingly.

We turned slowly and swung our lamp around, but the eyes had vanished. It was maddening. For we were certain now that this was the monster.

"Let's go on a little farther, then turn the motor off, and wait," I said. "It must be still on the river bed."

Quietly we sat, not even smoking, for the brute would have seen the lighted ends of the cigarettes. We spoke only in whispers. Then, after about twenty minutes, we went back.

This time the lamp picked out the eyes at once, and we sped towards them. Jack held the spear poised and shone the lamp directly into the red, devilish eyes. I held my rifle ready.

I shot at it from about two yards, and at the same time, Jack struck downwards with the spear. He shone the light down into the water where the crocodile had immediately submerged. It lay on the bottom, the spear firmly embedded in its side.

A crocodile always submerges at once when it is hit, so we were not able to tell whether the brute had been mortally wounded or not. I

had hit it all right, but, as we found out afterwards, only in the eye. This just put it temporarily out of action. I had aimed for its brain, which lies just behind the eyes on the top of the head, but it is extremely easy to miss this small vital spot. The slightest movement of either the boat or the crocodile will send the bullet just wide. That had happened in this instance.

Suddenly the crocodile came to life with a rush, and its fury was astonishing.

From the tip of its tail to the end of its ugly snout it measured more than fifteen feet and fifteen feet of lashing, writhing rage isn't a picnic, especially in the pitch dark.

It is common knowledge that the strength of the crocodile is in its tail, but it is the ability to twist and turn at furious speed in the water which makes it doubly devilish.

This crocodile was wild all right. Once it even tried to get into the boat, and its teeth gnashed together just short of my foot. As it thrashed about in the water we hung on to the harpoon rope with all our strength.

It was impossible to get another shot at the twisting monster, for the water was a mass of angry foam. Shooting through water is, in any case, ineffectual for the force of the bullet is cushioned.

As the crocodile plunged and twisted in all directions, the boat began to move, slowly at first, then faster. The brute was trying to make for the deeper water in the centre of the river.

The rope caught in the corner of my short, leather coat and began to wind me up in it. I could feel myself being dragged to the edge of the boat. In another minute I would be hurled into the water,

PLUNGE TO PERIL

Somehow I unbuttoned the coat and flung it off. It hit the water with a smack and was lost to view.

The boat was lurching violently to one side. It looked as though we would have to cut the rope and lose rope, spear and crocodile. But suddenly the monster rose from the depths, and lashed all along the side of the boat with its tail whipping the water into a boiling, seething turmoil. The tail caught Tim, and knocked him clean over the side into the churning river. I saw his agonised face as he fell.

Tim made a grab for the side of the boat and heaved himself into it, just as the crocodile lunged at him.

The monster was still lashing and writhing frantically. It seemed as though its strength was limitless. We were rapidly becoming exhausted in the hectic struggle and the boat seemed in real danger of overturning. We were still gripping the rope and our hands were becoming chafed and raw. The sweat was running off us as we grappled with the hideous, maddened brute.

For an hour we held on grimly as the crocodile's strength was gradually sapped by
(Please turn to page 154)

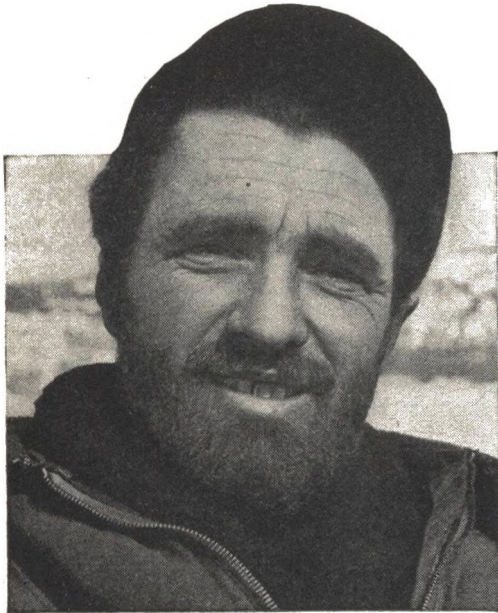
HEROES OF THE

TED CINANNON leapt for his life as the heavy caterpillar tractor crashed through the ice of Great Slave Lake into its black frigid waters. But for some reason he wasn't quick enough ; he went down with his tractor.

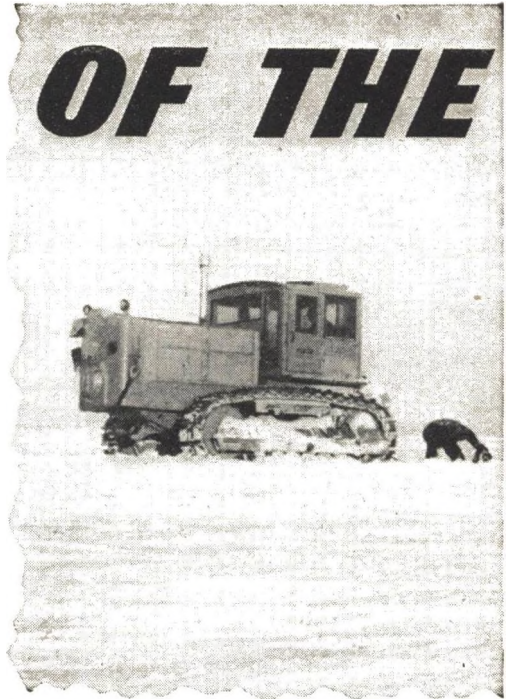
Shouts mingled with the cracking of the thick lake ice as the first and second sledges slid after the tractor. For a moment I thought the weight of tractor and sledges would pull the rest of our "train" into the water. But the train held, and so did the link between the second and third sledges—otherwise half the train would have plunged to the bottom of the lake.

Our sledge-train was heavily laden with mining gear, food and other supplies for the little town of Yellowknife. Week after week, through the bitter sub-Arctic winter, tractor-trains had rumbled across the ice of Great Slave Lake carrying tons of gear and concentrates between Yellowknife and our main supply depot 600 miles to the south, and between Yellowknife and outlying mining camps. There had been accidents, of course, for the North-west Territories are dangerous country. But this was the first time I had been in a fix like this.

I had not actually *seen* the tractor dis-



Here is one of the men who blaze tractor trails across the Frozen North, a job demanding courage, toughness and initiative.



By JAY ANDREW

appear, for I was in the sleep caboose when it happened. The first indications of the mishap were crashing sounds and a sudden jolt ; I jumped down on to the ice and peering through the driving snow I saw the two leading sledges slide from sight.

It was a nasty moment for Ted ; he hadn't been able to jump clear in time and had gone down with the vehicle. It was unpleasant for the rest of us, too ; if the ice were to give way along the length of our train, then those of us who survived the subsequent ducking would have a long walk back to Yellowknife, in clothes full of ice. We could expect severe frostbite at the very least after such an arduous trek.

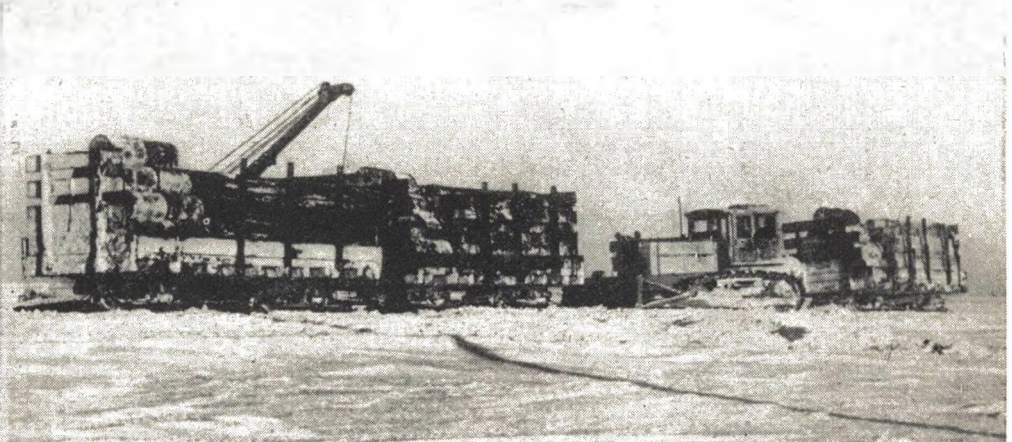
This thought flashed through my mind in a fraction of a second. Then I went into action. I leapt towards the jagged black hole through which driver, tractor and sledge had vanished.

There was no sign of Ted. "Probably got caught-up down there," I told myself. Then his head bobbed up like a helmeted cork and we were dragging him from the water.

When he had partially recovered he told us that he had tried to jump for it but his gloves had been frozen to the tractor's controls. By the time he had freed his hands he had been dragged down.

We surveyed the situation while Ted changed in the bunkhouse. It was accidents like these that made it vital for all cat-trains to carry radio. We would send an SOS for assistance, then, if the ice held, we would try to

TRACTOR TRAILS



It's one of the toughest jobs of the Northlands—and one of the most vital ; it's a job that can send a man mad, a job full of hazards and hardship and adventure. It brings men into close contact with the bitter elements of the sub-Arctic, with ravening wolves and treacherous polar bears. It is "cat-skinning"—that's what they call the work of the men who man the power-drawn sledge trains of Northern Canada and Alaska which carry essential supplies to the mining and military outposts of the Frozen North.

haul the missing part of our train, tractor and all, back on to the ice, and get going again.

Four days later we rode our train into Yellowknife. Another episode in the annals of "cat-skinning" was over, and shortly we would be off on another run, lurching and rolling and sliding behind a roaring "cat."

What is cat-skinning? The "cat" part represents the caterpillar track of the snow-tractors. But I have yet to meet a cat-skinner who knows the origin of the second word, or why a tractor-train is called a "swing."

I do know, however, that cat-trains are indispensable to the continuing life of the mining and military settlements that dot the empty tundras, frozen coasts, and sweeping valleys of Northern Canada and Alaska, covering an area two-thirds the size of the whole United States.

Dog transport—the husky and the sledge—is still widely used in the Northlands. The Eskimoes use dog-sleds for their hunting trips, missionaries use them for travelling from settlement to settlement, and members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police go out on patrol on husky-drawn sledges. But for heavy duty work dogs have been ousted by freight aircraft, river barges—and tractor-trains.

We operate our trains northwards from a

score of main bases at the railheads and road-heads. Churchill is one. It sits like a sullen squaw on the edge of Hudson Bay. This town, at the head of the Canadian National Railway line from Canada's "populated belt," serves as a supply base for the settlements that dot the icebound coast of Labrador and Northern Quebec, and their equally icy hearts.

Travel by rail to Churchill and you cannot fail to notice the piles of crates, boxes, drums, machinery and canned goods at key points. These are depots, "laid" in the summer against the day when lakes, rivers and hundreds of thousands of miles of bog freeze, and our cat-trains come into their own again.

There is a major depot at Churchill. Here the cat-skinners' conversation embraces the very stuff of the Northlands—Eskimoes and Indians, seals, caribou, occasional polar bears ; and, of course, cat-skinning!

At the main tractor-train depots in the interior, like Le Pas and Yellowknife, seals, walrus and polar bears are seldom, if ever, mentioned. Here the conversation is of prospecting for minerals, of gold and uranium mining and of the huskies that Eric Petersen has bred with wolves to produce strong sledge-dogs. But the main topic here, too, is cat-skinning.

You can hear about the miles-long walls of ice, often twenty feet high, which suddenly cackle the surface of Great Slave Lake. Caused by pressures within the ice, they can be impenetrable, and cause days-long detours.

I remember such a detour in the winter of 1954-55. A bush-plane radioed that one of these tumbled, white ice walls lay across our track. We altered course accordingly—only to find ourselves running into another one hidden in sweeping snow spume. A change of temperature produced another set of pressures in the ice, and very soon we were working a dangerous way through a maze of cracked, piled-up ice.

Each year new swing trails, or winter roads, are opened up as more constructional operations come into being. There is a new one, for example, across 500 miles of almost uninhabited muskeg, rock and frost-reddened willow-scrub to the important mining area of Uranium City.

SWING TRAIL HAZARDS

Month after month throughout the winter, the swings ply between their base and the settlements they serve, supplying Eskimos, Indians and Whites with the necessities of life and with the means of developing the industries of the Northlands. On the shoulders of the cat-skinners rests the responsibility of getting the goods through, no matter what the conditions.

Experiences on the swings of the North range from near-farce to the sort of grim catastrophe that can leave a skinner lying very still in the snow.

One of my most unpleasant and, also, most amusing experiences in the swing game was on a military construction site on Baffin Island. Baffin is mountainous, covered with icecaps, and surrounded by thousands of square miles of moving sea ice that sweeps along the rocky coast with the boom and roar of big guns. Our site consisted of a camp for the boys building a radar station, and a smaller camp on the new airstrip where the big air-freighters land the heavy gear. A winter road links the main camp with the one at the airstrip. Cat-trains use it to deliver material to the site.

The sea ice carries literally hundreds of polar bears along the coast of Baffin Island. One day there were so many bears on the airstrip that the boys there were unable to leave their huts. I was driving a cat to the landing field when I suddenly realized that the place was teeming with big white bears.

The polar bear is a treacherous animal—half-a-ton of muscle, claws like seven-inch scimitars, and a mean nature. Right then the airfield didn't seem any place for a cat-skinner. I swung the cat round in the tightest

circle I have ever made and high-tailed it away at top speed.

I had another unpleasant moment one day when a half-ton moose charged our swing. A big bull moose can have a ferocious temper. Anger him, and his eyes flare, his breath comes in grunts, and the next thing you know he's charging.

Obviously this bull didn't like the look of our cat. His eyes flared, he grunted—then he charged!

The man in the cat, Jim Bellamy, didn't know whether to stop and take cover, or stick to his controls. Ultimately, just as moose horns hit his cat, he jumped into the snow. The tractor went on unmanned. Jim ran after it, climbed into his seat—and had to jump for it a second time as the moose charged again.

We were curling up with laughter by this time, but Jim was red with anger and cussing terribly. The moose backed away and watched us as we rumbled on our way. He was clearly mystified that his charges had had no effect, even though they'd made a resounding impact.

One of the crewmen insisted that it was the funniest thing he had ever seen, but he didn't think it so funny when, later that day, he had to climb under the cat, his back on crystal ice and his ears full of blown-snow, to do a repair job.

Repairs on the trail can be tough on the temper—and on your hands if you have to take your mitts off and risk having your fingertips almost



"burned off" by the frost on the metal.

The weather can be pretty rough. Fifty below freezing point is not uncommon in the Northlands. Go up into Yukon territory and you will hear of times when the temperature has sunk to -80°F (112 degrees of frost); visit the meteorological station at Snag, just up on the Alaska border, and you will be shown official records of temperatures of -84°F and -87°F .

Strange things begin to happen long before the thermometer shows "bed rock" temperatures like these. Your breath "explodes" like minute Chinese crackers. Breathe in sharply, and the frost may nip your lungs. A finger freezes so hard that, knocked sharply, it may snap like a matchstick. The moisture on your eyeballs may freeze. A husky or moose may be almost invisible at twenty yards—shrouded in a kind of fog caused by contact between the extreme cold and the animal's natural warmth. Even metal will succumb to the cold on the swing trails.

I shall not forget the time when the cold split one of the tracks of a cat during a 600-mile return run in Yukon. We were bound for a mining camp near Keno, in the Klondike. We carried a 300-ton load of food and heavy gear, including a road grader, a big power shovel and two trucks. The weather was fine. It was intensely cold, but the sky was clear and all around us

was the stark beauty of the Northlands—snow, mountains, and the strangely iridescent colours of the sub-Arctic, especially fascinating at night when the Northern Lights sweep back and forth across the heavens.

We didn't have much feeling for beauty when the swing hit broken country and the sledges bucked almost like broncos. But there were moments when we couldn't help absorbing something of all that frozen loveliness. We could feel its vastness and it was like being in another world where the frost tingled in our noses.

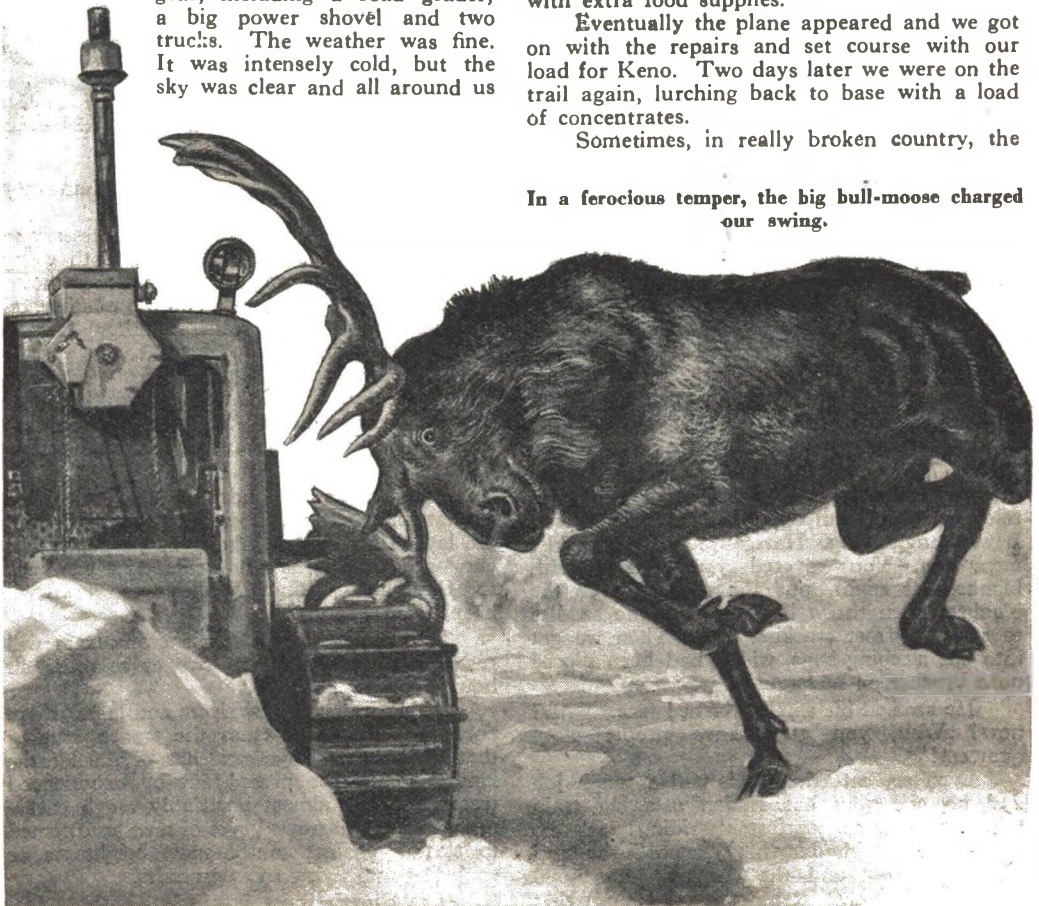
Then it happened! Weakened by frost, one of the caterpillar's tracks shattered. Then the other one broke. We came to a sudden halt, and for a few moments, until someone started swearing, you could almost *hear* the silence that always accompanies extreme cold—silence, punctuated by the occasional rifle-like crack of frost exploding the sap in the trees.

Most times we can carry out necessary repairs on the trail. But this breakdown was far too big for us to tackle. There was nothing we could do without spares, nothing except radio to Whitehorse for the necessary parts, and sit tight in the bunkhouse until a light plane came over and dropped them, together with extra food supplies.

Eventually the plane appeared and we got on with the repairs and set course with our load for Keno. Two days later we were on the trail again, lurching back to base with a load of concentrates.

Sometimes, in really broken country, the

In a ferocious temper, the big bull-moose charged our swing.





A cat-train forms up in preparation for another hazardous journey through a white wilderness.

lurching may be so bad that a newcomer to the swing-trails is "seasick." The riding is normally smooth enough when your trail is the ice of lake or river, but where it spans land—frost-hard and often rocky and furrowed—the train "buckets" like a ship. The man on the cat wedges himself back into his seat and the crew keep a watchful eye on the lashings. The off-duty men in the bunkhouse wedge themselves into their bunks or hang on to the screwed-down fittings.

But for all the discomfort, this system of transport is a vast improvement on that employed twenty years ago. I once met a chap in the Yukon who recalled those early days.

"Things have sure altered since I entered the freighting business twenty year ago!" he told me. "In them days we used pack horses. It was tough going. Horses would die of cold; men, too. You covered your horses with blankets at night, put the saddles over the blankets, then threw blankets over the saddles to stop the frost cracking 'em. Then we got into our sleeping-bags, which had been placed on a brushwood mattress."

He stroked his small, wizened face. "And now? Well, you guys have proper sleep quarters!"

Even so, cat-skinning is still a tough job and no one who has ridden a swing train will agree that it's comfortable riding! It's the roughest ride in the North. What with the hard work, the cold and the dangers, the 5-600 dollars a month (£50 a week, all-found) that

the cat-skinners earn is no more than they deserve.

Nearly two feet of solid ice is necessary to support a heavy swing. Given smooth going it may reach an average of four miles an hour. Speed depends on your load, on the weather, on the terrain—and on several other factors. Breakdowns knock the edge off top speeds. Lashing may work loose and necessitate a stop. Your swing can be held up by migrating caribou, or because the strain of constant battling against the North has affected the mind of one of the crew.

I remember the time we had to lash down a crew man because he went out of his mind. He lay on his bunk straining at his bonds and cursing during the last few miles of a run back to Churchill. Ultimately he was flown to hospital in Montreal.

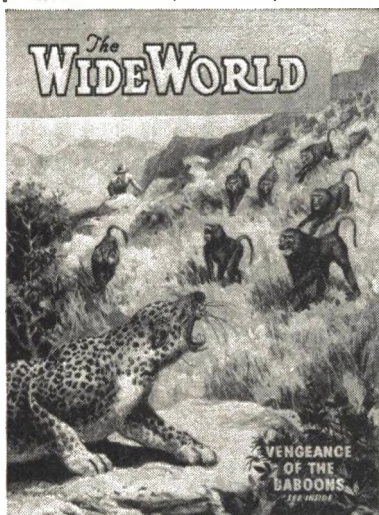
With hold-ups like this a swing-train will rarely average more than two or so miles an hour.

Swing routes follow rivers and lakes where possible; they also cross the frozen muskeg that covers such huge stretches of the Northlands. They are picked out by experienced tractor drivers, almost invariably tough customers with the narrowed eyes of men accustomed to staring against sun-on-snow brightness or squinting into flying snow granules.

The chosen route is marked with a dye,

DEATH CLOSES IN . . .

as animal cunning and ferocity are unleashed in



VENGEANCE OF THE BABOONS—a gripping tale of merciless savagery, featured in the August number of WIDE WORLD. Other true stories of thrilling adventure include:—

MIYAZAKI AND THE TOFFEE APPLE—a prisoner-of-war story that is dynamic and different, and throws a new light on Oriental character.

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specially designed for the purpose, that will seep upwards through new falls of snow and won't blow away in the tearing winds that sweep the North. These dye marks show the approved routes for the coming season's work.

The longest single winter road was the one from Hay River northwards through Yellowknife, across Great Slave Lake, past the uranium mine there, through Norman to Aklavik. I say "was" the longest, because engineers have started to build a 600-mile highway from Edmonton to Yellowknife and when that is completed trucks will take over from swings on this particular route. Even so, swings will operate from the new highway to the camps on either side of it.

There is a common bond between the men of the cat trains. One crew will turn out in a blizzard to help another crew out of difficulties. Crews erect crossed evergreen branches at the approaches to boggy ground, and on dangerous ice, to warn other crews. For in the North men must hang together or perish; they are continually pitting themselves against rough terrain, risking death by starvation, attack by wild animals—bears, wolves, moose—and braving the bitter cold or angry storms.

The need to hang together was demonstrated when a blizzard hit the swing which Jay Peters was driving in the North-west Territories. The engine seized up. "That's all right," the crew said. "We'll radio Yellowknife." But the radio was dead. The temperature dropped to -50°F . (82 degrees of frost) and when the mercury began to rise a storm broke. For days the wind roared, and the men, one of whom was frostbitten, huddled in their caboose, while wolves prowled around out of rifle range.

Then, from out of sweeping, eye-high sheets of snow granules, loomed another cat-

train, whose crew quickly came to the rescue of the marooned men.

Wolves are common enough in some parts of the Canadian North and Alaska and they can be a frightening sight to marooned men. The packs won't necessarily attack a man, but they can certainly make him feel uneasy. And if wolves don't often attack, bears do. I heard about the danger of bears from a tough, blue-eyed trucker named Bob Leschard. He told me: "We were marooned on the Canol Road. A bear killed our cook—split his head open with one blow. Another fellow was crushed when a bear he had shot and fatally wounded fell on

him. Its weight was more than he thought.

"The rest of us sheltered in a cabin while a blizzard raged outside. Our food began to run short. Then a guy named Pearce went out to shoot some meat. He was lucky. He returned to lead a butchering party to the carcass. But when they got there they found a number of grizzlies already doing the butchering. Lined up at a respectful distance was a circle of wolves.

"Those fellows thought better than to start any trouble," Leschard said. "They left the meat to the bears, returned to the cabin and waited until the storm let up enough for us to get going again."

PRISONERS OF STORM

They waited for nearly a month, their rations steadily dwindling and the cold getting a grip in their blood before they were able to carry on.

Since the war, cat-trains have operated not only in the Far North but in the Far South. During the International Geophysical Year the Americans, Russians, British, French and several other nations, will be running caterpillars across the snowy wastes of the Antarctic.

Meanwhile, as long as winter frost lasts, the cat-skinners will be manning the swing trains of the Far North. Each one of them says the same thing at least once between October and Spring: "This is sure my last winter freightin'."

As he rides along on the swaying train he curses the lurching, the cold, the hard work and spits to emphasise his words. But as likely as not he'll be back in the cupped seat of a £3,000 cat, or working on the freight sledges, the following fall. Why? "Well, the dough's good—and, oh, I guess cat-skinning kinda gets into a guy's blood!"

The dramatic adventure of five white men who, while making a documentary film, found themselves in the territory of the savage Arusi tribesmen who had a reputation for ruthless killing and wanton pillaging. When they stumbled upon a secret snake temple high in the mountains, the expedition were certain targets for the wrathful vengeance of its guardians.

The Temple

WE needed no further warning that we were in Arusi territory. A ramshackle truck stood at one side of the track; on the other, the mutilated body of the Amhara driver lay in a contorted, rigid heap. The man had been speared more than a dozen times.

"There are many ways of dying," murmured Paul Baros, the expedition's cameraman, "and that must be one of the most horrible."

"An ambush," said grey-haired anthropologist, Robert Worth.

I nodded, "Arusi—that's their trademark."

"Pleasant folk," said Worth. "Let's get out of here. It doesn't seem a very healthy spot."

We piled back into the jeeps and our small convoy continued its jolting progress along the rutted track.

