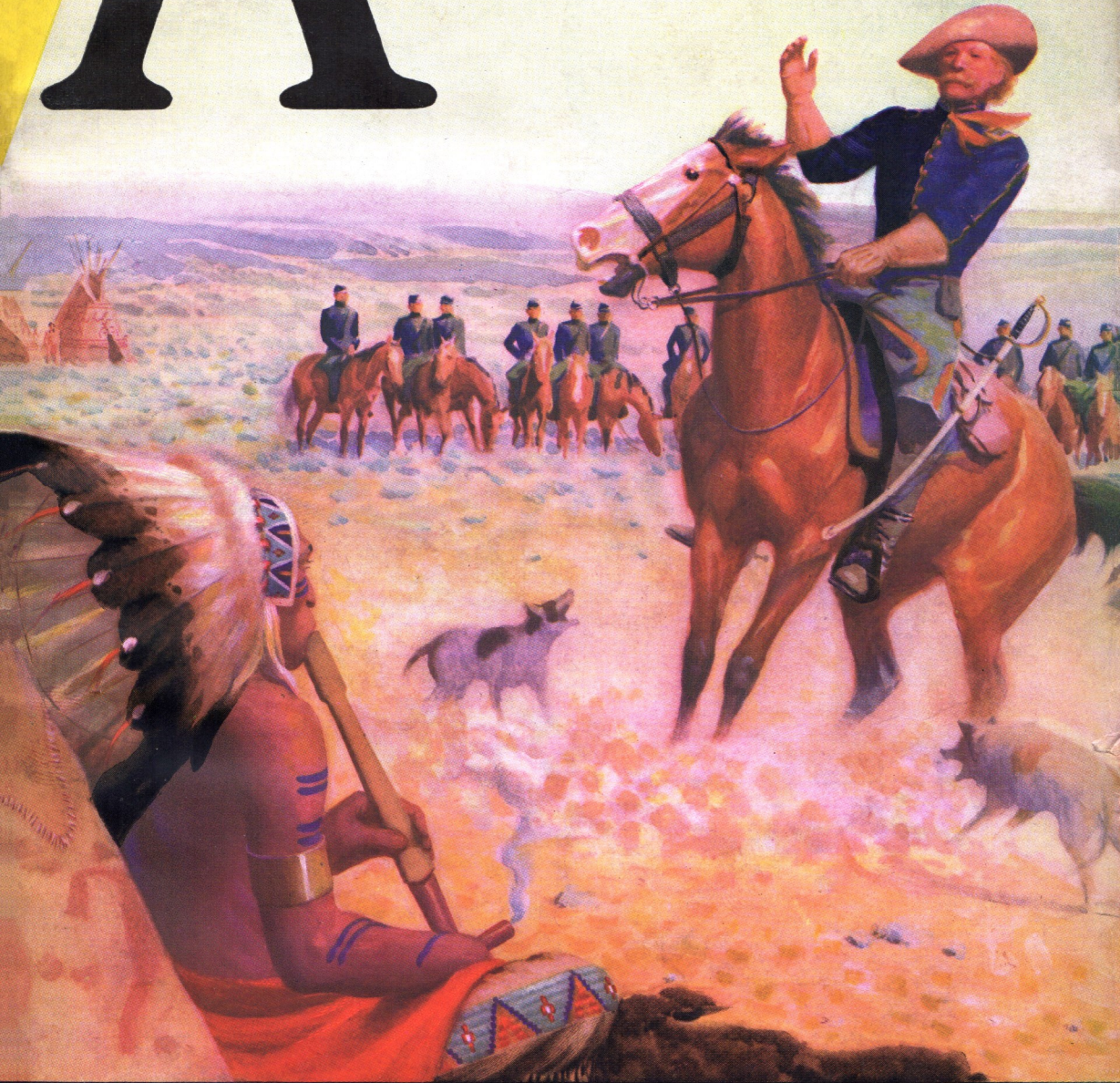


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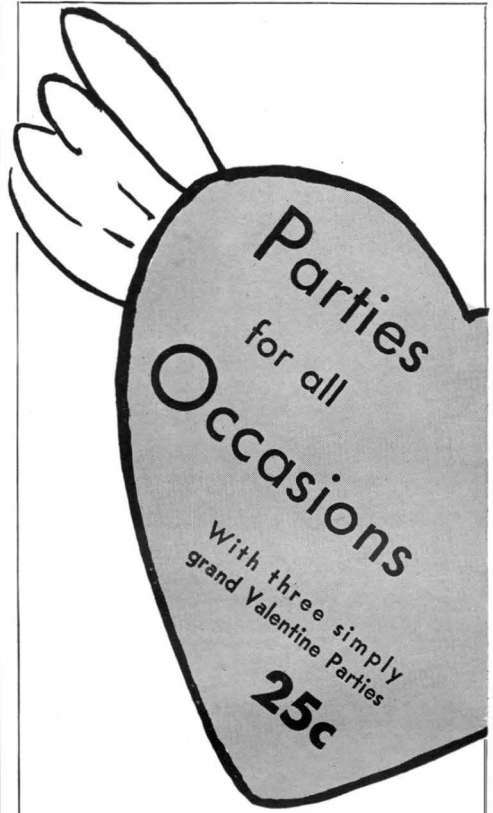
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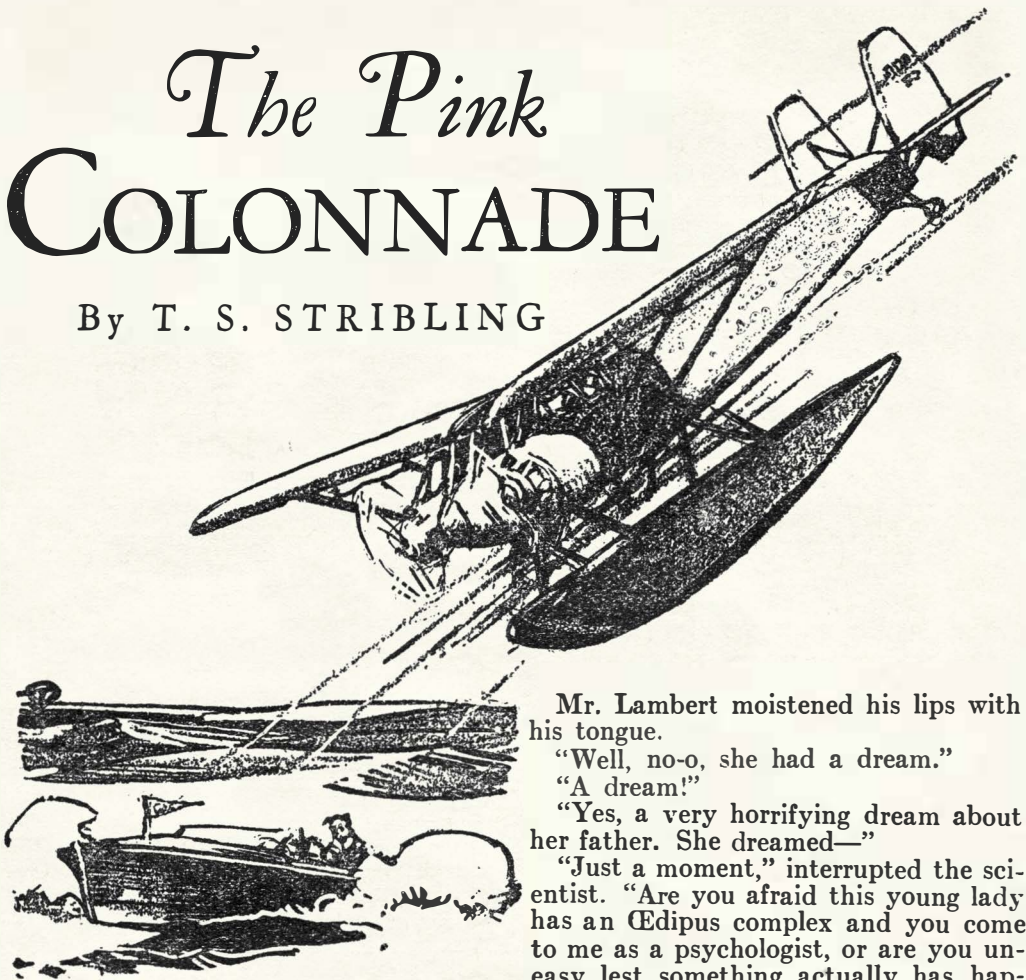
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The Pink COLONNADE

By T. S. STRIBLING



WHEN Mr. Henry Poggioli, specialist in criminal psychology, stepped out of the elevator into the lobby of the Hotel Las Palmas, a man by the name of Lambert made the all-too-familiar plea for help. He began by paying what he evidently considered to be a compliment—that he had read about Mr. Poggioli's great skill as a detective in the morning papers; then he added that he had come to ask Mr. Poggioli if he would go with him to see a young lady.

The psychologist glanced patiently at the hotel clerk who had introduced Lambert.

"What's happened to her? Has she lost something, been threatened, accused, attacked, arrested?"

Mr. Lambert moistened his lips with his tongue.

"Well, no-o, she had a dream."

"A dream!"

"Yes, a very horrifying dream about her father. She dreamed—"

"Just a moment," interrupted the scientist. "Are you afraid this young lady has an *Œdipus* complex and you come to me as a psychologist, or are you uneasy lest something actually has happened to her father and you come to me as a criminologist?"

"Oh, as a criminologist, of course. Nobody worries about complexes as far south as Florida."

The psychologist nodded dubiously.

"All right, go ahead; tell me about the dream," he conceded.

"Well, she was awakened by it at three this morning. She is still terribly upset; she thinks something awful has happened to her father."

"Then he isn't at home?"

"No, if he were at home she'd feel all right, I suppose."

The scientist stood nodding at this; finally he said—

"If you don't mind, Mr. Lambert, I believe I will prescribe for this young lady as a psychologist, not as a criminologist."

"Dr. Poggioli, we would be more than grateful."

"Then suppose you have your family physician give her a dose of bromide."

The clerk who had introduced Lambert laughed at this anticlimax. Mr. Lambert was greatly perturbed. He walked with Poggioli toward the elevator and said in a lowered voice:

"Her father's not at home now, but he was last night. He went to bed yesterday evening. At three this morning he was gone!"

Poggioli instinctively lowered his own tone.

"Then what did his daughter dream?"

"That her father was calling for help. She jumped up, ran into his room—and he was gone."

"You have no clue as to what became of—"

"Yes, Laura heard his speedboat leaving the pier."

"Well, is there anything unusual in a speedboat trip?"

"If he was going off in his boat, why did he call for help?"

"I thought you said she dreamed that part of it?"

"That's what we don't know; maybe it was a dream, then maybe it wasn't—with kidnaping going on everywhere—"

"Look here," interposed Poggioli, "if you are really uneasy, why don't you take the matter to the police?"

Mr. Lambert hesitated, then stammered—

"We—we couldn't possibly take it to the police, Mr. Poggioli."

The scientist laid a finger on the elevator bell.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Lambert, but if you find it inadvisable for the police to look into this matter, I'm afraid I can't go into it either."

The caller was greatly disturbed.

"Wait—don't ring that bell! It isn't what you think at all." He leaned toward Poggioli and whispered tensely, "The missing man is Brompton Maddelow."

"Well, is Brompton Maddelow a gangster, or outlaw, or—"

"Good Lord, no, man! He's the biggest real estate dealer in Miami. He has more power in that game than—"

The psychologist stared.

"Then why shouldn't a real estate dealer have police protection?"

"Because if a single rumor should leak out that he has vanished, the mortgages on his properties would be foreclosed at once. They are hanging now simply on Mr. Maddelow's reputation as a business man."

The psychologist began nodding at this odd twist.

"Mm—I see—I see. But really, from what you say, I don't believe anything has happened to the man. At a guess, I'd say he is out for a cruise and will be back in a day or two."

"Why should he have left home at three o'clock in the morning?"

"I really don't know his personal habits."

"Well, it wasn't his habit to cruise at three or four or any other hour in the morning. He never took his speedboat out, because it was too expensive. He—he couldn't afford the gas and oil."

"Tut! That's nothing; it's a commonplace in psychology for men to break over from long continued economies."

"All right, suppose it is. But why should he suddenly stop working on his colonnade to go cruising in his speedboat?"

"Working on his colonnade at three in the morning?"

"Yes, he worked on his columns at night when he got restless and couldn't sleep. You see, he was a plasterer in Pocatello, Idaho, before he came to Miami during the boom and made such a splash as a realtor."

During this conversation Poggioli had walked with Mr. Lambert to the door of the big beach hotel. At the curb he stepped into an old high powered car and started northward. At the third turn of the beach Lambert directed the scientist's attention to one of the villas that lined Biscayne Bay.

"It's the pink one with the royal poincianas in front of it."

"Is that the pier where the speedboat was moored?"

"Yes, sir, that's Mr. Maddelow's private pier, six hundred feet long, water seventy feet deep at the outer end. He built it when he was worth ten millions in cold cash."

"Can we reach the villa from the

beach?"

"By a ramp built into the side of the pier."

Poggioli looked at the structure looming above him.

"You don't mean he built this just to hitch a speedboat to it?"

"Oh, no. Mr. Maddelow had ordered a yacht from Germany to fit his pier, when the boom broke and everything fell through. It was a hard blow for him, Mr. Poggioli. I don't blame him for working on his colonnade at night to keep from thinking about it."



THE ancient car rattled up the ramp, passed under the poincianas and stopped in front of the pergola which the owner of the place had been building. The final column of the decoration still stood in its wooden mold where the plasterer had poured it just before setting out on his alarming boat cruise.

The sound of the automobile brought several persons out of the villa. A tall, sun-tinted girl, who evidently had been weeping, hurried to the car.

"Is this Mr. Poggioli? Mr. Poggioli, what happened to papa?"

"I have no theory as yet, Miss Maddelow."

"Do you think somebody made a mistake and—and kidnaped him?"

"—Made a mistake—how?"

"Why his having all this—" the daughter indicated the villa with a turn of her head, "a person who didn't know him might think he was wealthy and try to hold him for ransom."

Two other men on the pergola besides the Maddelow son, daughter and mother, broke into ironic laughter at the idea of Brompton Maddelow being held for ransom. The girl turned on them angrily.

"That could easily be! Anybody who didn't know what bad luck papa has had with his property would certainly think he was rich."

The psychologist got out of the car, and Lambert introduced him to the Maddelows and to a Mr. Sandley and a Mr. Lynch who bore an air of also being permanent residents of Villa Maddelow. The scientist naturally turned to the daughter and began questioning her about the call for help that had dis-

turbed her during the night, but she could add little to what he already had learned from Lambert. He then turned to the group at large and suggested in a comforting tone that Mr. Maddelow was simply on a pleasure trip and that they need not disturb themselves about the matter.

The man named Lynch answered dryly—

"It takes gas and oil to run a speedboat, Mr. Poggioli."

"You mean Maddelow couldn't afford it?"

"Of course not," seconded Sandley in a disgusted tone.

The psychologist walked to the end of the pergola and saw a small layout for mixing concrete. With this outfit the missing man had erected the final column of the pergola which now stood wrapped in its wooden mold. As he looked at this he asked in a more careful tone—

"Am I to understand that Mr. Maddelow built all these columns by himself?"

"James helped him," said Laura Maddelow.

"When he stayed up at night working at it," amplified Lambert. "He often said he made more money at night than he did during the daytime."

"How was that?" inquired the scientist.

"Why he figured the additional value this pergola would give the building would net him eighty-seven dollars and thirty-four cents a night—if times were normal."

Poggioli looked at the layout with a puzzled air.

"And he put up all these columns?"

"He and the man of all work. Why?" asked Lambert.

The criminologist shook his head.

"What you tell me makes this vat a rather extraordinary riddle," he said slowly.

The whole group looked curiously at the concrete mixer and asked why.

"Because of the concrete that is left in the vat unused," explained the investigator simply. "If Maddelow had poured all these columns he must have known to the half sack how much each one would take; now for him to leave

this much in the vat unused—you see, it contradicts the careful, exact character of the man you describe, Mr. Lambert."

Lambert scratched his head.

"That is odd—"

Lynch spoke up dourly—

"It shows the Emperor knew he was working on his last column and didn't care if he did use all his cement."

Poggioli shook his head.

"I don't quite think so. A man who would figure the value of his night's work to the odd cent wouldn't dump out the last of his cement. He would try to come out with a sack or two left over."

"Look here," interrupted Sandley, "how is that going to help us find out where the Emperor is now?"

Laura Maddelow interrupted her co-tenant's criticism by ejaculating—

"Why look, there's something a lot stranger than a little cement left over in the box!"

"What is it?" asked her brother as every one followed the direction of the girl's finger.

"That new column is yellow! You can see smudges of it on the molds. Papa forgot to put in the pink dye. Why, that column won't do."

Lynch put forth a sarcastic idea—

"Maybe the Emperor was pifflicated when he put up this post; that's why he put in too little dye and too much cement."

Poggioli shook his head.

"If he had been under the influence of alcohol he wouldn't have gone to work at hard manual labor."

"I am sure he wasn't drinking," agreed the daughter, "but if he left out the pink color he must have been tremendously excited about something. Why, color was the main thing with papa about the colonnade."

Poggioli shook his head in thoughtful negation.

"No, Mr. Maddelow wasn't excited. Excitement is something that demands thought, but Maddelow used this pergola as something to deaden his memories of his financial losses. If he were excited about something else, he never would have worked on the pergola in the first place. Therefore he didn't leave

out his dye through excitement."

"Look here," said Sandley acridly, "you seem to be able to prove our theories untrue—why don't you try one of your own and see how that comes out?"

Mr. Lambert broke into this incipient acrimony—

"Oh, Mr. Poggioli, I happened to think of something. Will you step in the library for a moment?"

Sandley looked at Lambert.

"What's in the library?"

"Something Mr. Poggioli ought to see," evaded Lambert with a trace of embarrassment.

With this Lambert stepped through a French window that gave on the pergola, and the scientist followed. A moment later Poggioli found himself in a long sunlit room with cases of books on two sides. Lambert walked quickly to a picture that was hung low against the wall. He beckoned silently to Laura Maddelow, who stood looking at them through the window.

"Let us in here, Laura," he requested in a low tone.

The girl approached, rather at sea.

"Why, Lawrence, you know papa's not in there!"

Lambert shook his head at her for silence, then drew aside the picture and displayed a small door masked by wall-paper. He pushed back the panel and displayed the steel door of a safe.

"You know the combination, Laura; open it for us, please."

"But there's nothing left in here that's valuable," protested Miss Maddelow, and began turning the combination, presently swinging open the small, heavy door.



THE vault contained an orderly collection of account books and private papers.

Lambert opened a small drawer and took out a linen envelop. With a glance at the French window, he handed this to the scientist and whispered—

"There you are, Mr. Poggioli; that's why they killed him."

"Who killed him?" frowned the criminologist, puzzled.

"Why, Lynch and Sandley," whispered the fellow.

"Lawrence Lambert, what are you saying!" exclaimed Miss Maddelow in horror.

"Look at it! Read it!" pressed Lambert in hushed excitement.

The scientist drew out a crackling enclosure.

"Read a life insurance policy?" he asked blankly.

"Certainly—read the amount."

Poggioli caught his breath.

"What—a million, two hundred and fifty—"

"That's right," hurried Lambert. "Biggest policy ever issued in Miami up to the time he bought it. Now look when the premium's due."

The psychologist followed Mr. Lambert's finger with quickening interest.

"Why, it's tomorrow," he exclaimed.

"Of course it is. Just happened to think of it. My heaven, don't see why it didn't occur to me the minute we found that Brompton Maddelow was mur—"

"Who was the million and a quarter made to?" queried the psychologist.

"His estate—to protect his creditors. When I sold Mr. Maddelow that insurance I told him he was doing the best thing in the world for his business, stabilizing it. My Lord, I didn't dream if he went broke his creditors would kill him to make him solvent again."

"So you think his creditors have done away with him?"

"Of course they have. Every debt against him is worth a hundred cents on the dollar now."

"But Sandley and Lynch—did he owe them anything?"

"No, he didn't. But he sold Lynch a ten per cent interest in this villa for four hundred dollars; later he sold Sandley another ten per cent for two-fifty. He was honest with 'em. He explained there were mortgages against the place and very likely they wouldn't get anything out of it except their room rent up to the time of foreclosure. But now, by murdering him, these rats have paid off all the mortgages and they've got ten per cent interest in holdings worth a cool million."

Mr. Poggioli listened in astonishment to this extraordinary theory.

"Then the vanishing of the speedboat

has nothing to do with Mr. Maddelow's disappearance?"

"Why do you say that?"

"Because it would be necessary to Lynch and Sandley's plans that the body should be found. His death would have to be proved to set up the insurance."

Lambert thought a moment, then stretched his theory to fit the conditions.

"They have probably killed him and moored the boat somewhere where it can be found."

At this point the girl behind them caught her breath and gasped:

"Oh, Mr. Poggioli, I—I know what's happened to papa! He did it himself! And with this Laura Maddelow leaned against the door of the vault and began weeping outright.

The psychologist was shocked.

"Miss Maddelow, why do you say such a thing?"

"Because his policy was about to run out. He had been trying every way lately to get up some money. He had advertised his speedboat for five hundred dollars. Once he thought he had sold it to a Captain Greer on board the *Arequipa*—"

"But he didn't make the sale?"

"I don't think so. Then he saw the time was out on his policy—he—he couldn't make the next premium in—in any way at all, so he—he—" Laura Maddelow began weeping miserably.

The two men looked at each other at this tragic theory.

"He could have done that, Mr. Poggioli," assented Lambert in a gray tone. "Brompton Maddelow had a keen sense of honor; he felt his responsibility toward his creditors. You see, he was a poor man once."

"As a rule," pointed out the psychologist more hopefully, "millionaires recover from any dangerous overscrupulousness by the time they have accumulated their fortunes. I can imagine a wealthy man killing himself if his debts were about to be collected, but not in order to pay his debts."

Mr. Lambert suddenly brightened.

"Look here, I wonder if it's possible. I'll bet it is."

"What is it?" asked the girl.

"Laura, do you know this Captain

Greer didn't buy your father's boat?"

"I'm not sure. I heard papa talking to him over the telephone. I understood the captain wouldn't take the boat."

"Good gracious, that explains everything!" cried Lambert. "Your father was a salesman. He never took no for an answer. I'll bet he's down there right now demonstrating his boat to the captain. Here, what's the captain's number?"

The ex-insurance agent started for the telephone.

"He hasn't any number. You call for the *Arequipa* at the docks. But why would papa call to me for help, Lawrence, if he was going to deliver a speedboat?"

"Oh, you didn't hear anything. That was a dream." He put the receiver to his ear. "Operator! Operator! I want the steamship *Arequipa* of the Fruit Lines—now, now, don't argue with me, I want the steamship *Arequipa*—" He put his palm over the transmitter to say, "These simp operators always trying to explain something—"



THE French window opened and Lynch and Sandley entered the library protesting in chorus—

"Look, will you, the Emperor has been trying to doublecross us!"

"What do you think you've found?" asked the girl indignantly.

"Why look at this note! He's paid off a mere personal note of hand—not a mortgage at all—paid it off without saying howdy to anybody!"

Even Mr. Lambert lowered the telephone to stare at the idea of Brompton Maddelow paying off a note.

"That explains why he was yelling for help," suggested Lynch sardonically.

"Why shouldn't he have paid it off?" demanded the girl.

"Because every cent he spent on outside debts weakened our mortgage on the villa," returned Sandley warmly.

"Who's the note made to?" asked Lambert. "Who in the world came here in the middle of the night and collected a note from Brompton Maddelow?"

Lynch put together two pieces of a torn note.

"Tom Snodgrass," he read. "It's for five hundred and sixty dollars."

Poggioli reached for the paper, adjusted the two ends and read the word "paid" scrawled across the face in lead pencil.

"Where did you find this?"

"Out there by the vat. The Emperor evidently paid it, then tore it in two and threw it away."

"That's an odd thing, for a systematic man like him to throw away a canceled note—" Poggioli stood studying the paper. "How did he get five hundred and sixty dollars at three in the morning? Did he have that much money in his pockets?"

"No, nor in his bank either," said Lynch sharply.

Sandley broke into incredulous laughter.

"I've got it, by George! This Captain Greer traded for one of the Emperor's notes and used it to pay for the boat. No wonder the Emperor was mad as a wet hen!" The speaker laughed heartily.

"But he couldn't have done that," objected the girl. "The advertisement says the buyer must pay cash." She walked to a table for a paper. "Here is the ad," she said, coming back, "marked around with a pencil."

Poggioli took the paper and looked at the advertisement curiously. It was two lines describing the *Sea Maid*, forty-six footer, two three hundred H.P. Diesel engines, max. speed 52 M.P.H. Apply private pier Villa Maddelow, terms cash, \$500.00.

Poggioli shook his head.

"This is one of the most puzzling features of this case," he said slowly.

"What—the advertisement?"

"No, the pencil mark around the advertisement."

"Why, what's puzzling about that?"

"This is Mr. Maddelow's paper, isn't it, delivered to him here in the villa?"

"Yes it is."

"Then he sat here in his chair, read it and made this mark around his own advertisement?"

"Certainly. What's odd about that?"

"Simply this; the only reason any one marks something in a newspaper is to refer to it quickly. What reason could Mr. Maddelow have had for a quick ref-

erence to his own ad?"

"I've got it," said Sandley. "He was expecting Greer to offer him a note for the *Sea Maid* and he wanted to show that his ad said cash."

Poggioli punctured the suggestion with another of his impressive and spontaneous observations—

"But Snodgrass's indorsement is not on the back of the note."

"No-o, but—"

Poggioli interrupted:

"Does anybody here know Tom Snodgrass? Who is he?"

All the listeners stood silent shaking their heads when the telephone bell whirred. Lambert reclapped the receiver to his ear.

"Hello! Hello! Is this Captain Greer of the *Arequipa*? Hello, Captain; Lawrence Lambert speaking at the Villa Maddelow . . . say, is Brompton Maddelow aboard your vessel? . . . Well, did he bring the *Sea Maid* down to demonstrate her to you? . . . don't know whether he did or not But she was down there? Passed your ship going south I see thanks very much Yes, we were getting uneasy about him. By the way, did you happen to notice if he went to some other vessel at the docks? What docks! Why, the docks down at the docks—the Miami docks What? You don't mean it."

Lambert put down the telephone and stared at his listeners.

"The *Sea Maid* passed the *Arequipa* two hundred miles down the coast. They were both going south!"

Miss Maddelow suddenly switched from grief over her father's death to anxiety over his mysterious voyage. The two co-owners were also sharply moved.

"Look here," cried Sandley, "if the Emperor has gone into that game we're sunk!"

"What game? What do you mean?" demanded the girl.

"I guess he got desperate and had to do something," said Lynch.

"But if he gets caught, his creditors will suck everything up like a sponge!"

Laura twisted her fingers together.

"What are you men talking about! What's papa doing?"



THE telephone buzzed again. Lambert leaped to it. He listened a moment, then slapped it back up.

"It's that confounded careless telephone operator. She gave me wireless connection with the *Arequipa* and the bill's six eighty-two."

"You ought to be more careful yourself," reproved Lynch. "You ought to ask if you've got wireless or line connections."

"Me got wireless connections?" cried Lambert sharply. "I didn't get any at all. I was phoning for you people."

"But you called the Emperor up yourself."

"Lawrence—Mr. Lynch, stop quarreling!" cried the daughter in desperation. "What are you men talking about? What do you think papa's doing?"

Gary Maddelow, her brother, entered the library from some search of his own. The girl blurted out to him that their father was on the *Sea Maid* halfway down the coast of Florida and these men wouldn't tell her what her father was after.

Lynch took his courage in his hands.

"Well, Miss Laura, I hate to say it—but we believe your father has—er—turned rum runner."

The girl stared.

"You mean father— Why, you know better than that."

"Then what's he after?" inquired Sandley. "It can't be a pleasure trip."

"Gary, you are not going to stand there and let these men—"

"Listen, sis, if dad has started any such business, you know it was his very last resort."

"You don't believe any such falsehood, I hope!"

"Well, I knew it had been proposed to him."

Laura dropped her hands.

"Gary Maddelow, who in the world proposed such a thing?"

"Why, James," said the brother. "He proposed it to me, too."

"Of all impudence—our man of all work."

"He did it tactfully. I suppose he came at dad the same way."

The two co-proprietors of the villa took up the discussion.

"Look here, how the Emperor got into this business doesn't make any difference. He's in. The question is, how'll we get him out?"

"But look here," put in Lambert. "If Brompton Maddelow goes into this business how do you know he won't make a big success? He's a born organizer. We may be all setting jake the first thing you know."

"Lawrence," cried Miss Maddelow, "do you imagine I'd let father do that for all the money in the world? What can we do to stop him? Tell me that."

Poggioli interposed to ask if the *Sea Maid* had a wireless.

"She did have one, but dad sold it off of her," said Gary.

"Listen here," put in Sandley, "there's just one way I see. Get a plane. Lambert, you telephone the aviation field for a flying boat."

"Who's going to pay for this?" demanded Lambert at once. "If you think you are going to stick me for a flying bill on top of a wireless call—"

"No, no, of course not," pacified Sandley, "and the bill won't be so much either. Air taxi business is slow nowadays. They say the aviators will take you up for the price of their gas."

Lambert picked up the receiver dubiously.

Mr. Poggioli moved over to Gary Maddelow with the torn note.

"Do you know any one by the name of Tom Snodgrass?" he inquired.

"Sure, Tom Snodgrass is our man of all work. We always called him James. Why?"

"Your sister didn't know that."

"Sis," called the young man in surprise, "what do you mean by not knowing James's name was Tom Snodgrass?"

"Why, I did know it. Who said I didn't?"

"Mr. Poggioli, when he showed you this note."

"Oh, the note. You know that Tom Snodgrass isn't James. Papa wouldn't be borrowing five hundred and sixty dollars from the hired man. That's what I meant when I said I didn't know any Tom Snodgrass. I meant I didn't know any other Tom Snodgrass."

At this moment Lynch was shouting:

"Look here, I've got the whole thing

figured out! James's note is torn up. Then it's been paid off in some way or other. He had been trying to persuade somebody to go into the rum running business with him. Very well, he got the Emperor. They're partners. The Emperor risked his boat and James risked his note."

"Yes," snarled Sandley, "and they'll both get caught and we'll all lose this villa."

"Everybody hush!" cried Lambert from the telephone. "Is this the flying field? We want a flying boat—a pretty big flying boat . . . Listen, how many here want to go?"

Came a general clamor and raising of hands.

"Look here, we're not chartering the DO-X," protested Lambert.

There broke out a swift conversation in undertones to determine who should go and who would have the most influence on Mr. Maddelow to persuade him to change his occupation. It turned out that each person thought he was more influential than the others. Just then Lambert put his hand over the mouthpiece of the telephone and called out—

"Listen, how we going to pay for this?"

"What you want to know for?" grumbled Lynch.

"The devil, it isn't me. I already know you can't pay for it. It's the air-men."

"How much is his fee?" asked Sandley.

Lambert made motions for them not to shout so loud; then he answered Sandley's query about the size of the aviator's fee—

"I told him how we were shaped up here and he said he would go for his gas and oil."

"Now that will be the devil of a note," said Lynch, "if we lose this air trip just because we can't furnish the gas and oil."

"Wait," cried Laura Maddelow, flying back to the camouflaged vault. "Wouldn't papa's courtesy card do?"

"Do?" said Lynch. "Good as the Bank of England! Better than it is now. Tell 'em to come on, Lambert. Tell 'em we ride on courtesy cards."



THE girl herself did not share in the general rejoicing over the card. She came up to the psychologist and asked in an apprehensive tone—

"Mr. Poggioli, do you believe papa has—has gone into such an awful business?"

The scientist shook his head.

"I don't think so, Miss Maddelow."

Lynch turned on the investigator.

"You don't think so. Why do you think the *Sea Maid* is on her way to Cuba—or the Bahamas? Is it a pleasure trip?"

"That's odd," admitted Poggioli. "I can form no theory to fit the facts."

"Fit what facts? If a man's going to Cuba, he's going to Cuba, isn't he?"

"I mean," returned the psychologist with dignity, "it does not explain the color left out of the concrete column, or the surplus cement in the mixing vat, or the lead pencil mark around the advertisement."

"What's that got to do with the facts we know?"

"They contradict what you call the facts we know."

"Contradict how?"

"Listen; if a careful man like Mr. Maddelow were leaving home on a hazardous expedition, he would put everything in shipshape. He would have put dye in the concrete, cleaned up the refuse and filed Tom Snodgrass's note in his vault. And you can not imagine a reason for his making a pencil mark around his advertisement. None of these details agrees with your theory that he has turned rum runner."