We were less than a dozen miles from Lake Zwal in central Ethiopia. Less than a fortnight previously our small team—consisting of two American scientists, a cameraman, and myself, acting as script writer for the documentary films we were making in Ethiopia—had made a hurried departure from the notorious Danakil Desert country, after a brush with Arab slavers. We were now planning to work among the Arusi people, whose reputation was hardly better than that of the murderous Danakils.

The track grew rougher and I could see our four Galla helpers peering anxiously from the jeeps, wary of every rock and patch of undergrowth that might be a site for sudden ambush. Sometimes the rocks we passed were upright stone slabs, memorials surmounting the burial places of Arusi chiefs. The tablets had Indian-type designs carved upon them and many were centuries old.

It was late in the afternoon when we reached our objective for that day—the square,

austere stone house that was the home of Peter Bjorge.

Bjorge, a tall and wiry Scandinavian, aged about forty, was outside his fortress-like dwelling waiting to greet us. His lean face crinkled into a grin of pleasure when he saw that there were white men in the jeeps.

In a flurry of introductions we discovered that Bjorge spoke excellent English and was delighted at the prospect of having us as his guests for the night.

We had heard about Bjorge in Aselle, the last township of any size through which we had passed. In the rush of conversation which now flooded from him, the invariable symptom of a man who has been long without the company of his own kind, he filled the gaps in our knowledge of his history.

He had arrived in Ethiopia soon after the liberation and had joined the new police service. After nearly six years of this he decided he wanted something a little more lucrative, so he set himself up as a trader and made the Arusi country his headquarters. This area, because of its unpleasant reputation, was wide



Of Snakes

open for such an enterprise as his, and he had obviously been successful. He had designed his house and had built it with the help of a few native craftsmen from Aselle.

"You've certainly carved yourself a comfortable little home down here," said Bob Worth, appraising the attractive, well-furnished room, which contrasted with the cold, rather forbidding exterior.

Paul Baros asked, "How come you have no thatched roof like the other places around here? I always thought they were the coolest in this kind of climate."

Bjorge smiled drily. "Cool when the sun is on them, yes," he said, "but they can be awfully warm when the *shiftas* attack. Those gentlemen have an unpleasant habit of visiting you in the night, setting fire to the admir-

able thatched roof, and then sitting on their haunches and waiting for you to choose between roasting to death inside or being skewered by spears outside."

He jerked his head towards the gun-rack against the wall.

"No, I prefer to have a non-inflammable roof and to let my rifle do any talking that is necessary with those trouble-making *shiftas*," he remarked.

I told Bjorge of the murdered lorry driver we had seen on the track.

"That makes three in as many weeks," observed Bjorge. "They are crazy to travel alone in this kind of country."

Bill Fallon, a lean and bespectacled botanist, twenty-three and the youngest member of our team, wanted to know more about the *shifita* bandits. So, in fact, did all of us. We had always thought that the bandit gangs of Ethiopia were small, highly mobile units composed of a variety of criminals. But those which Bjorge talked about seemed large, menacing groups, who virtually controlled the countryside.

"They aren't just gangs of bandits," replied Bjorge. "Unless you can call a whole tribe a bandit gang. The Arusi people have never been renowned for their impeccable manners; they are probably no worse than they have ever been, but that's quite bad enough."

"What about their domestic life?" asked

Paul made the mistake of touching the girl's bare, brown arm.





The author thought these Danakil tribesmen were fierce—until he met the Arusis.

Worth. "Anything you can tell us about it?"

Bjorge shook his head. "I only see them when they want to trade," he said. "Most of them seem to have a couple of wives and they call themselves Moslems, but from what I know I'd say they were an evil lot of pagans."

"Why?" asked Worth.

"There is some queer kind of snake worship going on among them. I don't know exactly what it is, but I do know that people who worship snakes need watching with a careful eye."

I could see that Worth, whose special studies lay in this direction, was quietly excited on hearing about the snake worship. He shot more questions at Bjorge, but the trader's knowledge of Arusi religious secrets was obviously limited. All he could say was that he had heard there was some kind of sacred character about the mountain which stood out in the range we could see from his windows. He had never been there, for he didn't go out of his way to look for trouble, there was enough as it was.

SEARCH FOR ARUSIS

The following morning, leaving most of our heavy equipment with Bjorge, we went in search of an Arusi encampment. We took with us one of the trader's Galla servants to act as interpreter. He was easily the least enthusiastic colleague we ever had.

We found some Arusi less than half-a-dozen miles away, near the hills. There were fourteen or fifteen families and a large herd of cattle. These were the nomad Arusi who wandered over a vast region of Southern Ethiopia. They were a lean, dark-skinned folk, yet there was nothing negroid about them; their features were delicate and their bodies slender and lithe. They watched in silence as we drove into their camp, revealing nothing

more aggressive than an occasional surly look. All the men were armed with either spears or knives.

Some of the women were exquisite creatures, their graceful necks hung with heavy beads and their slim and supple figures clad in animal skins.

Paul Baros, the photographer, waited with me beside our vehicle while Bob Worth, Fallon and the nervous native

interpreter went across to the nearest group to "break the ice."

We saw one Arusi make an angry, sweeping gesture with his hand, turn his back on the intruders and stride away. But there were three or four other men who seemed inclined to listen to what Worth had to say through the interpreter.

PERILOUS ERROR

The interview lasted a quarter of an hour. When he returned to us Worth said to Baros:

"Sorry, Paul, there aren't going to be any pictures. They didn't take to the idea and began to get excited. Maybe we should try and find another camp, these people are not very co-operative."

"Wait a moment," said Baros quietly.

While Worth had been speaking, Baros had slipped his reflex camera out of its case. He swung it nonchalantly towards two Arusi girls who had come quite close to the jeep, their eyes full of curiosity. Paul got his pictures—but he wasn't satisfied. While the rest of us piled back into the jeeps, he strolled up to the two girls. They seemed undecided whether to run away or giggle. Paul was trying to tell them something in a pantomime of sign language.

Then he made the mistake of putting his hand upon one of the girl's bare, brown arms. From the corner of my eye I saw Worth slip his Luger out of its holster just as I reached down between the seats for the rifle which lay there. Our movements had been dictated by the approach of at least half-a-dozen Arusi tribesmen who were closing in on Baros. There could be no mistaking their intentions. The curved blades of knives and spears glinted like glass in the white sun.

Baros dropped his hand from the girl's arm as if it had burnt him and backed slowly

towards us, gripping his camera as though it were a weapon. He had ten yards to go. Fallon had already started the engine when one of the Arusi broke into a run—a run which could have been a death charge!

Worth, one of the coolest and most accurate pistol shots I had ever seen, almost casually drew a pattern of slugs in front of the advancing man's bare feet. The Arusi stopped, looked at the little puffs of dust rising a few inches from his legs, and then stood in front of the rest of the tribesmen and watched us with hatred contorting his thin face. Baros leapt into the truck and we drove off hurriedly.

Paul handed me his camera to hold as he wiped the streaming sweat from his face. Worth was angry. "Why the devil did you have to do a thing like that?" he asked bitterly. "Do you want your throat cut—and ours, too?"

"I only tried to trade her for the bracelet she was wearing," retorted Baros indignantly. "It looked some kind of antique silver to me."

Bob Worth grunted his disbelief; but something occurred that night to give Paul the benefit of our doubt and to set our expedition on a fascinating, but sinister trail.

We were having supper with Bjorge when Paul, who had been working in his makeshift dark room, joined us. Baros eased himself into his chair with the satisfied air of a burglar about to pass a stiff sentence on a judge. He tossed a photographic print across to Bob Worth.

"Notice anything?"

Worth looked at it and said, "I am not likely to forget that Arusi wench, if that's what you mean."

"That is not what I mean, at all," said Paul. "Take a look at the jewellery she's wearing."

I looked over Worth's shoulder at the photograph. Paul was right. She had been wearing an interesting-looking bracelet.

Worth took out a small magnifying glass and inspected the print closely.

"You know what this is?" he asked quickly. Paul nodded, and Worth passed the print and the magnifier to me. "Look at that bracelet," he said.

Even in the photograph the artistry and beauty of the ornament was striking. But its shape was even more so. It was in the form of a double-headed snake wrapped around the slim, dark arm of the girl.

"You know, this ties in somewhere with

what you were saying yesterday, Bjorge," Worth told the trader. "When I was talking to those Arusi boys this morning, I thought for a moment I was getting somewhere. But then I questioned them about snakes and snake gods—and they clamped down immediately. They just didn't want us around after that."

Fallon slapped his hand upon the table. "Say, do you suppose those Arusis got sore because you had your hand on that silver snake, and not because you were touching the girl?"

"You may be right there," exclaimed Worth. "It's certainly an interesting thought."

"I hope you haven't upset those people too much," remarked Bjorge, "I don't particularly want them to pay me a visit."

"I don't think so," said Faros. "After all, we didn't do them any real harm."

"You were telling me about this snake worship yesterday," Worth said to Bjorge. "What else do you know?"

"Nothing," the trader said. "But perhaps one of my boys could help; he is a Galla, but he's been around this country for a long while."

He left the room and a few moments later returned leading a big-boned Galla with cheerful features.

When Worth started to question him about the snake cult his features became considerably less cheerful.

Eventually, after some stern prompting from Bjorge, the Galla mumbled some useful, though meagre, details.

It seemed that on a mountain which lay beyond the camp we had visited that morning, there was a *hujuba*, a sacred grove of junipers. All the Arusi in the district went on periodic pilgrimages to the mountain where they made sacrifices and prayed for prosperity. In the middle of the juniper grove was a sacred spring, and it was the spirit of the spring that the Arusi worshipped.

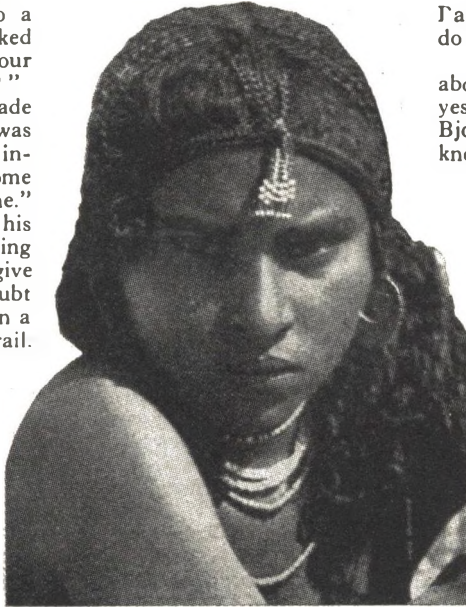
"What is this spirit?" asked Worth.

The Galla gazed uneasily at Bjorge, but he found no comfort there. After a pause he whispered, "It is the soul of a snake."

There was little more the man knew, except that there was also a wishing-cave in the grove, from which the Arusi collected a type of grass that was supposed to make their wishes come true.

After the Galla had been dismissed, Worth was on the point of speaking when Bjorge raised his hand to silence him.

"Before you say anything," said Bjorge,



The Arusi warriors' ferocity was as impressive as the beauty of their womenfolk.

"let me tell you that I know what is in your minds, and let me appeal to you to stay away from that place. You have already seen a little of the character of the Arusi. In any case, is it wise to meddle with something which perhaps even the wisest men in the world do not understand?"

But Bjorge spoke in vain. Our curiosity was fully aroused.

Soon after dawn the next morning we were on our way. We kept a keen look out when we reached the vicinity of the Arusi camp, but the nomads had moved on and there was not a tent or goat to be seen.

Four or five miles beyond where they had camped we abandoned the jeep and began the long trek up the lower slopes of the mountain which we believed held the secret of the snake-cult.

At first the trees were sparse, but soon we found ourselves searching for narrow tracks through dense rain forest. The overgrown paths led through a sinister woodland world that was silent except for the sound of tumbling streams.

It was nearly mid-day when the thick jungle suddenly ended and a totally new and contrasting vista confronted us. A carpet of heaths and flowers, vivid anemones and orchids, was spread above the limit of the forest. Half-a-dozen antelope bounded away over a crest.

We veered around to the east of the mountain, vainly wishing that the Galla's directions had been less vague. By the middle of the afternoon we appeared to be little more than half-way up the mountain and it was becoming increasingly obvious that we would have to spend the night somewhere on the higher slopes.

SEARCH BY MOONLIGHT

"It only needs a good, solid mist to fall and we really would be singing," remarked Bill Fallon.

"We'll continue for another hour and then make camp," said Worth.

It seemed at least three hours later when, exhausted and breathing heavily, we sank upon the heather under a rocky spur. A few trees formed a windbreak. We made a make-shift camp, emptying our light ruck-sacks of what little food we had brought with us.

The night was cold but we all felt better after we had eaten, seated around a blazing fire of dead wood. Worth used the firelight to complete his notes of the day's expedition, while the rest of us sat back, smoked, and yarned.

Bill Fallon asked, "Who's for a last leg-stretcher before turning in?" The response was a unanimous groan. He flicked his toe into my ribs.

"Come on. It'll do you good—ease your stiffness."

"Ten minutes," I said, knocking out my pipe. "Ten minutes and that's all."

The light of the moon enabled us to see our way with ease. The night was completely

silent except for the cries of the animals in the forest below us.

I looked at my watch. "That's my ten minutes, Bill."

"Aw, come on—just as far as those trees."

We had already walked over the sloping breast of the mountain and could no longer see the glow of the camp fire. The trees at which Fallon was pointing were a dark clump, some two or three hundred yards ahead and slightly below us.

We had almost reached them when we felt our feet treading some kind of path, probably an animal track leading to a watering place. Following the track we reached the edge of the trees. Fallon showed no sign of turning around and I continued to follow him with increasing reluctance.

THE SACRED GROVE

"I'm going back, Bill," I said at last.

"Just a few more yards," he pleaded, "I reckon this track must lead somewhere."

I was about to say sharply that the "somewhere" was probably at the bottom of the mountain when Bill suddenly stopped and beckoned me to him. We had reached the edge of a clearing and from somewhere ahead I heard the sound of water.

"Say, what were those trees back there?" he asked softly.

"Junipers," I said. Then I saw what he was getting at. This was probably the *hujuba*, the sacred grove we had been seeking.

I needed no urging now. I followed Fallon along the track. The ground was broken, and rock outcrops jutted up like huge, petrified animals.

"The pool; the miraculous spring!" said Fallon, pointing to a dark wall of rock from which a glittering, sinuous stream of water tumbled into a tiny pool.

"Well, what do you know! We've camped almost on top of it without knowing," said Fallon.

We walked around the rock and the moonlight revealed the low entrance to a cave on the western side. The Wishing Cave! It was too dark to enter and we had no torch with us. Nearby was a small building of rough stones. It had a heavy wooden door but no windows. I had my hand on the door when I heard something in the shadows behind us. Fallon heard it, too; he crouched low and ran in the opposite direction, into the trees. I stood waiting, my heart beating like a native drum. My only weapon was a penknife with a two-inch blade.

I heard the noise again, much closer now. I strained my eyes to peer into the shadows.

Suddenly there was a scuffle. I heard a cry, a choking gasp. Then Fallon stumbled out of the shadows, heaving something along. He had worked his way around in a half-circle to come up behind whatever it was that had been stalking us.

He had his arm wrapped tightly around

the throat of a small, thin man. As they half fell into the moonlight I heard Fallon say:

"Why, it's only an old guy."

He released his prisoner. The man was very old and fragile. He stood, gasping wheezily and feeling his bruised throat.

"The Imam, I imagine," I said, with relief.

"The who?"

"The Imam—the Arusi holy man who looks after the *hujuba* and officiates at the sacrifices."

I walked closer and looked into the snake priest's face. His eyes seared mine with such

an expression of hate that I almost stepped back from the impact.

"We'll have to get the others," I said.

"We can't let this character run around loose or we'll have a raiding party up here cutting our throats before we know it."

"You hang on to him, then, and I'll fetch Bob and Paul," said Fallon.

I took the withered old Arusi by the arm and made him sit in front of me on a low rock. Fallon walked quickly across the clearing and as he passed the stone hut I saw him pause, then push open the door.

"Can't see a thing," he called to me. "I guess it's the old man's bunkhouse."

I looked at the Imam. His eyes were on the hut and his face was taut and tense. I jerked around and cried out to Fallon, but the warning was too late.

Fallon was already inside; I heard the thud of a fall and a high pitched, shrill cry, like the cry of a child in deadly terror.

I gripped the Arusi by the wrist and dragged him after me. The door of the hut was still open. Inside it was as black as pitch.

"Fallon! You all right, Fallon?"

"I guess—I guess so." Relief swept over me as I heard the shaky, hesitant voice.

"For heaven's sake don't step inside that door!" he cried.

I stood in the doorway, trying to strike a match and keep my grip on the Imam at the same time. A light spluttered. I saw then that my foot was on the edge of a steep drop. The "hut" had no floor; its walls had been built around a pit.

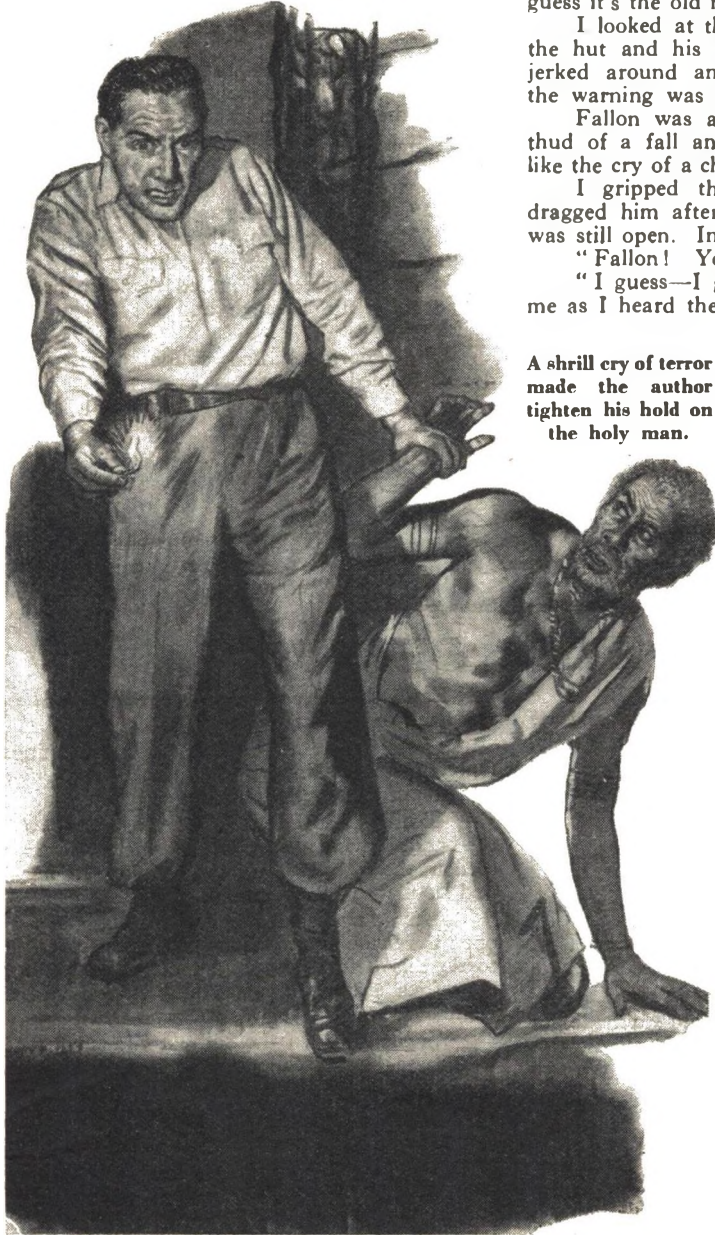
There was a movement down to my left. It was Fallon, and I saw that he was covered in blood! He found a short timber ladder leaning against the wall of the pit and climbed up to the doorway. He was bruised and shaken but the blood soaking into his skin and clothes wasn't his.

"I held hands with something very dead down there—and I didn't enjoy it a bit," he said grimly.

"Get Worth," I told him, "and a torch. I'll keep close to Mr. Shangri La here."

They were back in less than fifteen minutes—Fallon, Worth and Baros, with lights and guns.

As we stood in the doorway of the hut again the torch lit up the crude



A shrill cry of terror made the author tighten his hold on the holy man.

carvings on each of the wooden posts. They were of double-headed snakes.

The beam of light played into the pit. There was a stone slab in the centre and upon it lay a dead goat. Its throat had been cut. Dark blood seeped from an overturned wooden bowl beside the body.

"The sacrifice," murmured Worth.

"That's what I must have been sitting on," Fallon said. "But look there on each side of the goat!"

The dead animal was lying between two outstretched snakes. At first glance they seemed to lie there as if dazzled by the light, but they were quite dead.

"Some part of the sacrificial ritual," said Worth. "But let's get out of this place—I can't stand the smell."

"As I see it," he continued, when we were out in the fresh air again, "that girl with the bracelet was something to do with this old pagan, maybe his daughter. Do you fellows realize that we've just been in a real snake worship temple? What a stroke of luck! We are probably the first white men ever to have seen or been inside one of these places."

"You're welcome," said Bill Fallon, feelingly. "I reckon I prefer the wide open spaces."

Soon after noon on the following day we made our way back to base, jubilant at our discovery. Our elation was short-lived.

We stood silently with Bjorge as he kicked a piece of charred timber—all that remained of the table around which we had dined not so many hours before.

The ashes of Bjorge's home still smouldered; only the blackened, forbidding walls remained.

The Arusi had attacked while we had been on the sacred mountain and while Bjorge had been visiting a village ten miles away. They had speared his Galla boys and thrown them, dying, into the blaze.

When we left Bjorge on our journey south we were silently, guiltily, telling ourselves that we had brought destruction to the trader's wilderness home.

A month later, as we returned north, we saw the gutted ruins once again. But there was another house going up only a few yards away, and Bjorge's smile of welcome was as huge and warm as ever.

As we were passing in through the new doorway, Worth suddenly stopped and stared.

"You have seen those before, eh?" laughed Bjorge. "I thought they'd look good in my new house, so I pulled them up before I had my little revenge and set fire to the snake temple."

The doorposts had crude carvings of double-headed snakes.

L. M.



RED EYES OF EVIL

(Continued from page 141.)

its own anger. Finally it capitulated and we hauled it into the boat and trussed it firmly. The rope was in such a tangle we doubted whether we would ever be able to get it right again. My jacket was hopelessly entangled in it.

But we had the crocodile!

I put my gun to the top of the reptile's head and shot it through the brain.

We panted and sweated, thanking our lucky stars that we were comparatively unscathed. We stood and looked down at the loathsome reptile. It gave a final convulsive shudder and lay still.

Through the pitch black night we made our way homewards, still swinging the light, this time watching for that mother hippo. We saw two or three hippos bobbing up and down in the centre of the river but they were all well clear of the boat.

It was one o'clock when we arrived in our own stretch of water. Tim was shivering in his saturated clothes and we were all thankful to get into bed.

Early the next morning we went down to the boat to inspect our kill.

There were four boys to do the skinning. Only the belly skin, which is worth about one pound per foot, was taken.

Gleefully the boys heaved the monster up the bank. It was, they said, the biggest they had seen in those waters. They laid it on its back, and its mouth fell open in a vile grin.

After they had skinned it I asked them to open the brute's stomach. I had never troubled to do this before, but I had often heard that crocodiles swallow pebbles and stones, and I wanted to see if this was so.

As the boys slit the belly, a vile smell rose up. The boys recoiled, their eyes wide with horror.

Amid the stones and undigested vegetation were the pathetic remains of a native piccaninn. The little bones were bare, and among them lay one tiny native shoe, a poignant and terrible reminder of the danger of paddling on the banks of the beautiful but treacherous Zambezi.

MURDERERS IN MY KITCHEN

Each of the two men working for me in the isolation of the jungle was a convicted murderer. And when they stood before me, one of them holding a butcher's knife and the other dangling an axe, I thought my worst fears were about to be realized, writes the author, who recounts here a dramatic experience with an unexpected ending.

By **SCOTT LAROYAN**

DESPITE the fact that South America is now the escapists' pipe-dream, is fast displacing Africa as the explorers' and honeymooners' crock o' gold, and that Rio and Caracas possess more glitter than Casablanca and Ophir ever saw, there are still some places there where a tourist is a rare bird.

Maybe that is why they still make a stranger so welcome in Ecuador, especially in Quito where I had arrived as a kind of advance party for the botanical and zoological expedition which would be flying in from San Francisco a month later.

It was in Quito—town of church-bells, poster-colour houses and chaperons—that I met philanthropist Señor Manuel Velazco. He went out of his way to be helpful, and I was especially grateful for his aid in rounding up some local additions to the expedition. I had told him of our need for a cook and a general handyman, who could speak a little English, to assist in our base camp to be sited up the Rio Negro.

On my last night in Quito before leaving for the edge of the jungle, I was invited to dinner by Señor Juan Alvarez, another Quito resident of influential family, who had taken an active interest in the plans of the expedition.

"You have found, so far, that your affairs in Quito have run smoothly, Señor Laroyan?" he inquired politely as we took our coffee.

"Indeed they have—thanks to you, and gentlemen like you, who have been so ready to help and advise. My big headache of employing suitable labour—we needed two men—was solved yesterday by Señor Manuel Velazco. He has found me two people whom he assures me will fit the bill."

"Ah, yes," remarked Alvarez, softly. "It

was upon that matter that I wished to speak with you."

"Yes?"

"Señor Velazco is a very well-meaning—indeed, a very good—man. He has many saintly qualities which I admire and respect, but. . . ."

He hesitated a moment, while I wondered what he was leading up to.

"I feel it to be my duty to ask you, Señor," he continued, "whether you know anything of the history or character of the two men who are now in your employ?"

"Well, no, not exactly. I decided that Señor Velazco's recommendation would be sufficient and. . . ."

"Ah!" he interrupted, leaning over towards me, "that is the point. I do not suppose you are aware, either, of one of the main spheres in which Señor Velazco does his excellent social work?"

"No," I said, puzzled.

"Señor Velazco," he went on, "is deeply interested in the welfare of criminals who have been discharged from our prisons after serving their sentences."

He paused deliberately and with a hint of subdued drama.

"Oh, I see!" I said. "You mean that the men he has found for me are probably ex-convicts? That may be so, but I am sure Señor Velazco has the fullest confidence in them, or he would not have recommended them. For my part, I've no objection to employing an ex-pickpocket or embezzler, either reformed or semi-reformed, as long as they work and do as they are told."

"Quite," murmured Alvarez, "but these men are in rather a different category."

"How?" I asked.

"They are murderers."

"Murderers?" I exclaimed, incredulously.

"Murderers, Señor," he repeated. "One has served a life sentence here in Quito—that is sixteen years; we have no death penalty here as you know. The other, who was too bad for the prison here, served fourteen years in the Galapagos prison settlement. They both have been released during the past month. I learnt of the matter only to-day, otherwise I naturally would have spoken to you of it earlier."

I left early and went straight to the home of "dogooder" Manuel Velazco. I would have a thing or two to say to that *caballero*, I told myself. As if having to set up camp practically next door to jungle headhunters wasn't enough—this Velazco character had decided to add to the spice and uncertainty of life by planting two killers in my kitchen!

However, the calm, urbane manner in which he received me and blandly admitted the records of his protégés put me out of my stride.

"Well, Señor Velazco," I remonstrated, "you will, I am sure, understand my uneasiness at the prospect of spending the next few weeks in an isolated place with two murderers as my only companions."

"There is much difference between a murder in Europe and a murder here in this country," he explained.

"Indeed?"

"In your country murder usually is premeditated, committed in cold blood and intellectualized. Here, it is an act of the moment, springing from the hot blood of our race, a demonstration of strong emotion only. One must try to understand, and treat the repentant offenders as rather impetuous children—for that is what they are. I assure you there is no real harm in either of these men."

DRUNKEN KILLER

His explanation did not make me feel any easier, and I asked: "Who were these men's victims? Their wives or sweethearts?"

Velazco shook his head. "No," he said. "Lopez killed another man in a brawl; I am afraid he was drunk at the time. Anselmo had a dispute with a man over money, with fatal consequences."

"What sort of dispute? Who was the man?" I asked.

"The dispute was over wages; the man was his employer," said Velazco. "The victim was known to be occasionally dishonest with his workers."

Velazco returned my reproachful gaze without embarrassment.

"You will find them both excellent workers, and it is so very difficult to find suitable men who can also speak English as they do," he declared, confidently.

Unfortunately there was some truth in

what he said, and, as arrangements had been made for me to leave Quito in the morning, there was no time left for me to go bargain-hunting on the labour market.

"I seem to have no alternative to taking these men of yours," I said, resignedly. "I only hope that they are as harmless and as full of child-like innocence and simplicity as you have suggested."

Early next morning when the truck arrived to pick me up at my hotel, I found the two killers standing self-consciously beside it.

Lopez was a neatly dressed and lean man of about thirty-five. Two thin scars criss-crossed his not-unpleasant face.



Anselmo, the one who had served his sentence in the Galapagos settlement for dangerous criminals, was a few years older, shorter and more thickly set. Powerful shoulders, a bull-neck and enormous, muscular hands gave him a formidable appearance.

I looked the men over and decided that they were just as I had expected, perhaps a little worse. At the last moment, I was almost tempted to find some excuse, send them home and postpone the journey; but I didn't.

Not feeling too happy, I climbed into the vehicle and it swung out into the street.

I saw little of my two men, who rode in the back of the truck, until we reached the Rio Negro. There, horses and a team of pack-mules were waiting to take us on to the site of the base camp on the edge of the Oriente jungles.

I had to admit that Lopez and Anselmo gave no cause for complaint in the way they settled down to work. Both men were obviously eager to give a good impression of their abilities.

But I was keeping my eyes open; they soon would be having me very much to themselves, and I wasn't taking any risks. My gun-belt never left my waist, except when I slept, and then it lay beside my pillow.

Lopez, I discovered, was the spokesman both for himself and Anselmo. The latter probably had as much intelligence, but talking appeared to cause him more of an effort than it did the facile-tongued Lopez who was the



His knife was close to the man's stomach as Lopez disarmed the stranger.

and a bottle rolled on to the floor and broke. He looked up and saw that I was watching. For a moment I thought he was going to cry; then his entire expression and bearing changed suddenly. He stared back at me with an insolently defiant glint in his dark eyes, challenging me to strike him, as would have happened had I been a plantation manager.

"Sweep it up," I ordered, quietly. "Broken glass will hurt somebody; and try to remember that you'll need those bottles if you get sick."

He did as he was told, but I was uncertain whether my prestige had suffered by administering such a casual rebuke. He had obviously expected something stronger.

When he was serving dinner on the rough trestle table that night, Lopez said: "We are not far from a prison camp, which has been built in the jungle to accommodate very dangerous criminals, Señor."

"Indeed?"

"Sometimes desperate men escape from there, Señor. It would not be pleasant to meet them, and they might be attracted here by your money and valuable possessions. But Anselmo and I will guard the *hacienda*, and you, Señor, from these miserable people. Perhaps it is possible for us to be given rifles or pistols to enable us to guard you properly."

The man was oblivious to the irony of the use of the description "dangerous criminals."

"It is not possible," I replied, and then lied: "The weapons are in the steel cases, the keys of which I do not possess."

"That is unfortunate, Señor. Let us hope that there will be no need for them," he commented.

Later, when I walked past the kitchen, Lopez and Anselmo were deep in conference. They stopped talking immediately they saw me approach, and busied themselves in something or other. I uneasily wondered what was brewing.

That night not only was my revolver near my pillow, but the safety catch was thrown back—just in case it was needed in a hurry.

The next four days went by without

fixer, politician and super-salesman of the unholy alliance.

Both, I felt certain, would prove equally dangerous if crossed, and if Lopez lacked the physical strength of Anselmo, he could well make up for it in speed of action and strategy.

We arrived at the jungle *hacienda*, which had been loaned to the expedition, without incident. This dwelling with the grandiose name was little more than a large hut, used by its planter-owner as an overnight shelter when on his way from one part of his estates to another.

The building was in the centre of a fenced field which I used to accommodate the horses and mules. Beyond the fences on three sides rose the sombre, shiny-green jungle.

That night, I lay alone in the dank-smelling hut, listening to the conversation of the mule drivers and my ex-convict companions, and tensing involuntarily at any particularly piercing cry in the chorus of shrieks and humming which came from the jungle.

The mule drivers departed the next morning, leaving behind only a few animals for the use of the expedition. I was alone with my two helpers.

I worked them hard during the day, cleaning up the place and storing the equipment. Lopez, who was employed as cook, busied himself around the open-air kitchen and produced some surprisingly pleasant food.

Anselmo moved cases of heavy equipment as if they were filled with goose-down. Once he knocked over a canister of medical stores,

incident. A darkroom was erected for the use of the expedition's photographer, and the equipment needed for the first push into the jungle was placed on one side in readiness.

The two men worked consistently well, and I almost began to forget their background.

On the afternoon of the fifth day, I caught sight of Lopez talking to an Indian some distance beyond the *hacienda* fence. A few hours later I saw Anselmo and Lopez in energetic discussion over some matter. Again they stopped immediately on seeing me. I didn't think much of the incidents until it was almost time for our meal that night.

There was no meal forthcoming, neither was anyone at work in the kitchen. With a slight, unreasoning, but definite chill running through my being, I suddenly realized that I was quite alone.

PREMONITION OF PERIL

I shouted for Lopez and Anselmo, but no reply came above the murmurings and screeches from the dark jungle, which coiled around me in its breathless, squirming malevolence.

I tried to shake off the feeling of impending danger and made myself some coffee. I sat among the pots and pans of the kitchen and cursed myself for allowing my better judgment to be overruled by Velazco.

I was half-way through my second cup of coffee when I realized, with a start, that I was no longer alone.

Two strangers had very silently approached until they stood less than six feet from me, watching me drink my coffee.

Both had lank, greasy, black hair and one had an unkempt beard. Their clothes were dirty and ragged and I could smell the dirt and sweat from where I sat.

Plantation workers? Mule drivers? Convicts escaped from the jungle prison? My brain struggled to find the right answer.

The taller of the two carried a rifle. I noticed that it had a split stock, but I could not gamble on the weapon being unserviceable.

"What is it you want?" I asked, remaining seated. I knew that if it came to a struggle they could be upon me before I had time to free my revolver from its holster.

"We are hungry, Señor," said the smaller man, in a soothing, cajoling tone.

And then I saw that there were four of them, not two.

A few feet behind the strangers stood Lopez, smiling pleasantly and casually balancing a long butcher's knife in his hand. Anselmo was beside him, the haft of the heavy felling axe dangling between thick thumb and finger.

This, then, I told myself bitterly, was the logical result of my own negligence and weakness. This, too, would probably be the final mistake I would ever have the opportunity of making.

"There is food here, as you well know," I said sourly.

"We are also without money, and our

clothes are no longer good, as you can well see, Señor," said the man with the rifle.

"Alas, the Señor has need himself of the food, and money and clothes," said Lopez politely.

The two intruders spun around to face Lopez and Anselmo. I took several seconds to discover my mistake and reach for my revolver.

Lopez was quite close to the bearded stranger, and his butcher's knife was not more than a few inches from the man's stomach. Anselmo still swung the axe negligently like a pendulum, but his gaze was steady upon the second stranger.

Lopez gently tugged the ancient rifle from the hand of the man he faced.

"Do you wish that we make these gentlemen permanent guests of the soil of the *hacienda*, Señor?" Lopez inquired, pleasantly.

"See that they have no weapons concealed upon them, and then turn them loose," I told him.

To the uneasy visitors, I said: "If you are seen around here again, you will be taken to the prison immediately, understand?"

There was something like relief on their sinister faces as they nodded agreement.

Lopez and Anselmo saw them off the premises. When my ex-convicts returned, I asked them why they had left the *hacienda*.

"We had been speaking with an Indian who told us that there were two very bad men travelling in this region," explained Lopez. "The men had been asking about this place, and wanted to know who lived here now. It was evident that they intended paying you a visit. Therefore, as we had no arms, Anselmo and I decided that we would rest a few hours in the jungle and await their arrival."

MYSTERY MONSTER

"Who were they? Had they escaped from the prison?"

"No, Señor, they were just some stupid *hombres* who had made trouble on a sugar plantation and had to leave there quickly."

That seemed to be the crisis in our relationship; I found that something approaching confidence was slowly replacing the active distrust with which I had regarded the two men.

But there was to be another crisis, not so dramatic, yet in its strange way the one which was to be decisive.

I had begun to take my meals with Lopez and Anselmo. One evening while we were eating, Anselmo glanced over my shoulder and suddenly froze.

I turned around, just in time to see some kind of animal slink into the shadows along the fence.

"Take your gun, quickly, Señor."

I was surprised at the urgency and fear in Anselmo's voice, and I strained my eyes searching the shadows anxiously, in the belief that some dangerous monster was lurking there, preparing to pounce.



Terrain similar to this was the setting for the author's dramatic encounter.

"What is it, Anselmo?" I asked.

"A guard dog, Señor—it is a wild one and will kill a man."

"A dog?" I stared at him incredulously. His tough face was strained and anxious, and his fear had been conveyed to Lopez, who was now glancing around nervously.

I got up from my seat, picked up a lump of warm meat from the table and walked towards the fence.

The dog was still there; it was very large, but weak with starvation. Its bones almost pierced its scratched and scarred coat. I recognized it as a Great Dane, used on some of the *haciendas* as guard dogs.

The animal backed away warily from me as I approached, but it could smell food.

I tore off a strip of meat and threw it to the dog, and it snapped it up voraciously. I threw another piece and it came nearer, saliva trickling from its heavy jaws.

Within a few moments it was beside me and I had lain my hand upon its head.

As it followed at my heels back to the table, Anselmo sprang to his feet and retreated.

"It is not safe, Señor! You must not trust such an animal," he cried.

For three days he watched me feed and coax the dog into submission—but he watched from a distance. The dog had begun to lose its shyness; its famished skeleton filled out a little, and it slept near the foot of my bed.

"Why do you fear this dog?" I asked.

"When I was young, until I was thirteen or fourteen years old, I worked on a sugar plantation. I was treated like a slave, and men died there from overwork and the fever.

"The owner was a small man; to-day I could break him with my little finger. He had four dogs, such as this one, to guard him against a knife in the back from one of his people.

"Sometimes, for a game, he would hunt

a man or a child, using the dogs. He hunted me—see, Señor, I still have the marks on my arms and shoulder where the flesh was torn."

He pulled open his shirt and I could see the white scars, huge and terrible.

"Often I dream that I am fleeing from those dogs, and I awake crying out and gasping for breath. That is why, Señor, I do not like these animals

I didn't say anything more to him about it; there was nothing I could say. But his words had drawn a picture of a terrified hunted child who had grown into a haunted, fearful man—a man who had lost control and resorted to physical violence. This, then, was the murderer too dangerous for ordinary prisons!

CONVICT AND CANINE

I was glad that the dog had come to us, otherwise I should not have known about Anselmo.

Lopez, I had already decided, was a less complex character. A spirit of aggression, released whenever he "hit the bottle," was a common-enough weakness. Anyway, there wouldn't be any opportunities for that pastime while he was with me.

A day or so after my talk with Anselmo I asked him to feed the dog for me. For a moment I thought he was going to refuse; then he took the bowl of food from me without a word and went over to where the dog was lying.

That then became his particular task. Before the week was out the dog had transferred its affections from me to Anselmo. It followed him about and always slept near him.

The climax came one evening when I saw the ex-convict kneel beside the dog as he fed it, stroking it and talking softly to it.

When he got to his feet he saw that I had been watching him. He walked back to the kitchen with a self-conscious swagger, the dog not far behind.

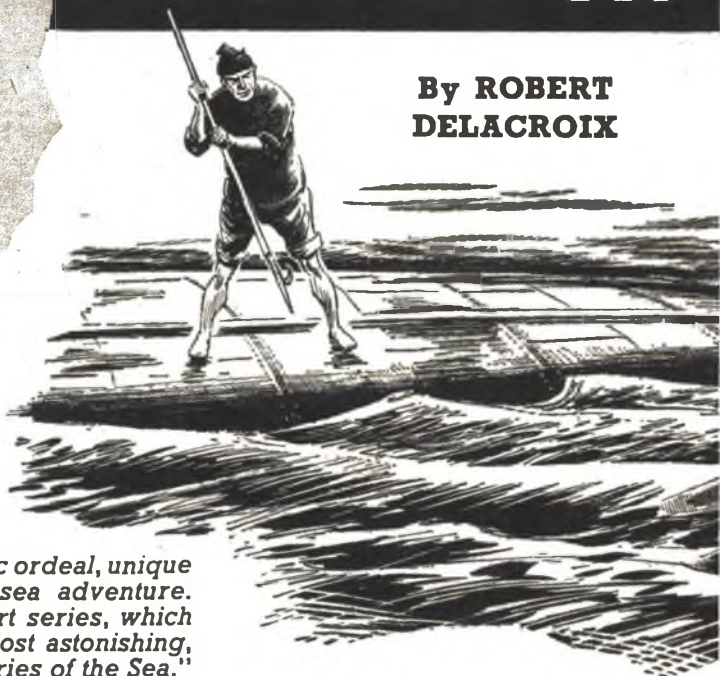
Lopez looked across at me and winked, and I relaxed—permanently.

When the rest of the party arrived, I found great amusement in watching their expressions as I told them that I had two murderers in my employ. But it wasn't long before they discovered for themselves the better side of my servants' characters.



TRAPPED IN

By **ROBERT DELACROIX**



A number of ships had reported the gleaming object floating off the Prussian coast, but no action was taken until the skipper of the Aurora lowered a boat to investigate. By doing so, he brought to light a fantastic ordeal, unique in the long history of sea adventure. This is the first of a short series, which recounts some of the most astonishing, yet least known "Mysteries of the Sea."

AT the end of the month of April, 1903, the crews of vessels calling at ports along the Prussian coast reported a strange object encountered at sea. They had several times noticed it, sometimes glittering in the sunshine, sometimes gleaming dully when the sky was overcast. It looked something like a buoy, a sort of metallic bell, or else the capsized hull of a ship.

They could not quite make out what it was. And, unfortunately, none of those who had encountered it could get near enough to identify the thing, either on account of bad weather, which made them fear a collision, or because they had no time to investigate it.

The maritime authorities at Memel and Danzig had been warned of the presence of this mysterious flotsam, but they seemed in no hurry to take the matter up. It was not so much that they disbelieved the tale as that they could not be bothered, or did not possess the equipment necessary to proceed with an inquiry. After all, there would be no end to it if one started getting excited about all the wreckage floating about at sea, especially near the coast.

On Thursday, April 30th, towards the end of the afternoon, the Norwegian sailing-ship *Aurora* also sighted this enigmatic object, some sixteen miles off Dixhoef. The sea was calm, and, as there seemed no risk in approaching closer, Captain Soerensen bore down.

At ten yards' range, he came to the conclusion that it was undoubtedly the metal hull of a capsized vessel, probably a small schooner. He wondered what dramatic events had preceded the wreck.

To be capsized or dismasted is the most terrible fate that can befall a sailing ship. The crew, then, has little or no chance of survival. Soerensen could imagine the steersman convulsively gripping the wheel, the seamen hurled violently overboard. As for those who happened to be below at the time, it was to be hoped that they had been quick enough, instinctively, to dash on deck through the hatchway and spring overboard. Otherwise, well. . . .

The blank, sinister appearance of that capsized hull gave the crew of the *Aurora* a queer feeling. It even frightened them, though they had really no reason to fear it.

"Well, we can't stay here all night," one of them said. "It was a bad business, that's certain. But we can't do anything about it now."

"Shut up!" bawled Soerensen.

There was no need to ask why he had called for silence. In the twilight stillness, the men fancied they could hear something like faint but distinct blows struck on the plating of the hull. At first they could only catch the sound of one at a time. Then the rapping came faster, as though some impatient caller were knocking with his fist on a closed door.

A FLOATING TOMB



He rapped with a boat-hook on the mystery hull. (Inset) Captain Engelhardt, who survived a terrible ordeal in a submerged wreck.

"It's only the water lapping round the old hulk," one of the sailors observed.

But mere ripples could hardly make such a noise as that. It started again, louder still, sounding like dull, metallic drum-taps.

"I don't see how you can say that's water," someone objected. "Each one of those taps is distinct and separate, like the blows of a hammer."

"Well, then ; it's something rattling about inside the thing."

"Maybe," retorted Soerensen. "But I'm going to find out. Lower the boat and bring a gaff along. We'll soon see what it is."

The *Aurora's* boat moved slowly round the wreck. The mysterious sounds had ceased. Soerensen seized the boat-hook and struck the hull of the derelict several times with it. The boat drew off a little under the impacts.

"We'd better make fast to the thing. Find something to hitch her on to, one of you," Soerensen ordered.

Easier said than done. The hull of the wreck presented a smooth, unrelieved surface.

"All right then," said the skipper. "Try to climb aboard. I'll pass you the gaff."

The man addressed, after taking off his boots and stockings, finally managed to stand upright on the hull. He struck a number of smart blows on it with the boat-hook, stopped, and then started again.

"That's right. Stop. Now listen."

The mysterious sounds became audible once more, like a muffled echo, but on a deeper note. As before, they consisted of faint, but distinctly separate, taps.

"Begin again!" cried Soerensen.

The boat-hook resumed its rattling against the hull, then ceased. At once the strange echoes replied. But this time they sounded more agitated.

"There's someone inside!" exclaimed Soerensen. "He's signalling to us! He's calling for help!"

"But hang it all, skipper," the seaman retorted, "ships have been reporting the wreck for a week on end. Anyone inside must have died long ago."

The rest of the crew made no comment. They felt sceptical and yet decidedly uneasy. It

seemed impossible that any human being could have survived imprisonment in that hulk, with no air to breathe or food to eat.

All the same, that obstinate, desperate rapping was still going on. It was followed by what seemed a faint shout, deadened by the intervening metal.

"We're all dreaming. It can't be true," one of the *Aurora's* crew said.

Soerensen did not answer. He circled the wreck again in his boat. No; it would not be possible, with the equipment he had available, to make any sort of an opening in the hull. And yet he could not leave those poor wretches, if there really were any there, to die in that floating tomb.

The sea was still calm and the coast was near. Why not try to tow the wreck into Danzig? The port authorities there would be able to cut the hulk open and find out the source of those mysterious sounds.

Soerensen succeeded in making a tow-line fast astern. As night fell, the *Aurora* set a course for Danzig, trailing the wreck behind her. No sound came from the derelict now.

At dawn on May 1st, the *Aurora*, with the capsized schooner in tow, was moored in the outer harbour at Danzig. The passage had been a slow and anxious one. Soerensen had never ceased to fear that the hulk might sink, but the baulks of timber, which had formed part of her cargo, kept the hull afloat, acting as a kind of lifebelt.

All night long, those aboard the *Aurora* had listened in silence for a repetition of those strange rappings from the wreck's interior. But nothing more had been heard. Were the prisoners asleep? Had they understood that they were being rescued and that it was therefore useless to go on signalling? Or had that tapping only been the last of their efforts before they died? Perhaps they were now lying prostrate, in a state of exhaustion, devoting their last thoughts to those rescuers who had arrived too late, by a few hours only, to save their lives.

The derelict now lay alongside the quay, but the captain of the port, fearing that she might sink, had steel cables slung under her and made an attempt to raise the hull with a crane. He brought it about a yard higher out of the water and resecured it in that position, where he judged it would be safe enough.

Then he had a blow-pipe applied to the plates. The men worked in a shower of sparks, to the accompaniment of the roar of the flames attacking the metal. They reminded one of the alchemists of yore crouching over a retort; one which, in this case, had a mystery of the sea to reveal.

As the work approached completion, the crowd of onlookers on the quays increased. They gazed inquisitively and apprehensively at the strange hulk. Now that the stern was above water, they could read its name—the *Erndte*, of Hamburg. She had been a coastal schooner frequenting the Baltic and the North Sea, and was well known in the harbour at Danzig.

After an hour's work, a small rectangle had been cut away from the plating.

At the end of his feverish search, he realized that he was walking on the deckhead.



All those engaged in the operation stared eagerly at the shadowy opening through which they expected the wreck's secret to emerge.

One minute passed.

No one moved. It was as though they all feared to look into that gaping hole, still more to call through it, in case some astonishing of terrifying picture should meet their gaze or their cries evoke nothing but tragic silence. If anyone were still alive down there, surely he would start up when he saw daylight and shout for help.

Yet nothing was to be seen and nothing was to be heard. The next step must, of course, be to enter the hull and investigate. But the workmen, in their haste, had made only a small opening, too narrow to admit a man's body.

The captain of the port, after consulting Soerensen, signed to the workmen. They took up the blow-pipes again. Suddenly a murmur went up from the crowd. It rose to a shout. The spectators were gesticulating. One of them was even clapping his hands as though applauding a well-mounted scene on the stage.

Something white had appeared at the opening in the hull. It remained motionless for a few seconds, then began to move slowly along one of the sides of the rectangular space. It trembled, grew bigger.

It was a man's hand. The spread fingers became clearly visible, then a gesticulating sleeve. It seemed to be waving a greeting to the sunlight, to life, to the watching crowd. It was as though the arm of one raised from the dead were emerging from a tomb.

The spectators, rigid with amazement, remained motionless, staring as if turned to stone. They could not believe that anyone could have survived inside such a floating wreck for more than a week. The thing was surely impossible. It must be a case of collective hallucination.

THE TALKING HAND

Suddenly someone called out: "That hand's talking!"

No one dreamed of laughing. For it was true enough. A deep, breathless, harshly distorted voice was coming from the depths of that ruin of a ship, demanding something, and with anguish. "I want to eat. Give me something to eat!"

The spell was broken. Several people rushed forward, carrying loaves of bread or bottles of beer. It was true! There was someone there, someone with a desperate will to live, who had survived, by a miracle, that deadly struggle with hunger, thirst and airlessness.

The hand seized the victuals offered and disappeared.

"Enlarge that opening, quick!" Soerensen ordered.

Work was resumed, this time with eager zest. It was now certain that at least one survivor remained aboard. An astonishing case! Crews had, of course, often enough been found alive aboard a wreck, but they had been able

to breathe freely, eat, and hope to meet other vessels. And they could make signals of distress. The fact that a man had managed to survive inside that sealed hull was a unique, incredible and almost supernatural circumstance.

The crowd watched the work of enlargement with feverish impatience. But it took time, a very considerable time. Two hours went by, then three. When the men stopped to rest for a few moments, more food was passed through the aperture, and encouraging messages were shouted down. At last, about eleven o'clock, an area of about a square yard had been cut away. A volunteer dropped through it.

He saw a man, one man only, about thirty-five years old, lying on sailcloth in a corner of the hold. His face was covered with brown hair. An empty cask and a wooden mallet, battered and flattened with incessant use, lay at his feet. A rope with twelve knots in it could be seen behind him.

TALE OF TERROR

"Been here for twelve days," he mumbled. "Name's Hans Eggellandt, master of the schooner *Erndte*. My crew were on deck when the vessel capsized. Were you able to rescue any of them?"

The *Erndte*, a steel-built schooner of eighty tons, had left Memel two weeks before. She was bound for Bremen with a cargo of deal planks. Hans Eggellandt was both commander and owner of the vessel, which had a crew of four.

They had bad luck from the start. A violent squall from the north-west struck the schooner abeam and flooded the cargo. Eggellandt had great difficulty in keeping on his course.

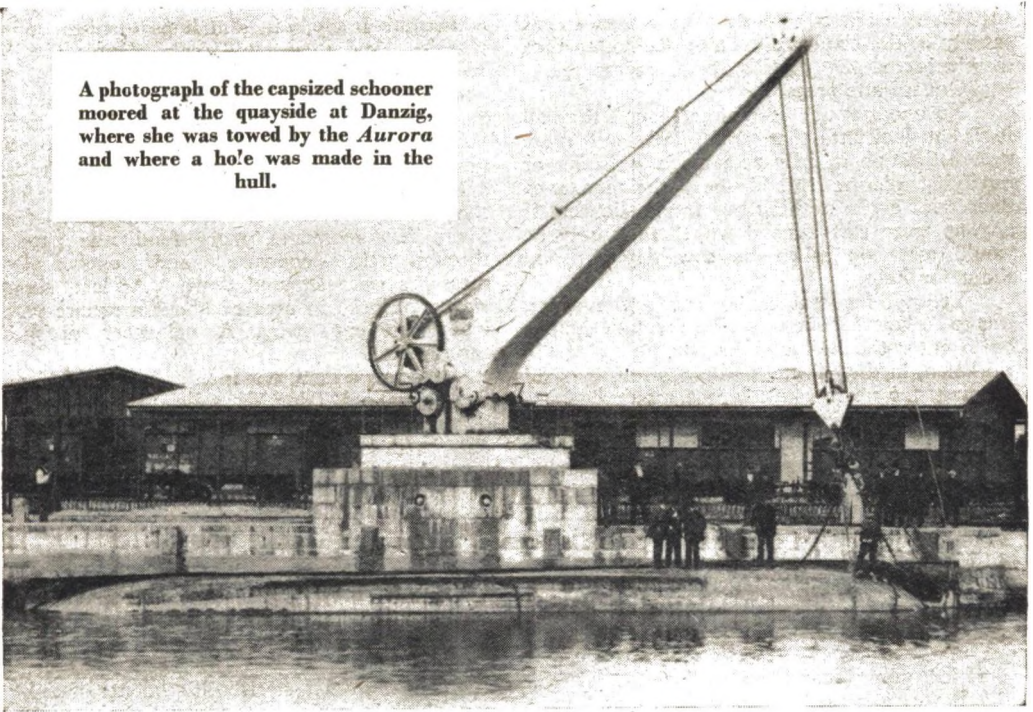
At seven o'clock that evening, the sea, which had been running high all day, lashed itself into a frenzy. The *Erndte* rolled madly, occasionally even disappearing for a few seconds, then painfully righting herself.