Here Miss Laura dropped her hands with a gasp.

"Oh I know what's happened," she said weakly, and caught Mr. Poggioli's arm for support.

She was a pretty girl, and the scientist asked very sympathetically what was her idea.

"I—I know papa won't be on that boat when we catch it."

"Why do you think so?"

"He—he'll be gone. He'll pretend he fell overboard. You know, the policy—so it will look like an accident. That's why he was so excited and forgot everything."

Mr. Poggioli attempted to comfort her from a psychological angle.

"You are wrong, Miss Maddelow; the reactions of persons contemplating suicide are extreme orderliness. A suicide never forgets to do anything."

The girl simply shook her head, sobbing.

"I just know papa has drowned himself."

At this point a droning made itself audible in the library and swiftly grew into the roar of an airplane. The group hurried out on the great pier that had been designed for an ocean-going yacht. The flying boat grew rapidly in the sky and a few minutes later took the water and came foaming up to the dock.

The party got aboard; the two motors popped half a dozen times like pistol shots, then started roaring again. The plane moved forward, climbed up on the wavetops, then swung loose from the water and dropped Biscayne Bay slowly beneath her.

As the plane stormed higher, the blue tourmaline sea stitched to the red tapestry of the city by a yellow thread of beach extorted a breath of admiration from every one except the flyer. He began bewailing his lack of trade, explaining to Lambert that the tourists didn't have the money to fly.

On the second seat Lynch and Sandley were astonished at the transparency of the sea. They thought some sharks were mullets until the aviator set them right.

In the rear seat Laura Maddelow was saying to Mr. Poggioli—

"We're doing all this j-just to find out that—that papa is—is—"

"Look here, Miss Laura," advised the the psychologist cheerfully, "instead of bewailing your father as dead, you'd better think of something to say to him."

"Something to say—what do you mean?"

"I mean some argument to get him to come back home with you. I think he'll tell us to mind our own affairs."

"Oh, Mr. Poggioli, do you really think papa will be aboard?"

"He couldn't possibly have jumped overboard as you fear."

"Why couldn't he?"

"Because James, the hired man, would have turned around and started back to Miami. If we overtake the boat still going south, your father is bound to be well and alive."

The girl brightened at the theory.

At this point Lynch and Sandley dominated the cabin by shouting and making violent gestures.

"Yonder's the *Sea Maid*! Yonder she is, big as life!"

Both Poggioli and Miss Madelow peered forward through the small windows. The pilot began laughing.

"Yeh," he shouted back, "and she's a whole lot bigger than life. That's the *Arequippa*—she sailed from Miami yesterday evening."

Sure enough, the distant vessel increased in size, became the ground plan of a ship with its bridge marked across deck, dots for masts and smoke trailing out of circles that represented funnels.

This view of the *Arequippa* produced a vertiginous feeling of height. Miss Madelow shut her eyes against it. On the forward seat Mr. Lambert became enthusiastic. He shouted to the pilot:

"That gives me an idea! Why not sell real estate from an airplane. A salesman could show his prospect exactly how far his home would be from the golf course."

"Yes," called the aviator, "and if he wanted it closer, all he'd have to do would be to take him higher."

"Say," went on Lambert more seriously, "why not form a company here in Miami to sell real estate from airplanes. I got a slogan for our organization—just popped into my head. Listen to this: 'We Sell Florida From the Sky; not the Sky from Florida.'"

"Man, it's a knockout," said the aviator. "Means more and says less than any slogan I ever heard."



THEIR conversation was interrupted by Lynch's shouting to Sandley to look at the white gull below. Then the aviator cried:

"That's no gull. That's a speedboat. Those wings you see are sprays of water. That's bound to be the *Sea Maid*."

"What's he running like that for?"

shouted Sandley. "Suppose he's been hitting that pace ever since he left Miami?"

"No, he'd be farther on than he is now," replied Poggioli.

"Then what's he in such a rush about?" demanded Lynch.

"Oh, the Emperor thinks we're a Government plane full of customs men," hazarded Sandley.

Poggioli objected.

"Why would he evade a customs plane. He can't have a stock of liquor aboard now. He's still going South."

"All right, what do you say he's running for?" Lynch demanded tartly of the psychologist.

"I don't know. I can't think of any reason for Mr. Madelow's running from a plane. It doesn't seem to coordinate with anything."

Their remarks were lost in the swoop of the plane to take the water close to the boat. The speedboat itself was hurling aside sheets of spray as it shot across the waves. The motors of the two vessels roared a mighty duet in the empty ocean. Just then Laura Madelow cried out:

"Look, look! Yonder's James sitting by himself in the cockpit. Oh, papa's drowned! I knew he would be. He's drowned himself."

"No he's not, Miss Laura," shouted Lynch. "He's in the cabin. He knows it's us and he's ashamed to show himself."

The girl shook her head.

"I'm sure he would be outside. Oh, I know he's dead!"

The plane was now twenty or thirty feet above the water and quite near the *Sea Maid*. An outbreak of shouting burst from the tiny windows of the airplane:

"James! Wait there, James! Where's your papa, James? Stop the boat, James; where's the Emperor?"

The pontoons struck the waves and sent a deluge over the flying *Sea Maid*. The man, Tom Snodgrass, cut off his engines. His boat slowed down and he sat staring up at the wide spread of wings with a colorless face. As the door of the airplane opened and the passengers climbed out on to the boat the man of all work exclaimed:

"So that is you-all? Who else you got in there—Mr. Poggioli?"

Sandley turned to the psychologist in amazement.

"By George, the fellow guessed you were inside!"

"James, James, is papa with you?" cried Miss Maddelow.

The face of the man of all work changed.

"M—Miss Laura," he stammered, "I—I shore hate to tell you, but—but your pappy slipped an' fell overboard this mornin' a little before good daylight. We wasn't forty miles out o' Miami."

The news of Brompton Maddelow's death plunged the group into the most diverse reactions. The daughter fainted. The men fell into a quandary whether to return her to Miami on the speedboat or in the plane. Eventually they transferred her to the boat where she regained consciousness, but lay on a couch in the cabin with her eyes closed.

Lynch and Sandley put on expressions of concern, but Poggioli could see they were excitedly happy that their speculation in the villa had ended in such undreamed-of good fortune.

The hired man protested against turning the *Sea Maid* about and going back to Miami. He said the boat belonged to him, that he had given a note which he held against Mr. Maddelow for the vessel. His objections were overruled, indeed they were hardly noticed under the urgent necessity of a millionaire's family. They told him he must come back to Miami and certify to the death of his employer on the insurance claim; after that he could take the boat and do what he pleased with it.

"Why didn't you turn back at once when Mr. Maddelow fell overboard?" inquired Lynch.

"I wanted to get to Nassau and bring back enough stuff to pay for the gas," explained the man of all work. "We went in debt for the gas."

"Mr. Maddelow had a courtesy card. Why didn't he use that?" asked Lynch.

"Why, I suppose he forgot it," said Snodgrass.

"Mr. Maddelow must have been quite excited, wasn't he?" asked Poggioli of the hired man.

"Yes, sir, he was," returned Snod-

grass, looking carefully at the psychologist.

Poggioli lolled in the cockpit and considered the ashes of his cigar as the speedboat flung the miles astern. Lynch and Sandley went into the cabin to see about Miss Maddelow.

"By the way, Mr. Snodgrass," pursued the psychologist, "the moment our plane stopped you called to know if I were aboard. That was odd. How came you to think of me?"

"I had the morning paper, sir. I had just got through readin' about you. Then I looked up and there come an airplane, lickety split, and it just came over me all of a sudden that you was in it after me—"

"Why did you think I would be in it?"

"Because I knew the folks would want to trace up the governor and I knew you was the only man in town who could figger out where he went."

Mr. Poggioli nodded at these correct deductions. It seemed an extraordinary truth for Snodgrass to have hit upon. Mention of the paper set the psychologist off on another tack.

"Speaking of the paper, it was you who marked the *Sea Maid's* advertisement in the *Herald*, wasn't it?" The investigator drew from his pocket the clipping and handed it to the helmsman.

Snodgrass took it with a slight frown on his leathery face.

"I don't know. I might of. What makes you ask me?"

"It simply puzzled me. I couldn't understand why the ad was marked, but of course you did it because you wanted to purchase the boat. You paid him the note you held against him for it?"

"Yes, I did." The man of all work nodded briefly.

"I'm surprised you got the boat, at that. The ad said cash."

"He made a good thing out of it," explained Snodgrass uneasily. "My note was sixty dollars bigger'n the price he asked in the paper."

"So Maddelow did object to taking the note straight as so much cash?"

"He did till I discounted him the sixty dollars and interest."

"M—huh—" The criminal investigator sat nodding his head. "What strikes me as odd—if Maddelow wanted

to go in the rum running business, what made him sell his boat at all?"

The hired man twisted on the cushion in the cockpit.

"Now I can explain that, too. He said he was afraid to risk his boat, and I said, 'I'll take it off'n your han's, an' it's my loss if it gits pinched.' That's what I told him."

"So you had no trouble trading with him?"

"If the governor hadn't wanted to trade, I don't reckon he would of," returned Snodgrass surlily.



THE psychologist sat looking absently at the speeding waves, rearranging the bits of evidence into a more rational design. Finally he said:

"Brompton Maddelow was a heavy man, wasn't he? Weighed about a hundred and eighty pounds?"

Snodgrass looked at his catechist suspiciously.

"Didn't you never see him?"

"No. I was simply making a guess. If you don't care to tell me—"

"Oh, I don't mind tellin' you. That's about right, I reckon. I don't see how you guessed so clost if you never seed him."

"Well, if you must know," said the scientist with a little laugh, "I guessed it from the cement left over in the vat."

The hired man thought a moment.

"Oh, from his tracks in the vat?"

"No, from the amount of cement left in the vat."

"The amount left in? I don't see what that's got to do with it."

"And by the way," interrupted the criminologist, "that last column you and Mr. Maddelow put up—your employer was so excited about this trip he forgot to put any red dye in the mixture. It's just plain yellow. When we get home, Snodgrass, you'll have to tear down that

column and mold a new one."

To this the hired man made no reply, but sat wetting his lips with his tongue, staring across the waves with his hand on the wheel.

Mr. Poggioli got up and went into the cabin. Sandley and Lynch were just coming into the cockpit again. The psychologist went to the girl's side, thinking of the simple yet macabre riddle he had solved. He wondered how he would ever tell her. Explain it to her brother, perhaps, and let Gary . . . In the midst of his preoccupation he heard a shout on deck. He turned and ran back. Lynch was holding the tiller and his eyes were starting from his head.

"Mr. Poggioli," he cried, "he slipped and fell overboard!"

"Who did?"

"James."

The psychologist looked astern.

"Where is he now?"

"Why, he's gone. While I was holding the wheel for him, I saw a fin. I called to him to look at it. I said, 'James, look at that shark.' At that very minute he slipped and fell overboard."

"Did you throw him a buoy?"

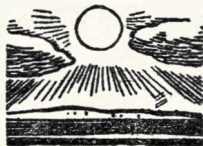
"Yes, yonder it is now—back yonder where you see those two fins moving about."

Sandley interrupted:

"Mr. Poggioli, how will this affect our proof of Mr. Maddelow's death? If we haven't got James, who saw him go overboard?"

The criminologist made a sick gesture.

"It's easy to prove his death. Maddelow's body is in the last column of the colonnade. He and James had a fight over whether Maddelow would accept his own note of hand for the *Sea Maid*. Of course, Maddelow wanted cash to pay on his life insurance. In the fight Maddelow was killed. Snodgrass dropped his body in the mold and poured concrete over it."





STRONG HEART

By

STANLEY
VESTAL

EX-SERGEANT Joe Wolf, late of the Flat Rock Agency Indian Police, strode into the new superintendent's office, carrying his equipment, and halted before the desk. Six feet Joe stood in his moccasins. His blue blouse was taut across his big chest, and his strong, dark face seemed impassive under the carefully rolled brim of his big white Stetson. Erect and steady as he was, only a man of long experience among Sioux Indians could have caught the angry glitter in his eye and guessed at the storm of shame and resentment which raged in Joe Wolf's heart. Only a man of long experience—and the new superintendent was not such a man.

Only Dr. Barton, agency physician at Flat Rock for twenty years past, who happened to be in the office when Joe arrived, was able to read the fury which burned in those Indian eyes.

Joe Wolf, after seven years' faithful and efficient service, had been discharged, as he considered, without cause. In all the thirty-five Winters of his active life he had never known such bitter shame and helpless anger. He made no reply to the dapper superintendent's words of greeting, his glib excuses:

"Retrenchment inevitable . . . Compelled to reduce the Force . . . Deeply regret . . . Perhaps in future . . ."

Joe hardly heard what was said; all that mattered had been said already, when he was ordered to turn in his equipment.

Without a word Joe dumped his McClellan saddle and his bridle on the floor. In silence he unbuckled the worn cartridge belt and laid it, with his holstered sidearms, on the desk. Quietly he peeled off the blue blouse with its shining nickel badge attached, and dropped it gently upon the saddle.

Afterward, for a long minute, he stood motionless, looking down at the dapper, nervous, loquacious little man who had with one word rubbed out all the glory and authority which had made Joe's life worth living. Joe could have killed him with one hand. Suddenly the office seemed to choke Joe; it was suffocating. He was fed up with white men, with all men who wore hats. With a quick, defiant gesture he jerked off his big hat and flung it furiously after the badge. Then he was gone.

Dr. Barton watched him go with a shake of his gray head. For twenty years Barton had watched successive superintendents slowly weld the wrang-

ling bands and factions at Flat Rock into a steady, progressive community. Carefully they had conciliated and organized and balanced the Indians, one faction against the other, until the whole tribe was marching together toward the distant goal of self-support and civilization. Each faction had been given due recognition, due representation on the agency staff, so that they all pulled together. But now, suddenly, the new superintendent, blind to the undercurrents of reservation life and without consulting any one, had gone to work and fired Joe Wolf, carelessly tossing away the fruits of twenty years of steady planning and hard labor. Barton thought the superintendent would have done better to pay Joe out of his own salary.

For Joe Wolf was the coming man, the hereditary chief of the turbulent band which, in the old days, had fought under Sitting Bull against the troops. His discharge meant that the other faction, the agency bunch, whose fathers had served as Indian scouts for the Army, would dominate and domineer; that Joe Wolf's faction would sulk and balk and intrigue against the superintendent; that the pleasant days of harmony and balance were ended. Well, the fat was in the fire!

But the dapper superintendent was smiling and rubbing his hands with satisfaction, wholly unaware of the havoc he had caused, of the endless difficulties before him. He got to his feet and came from behind his desk.

"An unpleasant necessity, Doctor," he chirped. "But we must cut expenses somewhere, you know, in these days." Then, looking at the equipment on the floor, he added in surprise, "Hullo! What's-his-name has gone off without his hat. That's not Government property. Better hang it on the peg there, Doctor. No doubt he'll come back for it."

Dr. Barton stared at the man who was so blind to the significance of that hat.

"I hope he will," he replied, a note of profound discouragement in his voice.

For a moment he was tempted to tell the dapper stranger what a mistake he had made. But Dr. Barton had been a

soldier; it was not for him to question the orders of his superior. Silently he picked up the hat and followed Joe out of the room.

Joe Wolf stood on the porch before the superintendent's office, pulling himself together. The porch—generally filled with loafers—was deserted, and Joe knew why. Straight across the dusty road was the trader's store. Joe had promised to get his uncle some tobacco when he rode in that day, and he knew he would have to go into the store to buy it. Joe had served in the Argonne, had faced shellfire and machine gun nests—faced them bravely, as his scars and his Croix de Guerre bore witness—but he had never faced anything to compare with the ordeal before him now.

He would rather have marched alone against the German army than cross the road to the trader's store just then. For under the wooden awning before it was a great crowd of Indians awaiting him—sarcastic old men, veterans of the Indian scouts, eager to rub in this disgrace to the son of their old enemies; worthless loafers whom Joe had thrown into the guardhouse for drunkenness and horse stealing, now ready to pounce, since he was out of favor; saucy boys fresh from boarding school, with the latest slang and wisecracks on their tongues, quick to follow the lead of their elders; girls giggling under their shawls; Indian policemen strutting in blue uniforms like the one which was stripped from him. Worst of all, there was Sergeant Strikes-Two, swaggering and grinning in triumph.

Sergeant Strikes-Two was the son of old Strikes-Two, chief of the agency faction, and because of this he and Joe Wolf had been rivals from infancy—in the camps, at school, in football and pony racing, in the A. E. F., and in the Indian police. So far luck had played no favorite between them; it was always neck and neck. But today Joe was down. The whole tribe knew it; and Strikes-Two was bound to rub it in. And so Joe stood on the porch, nerving himself to face the jeers and sneers and laughter of his people.

When Dr. Barton appeared, bringing Joe's hat, Joe did not look at him.

"Don't you want this, Joe?" asked the doctor.

Still Joe did not look round.

"I'm an Injun from now on, Doc. I guess I don't need no hat."

Barton was sorry for Joe, wished he could help him, and help the whole situation. No one knew better than Barton what a hell public ridicule could make of life in a small Indian community from which there was no escape. As well kill a Sioux, as laugh at him. But Barton could offer only words.

"Listen, Joe. I knew your father and your grandfather. I know your uncle, the chief. I have known you since you were a kid here at Flat Rock, in the trenches, in hospital. And I know that no man of your family will ever be happy if he lets a stranger come between him and his people."

For a moment the doctor paused, but Joe had nothing to say. Barton spoke again—

"I'll keep your hat until you ask for it."

Then he went off toward the hospital.



JOE WOLF squared his shoulders and crossed the road. The crowd before the store stood motionless, all eyes fixed upon him. Silently they watched him come, sizing him up before they jumped him; and, as he approached, the respect in which they had always held him kept them silent. Not a word was spoken as he pushed through the crowd and went into the store. Briefly he showed his money and pointed out the thin black plug his uncle liked; nobody uttered a word. But as the clerk made change, he wagged a tongue at Joe—

"Can't sell you a hat, can I, Sarge?"

Instantly the spell was broken. A laugh—a dozen laughs—broke out. Joe turned to go, and saw them grinning through the screen doors at him. Now he would catch it.

"Joe ain't no sarge, Buster."

"Joe can't afford a hat these days; he's out of a job."

"How you goin' to keep your head warm, Joe?"

"Shucks, Joe'll let his hair grow long,

and wear braids . . ."

"Oh, yeah, and if he does the girls won't love him no more . . ."

"What of it? Joe can marry old woman Pretty-on-Top; she's crazy. She likes men with long hair . . ."

The gabble roared in Joe's burning ears as he shoved his way through the unyielding crowd and swung off to mount his bareback pony.

But he was not to get away so quickly. Sergeant Strikes-Two was on his heels. He spoke commandingly, in a loud voice, so that nobody could miss his words:

"You, Joe Wolf, hold on there. What's your hurry? Turn around and listen to me. I got some orders for you, you damned Injun." The crowd laughed delightedly. "I been hearin' your uncle and you have got a lot of ponies down on the river. That so?"

"How," said Joe, using the Indian word of assent.

"Look here, Joe Wolf, don't you *how* me. When I ask you a question, talk English. You got some ponies down to camp, ain't you?"

"Yes."

Sergeant Strikes-Two's tone was severe. He drew himself up and imitated the stern manner of a drill sergeant of their old Army days.

"Yes what?"

"Yes, I got some ponies," Joe replied, longing to escape.

Sergeant Strikes-Two scowled and scolded.

"Look here, Joe Wolf; what's come over you? You used to be a soldier. Where's your military courtesy? When your superior speaks to you, you say, 'Yes, sir.' Understand?"

Stubbornly, Joe Wolf kept silence. All eyes were upon him. Strikes-Two went on:

"Joe Wolf, I guess your memory is getting weak. I guess you forget you ain't a sergeant on the Indian police no more. Well, keep it in mind. I'll help you. All of us here will help you keep that in mind, Joe Wolf, so's you can answer right when your name is called. And if you can't remember how to treat your superiors with proper respect, I'll have to throw you into the guardhouse and learn you some man-

ners. Savvy? Now, I asked you a question. What's the answer?"

Joe Wolf's eyes were bright, his lips stiff with rage. He would rather have cut off his hand than say the hated words. But he knew that Strikes-Two would throw him into the guardhouse if he had the least chance. Even though the superintendent released him, he could never live that down. Reluctantly he framed the words—

"Yes, sir."

"That's better; lots better," Strikes-Two crowed. "Maybe some day I can talk the superintendent into making a private of you again. That is, if I can break you to wearin' a hat. Now, Joe Wolf, me and the new superintendent are going to make a lot of changes around here—changes for the better. We aim to put those loafing Indians in your camp to work. There won't be no more pony races down on the river. Are them ponies of yours shod?"

"No, sir."

"Well, they can't pull a plow bare-foot. You catch them ponies tonight and bring 'em up to the blacksmith shop bright and early tomorrow morning. We'll shoe 'em, so's you can get to plowin' toot sweet. Them's my orders. Savvy?"

"Yes, sir." The angry glitter in Joe's eye warned the sergeant to press him no further.

"All right then, Joe Wolf," said the sergeant, with a patronizing grin. "Now you hotfoot it back to camp and carry out my orders. We'll all be waiting for you here tomorrow morning, ready to help you get civilized." The crowd guffawed at the sergeant's humor.



JOE WOLF flung himself astride the bareback pony and galloped away, with the laughter of the people—his own people—in his burning ears. He was in haste to get away, to get away anywhere from that mocking laughter. But all along the single street of the little Indian town of shacks and cottages he could see windows and doors; and he knew that every window and every door would hold a face to mock him as he fled. He could not endure more gibes just then. Wrenching his

pony to the left, he struck into the narrow, lonely Ridge Trail and loped up the hill. It was the long way round; but any trail was preferable to that gauntlet of ridicule, the street.

He saw now what was in store for him. Every day Strikes-Two would order him to the agency on some pretext. Every day the crowd of mockers there would badger and taunt him, goading him on until, in desperation, he struck back. Then Strikes-Two would throw him into the guardhouse, leave his friends without a leader and make their lives a burden. As Joe rode up the long slope, one thought, one desire burned in his heart—to get even with Strikes-Two and win back his power and place, his lost prestige. But how? There was no answer.

In the coulée beyond the ridge Joe saw a camp beside the trail. But there was no turning back now; and there was only one trail a horse could travel—the road past that camp. So Joe rode on. As he came nearer he saw a shiny sport model Ford roadster parked there, with an auto tent beside it and two men seated on the runningboard.

One of them was a stranger in a striped silk shirt, Panama hat, creased trousers, yellow shoes. A white man, Joe thought at first; then he recognized the sallow face of the Crow breed, Billie Brazo, who smuggled liquor and dope from Canada to the reservations. The other man he saw was Hippy, an old, war-scarred, long haired buck belonging to his uncle's band, famous for his valor in the old days, and a leading member of the Strong Heart Warrior Society. As Joe came near, he saw that Hippy was drunk.

Joe Wolf, a full-blooded Sioux, had no love for his ancestral enemies, the Crow Indians. He knew Billie Brazo as a cruel killer, wanted for murder. Yesterday Joe would have been only too glad to run into him, to arrest him; it was just his luck to find Billie after he had lost his badge. Old Hippy, he knew, though a member of Joe's own band, was a devil when drunk, and likely to stab his best friend. And Joe was in no mood to talk. But as he was squeezing his nervous pony past the car in the trail, old Hippy jumped up

and grabbed the pony's lariat, almost pulling Joe from its back.

"Get down, grandson," he urged. "Drink with me. You need a drink; so do I. If the police come here, fear nothing. I have my knife." Hippy slapped the leather sheath at his belt and thrust his bottle into Joe's hands.

Billie Brazo watched Joe warily, then decided to play the friend.

"Sure thing, buddy," he urged. "Take a swig of the old man's liquor. Good for what ails you. You ought to celebrate, now that you're a free man again. You been a policeman a long time, and what did it get you? Nothing. Well, look at me. I'm rich; I'm happy; I'm sittin' on top of the world."

Joe found Hippy's whisky good for low spirits, but he was slow to make up to the Crow.

"Huh. The police are layin' for you, Billie Brazo. We heard you was here. Strikes-Two says he's goin' to nab you."

"Oh, yeah?" Billie bragged, displaying the latest agency slang. "I been in the Big House once. Never again. Say, brother, they got a chair in there; and they strap a man to it and burn him to death. But not me! Let 'em come. They'll never take me alive!"

"How." Old Hippy in his blanket gloated drunkenly. "Let 'em come. I'm a Strong Heart, I am; I'm not afraid of nothing. Let 'em come." Then his crooked talon pointed up the trail. "Yonder he comes now."

Sure enough, Sergeant Strikes-Two was riding toward them. Joe stood up, stepped aside. It would be worth watching; Strikes-Two had courage.

With an oath Billie Brazo jerked out his revolver and crouched behind the car. There was death in his face—death, the fear of the chair, and a desperate resolve. Strikes-Two dismounted and came quietly forward, his hand swinging near his holster. His eyes swept them. Joe Wolf, grinning, stood by, an idle spectator. Strikes-Two was angry.

"Joe," he called, "you goin' to stand and watch a Crow shoot at a Sioux?"

Joe laughed.

"I got no gun. What can I do? You're a policeman; it's no business of

mine. Finish it yourself."

"I will," said Strikes-Two, and came on, watching the Crow like a hawk.

But before he could draw his Colt from the holster old Hippy was between them.

"This is my fight," he declared, jerking out his knife as he limped toward Strikes-Two. "You can't arrest my friend till you kill me. Come on, try it. I'll cut you in little pieces for the dogs to eat. You wear a blue coat. What of it? I've killed plenty of bluecoats. One more is just one more. Come on, try to take him, try to touch him. If you do, I'll kill you. Maybe you'll kill me too, but I don't care. The Strong Hearts will take care of that."

Strikes-Two hesitated. Hippy went on:

"Yes, you better be scared. You fight with me, and the Strong Hearts will kill all your horses, and it will be done so nobody will know who did it. Then your house and your hay will burn, and some morning they'll find you lying dead on the grass. Come on, try to take this Crow. I dare you, you coward, you woman!"

But Strikes-Two did not come on. Instead he turned and got into the saddle.

"Old man," he said, "go on and get drunk again. You'll wake up in the guardhouse. I don't want to kill you."

Hippy laughed.

Strikes-Two said:

"Damn you, Billie, I'll get you tomorrow, don't worry." Then he turned on Joe Wolf. "As for you, Joe, you'll go right into the guardhouse along with Hippy." Quickly Strikes-Two turned and galloped away.

Hippy sat down, laughing, and gulped another pint.

"Yah," he said, tears of mirth rolling down his painted cheeks, "these young men think they're mighty smart in their blue coats. But they don't dare lay a finger on me. They have to wait until I'm dead drunk before they touch me. I'm a fighter, I am, afraid of nothing. I am a Strong Heart, I am. What is a policeman alongside a Strong Heart? Dung, just dung!"

Joe Wolf rode on his way. Hippy had given him an idea. He would ask his uncle, Chief Bull Owl, to admit him to

the Strong Heart Society. Let Strikes-Two have the blue coat and the badge. Strikes-Two was afraid of the Strong Hearts. Old Hippy had bluffed him. Joe rode into camp that night singing a riding song; there would be no guard-house for him.



CHIEF BULL OWL puffed gravely at the long pipe while he considered his nephew's request. The old man's heart was full of pride and affection for his nephew, Joe Wolf, who, if he made good, would succeed Bull Owl as chief of the band. Steady as a statue, the old man filled his lungs with smoke and blew it out again in three straight streams through mouth and nostrils. In silence he framed his answer; and when he spoke, it was with that deliberation habitual to wise old men, upon whose decisions the welfare of a people might depend.

"My nephew, you are a brave man. I know that. You have fought with the white soldiers beyond the big water. I know you were brave, for you won. It was the Sioux boys who won that war; no white soldiers could have done it.

"My nephew, white man's war is just shooting. They lie in ditches and shoot all day. It is dangerous, but it is not honorable. It is not war as we make war. My nephew, tell me, did you ever ride in and strike the enemy with your hand, or with some weapon held in your hand? Did you ever count a coup?"

Joe Wolf hung his head. How could he make the old man understand the hell of the trenches, the horror of shell-fire, the terrible slaughter of modern battle? He shook his head.

"No."

"Then, my nephew, I am sorry. You are a brave man, but you are not fit for the Strong Hearts. You have never grappled with your enemy, never counted a coup. Your warfare was just shooting. I can not grant your request."

There was silence while the old man passed the pipe.

"My nephew, when I am gone you should be chief of these people. But it is not enough to be born to the chieftaincy. When your grandfather

died, I was made chief instead of your father, though he was the eldest son. I would advise you to do something brave, so that you will become chief after my death. Then you can get the better of Strikes-Two."

"How can I?" Joe Wolf's heart lay on the ground.

"There is only one road—the war-path. When I was a young man, and a war party started against the Crows, I did not wait to be invited. I followed them and went along. When we made an ambush, and our chiefs chose certain young men to go first and lure the enemy back into the trap, I did not care whether they chose me or not. I went ahead anyhow. I never missed a chance to fight. My people made me chief because they saw that I was ready to die for my people."

"But, uncle, there is no warpath nowadays. What can I do?"

The old man busied himself cleaning his pipe, which he replaced in its pouch as a sign that the interview was at an end. Finally he said:

"I can not tell. A man must make his own arrows."

That night was a bitter one for Joe Wolf. All night he lay awake, but found no solution of his problem. Dawn saw him on the road with the ponies, heading along the narrow trail to the agency blacksmith shop as Strikes-Two had ordered. Behind him trailed the wagons of his uncle's camp, filled with men and women. They had heard of Strikes-Two's high handed conduct and their hearts were hot with anger. But what could they do? There might be a riot when the two bands came together—who could tell? But a riot would not help. Sioux could not count coups on Sioux, their own people. Joe Wolf knew he was riding to the guard-house, to defeat and disgrace, to the end of his honorable career.

About sunset, when nearing the agency, Joe saw two cars speeding toward him. The first was a shiny Ford roadster, Billie Brazo's car; the second was the lumbering police car, model 1925. Billie was stepping on the gas, running away from the police, heading straight for Joe Wolf, making all the speed possible. As Billie swung round

the curve he saw Joe's ponies bunched on the trail ahead. He honked wildly, but there was not time to push the ponies from the narrow trail.

Joe thought the car would smash into them. But before the speeding car touched the foremost pony, Billie Brazo wrenched the wheel over, turned the car on two wheels out of the road. It lurched through the shallow, dry ditch, tore through the flimsy Indian barbed wire fence and leaped bouncing away over the rough prairie, dragging great strands of twisting wire behind it. On and on it went, plunging over rocks and through buffalo wallows, down among the boulders in the coulée, and slumped into the shallow water of the muddy stream. A moment later the police car slid to a stop, and Strikes-Two's seven bluecoats tumbled out.

Joe Wolf, from the back of his pony, saw Billie Brazo crawl out of his wrecked car, a Colt revolver in his hand. The dying sun glinted on the brass shells in his cartridge belt. Brazo was hatless, his striped shirt was in rags, and a red stain was spreading over his forehead where the glass had cut him; but the breed was on his feet, ready to defend himself. Strikes-Two led his men forward across the grass.

"Get round him, men," he yelled. "Don't let him get away down the coulée!"

Obediently the seven policemen fanned out, trying to surround the breed, to keep him from slipping through their thin line into the hills. It was already almost sundown; when darkness fell Billie could easily vanish into the rocks and brush. They could never hope to catch him at night in that wilderness.

Strikes-Two ran bravely forward toward the breed. Joe Wolf sat on his pony, watching. Everybody was watching now, as the wagons came on. Joe envied Strikes-Two. Strikes-Two had backed down before Hippy, but he was no coward now. Dodging from side to side to avoid the lead of his foe, Strikes-Two raced forward, straight for the desperate Crow. But Billie crouched behind his car, steady as a rock. Joe saw the smoke of his Colt. *Tchow!* Down went Strikes-Two, head over heels, like a rabbit. The other policemen halted,

hesitated, took cover. Joe heard Billie cursing, heard the Crow war-whoop, heard Strikes-Two calling—

"Come on, men; don't let him get away."

But the bluecoats made no move.

Joe Wolf's long habit of command spurred him, as he saw the cowardice of these men who had taunted and badgered him.

"Get in there!" he yelled. "Will you lay low and let a Crow kill your buddy?"

But all his taunts were useless; the police would not budge. Joe was ashamed of his people. If that lone Crow stood them off and got away, the Sioux would never hear the last of it. Joe had the best of them now—all but Strikes-Two. None of those policemen would ever dare taunt Joe Wolf again. Only Strikes-Two could do that, for he alone had shown courage. All the same, he had failed.