Eggellandt shortened sail. The vessel could then be better controlled. She made good time all that night, but suffered heavy damage. At five o'clock in the morning, the log showed that she had covered one hundred and twenty miles since leaving Memel. The first glimmers of daybreak revealed a sea white with foam all round the ship. Eggellandt was gripping the wheel. He was soaked through, stiff and bruised, shivering with cold and fatigue. Feeling faint, he ordered the mate, though the sea was still running high, to steer the vessel for a few moments while he changed his clothes and swallowed a little food.

Before going down the hatch, he took a last look round. Clouds were piling up to the east, in the dim light of the approaching day, and it seemed to be blowing harder than ever.

The mate stood at the wheel, motionless. One of the crew was keeping a look-out at the cathead, protected by an awning from the flying spray. The cargo seemed to be holding firm against the repeated assaults of the waves.

A photograph of the capsized schooner moored at the quayside at Danzig, where she was towed by the *Aurora* and where a ho'e was made in the hull.



Well, thought the captain, it would be a stiff passage. But they ought to get through to Bremen all right. On reaching his cabin, he was at last able to put on dry clothing.

He fancied, in that confined space, that the ship's movements were growing more violent. At first he thought he might be mistaken. Then, as he listened more intently to the waves thundering against the vessel's side and the wind whistling through her rigging, he knew he was right. The storm was rising to a hurricane.

He was leaning forward to pull on his boots when his head, as though punched by an invisible fist, banged against the cabin bulkhead. At the same time, the whole of the schooner quivered under a violent shock, and a fantastic uproar, composed of the clatter of falling objects broken to pieces, the crash of torrential waves and the shouts of his men, deafened him from above.

He believed the sounds were due to injury to his hearing, sustained as a result of the terrific blow struck against his head. He struggled to his feet and began to look for his storm-lantern, which had gone out. He tripped over the four legs of an overturned chair and a lot of smashed crockery.

The howling of the tempest now took on a deeper note, as though Engellandt had been cut off from the outside world by a partition of some kind. Even the recurrent thunders of the squalls reached his ears in a deadened echo, as though he were wrapped in cotton-wool. He could not hear the whistling of the shrouds at

all. "Must have been dismasted," he muttered, with a shudder.

He groped for the hatch-ladder in order to climb on deck. But he couldn't find it. He passed the palm of his hand carefully over the four walls of his cabin, staggering about among the chairs and other objects that had fallen to the floor. Apparently the ladder had vanished.

I suppose it dropped when she rolled just now, thought Engellandt. Well, never mind; I can pull myself up to the hatch somehow.

Climbing on to a chair, he tried to find the hatch. He had closed it when he came down, to prevent the cabin being flooded. He felt all over the ceiling with his hands, just as he had previously felt the walls. The hatch ought to be in the corner for'ard, to port.

But Engellandt had now lost his bearings altogether. He tried to identify each corner, one after the other. In the first he found nothing. Nor in the second. Must be in the third, then. No; it wasn't. Well then, in the fourth—No. There, too, the deckhead was perfectly smooth, without the least trace of a hatchway.

Engellandt felt that he must be dreaming. For an instant he believed, absurdly enough, that he was dead. He could only hear relatively faint sounds now. Finally, he pulled himself together. Whatever the answer to this mystery might be, he was alive and uninjured.

He made up his mind that he would really have to use his eyes. He found his lamp, then discovered that its base was wet. Water must have penetrated the cabin when the ship had rolled so heavily.

He struck a match and put it to the wick. In the ensuing smoky glare he could see nothing at first but the walls of the cabin, tremulous in the uncertain light. Then he raised the lamp to examine the ceiling, still with the idea of finding the hatch. His rigid arm wavered as he tried with all his strength to master the onset of panic. This time there was no doubt about it. The hatch had vanished!

He continued to move the lamp to and fro mechanically, but without hope. The hatch was definitely not there.

His legs were shaking. He groped at the wall for support, then, with the intention of sitting down, grasped a fallen chair and tried to set it upright.

It wouldn't stand properly. Something on the floor was in its way. He made an attempt to kick the obstacle aside. But it seemed to be a kind of frame fixed to the floor itself.

He shone the lamp down at it, then gave a violent start. It was the hatch! He was standing on the hatch which ought to have been above his head!

He realized that he had been walking on the deckhead, not the floor. That could only mean that the ship had capsized!

The roll that had thrown him against the bulkhead had turned the *Erndte* upside down. The keel was above him now, like a roof, with an implacable pressure he would never be able to remove. The cargo of timber kept the vessel afloat. But she was now a prison in which, in all probability, he was doomed to remain until he died.

Suddenly he remembered his crew. They would be swimming now, no doubt, with desperate anxiety round and round the walls of his prison, battling with the icy water. He thought of calling out to them. But the idea only made him shrug his shoulders. What was the use? Even if they heard him, what could they do for him? In any case, they had probably been drowned by this time.

FIGHT WITH FATE

He shuddered, with cold or with terror. It might have been either. Nevertheless, despite his anguish, he never dreamed for a single instant of resigning himself to his fate. On the contrary, all he feared was an increase in the violence of the storm, though any such event would soon have cut short the inevitable torments of the lingering death to which he seemed to be doomed.

By the light of his lamp he marked the waterline on one of the uprights in the wall. Then he dislodged, with an iron lever, a number of the floorboards overhead. He meant to make his way into the hold, see what he could find there to help him to survive, and do what he could, with the means available in that part of the ship, to keep her afloat.

The *Erndte* carried no cargo except timber. The ballast consisted of a mass of lead casting firmly riveted in position and unlikely to come adrift.

Looking down into the cabin, Engellandt saw that water was entering it to port or starboard, according to the direction in which the ship rolled. Boxes and splinters of wood were floating about. Obviously the cabin would soon be uninhabitable. He decided to stay in the hold, where he would at least be dry.

The *Erndte* measured eleven feet, vertically, below deck. The cabin was seven feet high. Consequently, Engellandt calculated that he was only four feet from the keel. He could only sit or lie. But at any rate he would be relatively safe if he stayed where he was.

He lay down for a few moments. He could hear the waves raging round the ship, buffeting her until she rolled, and breaking over her. How long would his imprisonment last? What were the chances of his coming out alive? It must be already light outside by this time. Some vessel would be sure to sight the capsized hull and approach it to investigate. Then he would find means to make his presence known.

But when would that be? How many days could he stand living like this?

ECHO OF DESPAIR

He realized that as he would not be able to see ships in the neighbourhood he would have to try to attract attention without waiting any longer. He shouted. The metal walls of the hold flung his voice back at him. He seized a heavy piece of wood and struck the wall with it. He felt sure that the sound would be more clearly audible outside than any shout. The clang it made would be like a gong resounding over the waters. It would be certain to arouse the interest of a possible rescuer.

He went down into the cabin again so as to be able to stand upright, and began banging on its walls with the wooden mallet, again and again, as hard as he could, with mounting vexation and, at last, despair. Planting his legs far apart to balance himself against the rolling of the ship, he continued this exercise until he was exhausted.

The storm raged on and on. He realized that the roar of the wind would certainly drown his hammering on the hull. Consequently, any vessels that sighted the wreck would not hear his blows, and would undoubtedly make off so as to avoid a collision, rather than approach.

He ceased his efforts, concluding that he would have to remain a prisoner until the weather improved.

He returned to the hold, noticing that the sea-level had not risen. The fact comforted him. He searched the victualling-store. A box of biscuits had fallen into the water on the cabin floor, or rather, deckhead. The beer bottles were all broken. After a long search, he managed to salvage three pounds of raisins, some sugar and sausage-meat, a flask of brandy and a keg of drinking-water.

He stowed these provisions carefully away in the hold, making sure they would not come adrift. They represented his sole chance of survival.

He then took stock of the situation again. At least he need not fear death by starvation, not for the moment at any rate. Moreover, the capsized hull was unlikely to sink. So far, so good. But what about air to breathe? Would he not be likely to suffocate, after absorbing all the oxygen available?

He decided, accordingly, to put out the lamp, so as not to waste air. But in the darkness his terror and mental torments returned. Nevertheless, he gradually got used to the obscurity, relieved as it was to a certain extent by the glimmers of the water in the cabin.

The changes in their intensity enabled him to measure the passage of time. When the water turned black, he guessed that night had fallen, made a knot in a rope, wrapped himself in sail-cloth in a corner of the hold and tried to sleep.

Sometimes he woke up suddenly, believing that he heard a ship approaching. He would then begin again to thump the walls with his mallet, with wild violence, until exhaustion set in. Then, supposing he had been mistaken, he would lie down again, a prey to a succession of nightmares and to the tortures of hunger and thirst.

He instinctively tried to conjecture what course the wreck might be taking. Judging by the currents prevalent in that area, he believed he must be drifting south-south-east.

At last the storm began to die down. Accordingly, he resumed his efforts with the mallet. But the meagre diet had undermined his strength, and he had to abandon them more and more often, in a state of exhaustion, to lie down once more, with a painfully beating heart.

The rope now had six knots in it. He had been a prisoner in the wreck for six days.

The weather had turned fine once more, and the sky must have been cloudless, with the sun blazing down on the hull, for the atmosphere in the hold was growing hotter. Soon it became a suffocating torment, crushing him with a fearful weight of depression. He went down to the cabin to try to obtain some relief from the coolness of the water. He bent over its surface, fascinated by its slow, rhythmic movements, corresponding with the rolling of the wreck. He bent lower and lower.

The water offered him not only relief from the clammy heat beating down from the steel plates of the hull, but also oblivion, in which he could forget his terrible nightmare of a prison, from which there was no way out.

As he leaned closer to the water, he longed to let himself drop into its cool depths, with their promise of forgetfulness and the cessation

of all toil and anguish. He leaned lower and lower.

Then he noticed that the slow, oscillating movements of the liquid had changed to faster ones. That could only mean that the wind was rising again.

The new, rapid rhythm revived his enervated faculties, breaking the spell that had been lulling his brain. It occurred to him that the rising wind would reduce temperature and put an end to his sufferings from the heat.

He was right. Soon he was able to climb back into the hold. That evening he tied another knot in the rope. It was the eleventh.

His keg of fresh water was almost empty. There was nothing left of his provisions but a little sugar, a handful of rice and a slice or two of sausage.

How much longer could he hold out? Two days at most, perhaps. He continued to rap on the walls, but by this time his mallet was so worn as to be almost useless.

"I must keep going, keep going," he told himself repeatedly, aloud. But he could not see how he was to do so, or why, indeed, he should not despair.

The wreck must be drifting in frequented waters. It must certainly have been sighted. But no one seemed to have had the idea of salvaging it. Engellandt understood the reason. Derelicts were shunned. Their sinister outlines were avoided like the plague. Who could dream that this one contained a captive desperately struggling, against all logic and probability, to survive, to conquer a fate that seemed inevitable?

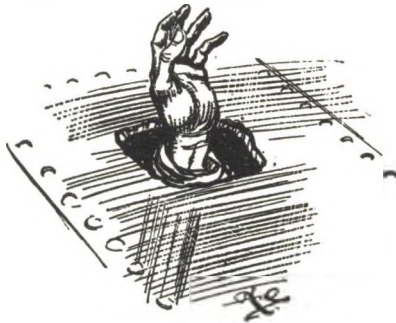
He was utterly prostrated now, only just able to breathe in the contaminated air. The end

could not be far off, he was certain.

Then with a shock, he suddenly saw clearly that he would never be rescued by others. His only chance would be to escape from this appalling prison by taking an extremely risky step, but one which might succeed and which he had been thinking of for a long time. He might try to force back the door of the cabin, dive into the sea and swim up to the surface.

He had hesitated until then to adopt this desperate expedient, for even if he succeeded in it, he would be too weak to swim for long, even if he supported himself on the wreck. But all he would have to fear would be a quicker and less painful death than that which awaited him if he did not take the risk. He decided, therefore, to take it.

He dived into the swirling water in the cabin, found the door, after blindly groping for



The hand remained motionless for a few seconds, then began to move slowly along the sides of the hole.

The *Aurora*, which came upon a grim tragedy—and a miracle of the sea. The story of Captain Engellandt's a m a z i n g escape is told in "Mysterics of the Sea," by Robert Delacroix (*Fred-erick Muller, 13s. 6d.*), and is printed here by arrangement with the publishers.

it, and tried to shift it. Then he felt himself suffocating, and regained the surface to breathe. Again he dived, thrusting at the door with his shoulder. But the weight of water behind it was too much for him.

Engellandt felt that all the sinister powers of the ocean were in league against him, preventing his escape. In the end, in fact, despite repeated efforts, he was obliged to return to the hold once more. He lay there with a confused buzzing in his ears, utterly crushed, this time, by the sheer malignity of his fate. The rope hung beside him. By its reckoning, the day was April 30th.

He gazed dully at the darkening surface, indicating the approach of night, of the water in the cabin. The sea must have been quite calm, for the wreck of the *Erndte*, possibly for the first time since the original storm, had ceased to roll. Complete silence enveloped her.

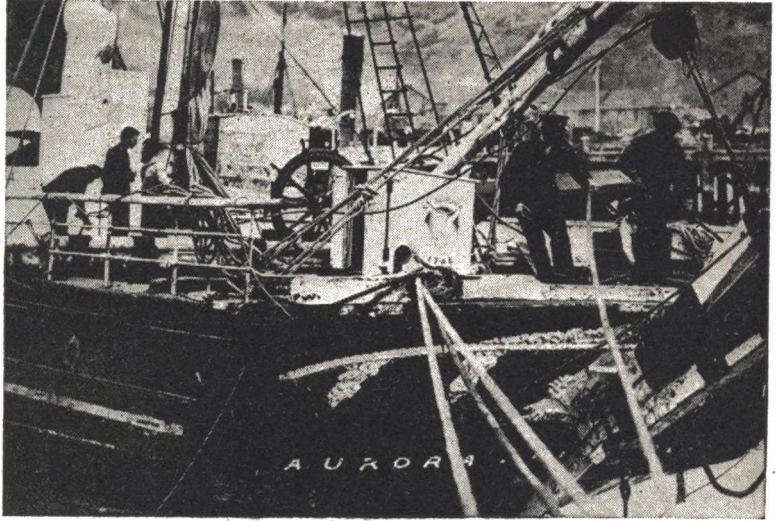
In that utter stillness, he lost his will to resist. He was no longer even tempted to seize the stump of his mallet and thump frantically with it, shriek and sob, as he had so often when, with his ear pressed to the wall, he had fancied he could hear the sound of a wake or of a propeller thrashing the waves.

He began to lose consciousness, dreaming of the open sea, dotted with white sails, under a summer sun. A ship was bearing down on him. He was hailed, "Who are you?"—"I am Hans Engellandt," he replied, "Master of the *Erndte*. I was making for Bremen with a cargo of timber. We sank. I have been dead for nearly a fortnight. I was thirty-five when I died, betrayed by my own ship. I am the prisoner of a wreck. Keep off, or she'll sink you."

He had become delirious. He was experiencing the extraordinary sensation of being surrounded by the echo of his own blood, the beating of his own heart, reverberating in every quarter of the hull.

Suddenly, the strange sounds ceased. "I am dead," Engellandt murmured. "My heart must have left my body already. And now it has stopped beating altogether."

Then the sounds started again. Engellandt, with a convulsive shudder, regained consciousness. What was this? Yes; those were blows;



blows delivered against the hull—from outside!

He remained motionless for a few moments, not daring to believe his ears. When the sounds ceased again he fancied he really had been suffering from hallucination. But when they started once more, accompanied by exclamations in human speech, he seized his mallet and struck in his turn, at first in a confused sort of manner, mingling the blows of the mallet with plaintive cries and hammering on the wall with his fist.

Then he realized that he ought to proceed more methodically, that he ought to reply firmly and distinctly to the blows he heard, and try to make himself understood. He could still hear voices. But the words were unintelligible to him. His head was in a whirl.

Panic seized him. He was quite certain this time that there were men near the wreck. And yet perhaps they were about to go away, thinking they had been mistaken in supposing they had heard sounds from it. Or else they merely meant to report what they had found, and the wreck would eventually be towed into harbour.

But when? More and more days of this? "I can't hold out any longer!" he shouted. "Come to my assistance instantly!"

He waited for an answer. None came. In a state of collapse, he lay down again on the sail-cloth. After a few minutes' rest, he went down to the cabin and again wrestled with the door. It still resisted all his efforts. He climbed back into the hold, half drowned, and lost consciousness once more.

He was still asleep when the *Aurora*, with the wreck in tow, entered Neufahrwasser, the outer harbour of the port of Danzig. He did not hear the murmurs of the crowd and the preparations for his rescue. But when the first blow-pipes were applied to the hull of the *Erndte* he opened his eyes, thinking that sunlight had begun to filter into the wreck, preparatory to flooding it with those rays from which he had been so long absent.

The plane hurtled into the boulder-strewn water-course.



The fun-loving Scot scoffed when he was warned that his insult to the sacred shrine might be avenged ; but strange things happen in the mystic East. . . . The author, a retired naval officer, vouches for the truth of the events related here.

TOOTH FOR A TOOTH

By BRIAN DODGSHON

ON the shores of a lake in the ancient capital city of Kandy in Ceylon stands the Buddhist temple of Dalada Malagiwa, better known as the Temple of the Sacred Tooth. The followers of Buddha come to this temple from all over the East, to do reverence to one of the most precious relics of the founder of their religion.

I first visited this shrine many years ago in company with my good friend and shipmate Bob Lorrimer. We had obtained forty-eight hours' leave and gone to Kandy to see the famous Sinhalese festival, called Perihara. This festival features a torchlight procession of a hundred or more elephants, heavily caparisoned, which winds its way round the lake in front of the temple, whilst grotesquely painted dancers with bells on their wrists and ankles twist and twirl to the accompaniment of throbbing native drums. It is a weird and never-to-be-forgotten spectacle which captures all the magic and mysticism of the East.

We were both newcomers to the station

at which we had recently arrived in a brand-new cruiser which had the distinction of being the first warship carrying an aircraft ever to visit Ceylon.

Bob was pilot of the aircraft. A thick-set Scot with an engaging smile and a shock of ginger hair, he just loved playing around with that old "kite," as he called his latest model Fairey seaplane. The only thing that bothered him was that he could land and take off only on smooth water, which meant that he could never venture far from the sheltered harbour of Colombo, and he longed to show off his new toy in other parts of the island.

The morning after the festival we were sitting on the veranda of our hotel, which overlooked the lake, admiring the scene when Bob remarked: "I like the look of yon lake."

Thinking that he was referring to the beauty of the setting I concurred, but he sensed that I was not following his train of thought,

and continued, "Och, mon, it's nae the scenery I'm admiring. If the wind blows richt doun the centre I'm thinking I could land and take off on yon stretch of water."

"So that's what has been going on under that red thatch of yours this last half-hour," I replied. I stirred in my seat, realizing that he meant business. "Even if it's possible, which I doubt, you'd have to get permission from somebody. You can't just go landing that flying machine of yours on any stretch of water you take a fancy to," I went on.

But once Bob got an idea in his head, he was not easily put off. When we got back to the ship at the end of our leave, he tackled the Captain and persuaded him to have a word with the Governor. In due course he was given permission to attempt his scheme, provided he took great care not to damage any private property, stampede elephants, or make a nuisance of himself in any way.

Bob was delighted. He immediately contacted the District Officer at Kandy and made him promise to let him know the first day that the wind was blowing in the right direction. The monsoon had only just ended and the winds at that time of the year were variable, and he had to wait for nearly three weeks before the awaited message came.

We watched him take off, never an easy matter in that crowded harbour; after circling the ship and waving, he disappeared inland. He was back about an hour later giving the "thumbs up" sign to tell us that he had succeeded. "A piece of cake," he told us on landing, and set about searching for other lakes in the island that might make suitable landing pitches.

It must have been a couple of days later that we learned of the local reaction to Bob's exploit. An article in the vernacular Press left no doubt that Buddhist susceptibilities had been deeply offended, and the writer ended with a warning that Buddha might be expected to avenge the insult to his temple in an appropriate manner.

Bob laughed when he was told. "Och aye," he said, "I'm gae scared o' yon idols. By the way, I've found a wee lake, in the mountains near a place called Nuwara Eliya, I've a mind to visit. I hear they have fir trees and heather up there, just like Bonnie Scotland, and a fine golf course an' all."

"Isn't it a bit high for the old kite?" I asked.

"Och, I can manage fifteen thousand feet and this lake's no but ten," he replied confidently.

The following week I was detailed to take a party of the ship's company up to the naval rest camp at Diyatalawa. It was a delightful spot, on the east side of a range of mountains which runs down the middle of Ceylon, and afforded a welcome escape from the heat of Colombo.

I was sitting on the veranda of the ward-room mess, one day after lunch, when the 'phone rang. The Marine attendant who

answered it announced that there was a call for me. I was surprised to hear the voice of a planter friend, a fellow called Judson, whose hospitality we had enjoyed on several occasions since our arrival up country.

"That you, Dodgshon?" he asked, and there was a note of urgency in his voice. "That plane of yours has crashed in a valley near here. We've got the pilot out. He's all right. Bit knocked about round the face. Can you send a doctor over?"

Three-quarters of an hour later the young doctor and I pulled up in front of Judson's bungalow. It was indeed a battered-looking Bob who confronted us when we got inside.

The doctor confirmed that his jaw was broken, but so far as he could judge there were no other injuries. When we had taken him to hospital, we went to have a look at the wreck of his beloved kite. We marvelled that he had escaped with his life. The machine was lying in the bed of a mountain stream, firmly wedged between a couple of boulders.

I learned later that his engine had stalled whilst he was circling round trying to find the lake on which he intended to land. As often happens in that part of the world, the spot was temporarily obscured by cloud.

Looking anxiously around for some water on which to make a forced landing, all he could see was the rock-strewn watercourse in which he eventually pitched. The sudden impact with the boulders had thrown him forward, ramming his face against the edge of the cockpit.

The saffron-robed priests in the Temple of the Sacred Tooth smiled knowingly when the news reached them, especially when they heard that Bob had lost all his front teeth.



When the author and his friend watched this festival of Perihara at Kandy, they little realized the adventure that lay ahead.

British prisoners had escaped from the "cattle trains" before; this time the Germans took stringent precautions. There were seven guards in each truck and a barbed wire framework to separate them from their charges. The prisoners had had their boots, braces and trouser-belts confiscated, and were manacled. The only opening in each wagon was a small ventilator, high up in the side, which was screened with barbed wire. Yet one man was determined to escape, and this is the remarkable true story of how he outwitted the Germans.

SQUEEZE TO

THE long column marched towards the village station. Personal belongings were carried in various containers and parcels, most of the men using the cardboard boxes which had once held Red Cross food. The prisoners from Oflag VIII F were on the move.

The German authorities had decided to transfer the camp from Czechoslovakia across Germany to Brunswick—from relatively friendly territory to the heart of the Reich, where escape would be extremely difficult and eventual release delayed.

Other considerations apart, the move had its compensations, one of which was the glorious feeling of being outside barbed wire. For in Germany, unlike Italy, prisoners were not allowed walks or other forms of exercise outside the cage. The journey would at any rate afford the men a brief respite.

It was the spring of 1944, and the opening of the Second Front was keenly awaited. Hopes were high and rumours were rife. The German papers were full of descriptions of the Atlantic Wall, which had been built along the coast from the Baltic to Spain. There were many photographs of important German generals and Party Members inspecting vast concrete defence works. The prisoners fervently hoped that the preparations were not so thorough as they had been made to appear.

Before the men had left camp, there had been the usual alarms and excursions. When a camp received news of an impending move, the Escape Committee usually withdrew the order that all escape plans be approved before being put into practice. The result was that those who were prepared watched keenly for an opportunity to disappear.

In the camp itself, hiding places were quickly filled with hopeful escapees.

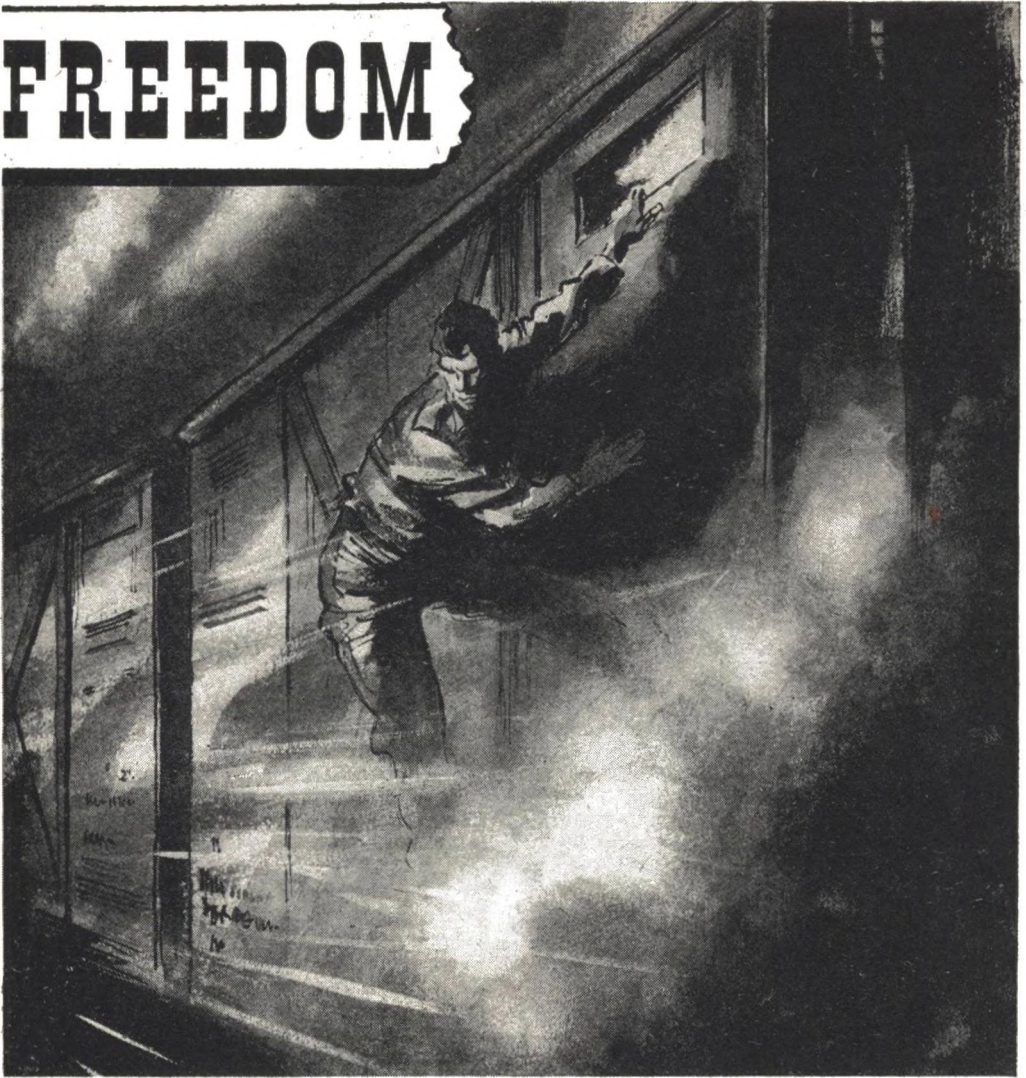
By LESLIE STEWART



Peculiar noises could be heard coming from rooms, where the floor-boards were being lifted or excavations hurriedly made. Unfortunately, the Germans were only too well aware of this tendency, and they usually frustrated any attempts by giving only very short notice of a move. Once having given it, they kept a relatively large number of guards inside the camp with the aim of counteracting any subversive activity. Their main job was the sounding of walls and floors to detect tunnels and hiding places. These guards were armed with crowbars, and were universally known as "ferrets," to distinguish them from the general body of Germans, who were all "goons."

In the present case, none of the hideaway hopefuls succeeded in avoiding detection, their endeavours delayed the departure to Germany and the prisoners derived a lot

FREEDOM



of amusement from watching the feverish activity of the Germans and the grins on the faces of the stowaways, as they were winkled out from unlikely places. Unfortunately, the camp, which had previously been a Czech military barracks, was of utilitarian design, and there was not much scope for vanishing tricks. At last, the number on parade corresponded with the nominal roll of the camp, and they were off. Where to? No one knew for certain.

The enemy said Brunswick, but one could never be quite sure. All hoped, however, that the railway journey would not necessitate a long wait at Hamm, or any other large marshalling yard, for there was a profound respect for the striking power of the R.A.F. It is a wretched anti-climax to be killed by British bombs, after years spent successfully avoiding the enemy's!

The now straggling files turned into the goods yard, and the prisoners dumped their

His feet felt along the outside of the truck, and his fingers gripped the lower edge of the ventilator.

boxes, bags and parcels. They were thankful to do this, as the loops of string, which served as handles on most of the packages, had long been biting like knives into the hands of the owners; and few of those hands were as well upholstered as they had once been. Before leaving camp, each one of the party had had his person and possessions minutely searched, as usual. The idea was not only to discover and confiscate all the useful hardware that could be used for escape purposes on the train, but also, as the officers were going to form a new camp, to restrict escape activities for some time to come, thus allowing those responsible for the prisoners' detention to sleep more peacefully in their beds at night. It was, however, a remarkably difficult job to make a thorough

search of a large number of persons, even though they were made to strip. This was still true, even if bribery and corruption were ruled out; in this case they certainly were not.

In a nearby railway siding were a number of cattle trucks, and as the doors were all open, and there were no cattle about, it was only too obvious what they were for. The guards divided the prisoners into groups of thirty, which was promising, as the official capacity of such wagons is forty. The outlook was soon darkened, however, when the Germans ordered all boots to be removed. They got their way despite very strong protests, both officially, from the Senior British Officer, and unofficially—and very vociferously—by the rest of the men. This was not all; the next demand was that all braces and belts be removed and these, together with the boots were collected in sacks by the guards. Such anti-escape precautions had not been known before, and it was obvious that the Germans had planned that the movement should allow no bids for freedom.

Each group of prisoners was escorted to a truck and shepherded inside. Each man was handcuffed and ordered to sit down on one of the wooden forms placed at the end of the wagon. As there were only a few forms, it was only with great difficulty that all the men could be accommodated. When the last man had squeezed inside, there was hardly room for the prisoners to breathe, let alone to stretch their limbs. A wooden frame bearing heavy barbed wire was fixed across the wagon. As the frame was exactly the width and height of the truck, it imprisoned the inmates in an area measuring about ten feet by nine. Six German soldiers, under an N.C.O., then took up quarters in the free area, and after lighting a lamp and hanging it from the roof immediately outside the screen, they made themselves comfortable.

ESCAPE BY NIGHT

This state of affairs was clearly to persist until the train reached its destination—a demoralising thought! Usually, on prison trains, some slight gesture towards sanitation was made, but on this trip there was going to be no provision of this kind at all.

The prisoners asked one of the guards why such extreme precautions had been taken, even though escorts were provided. He replied, naïvely, that on a previous trip, some prisoners, who had been allowed more freedom, had leaped upon their captors during the night and ejected them through the doorway, while the train steamed on through the darkness. The guilty ones had, apparently, followed after a short interval, and had disappeared into the countryside. Unfortunately, history does not record what developments followed. This innocent confession provoked gales of laughter from the prisoners in the truck.

At last the train got under way, and the motion severely increased the discomfort of those on board. The wagons were badly sprung, much smaller than railway carriages, and con-

tained nothing to deaden the noise of the wheels. As a form of transport they could not be recommended, for when going at any speed, they developed a slow roll, together with a sharp, pitching movement, which made standing impossible and the din inside almost unbearable.

One sees occasional references to the unfortunate effects long journeys have on the condition of livestock. There are many ex-prisoners-of-war who know exactly why.

As the train rolled westward, the captives became acutely aware of their handcuffs, and these articles began to receive more and more attention. In one of the trucks a nail-file— forbidden article—made its appearance and after a short time the most effective technique was developed and perfected. One by one the handcuffs were placed quietly on the floor!

PLEA TO PRISONERS

One wit felt he could not let such a glorious opportunity go by. He passed the word along the rows that he was collecting handcuffs, and in next to no time, had a good selection. He struggled to his feet and made a short speech to the guard on duty on the other side of the wire grid (there was one on duty at all times to keep an eye on the captives), telling him that they had got tired of playing at convicts. Then he pushed the whole assortment of ironmongery through gaps in the wire!

The reaction was delightful. The sergeant, very conscious of his responsibility, came forward. He returned the handcuffs and ordered the prisoners to manacle themselves again! This produced hoots of laughter. The Germans had organized things so carefully that, not only could the prisoners not get out, but the guards could not get in! Horrible visions of developments at the first stop, when the officers in command of the guard would certainly inspect the train, apparently filled the sergeant's mind, for he suddenly stopped his blustering, and said that it would be quite all right for the handcuffs to be left off in the meantime, but would the prisoners please—*please*—put them on again as soon as the train pulled up. The men discussed the request and finally decided that, provided the guards did not give them reasons to change their minds, they would co-operate. This decision was taken somewhat reluctantly, for the thought of burying in an avalanche of handcuffs the first German officer to put his nose through the door was not lightly to be dismissed.

The train clattered on its way throughout the day. The prisoners ate sparingly of bread and German sausage, travelling rations with which they had been supplied. Some dozed at times; all suffered from cramp. The beauties of the countryside were hidden from them, for the door was open only a few inches, and it was impossible to see out from where they were sitting. There were, of course, no windows, but there was a ventilator, a foot wide



Pushing the handcuffs through gaps in the wire, he told the guards that the men were tired of playing at convicts.

and two feet long, high up in the side of the truck.

This was a standard fitting on cattle trucks, and had been used on many previous occasions by captives who wished to make an exit. The aperture was much too small for a normally-developed person, but prisoners have a tendency towards leanness.

In this case, however, the ventilator had been well shrouded in barbed wire nailed to the framework. It would have been just possible for a tall person to see out, provided he was situated immediately below it, but few considered the reward likely to be worth the effort.

In the evening the train slowed down and stopped. Those on board were allowed to dismount and stand by the side of the track, surrounded by guards. A few German officers

walked down the line to see if everything was in order. Then all entrained once more for the long, tiresome run through the night.

Among the prisoners on board that train was an escape specialist, who, before the move, had been planning to leave the camp, by some undisclosed means, and join up with the Czech partisans. These partisans were organizing themselves in preparation for active operations when the Second Front opened and the Germans found themselves on the defensive. Considerable information on the subject had been received, but the sudden transfer had upset the plans.

The man was Lieut. Wedderburn, from that fabulous force, the Special Air Service, which sent its members into enemy country by parachute and other means to wreak havoc on lines of communication, or carry out other dangerous assignments. As the train's destination had been declared as Brunswick, Wedderburn was faced with the alternatives of giving

up any hope of reaching Czechoslovakia, or devising a method of leaving the train. To any one else there would have been only one course to follow—acquiescence; but this word was not in Wedderburn's vocabulary. He was an accountant, stood about five-feet four-inches in height, and wore glasses and a rather droopy moustache. He looked neither robust, nor determined; but there his looks were completely misleading.

In the circumstances, there was only one way by which it was physically possible to escape from the train, and that was through the ventilator. The difficulties and hazards of this mode of exit were numerous and obvious. The ventilator was wired; a lamp burned over the prisoners' heads all the time; a German guard stood near the prisoners as they sat on their benches. Assuming all these problems could be overcome, Wedderburn would have to squeeze through the small aperture into the night, with the truck rolling and pitching, hang on to the side of the wagon until he got a foothold, and then leap off into the darkness, hoping to clear the signal wires, telegraph poles and to avoid all other obstacles such as fences and trees. If he were seen, he would have to dodge a hail of bullets fired by the guards in his own and the following trucks.

Wedderburn thoroughly considered all the obstacles—and began to make preparations. The guards in his truck were small in stature, and he saw that if the prisoners immediately inside the barbed wire were to stand up, the duty guard would not easily see what was going on behind them—provided his curiosity were not aroused. Right from the start of the trip, all the prisoners had been getting up at intervals to ease their cramped muscles. Wedderburn now organized the stand-up routine and got the men to practise it a few times to see if the Germans accepted it as natural. They did.

FURTIVE ATTACKS

During the next stand-up period, a hefty prisoner caught the wire round the ventilator and tried his strength on it. It showed signs of giving. A few more attempts and the wire was detached sufficiently. It had to be bent back into position after each effort, for the ventilator could quite easily be seen by the guard as soon as the prisoners sat down.

Now for the final effort! Wedderburn had his escaping gear, including, oddly and fortunately enough, a spare pair of boots, strongly secured in a separate parcel. This would have to follow him through the hole, as it would prove difficult enough to get his body through, without any extras in the pockets of his battle-dress.

It was essential to allow a reasonable time to elapse between each attack on the wire. The "exercises" had to look natural and the prisoners had to avoid looking at the ventilator, lest the guards' curiosity were aroused. The train roared on. Wedderburn had no means of knowing where they were. How tragic if he

made his attempt while the train was passing through a town! How was he to know? The train would move a long way during the operation, and the Germans had learned to maintain an efficient black-out. The minutes ticked by. The train rattled and jerked. Five of the guards were asleep on the straw; the one on duty looked bored.

The hurricane lamp was doing a rhythmic dance and casting its yellow light along the wagon. A prisoner yawned, rather obviously. One or two others rubbed their eyes and tried to look bored like the guard. Then one prisoner rose slowly and unsteadily to his feet, the others followed suit. Enough were standing to do the job. No use overdoing it. A hand silently swept the wire away. Wedderburn was lifted and pressed through the opening. There was no alarm! A few soft bumps as his feet felt along the outside of the truck. Now, only his fingers were visible, gripping the lower edge of the ventilator. Then, suddenly, they disappeared!

SLEEPY SENTINEL

The tension snapped inside the truck, and all relaxed for a moment. Wedderburn's kit was passed up and pushed through the aperture. There was not much chance of his finding it.

There were no other starters. No one else was prepared for the journey, or prepared to take the risk. The danger of getting stuck in the opening was considerable, and even a sleepy guard could hardly be expected to miss at six-feet.

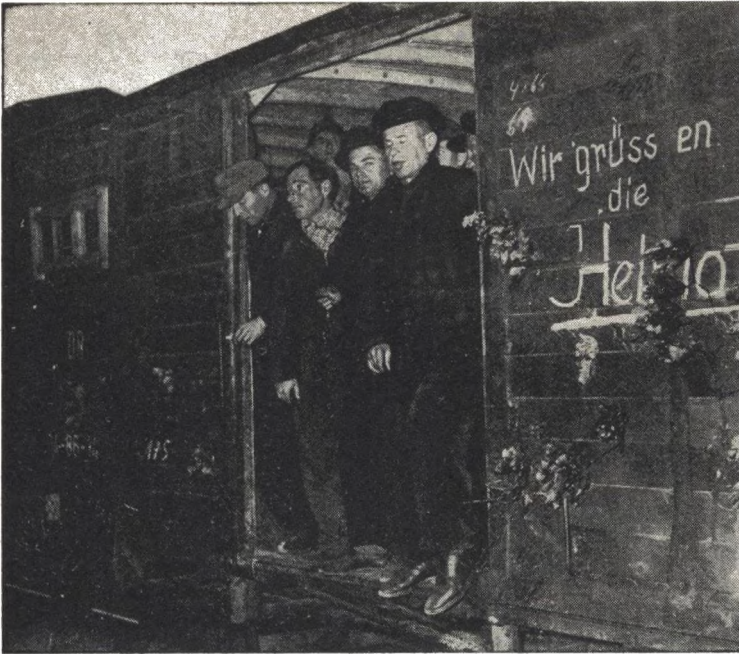
The standing prisoners sat down satisfied; something worth while had been done. All looked forward to developments at the other end; in the meantime, they went to sleep. It was the quickest way to pass the time.

The entire journey lasted more than two nights and a day. The train halted for quite a long time on a number of occasions. Obviously, it was not being given any particular priority. One of the stops was apparently in a large station, judging from the noise of trains moving and trucks being shunted. The destination was reached very early in the morning.

It was cold, and all the prisoners were weary of sitting on the hard wooden benches. People could be heard moving up and down outside. Guards were taking up positions round the train in case someone made a run for it. Little fear of that—the unfortunate prisoners could scarcely stand! Shortly afterwards, the wagon guards left the train and ordered the prisoners out. Not once had the Germans thought it necessary to count their charges while in transit. Their confidence was complete.

When the men stumbled, numb and stiff, out of the trucks, the frosty morning air hit them, and they shivered. Their boots, braces and belts were returned to them and the long column formed fives to be recounted.

In front of the parade was a high barbed wire fence, behind which were large brick



German prisoners return to Berlin from the Soviet Union, in the type of truck from which Wedderburn made his amazing escape.

The Senior British Officer stood during the whole pantomime, his face impassive, knowing full well what the retiring Commandant would have given his Iron Cross to know! When it was apparent that the guards had given up, the S.B.O. walked over to the retiring Commandant and asked him if it were true that one officer was unaccounted for? The Commandant could do nothing but admit the obvious. The S.B.O., in his most outraged voice, then asserted that, in view of

buildings, some of which had obviously been bombed. This, evidently, was to be the new camp.

Inside the barbed wire stood a large group of civilians. Odd to see so many non-uniformed men. They were members of the Gestapo, sent to search the prisoners as they entered the camp. Things were toughening up.

The parade was brought to attention, and a group of officers began to count. This was a most important count, because a new Commandant was taking over and the retiring one had to hand over the specified number of prisoners before his responsibilities ceased. The new man was going to make quite sure that he received the correct number of bodies. The counters worked slowly, carefully; there must be no mistake. There were fifteen hundred prisoners on parade, and it took an interminable time to count them.

They reached the end of the column. They had been excessively painstaking. They were one short! They could not be wrong. There were at least six officers in the counting party. Yet they *must* be wrong. No one could possibly have escaped. They counted again. The result was the same. They began to panic. They tightened up on the supervision, checked their rolls, counted again. They were still one short. They became apoplectic!

The retiring Commandant must have had frightening thoughts of what would happen when he reported to Headquarters. He would immediately be asked, "How did the prisoner escape, and where?" and he would be obliged to confess that he didn't know "how," and that the "where," might be anywhere between Brunswick and Czechoslovakia!

the very stringent security precautions which had been taken, the Germans must have done away with the officer, whoever he was. (The Germans did not know, and were not going to be told, the identity of the officer concerned.) The British Officer went further. He told the Commandant that he would be held personally responsible, and that a full report would be sent to the British Government, through the protecting power, Switzerland.

In due course, all the prisoners were transferred inside the wire, searched by the Gestapo, and subjected to an identification parade. In this, each prisoner's name was called, and he was obliged to come forward to have his identification established. For each man the Germans had a record card, which bore his description, finger prints and details of his "history" while in captivity, with photograph attached. After identification, each man was shepherded to another part of the camp; this process went on until the guards were left with a record card belonging to the person who was no longer there—Wedderburn. They were then able to pass on his name and description to those on the look-out for the escapee.

As an escape, Wedderburn's was surely an epic; because, in spite of all the difficulties, the Lieutenant reached his predetermined rendezvous. Unfortunately, he was later betrayed. After languishing in Prague jail, he was sent to the camp at Brunswick. But the Germans were not entitled to any credit for his recapture. They had taken every precaution to prevent an escape, but had been utterly outwitted.

There was the promise of tremendous power in the roar of the outboard motor, but it could not combat the might of the funnel-like whirlpool that swirled in the Vialala. Inevitably the lakatoi was sucked into the flood-impelled maelstrom and the man who tugged at her tiller faced a terrible death...

Caught

EVEN now I dream of Papuan river whirlpools, which is not surprising, for I was almost drowned in one. The terror of being dragged in a double dug-out canoe—or lakatoi as the natives call it—into the vortex of a spinning flood-impelled maelstrom was no picnic. It was something I had not bargained for when I resumed my job as demolition engineer in a run-down oil-drilling camp in Upoia, about seventy miles up the Vialala river in Western Papua.

Over nine months' drilling in almost bottomless soapstone formation had given the big Papuan oil company nothing but headaches. They transferred some of their headaches to me when I was detailed off to complete the job of dismantling a rig, fifty drillers' houses, huts, married quarters, a large mess and a popular liquor bar.

All machines, buildings and drilling gear had to be shipped down to the new drilling area at Ihu. The treacherous Vialala river is not wide, but in places it carries great whirlpools of brown water that draw any

Like a leech, I clung to the craft as it was sucked into the funnel-shaped whirlpool.



In A Whirlpool

object, big or small, into their vacuum-like funnels.

Everything in the area went along smoothly until Meta, my half-caste boss-boy, began to give trouble. He was the leader of a gang of river bucks who deliberately ignored my orders or lazed around in my absence.

A twenty-ton barge, with a native crew, was sent up the river from the company's base to collect machinery, timber and drilling gear I had ready for them. At first, Meta and his gang refused to load the incoming barge. I bribed them with trade tobacco and we all worked to get the twenty-tonner loaded on time.

After the barge had left, I was completely isolated and had no other means of getting out of the fever-stricken hole. The small wooden dinghy the company had left me was swamped by the swollen floods.

To be stranded at a spot over seventy miles up a treacherous Papuan river, with no fresh food or medical aid, was flirting with trouble.

DEATH-BITE THREAT

Lingering there, among unfriendly natives, and constantly risking being bitten by a death-adder or other venomous snake, did not appeal to me, and the following morning I explained my position over the radio to our chief engineer.

He replied that if I was having trouble with the river natives, I should sack them. He further suggested that I should have a couple of Ilimo logs carved out by any native boys I could spare for the job, and have them made into a boat or river lakatoi.

The double-log lakatoi is ideal for use on fast-flowing rivers like the Vialala. It is made by lashing together two solid canoes and attaching an outboard motor, and is capable of doing about two knots against a five-knot current.

We felled the trees and lopped them and I got them towed up the river by the twenty-ton barge when next it visited us.

They had to be cut, with axes and adzes, to their correct shape, and for this task I selected as a workshop the most level portion of the river bank, well above normal water level and about half a mile upstream from our demolition area.

Here we could work without disturbance and, when the job was completed, the two logs could be floated downstream to the camp, where I could fasten them together with steel straps, stays, bolts and lengths of pliable wire.

For days my little gang and I toiled on that low jungle bank that dripped with stifling humidity, and at last the two great thirty-foot logs were ready to be taken down river to the camp.

By
**GUY
BATHAM**



I was feeling very happy upon the completion of so arduous a task, but a glance at the sky warned me of trouble ahead. I bawled to the boys to collect the tools and prepare to leave for the camp in our dug-out canoes.

How we all got aboard those frail craft was a miracle; for the wind was blowing a gale and the drenching rain was blotting out sight of everything. Lightning stabbed down from greenish-black clouds and the wind came upstream like compressed air driven through a narrow funnel.

The surface water was being churned into white-capped waves, and we had only about three inches of freeboard on each of our canoes.

My two native boys babbled and raved in their native tongue, and paddled our canoe like crazy scullers, but in that storm every effort seemed futile.

My canoe sank, and the other one capsized soon afterwards. In the semi-darkness I felt myself being tossed about like a leaf.

Flapping sheets of lightning afforded brief glimpses of the river bank on either side. Just ahead of me I saw a couple of black heads bobbing about in the fast-flowing water and I recognized Paru, my new boss-boy, who was a powerful swimmer.

SENSELESS BUT SAFE

Consciousness must have been pummelled out of me, for the next I knew I was clawing at a sloping mud-bank and trying to climb on to it. I felt someone grasp me by the shoulders and drag me from the water and into a patch of brushwood. It was Paru.

After a while, I regained my senses sufficiently to sit up and wonder where we were. Paru told me that we were some distance from camp, and on the opposite side of the river bank.

I climbed a gnarled bread-fruit tree that was full of red meat ants, and found that Paru was right. I could see the kerosene lamps burning in the native compound where some of my work boys were practising a tribal dance.

Towards midnight the storm cleared, but the ants, leeches and mosquitoes remained to torture us for the rest of the night.

The following morning Paru hailed a passing canoe that carried four native girls in it. They took us aboard and paddled us across to our camp. I gave four sticks of trade tobacco to each of them for their services. They thanked me in Motu, grinned and went off upstream to their village.

Mavia and Orio, my personal and first-aid boys, had searched for me all night.

Two of my best axemen had been drowned and a third man of the canoe party had broken a leg.

I set the limb and gave Orio instructions to attend to him until I could ship him down to the doctor at Ihu, where he would remain until the leg was healed.

That evening, I decided to go along to the riverbank workshop and see how my two log canoes had fared in the storm.

Both were gone. With the rise of the river water they had floated off downstream. I was determined not to lose them for we had done much work on them and I was still without my river transport.

I sent a radio message to the drilling superintendent at base, asking him to instruct the native bargee to watch out for them. I was not very hopeful about the outcome, but on the following morning, when the twenty-ton barge arrived, my two freshly carved-out

ing down in my new lakatoi to have a few drinks with my friends and christen the craft.

Shortly after two o'clock, I tossed a change of clothes into a suitcase, pumped four army petrol drums full of fuel for the motor, got a bite to eat and, with my boys, Mavia and Paru, I started off on the seventy-mile journey down river.

STRIPPED FOR ACTION

While I was adjusting the carburettor and tuning the motor for the trip, a sharp shower burst over the river.

Automatically, I slid off my shorts and rolled them up in an old waterproof groundsheet. I'd learnt to do this so that after a shower I could put on fairly dry clothes. If this precaution was not taken during the rainy season a man would go around sopping wet most of the time.

I sat at the outboard controls stark naked, while Paru and Mavia shrugged off their cotton ramis (loincloths) and rolled them up, too, having learned the trick from me.

After a while I handed over the tiller to Paru, who knew the river better than I did, and we chugged down the tortuous stream in the pelting rain.

We must have been about half-way to the lower drilling camp, and it was getting late, when suddenly I heard a loud sucking noise coming from downstream.

The rain was like a slanting wall of water and I could not see either bank of the river.

We were on top of it before we saw it—a great, wide, funnel-like whirlpool swirling in the middle of the stream.

I yelled to Paru to pull the tiller well over and drive the big Johnson for all she was worth. I could see that we were being dragged into that rotating vortex and that the outboard was unable to pull us out.

Frantically I jumped across, snatched the controls from Paru and revved up that big Seahorse motor until I thought she would vibrate the lakatoi into matchwood. But it soon was obvious that we did not have sufficient power. The great whirlpool was dragging us back into its voracious maw, and there was nothing I could do about it.

Paru and Mavia dived overboard and tried to swim for the bank, and safety. I put my faith in those buoyancy tanks. I knew if they held, I could ride the lakatoi. I just had to hold on until she surfaced—or I drowned.

Lashing myself to the pine cross-members with a hepen rope that usually I used as a casting line, I sat in the hollowed-out portion of the canoe and waited. . . .



The author, Guy Batham, with one of his double-log craft on the Vialala river at Upoia.

logs were slung each side of the steel barge, and among the cargo was my big Johnson Seahorse engine to propel it.

I fitted two long, narrow, galvanized tanks under the belly of my craft to act as buoyancy tanks, and then attached the big Johnson Seahorse motor to the stern.

The powerful outboard worked like a charm and that evening I gave my new lakatoi a try-out on the river. She was as good as any speedboat, and could turn in her own length.

The following Saturday morning, I made a routine radio report to base, and told the operator that during the day I would be com-

I cannot give a detailed account of all that happened. I was not memorizing it all, I was fighting for my life.

I remember the two great logs standing almost on their ends as the craft was sucked down into the funnel-shaped whirlpool.

I clung like a leech to those dug-out logs with their buoyancy tanks, praying that they would surface after I had hit the bottom of the river.

The motor must have become waterlogged and stopped. The roar of that spinning water was like thunder.

My breath shot out of my lungs, my back felt broken, my forehead was heavily hit by the great spinning logs and I became light-headed. Hanging on for dear life, I was gurgling and choking, when I felt my watery world dropping from underneath me.

The lakatoi held together and soon I was riding it the hard way. Spinning down to the river depths, I slipped, struggled and clawed frantically, and must have got my fingers wedged in a crack between the buoyancy tanks and the canoes.

The craft finally broke up. It dissolved beneath me, with splintered logs and buckled buoyancy tanks gyrating in the whirlpool like straws. Grimly I hung on to a section of the lakatoi; I was half-drowned, gasping for air and knowing a man-destroying fear.

Suddenly my section of lakatoi surfaced. The water boiled over me and then receded, and I saw that I was washed among a great heap of debris, drift-wood and water-lilies near a black muddy bank. My piece of lakatoi was wedged against a floating tree-trunk that was alive with slimy leeches.

Bordering the river bank was a native garden. Weak, naked, and smothered in leeches and mud, I crawled to the low, slippery bank, and laid at the water's edge until daylight broke.

I must have fallen asleep, for I learned that it was nearly midday when some native women gardeners spotted me. Three of them came across to where I was lying on my stomach in the black slime of the river bank.

I'm sure that they thought they had found some new breed of edible jungle hog, for they came up and poked me with one of their digging sticks, half-expecting me to grunt. When I didn't they apparently thought that I was some crazy buck, from an up-river village, who had been washed down by the flood, for I was as black as the Vialala mud itself.