And suddenly Joe Wolf saw that his chance had come. The words of Doc Barton, the advice of Uncle Bull Owl swept through his brain like a prairie fire: "Never miss a chance to fight!"

Joe yelled a contemptuous warning to the craven bluecoats:

"You women, if you won't, I will! Watch me!"



JOE had no weapon, and wanted none. He would outdo Strikes-Two, take Billie alive.

And well he knew that no threat of firearms would ever make Billie Brazo put up his hands. Unarmed and bareback, he dashed through the gap in the fence, sped over the prairie on his fleet pony, lying close to the animal's neck to avoid the lead of his enemy. He rode zigzag, jerking his mount from side to side, as his uncle had taught him to ride long ago, before the school had made him ride like a white man. Back in the road he could hear some one singing a war song; every one was watching him now. No wonder. This time his fighting would not be "just shooting".

But all his dodging was needless. Billie Brazo wasted no bullets. Cool as ice, he crouched behind his wrecked car, six-gun in hand; it was a matter of

pride with Brazo to make every shot count. He liked to boast of his marksmanship. If the Sioux kept on coming one at a time, he thought he could drop them all, and then shoot his way out, or skip in the darkness. Joe's pony sped down the slope, circling the rocks, and splashed into the shallow water of the muddy stream behind Billie, who fired at five yards. Joe, seeing he was about to shoot, kicked the little horse up the slope as the Crow fired. The frantic jump of the animal reared Joe above the breed's aim. The lead hit the pony in the chest; it stumbled back and rolled over in the water. The fall threw Joe almost on top of the breed.

But as Joe rushed in to grapple with Brazo, the Crow fired again. Joe felt the jolt in his left ankle. He stumbled forward and clutched at his enemy. His grasping fingers caught the breed's cartridge belt as he fell. Joe knew his leg was smashed; it was numb with pain. He had only one chance in a thousand now. Therefore he clung to that belt with all his might; and with all the weight of his dragging body and all the force that was in him, he wrenched at the belt, trying to drag down the breed before another bullet found him.

Once Joe got the Crow rolling on the grass with him, his greater weight and strength would equalize the struggle. Brazo, cursing and panting, struggling to keep his feet, was sent reeling off his balance by Joe's furious lunge, and for the instant was too much taken by surprise to use his gun. Yet he did not go down, and Joe knew another second might be fatal. With all his might he wrenched at the cartridge belt. Then, just when victory seemed certain, the belt parted. Joe fell back on the grass, empty handed. The belt flew over his head into the stream. Billie Brazo staggered back, fell on one knee with the suddenness of his release. But a second later he stood over Joe, panting and unhurt, with the ready Colt in his hand.

Joe Wolf's eyes ranged the hillsides where the scattered policemen cowered behind their rocky shelters. No one would come to his rescue; no one could come in time. Billie Brazo stood over him, and Billie Brazo's eyes were gloating. Joe was sure that Billie would

shoot him, and Billie said as much.

"Pretty good, but not good enough," he growled. "Now I'm going to fill you full of lead, and then I'll get out up the coulée."

Joe Wolf had failed; and having failed, he hardly cared what happened. He might just as well die as have Strikes-Two still in a position to taunt him. Already the sun was setting; and with the first darkness, Billie would be off and away. Those bluecoats would never attack so long as Billie had ammunition. And his revolver still contained two shots, maybe three. If that were emptied, maybe—

"I told you they'd never take me alive," Billie Brazo boasted. "Let 'em come. I'll bump 'em all off, one at a time."

Joe Wolf laughed: there was a chance he might get Billie yet. Billie did not know he had lost his cartridge belt. In the rough-and-tumble he had not seen the belt go into the stream, did not know it had parted! Joe Wolf laughed.

"What-t-'ell you laughin' for?" Billie demanded, astonished and displeased.

Joe grinned up at him.

"Huh. You talk a lot. You shot Strikes-Two; you kill my pony; you break my leg. But I got another good leg. I'll trail you down. I'll get you yet, Billie Brazo." Joe waved his sound leg and laughed.

Stung to anger at the taunt, Billie turned the nose of the Colt at the offending member of his enemy.

"Oh, yeah?" he drawled, and fired. Joe's body jumped with the impact. "I guess you won't use that leg soon again, damn you!" crowed the breed.

Joe managed another laugh in his pain.

"What do legs matter, Billie? They'll put me on a horse, and I'll trail you. You see this right arm? Well, take a good look at it. That's the arm that will shoot you down."

And now it was Brazo's turn to laugh. He was beginning to enjoy this slow torture. This was more fun than an immediate kill.

"Naw, you don't" he answered, gloating. "I'll fix that."

Again the Colt barked. Joe's right arm was shattered; his brain reeled with

the agony.

Still Joe tried to grin at his cruel master. On the skyline his dazed eyes could see heads rising here and there, men peering down to see what the shooting meant. Once more Joe gathered the fragments of his courage to meet the Crow's murderous lead. He threw out his left arm along the grass.

"I sure fooled you—that time—you damned breed!" he gasped. "I can shoot—better—with my left hand—than with—my right."

Billie Brazo stood over Joe, staring down into his glazing eyes.

"That so?" he sneered. "What of it?"

Once more Joe braced himself. But this time there was only the click of the hammer on an empty shell chamber; Billie's gun was empty.

Joe Wolf gave a great sigh. Then he gathered all the air he could into his lungs, and yelled to the men on the hillsides—

"Come and get him; he's out of ammunition."

That was good news to the bluecoats up there.

Brazo laughed.

"You poor sap, I got plenty. Now I'll finish you, and then—"

But his groping fingers found no belt. His face changed; he looked down. The belt was gone; it had disappeared. He looked around like a trapped animal. All along the hillsides bluecoats were advancing, trotting forward, and with them the warriors of Chief Bull Owl, knives in their hands, fanning out, blocking all hope of escape.

"You tricked me, you damned Injun!" he shouted.

"Yes," said Joe Wolf, "you'll die in the chair." He fainted.

With a yelp more animal than human, the breed jumped upon Joe's helpless body. Joe could not turn aside from the savage blows the breed rained down. Darkness was upon him. Again and again the Colt rose and fell; but there was only darkness and silence for Joe Wolf. He never knew how Billie pounded and beat him in savage frenzy, until the bluecoats dragged the breed from his mangled body. No more did Joe know when the women came wail-

ing from the wagons and laid him out, while Chief Bull Owl painted his face for death and dressed him in the bonnet of the Strong Hearts for burial; nor how Dr. Barton came racing with the ambulance and carried him and Strikes-Two to the agency hospital. Bull Owl shook his head at the doctor, saying—

"No man can survive such wounds."

Doc Barton was inclined to agree with the old chief. But the doctor was no quitter; and after all, he reflected, medical science had made great strides since Bull Owl was a warrior. If Joe wished to live, perhaps he might. That was the question. Did he wish to live? His behavior in the fight did not indicate any such desire. And Doc Barton knew that few patients, least of all Indians, who hovered on the border between life and death, could live when the love of life was gone.

When Joe roused out of his long coma, the doctor saw that the desire to live was lacking. Hoping to bring it back, he carried a mirror to Joe and showed him the bonnet of the Strong Hearts topping his bandaged head. For a moment Joe's spirit flickered into interest; he even cast his eyes round the ward to see who else might be aware of his new honors. Then his eyes lost their luster, his muscles relaxed. For across the room lay the grinning face of Strikes-Two on his white pillow, his blue coat and badge hanging from the peg beside his bed. That sight took all the joy out of life for Joe Wolf; he knew then that it was not the bonnet of the Strong Hearts that he craved, but the badge of the Indian police. He could not be even with Strikes-Two after all.

But old Doc Barton was quick to sense his trouble.

"Listen, Joe; the superintendent just telephoned to say that your badge is waiting for you when you get well. He says he made a big mistake about you. He says you're worth a dozen ordinary policemen. He wants you to reorganize the force."

Joe's eyes brightened again, and he wrinkled his torn face into a torturing grin.

"Doc," he whispered, "hang my hat up there where I can see it, will you? I guess I'm going to need it after all."

The WEIRDEST ISLAND in the WORLD

By LAWRENCE G. GREEN

BOUND for the guano islands off the coast of Southwest Africa, the little steamer dropped the sandy town of Luderitzbucht into the yellow haze. All the black cutthroats of the African seas seemed to be squatting in our welldeck.

They were laborers for the islands. I can hear them now, droning their soft toned negro melodies; certainly I shall not forget the educated mulatto from Sierra Leone—probably an exile with a price on his head—who announced each musical item with a great display of university English and woefully defective teeth.

Before sunset that day we had reached Ichaboe Island, and saw nature's most astounding spectacle. In the distance the birds were like a swarm of flies; on landing, they burst into sight in untold myriads.

Ichaboe is waterless, inconceivably barren. Yet the bird life is so dense that the six hundred yards of rock which rise above the sea are packed with nests.

For hundreds of years the island must have been a bird sanctuary, though roving Liverpool schooners only chanced upon these layers of nitrate wealth eighty years ago. British enterprise, in the form of a lumbering, square rigged gunboat, hoisted the Union Jack long before Germany came to Africa, and the halcyon days of the guano group began.

There are strangely named islands in the group—Pomona, Albatross, Mercury, Roast Beef, Plum Pudding and Possession. To these islands in the breeding season the birds come each year, arriving in great flights which last for hours and blot out the sun.

I watched them whirl and eddy in the sunlight—a maelstrom of beating wings. Flying high in endless procession, they spy their food deep down, dive like plummets, wings and bodies stiff during that breathless flash from sky to sea. When they break the surface there is always gleaming silver in their beaks.

They are all alike, these gannets, and handsome with their goose-like bodies, white wings fringed with black, their yellow necks and webbed feet and dreamy, light blue eyes.

On Possession Island, the penguins' kingdom, there is a mysterious breath of gray old age—things that the historian has passed over, of which the world today knows nothing.

There is a corner which is used as a cemetery, and some of the headstones are fairly new. Others, with the names of sailors who went down in the full rigged ship, *Auckland*, can just be read. There are a few pitted, moss grown stones on which a word or two of Portuguese remain, the full inscriptions gone. And there is a line of mounds which bear no trace of those who lie beneath; though once, after a great gale had raged, the island headman found a few old coins where the sea had ravaged a cairn at the base of the mounds.

There are diamond workings, too, and a couple of wizened native women who seem always to have lived on Possession. They are not Hottentots, Damaras or Hereros. They speak a language which no native of the guano gang can understand; and they live in a tiny hut, fed by the headman—two living enigmas of one of the queerest islands in the world.

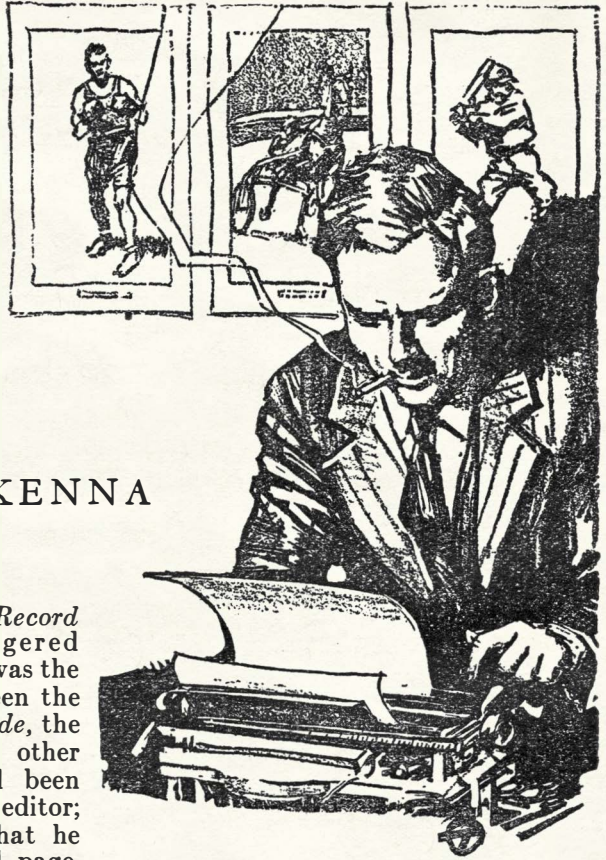
FIRST, PLACE *and* SHOW

By EDWARD L. MCKENNA

JOE HAWKES sat up in the *Record* office, tapping a two-fingered sonata on his typewriter. It was the *Record* office this year; it had been the *Globe*, the *World*, the *Toledo Blade*, the *Kansas City Star* and lots of other papers in days gone by. He'd been everything from copy boy to city editor; in his youth they found out that he wrote too well for the editorial page, so they shifted him to sports and gave him a by-line. He'd had newspapers shot from under him; he'd been through reorganizations and economy campaigns and he'd also been fired, several times, on his own account. He was thirty-six years old.

It was a wrestling story he was doing, a little general hurrah-boys for an outdoor show Frankie Norelius was putting on over at the stadium the next night. Joe knew plenty about wrestling, plenty about boxing, plenty about football, baseball, track and rowing. The thing he didn't know about was the horses, horses, horses. He was a form-player; he read the past performances, looked earnestly at the odds and laid his money on the line. And lost. The dogs just wouldn't run—for Joe.

Of course, you can't help the way you're built, and form was Joe's weakness. He didn't believe in hunches; he liked to dope things out; he was studious and he had a good eye. He'd try



to pick the winner, any old time, in any sort of sport; he'd forecast the probable pennant winner, or the results of the Lafayette-W. and J. game, or Notre Dame and Southern California, or the British Open, or the lightweight championship, quite cheerfully, and sign his name. They wouldn't let him pick the horse races; too many readers had complained. On most other things he was pretty good.

Glance over his shoulder as he writes. It's something like this:

Ben Carlo v. Wladek Michaelovitch. Winner, Carlo. Michaelovitch won last time. Sigmund Johannesen v. Paul Petroff. Winner, Johannesen. This one is a toss-up. Petroff is new around here, and hasn't shown much so far.

Gus Dreyfoos v. Bone-crusher Martin. Winner, Dreyfoos. The Bone-crusher is too slow and clumsy for Gus.

Wally Bergman v. Five-yards Parsons. Winner, Bergman. Five-yards Parsons never

saw any tackles like his. Looks like the best bout on the card.

Tubby Hannaford v. Earl Whittaker. Winner, Hannaford. Experience will tell in this one. Whittaker is promising, but not good enough yet for the ex-champion

Joe finished his story, lighted a cigaret and yawned. He'd been on the wagon seven months, the seven months he'd been with the *Record*. It came to him that it would certainly be nice to have a little drink. That thought had occurred to him before. As usual, he tried to think about his couple of nice kids, and how bad times were, and how lucky he was to have a job. His phone rang, and he answered it; the columnist dropped in and asked him if he had any new dirt; the phone rang again, and Joe said no, he didn't have any free tickets for anything.

He looked at some cartoons of Wally Hesselman's and the layout for the morning, then talked awhile to a broken down fighter who wanted a few lines, a little publicity, to help him to get another bout; he looked at the record books to find out when and where and if Tom Sharkey fought Gus Ruhlin, so that some subscriber might sleep peacefully, or collect a bet. He heard the rolling of the make-up trucks down below and knew that the paper was yawning, as he was, and getting ready to go to bed.

He drifted up to the art department and watched a few rounds of twenty-five and fifty. Then the building shook with the vibration of the presses, and he picked up his hat, grabbing a paper as he left. Another day was over, another long day in the life of an old newspaperman of thirty-six.



NEXT night he went over to the stadium to cover the show. When he arrived, the first bout was on. It wasn't dark yet, and the crowd was still coming in. It was a pretty good house, considering. Frankie Norelius would come out all right on the show, so Joe figured.

Above him, on the platform, two chunky men were pushing each other around. They were fat, they were hairy; their wrestling was rough and

dirty and far from clever. To Joe it looked like a brother-act; he'd seen it before, and it didn't amuse him. They'd crack each other and display an open hand, with much unction, to the referee; they'd pull hair and ears and fingers; they'd say "ooh" every time they got a good slap, or maybe it was a good punch. It looked like clowning to Joe.

The crowd liked it. They laughed and cheered, ironically or earnestly; they yelled advice. After twenty-four minutes Carlo threw Michaelovitch with something which the referee, somewhat at a loss, described as an airplane spin, and Joe made a mark on his card.

There followed Sigmund Johannesen and Paul Petroff. Their styles didn't suit each other; the bout was pretty slow; the crowd began to whistle and stamp. The referee seemed to be having his troubles with both of them; Johannesen seemed to be insolent, and Petroff apparently couldn't understand. It was rough enough, what there was of it, but the referee made up his mind they weren't trying. He stopped it after nine minutes.

Petroff was a blond with a lot of hair, and a tremendous chest even for a wrestler. He stood there, shaking his head, trying to protest. The referee kept waving him away. At last Petroff turned to his corner and went through a pantomime to the customers, shaking and bobbing his head, shrugging his shoulders, extending his palms. They laughed and booed. He'd been over here six weeks; he couldn't speak English. He didn't want to go out of that ring without wrestling somebody; that was plain. Probably he was worrying about his money, and maybe he had a right to worry.

Joe drew a line through his card. Nine minutes, ten seconds, no decision. He didn't know how to figure the bout and he didn't care much.

He thought he'd slip out and have a chat with Frankie Norelius and see how things were going at the box-office. So he spoke to Jim O'Hara, of the *Mail*, and Jim nodded.

"Sure thing, Joe. I'll be here," he said.

Frankie Norelius was just as usual, laughing, perspiring, affable and excited.

Frankie was O. K; all the newspaper boys liked him. He said something to Joe about the nice writeup in the *Record*; asked him what he really thought about the card. It was all right, wasn't it? Joe said sure. Norelius said he thought the Summer wouldn't be so bad; times were hard, all right, but people had to forget their troubles, didn't they? Joe knew that Frankie had troubles of his own, troubles with the big city outfit, troubles down at the City Hall, troubles about money, as who hasn't? Norelius asked Joe to have a drink. Joe declined. He watched Norelius have one. He had to do a lot of that in his business.

When he got back to his seat, Jim O'Hara told him about the bout between Dreyfoos and Bone-crusher Martin. Dreyfoos had been given the decision, after the allotted thirty minutes. There'd been no fall. It was a right fair bout, so O'Hara said.

Wally Bergman and Five-yards Parsons entered the ring. Bergman was short and dark and chubby. He'd been a real All-American, an All-American from a little Eastern school, and a half-back, at that, which makes it still more binding. He weighed 218. He'd been in the game since he'd been graduated from college; made good money at it; still had it. He was twenty-five or twenty-six.

Five-yards Parsons weighed, so they said, 225; he didn't quite look it. He was six feet three, with huge, high shoulders and red hair that was getting a little thin, and skin that was almost too white for a man in good condition.

Parsons was thirty-four years old, though he wasn't advertising it. He'd gone to Harvard, or to Yale, or to Princeton, or to Pennsylvania, and he'd been mentioned for a couple of All-American teams himself. He'd been a coach; he'd played professional football; he'd been in the bond business, and the advertising business, and the insurance business, and the automobile business, which, when you come to think of it, is rather a melancholy progression.

Everybody who knew Parsons agreed that he was a pretty good fellow. He was just another one of the boys who go to college on an athletic scholarship,

make a good fraternity and study a few subjects in which they're not so interested. Yes, and sometimes they do study them, too, and do the best they can with them. They're not much interested in books, these boys; they're interested in sports, any sort of sport; they like to be outdoors, hunting, or fishing, or playing ball. They're not always great hands for parties, either, or for running around; they're tired when night comes. As a general thing, it isn't the athletes who give college boys a bad name.

They don't plan much for the future. They have a vague idea that everything will be all right. They can hit a line, or run back a punt; they don't quit; they aren't yellow. They muddle through their courses somehow. It's not so hard to get a college degree.

And then—and then, sometimes, they find that they've got everything but sharpness, everything but cleverness, everything but what it takes. Their tastes are expensive. They're used to good clubs, fairly good food, good clothes and good service, and a disregard for money as money. They like girls who have been brought up as they have been; sometimes they marry them, and that's their way out. Sometimes they're not sharp enough, or self-seeking enough to marry a girl with money, or else they've a distaste for such a refuge. So they go on, as best they can, and often that's not well.



IT WAS pleasant to see Parsons bow to the crowd. It wasn't the bow of a pugilist or a paid performer at all.

There was no waving of hands above his head, no turning to every side of the ring. He took off his bathrobe casually, he stood up straight, he bowed, not haughtily, not perfunctorily; not with a sneer, not as if he were frightened, embarrassed or ashamed.

Joe Hawkes watched him and grinned, and right then and there he began to hope that Parsons would win, though he'd predicted that he wouldn't.

They came together; the referee broke their handclasp, but there was no need. They moved around each other, watchful, grave and dangerous. There wasn't

any slapping, or scratching, or cries of "ooh", or "ouch", or the equivalent ejaculations in Polish or Lithuanian; they wrestled silently, one hand on the neck, another on the elbow.

Suddenly Parsons went in. He got a head-lock, a good head-lock, his left hand clutching his right wrist, his right arm around Bergman's head. They stood so for a second, then they tumbled to the mat.

"Can't throw him with any head-lock," said Joe Hawkes half to himself. "Anyhow, not yet."

Parsons kept that head-lock on. He was wrestling as he'd been taught in college, where the bouts last nine minutes and a man tries for a fall or a time advantage. He was going after him, trying, trying for that fall, swinging his legs out at right angles to Bergman's body and putting on the pressure. Bergman was pivoting on his shoulder, swinging his legs up into the air. He wasn't in trouble. This was a strong boy, yes, but he thought he could break that hold when he liked. The referee wasn't even kneeling down; he thought so too. Everybody thought so but Five-yards Parsons.

He was the one who was wrong.

After two minutes Bergman broke that hold and rolled away. He got to his feet. So there was nothing to do but try it all again.

Six times Parsons got that head-lock; Bergman broke it six times. Bergman knew his stuff. He was strong and smart and young. He was keeping the customers amused and tiring his man out.

The crowd was for Parsons, though he was the taller man.

"Get him, Red! Hold him, Harvard! Hold that line!" they were yelling.

Parsons was doing all the forcing. He knew a few holds too, but the head-lock and the half-nelson and bar were the best.

The bout was clean as a new broom. Bergman could have made it nasty if he'd liked. He'd wrestled a few tough ones and learned a lot of tricks. He was being made to back up, too; he wasn't out in front. He was taking on the big boy from the big school, taking him on in a way that wouldn't

have barred him in the Intercollegiates. Rough stuff for a dirty guy; that was Bergman's motto. He was wrestling fair, not trying to hurt or punish.

Eighteen minutes passed, twenty, twenty-two. Parsons's body was glistening; his white skin had reddened from his efforts and from his contacts with the mat. He was still coming in, coming in, carrying the battle to him. He'd found out, at last, that the professional game is different, and that even when you get the hold, they don't fall. He'd put that head-lock on, the best he knew; they were beautiful head-locks. He'd been on top, all through the bout, he'd given his best. Well, what do you say when you're fifteen yards from the goal and the quarter fumbles and they kick to your forty-five yard line? "Come on, boys. Five yards more," you say, and then they call you Five-yards Parsons, and think your heart's better than your head, and you almost make the All-American.

He was pushing Bergman back, pushing him back, crowding him, worrying him. He had him within a foot of the ropes.

Bang!

Bergman's catapulting body hit him in the side. That was Bergman's way, that first hard tackle that started with a bounce off the ropes.

"That's got him! That's got him!" they said.

Parsons got up, trembling and shaking. *Bang!* Bergman hit him again. Down he went.

"Stay down, stay down, you fool!" roared Joe Hawkes. "Make him come and get you. Stay down!"

But they don't teach them to do that at Yale, or Harvard, or Princeton, or Dartmouth, or State, or Pennsylvania. They teach them to get up and take it, and goodness knows it's not very sensible. Parsons got up, twice more, just to get that head and shoulders and hurtling body in his chest, in his ribs. The last time Bergman knew it was enough. He rolled into him and threw him with a half-nelson that wouldn't have made a baby cry.

"You're O. K., Parsons," he said. "Hope I didn't hurt you."

Parsons grinned and shook hands.

"O. K, Bergman," he said. "I heard you were tough."

Parsons went tottering to his corner. The crowd gave him a nice hand, and he bowed again to them. He'd had nice hands before, for instance when they took him out with a broken leg in the State game, during his sophomore year. He nearly flunked out of school because of his time in the hospital. Oh, well, you do your best, you get a nice hand, what's the difference? You fail once more, you find there's another game at which you're pretty good, but not quite good enough. You don't starve to death, at least not right away, not till you're past the age when there are still new games to find.

Joe Hawkes made another entry on his card:

Bergman. 24 minutes, 32 seconds; series of flying tackles, followed by half-nelson and body-hold.

He could see a clock on a tower opposite the stadium. Twenty past ten, it said, twenty past ten, and soon another day would be over. Another day for him, another for the wrestlers, another for all the people who cheered and booed and watched them.



JOE HAWKES wondered about those crowds of people all about him, the stupid, unseeing crowds that follow sports and pay to see them without appreciating them. The crowd that sits too far away to see the blows that count, the holds that throw. The crowd that boos and hollers: "Fake!" "Ah, kiss and make up!" "Ah, throw them out, the bums!" "Give that umpire a stick and a tin cup!" "Where's your mask and gun, you robber?" The cruel crowd that shouts for the kill, the knockout, the fall, the decision. The crowd that's looking for an answer, always, the only answer it can understand, one man with his face in the dust, another with a cup or a medal in his hand. And still, the crowd that worships courage, too.

Tubby Hannaford was coming in. He was laughing, chatting, waving to his friends.

"Lo, Joe," he said.

"Good luck, Tub," said Joe.

Tubby Hannaford was at least forty-five. Some said fifty. He'd been the champion, and he'd thrown the champion after the title had been safely passed along. There were those who said that Tubby in his prime could have thrown the champ, and the next champ, and any three other wrestlers, one after the other, out into row twelve, had it pleased him. Still, men must live, and there wasn't so much money in the game back in the old days when Tubby's playmates were men like Gus Rober, Leo Pardello, Tom Jenkins, Frank Gotch, Hackenschmidt, Dr. Roller Zybyzko and similar Goliaths.

Some said that Tubby had money salted away, and some said that he didn't have a dime. At any rate, he'd come back to the wars again. He was fat, he was old. The wise ones said that he was glad to be fat, glad to look old. It made him look like soft pickings when as a matter of fact he was fast as a shooting star; and, though his brain was still active, he'd forgotten more about the game than most of his opponents would ever know. He wasn't the slapping, gouging kind, but he'd go to work on a wrist or toe and soften a man up, not cruelly, exactly, but purely as a matter of business. It was his bread and butter, his cakes and ale.

Earl Whittaker was another college boy, from a university out in the cornfields. He was six feet five, so tall that he looked slim; he was blond and very handsome, with a beautiful body, but not a body that was made for wrestling. Nobody could tell Whittaker that, though. He was self-conscious about his good looks, in the sense that reference to them made him peevish. It was said that when he was on the card many a lady would hurry through her dishes; there'd be plenty of women in the audience. He was a decent young boy, and despised cheap pick-ups; they yearned for him in vain. He wasn't exactly frail; he did weigh 232, and he could break any ordinary man in half, particularly if he could get a scissors on him.

That was his hold, the scissors. He'd wrap his legs around a head, or a body, and hold on, and hold on, and hold on.

If he'd had two men's legs, he'd have been worse than a boa-constrictor or the Iron Maiden.

Tubby had heard about that scissors. He didn't want it around his forty-two-inch waist; few people would. Tubby knew a hundred and twenty-seven holds, all good, all different; his preference was a nice stiff head-lock till his man was dizzy, followed perhaps by a stretch or a toe-hold till a leg or arm was limp; followed next, if necessary, by something special in a wrist-lock or double-nelson, and the whole thing neatly concluded by five or six more or less back-shattering spills to the mat.

This artist could finish them up in thirty seconds, or he could calculate the fall so that he'd just catch a train. If he were staying in town overnight, and time were no object, he could keep the man from falling for a long, long period, and still make everything look like the absolute McCoy. What a man that McCoy must have been, by the way, and why is there no monument to him?

But Tubby, for all that, was more than forty-five years old.

He put his head-lock on young Mr. Whittaker, not too gently, but still as if he loved him. He put the wrist-lock on, till Whittaker's fingers grew white, not just pale, but white, dead white. He fiddled around, possibly deciding what he'd do next. Then Whittaker jumped, and Joe Hawkes jumped, too, almost out of his seat, and Tubby said—"Ooh."

It was the scissors, all right, and for those who like such things it was a beauty. They fell to the mat, all five hundred pounds of them. Whittaker grabbed an adjacent arm, thinking no doubt that he might do something with it. And he squeezed, and squeezed, and squeezed.

Nobody is really keen about encountering that hold, nobody in the world. The feet are locked at the instep; some don't even have to lock their feet; they get the result in some other horrible way. The victim can't reach those feet, can't pry those crushing legs away. He suffers. Ask Tubby Hannaford.

He broke that scissors. He broke it nine times in that bout. After the third time he did a little acting; he pre-

tended to be weak, worn out, but Whittaker wouldn't be trapped by him. That tall blond snake kept coming in, but he was always wary, always careful; he didn't like that head-lock, any more than Tubby liked the scissors. It was like the old days when the man with the net and trident would come in, skipping gracefully, at the man with a shield and sword, and a pleasant time was had by all, no doubt, including those in the cheap seats who yelled—

"Why don't you fight, you bums?"

After Tubby felt that fourth scissors, he didn't need to do any acting. The other three had been a little high. This wasn't.

While the eighth one was around his body, the referee came over and spoke to Tubby, asked him if he wanted to quit. Tubby couldn't speak, he couldn't breathe; he was an old man, a man forty-five years old and more. He could shake his head, though; not far, but a little.

"They'll have to kill him to make him quit," said Joe.

"I think he's done," said Tommy Martin of the *Gazette*.

"Looks that way," said Joe.

In a way, he'd have been glad to see him quit. He didn't enjoy that suffering. He didn't like to see blood in a prizefight. In a way, he'd have hated to see him quit. This fellow was an old man, an old fighter. Stop it, you, stop it if you like; don't ask Tubby whether he'll stop. That was how Joe felt about it. But they didn't stop wrestling bouts.

Tubby broke that eighth hold. He staggered away; he tried to ride his bicycle. The blond boy was after him, after him, after him—and fame and fortune. He was young, he was strong. It was cruel, yes, but that's the way it is.

He put the ninth scissors on him. Tubby broke it, got up, staggered, fell. Whittaker ran forward.

"Hunh!" said Tubby. "Hunh!" He had Whittaker in his arms.

"Agh!" said Joe, on his feet.

Tubby raised Whittaker up, high up, straight up above his head, as if he were a little boy. Bang! Down they went. Tubby didn't fall into him; he

rolled away and propped himself up on his knee, and fell again.

"He's out! He's out! They're both out!" said Jim O'Hara.

The referee began to count. Tubby heard that count, as our stout forefathers heard the padding steps of the saber-toothed tiger. Four! Five! They must be counting for him, he thought. He rolled over, he staggered up, he broke into a waddling run, looking fearfully for a pursuer. There was none. Whittaker was lying there. He saw him; he dropped beside him; he rolled into him.

The referee had to pull him away. He had to hold Tubby up as he lifted his right hand.

Whittaker was out for five minutes. Joe Hawkes put a note on his card.

Tubby Hannaford. Fifty-one minutes, nineteen seconds.

"What would you call that hold, Jim?"

"Search me. Call it the firemen's lift. That wasn't a hold. That was the answer to a prayer," said Jim O'Hara.

"Tough bout," said Joe. "I picked the winners four out of four tonight, Jim."

"You must have changed your luck. Why don't you tell fortunes?" said O'Hara.

"Four times out of four," Joe was saying to himself. "But how close I was to being wrong, twice. A little more, and Parsons would have won. I'd have been glad to see him win, too, if it did spoil my percentage. And Tubby, well, if he gets as close a call as that, again, it'll be 'Kitty, bar the door.' I don't know. I guess he's the better

man. I guess Bergman's the better man. What's the use? Form doesn't lie. The books are right. The books are always right."

He stretched and yawned. He'd missed the first edition, but he could still make his deadline. After that he could go home.



NOW, perhaps, somewhere there is a "Book of Past Performances", and a "Winter Book", as well, with millions and millions of pages. If you could turn to these, perhaps they'd read something like this:

Hawkes, Joseph. Father, so-and-so. Mother, so-and-so. *Past Performances.* Bad.

Now, the "Winter Book":

Hawkes, Joseph

Best Race. (This line is blank).

Characteristics. Drinks. Gambles. Is unsteady. Loves his wife and children. Loves all contests. Hates unfairness and lack of sportsmanship. Wishes to write a novel. Wishes to leave the newspaper business. Wishes to conquer his love of drink, and cards, and horses. Wishes to be some one of importance, and of character.

Probable odds for the Futurity:

Writing a novel. 100 to 1, against.

Leaving Newspaper Business. 1000 to 1, against.

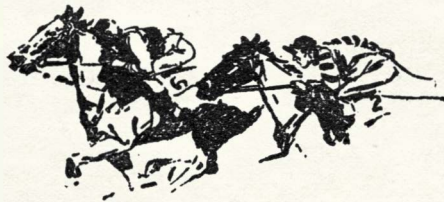
Conquering his gambling habits. 50 to 1, against.

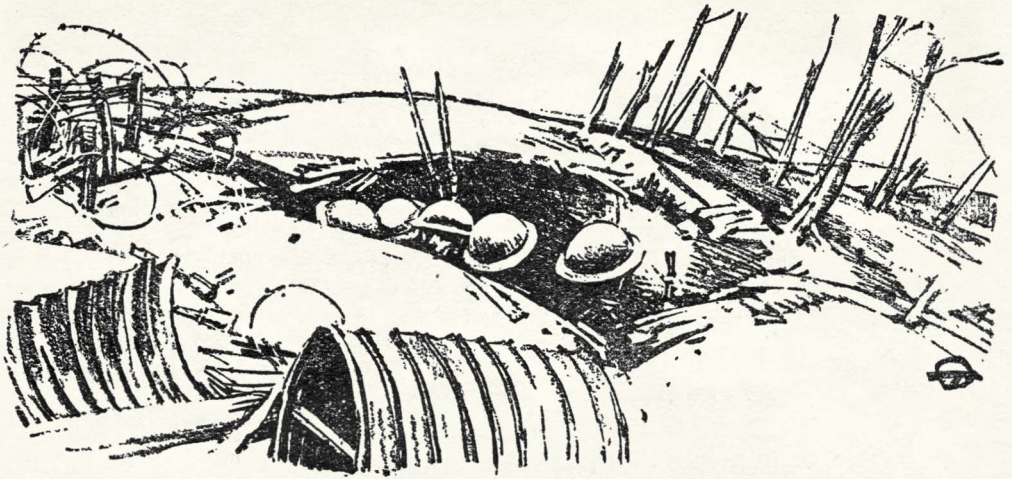
Being some one of importance. 5 to 3 against.

Being a man of character. Even money odds on, to place and show.

There *are* such Books. Don't you think there must be? Perhaps they don't read just like this.

What's your own weakness?





Beginning

ESCAPE

By ARED WHITE

CHAPTER I

OUT OF A SHELL HOLE

YOUR last chance to surrender, you Americans. It is the last warning you shall receive!"

The voice came in measured English from behind a litter of wreckage on the right flank of Sergeant Gill's crudely fortified shell crater, the last refuge of the pitiful remnant of his patrol. It was the fifth German call since dawn broke an hour before upon a hideous night.

"Hold your fire, men," Gill ordered his riflemen. "We're going to parley this time. The jig's up."

The crack of a rifle punctuated the sergeant's command as the impetuous Corporal Sandstrom pressed his overwrought finger home on a pot-shot across the top of the crater. Then, with the other three survivors in the clay hole, the

corporal sank back upon the butt of his rifle and turned his bloodshot eyes to the patrol leader.

A copper jacketed Mauser sprayed them with dry clay and splinters. A dozen missiles shrilled past in the air above their heads. Then the German tempest gave place to calm. Sergeant Gill removed his steel helmet and hoisted it aloft on the muzzle of his rifle. It did not draw fire. He peered cautiously over the jagged rim of the crater to find that animation was suspended outside.

"Do you hear me, you men?" shouted the unseen German.

"Sure," Gill called back. "Go ahead and say your say."

"I am giving you one last chance to lay your arms down," the German cried. "This is the Herr Hauptmann Zweibrucken who speaks."

Corporal Sandstrom snapped a fresh shell into his barrel, with a muttered oath,

and squirmed slowly into position for action.

"Back down, Sandstrom," snapped Gill. "I'm in command."

"But didn't you say our orders was to fight it out to the last gasp?" retorted Sandstrom. "What's the use wasting talk—"

"That's all, Sandstrom!"

The corporal subsided with a grumble at the crack of the sergeant's command.

"You are surrounded, you Americans," argued the German. "We you outnumber an hundred to one. Unless you surrender at once, I will a battery of howitzers fire upon you, with a few grenades. In the name of humanity, this last chance we are giving you."

"Give us ten minutes to talk it over," Gill shouted back.

"I will five minutes give you," the German officer replied.

"Check!" agreed Gill. "But if any of your men make a move, they'll get bored." He gave terse instructions to two of his own men. "Sandstrom, you watch sharp to the front; Marr, you to the rear. See that nobody closes on us to grenade distance."

Sergeant Gill raised himself to his elbow and surveyed the remnant of his combat patrol in somber silence as he made a military estimate of the present desperate situation. Five alive out of the seventeen who had been left as a covering detachment, to hold until dawn at all costs. But when dawn had released Gill's remnant, the Germans were at their rear, front and flanks. No sight of the regiment since the night before. No hint of reconnaissance planes, no indication of any sort of counter-attack or that relief might be expected. Their shelter was now reduced to a small islet in a sea of Boches, and about to be inundated.

In the previous parleys Gill had shouted back defiance. His men were keyed up to fight it out, believing their own regimental assault waves might come rushing forward at dawn to rescue them. Nor had the ammunition problem become acute until now. Since the evening before they

had held out stubbornly. Although they were now reduced to a mere skeleton squad, their position was well protected—an immense shell crater at the crest of a broad knoll with a fair field of fire in every direction. The trees in the naked forest about them had been denuded of cover for snipers. They could be taken only by a rush of superior numbers, or by skulkers with grenades. Against this menace, they had fired at every moving twig in the bushy void. Howitzers, of course, might dig them out with a single well placed shell. Or again, howitzers might bang away for hours without landing a shell in the small target offered by the crater.

But whatever means must be used by the Germans, Gill knew now that his position was untenable. He knew, too, that there was but one reason his men were alive. The Germans wanted prisoners for questioning. Americans had got into the big fight in force only the past month. With this last thrust for Paris in motion, American prisoners were a prize worthwhile for the German intelligence staff.

Gill snapped his wristwatch to his eyes. Three minutes left for a decision.

There was another consideration. He thought upon it coolly. Nine years in the Army—and those years beginning with the age of sixteen—had given him a military way of estimating things. His own life was secondary. The lives of his men were secondary to his mission. How much information would they give the Boche if captured? Nor had he been a noncommissioned officer since he was nineteen without learning to estimate men.

Sandstrom? There could be no doubt of that firebrand. A piece of tempered hickory that the Boches could never break to their will. Van Blick, noisy and temperamental, but with a stout fighting heart. The juvenile Marr, yet short of eighteen, had developed level eyed fighting resolution and stamina in facing hardship. Maurice, tall, gangling, cynical, but a good front line man. They had come to Gill only a few weeks before from a replacement outfit of Western men. He put them to a quick test of his own.

"Well, speak up, you lads.⁷ Do we turn over to the Boche or do we fight it out?" he demanded. "Sandstrom?"

"Tell 'em t'ell with 'em!" growled Sandstrom. "Me, I'm not for dying of black rot in no German jail."

"Van Blick?"

"What Sandstrom said goes double with me, Sarge."

"Maurice?"

"Shoot it out with 'em!"

"Marr?"

"Fight it out, Sarge. It's only a Boche trick to trap us, anyhow!"

The voice of the German captain rose again, impatiently.

"One minute is left, and after that no quarter!"

Gill looked his men over coolly.

"Poor headwork," he said. "Less than a hundred rounds of ammunition left, no food since yesterday; no water. Five of us against hundreds if they want to use that many. What's more, Fritz means business this time. I reckon we've done our job, and I'm not going to let you men commit suicide and waste five good riflemen. You're long on guts and short on brains, and I'm going to do your thinking for you."

Sergeant Gill leaped to his feet and waved his helmet over his head in token of surrender.

"All right, Herr Captain," he cried. "We surrender."

"Disarm your men and march them forward promptly," ordered the German officer evenly. "You have a wise decision made."



GILL turned to his men and motioned them to their feet with a jerk of his arm. They obeyed reluctantly, in a sullen silence, each of them holding on to his rifle. The sergeant cast his own rifle into the bottom of the crater.

"Throw those guns down," he commanded. "And let me warn you of this thing. It's information the Boche is after. That's the reason we're being taken alive. I'm banking on you lads to tell nothing.

Not a word, even if they string you up by the thumbs. Don't be quitters!"

"Quitters, eh?" growled Sandstrom. "You didn't see none of us do any quitting, did you, Sarge?"

"No, and if you had," Gill shot back at him, "I'd never let the Boche get his hands on you. I found out whether your livers were the right color before I ever made up my mind to turn you over!"

They filed out of the crater, Gill leading the way. The German officer left his place of concealment and came forward to meet them, a triumphant grin on his thin face. But he halted abruptly, the mirth vanishing, and whipped a long barreled Luger from its holster.

"Drop your weapon!" he commanded.

Sergeant Gill turned to see Corporal Sandstrom bringing up the rear with his service rifle at the port arms, bayonet fixed. His lean face was twisted into a grimace of stubborn defiance that suggested anything but a prisoner of war. But he made no effort to fire upon the German officer.

"Chuck that rifle, Sandstrom!" thundered Gill. "Didn't you hear me surrender this outfit?"

"Me, I'm not rottin' in no Boche prison camp!" raged Sandstrom through purple lips. "I'm out in the open now and I'm going to die like a man with my boots on. Come on, Cap'n—let's see if any of your crew got any sporting blood in 'em!"

Hauptmann Zweibrucken lowered his pistol, fixed a monocle in his right eye and surveyed the American appraisingly. An amused glint appeared shortly in his blue eyes.

"You evidently feel yourself quite a superior fellow, yes?" he inquired sneeringly.

"You're darned tootin'!" yelled back Sandstrom. "And you ain't got nobody big enough to change my mind."

The captain's smile spread slowly as he debated the challenge. He must have concluded that it would be good for morale to put this noisy braggart in his place, demonstrate German superiority to his men. He turned to his followers, who

were collecting about the scene in increasing numbers.

"Gefreiter Wipperfurth!"

At the officer's bark, a German soldier trotted forward, fixing his long, thin bladed bayonet to the muzzle of his Mauser as he moved. Corporal Wipperfurth was an immense, beefy fellow, with long, thick arms, ham-like hands, bull neck and a small bullet head out of which beady black eyes gleamed joyously at the prospect of combat.

Sandstrom's small gray eyes lighted up and his snarling lips parted in a grin as he appraised his antagonist. Sandstrom was half the size of the German grenadier, but quick, wiry and with an unlimited confidence in himself, and a fighting heart in his breast. Impulsive, hot headed and with a chip forever on his shoulder, he had proven himself cool and calculating in combat, whether with his fists behind the lines or with cold steel in an assault wave.

The two men moved toward each other without further instructions, with their rifles slantwise across their bodies. As the German soldiers closed in on the scene of duel, the captain issued guttural instructions that they were not to interfere. He took the precaution of putting the American prisoners under guard, but allowed them to remain for the battle.

When the combatants came within striking distance of each other they threw their blades forward and moved cautiously about, feeling out before coming to the grips. Sandstrom stood with stomach drawn in, chest and head thrown forward, his rifle stoutly gripped in both hands, his face drawn into the savage leer of the American bayonet duelist. Wipperfurth was bent low, with his weapon fanning back and forth at guard in front of him, his face devoid of expression except for the fire of battle in his black eyes.

Sandstrom launched the first attack, leaping in with a furious parry that thrust the German's blade to one side. He attempted a point thrust at Wipperfurth's heart, but the German parried skilfully and with a force that nearly hurled the American off his balance. If Sandstrom

had counted upon the other's clumsiness, he saw now that Wipperfurth was as nimble on his feet as a smaller man. It was only by a hasty retreat that Sandstrom fanned off a succession of quick thrusts and broke clear of the attack.

Again the men moved cautiously about each other, touching each other's points guardedly and watching for an opening. Again the German attempted to take the advantage of his superior brawn and strength, rushing with a series of parries and short thrusts in an effort to break down Sandstrom's guard. But Sandstrom danced warily about and kept clear of the mountain of flesh and muscle. A transient shell shrieked in upon the group, sending the spectators on to their faces as it burst with a noisy detonation thirty meters distant. Neither Sandstrom nor Wipperfurth appeared to hear it as they fought grimly on.

Having failed in his strategy of forcing his light footed antagonist off his feet, Wipperfurth finally tried a dangerous play, a throw point at Sandstrom's body. Releasing the barrel of his musket with his left hand, he hurled his bayoneted rifle forward, holding lightly to the grip of the stock with his right hand. Sandstrom leaped to one side with such suddenness that he lost his footing and went sprawling to the ground. He was up again before Wipperfurth could recover his own balance and run him through.

A few seconds later when the German repeated his throw point, Sandstrom deftly parried the leaping German blade with his own rifle and rushed in to close quarters with a swift horizontal butt stroke. The butt of Sandstrom's rifle found its mark, the point of the jaw just in front of Wipperfurth's ear. The force of the blow, added to Wipperfurth's momentum, sent the German sprawling with a moan of anguish. The light Sandstrom was upon him with the point of his blade in a flash, with a prodigious jab that brought the struggle to a sudden gory end.

As he jerked his murderous blade free of his victim, Sandstrom turned defiantly

to the German officer.

"Who's next—bring on your next Fritz!" he yelled.

Hauptmann Zweibrucken whipped out his pistol again and advanced ominously upon Sandstrom.

"Drop that weapon and surrender!" he raged. "I will not with you be bothered an instant longer."

Sergeant Gill precipitated himself into the crisis with such suddenness that his German guard failed to restrain him.

"I'll make him surrender, Herr Captain," exclaimed the sergeant, leaping in front of the officer's leveled pistol. He marched straight at the belligerent Sandstrom. "Drop that rifle or I'll take it away from you with my bare hands!"

The sergeant was within thrusting distance of him before Sandstrom suddenly made up his mind. He dropped his rifle to the order arms, brought his heels together and stood sullenly erect. Gill seized the rifle, cast it into the brush and motioned Sandstrom into the group of prisoners. Then he turned to the German officer.

"All right, Captain," he announced. "The war seems to be over as far as we're concerned."

The German officer stood with his pistol half raised for several moments, debating with himself whether he should accept Sandstrom as a prisoner after his violent conduct.

Gill stood watching him sharply.

"It was a fair fight, Herr Captain," Gill reminded the officer pointedly. "I have surrendered my men to you and demand fair treatment for all of them."

"You are exceedingly impudent," said the German, turning his wrath now upon Gill and walking menacingly up to him, pistol in hand.

Gill met him with level eyes, unafraid. The German was the first to shift his eyes away from the conflict of mettle. He turned about with an oath.

"March the swine back and turn them over," he ordered his *Feldwebel* in a thick voice. "Watch them close that they do not escape."

CHAPTER II

INQUISITION

ARTILLERY fire drummed in the distance, but Sergeant Gill's practised ear could gather no hint of musketry—which confirmed the fact that the tide of battle had ebbed far to the west, carrying with it the Allied lines in this sector. Gill derived a certain somber satisfaction at finding that he had not mistaken the situation in the heat of his clash with the German skirmishers. He had made a wise choice between death and surrender for his men. And before he surrendered, there had formed in his mind a grim determination that it did not mean he was permanently out of the war.

Fifteen German grenadiers with fixed bayonets, commanded by an undersized Bavarian lieutenant, formed the escort which started Gill and his men to the rear. As they moved off into the network of light trenches of the German reserve positions, their escort divided into two groups, one in front and one in rear, as a precaution against the vagrant shells that plopped down from time to time to set momentary black geysers spouting from the earth.

Gill's men slouched along, heads down, feet dragging. Even the fiery Sandstrom lapsed into a jaded shamble, his legs threatening to buckle under him in his exhaustion now that he had let go. A grueling two days they had been through—two days and nights without sleep, with only a nibble of iron rations since the battle began. And now that their blood was cooling from the heat of conflict, exhaustion wracked their bodies and clouded their minds with a heavy misery.

Sergeant Gill alone kept his chin in the air and his body erect, though he mastered his own fatigue with the iron hand of self-discipline. A sense of his responsibility supported him in his effort. He understood very clearly why they had been given a chance for their lives. He knew the grueling inquisition that lay ahead when they were taken before the

German intelligence officers at headquarters. And he knew that, as the non-commissioned officer in charge of the patrol, he would be the one to stand the brunt of that inquisition.

Two interminable hours of heavy marching put them across the trenches into the shell mottled French countryside. The artillery was now an indistinct murmur. The winding country road into which they had emerged was jammed with advancing infantry reserves. A half demolished French village rose before them. The activity of motorcycle couriers and staff cars on several roads converging at the village told Gill that this must be division headquarters, their immediate destination.

"Swallow your tongues," he cautioned the others. "Even if they threaten to skin you, don't tell anything!"

"Do you think they'll give us something to eat, Sergeant?" Private Marr turned to ask with a pathetic anxiety.

"Of course they will—in due time!" snapped Gill. "But don't let them work up a trade with you—pickled pig's feet for information."

"Ah, choke it off," wailed Van Blick. "It's hard enough to keep my mind off my stomach without you birds talking about eats all the time."

"Stick it out, men," Gill added a final warning. "Remember, anybody that spills anything to the Boche is nothing more than a traitor."

They entered the village and were brought to a halt in front of a German command post. Gill judged from the number of staff cars, runners, motorcycle couriers and headquarters troops that it must be at least a German division headquarters, perhaps the advance field command post of a corps. Which meant that the prisoners would be questioned by experts who would exhaust every resource to exact useful information. The escort officer disappeared into the headquarters, to return a few moments later and lead the prisoners to a small bare room where they were searched carefully, even to the insides of their shoes. The search netted

the Germans six pairs of dice, two decks of cards, an assortment of pocket knives and minor junk and a total of eight francs in cash. No letters, no scrap of paper, nothing of value to the German intelligence operatives.

"I'm glad for once we ain't been paid for three months," muttered Sandstrom. "Me, I'm glad I only got half a franc for the Boche to steal."

"Your money will be returned to you promptly," said the lieutenant testily. "You are with honorable men dealing."

"I got your word for that, mister," sneered the implacable Sandstrom. "But I'm glad I ain't got anything to tempt you with."

A German captain strode in as the infuriated lieutenant was shaking his fist under Sandstrom's nose. The lieutenant regained his equilibrium instantly at sight of his superior and slapped his heels together. Sandstrom gave a short, insulting cackle at the junior officer's quick change of front.

The captain passed along the line of prisoners, examining them with a certain aloof arrogance. He was a small, strutting dandy, immaculate in his staff uniform and large rimless monocle. Whatever antipathy he had held toward the prisoners when he entered the room was aggravated by Sandstrom's taunting leer and by the lack of awe with which the five Americans received him. He paused in front of Sandstrom to look that soldier up and down with a particularly frigid stare, fanning his polished boots with his gold headed riding crop as if his hand itched to lay the whip across the corporal's face. But he passed on to Sergeant Gill before he took up his questioning of the prisoners.

"I observe that you appear to be the under-officer of this group," he said in a London accent that broadened the smile on Sandstrom's face.

"That's correct," said Gill tersely.

"You do not impress me as amounting to much as soldiers," said the captain. "Are all Americans as poor a lot as this?"

"There may be better ones; no doubt

there are," said Gill softly. "But we measure up with what I'd call the average."

"You have ever been taught the rudiments of military manners, my man? How to deport yourself in the presence of your superiors?"

"Sure, Captain. We've all had better'n two years' service. Know how to salute, click our heels, say sir and yes sir and everything when we are in the presence of our superiors."

"One would not guess as much from your present boorish manners."

"I said in the presence of our—superiors," Gill rejoined quickly.

The captain's brows and nose lifted. He turned to the lieutenant.

"Scum!" he sneered. "Herr Leutnant, were you able to find no better specimens of the enemy than these to capture for us?"

"I regret, Herr Hauptmann," apologized the lieutenant, "but the others all ran so fast we could not catch up with them. These alone remained in a great shell hole for us to capture them."

"Probably too shiftless to run," rejoined the captain. He turned back to Sergeant Gill in high disgust and gave him a peremptory order. "I'm going to question you, my man. Bring yourself to a proper posture in which with an officer to converse."

Gill slapped his heels together in approved German fashion and stood erect at attention. The captain blinked rapidly at the swift transformation.

"Ah, I am glad you have recovered your wits," he said. "First, I wish to know your company, your regiment and division and the date of arrival in France, my man."

"I really couldn't say, Herr Captain," Gill replied.

"Do I understand you as saying you do not your own division know? Your company, then, and your regiment, what number are they?"

"I really don't know, sir. You see, sir, me and my men met with a serious loss a couple of hours ago."

"I do not entirely understand you. Explain yourself, my man. What was it you lost?"

"Our memory, sir. There isn't a one of us can remember anything."

The captain's blinking unseated his monocle. He made a wild grab for it as it hurtled toward Gill, and collided with the sergeant as the glass shattered on the stone floor. The captain drew himself back quickly from the collision, brushed his tunic and turned again to the lieutenant.

"*Herr Gott!*" he exclaimed. "But have these scum been deloused, Herr Leutnant?"

"I regret, Herr Hauptmann," said the lieutenant. "But there has been no time."



THE CAPTAIN moved involuntarily back a couple of paces, reached in his pocket for another monocle, fixed it in his eye and stood glaring while his temper rose to white heat.

"You dare say you will not my questions answer?" he exploded, tapping his boots with his riding crop so vehemently that it had something of the sound of an aroused rattler.

"No, sir, Herr Captain. What I said was we've all lost our memory and you're going to find out I'm right in spite of any hell and high water you want to raise about it."

The riding crop struck out with a malignant fury. It caught Sergeant Gill full across the face, a blow leaving a diagonal white line which quickly became a red welt. Gill did not wince or lower his eyes, nor did he lose either temper or poise.

"Does that aid your memory?" barked the captain.

"I really don't remember," said Gill without raising his voice.

"Or that?" rasped the captain, striking a second blow.

"I think I remember something, now, Herr Captain," said Gill through his compressed lips.

"Well, the number of your division?"

The German stood with his crop half raised. His lips parted in a malignant grin at the American's sudden weakening.

"No, not that," said Gill. "But I remember learning that there was a little whipper-snapper captain back here ambushed at corps headquarters who didn't have guts enough to go to the Front, or brains enough to—"

"Herr Hauptmann Waldefischbach!"

A sharp voice cut off Sergeant Gill's speech and intercepted the captain's riding crop in midair. It was the voice of a very fat, middle aged officer whose presence brought the captain's heels crashing together in an instantaneous transition from rage to trembling docility.

"What is the matter here?" demanded the fat officer, looking about authoritatively. "These are the American prisoners, ja?"

"Ja wohl, Herr Oberst-Leutnant," replied Waldefischbach meekly.

"Ah, Americans!" chuckled the lieutenant-colonel, rubbing his chubby red hands with satisfaction.

He looked from one to the other with friendly interest while he assembled his meager stock of English. Then he turned to Waldefischbach and scowled.

"Herr Hauptmann, you are an ass to treat with the Americans like French. Stand back and I with them will speak myself."

"Ja wohl, Herr Oberst-Leutnant."

"Gentlemen, it is a great mistake," the Oberst-Leutnant addressed the prisoners in an after dinner voice. "I am sorry of what happen. For even now the Americans and the Germans is treating for peace. Soon we shall friends be once more."

"Say, mister, if you get any more mush to pass out, feed it to us in a dish," Sandstrom spoke up. "We ain't et for two days."

The fat officer puzzled upon this statement for several moments before he turned to Captain Waldefischbach.

"Nicht verstehen," he grunted.

The captain launched forth into a

rapid fire of German. But whatever translation he gave did not appear to discourage the senior officer.

"The food is plentiful for you," he went on. "Soon will you have all what you can devour—meat, soups, cheese, bread."

Privates Marr and Van Blick groaned aloud in unison.

"And in a few weeks comes peace with the Americans and home you is sent."

"Say, mister," Sandstrom cut in again, "you're going to get mad in the long run, so it might just as well be now. Just what's itching me is whether you're a tee-total damn fool or just thinks we is. Us, we ain't going to spill any information."

The Oberst-Leutnant gathered some hint of Sandstrom's meaning from his voice and manner. Another animated outpouring of German from Hauptmann Waldefischbach filled in the details. The senior officer's red face became an apoplectic scarlet; the veins on his short thick neck welled out like whipcord. He seemed on the point of bursting, but he held himself in check long enough to address Sergeant Gill.

"Is it you will talk or is it you will not talk?"

"If it's any military information you want us to talk about, you're wasting time on us," said Gill quietly. "Not a word."

"Ach, Gott, der Schwein!" exploded the senior officer, casting his arms violently above his head and turning toward the door, with the captain at his heels.

"Steady!" cautioned Gill. He smiled his satisfaction at the spirit of his men, at the chance the German officers had given him to stiffen resistance against further inquisition. "Remember, men, the worst is yet to come. If I'm not fooled, they'll try some strong stuff on us next—and one at a time. Sit tight and hold your tongues."

Some little time must have been devoted to conference on the problem of these unruly Americans, as it was ten minutes later when the captain reappeared. He indicated with a snap of his fingers that Sergeant Gill was to follow

him. The captain led the way into an inner room, where sat the colonel and another German staff officer, their faces steeped in austere gloom. As Gill was halted in the center of the room, Captain Waldefischbach closed the door ostentatiously and faced the sergeant with a menacing glare.

"You are a prisoner of war, my man," he said. "You will be good enough to remember that we the power of life or death have over you. I command you to answer my questions, or we will let you the penalty pay for your defiance. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Herr Captain, I understand," flared Gill. "And as a prisoner of war I'm not going to tell you a thing."

Waldefischbach drew his long barreled pistol and raised it slowly at the sergeant's head while his face twisted into a deadly grimace. Gill looked back with superb courage, his level gaze unbroken by the flicker of an eyelash.

"You can't bluff me, Herr Captain," said Gill coolly. "You haven't any idea of pulling that trigger and I know it as well as you do. Even if you did have the guts, which you haven't, the Herr Colonel wouldn't stand for murder in his presence."

"War—it is not murder!" spluttered Waldefischbach. "I give you one last chance. One—two—three—four—"

"Cold blooded murder," said Gill. "Murder of an unarmed prisoner because he wouldn't turn against his own gang. Bah!"

"*Ach, Schwein!*" snorted the captain, lowering his weapon. "Throw him out of here before I lose my temper."

The captain himself threw the door open with a savage bang and pointed the way out with a finger that trembled with impotent rage. The escort lieutenant led Gill out into the open air and left him under guard in the neglected garden that fronted headquarters.

One by one the other prisoners were ushered back outside during the next hour. Gill searched their faces intently as they reappeared. Van Blick and Marr emerged with triumphant grins. Maurice

was grim faced, but with eyes that snapped defiance. Sandstrom alone was to be accounted for, but Gill had no thought that he would weaken. Maurice edged close to the sergeant and spoke in an anxious whisper.

"I'm fearing for Sandstrom, Sergeant," he reported. "He was real cocky when they took him in there, and the Boche was getting pretty much het up by the way he was bubbling over."

As the minutes ticked by, Gill became worried. Not that Sandstrom would weaken, but that he might let his hair trigger temper get the upper hand of him and attempt violence. He knew that the German captain would not hesitate to shoot if assaulted, and he felt that Sandstrom would not hesitate to attack if baited too far.



A MOMENT later Sandstrom sauntered out the door, erect and unhurried. Gill started at sight of the corporal. His face was cut to ribbons, a veritable network of black, blue and purple welts from which blood trickled in several places. Behind his lacerated and mottled skin was a malignant grin of triumph. The passion that must have seethed within him was held closely in check. Gill gave a sharp exclamation of amazement as Sandstrom came up.

"Sandstrom, what the—"

"I give that little lizard an earful," exulted the corporal. "I showed him who was the best man."

"But what did they do to you, Sandstrom? What happened?"

"I told that squirt what I thought of him," Sandstrom explained, while his grim smile spread across his battered face. "Every bouquet I gave him he whacked me across the face with his quirt. I just grinned at him and told him something more. Say, if you ever saw a red eyed Proosian that was it. Somebody had to weaken, didn't they? Well, I just took it and grinned and cussed him out till he loses his nerve and throws up his hands and storms out of the room talking to

himself like a gibbering idiot. Say, but wouldn't I give six months' pay to have that bird alone for two minutes?"

The escort lieutenant broke in upon them with a sharp order to form in column of twos. Then, with front, rear and flank guards, he marched them across the gaping German headquarters village to a small stone hut and herded them inside. Before closing the door he tossed inside a supply of German field rations, tinned wieners, tinned meat, cheese and hard bread. Gill took possession of the food and divided it evenly, after which it disappeared in a twinkling to the last morsel.

"And just to think, I had to turn down beefsteak smothered in onions, bread, butter, coffee and jam for this mess," wailed Van Blick.

"So that's what they baited you with, eh?" said Gill. "Well, they sure read you right when they tried food on you."

"Sure, and I'm thinking if they'd showed me the eats," said Van Blick, "I'd of weakened and spilled everything I know."

"Well, they'd got the worst of the bargain at that," scoffed Sandstrom.

"I'm proud of you all, men," Gill spoke up. "The only information the Boche got from you was that they're up against the real thing when they tackle American volunteers." He turned solicitously to Sandstrom. "We're all sorry you had to get your face messed, Sandstrom, but we're all proud of you."

Sandstrom gave an uncompromising grunt.

"Wish I could say as much for you, Sarge," he snarled. "If you hadn't weakened on us we wouldn't be in this little pickle."

"No, we'd all be out there pushing daisies, soon's the Boche had time to cover us over from the flies," snapped Gill.

"Which'd suit any white man with a red liver better'n being a Boche prisoner, Gill. They sure was careless when they put chevrons on your arm."

Gill stepped forward and said in a tone that was unmistakably angry as well as authoritative:

"That'll be all from you, Sandstrom. You're a smaller man than me, and you got a sore face or I'd—"

Sandstrom whipped off his blouse impulsively, cast it on the dirt floor and bristled up to Gill.

"Don't let that hold you back none, Gill. A man that quits as cold as you did ain't big enough to bluff me."

"Who said I quit?"

"I do. Everybody does."

Gill folded his hands behind his back and delivered himself coolly in a low tone.

"A dead soldier ain't any good to anybody, Sandstrom. There's a lot of good fighting stock in this crew. It's valuable—too valuable to waste. That's why I saved it. Just because I worked you lads out of a tight hole the only way that was open don't mean I quit. We've not really got started yet."

Sandstrom considered this a moment, then burst out again:

"Your line of guff is getting worse than what them Boche tried to feed us. What good are we to anybody in this nest?"

"No good. But we're not staying in this hole. They aren't smart enough to keep us in this hole. I'm steering you men back to the old outfit before I get through with it. If I hadn't figured on staging a comeback, we'd have fought it out back there. Do you get that idea through your thick skull?"

"You mean, Sarge—we're going to try to escape?"

Gill smiled.

"No. I don't mean we're going to try to escape, Sandstrom. I mean we're going to escape."

Sandstrom's sullen face underwent a slow transformation. His pugnacious air lifted slowly, the muscles of his face relaxed. On a sudden impulse he thrust his hand out to Sergeant Gill.

"I should of knowed better'n to guess you all wrong, Sarge," he said softly. "Let's shake and forget it. Me, I'm with you from now on clear across the board and no more questions asked. I allus said, Sarge, you should of been a cap'n instead of a noncom, anyhow."

CHAPTER III

HIDDEN WIRE

THE pulse of the others leaped in instant response to Sergeant Gill's words. They snapped out of their mood of gloomy despair and their faces lighted up as they gathered close to their leader, a new interest in life coursing in their veins, a new and fervent acceptance of Gill's leadership in their eyes. Gill placed his fingers across his mouth in silent warning that they must guard their tongues. Outside the measured strides of sentries could be heard. Van Blick detached himself to a study of the interior of the hut, running his fingers along the mortar seams in the stone walls and gently trying the heavy door with an air of expertness.

"It's easy to bust out of this joint, Sarge," Van Blick reported shortly. "That door's fastened with a outside bar and all it needs is to bore a hole—"

"Not too fast, Van Blick," Gill cautioned. "We got to go about this thing with some degree of headwork."

"But, Sarge, it'll be dark in a couple hours," protested the private. "I've got outa better hoosegows'n this in my day. I'm telling you it's a snap."

"See here, all of you," said Gill aloud. "Are you all leaving the show to me, or am I going to have to spend all my time arguing with you over bright ideas?"