The three women were short, stocky and quite black, looking more negroid than Papuan. Their oily, black, curly hair crinkled down to their broad muscular shoulders. All wore grass-plaited skirts, but otherwise were naked.

One of them prodded me with her digging

spear again and, pinching my buttock, mumbled: "*Namo heria aniani*" (very good to eat).

They could have eaten me there and then for all I cared. I was like a drugged animal after the terrific buffeting I had taken from the great whirlpool.

I'm sure that if that jungle woman had possessed a knife, she'd have slit my throat and made *Boroma ania* (pig meat) out of me, and I would have been too weak to prevent her.

By sign language and with the use of a few words in their tongue that I had picked up, I explained the situation to the woman who seemed to be the head gardener.

She told the others to carry me into the village. By now, two more women had joined



This looks a peaceful enough scene, but very near this section of the Vialala river is the perilous whirlpool that gave the author a nightmare experience.

us, and four husky young native women made a rough stretcher of vines and saplings and carried me along a bush track to their village.

The old village chief scowled when he saw my naked condition, and learned that I was unable to walk. He promptly sent a messenger by canoe to the lower drilling camp.

The following day, the native labour superintendent, the company doctor and the chief engineer came up to the village on a twenty-ton barge. The doctor found that I had two broken ribs and two smashed fingers, and that my body was one mass of aching bruises.

It was some little time before I was able to return to duty, and in the days of inactivity that followed, I waited anxiously and very impatiently for news of Paru and Mavia.

But although a thorough and extensive search of the river and surrounding countryside was carried out, no trace of them was ever found.

It was generally believed that they had become the victims of the crocodiles that infested those treacherous waters. I had been indeed lucky to reach the river bank alive.

SPORTS DAY



Most noble and cultured of the nomadic tribes in the French Sudan are the Oulliminden Tuaregs. The author, who spent many years in Africa, had long wanted to visit a Tuareg encampment. Then, one day, the opportunity presented itself and during his stay with these proud and courteous warriors, he witnessed a Tuareg sports meeting—a fascinating and colourful event which he vividly describes in the "out of the rut" article below.

WHILE a guest of the French political officer in charge of Tuareg affairs at Timbuktu, I had the good fortune to visit the Oulliminden tribe of the Tuaregs. Their encampments were then located a few miles north of the River Niger, downstream from the modern Timbuktu, which is situated on the site of the ancient mud-built city and caravanserai of that name, once a great Tuareg stronghold.

There is an atmosphere of romance about these men and women of the desert. They are strict Moslems in most respects, but they reverse the normal Moslem customs in their family life. The high caste men are heavily veiled and recognize each other only by their eyes. It is very bad form—almost indecent—to expose the mouth, and they eat and drink under the veil.

The women, on the other hand, are unveiled, and the single wife and her daughters have always had much greater freedom than the women of other Moslem countries. Many of the women read and write their ancient Tamashek language, and are the

Crouching close to the ground, their eyes fixed upon each other, the swordsmen crept slowly around and around before springing into the attack.

keepers of the family and tribal records and traditions.

We visited three encampments. In each we received a most friendly welcome, and there appeared to be a very real liking for the political officer with whom I was travelling—one of the very few Europeans who had mastered the difficult Tamashek language.

On our arrival at the first camp, the best and largest leather shelters were ready for us. While our servants unpacked our kit, we visited the chief, and were presented to his wife and daughters. His wife was a very, very stout lady who reclined on a ground-level sofa. I presented her with a string of rather large French pearls and she received them with childish glee.

A friend had recommended American clocks and watches for the men, and pearls for the women. I found this advice was sound.

Large calabashes of milk were brought in by dark-skinned servants, or, more properly, domestic slaves. Glass tumblers were dipped into the milk and handed round together with small sweet cakes.

It was sunset, and the camels and cattle were being brought into large thorn enclosures for the night. With them, on spirited ponies, arrived the two sons of the chief, each fully armed with sword, steel lance, and white oryx hide shield. As the sons approached the place where their father and the political officer were talking, they raised their shields in salute, while their ponies went down on their knees.

I have only seen ponies do this on one

WITH THE VEILED WARRIORS

By
G. H. KEIGHLEY-BELL

other occasion—it is a most charming gesture of courtesy and respect.

The sons dismounted and joined us while their well-trained animals went off to look after themselves. Leaning lightly on their lances, their gowns flowing about their finely-formed arms and ankles, the two warriors looked the embodiment of manly grace.

Most of the young men were exceedingly vain. They delighted in posing and insisted on being photographed. Luckily, I had two cameras. One of them was not loaded and was, therefore, an ideal instrument with which to meet the constant demands to be photographed. I was not, however, invited to photograph the womenfolk.

The Tuareg is a great stickler for "form," and I could not but admire the calm, even tenor of life in this encampment. There was none of the feverish excitement of the Negro, nor was there any trace of the fierce, aggressive manner of the Arab. The elders had that grave dignity of bearing that demands good manners from the younger people. The children were particularly well behaved and did not stare. They appeared very mature for their respective ages.

Our visit occasioned no fuss; life continued normally, the men raising their hands in friendly salute and the women smiling openly.

In the evening, after a meal prepared by our own servants, we wandered over to join a large circle of men and women who were listening intently to the recital of tribal legends

in ballad form, being given by a young girl. Music was provided by reed and string instruments which filled the short intervals while the singer paused for a rest.

Our chairs were brought over, and we remained there in the brilliant desert moonlight until late into the night. At intervals we were handed glasses of tea, and what tea it was!

"Be careful," warned my French friend. "You'll have a sleepless night if you drink much of this stuff."

It was very strong, "stewed" tea, almost black, with sugar added in such quantity that it became a syrup. A wonderful pick-me-up; a marvellous drink to keep one going on a long, foodless journey; but not the drink to sleep on!

Though the moonlight reflected from the desert sand almost turned night into day, there was a sharp bite in the air, and I was not sorry when we took our leave and made for bed.



As the mounted referee looks on, a competitor in the lance-throwing event takes aim.

Before departing we were told that the next day there was to be a sports meeting and some racing. Already, we learned, competitors from other encampments had arrived and were now among the audience.

Apparently, it had become known that I had some clocks and watches in my baggage, and it was tactfully intimated that these would be highly appreciated as prizes!

The next day we rose early and breakfasted on cereals and tinned fruit, with large helpings of Devonshire cream which my cook had made overnight from some of the wonderfully rich milk that had been brought to us on our arrival in the camp.

Then, mounting our ponies, we joined the chief, who, seated on a beautiful white camel, was making his way with other spectators to a natural arena that lay about a mile from the camp. None of the women came to the meeting for they were busy preparing a feast that was to be ready for us on our return.

The first of the major events of the day was horse-racing over a three-mile course of mimosa-covered desert. The thorny mimosa bushes formed natural and most unpleasant obstacles which could not be jumped, and circumventing them without losing too much ground called for considerable skill.

Only the starting and finishing lines were marked, and the race was an all-out gallop between these two points. The riders were all fully-armed with lances, swords and shields, and until they began to thin out, the sixty or so starters swept over the ground like a charge of cavalry.

The shouts of the riders to their steeds, and their wild tribal battle cries, made the event a most stirring one, and the cheap and inelegant American alarm clock that I presented to the winner seemed a most inadequate reward for his prowess. Time and again I had to set the wretched thing ringing for the edification of this assembly of warriors, who crowded round and expressed the utmost wonder each time the alarm commenced to buzz. The alarm clock, in fact, aroused far more interest than any of the day's events. Luckily, the bell always worked and did not let me down!

During the intervals between the major events, we were entertained by a party of musicians and reciters, and were regaled with more strong, syrupy tea which the Tuareg drinks in large quantities and with great gusto.

It was interesting to note how few white Tuaregs were present at this gathering. The pure-blooded, white Tuaregs appear to be a dying race. The authorities estimate their number at about 70,000.

The very large majority were of the dark-skinned, Imrad fighting caste—children of white Tuareg men and their dark-skinned concubines. Here were, presumably, the pick of the young men from the surrounding encampments and, fair or dark-skinned, they all appeared true to type. Picturesque and graceful in pose, small-boned and with wrists and ankles like those of women, they give the impression of being too finely-bred to have much stamina. It is for this reason that they are seldom recruited for the French colonial army.

From the moment I arrived among them I decided that I must see one of the high caste white Tuaregs without his veil. Normally this would have been difficult, if not impossible, but it so happened that two of the tribe had just returned from a two-year pilgrimage to Mecca.

It may have been that on their pilgrimage they had found that other Moslem men did not wear veils, and had decided that the practice was rather overdone among their own people. Be that as it may, they willingly allowed me to photograph them unveiled. It was a unique opportunity, and I made the most of it!

The second event was a fencing display. There were some forty competitors, all wearing their normal, voluminous attire, and armed with big two-edged swords and oryx hide shields. The sword blades were sharp and I fully expected to see blood spilled, but none was.

It was not fencing as we understand it, nor was it the sword-play or sword-dancing that one sees in Turkey and Syria.

With his eyes fixed upon his adversary, and crouching close to the ground, each man crept slowly around and around, then suddenly sprang forward. There was a great clashing of blades, and a dull beating as sword struck shield. Finally the swordsmen broke away, having made no apparent effort to land a blow on their adversaries.

This sequence was repeated two or three times, but closely as I watched, I could not see how points were gained or lost. The rules and scoring were apparently clear enough to the participants and to the referee, however, for eventually the winner was brought up to receive one of my watches! I would have liked to learn more about the rules and judging in this event, but as I did not speak the

language, I had to rely on my French friend, who knew nothing and was too bored to ask. "*Ce n'est qu'une bêtise,*" was all that I could get from him.

The last event was lance-throwing for accuracy, and it produced the only hitch in the day's proceedings. There were two eliminating rounds before the final, and three targets of decreasing size, each consisting of three circles round a central peg. The targets had been marked on a piece of ground which had been carefully watered and levelled. Each of the fifty competitors threw one lance into the largest target. The best four performers then threw into the next smaller one, and lastly, the two finalists threw into the smallest ring.

There was great excitement over this final, which resulted in two beautiful throws, one just inside the central circle and one just out-



Pure-blooded white Tuaregs, like this handsome warrior, appear to be a dying race.



The winner of the horse race pictured after his all-out gallop over the three-mile course.

side. Then, with the lances in the ground, it was seen that something was wrong.

When distances were measured, it was found that the lance outside the circle was actually nearer the peg than the one inside—the peg was not at the centre of the circle.

This discovery caused some consternation among the spectators, most of whom, I suspect, had had a wager on the contest, but the two competitors calmly awaited the decision of the referee. The official declared in favour of the thrower whose lance was nearer the peg. The winner, however, disputed this decision. He declaimed at some length that his opponent, whose lance was within the circle, should be adjudged the winner and receive the prize, which incidentally, was yet another of my clocks.

The matter was finally referred to the chief who supported the referee. In the circumstances I could not resist giving the runner-up a prize, so I produced yet another watch, making my total for the day two alarm c l o c k s and three watches. The third watch I had presented to the winner of a boys' race on foot which I had instigated.

The music started up again, and a very tall warrior led the chanting and "conducted" the players of the stringed and reed instruments with his sword. I gathered that

his theme was in praise of the winners of the day's events, and he appeared to be laying it on fairly thick. I heard later that he had also said some highly flattering things about me and my clocks!

Thus ended this lively and fascinating meeting, and so to the feast that was awaiting us in camp.

The whole encampment was "at home" to all those who had come to take part in the meeting, and we two Europeans were guests of the chief.

The meal that was served as we sat in the shade of grass screens erected for the occasion, was a masterpiece of nomadic cooking, where the kitchen is the open desert, and the fuel is the dung of animals and a few mimosa bush roots.

Milk and rice are the staple food of the Tuareg, but on an occasion such as this, baked and highly-spiced lamb and desert game are added to the normal fare.

After the main dishes had been washed down with curded milk, a large assortment of European biscuits and sweets, purchased from some French trading firm, was produced.

After this enormous meal there was only one thing to do, and I slept like a log until after sundown. I was awakened with the news that the chief and some of the elders were on their way over to return our visit of the previous evening. While we had been sleeping, our cooks and boys, having got wind of the visit, had saved the situation by preparing a wonderful spread of "small-chop" and gages, with a suitable background of bottles.

Brandy was the favourite drink and our guests took it like gentlemen. As good Moslems they could not ask for brandy, but, politely, they never refused it, and our well-trained servants tactfully kept them well supplied.

So ended a most eventful day with the Tuaregs, of whom I had heard so much while

stationed in West Africa. They are a people quite apart from other African races, and the more I saw of them, the more I felt at home among them—this without speaking or understanding a word of their language.

Though they are complete nomads, roaming the high desert north of the Niger with their herds, their camels and their horses, they have the manners and way of life of a highly-cultured people, whose laws and customs must have been passed down from an age far earlier than the birth of the Moslem religion.



JUNGLE GUINEA PIGS

By MICHAEL HENNESSEY

When an aircraft nose-dives into the dense Malayan jungle, the crew know that surviving the crash is only half the battle. After that comes the long and often terrifying trek in search of civilization. This ordeal confronted Sgt. Ken McConnell when his Auster crashed in Malaya. Heroically he fought his way to safety—but it was a nightmare experience that left him ill and exhausted. Now the R.A.F. are helping to eliminate some of the terrors that aircrew have to face when they crash-land in the trackless forest.

FLYING aircraft over Malaya's dense jungle and mist-wreathed hills is a nerve-racking job at the best of times.

Sometimes, when the airplane is on a low-flying, supply-dropping mission and the weather is bad, it can be a nightmare.

For miles in every direction stretch tall, forbidding and closely-packed trees, unrelieved by even the smallest clearing. If the aircraft "goes in"—the R.A.F.'s euphemism for a crash—the crew's chances of survival are slight. Even if they escape from the wreck they have still to escape from the unfriendly jungle . . . a jungle full of treacherous swamps seething with leeches; a jungle which restricts progress to less than a mile a day; a jungle swarming with mosquitoes and a million other insects; a jungle wherein lurk tigers and deadly snakes.

It is a frightening prospect for anyone who parachutes or crashes into Malaya's trackless forests—but the R.A.F. are now helping to eliminate some of the terror from the ordeal through their newly-formed Jungle Survival School.

Directing the school—at R.A.F. Station



Where few have trodden before : Flt. Lt. Burcher and Sqn. Ldr. Podevin push on through the trackless jungle of British North Borneo.

Changi, Singapore—is Squadron Leader George Podevin. He told me, "Anyone who comes down in the jungle can quite easily die unless he knows the fundamental principles of survival in this difficult territory."

And George Podevin—17 years in the R.A.F.—should know. Just over a year ago he and three other R.A.F. officers from Changi undertook a two-week trek through some of the worst jungle of North Borneo.

They had to be certain that the R.A.F.'s jungle survival equipment would stand up to the toughest jungle conditions. So Squadron Leader Podevin, together with Wing Commander Lynch-Blosse, Flight Lieutenant "Bluey" Burcher and Flying Officer Tom Mann, a Medical Officer at Changi, plunged into the jungle a few miles north-west of Lahad Datu in British North Borneo.

The plan was to walk through the jungle from Lahad Datu to the River Tamegang, a distance of about twenty miles. From there the party were to paddle sixteen miles in their dinghies down to the River Kinabalangan, land, and then walk ten miles through jungle to the River Suanlamba. This was to be followed by a further ten miles' travel in dinghies to Sapagaya Bay, where the local police had offered to provide a launch that would take the party to Sandakan.

The route lay across some of the worst country in North Borneo. It was uninhabited except for small settlements of Orang Sungei, river people, along the banks of the River Kinabatangan. Apart from the natives, the only other prospective "companions" for the four airmen were elephants, snakes, monkeys, jungle pigs and crocodiles.

A local estate manager had told the four "pioneers" of an old Japanese track leading into the jungle some two miles west of their planned starting point and the party decided to make for this. A minute sampan, manned by a wizened old native, took them across the River Segama, and half-way across the four officers were drenched in a torrential downpour. Once across, they scrambled up the river bank and made an atap shelter on the jungle fringe to dry out their clothes and equipment and to have their first jungle meal.

At dawn they cooked breakfast and at 7.20 a.m. they set off along the Japanese track. After half a mile it petered out and the party had to hack their way through the jungle—a process that was to continue for the next twelve days.

It was terribly hot and they sweated freely as they threshed their way through the dense undergrowth.

Soon they came to some low hills covered with fairly thick foliage and their progress was considerably slowed, so much so that when they came to a stream meandering across their path they abandoned all thought of continuing and sank to the ground, exhausted, before pitching camp.

That evening the party made radio contact with the Sunderland flying-boat which had been briefed to keep in regular touch with them. At dusk they settled down to sleep in sweat-soaked clothes, and the nocturnal chorus of insects, crickets, birds and other animals assailed their ears. Fireflies hovered over the parachute-silk hammocks and mosquitoes duly celebrated the arrival of about eight hundred-weight of human flesh and blood in their patch of jungle.

At midnight the temperature slumped but the weary travellers managed to doze fitfully.

The next morning they were off again.

Visibility in the jungle varied from five to fifty yards with an average of about twenty. As they progressed day by day the going got worse. On the third day, after scrambling up the side of a rocky ravine slippery with moss and smelling strongly of snakes, the airmen were thankful to collapse into their hammocks. During the night, trumpeting elephants told them they were still in deep jungle.

On and on they plodded and by the fifth day they were rewarded with fairly reasonable going. They maintained a faster pace, hoping to make up for their slow progress at the start. They covered about three miles a day—but this "rapid" progress was soon to be halted.

Soon after noon on the eighth day, the party stumbled into a swamp—a swamp of black, stinking ooze into which they sank often up to their thighs. Undergrowth, overgrowth and rotting vegetation slowed them down to the pace of a lame snail and the leeches had a field day.

Exhausted, filthy and dispirited, the four officers struggled on for an hour before their feet touched firm ground. The ordinary jungle then looked almost like paradise after the misery of the swamp.

Progress speeded up again but on the twelfth day the party got lost. The first hour's march on that day led them through more swamp. This suggested that they were close to the Tamegang river. They headed west, and after a further hour's march they knew they were hopelessly off course. They floundered silently on, wondering how their supplies would last out. They all knew that they could wander aimlessly in the jungle for weeks without seeing any signs of habitation.

Then, suddenly, they heard what sounded like the noise of an axe hitting wood. George Podevin fired his .38 into the air to attract attention but it produced no reaction.

They stumbled on towards the sound. There it was again. The party shouted at the



Flt. Lt. Burcher is rowed across the River Segama by native canoeists.



The tiny port of Tamegang Besar where the Jungle Guinea Pigs embarked for their journey to the comparative civilization of Sukau.

tops of their voices and, to their relief, there came an answering shout.

Minutes later they were surrounded by friendly, smiling Malay woodcutters who gave them shelter. The Malays told them that a train could take them to the River Tamegang and a boat from there to Sukau on the Kinabatangan.

Thus, fifteen days after leaving Changi R.A.F. station, the jungle weary party arrived back and were soon reunited with their families.

The lessons learned from their forty-mile trek formed the basis of the syllabus of the Jungle Survival School established last year at Changi.

The Jungle Survival Course lasts for ten days and has a fortnightly intake of thirty men, including Dutch and American as well as British aircrew. The first phase is spent at Changi where the trainees sleep under canvas. Lectures and demonstrations are given and instructional films shown.

For the next phase of the course the men set out in a sea rescue launch for the island of Tekong Besar off the coast of Malaya. Here they put into practice what they have learned in theory. A quarter of a mile from the island shore they leap over the side of the launch, wearing Mae Wests, and clamber into a dinghy.

Once ashore they make camp and dry their clothes by the fire.

The next day the party move into the jungle to erect another camp.

If you parachute into the jungle you are almost certain to land in a tree and some of Malaya's trees are as much as 250 feet high.

The men on the course therefore learn how to lower themselves from perches hundreds of feet up in the trees, using special equipment.

They learn how to identify edible plants, how to cut bamboos to use as hunting weapons, cooking utensils and to make rafts, and how to set traps for animals.

They are also taught the international ground signals with which to communicate with any aircraft which may be sent to search for them.

The final test on the course is a navigational exercise. The party abandon camp and each member makes a solo trip to a designated spot deep in the island's primary jungle.

As a complement to the Jungle Survival School, Squadron Leader Podevin has formed a jungle rescue team consisting of three senior N.C.O.s — all physical training instructors—and two young medical orderlies. This team will be parachuted into the jungle in the event of a crash. Once on the scene they will attend to the injured and radio back information to their unit.

A clearing will then be made by blowing down trees with explosives and this will enable a helicopter to land and pick up the casualties.

Each member of the team—they call them Podevin's Paratroops—is thoroughly skilled in first aid, wireless telegraphy, tree-felling and parachuting and fully trained in the latest techniques for rescuing occupants of aircraft which have force-landed in the deep jungle.

Heading the Rescue Team is George Podevin himself. Podevin volunteered for service in the R.A.F. in 1939 and spent much of his time at the parachute school at Ringway near Manchester. He is a veteran of nearly 450 jumps.

Sergeant Gordon Gillibrand, 18 years in the R.A.F., Sergeant Richard Bridgman (125 jumps) and Flight Sergeant John Chaganis, who has been in the R.A.F. for nearly 23 years and who speaks fluent Malay, are the three N.C.O.s in the team. The two medical orderlies are L.A.C. Michael Hegarty and S.A.C. Pollock.

Aircraft accidents in Malaya are few and far between. The skill of the R.A.F. pilots and the care lavished on their machines by the ground mechanics combine to make flying over the dense jungle a far safer operation than might be imagined.

But crashes do occur in this almost forgotten theatre of war, and when they do, the lessons learned by the aircrew at the Jungle Survival School and prompt action by Podevin's Paratroops will, the R.A.F. hope, keep casualties to a virtually infinitesimal minimum.

Anyone who has known the horror of having to fight a way out of the jungle will appreciate the value of the work of Malaya's Jungle Guinea Pigs.



Between Ourselves

FISH FESTIVAL

A BOISTEROUS greeting announced the entry into my office recently of popular WIDE WORLD contributor, R. Forrest Webb, newly-returned from a visit to Nigeria.

Bearded and bronzed, he immediately went into rhapsodies about the amusing and amazing things he had seen during his trip. No doubt readers will be invited to share his adventures in the story upon which he is now working.

While visiting Argungu on the Sokoto river, Webb was privileged to witness one of the most colourful spectacles in Nigeria—the annual fishing festival.

This took the form of a drive up-river—by the men and older boys—to scoop out the fish which are found during the flood period after the rains.

The fishers were encouraged by the beating of drums and religious chanting by natives lining the riverbank.

Fish were caught in small nets and stowed in hollowed-out gourds, and when the six hundred fishermen had practically cleared the river, they prepared for the evening feast that marked the commencement of two days' festivities.

Singing, dancing, horse-racing and an agri-

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR

cultural show rounded off the event, at which Webb took the accompanying photograph of the fishing in progress.

ATOMIC ICE-SHIP

From Harrow, Middlesex, comes a report about a sensational Russian project.

Reader George Starr came by his interesting information because he is a student of the Russian language, and listens to Soviet broadcasts to improve his pronunciation.

Thus it was that he heard Moscow Radio tell of the world's first atomic ice-breaker, being built at a Leningrad shipyard and expected to be completed by the end of the year.

Electro-motors have been installed in the vessel, of 16,000-tons, which will be able to stay at sea for more than a year without re-fuelling.

Crew accommodation, food storage and refrigeration will occupy the space normally used for storing coal or fuel oil.

Every ship's officer will have a cabin to himself, while ratings will sleep two to a cabin, each of which will have upholstered furniture, reading lamps and hot and cold water. Temperature and humidity will be kept constant.

For off-duty hours there will be a cinema, a library, games room and concert room.

The atomic power plant itself will consist of



The annual fish festival has become one of Nigeria's most colourful spectacles.

a nuclear reactor using uranium. A thick, protective wall of glass will insulate it from the rest of the ship.

Steam produced by heat from the reactor will drive the turbo-generators which, in turn, will drive three electro-motors.

GOLD-MINING IN EIRE

An interesting letter from E. V. Malone, my Downpatrick correspondent, reports on progress being made by a veteran Irishman whose wildest dreams are coming true.

Mr. Michael Hughes, a native of Cork, spent many years prospecting, single-handed, for gold along the river valley near Castleblayney, not far from the Eire-Northern Ireland border.

Now comes the announcement that experts have expressed the opinion that he has struck a rich gold-bearing strata which should yield as much as an ounce of gold to the ton.

When one remembers that only a fraction of this proportion is regarded in the South African goldfields as an excellent commercial proposition, Mr. Hughes's high spirits can be readily understood.

His persistence, in the face of so many disappointments, is a tribute to his courage, for he has worked under a great physical handicap—a game leg, sustained during youthful mining operations in County Cork.

Lack of financial support hampered his operations, and on occasion he has been unable to afford an assay, for many people whom he invited to join his venture refused to believe that "Old Mike" had "struck it rich at last."

But to-day he has thirty men working for him, and has said that by the end of this year he will be able to offer employment to more than five hundred workers.

Irishmen the world over are congratulating him and expressing the hope that his efforts will place his country among the leading gold-mining nations of the world, and bring overdue prosperity to his fellow-countrymen.

PIGEONS BEAT TIGERS

The menace of man-eaters in the Bijepur area of Kalahandi, India, is causing the authorities considerable anxiety.

In one week three people were carried off by tigers, and the Kalahandi's superintendent of police ordered three shikar parties to comb the district in search of the killers.

Patrols were organized so that voters might not be frightened away from polling stations in those areas.

For many days, messenger pigeons were the only means of communication in the tiger-infested area.

CITY LIGHTS SIGNAL

Recent mention in these columns of the use of car headlights as a means of passing signals in Morse, has prompted Reader A. G. Knight, of Strathallyn, South Australia, to send me the following account of a most unusual sequel to an air race.

In October, 1934, a KLM Dutch airliner, competing in the Melbourne Centenary Air Race, got lost over Albury, New South Wales.

Pilots K. D. Parmentier and J. J. Moll had taken their machine high to avoid electrical storms, but were forced low again by masses of ice on the wings.

Anxiously they circled Albury, looking for a landing ground.

The city's engineer heard the machine, realized the pilots' plight and conceived a

brilliant idea—literally brilliant. He operated the town's main lighting switch to signal the name "Albury," and then organized a rally of motorists at the local racecourse.

The track was circled by cars whose headlights turned the place into a well-lit landing strip.

The plane was landed safely, in spite of the fact that the track was only seven hundred yards long and lay more than a foot deep in water following one of the most terrific rain-storms Albury had ever known.

WHO WANTS AN ISLAND?

Mr. Graham Kerr, a planter in New Caledonia, is offering the island of Sakau for sale.

Described as a Paradise Isle, in the New Hebrides group—miles north-east of Australia, it has a sandy bay, coral reef, spring water, sea teeming with fish and fertile soil suitable for growing coffee, cocoa and coconuts.