"What you say goes, and the rest of these birds is deaf and dumb from now on," averred Sandstrom, squelching Van Blick with a glance.

"I was only trying to show you a good way out," wailed the private. "I—"

"Dry up!" ordered Sandstrom. "This outfit ain't no longer any debating club."

"The point is," said Gill, motioning the others close about him and speaking in a whisper, "the point is, it's not going to be any child's play giving Fritz the slip. Don't get the idea we can just simply walk away from the Boches while they're asleep, or break through a whole army corps of fighting Heinies like we are a

bunch of Prussian staff officers with a guide. I'm telling you here and now it's going to be a tough and ticklish job. We may get our big chance tomorrow, or have to wait till next week, or maybe a month. I got one good plan right now, if things break the way I figure. But I'm keeping that to myself and what I'm asking you to do, all of you, is keep your shirts on and your tongues at ease. Do you get the idea?"

"That's my ticket, Sarge, me, and all of us," said Sandstrom, looking at the others as if defying them to dispute his acceptance.

"Even if we spend the next two years waiting for a nice chance to bob up, you've given us something to live for," volunteered the cynical Maurice. "So your plan suits me O. K."

"That's not the idea at all," Gill snapped. "It's not a hope I'm holding up. It's a duty. We're going back or we're going to die trying. Get that? And we're not putting it off any longer than the first decent, reasonable chance."

Sandstrom emphasized his acceptance by retreating into a dark corner of the hut and curling up on the floor. He was snoring in a rising crescendo within a minute. The others quickly followed his example. The hard floor was bed enough after their weeks at the Front. Opportunity was the only sleeping potion they needed, no matter what excitement stirred their ragged nerves. It tested the lungs of a ruddy *Feldwebel* to bark them into wakefulness at dawn. Gill alone got to his feet at the summons, the others merely rolling over with mingled oaths and curses at the intrusion upon their slumber.

"Rouse your soldiers," commanded the *Feldwebel*, in mechanical English. "I have for them much work to do, please."

Gill was shaking his men into their faculties when he caught the familiar clank of metal outside. He looked out to discover a German soldier nursing an armful of long handled shovels. The fact that there were five of the implements left no doubt as to their purpose. At this discovery, Gill's face brightened and he re-

doubled his efforts, fairly jerking Van Blick and Marr to their feet when they failed to respond promptly enough.

"Snap into it, men!" he goaded his bleary eyed crew as they stood blinking morosely before him. "The Boches have given us a nice, soft assignment to engineer duty. All out, and lay your hands on those tools like you meant it."

The others ambled out, dull faced and sullen, and accepted the tools listlessly. But as they caught from Gill a clandestine wink, they stirred suddenly into cheerful animation. The *Feldwebel* formed them in twos and marched them to an army kitchen in an open barnyard near headquarters, where breakfast was served them: steamed wieners, sauerkraut, tepid black tea and musty black bread. Gill's pulse rose as they were marched off, not to the rear, but directly in the direction whence they had come, to the westward where lay the trenches.

The hum of artillery was perceptibly louder this morning. Their faces lifted at the discovery. But the noise of battle yet was faint enough that Gill thought the increase in volume might be accounted for merely by a shifting of the wind since yesterday, or a movement of the heavy calibers to new positions during the night.

Their hope of being sent far forward to work in the front line trench system was dashed suddenly when the *Feldwebel* halted them just in rear of the rearmost trenches and set them to work spreading gravel on the unimproved country road that led forward from the headquarters village. It was a one-track dirt road that had been used only by light staff cars, couriers and foot reserves. Its improvement with gravel for use by heavy traffic might mean anything—the opening of a new supply artery forward, or the development of another route of retreat for emergency use. And the laconic bearing of the German sentinels offered no hint of a German reverse at the Front.

But Gill promptly swallowed his own disappointment and urged the others into hard work. Any job in the zone of action offered possibilities. With a day or two

in which to survey the situation and work out a detailed plan, their chance for a break might come. And a show of industry, Gill reasoned, was the best assurance that they would be kept at the task while they were waiting for their chance.

The hot July sun beat down upon them relentlessly, but the prisoners followed Gill's example and grimly plied their shovels without complaint. They were allowed only long enough at noontime to eat, a repetition of the uninviting breakfast menu. The day passed without development, distant artillery intermittently, an occasional staff car or courier passing forward along the road. Yard by yard they worked their way rearward. By sundown they had covered nearly a half mile of road.

Muttered complaint was growing at the long hours when fresh fuel was piled upon their grief. A light truck came forward with another ration; they were served their supper, and the *Feldwebel* informed them that they would continue to work into the night. Supper turned out to be nothing more than another light issue of steamed wieners, sauerkraut, black bread and mild tea.

"I sure got a new reason for wanting to get back to old F Company," wailed Private Van Blick. "I done the old company cook wrong when I crabbed about that good old slum, goldfish and dishwater he slung at us three times a day."

"If you don't like this chow, you don't have to eat none of it," muttered Private Marr. "They'll be that much more for the rest of us."

"Say, that's just what my howl's all about," rejoined Van Blick. "No seconds! How do these Fritzie expect a man to work his head off when they squeeze down his chow like a paymaster dishes out francs on pay day?"

"Them's my sentiments," joined in Maurice. "They got to loosen up on the eats or I'm striking."

The complaint persisted as they cleared their tin plates and were told bluntly by

the *Feldwebel* that there was nothing more for them since they had been issued the full German ration, enough to provide a German soldier with energy for work or battle.

"It'd start a mutiny in the U. S. Army darn quick, and that's what it's starting right here," threatened Marr, encouraged by the grumbles of the others.

"Steady!" commanded Gill. "Cut out that prattle. This food is good enough for anybody and there's plenty of it."

They caught another of the sergeant's clandestine winks and the flurry was ended.

"Me, I'm saying you lads sure do eat well in your army," Sandstrom addressed the *Feldwebel*. "That's one reason we give up fighting, account of hearing about them wonderful wieners and sauerkraut you got over here. I'm sure glad we get it three times every day."

"It is time for work, please," said the *Feldwebel*.

An hour later, as dusk deepened into darkness, the enigma of the new graveled road began to unfold. Traffic developed in one endless stream. Ambulances laden with wounded men under evacuation from forward hospital stations. The slow, careful progress of the drivers told of severely wounded men. Moans of anguish rose above the chugging of motors. From time to time there was a sharp outcry of agony as an ambulance, feeling its way along the road without headlights, lurched into a rut or over a rough patch of gravel.

The five Americans stood beside the road watching the gloomy procession in glum silence. When the first ambulance train passed and the *Feldwebel* ordered them back to work, Sandstrom's voice sang out in a vibrant admonition.

"Snap into it and level down them rough places, you birds," he cried. "There's more of them ambulances coming up."

"This is very kind of you," spoke up the *Feldwebel* politely. "I thank you."

"Ah, pipe down, Fritz!" snapped Sandstrom hotly. "Me and you ain't on speaking terms."



TRAIN followed train at short intervals. For two hours the evacuation of severely wounded continued, a ghostly inferno of human misery that chilled the prisoners to the marrow. But half an hour behind the final ambulance appeared a spectacle that dissipated their gloom—an artillery column clanking out of the moonlit Front at a heavy trot. Half a mile of pounding 77's was followed in fifteen minutes by horse drawn mortars. The prisoners needed no one to prompt them as to the significance of what they saw. Evacuation of desperately wounded men followed by horse artillery could mean only one thing—the first stages of a German retreat.

As each column passed, the prisoners were put to work repairing the torn road behind the guns and caissons. It was not until nearly midnight that the artillery column became a steady stream. The *Feldwebel* started them back for the village on the flank of the moving artillery column, marched them direct to their stone hut and locked them in with the warning that they must be ready for work again at daybreak. Barely four hours for sleep after their grueling day. Marr started to grumble, but Gill cut him off.

"It means they're up against it for time when they crowd us this way," he observed. "What do we care for sleep when we know our own side is winning?"

"Maybe," said Maurice, with an incredulous note in his voice. "By the way, Sergeant, just what's behind all them winks you been passing out today? I note we are still doing business at the same old *hôtel de ville*."

Gill struck a match and inspected the interior of the cabin before he replied. Then he gathered the others close about him and spoke in a whisper.

"All right, I'm ready now," he said. "I'm giving you lads the lineup so you can get it fixed in your heads by morning. If there'd been any chance to get you alone and give you the dope, we might have got away with it tonight. But tomorrow night'll have to do. Now here's

your plan, and get it right. When dark comes and the first trains get past, I'll stand up straight and scratch the back of my head. That's a signal to edge toward your guard while you work. Then I'll yell 'now' at the top of my voice. You make a jump for your guard and grab his gun. Hang on. I'll have my man clouted down in two jiffies and be ready to help anybody that needs it. Then off we go forward."

"Supposing, just supposing," suggested Maurice, "one or two of them Heinies yank their guns away and cut loose on us."

"They're a dumb lot, that Boche headquarters bunch," said Gill. "Wurtembergers or Bavarian *Landsturm*. Man to man I'm counting on you lads to put them under. But remember you got to act quick. It's the surprise and teamwork that'll put it over. If anybody fumbles—well, one Boche with a loose rifle can bore a lot of holes."

"Not with me standing around with a rifle of my own," averred Sandstrom. "Me, I'm getting my man and getting him quick; and don't worry, Sarge, but I'll be there to help out any weak sisters."

"Well, it sounds like a stiff game, but I'm on," responded Maurice. "But what do we do after us and Sandstrom overpowers the German army?"

"Did you notice that stone shack near where we chucked off work tonight? We'll march them over there and swap uniforms, bind and gag them and head off for the Front, with rifles slung over our backs and shovels in our hands. Once in a while we can work a bit on the road. After we get forward of where there's any more artillery pulling stake, we'll have to use our heads. My idea was that when we get far enough forward, we can hide out in a dugout if there's a hot fight going on. Or if it happens to be quiet, maybe we can belly past the wire and go on over home."

"What'll we do if we get challenged on the way?" persisted the cautious Maurice. "Not a one of us hocks a word of Boche."

"Say, there's five of us ain't they?"

fumed Sandstrom. "And we got guns with butts on 'em, ain't we?"

"Now turn in, men, and get what sleep you can," said Gill. "We got to be at our best tomorrow."

"Anyhow," Maurice yielded, caustically, "the worst that can happen is we get sprayed with German lead."

The group dispersed without further comment. One by one they sprawled on the floor. In less than a minute Sandstrom's heavy breathing developed into snores. Where once the sound had stirred them to thoughts of violence, just now there was a certain grim comfort in Sandstrom's noisy slumber. In a few minutes all had joined him in sleep. And forty winks later they were being harangued into wakefulness by a noisy Teuton, who punctuated his shouts with noisy guffaws.

"Ha-ha-ha!" he chortled. "Wake up! It is daytime, *ja*. Wake up or I wake you up!"

An uneasy apprehension stirred Sergeant Gill as he rubbed the sleep from his swollen eyes with dirt caked knuckles. The boisterous German was not the *Feldwebel* of the day before but an *Ober-Leutnant* attired in immaculate field uniform, with field kit hung from his shoulder. There was a certain disturbing note of gloating insolence in his merriment.

"What's all the joke, Fritz?" inquired Sandstrom crisply. "If it's so howling funny, why not let us all in on it?"

The *Ober-Leutnant* turned to Sandstrom in reprimand, only to be overcome again by his laughter. He slapped his thigh in another outbreak of guffawing.

"Der Herr Hauptmann is made an ass of," he gloated. "An ass of, *ja!* All night he listens to the whispers you make—and all der time it is nothing, not a word, just der snoring."

Gill and Sandstrom exchanged startled glances and their eyes made a hurried search of the hut while the *Ober-Leutnant* enjoyed a fresh burst of laughter at his captain's expense. They detected in the gray light a succession of stones, above their heads on the wall, whose outer surface was nothing more than a lightly

camouflaged, rock colored expanse of wire screen.

Sandstrom frowned.

"You mean, Lieutenant, that the captain was listening to us snore?" suggested Gill, with an attempt at unconcern. "Maybe it was lucky we was too tired to talk into your nice little dictophone."

"You talk too much," said the officer. "But nothing you Americans say except foolishness."

He motioned them outside with a flourish of his walking stick. An armed escort of five awaited them, two less than yesterday. But the five were stalwarts of the Prussian Guard, men in spick and span new uniforms as for some gala occasion, and each one of them with the Iron Cross or a silver wound medal. The escort marched them not to the kitchen but to a light German army truck that stood in front of headquarters.

"Say, mister, how you think we're going to build roads all morning on a empty stomach?" demanded Van Blick. "None of us ain't et since yesterday, an' we crave some grub."

The German's only response was a grimace of contempt as he motioned them into the vehicle, placed his grenadiers at front and rear and took his own place beside the chauffeur. As the car moved off, it turned to the south and east. The headquarters village was left in the background.

The car gained speed as it emerged into the open roads from which heavy military traffic was now clear. A German soldier passed a field ration to each of the prisoners—another dose of tinned wieners and hard bread. But even Van Blick had lost his appetite in the turn of events. He looked up pathetically and made a wry grimace at Maurice.

"Well, Sarge," Maurice spoke up in an acrid taunt, "if we see you scratch the back of your head now, does it mean we're to get ready to jump the Prussian Guard? Or just that you're bothered with cooties?"

Gill smiled forlornly.

CHAPTER IV

WELCOME TO ULM

ANY forlorn hope that their destination was not Germany itself vanished as the truck sped on to the east through the morning. Moreover, the fact was clearly attested by the full field equipment which the Prussian grenadiers carried in the truck and by the heavy supply of field rations. Efforts to strike up a conversation with the German soldiers resulted in repulse. Either the guardsmen understood no English or they disdained to speak with enemy prisoners.

Gill rode with an air of outward serenity. His face seemed to say to the others that they must not abandon hope, that their chance would come again. But within, despair gripped him as he saw the Front area sink into the distant background—despair and bitter self-reproach at having fallen into the German trap. He should have known, he rebuked himself, that the Germans would be listening in on every breath when the prisoners were alone, in hope that unguarded tongues would spill some useful bit of military information. Well, they would not find him off his guard a second time, he vowed.

"It's all right, Sarge," Sandstrom consoled, as if he had divined the other's thoughts. "Don't run away with no idea any of us is blaming you for what went wrong. Me, I know you'll outfox them when the time comes."

Early in the afternoon the truck brought up at the railway depot of a Belgian village and the prisoners were transferred to a nondescript train jammed with German wounded. They sat in gloomy silence, staring dully out through the windows of a third class compartment throughout the afternoon. Shortly before dark the train crossed a great river which they identified as the Rhine. At Köln the car in which they rode was switched to another train. As this train pulled out to the southeast they accepted the worst with-

out further reservation. They were headed not merely across the German frontier, but to some remote prison camp. Gill groaned inwardly, even though he smiled outwardly, as the train gained momentum. Van Blick, revived by an issue of cold *Leberwurst* and *Wrucken* bread, suddenly rallied himself.

"Join the Army and see the world," he cried. "Everything furnished, good pay, travel in foreign lands—"

"Aw, pipe down," snapped Maurice irritably. "I'm busy counting how many kilometers we got to walk back on this one way ticket."

"Snap out of it, all you birds," piped Van Blick. "Maybe we don't know where we're going, but we sure know now we're on our way; so make the most of it, gang. Let the Fritziees see we ain't down-hearted."

Glum silence was the only response. Exhaustion, pinched rations and the day's grim developments were not to be tossed lightly aside. But Van Blick's raillery was not wasted. It served to crystallize an acceptance of the tragic situation. Untroubled snoring broke forth from Sandstrom's seat shortly thereafter to complete the transition. In a short while all had transferred their despair to the soothing realm of slumber. They slept in their seats, sitting up, a sleep of exhaustion that was unbroken by the jolting and shrieking of the train. When blunt German gutturals finally aroused them, they found the warm July sun slanting in through the windows. The train was standing in a station and the Germans were busy assembling their equipment.

They were hustled to the platform and set in motion down a broad cobbled street, two guardsmen leading, two bringing up the rear, the *Ober-Leutnant* riding behind in an open horsecab. From the sign on the *Bahnhof* they learned that they were in the village of Ulm in the ancient domain of Württemberg. None of them had ever heard of the place before.

"But I know this much," said the disconsolate Maurice. "It's a darn glon

walk from any place we want to be."

A crowd of villagers began forming on the sidewalks. The crowd quickly gathered strength as the news spread, and overflowed into the street. Mostly old men, women and small boys who greeted the newcomers with sullen stares and an occasional jeer from some war mad villager.

"The home guard is out to give us the razzberry," exclaimed Marr breezily. "Somehow I get the idea that they don't like us very well."

"You just don't understand the lingo," rejoined Maurice. "This is a welcome committee from the Ulm Chamber of Commerce."

A sudden uproar broke around Private Van Blick. A buxom *Frau* pointed an accusing finger at him and jabbered noisily, others joining in the demonstration. Van Blick looked around at Gill with a broad grin.

"What's wrong now?" demanded the sergeant.

"I winked at the wench." Van Blick laughed.

"Be careful not to stir them up," Gill cautioned. "Make them eyes behave, Van Blick. You're not in France now."

"No, but I'm bettin' that jane'd go eat with me quick enough if that gang wasn't around. Say, turn me loose in this *vill* with six bars of soap and a can of good U. S. chocolates and you'd be surprised."

The staring crowd hung to the prisoners' heels until they were marched through a gate in a high brick wall that surrounded a set of ancient ramshackle stone and brick buildings which had the appearance of an abandoned brewery. Soldiers with fixed bayonets at the gate disclosed the present use of the place. The prisoners were halted outside a door that bore the legend "*Kommandantur*" while the *Ober-Leutnant* slid out of the horsecab and entered. Then they were filed inside and forced to attention in front of a broad desk.

"Place der heels close und like soldiers standt up!" blurted the *Ober-Leutnant*. "The *Herr Rittmeister* will you receive in

his august presence."

Close upon this announcement entered a fat, apoplectic little man, bursting with martial importance, swaggering across the room with his protuberant, fishy eyes fixed upon them. An ancient file of the old Prussian army, wearing the dress uniform and insignia of a full *Oberst*.

"So, it is the Americans?" he sneered. He looked them over, until his contempt reached the bursting point. "Ach, what scum!" he grunted, and ordered them out of his presence with a flourish of his fat hand.

A dry voiced private, red, fat and past fifty, took their names and registered them in twisted English, after which a gray bearded *Feldwebel* harangued them in a phonographic monotone on the rules of the prison. This done, they were fumigated, inoculated against typhoid, vaccinated and turned over to an armed escort of two middle aged *Landsturm* privates. As they were leaving the room, the *Feldwebel* arrested Gill and Sandstrom by name and rank.

"You to the cells go," he announced thickly, "for the crimes of plotting an escape to make and for the disrespect to the Herr Hauptmann Waldefischbach. Ten days of the cells in. The other prisoners to the stockades go. March!"

"Say, fuzzy, what kind of a kangaroo court do you run?" Sandstrom exploded. "Ain't wəentitled to have our say?"

"Fifteen days of the cells in," droned the *Feldwebel* after blinking owlishly at Sandstrom for several moments.

"Steady, Sandstrom," cautioned Gill through the side of his mouth, barely in time to interrupt another outburst. "We'll need you outside."

Sandstrom choked back his temper with difficulty and accepted the prison sentence without further protest. Gill

and Sandstrom were taken through winding stone corridors to a flight of stone steps leading underground and locked in cells whose only furnishings were filthy piles of sawdust and wood shavings on the dank floor.

The others were escorted to a great two-acre enclosure, hemmed in by thick barbed wire stockades and filled with a motley array of disheveled prisoners, mostly Russians and Roumanians, but with a sprinkling of Portuguese, Senegalese, Algerians and Belgians.



WHEN Sergeant Gill emerged from underground ten days later, he pulled himself together and walked out in the open air of the stockade with the jaunty air of a man who has fared well. His uniform was somewhat too large for him after his daily fare of brackish water and soggy *Wrucken*, and there were dark rings under his eyes that emphasized the pallor of his faded skin. But these symptoms were obscured by his firm step and level, unchastened eyes as he made the rounds of the stockade in search of his men. Not only was he eager to know how well they fared, but what information they had culled that might be of use to him in plotting their future course.

Van Blick discovered the sergeant from across the enclosure and rushed over to him, bubbling a greeting. Gill noted that Van Blick had shrunk perceptibly and his eyes were ringed, his person tousled, grimy and altogether disreputable, but the private's effervescence was undiminished.

"We been looking out for you all day, Sarge," he exclaimed eagerly. "All set for tonight, and all it needs is you to put on the finishing touches. Switzerland or bust."



TO BE CONTINUED

TODAY'S RAW BRONC

~ *The First Saddling* ~

AS TOLD BY GIL STRICK
TO FREDERIC MERTZ

THE first saddling of the raw bronc don't come until he has been broke to stake and broke to lead. That is to say, in the first place you have caught him. Then you have took a few days to let him learn that when he is on the end of a rope he might just as well go where the rope goes, because in the end he will still be on the end of the rope, even if he has followed it along by means of sliding on his back. But after he has been broke to lead pretty good, this is the time for his first saddling.

You see, he is only going to be worth about thirty dollars when he is one hundred per cent good in his work, and we can't have a seventy-five dollar a month cowboy working half his life on just this one broomtail.

To saddle the raw bronc, what you want is a level piece of ground, pretty sizable, without too many trees and fences which are liable to be destroyed by the bronc throwing the rider through them. Especially I have found out it is a good thing not to be near a barn. A barn may look innocent as can be, just sitting there minding its own business, but I have found out it is one of the most uncomfortable things to ride through that you can get hold of.

Cow country people who do not own the barn think that it is the most comical sight in the world to see a feller ride in through the solid side of a barn, and out again through a different side; they figure the rider will heal up later,

given time. But the barn will not heal up. Somebody will have to go and actually fix it, and also buy nails, and this makes somebody sore and causes hard feelings.

You lead the bronc out to this open space and your helper snubs his head very tight to the horn of his saddle. And now you stick the snaffle on him, or maybe a hackamore, whichever one you have a leaning to.

In the Cuyamacas of California, where I started breaking horses, the snaffle bit is generally used for breaking. This is a straight bit, busted in the middle; that is to say, jointed. It has big rings at the corners of the mouth, and a chinstrap crossing below the under jaw, fairly loose. The rings and the chin strap fix it so that when you pull on one side to turn him, the whole works will not go whistling through his face.

But the hackamore, if you use it, hasn't any bit. It is a kind of nose band braided out of rawhide. You fix reins to it by wrapping a rope close around the hackamore under his chin, so it is tied under his chin like a sun-bonnet, and a loop of this wrap-rope leads back for reins. Sometimes a big iron ring may be used over the end of the hackamore and in the mouth; this will not pull on his mouth like a bit, but just keeps the hackamore from pulling too far back along his jaw. The iron ring is called a fedora.

If you don't have any ring you can

use some rawhide string for a fedora.

You hear two arguments against the hackamore.

One thing is that it is not severe enough, and gives you poor control over the horse during the breaking, and takes longer to break. This is the worst nonsense you could gather up in many a day's ride.

The other argument against the hackamore is that it is too severe, and this comes closer to the truth than the other side. The hackamore takes effect in two ways. When you pull on the reins the hackamore tightens over the top of the nose, and there are a couple of knots braided into the rawhide and these press down and partly shut off the bronc's wind. But what is more severe, the knot under the chin presses up hard against the jaw. Just at first the bronc may not pay much attention to this pressure; but after awhile his chin gets skinned and raw and makes him very careful of what he is trying to do. People, seeing the hackamore working on his raw chin, often think this is too cruel to be used.

But personally I do not think it is cruel, and I will tell you why. The horse's mouth is very tender, and pulling on his mouth is very painful; the only reason his mouth does not get raw and make the snaffle look cruel is because the mouth has more give to it, different from the chin. Breaking with a hackamore, you get away from giving your horse a tough mouth, because you have not had anything in his mouth. Most of the fretful horses, unhappy in their work, are tough mouthed horses. It is a funny thing, but a horse can get used to pretty near anything, and would just as soon do pretty near anything, if only he believes he has to do it.

What makes a horse unhappy is thinking maybe he is doing some work he could get out of. A horse like that frets all day, and you keep sawing away at his tough old mouth, and he is in discomfort the whole time. A horse that is trained severely in the first place, with the hackamore, lets himself be guided by the very least pressure on the reins—usually just swinging the weight of the reins alone—so he is never uncomfortable, and he is not unhappy,

because it never occurs to him that anything else in the world is possible.

So I throw in in favor of the hackamore, because I think it is kinder in the long run and gets a better result. But I have broken horses with the snaffle bit which have turned out as good as some hackamore horses.

After you have got this rig on his head, you are now holding him by a rope around his neck and then run through a hackamore, and the halter is out of the picture. You now blindfold him; and all this has maybe taken a little longer than it has took to tell it.

You will leave off the blanket this first time, to slim down the chance of the saddle rolling. You now pick up your saddle, but in place of throwing it on one-handed as with a broke horse, you ease it on very slow, and let the straps down careful.

The saddle you are using will be your personal choice, and whatever you use there will be plenty of people tell you you must be crazy. Because if there is anything in the world people will argue about and fight over, it's anything around a horse.

What I like for a bronc saddle is the three-quarter rig. A three-quarter rig is a single-cinch or center-fire rig. A true center-fire cinches right from the middle of the saddle around the belly. A Spanish rig has the cinch in the front of the saddle and cinches just back of the shoulder; this is a very sound, tight rig, but it is liable to cinch-cut a young horse under the elbow. Between the center-fire and the Spanish rig you have different types of rig named according to how far forward the cinch is hung—three-quarter, seven-eighths, etc.

I like the three-quarter for bronc breaking because it gives the saddle a chance to move some, in the cantle, with the movement of the horse, taking up some of the wallop when you get slammed in the back with the cantle. For slim built horses, with thoroughbred blood, there is a lot to be said for the double rig, or rim-fire; this is cinched Spanish in front, with a second cinch back of the swell of the belly. This keeps the whole works from slipping backward and forward. It is also a great roping saddle for heavy stock.

In contest riding, the Association furnishes a standard saddle, with a medium dish cantle and a slightly swelled fork, generally made of a very good grade of leather. On these Association saddles the stirrup leathers swing very free, more so ahead than back, giving the rider a chance to qualify to contest rules and spur the horse in the neck and shoulders the first three jumps out of five.

There is a lot of difference in saddles too, as regards the swell of the fork. Old-time saddles had a fairly slim fork, but most modern saddles have a big square-built swell, anywhere from ten to fourteen inches wide. I have seen them seventeen inches wide. This big broad swell is under-cut to fit over the top of your leg and helps hold you on top. When a lot of the fork curls out over your leg it is known as the "bucking rolls".

There is nowadays even a form-fitting saddle which surrounds you so much you practically have to back into it. Some like this saddle because it seems like it would be impossible for it to leak, but it is not true that you can not be poured out of it, and personally I never liked this saddle.

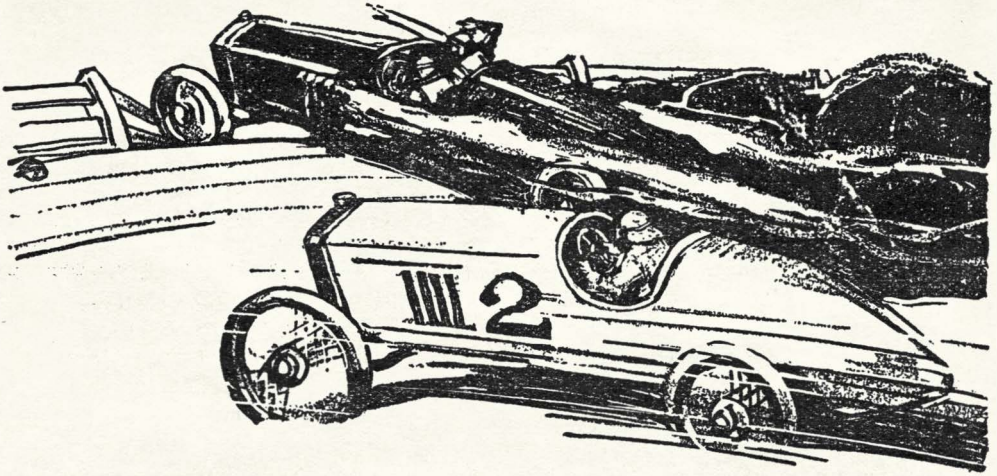
After you have slid the saddle on the bronc's back you want to cinch him

up as quick as possible before something worse happens which will keep you from cinching him at all. Something might even happen which might keep you from cinching any horses at all, ever. To cut down the chance of this, you cinch with your right hand, and with your left hand you hold his head. Holding his head will not keep him from whirling, but you can at least whirl with him. Always stand about two points off his port bow; that is, a little in front and to the side of his near foreleg, this being one of the very few directions in which he can not lash out, at least not freely.

You now ease into the saddle, taking a long hold on the bucking rein—if you take too short a hold, you will be jerked and slung like a shot when his head goes down. You take a deep seat in the saddle, tuck the loose end of the lead rope through your belt and tell your helper, "Cut him loose." You lean forward, offer up a very heartfelt prayer and pull the blindfold back.

If you have followed all my directions properly you may now figure that you have your raw bronc saddled. And if you feel that you have now worked your way into a very bad fix, just remember this: You may be in serious trouble—but so is the bronc.





Factory Jobs

By T. R. ELLIS

HAVIN' made a lot of mistakes that way, I generally go slow on this snap judgment of people; but the first time I see this factory guy I get a strong hunch we ain't goin' to be on speakin' terms long. Me and Smitty and Al De Gama are distributed around the cigar-box office of my garage in Los Angeles when he first blows in. Our heels are hooked on the edge of the desk and the room is full of cigaret smoke and high speed lies as we drive over an Ascot speedway meet that's a week old. About the time we're takin' all the turns wide open and settin' a new track record with every lap, this bunch of high priced tailorin' waddles in. Droppin' a card on the desk, he demands—

"Which one of you is Lewis?"

Nobody answers for a time and, pickin' up the card slow-like, I check over his chassis specifications. He's short and fat, but from heels to hat he's spent plenty dough tryin' to look streamlined. The cigar in the corner of his mouth is tilted at a Tammany angle, and he's tryin' hard to push his chin forward

and look like big business. After decidin' he's assembled all wrong and ought to be sent back to the body shop, I read the card. It says he is P. Quincy Hatton, Engineering Department, Ralston Motors, all of which is just so much vacuum in my not so young life. I never like guys that part their name on the side anyway.

While I'm rubbin' my finger over the printin' like my wife does to see if it's expensive, Smitty's French accent cuts the silence.

"Before he have retired from active competition, the gentleman that is hold your card is sometimes called Lightning Lewis."

"Yeah," I chip in my two-bits' worth, "but I've always kinda expected a stranger to call me 'mister.'"

Al De Gama's mouth quirks wicked-like at the corners as he adds—

"Most of us, though, just call him Jerry."

P. Quincy passes up the caution flag wide open and sits on a vacant corner of the desk.

"Jerry," he says, impressive, "I'm

with Ralston Motors in New York."

From his accent on the name of the city, you'd think nobody else lived there; so I murmur, soft-like—

"New York, huh?"

"That's right."

"Tell me, mister," I ask, "who runs the garage in that town?"

Al makes a chokin' sound and the Ralston Motors representative gets red.

"If you're all through being funny," he says, "I'd like to talk business with you."

"Oh, sure—" I wave a hand toward the back shop—"sell you all or any part of it—for cash."

He ignores my generous offer and says—

"I'd like to buy the contract of this man Smith who drives your race car."

That crack knocks my feet off the desk with a bang. Is this guy dumb, or just tryin' to make me think so? All the drivers I know just have a verbal agreement with their owners; so if either party gets sore about anything, they can tell the other where to go, without gettin' legal permission. My curiosity is gettin' me down, but I tell him:

"No soap, fella. There's a law in this State against sellin' things you don't own. That good lookin' egg over there, with the trustin' blue eyes, black hair and French accent, is the driver in question. Suppose you ask him?"

He looks kinda confident as he turns to Smitty and asks—

"Smith, if you have no contract with Lewis, how would you like to sign one with Ralston Motors?"

The Frenchman smothers a grin and, lookin' at me, says:

"What is it, this contrac', Jerry? Surely you have not—how you say?—hold out on me?"

Again Al makes that chokin' sound, and P. Quincy ain't so dumb but he knows he's bein' put on the pan. He clouds up like he's gonna rain all over the place, and snaps:

"You understand this contract carries a salary. That means you get paid, win, lose or draw. Ralston Motors has a two-car racing team—special factory jobs—that make these pampered speedway pets look slow. Last week we took first and second at San Luis Obispo.

The week before, first and third at San José. We're thinking of adding a third car to the team and we're offering you a chance to drive it."