The New South Wales Government has had this posting-box erected on the summit of Mount Kosciusko, 7,398 feet above sea level, for the convenience of tourists. During the summer season the box is emptied weekly, and letters posted therein are overstamped with a pictorial postmark and the words "The Summit, Mt. Kosciusko, N.S.W., Roof of Australia."

It has been suggested that Sakau might make an excellent tropical holiday-camp site, if prospective buyers wish to exploit its commercial possibilities.

But most of our readers would probably prefer to use it as a retreat from the bustle of life in a modern town. Certainly it would be an ideal place to "get away from it all."

There is but one snag—the purchase price. Mr. Kerr is asking £17,500 for his Paradise Isle of Sakau.

SEA-BUS ON STILTS

A Dutch firm is planning a "water bus on stilts" service from the Hook of Holland to Harwich in England.

The strange craft would carry up to eighty passengers, and travel at a speed of nearly forty knots, thus making the crossing in three hours, half the time taken by railway steamers.

Known technically as hydro-fins, they would travel on the surface like normal motor-boats until reaching a speed of thirty knots, when their velocity makes them "stand up" on their strong legs.

They are already being used for passenger-carrying on the Swiss lakes, and others are planned for ferry service in the Mediterranean.

My shipping correspondent writes that critics of the Dutch scheme are pointing out that the North Sea will often be too rough for the bus-on-stilts. But the designers claim that because the craft offers less resistance to the sea and travels so fast, it will be as steady as normal boats.

They claim, further, that as there will be no rolling or pitching, passengers will not suffer from sea-sickness.

HONEY HUNT

An interesting sequel to the publication, in the December, 1956, *WIDE WORLD*, of the story of African honey birds that lead natives to bush bee-hives, is a letter from William Courtney, of Sarina, North Queensland.

Reader Courtney describes how the aborigines of Northern Australia catch the "tchugar bag" as they call wild honey.

The honey hunter will take his lubra (wife) to a spot where bees are at

work collecting pollen from flowering shrubs.

One of the insects is caught and a blob of down from a thistle or native grass is attached to it with a little wattle gum.

It is then released. As the bee heads for home, the native woman chases it, keeping her gaze fastened on the down-bedecked insect.

She ignores all else but the bee, so her husband has to run behind her, calling a warning each time it seems that she is about to collide with a bush, tree or rock.

When the bee enters its home-hive, the man pauses for breath while the equally-exhausted lubra forgets her own distress, climbs the tree and, making a cut in the hive, empties the honey into a bag.

This is afterwards handed to the man, who supervises the distribution of the fruits of their joint hunt.

THE CAPTAIN'S LADY

A correspondent signing himself "Distressed Deckhand" writes from Plymouth to ask for advice.

"I serve on a merchantman," he announces, "and have always referred to the skipper as 'the old man,' as do all my ship-mates. But on recent trips there has been a female on the bridge, the skipper's missus.

"Now what do we call her? 'The old woman' doesn't sound respectful, and to call her 'Mrs. Skipper' might suggest that she is running the old tub. What do you think?"

I put the problem to officials of leading shipping lines with offices in London, and have been offered the following suggestions:

Captain's lady, Bridgette, Ma'am, Mer Maid, Skipperess, First Lady, No. 1 Woman, Braid Bride and Madam Captain.

The spokesman of one line, who claimed to have sailed for many years with the skipper's wife aboard, contended that in any case the "men below" will call her the "boss's boss."

A twenty-one-year-old tragedy is recalled by this photograph, sent by a reader, of the famous four-master, the *Herzogin Cecile*, wrecked off the South Devon coast. One of the renowned Finnish fleet of sailing ships, she took part a number of times in the Grain Race from Australia to Britain.



The Wide World Brotherhood

The Wide World Brotherhood is a fraternity of men (and women) of goodwill, linked by the common bond of a love of travel and adventure. It has only one rule—a solemn pledge to treat fellow-members as brothers and, if need arises, give them any help possible. There is no annual subscription: the only necessary expense is 5s. (US 70c.) for the gilt-and-enamel buttonhole badge (brooch for ladies) and certificate of life membership. The badge should be worn whenever convenient to enable Brethren to recognize one another.

Although only seven years old, the Brotherhood is represented in over seventy different countries and is continually increasing its strength.

NOTE: Although we are, of course, always glad to give in these pages such details as addresses of secretaries and other officials of WIDE WORLD Brotherhood Clubs, Groups and Branches, this does not mean that they are representatives or agents for the proprietors of the WIDE WORLD Magazine, or that they have any authority to make contracts or enter into any arrangements on behalf of the Company. Nor, although we are always keenly interested in the spirit and ideals of the Brotherhood and to receive news of the activities of Clubs, Groups and Branches, can we accept responsibility for their conduct.—George Newnes, Limited, proprietors of the WIDE WORLD Magazine

RALLY NEWS

IT is expected that many overseas guests will be in England for the Third World Rally of the Brotherhood, being held this year in Plymouth on September 21-22.

In order that accommodation may be arranged for all Brothers wishing to attend this annual get-together, it is requested that bookings be made at an early date.

Full details may be obtained from Mr. W. Stratton, at 18, St. Vincent Street, Keyham, Plymouth, Devon.

TRAVEL TOPICS

Who wants to visit Portuguese East Africa, tour New Zealand, travel all round the English coast or hitch-hike through the Continent?

Companions are sought by Brothers planning these trips.

Brother A. E. Bate, of 35, Distaff Road, Poynton, Cheshire, is making the African trip and Brother M. E. Baughan, of 34, Shelbourne Road, Tottenham, London, N.17, proposes the New Zealand visit.

A tour of the English coast is the plan of Brother L. Wilsell, of Staunton Harold Hall, Ashby-de-la-Zouche, Leicestershire, while the Continental hitch-hiking holiday is the idea of Brother Paul McCreery, of 133, Silwood Street, Deptford, London, S.E.16.

... THE LADIES, TOO

Miss B. Cox, of 2, Wilson's Cottages, Wilson's Lane, East Farleigh, Kent, is planning a trip to California, U.S.A., and seeks a companion for the journey.

Adventurous Miss Victoria Dainton, of Dorchester Court, Camberwell, London, S.E.5,

proposes to make a hitch-hiking tour of England and Scotland, and invites a girl, interested in agriculture, to accompany her.

CLUBBING TOGETHER

Brother John Langin, of 1, Balmoral Terrace, Trinity Hill, Jersey, Channel Islands, would like to hear from members interested in forming a club in the district.

Forming a Brotherhood club in Cardiff is the plan of Brother I. T. Hurman, of 24, Vishwell Road, Canton, Cardiff, who invites interested Brothers to discuss the scheme.

Brother B. Williams, of Little Orchard Bungalow, Upper Eashing, near Godalming, Surrey, invites help in forming a Brotherhood club in the Godalming area.

Brothers overseas are also planning the formation of branches in their neighbourhoods, and would be grateful for help and advice. They are:

Brother A. Veeraswamy, of 37, Dr. Joseph Riviere Street, Port Louis, Mauritius, Indian Ocean; Brother Oswald McDavidson, of 25, North Street, Lacytown, Georgetown, British Guiana, South America; and Brother M. A. Malik, P.O. Box 318, Lahore, West Pakistan.

EMIGRANTS' TRAIL

The Big Trek of emigrants leaving Britain to seek a new life in Commonwealth countries continues.

While many Brothers have been fortunate enough to secure offers of help in the new home of their choice, several others have written to invite advice and assistance in settling in a strange land.

Before leaving on the great adventure.

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 5s. od. (Canada 70c.) for Buttonhole Badge and Certificate of Life Membership.

(Block Letters, please.)

NAME

ADDRESS

American readers can send International Money Orders (70c.) Stamps and coins cannot be accepted.

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE MADE ON THIS FORM.

PERIQUE—AND THE PIPE OF PEACE

Cricket— and Three Nuns



SETTLE yourself under the trees. Give a thought to the batsmen, fielders and umpires who are going to please you, or displease you, for the next few hours. And then light up your pipe of Three Nuns tobacco. Cricket may be full of glorious uncertainties—but Three Nuns is always a glorious certainty. The reason is Perique—that rare tobacco which once filled the American Indians' pipe of peace and is now so subtly blended in Three Nuns. Rich indeed is the pleasure of the Perique blend, as all Three Nuns smokers know.



TN35F

Three Nuns

with the black heart of Perique

Brother James McCallum, of 250, Kilsyth Road, Banknock by Bonnybridge, Stirlingshire, would like to hear about his prospects in Australia.

Brother H. G. Jack, of 56, Mackenzie Place, Avoch, Ross-shire, is a fisherman emigrating shortly to Canada. He would be grateful for information and help in getting employment there.

Tasmania is the choice of Brother James Mowbray, of 45, Bank Place, Leslie, Fife, who would appreciate advice about his prospects "down under."

Brother D. A. Mann, of 28, Alexander Road, Mutley, Plymouth, Devon, seeks information about emigration to Kenya and would be grateful for help.

who are invited to write to him about their needs.

Brother R. Howe-Smith, of 72, Lansdowne Road, Crumpsall, Manchester, 8, is a tape recorder enthusiast who is eager to exchange recordings with Brothers who share his interest.



Smiling faces at a social evening held by the Christchurch, New Zealand, Branch, make this the month's choice in our "Pictures from the Clubs" series.

HOPING TO HEAR . . .

Brother Don Hallington, a full-time missionary, of Berea Bible Seminary, P.O. Box 423, Kroonstad, Orange Free State, South Africa, would like to hear from Brothers interested in missionary work.

Mrs. M. Morrison, of 60, Aberconway Street, Blidworth, near Mansfield, Notts, collects footballs on behalf of the Missionary League. These, and other sports kit are required for poor African children.

Brother Francis P. Healey, of Ward M13, Deva Hospital, Upton-by-Chester, would be grateful for letters to relieve the monotony of weeks spent in bed.

BACK NUMBERS MART

Brother Allen Forester, c/o Zec Ltd., 128, Baker Street, London, W.1, invites offers for the first four volumes of WIDE WORLD.

COLLECTORS' COLUMN

Collecting automobile badges is the hobby of Brother Colin E. Freestone, of 568, Englehardt Street, Albury, New South Wales, Australia, who wishes to add to his collection badges used in other countries. Correspondence on the topic is invited.

Brother Stanley Smith, of 9, Newark Road, Southwell, Notts, is anxious to help stamp collecting members of the Brotherhood,

BROTHERHOOD SHOP-WINDOW

The following articles are available to Brethren only, post free, to any part of the world. *Quote your official number when ordering.*

W.W.B. TIE.—British-made pure silk. Navy-blue, with small woven reproductions of badge in red and silver. Price 17s. 6d. (U.S.A. \$2.45).

W.W.B. MOTOR-CAR TRANSFER.—3 in. reproduction of badge, in gold and colours, for windscreen or window of car. Price 1s. (U.S.A. 15 cents) with instructions for fixing.

W.W.B. SHIELDS.—Handsome wall-ornaments, 7 in. x 5 in. Badge in gold and colours on dark oak shield, with gilt scroll bearing member's name and number (state if latter is required). Price 25s. (U.S.A. \$3.60).

W.W.B. SEALS.—Miniatures of badge in gold and colours with gummed backs. For use on envelopes or to convert ordinary notepaper into "official" stationery. Ideal for authenticating "Pen-Friend" or W.W.B. Club letters. Price 3s. per 100 (U.S.A. 42 cents).

W.W.B. MUFFLER.—30 in. square of heavy-weight pure silk; replica of tie. Splendid for sports or winter. Price 45s. (U.S.A. \$6.00).

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W.W.B. PENNANT.—Triangular dark-blue flag, showing badge in red and yellow, for cycle or radiator-cap of car. About 7 in. long, complete with metal mast and nuts for fixing. Price 3s. 6d. (U.S.A. 50 cents).

Address orders to the Registrar, Wide World Brotherhood, Tower House, Southampton St., Strand, London, W.C.2; make all remittances payable to Messrs. G. Newnes, Ltd., and cross them for payment through a bank.

LIVING SEA HISTORY

STROLLING along Seaport Street in Mystic, Connecticut, you probably would gaze about in amazement and feel yourself transported back to the middle of the nineteenth century. For riding at the dockside is a full-rigged whaling-ship, tarred, painted and straining to be off to the South Seas and Antarctica.

The cobbled street along the wharf is lined with buildings that seem to have popped out of a history book. The signs over the bullseye windows appear strange to the modern glance.

Apothecary, shipsmith, sail-loft, ropers, ship's carpenter, lobster shack, rigging loft, clockmaker, the Aloha Church, the counting house—all are there.

Looking beyond the whaler *Charles W. Morgan*, along the wharf and through the squared yards, rigging and masts of other sailing ships, you feel to-day's rushed, unromantic world recede farther into the peace of these graceful surroundings.

It was the desire to produce this effect of having recaptured the past which prompted the Marine Historical Association to re-create the town of Mystic Seaport on the banks of Mystic River.

Some thirty years ago this Association was founded by three local businessmen in an endeavour to preserve the traditions and history of New England's coast.

Fearing that some of the finest spirit of America might die with the passage of time, these farsighted men set about making a graphic record of those dauntless Yankee whalers of long ago.

EPIC REVELATIONS

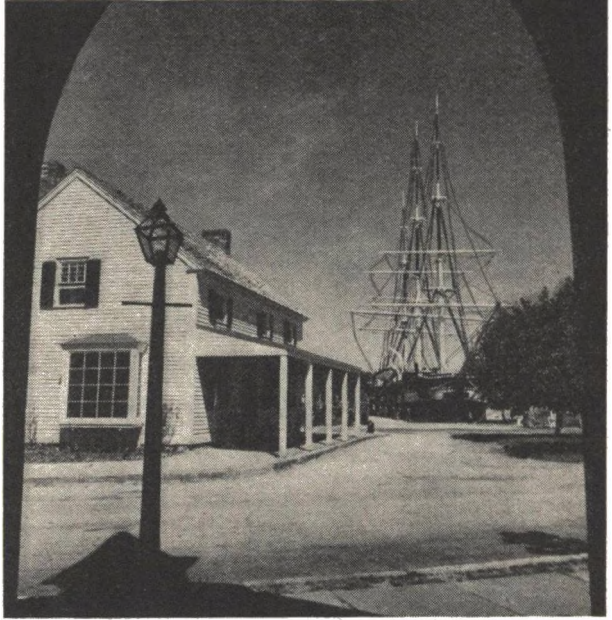
These seafarers sailed to the ends of the earth to bring wealth to the young, growing country when wealth was desperately needed.

The story of the men of Nantucket, New Bedford and Boston was often told, but the port of Mystic had fallen into disuse and her history lay among the rotting timbers of her deserted shipyards.

Work began slowly, but each facet of rebuilding revealed another epic of far voyaging.

By November, 1941, a small museum was a thriving attraction, with its array of log-books, ship-models and paintings.

At that time, the Association brought to the wharf the *Charles W. Morgan*, hundred-year-old sole survivor of the age of wooden whaling ships. Battered as she was, stripped of paint, brass, rigging and spars, her refurbishing



The *Charles W. Morgan*, survivor of the age of wooden whaling ships, rides at the dockside.

brought with it the sweeping idea of rebuilding the seaport as it was at the time of New England's maritime heyday.

To-day, a community thrives in an environment essential to a seafaring town of the 1840s.

Grouped around the village green are the tiny red schoolhouse, the general store, several small white houses, the Fishtown Chapel and the Spouter Tavern.

Strolling towards the masts and spars that rise above the docks, and the bowsprits that thrust out over the cobbles, you read the romance of these graceful ships in their brightly painted names.

Here is the last resting place of the square-rigged *Joseph Conrad*, which was once sailed round the world by that master-mariner Alan Villiers, a popular contributor to *WIDE WORLD*, and Commander of the twentieth-century *Mayflower*, built to re-enact the epic voyage of the Pilgrim Fathers.

Here, the *Regina M.*, last of the New England pinkys, is being completely rebuilt on the slipway and in a nearby ferryslip is the last of the side-wheel ferryboats, the *Brinckerhoff*.

Such a unique method of presenting history ensures the popularity of this amazing community of the past.

S. ALLINSON.

Travellers' Tales

It's a Wonderful World

Poisonous snakes have a flat head, and non-poisonous ones a more rounded head. When poisonous snakes bite, they leave two small wounds (the two marks of the teeth) which do not bleed. Wounds caused by the bite of a non-poisonous snake bleed. Poisonous snakes bring living young into the world; non-poisonous ones lay eggs.

I got to know a curiosity of Mexico, the Mercado del Volador—or thieves' market. I had lost the key to my suit-case and enquired for a locksmith. The porter said, "Why pay a lot of money?—go to the thieves' market." I was taken there and in a few minutes an "honourable" dealer of this market had made me a new key at very low cost, which functioned just as well as the old one. The market is quite large and is like the *marche aux puces* in Paris. I was told that when anything is stolen, instead of going to the police, people wait a few days and then go to the thieves' market in order to buy back their goods cheaply.

The Hoover Dam is 726 ft. high, 660 ft. wide at the base and 1,244 ft. across the top. The concrete used for building the dam, the tunnels and the shafts would have been sufficient to build a road five feet wide from the North to the South Pole.

Those are just a few of the innumerable scraps of interesting information to be found in "Thirty Years Travelling Round the World," by Hans Grieshaber (Robert Hale, 21s.). The author takes us on a lively tour of over fifty countries and the book contains a colossal number of photographs—259 to be precise, most of them first class.

Turtles' Graveyard

The whole surroundings, lifeless and abandoned, suggested a vast cemetery. Between the



Wild, primitive, lonely. . . . This beautiful photograph is vividly symbolic of the North American Indian's life. It is reproduced from "Thirty Years' Travelling Round the World," reviewed above.



"Mokivu, a typical African native witch-doctor. The charms around his neck consist of horns, lion claws, wild pig tusks, bladders and other parts of animals and reptiles. Each charm is reputed to have some magical power." Thus says Marjorie Michael in her book, "I Married a Hunter" (Odhams, 16s.), which gives a woman's-eye view of life in the jungle with a wild animal photographer.

swirling sea and the parched coconut palms, with the wall of virgin forest behind them, lay that wide shore strewn with skeletons!

Java's palm-fringed shores have been rapturously sung in many a poem, but no one has written about the turtles' cemetery of Tandjung Sodong. Innumerable skeletons of giant turtles lay there in the utmost confusion. Most of them had probably been there for many years, for they now consisted only of great white bones. Other carapaces still contained remains of rotting flesh.

The existence or otherwise of the elephants' graveyard has long been a subject for argument, though largely dismissed as legend in recent years. But I had never heard of a turtles' graveyard until I read the above description in "Tigermen of Anai," by Ton Schilling (George Allen and Unwin, 16s.). The author explains, in this first-rate book of jungle adventure in the East Indies, that when the turtles come ashore they are attacked by savage wild dogs. He witnessed one of these moonlight encounters and describes it with a grim and macabre vividness.

This book has the real tang of the jungle, and many of the experiences the author relates are unique and exciting.

Menacing Weed

The pernicious water hyacinth clogs every stream in Burma. . . .

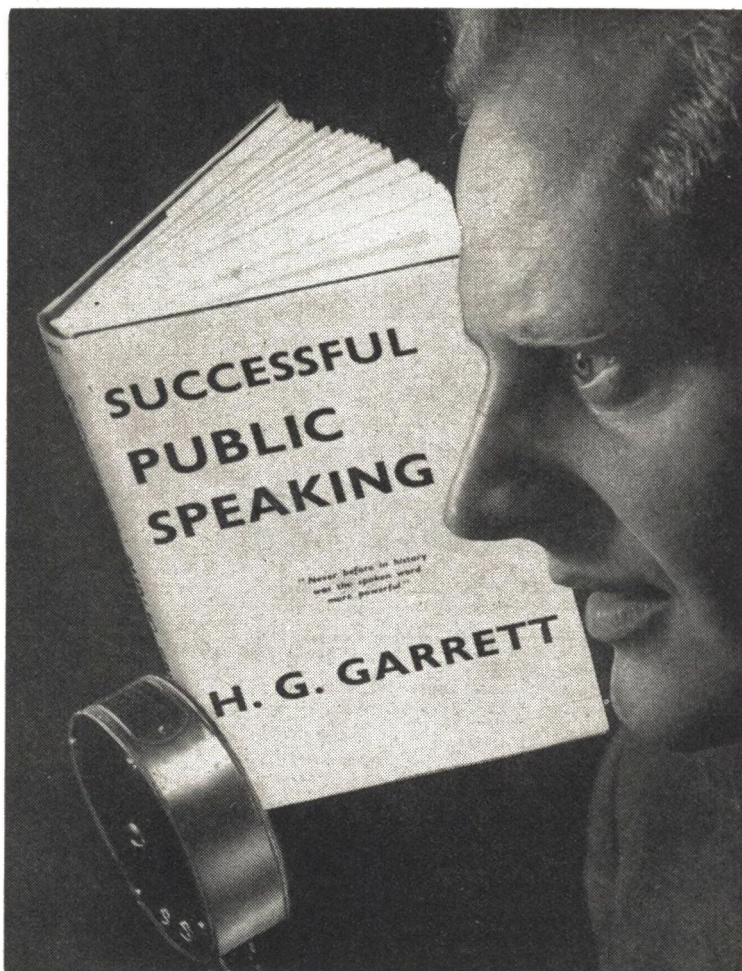
The story goes that an American lady-tourist was so fascinated by the floating hyacinths she saw on some South Sea island that she took a few plants on board ship with her and

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A sight to terrify even the most indomitable man is an angry tiger at close quarters. This fine picture is to be found in "Tigermen of Anai," reviewed on the previous page.

deposited a plant here and there in each of the countries she later visited. If that story is true she certainly messed up Burma for all time unless someone can find some way to turn these hyacinths into fertilizer.

So states Gordon S. Seagrave, M.D., in his new book "My Hospital in the Hills" (Robert Hale, 18s.), the inspiring account of a doctor's efforts to care for the sick and to train nurses during the troublous and dangerous period of rebellion that followed after Burma became independent.

VITAL BOOKS

THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF YOGA 11/6

Illustrated. 4th Impression. 9/3

ABOUT YOGA—The Complete Philosophy. 5th Impression. 9/3
 Two fascinating books by Harvey Day, providing an explanation of the philosophy and a practical illustrated exposition of this ancient science adapted to modern requirements. They describe the benefits of *Yoga Breathing*—How it can induce *Sound Sleep*—Its effect on the *Emotions*—How it will *Strengthen Nerves*—Create *Healthier Glands*: *Control Weight* and *Preserve Youth*—How it will *Stimulate Clear Thinking*, etc. These are books for everyone, each is complete in itself and can be bought separately if desired.

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SELF HYPNOSIS Its Theory, Technique and Application. 11/3

By **MELVIN POWERS**.
 The mind and brain are fascinating actualities of unlimited potential. By using the technique of self hypnosis, one can open the way to self realisation, success, personal satisfaction and happiness.

YOUR MIND AND HOW TO USE IT 8/3

A complete course of self-instruction by W. J. Enever, the founder of Peimianism. Deals with all essential mental needs: concentration, memory, self-confidence, fear, inferiority feelings, will-power, etc. It offers a plan for developing a trained mind at a fraction of the usual cost.

THE TEXT BOOK OF JU-JUTSU By S. K. UYENISHI. 9/3

The recognised text book of the art of ju-jutsu. Explanatory photographs and concise instructions can be fully understood by the complete novice.

THE ART OF MEETING PEOPLE 6/6

By **E. H. WELFORD** (Director of The Peimian Institute, Australia).
 This book provides information on the principles governing our relations with others. Includes Chapters on *Speaking Easely*, *The Material for Conversation*, *The Attitude of Mind*, *Public Speaking*, etc.

YOUR SIGHT: Care and Improvement by Natural Methods. 5/6

By **C. LESLIE THOMSON, B.Sc.**
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 Dept. 131A, 91, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.2

Jobbing Along

The Bluebills who left first were for the California and Arizona cotton fields and fruit orchards. Most of our friends worked the Northern harvests which, of course, started later, and they remained at the beach for a couple of months to rest before hitting the road. Some had employers for whom they worked every year. The others just lit out and took their chances in the open, labour market.

The Northern harvest began in Western Oregon in May with strawberries and asparagus, followed by the June beans. From Oregon the fruit trappers move to eastern and central Washington for the soft fruits: cherries, plums, prunes and apricots, then take in the apples around Yakima, Wenatchee and Chelan. That is the final stop on their tour of the fruit circuit, except for a few of the Bluebills who stay on to work the Washington wheat harvests.

The "Bluebills" are people with itching feet, who can't stay put, but work their way across a continent, taking on seasonal jobs. Norah Berg lived among them for a long time, although she wasn't a hobo. She lived in a shack near the sea and, with her husband, made a living beachcombing, digging clams, and by any other means that cropped up. Her book "Lady on the Beach" (Alvin Redman, 15s.), written with Charles Samuels, gives a simple but fascinating picture of a highly individual mode of life.

"Happy Arabia"

A film manager had applied to the old Imam for permission to install a cinema.



A "bar of gold" helps solve an export problem

A tense conference room. Anxious faces exchange glances. Pipe in hand, he gets to his feet: "Gentlemen, I think we can solve this problem."

Minutes later, the tension is gone. Everyone is looking at this man who always has the answers, always from the mellow mood induced by his pipe of Cut Golden Bar.

Cut Golden Bar tobacco is, almost literally, "cut from a bar of gold." Selected leaves are tightly compressed into a solid bar for special treatment. In this process each leaf takes flavour from its neighbours and a rich maturity is achieved which gives Cut Golden Bar its characteristic quality. **In flake form or ready for your pipe—4/8 an oz.**



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By applying promptly you will have the opportunity of enrolling at very moderate terms. Many students earn the fee several times over during tuition.



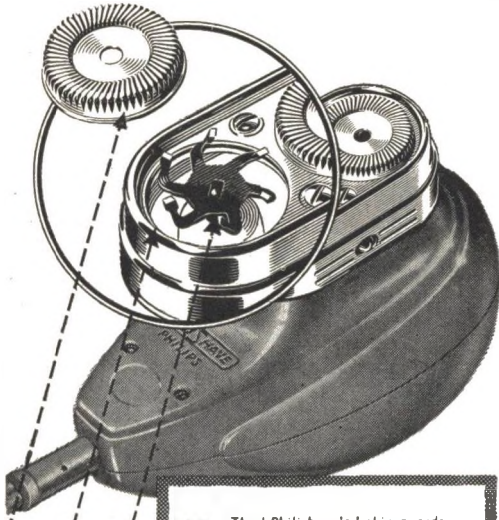
Barbour STORMCOATS

Men who must be out in all weathers keep dry right through the longest, wettest day in Barbour's famed Beacon Thornproof—the toughest, hardest wearing watertight coat made. Unaffected by climate. Three-quarter coat 42in. long, lined body and sleeves, 112/6. Full length single-breasted coat, 130/-. Stormfront riding style, 147/-. Long Leggings, 42/-. Overseas postage extra.