When he tells how good his cars are, I can't resist interruptin' to ask—

"I wonder what these fast cars of yours will do when they get in a race where there's a little competition?"

He dismisses my question with a pityin' look and asks Smitty—

"How about it?"

All of a sudden the thought smacks me that if Smitty should decide to switch I'd be in a bad way for a pilot. A factory hook-up on a salary contract is nothin' to sneeze at. Then I breathe again as Smitty says, soft-like, but plenty sarcastic:

"M'sieu, you honor me, but I am desolate. I can not. Who then would drive the Miller Special for Jerry Lewis? You see, I am so much of the conceit I think perhaps no one could do it so well as Smitty."

After P. Quincy wakes up to the fact that he's havin' an off day, and pulls his freight, I turn to De Gama and ask:

"If I ain't bein' too dumb, would you mind tellin' me what this Ralston Motors outfit does for a livin'? If they build automobiles, I never saw one."

"Somethin' new," Al informs me. "They're not on the market yet; but from the advance advertisin' I gather it's to be a new line eight, priced under a thousand."

A little while later Al drags out, and me and Smitty go back to the valve grindin' job that's been markin' time, while we're gabblin'.



SOMEHOW this Ralston outfit sticks in my mind the next few days, though there's no real reason why it should. I've seen these factory built race cars before, and most of 'em ain't fast enough to keep out of their own exhaust smoke. I wonder, too, if this P. Quincy knows that Smitty was Jules Moreau before he applied for citizenship papers and added Smith to the tail end of his name. If he does, he probably knows that Jules Moreau was considered quite a chauffeur in France, before he got peeved at the speed gang on that side of the creek

and crossed over. Oh, well, it's too much for a one-cylinder mind, so I decide to forget it. I really try to forget it, too—but what chance!

Me an' Smitty are scheduled up for a three-event sprint race the followin' Sunday; and the day before we're puttin' the finishin' touches to the Miller Special, gettin' ready for a tryout in the afternoon. After I cinch home the last bolt in the oil sump, I lean against the work bench while Smitty wipes the grease spots off the bright red body. When he gets through he backs up beside me and, lookin' her over from the shiny pointed radiator to the slipstream tail, he says—

"You know, Jerry, I have drive many race cars; but I would not trade *la belle Betsy*, here, for any two of those other."

That's sayin' somethin' too; for before he came to this country Smitty used to play around with such cars as Mercedes, Peugeot, Renault and several others I've never even seen outside of motor magazines. Naturally I feel kinda swelled up about it, so I sock him between the shoulderblades and say—

"Can it, you lead-footed snail-eater, and let's see if she'll still run on a track."

We hook the Miller on behind a tourin' car and drag it out to the course. As we top the rise on the runway across the track I see De Gama's roadster is sittin' in one of the pits and Al is out gallopin' his yellow Miller around the oval. We take a pit next to Al, unhook the speedster, and in a few minutes Al an' Smitty are playin' a fast game of tag around the five-eighths mile bowl. Both cars sound perfect; but neither driver is kickin' his throttle very hard, both havin' too much respect for the other's steam to waste any effort when there's no checkered flag concerned.

Al, at some time or other, has held every dirt track record in the country; and after seventeen years in the racket, he ain't so old that he can't bust another every now and then. Smitty is lots younger, but to date he's the only pilot that's been able to lead the Italian over the finish line when both cars are goin' good, and *he* can't do it very often. In the last five races at Ascot, Al has collected first place money four times. The other time he went out of the race with

a bad case of motor trouble.

They unwind fifteen or twenty laps, then come into the pits and walk over to where I'm sittin' in the shade of the tourin' car. For awhile we sit there, talkin' about nothin' particular, and Al asks—

"Well, Jerry, how does it look for tomorrow?"

"Looks like it's gonna be another De Gama benefit performance, same as the last four meets here."

Al chuckles and runs his fingers through his gray hair. Then, lookin' up the track, he says, sober-like:

"Maybe so. But look up the line here and tell me if you see what I see"

Comin' slow down the stretch is a couple bright blue roadsters, each towin' a race car the same color. They have rounded, foreign lookin' radiators, all plated, and each one carries a gold plate stamped Ralston-8. The wire wheels have winged hub nuts, like racin' wheels, monogrammed with a big R. The race cars have the same radiators and wheels as the roadsters, but that's all. The rest of the body from the front of the bonnet to the speedway tail was built by some one who knew his race cars. Gold letterin' on the side tells the world that each is a Ralston Special and, what I mean, they're hot lookin' iron.

When the procession stops several guys get out of the roadsters; and right away I recognize the fat shape of P. Quincy. Then, noticin' one of 'em pullin' on a helmet, I grab Smitty's wrist and ask:

"Look, Smitty! Is it or not?"

Smitty looks, and answers in French, like he does when he's surprised—

"*C'est M'sieur Davis.*"

"Dizzy Davis, no less," verifies Al. "And the guy gettin' out of the other car is Sid Hoagland."

"Ain't *that* a load?" I mutter to myself.

The last time me an' Smitty tangled up with Davis was durin' a hundred mile event in Midtown, Oregon, when he tried to hub the Frenchman. A couple laps later Smitty chased Davis's white Frontenac down the front stretch so fast that Dizzy forgot to turn left when he got to the end. Dizzy's net profit outa that meet was a hospital bill

and the pleasure of buyin' a new race car. Later I hear he's got himself a 122 cubic inch Duesenberg that's supposed to be awful fast. Hoagland has been barnstormin' county fairs, drivin' the same kind of Duesy as Davis. He's considered a pretty fast chauffeur; and while there's an occasional cloudy rumor about him, I don't know of anything definite.

As they climb into the blue cars, me and Smitty and Al settle down to watch 'em go, and get some dope on these new speed creations that P. Quincy's so proud of; but that last named gent drops a fly in our soup. In a few seconds he comes puffin' up, towin' Bill Dickens, the egg that runs the track. Lookin' kinda uncomfortable, Bill says:

"Would you boys mind lettin' these fellows have the track for awhile? They want to try out their cars."

"Hell!" I snort. "There it is. Do they think we're gonna take it home?"

"Don't be a crab, Jerry," Bill answers. "I promised 'em they could use the course alone for a couple hours."

"O.K. I wouldn't trust my car on the same track with 'em anyway. Let's go."



THE next morning we get out to the track around ten and knock off a few practise laps. In an hour or so De Gama shows up and takes the pit on the left of us. From then on until noon race cars straggle in one at a time. Lyons and Buxton of the Grady team drop by the pit and later Red Shafter stops to powwow with Smitty. A little past noon the Ralston outfit arrives in all its glory, and takes the two vacant pits on the right of us. At the time I think their parkin' next to us is kinda odd, because Dizzy ain't got any more use for me than I have for him, and you'd need a micrometer to measure that. It don't take long, though, to find out why.

About a half hour before qualifyin' time, which is carded for one o'clock, Dizzy calls me off to one side and asks, real friendly and confidential—

"Jerry, you ain't still sore about that Midtown race, are you?"

"Me sore? Why should I be? We won the race."

"Aw, you know what I mean. You don't still think I parked that tow-car across the track on purpose when Smitty was practisin', do you?"

I know so; but bein' curious as to what he's drivin' at, I stall by sayin':

"That's so much history, Dizzy. The race came out right for us, so I don't think anythin' about it."

Takin' that speech for encouragement, he goes on:

"Here's the way I look at it, Jerry. Ralston Motors has spent a lot of money on these two jobs and you've got a lot of money tied up in your Miller. There's no reason why we should go out here and drive cutthroat, when our three cars could work together, pool the prize money and split even. Three fast cars with good drivers could just about sew up most of the dough in these short sprint races."

So that's the answer. Out of the corner of my eye I see P. Quincy lookin' me over kinda hopeful-like, and I know he's in on it. The more I think about it the madder I get, but I keep my voice down and answer Dizzy, real gentle—

"In plain United States, you want me to help you hippodrome the meet, huh?"

"Not exactly," he says. "We'd just cooperate."

"Uh-huh," I grunt, "but I wonder what the officials would think about it? I betcha they wouldn't call it cooperation. Besides all which, I wouldn't hook up with you in any kind of a deal. Now get out of my pit—fast."

From his own pit he calls back:

"O.K., wise guy. Play it on your own and see how far you get."

"Maybe not so far," I crack back, "but when I get there I'll still be in front of you."

Smitty is fussin' around the car in that jumpy way of his, and I squat on my heels with my back to the pit fence, watchin' him for awhile. Pretty soon he comes over and sits beside me.

"*Mon ami*," he says, "what is it you have on the mind?"

"To be honest, Smitty, I'm not sure."

For awhile we sit there and stare at the crowd fillin' the grandstands. Then De Gama comes into our pit and joins the heel-squattin', no-talk contest. Standin' the silence just so long, he

blurts—

"All right, you eggs, get it out of your system."

"I'm just wonderin'," I tell him, "why this Ralston outfit is so wound up in this race meet."

"Five hundred bucks for each preliminary and fifteen hundred for the final," he answers, but his sarcastic smile says he don't believe a word of it.

"Horses!" I growl. "What's a couple grand to a outfit that makes automobiles?"

"Maybe," he suggests, "it's because their advertisin' has been tellin' the public to watch the Ralston race cars today."

"Maybe," I agree. "Anyway Dizzy Davis just propositioned me to hippodrome the meet with 'em, so he can't be so sure of himself. Now look, Al, you know that factory jobs can be souped up just so fast, and that ain't near fast enough for a racetrack. Dizzy Davis and Sid Hoagland know that; so why should they park a couple Duesys to drive cans that ain't near as fast? The whole damn thing smells kinda unsanitary to me."

Durin' all this palaver Smitty had been quiet, but suddenly he stands up and, takin' me and Al by the arm, he says:

"You think those cars are slow? Come with me and learn your error."

With a quick look at each other me and Al follow him over the pit fence and across the infield to where the two Ralston roadsters are parked. After a glance around he goes up to the left side of one and yanks up the bonnet.

"Observe," he orders, with a wave of his hand.

Me and Al observe, but don't see anything sensational.

"What of it?" I ask Smitty. "That's a Hysong line eight motor, but I can name you at least four commercial cars that use 'em."

"Non," he says, impatient, "not that."

Then he raps his knuckles against the motor and demands—

"What is it I have hit?"

Me an' Al chorus—

"The exhaust manifold."

"Bien," he snaps. "You awake. Observe, it is on the left side. Take now a

look at the race cars."

We look at the blue race cars and our mouths pop open. The exhaust is on the *right* side of the bonnet.

Al's eyes narrow, but he grins as he says softly—

"Jerry, I wonder what became of the two Duesenbergs you were worried about."

"Sure." I nod. "They hang on a couple fancy radiator shells, wrap new bodies around 'em, add a little gold letterin' and turn 'em into Ralston Specials. That means you two guys have to drive like hell if we make any money outa this meet."

"Also," adds Smitty, "it might be well to keep the eyes open."



BY the time we get back to our pits the loud speakers are blattin' a call for all drivers to report to the starter's box. I go along and listen to the starter lay down the law to these speed hounds, and nudge Smitty to get a load of what he's sayin', because this flag tosser, Paul Derkim, is tough. If he says he'll throw a white flag on you, he'll do it; and when he does, you're out. He'll back it up with his fists, if necessary.

When he finishes tellin' 'em who's bossin' this race meet, he reads the list that tells the order they qualify in. The Ralston jobs are first, then Fred Shafter's Duesy, Fred Horey in the Manning Special, then Smitty and the red Miller and so on down the line of eighteen entries. Al De Gama is last, seein' as he holds the track record at twenty-seven and two-fifths seconds.

When Derkim dismisses us with a wave of his hand, Hoagland is pushed to the line in the No. 11 blue Ralston. As soon as the crank is flipped and the motor lets out its yelp I know for sure it's one of Fred Duesenberg's pets. No stock power plant I ever heard has a whine like it. Sid gets away and on the second round signals for the flag as he comes outa the turn. Paul flips it, and the Ralston makes a sizzlin' blue streak to circle the oval in twenty-seven and two-fifths, tyin' De Gama's track record. Dizzy Davis takes the other Ralston around in twenty-seven-four. Smitty and Red Shafter tie for the next

place by makin' it in twenty-eight flat; then they toss a coin for it and we win. More cars go out and shoot for position and come back, but I don't pay much attention until a roar from the stands tells me De Gama is goin' to the line. Al's Miller spits out its singin' moan a couple laps and, as the flag is dropped, turns into a yellow flash that rounds the east turn and tears down the back. As he comes on to the front stretch I turn to Smitty and say—

"There goes the track record."

Smitty nods as the loud speakers tell the crowd the Italian pilot has qualified in twenty-seven seconds, settin' a new track record. A little while later the qualifyin' list is posted. De Gama is first, then Hoagland, Davis, Smitty, Shafter; Buxton in one of Grady's Frontys, Lyons in the other and that's as far as I read. This puts Al, Dizzy Davis, and Shafter in the front row of the first race with six more behind 'em. Hoagland, Smitty and Buxton have the front in the second, followed by the rest of their quota that promises plenty of competition. The first five cars to finish each twenty-five lap preliminary drive the fifty-lap final, position to be set by their qualifyin' time.

At two-thirty the line-up for the first race is called out and a few minutes later they're on the way. As Paul drops the flag Al streaks into the turn first followed close by Dizzy and Shafter. In the fifth round Phil Mace of Portland brings his Frontenac from someplace in the tail end up to fourth place, and a couple clunks drop out. From then on positions don't change and the Italian leads the field over the finish line in that order.

Durin' the breathin' space between races me an' Smitty are talkin' with Al when one of the officials comes over and hands him a telegram. As he reads it his face goes white and, turnin' to me, he says:

"Jerry, I've got to go to town. I'm takin' my roadster and if I don't get back look after the race car when the meet's over."

"O.K., Al, beat it," I tell him.

Before I get a chance to wonder what was in that message, the assistant starter is callin' out cars for the second

race, and from then on I got my hands full.

The qualifyin' time has given Hoagland the pole in this event. Smitty is second in the front row and next to him is Buxton. In the second row Ted Wilson of San José has the pole with an S-R Fronty, then Charlie Bobby's D-O job and Fred Horey in the Manning Special. There's three more cars in back of them, but that's as close as they get to havin' any part in the rest of the meet.

Paul Derkim gives 'em the usual instructions and, after the motors are started, steps back and lets 'em go. They turn the parade lap in good order but, as Paul swings the flag signalin' the start of the race, all hell breaks loose. Smitty kicks his throttle and the red Miller howls into the first turn, leadin' Hoagland and Buxton by inches. The second time around Smitty is still leadin'. A car length back and a little to the right is Buxton in the Grady job. To the right of Buxton and about the same distance back of Smitty comes Hoagland and the Ralston. As they roar down the front straightaway, about a quarter-lap ahead of the rest of the field, Hoagland drops back of Buxton and pulls up on the pole side. They ride like that until the east turn comes up, then Smitty and Buxton ease off a little just before going into the curve, but not Hoagland.

He kicks the Ralston wide open, shoots across the track in front of the Grady car, swings up and misses the guardrail by a hope, then cuts back down to the pole again in front of Smitty. As he goes by the red Miller, the tail of the blue car just nicks the right front wheel. The Miller swings backward to the top of the bowl, hits the upper guardrail tail first, then comes down in a spin, with Smitty fightin' hard to get control. As he grazes the lower rail and bounces out into the center of the track, cars go by on either side, just missin' and that's all. Just when it begins to look like everything's gonna be all right, Fred Horey comes blastin' down the stretch, makin' up time lost in a late start. The Manning Special heads into the turn just in time to lock front wheels with the Miller; then both

cars whirl and smash through the inside rail.



WITH Smitty's first spin, and the first yell of the crowd, I start runnin', scared sick; but by the time I get there both drivers are through the fence and out of their cars, askin' the other if he's hurt. It develops that neither of 'em is, but the cars are all through for the day. While we're walkin' back to the pits, Smitty tells Fred what happened; and I'm so relieved that Smitty got out of the mess in one piece, I can't speak.

Meanwhile Hoagland is leadin' the field by half a lap, havin' a nice time until the starter gums up the works for 'im. As he comes rarin' down the stretch on the next round, Derkim throws a white flag. The next lap the white flag is waved again as Hoagland yells somethin', and keeps goin'. After another round or two he realizes he's disqualified and might as well stop. As the blue car rolls into the pit he gets out from behind the wheel, real irritated-like, and starts for Derkim.

He don't get that far, which is lucky for him, for Paul has tangled up with tough chauffeurs before, and is still flaggin' races. Hoagland starts, though, and is standin' across the track from the starter's box, waitin' for a chance to get over, when me an' Horey head for him. Fred gets there first and, spinnin' Hoagland around by the shoulder, demands:

"What the hell's the matter with you, Sid? Are you drunk? You know better than to act like that on the course."

Then Sid commits a social error. He makes a pass at Fred and misses. Now Fred is one of those kinda guys that's easy enough to get along with; but he wipes his nose on broken bottles every so often, too. And before I can take any part in the argument, a hundred and eighty-odd pounds of Fred Horey lights on the point of Sid's chin. He goes out like a light. When he comes to, the race is over and several mechanics are pourin' cold water on 'im; but he gets little sympathy, if any.

When the excitement cools off a little Smitty is called to the judges' stand and asked if he wants to file a protest. We

talk it over and decide it won't help anything. Our car's out for the day; Hoagland can't drive the final because he's disqualified in the preliminary, and the only ones hurt would be the drivers who did finish, as the prize money wouldn't be paid until the protest was settled. Turnin' to the judges, Smitty says simply—

"I have no protest."

"But, Smith," one of 'em insists, "he might have killed you."

The Frenchman's answer to that is still quoted as a speedway classic.

"Perhaps." He shrugs. "But I have drive race cars for several years, and I drive because I wish it. If I can not take the care of myself in any company, it is—how you say—too bad for me."

As the cars are rolled to the line for the final event, me an' Smitty are feelin' pretty down at the mouth. I wouldn't go so far as to say Dizzy 'd planned things to come out this way, because I don't think he's smart enough; but his cocky sneer tells us he's plenty satisfied with results. My hope now is that Shafter, Buxton or Lyons will show a little extra steam and take him into camp or, better yet, that Al will show up in time.

Suddenly Smitty pokes me in the ribs and, pointin' to the vacant pole position in the front row, says:

"It would, perhaps, be well to push Al's car into place."

"Good shot, fella," I answer, "just in case he does get here at the last minute."

As we do, the lineup is complete, with Al's yellow Miller at the pole, front row, Dizzy Davis in the Ralston 8 car in the middle, and Red Shafter's Duesy outside. Buxton has the pole in the second row with the No. 12 Grady Special; then Lyons in the No. 14 Grady job, and Phil Mace with his Rajo Special. There's four more cars in the lineup, but they don't look fast and I ignore 'em—which proves that old age is gettin' me.

We're still standin' beside the yellow Miller, and it's gettin' close to race time, when the starter comes bustin' up and wants to know where Al is. I tell him all I know about it. When I finish, Dizzy Davis has been listenin' in from his own car, and yells:

"I think that's a lotta bull. The wop's

yella streak is showin' up, that's all."

I hike over and, leanin' on the cowlin' of his car, I tell him real positive:

"Listen, you louse; i don't take much guts to call a guy yella when he ain't here to take it up. But don't overlook the fact that he's a friend of mine, and I'd rather take a bust at your mug than win the race at Indianapolis. Speakin' of yella streaks, I'd like to see you step outa that car for one and two-fifths seconds."

Paul comes over and sprinkles a little castor on the choppy water; then, pullin' out his watch, says to me:

"It's five minutes of three. I'll hold the race until ten minutes after, but I can't wait any longer than that."

"Fair enough, Paul," I answer. "Thanks."

The minutes tick away as me an' Smitty keep our eyes glued on the runway beside the grandstand, but no Al. The crowd is gettin' pretty restless at the delay, and finally Paul comes out and says:

"Sorry, Jerry, but I'll have to start now. Push that car off the course."

Then inspiration smacks me down!

"Nothin' doin'," I yell, "we'll run it. Smitty, get in the saddle and drive this heap."

Dizzy pulls himself outa his car and, sittin' on the tail with his feet on the seat, shouts:

"He can't do that! He ain't got no right to drive that car!"

Paul is kinda bewildered for a second. I dive for Dizzy and cut loose a drive at his jaw, but he ducks, the way Tunney forgot to at Chicago, and slides back down under his wheel—quick.

Then, takin' things in hand, Paul says to Dizzy:

"Close your face! I'm all caught up with your squawkin'. Why can't he drive it? De Gama qualified the car and Smith is a qualified pilot."

Turnin' to the lineup, he shouts—

"All right, gang, let's go!"

Ten racin' motors thunder at the grandstand and the crowd roars back. I lean over Smitty and yell a last word in his ear:

"Be careful, son. Don't let your yen to beat this guy trick you into doin' somethin' reckless."

They start rollin' then, and the Frenchman's face is wide in that good-lookin' smile of his, as he slaps the back of my hand a couple times and shouts back:

"O.K, *mon ami*. I will remember, too, this is not our car."

I stiffen in the middle of the track, lookin' after the tail of the yellow Miller with my mouth open, as cars slide by on either side of me. Hell's bells! I never thought of that!



AS usual, Smitty sets the pace at around fifty for the pace-makin' lap; but as the lineup goes down the back Davis is hangin' 'way back of his position. When they round the west turn and approach the startin' line, the blue Ralston comes up with a rush to cross the line and take the flag with the rest of 'em, but it's movin' miles per hour faster, and leads the bunch into the first turn. I'm watchin' Paul to see if he's gonna start 'em over on account of Dizzy's beatin' the flag; but it looks like he's tired of the bickerin', for he lets 'em go.

Goin' down the back straightaway Smitty and the yellow Miller are about fifty feet back of Dizzy. Shafter's Duesy is ridin' Smitty's tail; Buxton and Lyons are right behind Shafter and Phil Mace is a few car lengths back of them. As they enter the second lap Dizzy is increasin' his lead a little and the rest are stringin' out. On the third a black Fronty, that I haven't paid any attention to all day, comes sprintin' up from the group of four cars bringin' up the rear, cuts in ahead of Mace and starts closin' up on the leaders. A look at my program says it's a D-O Fronty Special driven by Joe Furniss of San Francisco.

Fred Horey, his good humor back again, strolls into the pit and remarks—

"Looks like it's gonna be a race."

"No foolin'," I answer. "Look at that black Fronty burn the wind."

"The darn thing looked like a heap of junk, sittin' in the pit." Fred grins.

"These crates surprise you every now and then."

I notice P. Quincy in the Ralston pit chewin' his nails, so I lean up against the fence where he can hear me, and tell Fred:

"Yeah, but the can's probably motored

with a Mercedes. You can't tell a damn thing about it in this race."

P. Quincy gives me a quick look and moves to the other side of his pit.

By the tenth lap Smitty is gettin' used to the way the yellow Miller handles and starts closin' the gap between him and Dizzy. Furniss in the black Fronty has passed up Buxton and Lyons and goes into fourth place, gettin' a big hand from the crowd every trip by. Each time the blue Ralston rounds the east turn, Dizzy takes a quick look over his left shoulder. That kinda worries me, for if he loses control, like he did once that I know of, I'm afraid Smitty's too close to miss 'im.

The next few rounds Furniss closes up on Shafter and on the fifteenth the crowd comes to its feet hysterical, as the black Fronty passes Red's Duesy, to take third place. Looks like he's gonna have all the apples or none, too; for as soon as Shafter is passed, Furniss takes after Smitty.

About the twentieth lap, when I've nearly got my neck in the shape of a corkscrew, tryin' to see all around the course, some one in back of me says—

"Nice race, Jerry."

I turn quick, and there's Al De Gama. I'm kinda nervous for a second, but in the Army they taught us that the best defense is offense, so I demand—

"Where've *you* been the last half hour?"

"Takin' care of some business," he says, smilin' as if he don't even know his car's on the track. "Most of the time, though, I was up in the grandstand."

I pick up the signal slate and ask:

"Shall I call him in? Do you want to take it from here?"

"Why call him in? He's doin' a good job; let him alone."

Then I think to ask where he went. Without answerin' he hands me the message he got. It's from his wife and says:

HAVE HAD AN ACCIDENT. CAN YOU
COME HOME? —HELEN

"Was it bad?" I ask.

"There wasn't any," he answers. "I'll tell you about it later."

While we're talkin' we're watchin' the

race; and it ain't helpin' my peace of mind a bit to see this Furniss guy push his black car closer and closer to Smitty's tail. On the thirty-first round I step out on to the course and give the Frenchman a "push-it-up" highball. He nods, then proceeds to get in a hurry. The next three laps he pulls up on Dizzy and is almost even before Dizzy sees him.

As they come down the front on the thirty-fifth Davis reaches into his bag of dirty tricks.

After a quick look at the Frenchman, he starts to ease the blue car away from the pole and cut across the path of the yellow Miller. Instead of givin' way to the right as Dizzy expects, Smitty kicks the Miller's throttle and drives straight at the right front wheel of the Ralston. Dizzy jerks his car back down to the pole in a hurry, and Smitty is alongside in one jump. For a split second you couldn't have put a pencil between their front hub caps.

From then on it looks like Smitty's tryin' to see how fast De Gama's car will really go. In two laps he takes the lead away from Dizzy, and the black Fronty, stickin' right on the tail of the Miller, passes up the Ralston too, leavin' Dizzy in third place. Where this guy Furniss got all his horsepower I don't know, but he's sure makin' plenty o' knots.

After they dynamite by on the forty-first, the loudspeakers blare above the noise of the motors—

"Dri-i-i-ver-r Smith, in Car-r-r No. 2, turned the fortieth lap in twenty-six-x-x and four-fifths sec-conds."

Me an' Al grin at each other, and I shout—

"Great stuff—but how long is that damn Fronty gonna keep up that pace?"

"Not long," he yells back. "Motor's smokin' bad right now."

It is, too, and the next few laps it gets steadily worse. By the forty-fifth black smoke is pourin' from under his bonnet in a cloud; but Furniss is stickin' to it, hopin' it'll last the few more rounds necessary. On the forty-seventh Smitty and Furniss are leadin' by several hundred feet, then comes Dizzy, Shafter, Buxton and Lyons. All the rest have dropped out of the race.



THEN things happen. As they come down the front on the forty-eighth, a sheet of flame rips out from under the hood of the black Fronty. Furniss screams and throws an arm over his face. His plungin' mount gets away from him and goes into a spin. Dizzy throws the Ralston in a slide toward the top rail as the Fronty splinters through the infield fence. The rest of the cars go through between the two; and by the time Dizzy gets his car straightened out he's in last place. The Fronty stops right side up, and several of the gang get hands and arms pretty well scorched pullin' Furniss out of the blaze.

As Smitty blasts by on the forty-ninth he takes his last lap flag a hundred yards ahead of the field, and on the next circuit the checker is snapped over the bonnet of the yellow Miller. As the last car is flagged off the course, the crowd floods outa the stands and fills the pits. While speed fans are fightin' to get close enough to shake hands with Smitty, Al pulls me to one side and, hookin' a thumb over his shoulder, says—

"Watch the Ralston pit."

I look that way and see P. Quincy, Hoagland and Dizzy in a huddle. The Ralston representative is swingin' his arms and doin' a lot of fast talkin'. They have their backs to the mob; and, while I'm watchin', three coppers and a plain-clothesman come plowin' through. As P. Quincy makes a real eloquent swing with his right arm, it comes down with a handcuff hooked on the wrist; and before he can squawk, he's bein' hustled into a police car that's standin' in the middle of the track. I turn to Al, but he's busy rescuin' Smitty from the public.

A little later, when we've got the tow-bars hooked up and are waitin' for traffic to thin out so we can go to town, me an' Smitty walk Al out in the middle of the infield, and I say—

"All right, you grinnin' sphinx, what happened?"

He answers with an aggravatin' smile—

"P. Quincy was breakin' the law."

"How?" I demand. "It's no crime to paint a stock car name on the side of a race buggy. It's been done plenty times. Are you gonna tell us or am I gonna

have to make you a necktie outa this spanner wrench?"

He surrenders then, and reports:

"You know, when I got that message I was pretty scared; but on the way to the gate I had time to think it over and decided to telephone first. I did, and my wife didn't know a thing about that message. It didn't take much savvy to figure out who didn't want me in the race. I got pretty mad then and did a lot more telephonin'. On the way back from the gate I met Fred Horey on the other side of the grandstand and he told me about the second race. Starting for the track, I got to the top of the runway just in time to see you take a swing at Davis as Smitty slid under the wheel of my car. That suited me fine. In the first place it was Smitty's battle, and I had other fish to fry.

"As you say, you can paint any name on the side of a race car; but there is a law against usin' those race cars for advertisin' and sellin' stock in an automobile factory that don't exist. Outside of a coat of paint, a couple fancy radiators and hub caps—which could be made in any small body shop—those Ralston roadsters were built in the Delmar Motor Car plant at Detroit. I used to work there, and I know. Well, to shorten it up, I called the local Delmar dealer; and when he came out, met him at the gate. We went up in the grandstand, borrowed a pair of field glasses and, after one look at your so-called Ralston roadsters over in the infield, he started some telephoning on his own hook. The rest you know."

Me and Smitty think it over awhile; then the Frenchman says—

"I am glad they have not arrest this Davis and Hoagland."

"Why?" I want to know.

"Because," he answers, spreadin' his hands, "most of the other drivers are my friends and I like them very much. It is only these two I can enjoy takin' the race away from."

"Well," Al remarks, "I don't see how they can do anything to Davis or Hoagland; but it looks like P. Quincy is goin' to take a little rest at San Quentin."

"Yeah," I growl, "and by the time he gets out, maybe he'll have sense enough to call strangers 'mister'."

A Problem In EXTRADITION



By GEORGE E. HOLT

THERE was a time, before the French imposed their beneficent paternalism upon it, when Morocco was a sanctuary for certain men and women who had found their own countries too hot for comfort. Which is to say that, like a few other nations of the world, it had made no extradition treaties which would enable another government to reach forth its long arm and withdraw one of its erring nationals from Tangier, or Fez, or Marrakesh, or the Mountains of the Moon, back to deserved punishment.

Thus, from time to time, pious gentlemen who had been presidents of banks or trust companies, less pious ones who had had the handling of official public funds, erring executors of large estates, impulsive persons who had been too quick on the trigger or too optimistic about the stock market—in short, those who had good reasons for not wishing to appear before the tribunals of their own countries—landed at the rickety wooden landing stage at Tangier. They became one of the few hundred foreigners in a land which was still func-

tioning along lines laid down by Old Testament patriarchs.

Regarded purely as a means of avoiding direct responsibility for social misdemeanors, Morocco was ideal; for there was no danger whatsoever that Mr. Blank, fleeing from the ruins of the People's National Bank of Boomton, Wisconsin, would feel a heavy hand laid upon his shoulder, hear a bass voice informing him that the next boat back to Boomton would leave shortly. No; Mr. Blank was in position to snap his fingers under the very nose of Pinkerton and invite the sleuth to be himself and have a drink at the Café Aleman at the expense of the depositors of the People's National.

But looked at from other angles, Morocco as a sanctuary had its drawbacks, at least as a permanent sanctuary. That fugitive gentlemen from America should see in their emergency only the need for immediate safety was very human. The thought of iron barred prisons was much more intimidating than any vague suspicion that flight into an unknown, semicivilized African country

might have its unpleasant side.

Generally the idea was that one would be completely lost to view in such a country; that there one would find a goodly company of other erring ones who had found it advisable to travel for their health; that what law there was must be fairly simple and easily avoided, and that a man who had possessed nerve enough to loot or kill would be well able to protect himself against the simple minded, if half barbarous, natives.

Besides, they understood that they would be under the protection of their consulates in spite of being "wanted" at home.

Hence such persons sailed blithely eastward, and presently found themselves in an Oriental land where most things were done in a manner which they could not understand. They found that instead of being swallowed up in the crowd, there were so few foreigners—all of whom were given the generic title of Rumi—Romans—by the natives, a noun used for all Christians since Cæsar's armies overran Al-Moghreb—that the newcomer was as prominent and as much observed and discussed as though he had suddenly appeared in a kimono on the streets of Oshkosh.

Seeking those legendary brothers-in-crime, he found instead Masons, members of the Legion of Honor, the diplomatic and consular officials of a dozen nations, and other respectable, hard working, hard riding people. And at last, discovering certain folk who should legally have been elsewhere, he also made the discovery that a criminal was no more popular among the Rumi of Tangier than among the Christians of Boston, Manchester, or Munich. And as for the natives, as soon as they observed the attitude his compatriots took toward him, he was marked down as fair game for mild but persistent robbery and considerable insolence.

In short, it was safe sanctuary, but unpleasant. A crook in Boomton, Wisconsin, was a crook in Tangier, Morocco. And Tangier was quicker in spotting crooks than Boomton.

Into such a situation complacently sailed Mr. Hiram Higginworth, on a lovely day in June.



MR. HIGGINSWORTH was tall and slender, narrow waisted and broad shouldered. His pale skinned face bore the side-whiskers which, with the cutaway, were the banker's trademark in those days. Nobody would have deposited a nickel in a bank whose president wore a common business suit and shaved his face all over. On the other hand, old ladies and gentlemen, hard handed toilers and fair haired children were eager to hand their all to any one who wore a cutaway and sidewhiskers. Nevertheless, Mr. Higginworth was not a banker save by assumption: he was one who had assumed the banker's formula to facilitate his business. No, Mr. Higginworth, one might say, was president-in-flight of the Prairie Mortgage and Trust Company, of Riverdale, Illinois.

He had organized the company five years before. And when a man can organize his own company, and then control it for five consecutive years, his I. Q. is below normal if he can't get the milk out of the coconut. Mr. Higginworth had gotten the milk—and the meat. The shell he had left on the corner of Main and First Streets, Riverdale. But it was pretty thin, having been well scraped.

Mr. Higginworth arrived in Tangier with several trunks, a Gladstone bag and a small black bag. He coldly left the trunks to the usual fate of trunks; the Gladstone he watched; but the little black bag he seemed fond of. A brown-*djellabed* half-negro hotel tout tried to take it away from him on the landing stage—as hotel touts always try to take one's hand baggage, thus insuring that one must go to the hotel they represent—and was much surprised when the tall, Chesterfieldian gentleman, whom he had taken for an English lord, pushed him in the face.

Mr. Higginworth looked over the heads of the milling, shouting touts and donkeymen and caught the eye of the most dignified guide in Tangier. Duke Ali, visiting tourists thought his name was, instead of Dukali; whereby he received much respect and more money as a native nobleman. Dukali was brown, black bearded dignity clothed in a sweeping white *sulham* over pale blue

breeches and waistcoat; but he was watching for signals none the less. As pale gray American eye met warm Moroccan brown, Dukali smiled, uttered a few searing words in Arabic which cleared a path for him most impressively, strode majestically forward and said:

"Gentleman, you come with me. I am the Hotel Cecil."

He relieved his charge of the heavy Gladstone, then looked at the little black bag; but he looked also at the gentleman's face, and let Mr. Higginsworth continue to carry the bag.

This is not the tale of Mr. Higginsworth's first two weeks of life in sunny Morocco, although that would be worth telling too. It is the story of what happened at the end of a fortnight. And so that it shall be told clearly, we must leave Mr. Higginsworth—lonely but safely established in a commodious rented house on that small mountain which had been named Mount Washington by an early, patriotic American consul—we must leave him there, move ahead half a month, and meet certain other people who were interested in him. Of these there were, at the moment, two.



IN THE American consulate the consul sat at the ancient cherrywood desk, which had been sent over from Washington in 1818 and was getting a little debilitated, and across from him sat a heavily built, determined looking, blond man who had just arrived on the steamer from Gibraltar. The consul was young and tall and slender, and was still somewhat dazed at finding himself, in his first post, one of the few consuls with real power left. Not only was he consul, granted great powers under a special treaty, but he had diplomatic standing and was, ex-officio, judge of the consular court which had jurisdiction over all Americans, native and naturalized, and their non-American partners or employees. Moreover, he was the entire court; he was empowered to judge without jury; and there was no appeal from his decisions except in verdicts involving life imprisonment or worse.

Nevertheless, he had no more right to take steps against Mr. Higginsworth—whom he knew all about and had refused to receive at the consulate—than he had against King Edward of England. He explained this to the big, blond, determined looking man; or began to explain it, for his visitor interrupted.

"I know all about that," he said. "That's why I'm here. I want that bird, and I'm going to get him. But how, I don't know."

Consul Teddy Lane looked at the man's credentials again. Joseph J. McDonald, Editor, *Express*, Riverdale, Illinois, special deputy sheriff with Governor's O.K. Then he looked at Mr. McDonald, decided that he was an efficient person, but that he was tackling a job too big for him.

"You can't touch Brother Higginsworth here," he informed him. "I'm not kidding. I'd even have to protect him if he appealed to me. Can't say I'd break my neck doing it, but if I let you get away with anything raw, like taking him away by force—even if you have got a warrant from the Illinois courts—it would be forcible removal, for the warrant doesn't run here. I'd have to—hm—lock you up. Sorry."

"If," offered Mr. McDonald, grinning a bit, "you knew anything about it."

"Yes," assented Consul Teddy, "if I knew anything about it. But, of course—" He paused, looked stern and waited for Mr. McDonald to speak.

"But of course I shouldn't do anything to embarrass you," said that one promptly. "Or myself," he added brightly.

The consul nodded. Mr. McDonald was an understanding sort. Maybe it was about time the American consul ran over to Tetuan for a week's wild boar shooting.

"There is," Mr. McDonald said, "one thing you can do for me, however. Perfectly in order, I'm sure. Can you put me in touch with a reliable native who understands something about Americans and their psychology? I need an assistant."

The consul passed cigars again, lighted one and considered.

"There isn't," he said at last, "any

such animal. At least, not at the moment. I know one. Naturalized American. Spent most of his life in New York. But he's there now. Would an American who knows the natives do?"

"No good," responded Mr. McDonald. "I've got to have a native. Or a man who can pass as a native, although that's probably out of the question."

"Hm! Say—" The consul hesitated. "I don't know. There's an Englishman here—American mother—one of the strangest fellows I've ever met. But mighty good sort. Long story connected with him. Father was British consul at Mogador. Died there years ago. Before he died the Sus Berbers stole his daughter. This son of his was only a kid then. But he stayed here with native friends after his mother left to live in England. Stayed here and made it his purpose in life to find his stolen sister. He's more native than English. Has traveled all over the country. Now and then he does a good turn for the consulates or legations. Knows the natives better than they know themselves."

"He," said Mr. McDonald, "might very well do, if he would help. Would money—"

"Heavens, no!" exclaimed the consul. "He's not that sort. But he hates a crook, naturally. And I've helped him a bit here and there in his hunt for his sister. I've no doubt he'll do what he can. Anything a decent fellow could do." He looked sharply at Mr. McDonald.

"I get you," said that one promptly. "Will you send for him?"

The consul dispatched a gloriously robed *makhazni*, or consular guard, in search of the man they wanted. Presently the guard returned, flung open the door and announced, "Sidi Keane," standing aside to permit the entrance of a man of medium height, with a dark tanned face bearing a semicircular black chin beard, and dressed in white native garments. Keane nodded in a friendly way to the consul, as one gentleman to another, then turned his bright brown eyes upon Mr. McDonald and waited. The consul introduced him, waved him to a chair and explained Mr. McDonald's need of assistance.

"I don't know, of course," the consul explained, "just what he's going to try to do. He says it will be perfectly legal. Legally, however, we can't touch Mr. Higginsworth. But, anyhow, Mr. McDonald will have to be responsible for his actions. And any one who helps him—to his own consul, of course."

"I understand," said Sidi Keane—Jordan Keane—smiling faintly. "Have you heard that I had an encounter with this fellow, Higginsworth? Oh yes, indeed." He rubbed a shoulder, made a wry face. "His riding crop was heavy. I happened to be in his way. He supposed me to be a native, of course. I put up a little argument when he rode into me; and then he struck me . . ." His low, slow voice drawled to a fadeout.

"And then?" urged the consul.

"Oh, and then I took his riding crop away from him and beat him a little myself. I thought probably he would complain to you about it, but I see he didn't. He's a swine. And—he's crossing the color line. Woman who cooks for him—wife of my stableboy. I'll help. Legally," he added, and grinned at Mr. McDonald.



THUS was laid the groundwork for what followed concerning Mr. Higginsworth. Mr. McDonald and Sidi Jordan Keane departed from the consulate and spent an hour pleasantly at a small marble-topped table in the Café Aleman, bordering the little marketplace through which surged all the varied life of Tangier. Beggars, basha, living saints and scarred fighting men. Women wrapped to invisibility in their white *haiks*, slipping along. Brown men on donkeys, Europeans on horseback, Moorish notables on sleek mules. Candy sellers, with their fly covered taffy looped over a long stick, shouting:

"Ah, *Mulai Idrees!* Ah, *Mulai Idrees!*"

Whining beggars with worn black begging bowls, wailing—

"*Alarbi, alarbi*—alms in the name of Allah the Compassionate."

A camel caravan passing—*slump-slump-slump*. The "*Urrh! Urrh!*" of donkey drivers urging their burdened beasts onward. The shrill of *ghaitas*,

like big clarinets, and the beat of drums as a religious procession passed. The tramp of feet as a company of yellow-breeches and red-jackets, sultan's soldiers, marched through.

"*Balaki! Balaki!* Make way for the master!" came from the lips of a consular guard preceding, with sword at side and iron tipped staff in hand, the horse ridden by the consul of a great power, young Teddy Lane himself.

"You're sure he wouldn't know you again?" asked McDonald.

Jordan Keane laughed.

"I've seen him, passed him, twice since then. No. It takes a long time for a Christian to begin to remember native faces. Some never do. Say we all look alike—like Chinese. Silly, but true. No risk there. I'll go as soon as the rest of the business is ready." He rose. "I'll be here at *moghreb* prayer," he said. "I mean sunset. That do?"

"Perfectly," agreed Mr. McDonald, and he watched the swinging robes take their departure.

Shortly afterward he paid the bill, walked out of the café and made his way to the beach where he found the office of the one newspaper in all Morocco. *Al-Moghreb-al-Acksa*, an English weekly, had been published for many years by an English gentleman with the white beard of a Moses and keen old eyes and a comprehensive knowledge of the deviltry going on both in Morocco and the European chancellories. His paper had been established solely to further the commercial interests of England in that country, and it had been successful. Consequently the editor was as happy and well-to-do as the gods intend any editor shall be. His name was Montgomery.

Mr. McDonald and Mr. Montgomery had a talk. Mr. McDonald offered a banknote, but Mr. Montgomery waved it aside.

"Good of the public," he said. "Charge it to charity. Six o'clock will do. I'm going to press at midafternoon. Drop in again any time. Let me know how things come out. 'By."

Shortly before five o'clock Mr. McDonald and Sidi Jordan Keane sat again in the Café Aleman, but this time at a quite secluded table. Between

them on the marble lay a copy of *Al-Moghreb-al-Acksa* damp from the press.

At six o'clock Sidi Jordan Keane was hobnobbing with a groom at the gateway of the house occupied by Mr. Higginsworth. He had exchanged his more respectable white *sulham* for the ordinary brown *djellab* of the common countryman; and a saddled mule, which had brought him up the hill, stood sleepily nearby.

A brown urchin in tattered shirt and pants, with a few newspapers under his arm, trotted up to the gate. The groom tried to stop him, held out a brown hand for the paper, but the boy laughed.

"No," he said, "maybe he gives me a peragorda as a tip."

He ran on, found Mr. Higginsworth smoking in a deckchair under a tree, gave him the paper, then waited. Mr. Higginsworth began to read, saw the boy still there and growled—

"Get out."

The boy walked away, stopped to make a gesture of which Mr. Higginsworth would not have known the meaning if he had seen it, then continued on his way.

Practical psychology had told Mr. McDonald and Mr. Montgomery and Sidi Jordan Keane that, as if at home, Mr. Higginsworth would look the paper over the moment it arrived. All American and English people did so. Strangers in a strange land, they missed their home papers and reached eagerly for *Al-Moghreb-al-Acksa*. Mr. Higginsworth would be watching for possible news concerning himself.

Mr. Higginsworth had read two columns—or glanced through them—when the groom interrupted him to tell him that a certain Achmed Abdeslem, a proficient and reliable muleteer, desired to speak with him.

"No!" snapped Mr. Higginsworth. "What does he want?"

"He, sar, goes to the far interior tonight with a caravan. He thinks that you, sar, would be glad to have him bring you carpets, fine carpets, from where he goes. Fine carpets and most cheap, sar, by damn!"

"No," said Mr. Higginsworth positively. "Get out."

"But, sar—"

"Get out!"

"Oh, well, the mule who has no pasture may as well remain where he is," said Sidi Jordan Keane, alias Achmed Abdeslem the muleteer, when the groom told him of the result of his mission. "Smoke?" They smoked Keane's cigarettes and discussed the oddities of Christian conduct in unclothed words.

Suddenly the voice of Mr. Higginsworth bellowed from inside the wall:

"You, Hassan, where the hell are you? Come here."

Hassan, the groom, rose from his crosslegged ease, laid a half smoked cigaret on a protuberance of the stone wall, cursed his master with a flowery phrase and went to see what was wanted. Achmed Abdeslem, the muleteer, smiled to himself and nodded. Then he listened.

"Where," demanded Mr. Higginsworth of Hassan, "is that muleteer you were talking about? Gone?"

"No, sar," replied Hassan. "He still sits without the gate. You want—" his face broke into a great smile; commissions were in sight—"you want that he should bring fine carpets from where he goes, eh?"

"To hell," said Mr. Higginsworth earnestly, "with your carpets! Send the man in to me. Does he talk English?"

"Oh, yes, sar, him talk English fine, all some like me, by damn!" Hassan assured him, and hastened to send Achmed Abdeslem to his lord; but not before he had had time to say a few sentences in Arabic intended to guarantee due receipt of the right and proper commissions on money his lord and master might spend for anything.



"HAVE you," demanded Mr. Higginsworth when Achmed Abdeslem stood meekly before him, "ever been far south? To Marrakesh, for example?"

"Oh, yes, Lord. I be all places, everywhere. Marrakesh, Agadir, Tiznit, Saffi," he chanted, eyes closing, "Mogador, Tlemcen, Dar-el—"

"Never mind giving me the atlas," growled Mr. Higginsworth. "I want to go to Marrakesh. I'm writing a—a book on Morocco, understand? How much will it cost me?"

Achmed Abdeslem took note that the newspaper was still unopened, was folded, front page out, at the middle. Also that Mr. Higginsworth's pale hands were shaking perceptibly.

"Marrakesh very far," he said. "Long ways, damn, yes."

"I know it," said Mr. Higginsworth grimly.

"You want come back, maybe?"

"Not soon," said Mr. Higginsworth, still more grimly. "You take me there. I'll come back when I get ready. How much?"

"Two hund'd pounds," said Achmed Abdeslem.

"A thousand dollars, eh?" reflected Mr. Higginsworth. "Cheap at . . . All right. How soon can you leave? Is your caravan ready?"

"Sure," Achmed Abdeslem affirmed. "Him all ready two days. Go buy carpets. When you want go?"

"In an hour," said Mr. Higginsworth firmly. "One hour."

"All right. Gimme money. Buy mule for you. Everything." He held out a brown and somewhat dirty paw. Mr. Higginsworth hesitated but a moment, reached into the inside pocket of the white duck coat he had adopted to replace the cutaway he had worn upon arrival and counted out twenty pounds in English banknotes.

"You get half of the rest when we start," he told Achmed. "The balance when we get to Marrakesh. American saddle, understand?"

"All right," agreed the muleteer. "I be here one hour. Sure, by damn!"

Achmed Abdeslem tucked the money into the sash beneath his *djellab*, all except one banknote, which he dropped wordlessly before Hassan as he passed, mounted his mule and trotted away. Mr. McDonald got word from him within the course of an hour, and at the end of it, when the night shadows already were thick, Mr. Higginsworth, wearing a *djellab* over riding clothes, got himself into an ancient American saddle astride a sturdy mule and moved off southward with Achmed Abdeslem beside him, and a procession of half a dozen mules, ridden and led by three dark faced fellows, straggling along behind.

Mr. Higginsworth was bent on putting lots of distance between himself and Tangier, himself and the American consulate, himself and the American consul. There was no consul in Marrakesh. In the little black bag which lay in the woven saddlebags spraddling the saddle in front of him, was also a copy of *Al-Moghreb-al-Aksa* containing the paragraph which had been as dynamite under Mr. Higginsworth's deckchair. The item still danced before his eyes. He mentally read it for the hundredth time as his mule jogged along the road through the Suanee, the road to Fez, the road to Marrakesh, far, far in the southland.

NEW EXTRADITION TREATY

Paris, June 25. Dispatches from Washington, D. C. report the negotiation of a treaty of extradition between the United States and Morocco, to become effective on July 1st of this year. Thus another sanctuary for defaulting bank presidents will become closed.

July first! It was now June twenty-ninth!

Mr. Higginsworth found Achmed Abdeslem an ideal guide and caravan master. The food was excellent, the wines were good, the mattresses were comfortable and clean. There was only one thing which took him a little time to get accustomed to. That was traveling at night. He saw the necessity after one day's journey beyond Ak-bel-Hamra, where they struck the real interior and the full sun of Africa. After that they moved at night only, sleeping through the day in whatever shade was available, sometimes beneath a tree and sometimes in their tents.

It was pleasant, after all, he found, to travel thus in the cool darkness with bright stars overhead. There wasn't anything to be seen anyhow, except scenery; and a little of that would go a long way with him. What he was interested in was distance. Although—having not the slightest idea of using the great stars as a compass—he couldn't have proved what direction they were traveling, he knew that they made good mileage in their night pushes, and figured that they were getting south toward Marrakesh at as good a pace as could possibly be expected.



IT WAS a week after leaving Tangier that, about midnight, lights showed in the distance across a black plain.

"What place," Mr. Higginsworth desired to know, "is that? Fez?" It was, he figured, about time they reached Fez, two hundred miles south of Tangier. No reason to avoid Fez. There was no American consul there.

Achmed Abdeslem grinned cheerfully, surreptitiously prodded his mule with a spur, thus causing cavortings and snortings which made an answer out of place at the moment, and then found business to attend to in the rear of the caravan.

Thus, quite cheerfully, Mr. Higginsworth and the caravan waded through the darkness of the plain and came to a walled city, and a big gateway in that wall where guards sat with rifles beside them. The gates were closed. Achmed Abdeslem motioned to Mr. Higginsworth to ride forward with him. They approached the guards and Achmed held a swift, and to Mr. Higginsworth unintelligible, conversation with them. Yawning, one of them at length deigned to rise, to accept a coin which Achmed Abdeslem offered him, and to throw open the gate. They rode through. Achmed Abdeslem gave his men some orders, and they rode away to find a *fondak* in which to spend the rest of the night.

"Now we go find place sleep," Achmed told Mr. Higginsworth. "No, this not Fez. Fez over that way." He gestured generously toward the west. "This way better road."

Achmed Abdeslem led him through the narrow streets of a dark, sleeping town, seeking for a certain building.

"Sure, me know where go. Me be here before. Ha! Here she is!"

He dismounted. Mr. Higginsworth, following his example, got the little black satchel out of the saddlebags.

It appeared to be one of the main streets. They had stopped before a green, iron studded door in a wall whose windows were shuttered. Achmed Abdeslem lifted an iron knocker and let it fall three times, then twice more. There was the sound of shuffling slippers and the door opened. Achmed said some-

thing in Arabic and got a reply.

"Come inside," he said to Mr. Higginsworth.

The latter obeyed and followed Achmed toward a doorway through which came light from a room beyond. Passing after Achmed into that room, he saw a man, a Christian, sitting up in bed, tousle haired but keen eyed and heavy jawed. A man he had seen in Tangier, he instantly recalled, with a sudden suspicion.

"Hello, Brother Higginsworth," said Mr. McDonald pleasantly. "Welcome to Tlemcen."

"Tlemcen!" stammered Mr. Higginsworth, and reached for a chair. "Tlemcen!"

"Algeria, let's say," offered Mr. McDonald. "Bound to hit it if you go east from Tangier far enough. You did. Better sit down."

Mr. Higginsworth sat down. He gazed at Mr. McDonald, and he gazed at Achmed Abdeslem. Then he announced bitterly—

"Stung!"

"Oh, absolutely," agreed Mr. McDonald cheerfully. "Right as rain. American extradition treaty with France runs here in Algeria. That means a boat, a long journey, a dark man on a bench, a new suit of clothes and a haircut."

"And—you?" Mr. Higginsworth looked viciously at Achmed Abdeslem. "You no damn good, eh? You damn trick feller, no? Take money, make trouble me."

Achmed Abdeslem took from beneath his *djellab* a small wad of banknotes and cast them upon the table before Mr. Higginsworth.

"Well, Brother Higginsworth," he said slowly, "you may be correct, but I doubt it. Allah hates a crook and so do I. You're one. A first class, twenty-two carat, hundred percenter. About six times as bad as a burglar; for a burglar takes a chance. That little

black bag of yours may help the people quite a bit—back in Riverdale. But I'm not so sure that I would have taken all this trouble if you hadn't whaled me with your riding crop. You did, you know." Mr. Higginsworth started. "Oh, yes; no memory for faces, eh?" concluded Achmed Abdeslem dryly.

Mr. Higginsworth's eyes had been growing bigger and bigger.

"Where," he asked, "did you learn English?"

"Hell," replied Jordan Keane, "I am English."

Mr. Higginsworth collapsed. This was a hell of a country.

"Oh, well," he muttered, "what's the difference? There's an extradition treaty with Morocco now, anyhow. It would only be a matter of time, I suppose. In Marrakesh, or anywhere else."

"Oh, you're mistaken," said Mr. McDonald. "I'm sure you are. No extradition from Morocco."

"I'm not mistaken. It was in the last newspaper. I got a copy an hour before I left. That," explained Mr. Higginsworth, "is why I left."

"Sure, I know," assented Mr. McDonald cheerfully. "Keane, here, was waiting for you to holler for a caravan. But there was a—hm—typographical error in that item about the treaty. Printers are so careless, I find."

"Error! What—" Mr. Higginsworth eyed him with sorrowful suspicion. "What the hell now?"

"Just in the name of the country with which the United States had arranged the treaty," explained Mr. McDonald. "The printer set it up as Morocco. It should have been Nicaragua. It was Nicaragua, you'll find, in all other newspapers."

There were heavy steps in the hallway; the door opened and two French gendarmes entered. Mr. McDonald nodded to them, pointing to Mr. Higginsworth.

"That," he said, "is it."

The Sugarland Cop

By CHARLES A. FREEMAN

ONE of the most important members, though one of the least paid, on the staff of American sugar centrals in the Philippines, is its *Jefe de Policia*. This individual is usually an American of long residence in the Islands, in the majority of cases a veteran soldier, and always able to handle the Tagalog and perhaps other widely spoken dialects.

His job is to keep the peace among different tribal factions on the vast estate which employs him; to prevent stealing of company property, be it merchandise or livestock, to cut down gambling to the minimum, to drive out vagabonds and parasites, and generally to enforce the law.

From dawn to darkness the American chief of special police is on horseback or attending to his multiple duties, and the work is often dangerous due to the fact that sugar central laborers are recruited from the most ignorant class of natives. Each *tao*, or peasant, is always provided with a bolo, and a slash of its heavy chopping blade is often his method of settling arguments.

There being no prohibition, and gin obtainable at practically all company stores for fifty cents a quart, rows are frequent on Saturday night and on Sunday. Then the *Jefe* and his native police must step in and act with both swiftness and good judgment.

Women, cards, gin and tribal jealousies are at the bottom of most plantation troubles. One or perhaps all appear on investigation.

The *Jefe de Policia* who shows the slightest sign of lacking nerve must soon relinquish his position, but few of these picked men have ever been known to have a yellow streak. Not long ago a maniac armed with a dagger terrorized the women and children in a sugarland village

in Mindoro. The men were in the field or his shift would have been short; but as it happened the American *Jefe* was passing and noticed the commotion.

Unarmed, he leaped from his horse and confronted the maniac.

"What are you going to do with that dirk, Juan?" he inquired calmly.

"Cut your heart out, white man!" stormed the frenzied Malay, raising his weapon.

The unruffled American spat a stream of tobacco juice in Juan's eyes, and then with a single punch broke the knifer's jaw.

But it is not all brawl and battle with the sugarland cop. He has his hours of ease when he rides through the waving cane to visit field watchmen, and often on moonlight nights he joins his huntsmen in driving out or killing wild pigs or deer.

The company provides him with a comfortable house, horses, saddlery, a groom and a firearm, and the job is one which appeals to an active man. The sugarland cop's authority comes from the Philippine constabulary, in which he is sworn as an unpaid special agent, and his brown policemen are sworn in by local justices of the peace. Once a year during the dead season before the harvest this keen eyed, sunburned American takes a few days' vacation in Manila, and whoops things up a bit after purchasing his supplies; but the city soon palls on him, and he applies to headquarters for return transportation.

Then, when once more he mounts his horse and rides off on his patrol, he is glad to be a sugarland cop and not a dweller in a district bounded by high walls and expensive cafés. At night a bottle of cold gin from the ice box, a few limes, a bit of sugar and week-old newspapers are his, and he would not trade places with a king.

Continuing

The BUNGLERS

By

HUGH PENDEXTER

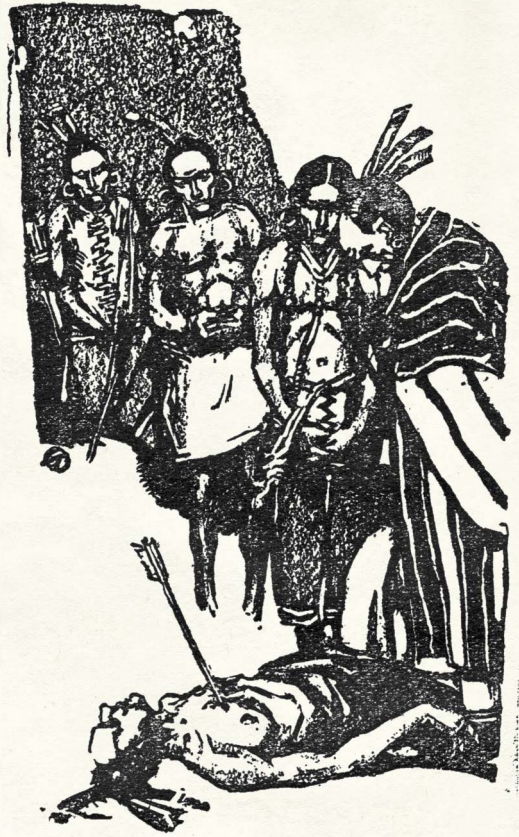
The Story Thus Far:

WHEN war was declared in 1812 between the United States and Great Britain, Ramblin' Peevy, a Tennessee frontier man, joined General Hull's army on the march to Detroit, where the Canadians were massing. With Peevy was Jim Cassy, the seventeen-year-old son of Jim Cald, who had quarreled with the boy's mother before his birth and quit the Southern hills for the wilderness of Canada.

In the ranks of the army Peevy met his old friend, Cald, and told him of the presence of his son. Cald was shocked to learn that his Annie was still awaiting his return. He tried to make friends with his son, but the boy coldly repulsed every advance. Peevy, grieved by the suffering of father and son, offered Cald a bit of wampum given him by Tecumseh, the great chief of all the British red allies, which insured the wearer safety from any Indian who saw it. When the boy refused to accept the gift, Cald was inconsolable.

A short time later a British spy came to the American camp and succeeded in murdering a young soldier on his departure. Cald, sick with fear lest his own son be struck down by the lurking assassin, joined Peevy on a scouting expedition to Hog Island, where they had the good fortune to discover the secret hideout of the spy-murderer. Peevy then waited for nightfall, when he slipped

WITH swinging arms to ward off the expected attack, Peevy came to his feet, and was amazed to find he had the single room to himself. Light from a nearby fire filtered through the square hole serving as a window, and there was nothing for one to hide behind unless he could crawl beneath the low bunk. Peevy doubted that Captain Ween could



into the British lines. There the lank Southerner made an important find. The assassin was known as Captain Ween, and he often disguised himself as a woman.

Meanwhile the American army had moved in behind the stockade at Detroit. Peevy rejoined Hull's command, then set out to find young Cassy. Vainly he was pleading with the stubborn youth to accept the friendship of his father when he suddenly abandoned the argument and fired pointblank into a nearby cabin window.

Then with the snarl of a wild animal he dropped his rifle, yanked knife and ax from his belt and sped toward the cabin, hurling himself against the door. The portal was not barred and gave instantly, permitting him to roll inside.

squeeze into such a small space.

Yet, surely he had seen the face at the window as the assassin was about to fire at him or the boy. Throwing himself flat on the floor, Peevy viciously thrust with his knife under the shallow, box-like bed. Meeting with no resistance, he explored more deliberately and discovered that the earth had been excavated for the depth of a foot under

the bunk. His long arm, now careless of knife thrusts, searched more thoroughly, until he had satisfied himself no one was hiding under the bunk. Therefore, no one was in the cabin except himself. Yet the shot was fired from the one window, and no person had left by that aperture, or through the doorway.

"Some devil's trick," he muttered as he stared around the room, deeply perplexed.

As he was drawing back from the bunk young Cald entered, swinging a blazing brand. Peevy snatched the torch from his hand and thrust it under the crude sleeping box. He muttered savagely under his breath at the simplicity of what had been an enigma. The foundation log was sawed through in two places, leaving a five-foot section which could be pushed in or out.

Telling the boy to keep against the wall and under the window, he crawled into the grave-like cavity and essayed to push the log aside. It gave readily. And further experiment permitted him to roll out under the starlight. He replaced the section and ran around to the door and amazed his young friend by entering.

"Dingbust, mister, I 'lowed you still was under that contraption!" exclaimed young Cald.

"Captain Ween snucked in from the outside an' went back that way, after takin' a shot at us. You keep low. I'm goin' huntin' outside. If anything stirs under that bunk, shoot."

Leaving the cabin, Peevy hurried from the stockade and, for the second time, alarmed his mates. Once more the word was spread that death was abroad. But search as the men would they could find no further signs of the killer. After the disgruntled soldiers had returned to their fires, Peevy took the elder Cald aside and briefly recounted what had happened.

"Oh, Lawd, who watched over Israel, send that younker back home safe an' stretch me dead up here this minute in his place if You allow that's necessary!" prayed Cald.

"That's powerful good prayin'," conceded Peevy. "But if I git to goin' you'll reckon you ain't heard nothin'.

I never ask any halfway blessin'. I never am afraid of askin' too much. If I do, I know the Almighty knows what to leave out without me tellin' Him. Cald, this business up here looks mighty bad. I'm thinkin' the time 'll come when we'll be glad to sneak in here. An' when that happens that cabin with the back door is the one we'll live in. Friends we can trust can come a-neighborin' with us by the dark of the moon. An' things may happen that makes that hole under the bunk the difference a-tween life an' death."

"That loose piece of log is known to the scut who last used it in tryin' to pot you," somberly reminded Cald.

"We'll plug it from the inside so we won't have any night visitors."

Cald had no thoughts beyond the welfare of his son.

"Where's the boy?"

"He was here till the huntin' for the killer began. He must 'a' hooked out when you'n' me come in."

"When I came in, Peevy. There be times when a man who's lived rough feels mighty small an' pindlin'. Just two things I'll ask of the Almighty—that the boy's mother will be happy; that the boy, some time, will feel different toward me."

"When you start prayin', don't be afraid to chuck in for some help for yourself. I never try to run the Lawd's business. I simply say, 'Give what you're a mind to.' Gittin' yourself killed, Jim, won't hurry along any answer to your prayers," Peevy warned.

He added, for good measure:

"Now look at me. When any of the Peevy tribe start prayin' an' askin' for help, there ain't no stoppin' us. We're like a Far West Injun visitin' a tradin' post for the first time. We want everything in sight. When I was young Jim's age I prayed for a two-legged hoss. Inside of twenty-four hours pap's old roan tripped an' busted a leg. I come within a leg of gittin' my prayer. When you knuckle down to pray, go the whole hawg. The Almighty don't have to be savin', like old Miss Fled. She used to try an' help the Almighty out by offerin' to do half. I'm too meechin' to do that; or too lazy. Just make yourself believe that some time the younker 'll

come to you an' call you pap, an' be glad to do it."

Cald's mouth opened; his lips worked oddly, but he could not speak. He walked away with stumbling steps to find Bills's kettle.

The morning found General Hull where he had been since retiring with the army to Detroit—shut up in his room. It was the unanimous belief of the officers and the men of the volunteer regiments that this inactivity could produce but one result: surrender to the enemy. There was scarcely a man in the army who was not convinced of Hull's complete incapacity for handling the very desperate situation. The failure to capture Malden, when the works there could be had for the taking, was a monumental error.

Tecumseh and his braves blocked any retreat to the Raisin. The guns across the Detroit River commanded the town and the fort. In Pontiac's day the stockade had been sufficient to keep out the savages, but against England's guns it was no more of a protection than a tent.

Those who endeavored to secure an audience with the general were denied the presence. He would see none but his son. After a hurried consultation the officers decided to offer the command to Colonel Miller. He refused to accept, but was willing to give the command to Colonel McArthur. The situation has but few parallels in modern history. The commanding officer kept in seclusion and refused to meet his staff, or to take any action on his own initiative.