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The 'Philishave's' skin-guards are slotted to catch hairs growing in every direction.

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Because the 'Philishave's' blades rotate they shave every hair without pulling or clipping or scraping.

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PHILIPS PHILISHAVE

the dry shaver with the biggest world sale

A PRODUCT OF



PHILIPS ELECTRICAL LTD

(PS701D)

"I agree," the latter had said, "but on three conditions."

"What are they?" the fellow had asked hopefully.

"First, that nothing be shown against either religion or régime."

"That goes without saying."

"Second, that no women shall appear in the films."

"That's a little more difficult," the fellow had replied awkwardly, "but we shall do our best."

"And finally," the Imam had concluded, "that admission be free to everybody."

The old Imam, it seems, had no lack of humour, and there is still no cinema in Sana.

Small wonder they call the Yemen "Happy Arabia"! The story is told by Claudie Fayein, one of the few Westerners to be allowed there, in "A French Doctor in the Yemen" (Robert Hale, 21s.). Her keenly observant account of what she saw during her eighteen months under contract to the Imam is therefore all the more interesting. As a woman, Dr. Fayein was allowed inside the harems and gives us a picture of those "secret places" which may correct the mistakes passed on to the public by Hollywood versions of the subject.

Other Books Received

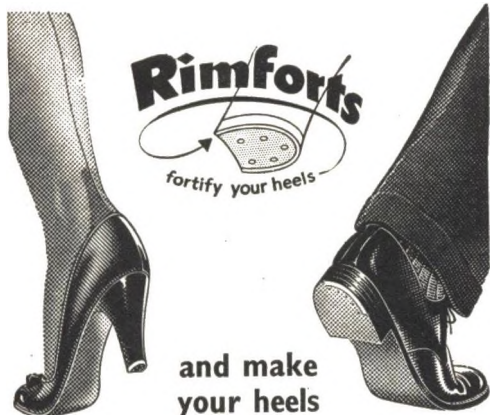
"WHO RIDES ON THE RIVER," by J. K. Ewers (Angus and Robertson, 16s.). Although told in novel form, this story of Sturt's exploration of the Murrumbidgee and Murray rivers is well worth the attention of the true adventure lover, for although fictitious with regard to certain incidents, and even though a little romance has been introduced, the basic, epic story of one of the major feats of exploration has not thereby suffered.

"JUNGLE MISSION," by Rene Piesers (Hutchinson, 21s.). During the Viet-Nam, Viet-Minh fighting in Indo-China the author was instructed to win the friendship of a native tribe. He was successful in making himself one of themselves—they called him "the father with the white hair," and satisfactorily accomplished his task. It was necessary for him to take a native wife and, later, in order to win the alliance of another tribe, a second spouse. This book is a very readable account of jungle warfare and of native peoples, with a very "human" feminine angle. T. H.



The calm placidity of yesteryear is conveyed by this picture in "Pembrokeshire," by R. M. Lockley (Robert Hale, Ltd., 18s.). It shows a fisherman with his pots in the remote hamlet of Marloes. This is an away-from-it-all book about a largely away-from-it-all corner of Britain.

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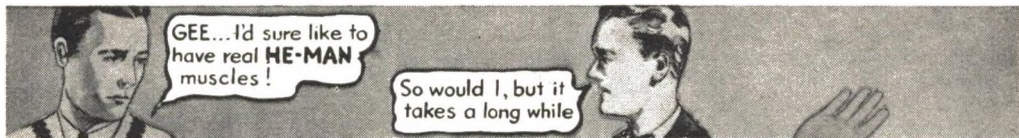
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Here you see my actual photo, no painted muscles, but the camera's honest proof of what I did for my body with “Dynamic-Tension.” I used to be a flat-chested, spindle-armed, seven-stone weakling. I was worried—I studied myself and found a new way to build myself up—a sure, simple, quick and natural way—“Dynamic-Tension.” The method that in a short time won me the title, “The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man.”

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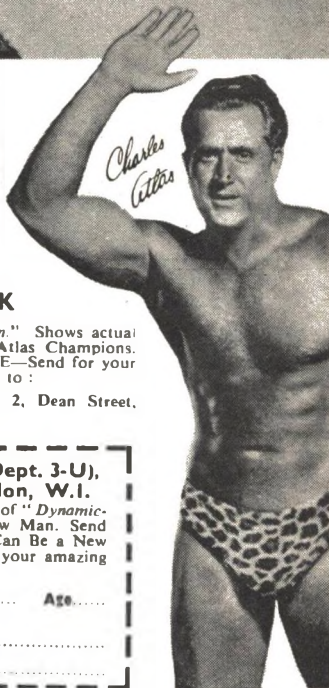
Tells all about “Dynamic-Tension.” Shows actual photos of men I've made into Atlas Champions. It's a valuable book and it's FREE—Send for your copy TO-DAY. Post the coupon to:

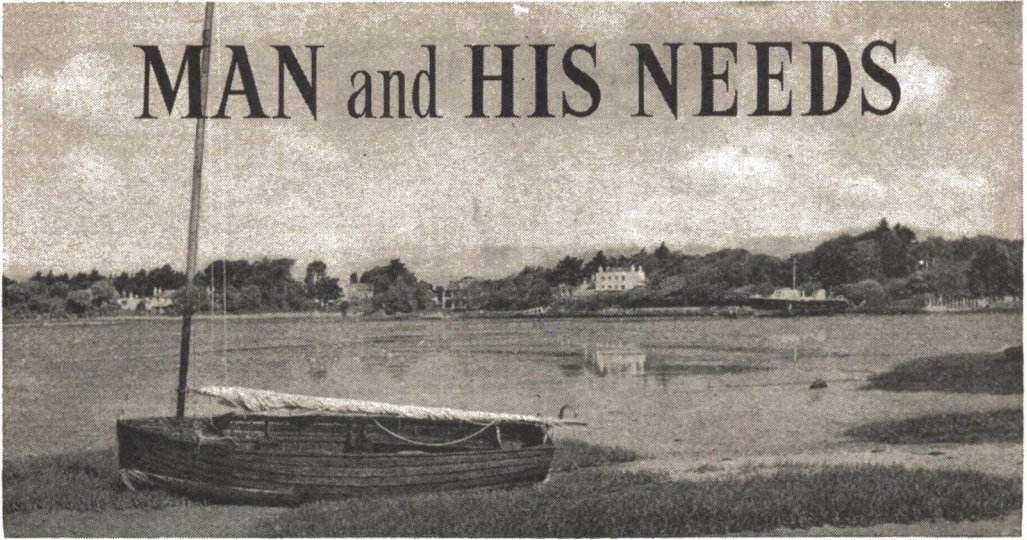
CHARLES ATLAS (Dept. 3-U), 2, Dean Street, London, W.1.

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Picturesque Mudeford, at the mouth of the River Avon, is just another little Hampshire spot where people love to "mess about with boats."

MAN and HIS NEEDS

By "THE CAPTAIN"

INSECT WARFARE

I KNOW I shall make some overseas readers smile when I refer to insect nuisance in the home-country. But even if this form of pestilence is slight here compared with warmer places, it still can be irritating in more senses than one.

The real invading season is now on in Britain. Nightly intrusion seems to worsen as summer evenings shorten, mainly, I think, because light attracts most flying insects and not only moths gather round porch lights.

I can wholeheartedly recommend a household spray, packed in press-button, auto-spraying tins. It is quickly toxic to insects, but quite harmless to humans and animals.

It is not an entirely new product. In fact I first used it about three years ago.

There is no need to spray rooms excessively with it; over-spraying is one of the temptations that go with these modern aerosol packs, for they're almost too easy to use. Moderate spraying is quite sufficient.

Some products of this kind are offered for sale without any statement as to what they're composed of.

This one, marketed by one of our largest chemical firms, has no secrets.

It is a blend of the persistent and very deadly post-war insecticide, BHC, with the older, natural one, pyrethrin, together with a third substance that makes pyrethrin even more active.

The action of pyrethrin is very rapid, but sometimes the apparent death of a fly is merely a temporary "knock-out." Here, the slower

but far more certain action of the BHC comes into the picture.

The name this insecticide is sold under is "Lorexane." The smallest pack is a four-ounce aerosol can, at 5s., the largest is a twenty-ounce size at 17s. 6d. Obtainable at all chemists, etc.

ON THE SHIRT FRONT

A new type of nylon shirt was introduced a few weeks ago—new at least to the English market—for in America this softer and more porous form of nylon has been known rather longer.

To me, it seems to overcome the objections to nylon fabrics as shirting materials, objections that some men have held, anyway. This nylon fabric is less transparent, though it is still lightweight in comparison with most other shirt materials.

It is claimed to be softer to the touch than nylon textiles usually are, and I can certainly substantiate this.

It is cool in summer, but its more absorbent properties mitigate the perspiration build-up troubles that many nylon shirt wearers have complained about hitherto.

The new shirt loses none of the accepted advantages of nylon in offering these improvements.

It can be washed overnight, dries speedily, needs no ironing, and has the full wear-resistance of nylon. I think it will convert many more males to the use of synthetics for their shirts.

An exceedingly well-known and old-established shirt firm is behind this development. This shirt is offered in a check design

Should readers have any difficulty in purchasing products mentioned in these columns, I shall be pleased to pass on the names of manufacturers or their sales agents.

THE CAPTAIN

“Saracens” – the ideal sandals

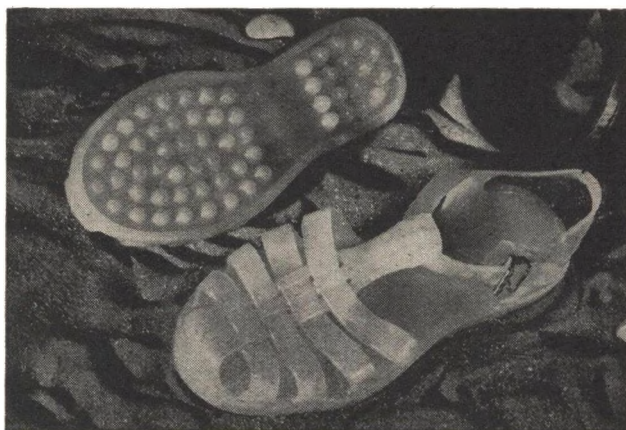
*for rocks, shingle
or sandy beaches*

These unique sandals, already widely used on the Continent, are the most practical all purpose sandals yet produced. In clear plastic, they are almost indestructible, soft and comfortable to wear, water repellent and need no drying. Ideal for skin divers.

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(returnable Deposit) for 14-day Free Trial . . . then 12/- balance after trial if satisfied and 8 monthly payments of 24/6 (or 19/6 if you send your old shaver). Cash Price £10.13. Brand new in presentation case. AC/DC 200/250 volts. 12 months' Makers' Guarantee.

has specially designed Rollers at each side of the multiple shaving heads, which smooth out the skin folds, exposing the "Hidden beard" for speedy removal. **A TRIAL WILL CONVINCING YOU** that it really does shave quicker and closer than any other method.

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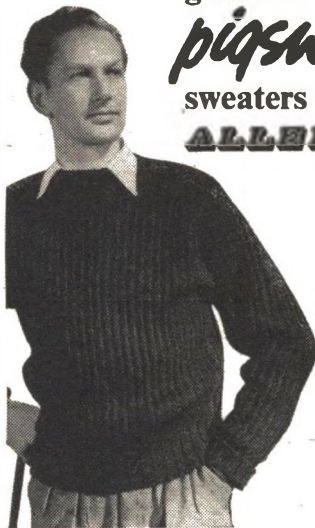
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and a range of plain colours—white, cream, Cambridge blue, and grey.

Two-way cuffs, coat-style buttoning all the way down, and anti-crease-and-wrinkle collar (attached), are specially attractive features. Prices are no less attractive, 63s. for the plain designs, 72s. 6d. for the checks.

Incidentally, this is one of the first nylon textile developments with a men-first angle. Frankly, I'm not sorry to report this. The same kind of nylon material is being developed for the ladies, but they've got to wait patiently for it.

TALE OF A TILE

Easy-to-fix wall tiles, which should appeal to the do-it-yourself brigade, seem worth mentioning. The tiles themselves are plastics made in a range of pastel shades—cream, grey, pink, blue, etc.—or in red, white and black.

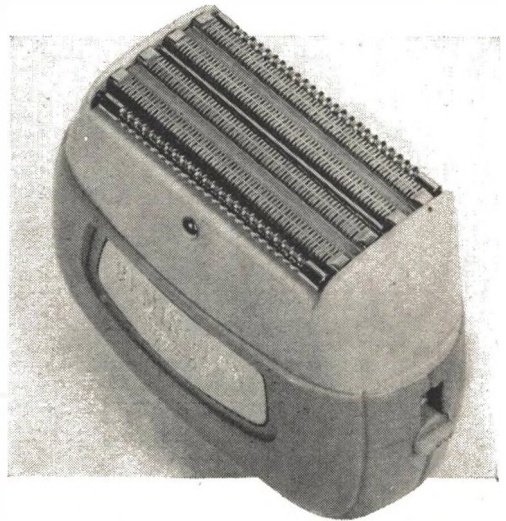
They are rigid when fixed, although during the actual fixing operation they can be bent to fit any rounded or curved surface.

They are almost self-fixing. No extra adhesive or special preparation is required, for when a protective backing film is peeled off the rear surface, the adhesive on the tile will ensure firm and lasting attachment.

The tiles can be cut with scissors, or holed to take screws.

SHAVING—BY LAW

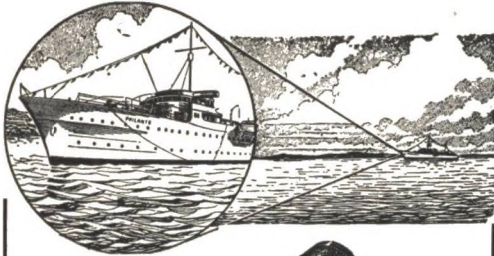
Though a few readers will no doubt continue to criticize me for over-plugging shaving as a topic, I'm afraid I still unrepentantly insist



that good shaving tools are one of modern man's primary needs.

Shaving was compulsory under ancient Inca law, and the Peruvians of about three thousand years ago had to use stone implements whose cutting edges were about as friendly as a piece of broken glass.

Flint "razors" were used in the Stone



The Dollond High Power Binocular 15 x 60 OWLVIS



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SELF-RELIANCE! Is there any finer quality in the world? It is like a rock in a desert of shifting sands, a lighthouse in a stormy sea. To depend upon yourself and your own trained skill and ability instead of relying upon the support of others! Those who rely upon the support of others become weak and devoid of initiative and resource. And when that support is withdrawn they fail and fall.

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Age, and in ancient Rome they had straight-edged razors or tweezers to pull out the bristles one by one.

And so on through the ages. Even the safety razor belongs only to this century, and the electric razor has been about for no more than twenty years.

All of which brings me to a new refinement in electric shaving. One of the best-known plug-in shavers now incorporates specially designed rollers at each side of the multiple shaving heads. These rollers smooth out the skin folds and enable the cutting head to get at bristles normally hidden in these folds.

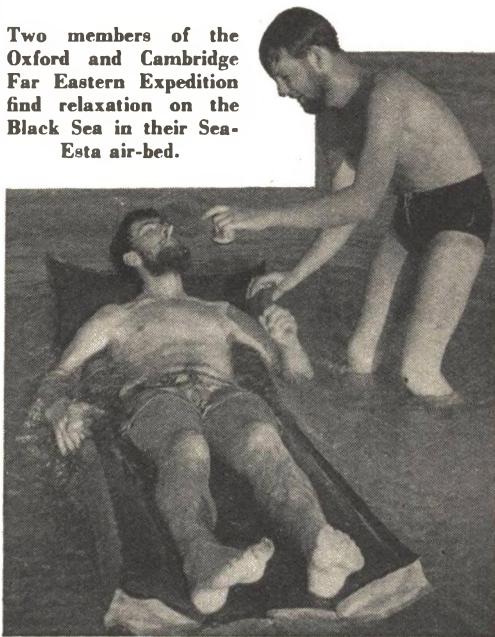
The price of the new model with this feature has not been raised above that of the former and otherwise similar de luxe model. I think the illustration shows the design of this new device more clearly than it can be described in words anyway. It sells at £10 1s. 3d. for 210-240 volt AC/DC, or at £11 1s. 11d. for the wider voltage range, 110-240.

COMFORTABLE INFLATION

There is at least one kind of inflation that won't cause headaches, and once again Scotland must be given the credit.

A Glasgow firm is specializing in air-beds,

Two members of the Oxford and Cambridge Far Eastern Expedition find relaxation on the Black Sea in their Sea-Esta air-bed.



air-cushions, air-pillows, etc., and quite a remarkable range of these holiday accessories is offered.

There are beds with or without combined pillow-heads, single and double, dual-purpose "chair-beds" with a back-rest at one end and a pillow-head at the other, and even one light-weight air-bed for hikers, that can be worn as a waterproof cape when not inflated.

There is, too, an inflatable paddling-pool

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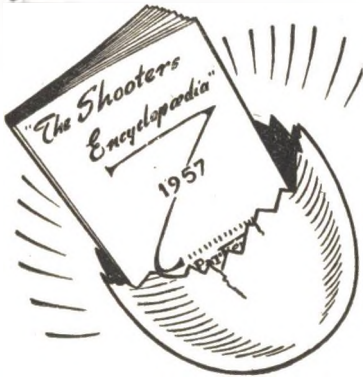
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Writing on 5th February, 1957, T.R., of Kegalle, Ceylon, says: "I am very pleased to tell you that my G.P. gun No. 29863 has given me every satisfaction with its long range, hard hitting and beautiful finish."

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that can hold about forty gallons of water, and a child-size dinghy. This enterprising firm also sells a pump for inflating all these goods.

All are made of repairable fabrics and natural rubber, and spare patches are supplied with the goods, for any small repairs that may become necessary.

All these articles are on sale under the general trade-name "Sea-Esta." Prices are very reasonable, ranging from about 50s. to 70s. for the single-sized airbeds; only the double-bed size takes the shillings price into a three-figure amount.

The makers offer an attractive leaflet describing each of these inflatable products, which seem commendable as additions to the basic kit for camping or motoring holidays.

EXPORT SECRET

This is the time of year when many overseas visitors to Britain find their way to Scotland. But no matter how intensive their tour of Edinburgh may be they cannot hope to discover the basic secret of one of the leading Scottish exports of the past ten years—the famous Drambuie liqueur.

For every case that left Edinburgh back in 1945, twelve cases are sent out now. But the recipe is still locked up in a lawyer's deed-box, and the widow of the first Mackinnon to offer this family drink commercially still personally makes the essences that give Drambuie its unique flavour.

I'm told that several vials of this essence are sent daily from her house to the Edinburgh headquarters.

Incidentally, the name comes from the Gaelic phrase, "an dram buidheach," which being roughly interpreted means "the drink that satisfies."

Well, of course, Britain is not normally thought of as a liqueur-producing nation, but this one is the biggest seller of any liqueur imported into the United States. That's quite a record to hold, and a sizeable dollar-earning one in the bargain. Incidentally, no other British-made liqueur has won awards at Continental exhibitions.

MILLING AROUND

I can't remember when I last mentioned a food topic in this feature; but food is one of man's needs and I don't see why we should leave the subject entirely to the other sex, though male interference in these matters generally requires generous additions of caution and tact.

However, I am not going to try out-Harbening Harben with recipes. This item concerns that useful accessory to so many foods—pepper.

When I was very young, the pepper on my French grandmother's table was always in a pepper-mill. The pepper-pot, for shaking out ground pepper, was unknown in that house; so, incidentally, was anything but superb cooking.



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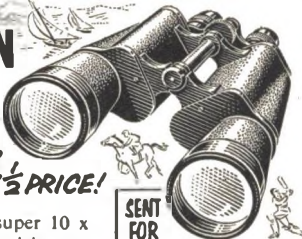
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Subject or Exam

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BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

But that's a long time ago—and only this year have I come across the pepper-mill again. Pepper freshly ground from peppercorns is far superior to pepper that has been ground before being packed in tins.

This has something to do with the effect of air on pepper that has been reduced to fine particles. The same sort of thing applies, of course, to coffee; but coffee is at least speedily used whereas pepper may stay in a pepper-pot for many weeks.

Peppercorns are hard things to grind, so the mechanism of a table-sized pepper-mill has to be strongly made—quite a precision engineering job, in fact.

NOT TO BE SNEEZED AT

But a British firm who have been keeping the market for pepper-mills supplied for generations have solved that problem. Now, to suit the modern table and kitchen—and the modest pocket—they have housed their excellent mill in stout plastic cases in attractive shades of green, blue, red, yellow, etc.

These mills are easy to fill, and quite as simple to use as an ordinary pepper-pot is to shake. You just turn the top and freshly ground pepper sprinkles forth.

I can only report that the pepper-pot in my house has now been banished. Incidentally, fresh pepper from a mill will not cause sneezing—you can test this by putting some on the back of the hand and sniffing it.

The name of the makers of these mills will be forwarded with enthusiasm to any reader, but probably they are to be found in many good stores under the general trade-name, "Peter Piper" mills. In addition to the plastic-cased mills, which cost 12s. 6d., there are various more expensive models cased in wood, pottery, etc.

THE TORCH TEST

Much ingenuity is being devoted to torch design these days. Another new type, now being sold, is a normal cylindrical hand-torch with the usual battery-fed operation, but is also a fuse-tester for electric circuits.

At the side of the torch, and just above the lighting button, is a small auxiliary contact. If one end of the fuse to a circuit is placed on this, and the other end on the torch case, the torch-light bulb lights up if the circuit is non-faulty.

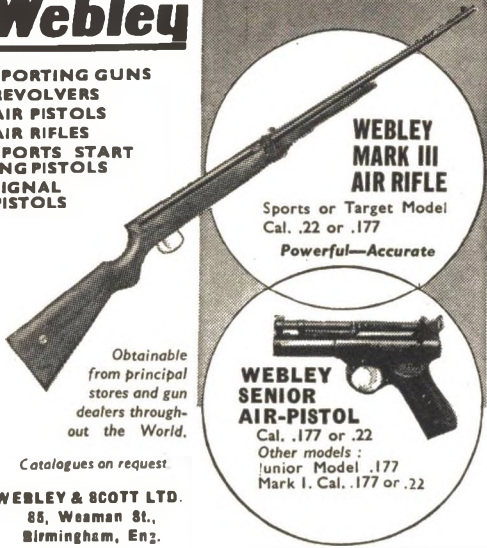
The price for the whole thing is no more than would be asked for any hand-torch of good construction. At under 5s. the "King-Pin" fuse-tester and torch is cheap yet efficient.

SHOE SHINE

I found a new kind of shoe polish on a shop counter a little while ago and made a trial purchase. The idea of a liquid that, it was claimed, would give an instant shine, didn't quite square with my own habit-formed ideas about waxy polishes that are rubbed on with a brush and developed into a shine with sheer elbow-grease.

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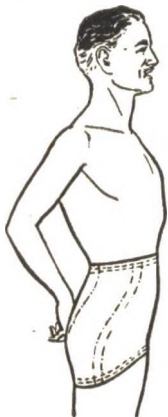
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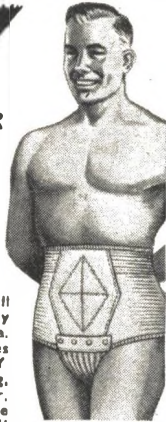
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However, we live and learn. This liquid—in a bottle with a brush applicator attached to the stopper—does all that is claimed for it.

Spread thinly over the leather and allowed to dry, it gives a long-lasting shine after very light polishing with a cloth.

DEFIES THE RAIN

As the liquid contains silicones as well as waxes, the shine is resistant to water. That, to my mind, is the major point, for nothing disperses shine on shoes faster than rain.

A second point of considerable merit is that this new liquid polish covers up scratches particularly effectively. With the conventional solid polishes, the vigorous brushing required often, I think, aggravates rather than minimises the effect of surface scratches.

This new product is marketed by a very well-known shoe-polish manufacturer; a bottle costs 1s. 9d. Readers in Britain should not have much difficulty in finding a shop stocking this widely-sold polish.

FOR THE RECORD

Motorists are an open target these days for the producers of gadgets, and I'm afraid that a good many of these novelty-ideas have had a here - today - gone - tomorrow market existence.

There is a motoring type who must have "the latest," but I'm pretty sure he's far from representative, although his "look-what-I've-got-now" complex usually makes plenty of noise.

However, here is a new gadget that costs very little and certainly will be useful to many drivers—a combined key-ring and mileage recorder that can be kept attached to the ignition key.

The mileage recorder is in the shape of a little reel, both halves of which can be turned by hand to show a sequence of numbers. At the end of each day's driving you simply set the two numbers to correspond with the two last figures on the speedometer.

The ladies will say that there's nothing very new in this, and point out that they've had the same sort of device for counting stitches in knitting for a long time. Maybe—but now the idea is being put into service for motorists.

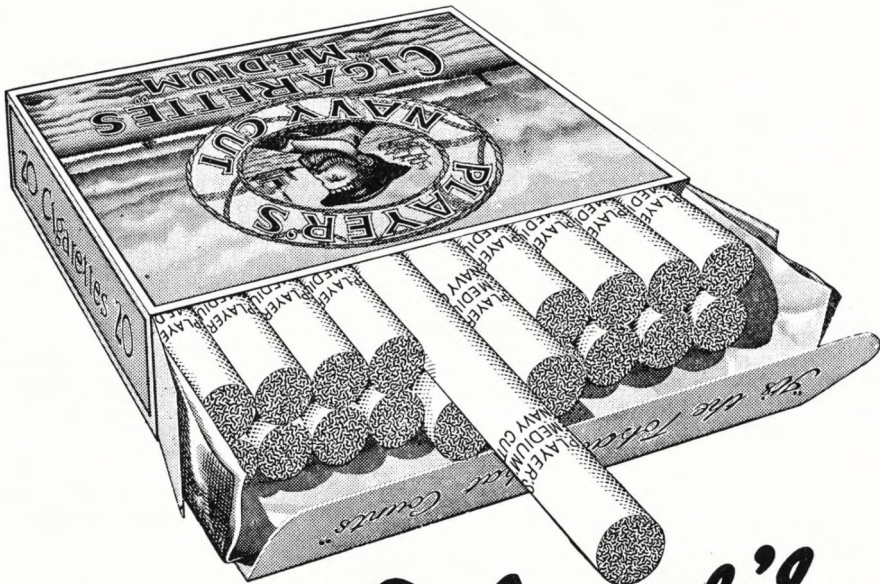
At 6s. 6d. in either a gilt or chrome finish, this gadget is available at most motoring accessory shops.

All communications for this department should be addressed to "The Captain," c/o THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE, Tower House, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2. Please enclose stamp if reply is required.

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