McArthur was senior officer of the volunteers, but there was no precedent for removing the commanding officer. The only alternative for such a radical action was the coming of some relief column, strong enough to smash through Tecumseh's red horde and raise what was rapidly developing into a siege.

Somehow the rumor spread that Governor Meigs was on his way with Ohio troops. This was optimism born of forlorn hope. Rank and file were willing to bestow the dubious honor of supplanting the commander-in-chief upon him. Colonel Cass wrote a letter to Governor Meigs, requesting him to lose no time in coming with men and sup-

plies. He closed with the statement that the army was "in a plight from causes not fit to be put on paper". He urged that the relief force should, at the least, number two thousand men. While all the futile fretting and worrying was distracting the army, the enemy had made no hostile gestures. Now a radical change in the entire situation took place. What was feared as about to happen began to develop.



MEN along the river bank came running to the fort to announce that the enemy army was collecting at Sandwich. That day a spy returned from the east side of the river and reported that General Brock had joined Proctor at Malden, after covering nearly two hundred miles in five days, in canoes, boats and batteaux through rough water. Such initiative wins wars. Soldiers camping down the river heard the *feu de joie*, fired by Tecumseh and his braves on Bois Blanc Island, opposite Amherstburg, in a welcome to Brock.

The next morning Brock held an Indian council, a thousand red men being present. Brock promised the Indians not only that he would drive the Americans from Detroit, but also from the hunting grounds north of the Ohio. But even this energetic leader did not dare to promise the capture of the American army. He also issued a proclamation, forgiving the temporary desertion of Canadians to the American cause. This offer of amnesty was gladly accepted.

The first definite information of Brock's position was learned when he arrived at Sandwich. He promptly placed a battery to cover Detroit, both fort and settlement. The American gunners pleaded for permission to open fire on Sandwich with their twenty-four pounders. Hull refused to permit this offensive; and the army dumbly waited while the British batteries were established. Captain Snelling pleaded for permission to cross in the night and capture the enemy's works. Again Hull refused.

Now the army was convinced that the commander-in-chief for several days had planned to surrender Detroit, rather than to risk battle, or siege. Hull con-

tended that Detroit and its fort would be of no value to the army as long as Tecumseh could break all communication with the Ohio. The only hope left for Peevy and his companions-in-arms was that General Dearborn would make a diversion on the Niagara, or at Kingston. He had been ordered to do this by the War Department. But Dearborn had captured a messenger with a letter from Proctor to the commandant at Mackinac, threatening to loose five thousand Indians on Dearborn. The latter was along in years and his kindness made him fearful; nor could he know it was planned that the letter should fall into his hands and keep him quiescent.

On the morning of August 15th Hull emerged from his retirement and pitched his tent in the middle of the camp near the stockade. For two days the enemy had openly labored in throwing up earthworks across the river, and in installing a battery of two eighteen-pounders and an eight-inch howitzer. These guns commanded the town and fort; and the militia and regulars groaned at the shame of being overawed by this inferior metal while the fort boasted of twenty-eight pieces of heavy ordnance.

About midday Brock sent a flag to Hull, demanding unconditional surrender. Hull's fear of what might happen to the aged men, the helpless women and children, now filling the fort, prompted him to keep the flag waiting for two hours while he endeavored to make a decision. Oddly enough, it was during this two-hour delay that he displayed his only defiance. He notified Brock that he was ready "to meet any force which may be at your disposal and any consequences which may result from its execution".

This unexpected stiffening of the official spine caused great joy throughout the camp. But Hull refused to permit a twenty-pounder to be used to drive the *Charlotte Queen* from her advantageous position, and further denied the pleading of his men that a hundred and fifty be sent across to spike the enemy's guns. To all this he replied—

"I will think of it."

"Good land, Gutherie, what's this all comin' to?" groaned Peevy. "Surely he will put up some sort of a fuss! Our guns can blow their guns sky high. What's he thinkin' about?"

"Devil may know, but he won't tell, short of a dollar," growled Gutherie.

The elder Cald yelled from sheer excitement when the enemy's battery opened fire at four o'clock in the afternoon.

"They started it! Now, we'll finish it!" he cried.

But the twenty-pounders remained silent and docile. Young Cald rushed up to Peevy and demanded—

"Don't we try to do nothin'?"

"Just about that much, son," wearily answered Peevy. "I think I'll go into one of these houses an' bake a nice cake for General Brock. Then we'll all put on petticoats and sing 'Daisies in the Dell'."

Cheers rose from the American side of the river as the guns began barking back. Until midnight the opposing batteries warred on each other, and the spirit of the army was high. Two of the enemy's guns were out of commission. The artilleryists eagerly sought permission to move a strong battery closer to the river, so they might destroy the enemy as fast as they attempted to make the crossing.

Hull appeared to be dazed and would give no orders. The enemy crossed the river on the morning of August 16th, the Sabbath. The landing was made without any opposition being offered. Tecumseh, with six hundred Indians, crossed during the night and soon was in the woods and in a position to attack the Americans' rear and flank. These invaders numbered seven hundred and seventy-five, and they brought but five pieces of light artillery. The army hung its head in shame. The enemy halted and ate breakfast and were not disturbed. Such sustained poise smacked so strongly of assurance as to impress the silent Hull with the conviction he had met the inevitable. His army did not share in this belief. The men were keen for fighting.

The 4th Regiment was penned up inside the worthless fort. The Ohio and Michigan militia were behind the town

stockade, ready and eager to punish the enemy's left flank. In the upper part of the town was the rest of the militia, confident of being able to hold back the Indians. Peevy, the two Calds and Guthrie were among these. To clinch the Americans' successful resistance were two twenty-two pounders, ready to mow down any advancing column. While the Americans were outnumbered by the combined white and red forces, they enjoyed the advantage of a much superior position. Four hundred rounds of twenty-four pound shots were ready for the cannon, and a hundred thousand cartridges were in readiness. There were other arms and loose ammunition in abundance, and provisions for more than two weeks. The day seemed destined to end in an American victory.

So jubilant was young Cald over the prospect of immediate defeat of the enemy, he forgot himself and, in his wild enthusiasm, while meeting his father's gaze, exclaimed—

"We have 'em just where we want 'em!"

Cald, senior, drew a deep breath, his melancholy face becoming transfigured. But in the next instant the boy remembered his grievance. His gaze became impersonal and he abruptly turned away. His father ran to a more exposed position and fired at the head of the British column, now less than five hundred yards from the American line.

The firing became general. Peevy sought in vain to send his voice through the din in a profane command to Cald to fall back to cover. A young subaltern ran up, his eyes streaming tears, and shrilly announced—

"General Hull's orders that you men retire to the fort at once!"

The Americans stared at each other in amazement. A captain of militia, his official speech interlarded with rare oaths, repeated the command. To enter the stockaded fort, now a trap, spelled the end of all resistance. Many hesitated. The order was repeated, and slowly the retreat began. Some of the younger men were openly mutinous. These, aided by young Cald, endeavored to fire a twenty-pounder at the advancing British column. They were forcibly prevented by Lieutenant Anderson, act-

ing under Hull's orders.

There was nothing for the angry and dismayed men to do but enter the fort. This enclosure already was much crowded with women and children. The battery on the Canadian side kept up its fire. A ball passed over the wall and killed several of a group in front of the officers' quarters. These quarters were filled with women and children, including Hull's daughter and her children. Hull, neither fighting nor surrendering, paced back and forth along the parade. The cannonade continued and others were slain. A Michigan militia officer ran up to the commander and demanded to know if the town battery alone was to defend the fort. He concluded by crying—

"The redcoats an' Injuns are at the tanyard already, sir!"

Without a word Hull entered the barracks and wrote an order. He gave the paper to his son and ordered him to display a white tablecloth. The firing ceased when this signal was displayed. It was a moment of utter stupefaction for both sides.

Ramblin' Peevy, haggard of visage, plaintively complained to Abe Guthrie and Jim Cald—

"Why'n hell didn't we three bolt, when we could, an' carry on the war alone?"

CHAPTER VIII

INSIDE THE STOCKADE

HULL'S proposal for an immediate capitulation at once resulted in the arrival of two officers, authorized by General Brock to fix the terms of surrender. Helplessly the chagrined and dismayed soldiers looked on. The American general had taken this drastic initiative without consulting any member of his staff.

None in the garrison, aside from young Hull, had anticipated such a shameful disaster. Men were weeping from rage and mortification. After the articles of capitulation had been drawn up and signed, Hull issued a general order announcing his action.

Brock secured all that he had demanded. In fact, it was at the request

of Hull that the commands of Captain Brush and Colonel McArthur, both absent from Detroit, were included in the surrender. The Ohio militia, which had not joined the army, was paroled on the condition that the men return to their homes and not serve during the war. A messenger was sent after McArthur, who had started for the Raisin, to inform that doughty officer that he and his command were included among the prisoners of war. McArthur thrust his sword in the ground and snapped the blade. He ripped the epaulets from his shoulders and threw them on the forest floor.

Captain Brush, however, was not amenable. When a British captain found his command on the Raisin and, under a flag, submitted a copy of the terms of surrender, Brush placed him under arrest and restraint, and marched for the Ohio with all his force, cattle and public property.

While the dire news was traveling south to cause political explosions, and excite mobs to hang and burn Hull in effigy, the prisoners of war were milling hopelessly about inside the stockade. The women and children took refuge in the cabins and wondered what would be their fate now that the place was open to the Indians. General Brock and his staff, in full uniform, rode up and received a salute from the guns on the esplanade in front of the fort.

Tecumseh came up, followed by some of his warriors. Brock was quick to cater to red favor by removing his own rich sash of crimson silk and placing it around the waist of the chief. Tecumseh gave evidence of his great genius for leadership by immediately bestowing the sash on Round Head, a famous Wyandot warrior. In a loud voice he explained that he could not wear such trappings of distinction when "an older and abler warrior" than himself was present.

After the officers had retired Peevy gathered the Calds, Bills and Gutherie around him at the back of the stockade, where he said whimsically—

"But won't I catch it when the little woman hears about this!"

"We must bust loose an' make off to-night," said Gutherie.

"The sooner we start the sooner we'll be out of this hell hole," added Cald, with a glance at his son.

Peevy shook his head.

"How many of you turned your rifles in?"

None had. Peevy nodded approvingly and whispered:

"I snuck two good ones from the heap to lay alonside of mine in the bottom of my bunk. We'll have guns. Gutherie, you pick up some powder an' hide it."

"What did you mean when you shook your head?" anxiously demanded Cald.

"We can't poke off in a hurry. Wait till the Injuns git tired of huntin' for the poor devils scattered through the woods atween here an' the Raisin."

"We can stand off a goodly parcel of reds," warmly insisted young Cald.

"Mebbe, mebbe not. Tecumseh's men be rare trailers an' fighters. But there's somethin' else to think about. We can't pull out till we know the women an' children here will be treated well."

"The Britishers would see that they ain't hurt," moodily said Cald, who was worrying himself sick in fear lest something should happen to his son.

"Brock's soldiers won't cross any Injuns, for fear they'll quit," said Peevy. "I don't reckon on the reds killin' any of the prisoners. Leastways, so long as they keep inside the stockade. But a woman can worry herself to death. It would look sort of meechin' for us to duck out an' leave 'em. After we're sure everything will be all right with the helpless ones, you folks can steal away some dark night. I may stay on here for a bit, as I'm keen to finish á little business I started on, but had to quit."

"Business?" repeated the elder Cald. "As if gittin' free wa'n't the biggest business a body could have."

"I ain't forgettin' Captain Ween," murmured Peevy. "I always like to finish what I start. But this may look bad, our stayin' together an' at one side overlong. Scatter an' meet in front Jim's an' my cabin."

They dispersed, and Peevy noticed that young Cald, walking behind his father, soon shifted his course and followed Gutherie. It was pathetic to see Cald slowly turn to ascertain if the boy

was still behind him, and then observe the sudden drooping of the shoulders when the heavy-hearted man discovered he was alone.

His attention was violently diverted by a woman's shriek, and he beheld several painted savages vigorously assailing a cabin door with their axes. Several men ran forward to question, or protest, but rapidly gave ground before a swinging tomahawk, or the glittering slash of a scalping knife.



PEEVY was determined in his inquiry and caught two warriors by the shoulders.

With outflung hands he hurled them to one side. Instantly they came back like tree cats, their weapons eager to deal death. Their companions were scarcely less slow in resenting the intrusion. All displayed a like truculence as they turned their backs on the barred door and crouched low, preliminary to chopping the tall man down.

Peevy realized that physical resistance was useless. He folded his arms and returned the baleful stares with simulated serenity of gaze. Behind him he heard a shrill laugh, but did not turn his head. One savage, squat of figure, with bandy legs and unusual breadth of shoulders, came close. His squat body swayed from side to side with each step. Another savage was breathing heavily at Peevy's back. Suddenly the bandy legged man shot forward a long arm and exclaimed in a stentorian voice. Peevy first thought this man was grabbing at his throat. Each instant he expected the bite of an ax through his skull, yet nothing happened. He was conscious of the shrill laughter suddenly ceasing.

"Do the sons of the great Tecumseh make war on frightened women?" Peevy demanded, his head held high.

"There is something," slowly replied the bandy legged man, and he placed his hand on Peevy's chest palm up so that the silver ornament might rest across his fingers.

"A gift from a man of the Great Mad Panther circle," slowly explained Peevy. For the first time since distracting the savage's attention he felt safe in relaxing and taking a deep breath. "Why

do Tecumseh's children frighten women and their babes after whipping many white men?"

Those at Peevy's back, breathing heavily on the bronzed neck, edged around to observe what had engaged the earnest attention of their companion. To them the bowlegged man said:

"He wears the mark of Tecumseh. Our war arrows are broken. Our axes are dull and too heavy to lift."

The savages slowly gave ground; nor did they attempt to renew their attack on the barred door. Then entered a new actor on the scene, none less than Tecumseh himself.

He loudly addressed the Indians. More red men hurried to the scene so as not to miss the chief's words. Of Peevy, Tecumseh asked—

"Why does my white brother walk with one foot underground?"

Interpreting this to mean "in the grave," Peevy lost no time in explaining the reason for his presence. Tecumseh's eyes were gloomy as he told his followers—

"You would make a chief walk with head held low because his warriors frighten women?"

One of the men explained that the door was barred. Tecumseh frowned as he stared at the portal. He told Peevy:

"Even a chief can not stand between any one in Detroit and danger, who bars the door of the wooden teepee. Tell the crazy women to remove the bar. Tell all the cabins not to bar their doors if they would live."

Peevy then understood the situation. He rapped smartly on the door and called to those within:

"Pull the bar back. Throw it into the fire, anywhere. You will not be harmed if you leave your door unlocked. The Indians may come in any time, but take no notice of 'em. They will not harm you. But if they find a door barred they will chop it down. Act as if you did not see them when they pay you a visit."

There was the sound of the heavy bar falling to the earthen floor, and the door slowly swung open. The Indians filed in and examined the interior with the curiosity of children. Peevy wiped the sweat from his brow and told the

frightened women:

"You folks stop yowlin'. Do as I say. Never fasten this door. Let the little boy an' girl play in front of the cabin. They need lots of fresh air. The Injuns won't hurt them."

With this piece of trouble smoothed out he now took time to locate the source of the shrill, sardonic laughter. A man was standing nearby. His beaver hat was pulled low. The face was pale and thin. A long black cloak enveloped his figure and was drawn about him after the Spanish fashion, revealing the outlines of a figure which was slim even to the point of emaciation, except for a certain rotundity at the waist. Peevy quickly deflected his gaze to take note of the man's feet; and his eyes showed yellow lights as he beheld the long, narrow footgear.

"The bloody Merry Andrew!" he exclaimed.

"Captain Ween, of his Majesty's Canadian troops," was the low reply. "Keep your hand from that ax, else no geegaw given by Tecumseh can save you."

"I'll blow your candle out, you cowardly, bloody murderer!"

Ween's eyes dilated. He lifted a hand and a grotesquely painted savage came forward. The Indian's eyes grew lurid as he stared at the Tennessee man. He commenced stalking him, and swung his head back and forth like a pendulum. As in pantomime of a wild creature stealing upon its prey, he advanced toward Peevy. The latter quietly said—

"The beast will be dead if he comes within reach of my ax."

His tone was so convincing that Captain Ween was impelled to whistle softly, at which signal the grotesque creature slunk back, like a dog called to heel. Then the killer explained:

"I almost had you near this very cabin the night you spoiled my aim by getting in the first shot. Perhaps you don't know that Hull and the army of prisoners are to be taken to Montreal."

"Take Hull to Turkey, for all of me."

"You'll go along, also."

"No. I'm militia. Not a regular."

"At least you will start for Montreal. Between here and Montreal you may die of some queer malady."

"Bet you the best johnnycake I ever baked in hot ashes that you're a liar."

The killer replied angrily:

"You'll pay for that word. Pay for all the bother you've caused me. You'd hunt me down in Detroit, eh? Well, we stand face to face in Detroit. Some time on the journey to the St. Lawrence my ugly friend here will come to you when you are alone."

Peevy surveyed the savage with new interest and mused:

"Some Canadian tribe. Soil's poor where he come from. Grew out sideways, 'stead of up."

Then he swiftly advanced until within two feet of the lowering savage and touched the gift of Tecumseh. The man recoiled a few steps. It was obvious that he recognized the talisman. Peevy again advanced and drew back his arm and, with all his great strength behind the blow, he caught the gargoyle of a figure on the chin with his hard fist and knocked him down so violently as to cause him to turn a somersault when he hit the hard ground.

The killer spoke sharply to the savage, then told Peevy:

"For that blow he shall have you to do with as he pleases. I have promised him that."

"Mebbe," said Peevy; and he walked rapidly away to escape the presence of the creature before he was tempted to kill him, and thereby seal his own fate.

The importance of escaping from the stockade before any captives started for Montreal now became of paramount importance in Peevy's mind. Now that the mischief was done, he greatly regretted the blow he had given the uncouth creature. He knew that only blood could wash out the fisticuff.



AS HE elbowed his way through the milling mass of angry, anxious prisoners he realized that his position was more dangerous than, perhaps, that of any other man inside the stockade. On reaching his cabin he entered and left the door half open.

Now that he was alone and had time to think he decided it would be miraculous did he manage to survive captivity,

and to escape to the States, unless he acted alone. Not for a moment was he tempted to separate from his friends. There were the Calds, Gutherie, sour natured Bills, half blinded by many kettle smokes, and many others. He loved them all. As he pondered and considered various desperate schemes he beheld Cald coming toward him, walking as one having a definite purpose. His strong features wore a curious expression, and Peevy could not determine whether the man was sorrowing or secretly elated.

"I opine the boy's safe from the red devils," were his first words.

Peevy's eyes widened, and he asked:

"The young imp ain't gone an' bolted, has he? Don't tell me he's done that!"

"No, no."

"You almost skeered the life out of me," sighed Peevy. "I was afraid he'd dusted out—an' that would be death for him."

"He's safer just now than any American here," said Cald.

"In what way? How?"

"He's been put to work on the mails from the St. Lawrence an' Mackinac. Officer see him writin' to his mother, an' liked his clear hand of write, an' set him to work. He feeds well an' sleeps safe. Glory to God for that much!"

"Amen!" said Peevy. "Mails from the St. Lawrence an' Mackinac?" he repeated. "He's good at handlin' a goose quill?"

"Can do it with flourishes. His mother's teachin'. She's a master hand at writin'. Can spell, too."

"Where will he sleep?"

"In your cabin, of course. So you'll sleep as safe as him."

"I'll talk with him tonight. Some sort of a bee buzzin' in my thick head."

Cald suggested a friend and would have hurried away to spread further the good news, when Peevy, on second thought, halted him by saying:

"Forgot to ask this one question. Is the man who put the boy to work any of the high officers?"

"No headquarters man. A Captain Ween."

Peevy came near to betraying his violent mental disturbance. But his voice

was indifferent as he said:

"It's fine he can take it easy doin' genteel work. I like to know what kind of bushes surround me, an' what's on t'other side of the growth."

"That last sounds as crazy as old Hoot Hob acts."

"Dawggone! Old Hoot—haven't thought of him since the last time. So he's been down on Little Briar Crick? Lived a year within borrowin' distance of us. When he moved away he had more of our property than we did. We used to think he was plumb foolish. We'd show him off afore strangers. Stick out a handful of hard money an' tell him to help himself, an' he always would pick a penny, never any silver."

"I've seen him do that. Crazy's a loon. Folks would come a mile to see him act up that simple."

"He sure was plumb crazy," mused Peevy. "But one day, when we was alone, I asked him why he did it. He said if he tried to take silver they wouldn't let him; that it was a penny or nothin'. He got a lot of pennies. But, of course, he's crazy."

Cald stared at his friend for a few seconds, and then slowly bowed his head.

"You win that rasselin' match. I opine Hoot was wiser than we reckoned. Now, you old buzzard, what game you thinkin' up?"

"I'm thinkin' of throwin' my man by usin' his own strength agin himself."

Until dusk Peevy remained near the west end of the big enclosure, watching the savages come and go in small bands. These entered cabins and appropriated food, or aught else which took their fancy. The prisoners had been warned to offer no resistance, and as yet none had suffered any physical hurt from any of the red visitors. Nor had this period of brooding passed slowly for the Tennessee man. His fertile mind was putting together and taking apart a certain scheme. Much of the time he was entirely oblivious of the Indians who paused to look at him as he stood staring vaguely into the north.

When he reached his cabin he did not enter, but seated himself by the door and called out for some one to hand him a portion of the evening ration.

He was finishing his meal when young Cald came along and dropped beside him. Peevy lazily remarked:

"So you've been put to work, son? That's fine. An' you're sleepin' here? That's fine, too."

Young Cald frowned heavily.

"I don't know just how fine it is. I'm wonderin' if I'm doin' right in helpin' the enemy. I won't do that. I may tell 'em so tomorrer."

"No you won't. You'll work an' love it, till I tell you it's time to stop. Have you seen any letters from Captain Roberts, in command at Mackinac? Or from Porthier, the agent of the North-west Fur Company?"

"Two from Porthier come in. Captain Ween was expectin' one from Roberts. Sort of disappointed when he didn't find one today."

"If you looked mighty keen at their writin', do you think you could make your handwrite look like either, or both?"

The boy nodded confidently and explained:

"I have to make two copies of each letter. One remains in Captain Ween's department, one goes to headquarters an' is passed on to Montreal."

"How does Ween treat you?"

"Fine. Tells me to take it easy. Plenty to eat. I'd feel guilty, if I wasn't a prisoner, when the batman comes in an' set out our supper. I have the same food the captain has, but I eat four times as much. Everything's been mighty pleasant, an' yet—"

"Go on!"

"Well, it's the squatty shaped Injun. Looks like a monster frog. Gits on my nerves by standin' behind me. I feel he'd love to kill me, if Ween would let him."

"He's a Winnebago beast. Now, here's a scrap of writin'. You read it till you've got it planted in your mind. When you git a writin' from Cap'n Roberts, actin' commandant at Mackinac, you stuff it in your pocket an' put a copy of my writin', writ to look like the 'riginal, in its place. Then make your two copies in your nat'ral hand just as if it was the one fetched down from Mackinac. You can do that?"

"Yes. You wouldn't ask it if it wasn't

somethin' I oughter do. What next?"

"Nothin'. Just wait. By 'n' by I'll give you a paper to copy an' put in place of a letter from Porthier . . . That Winnebago Injun—how's he seem to be feelin'?"

"Ugly. Must have a bad tooth. Jaw's swollen. He's been makin' a new medicine. Captain Ween laughed at first; then he got mighty interested."

"So? What sort of a medicine," murmured Peevy, his eyes narrowing as he sensed a great danger.

"Must be a frog medicine. Ween gave a hand in makin' a green coverin' for him to slip on. Covers head an' body, an' has arms an' legs. I held the cloth while Ween did some sewin' on it. The Injun will look most mightily like a big green frog when he puts it on an' goes a-hoppin'."

"It's bound to make the staff officers laugh," said Peevy. "Don't forgit about keepin' an eye out for that Roberts letter. An' if you l'arn when the big medicine frog is goin' to do hoppin', just pass me the word."

None of the Indians now was inside the stockade, a bullock barbecue on the bank of the river having called all the red men to the feasting. Women and children were taking advantage of the savages' absence and were walking in the twilight and exchanging talk as to what they had feared and suffered. Peevy sought out Bills at his cooking kettle and inquired—

"Lost your knack of makin' bows an' arrers?"

"What ye l'arn when ye're young ye never lose."

"To be sartainly sure," agreed Peevy.

Then he talked briefly for two minutes. When he had finished Bills smiled grimly and slowly nodded his head.

"As ye say, it'll take about three seconds. An' no evidence must be found. I'll have a hot cookin' fire. Oughter be one of the best jokes of this whole campaign."

"One of them which is next to the best," gravely corrected Peevy. "General Hull's the prize joke of this war so far. A long distance after him comes our joke in second place. Well, have to take chances at times if we'd git anywhere. It's either that, or act like a

lost man follerin' his own tracks in a circle. Old Hoot, down home, done that when he was huntin' with me one Winter in the Illinois country. We got separated. He come to a man's trail an' reckoned it must be mine. By 'n' by he come to another trail cuttin' in, an' it made two men ahead of him. When I found him at sundown he was chasin' the tracks of forty men, an' every changed one made by hisself in travelin' in a circle."

CHAPTER IX

THE FROG MEDICINE

THE Indians were a daily nuisance, and always a threat, in their visits to the cabins. Day and night the prisoners left their doors unbarred. At any time, one or a dozen warriors were apt to stalk in. Especially were they an annoyance at mealtime, when they would enter and take food from the table and devour it. To refuse them, or bodily oppose them, meant the ax or knife; nor did the Canadians dare take any decisive step in offering protection. And always were they demanding whisky.

Peevy was so incensed at this form of oppression that he hunted up Colonel McArthur and requested him to appeal to General Brock to abate this abuse. McArthur, white hot with anger over the entire miserable situation, was quick to accept the mission. He secured an audience with Brock and heatedly described what the prisoners were suffering.

Brock, idolized by Canada, was cold at first in his reception of McArthur's representation.

"You should realize, sir," he said, "that our Indians may be as sensitive as white men. You should realize that General Hull's proclamation, declaring that no quarter would be given to a white man found fighting beside an Indian, has caused great indignation and anger among all the tribes. I find no law, natural or man-made, which prevents the red men in Canada from fighting to defend their property against an invader—such as General Hull essayed to be. If our red allies appear to be

relentless, it's because they believe they have been grossly insulted."

"I wear no sword, sir. I broke it when I learned of this shameful capitulation," coldly replied McArthur. "It's not necessary for me to tell you how the army and all America feel about this sorry business. I am striving to help the women and children of Detroit, who have flocked to the stockade to escape from being starved by the Indians. A man of your sense of justice and humanity can be in sympathy with my request, I am confident."

Brock was quick to recede from his sentiment of resentment, and shortly thereafter the cabin dwellers noticed there was less intrusion at mealtime and that the appropriation of food by red hands practically ceased.

With this trouble smoothed out, or reduced to a minimum, Peevy wandered more widely about the stockade, his shrewd eyes seeking certain vantage points in the promotion of his new plan. A partly dismantled hut on the north side, half filled with débris, impressed itself upon his memory. He had a talk with Gutherie regarding it. The latter grinned cheerfully and said:

"Easiest thing in the world. Just a thin train of powder, an' the right sort of fire fixin's inside the hut, an' the trick's done. I'll 'tend to it, most careful-like. You can count on it bein' done at the right time."

Young Cald continued his labors under Captain Ween's direction and won much praise for the clerkly manner in which he handled the mails. Now that all Canada was learning how its domain had been greatly enlarged by the addition of the entire Territory of Michigan, the mail grew heavier. The Northwest Fur Company, always a powerful factor in promoting Canada's strength, was in position to ask much, and to have it granted.

Young Cald told Peevy one evening: "Letter in from Captain Roberts. Regular army stuff. He writes that a more 'portant letter will follow shortly."

"You've got copies ready of what I writ out?"

"Inside my shirt."

"Then you swap 'em for Roberts's next letter and for Porthier's next let-

ter, if you can do so without being caught."

"If Captain Ween is there when the mail is opened, I mayn't be able to do it without takin' an awful risk."

"Then don't. We can wait if we have to; but the game won't work if we can't set it to workin' mighty soon. There's no more use of havin' it fizzle than there was for Rashe Titcomb, down home, to grow three sets of teeth. Two sets on his upper jaw. Set highest up couldn't grow down an' had to grow out at a right angle. Sprangled Rashe's upper lip out most terrible. See him comin' through sleet, hail an' snow with that upper set outdoors. Tough enough luck not to have any upper teeth, but when you have a set too many, an' can't take any of 'em in out of a blizzard, it's hell."

Rather puzzled as to the true relevancy of this bit of philosophy, the lad nodded his head and repeated—


"I'll make the shift the first chance I get."

Peevy nodded and in a new voice, both soft and gentle, said:

"An' what about your old man? Ain't there any father 'n' son doin's yet? Even my wife changes her mind sometimes."

The lad grimaced as if in pain. In a husky voice he replied—

"When my mother forgives, then I'll forgive."

 NOW the report spread through the army and stockade that the prisoners would soon start for Montreal. Almost at the same time it became commonly known that Captain Ween proposed to entertain the staff and prisoners through the medium of his Winnebago follower, who would seek to recover his lost medicine, or prowess, by a new medicine dance. This ceremony, most important from the red viewpoint, was pronounced by Ween to be of the utmost consequence to all that pertained to the Canadian army. It would take place, he further announced, shortly before sunset of the following day, if the weather be clear.

Even the prisoners in the stockade welcomed this announcement. It prom-

ised to vary the awful monotony of a very restricted, and at times dangerous, mode of existence. Even the women put aside their fears and looked ahead to what would be a new, even if grotesque, spectacle. Peevy, in his cabin, worked with a lookout at the door. With keen knife and straight grained cedar he whittled skilfully, often pausing to brush the shavings into the deep recess under his bunk. These in turn were fed into the fireplace, a few at a time. He took almost microscopic care to leave none on the beaten earth floor. In all, three long arrows were finished and concealed. On the appointed day for the Winnebago to test his medicine Peevy wandered lazily to Gutherie's cabin.

"All's fine," was the answer to the unvoiced query.

"An' the bow, of course?"

"A fine one—of ash. Like your arrers, a veteran would swear a Shawnee made it."

"Leave it back of your cabin, behind the log."

"It'll be there when I quit the cabin an' cross to t' other side of the parade," Gutherie promised. "You told the boys to keep away from my cabin?"

"They be all primed to be well away from your shack, ready to sing 'Sinclair's Defeat,'" said Peevy.

"But what if you can't git to your cabin in time?"

"Then the little woman down in Tennessee won't have to do no more waitin' for her man to come home to a supper that's been cold for some months."

That morning young Cald lounged among the cabins until he came to Peevy sitting outside his door. The mournful gaze of the elder Cald lighted momentarily in the hungry hope that his son had come to see him. The boy, however, gave a signal to Peevy and walked along. Peevy waited till the boy was turning to come back and then walked aimlessly toward him. His first glimpse of the lad's face caused him to frown. In an undertone he demanded—

"What you upset about now?"

"I've made the shift. Runner come with a letter from Porthier while Ween was out. It was then or never."

"How'd the killer act up when he see

the bogus one?"

"Acted nat'ral. Yet he didn't."

"What you mean, did an' didn't?"

"He found the letter in the mail I'd put there. I'd made one copy, an' from that was makin' another."

"Well? That's what he expects you to do. What did he do, or say?"

"Nothin'. Just whistled. Never knew him to whistle when handlin' the mail. He read the letter an' put it aside. Then told me to file one of the copies an' take t'other to headquarters."

"Then everything is reg'lar as four legs on a hoss."

"By everything he did, said an' looked, I'd say yes. An' yet—it's like this: When I got back to my table an' sat down to my work, I caught a glimpse of his face in one of the trade lookin' glasses."

"What did his homely face have to tell?"

The boy shivered as if cold, and whispered:

"He looked like picters of the devil I've seen in church books. He was starin' my way."

Peevy showed the whites of his eyes. The thought that he had placed his young friend in trouble—deadly trouble—ca sed him to regret his scheme. Half aloud he said—

"If he ain't spoke out in meetin' yet, then he may wait till after the medicine dance is over."

"Waitin' that bit extry won't help me none."

"Yunker, I'll step atween you an' any trouble. Mebbe after the dance is over our friend will hold his tongue."

Pointing to different parts of the stockade, as if calling his companion's attention to something about which he was talking, he said:

"It's touch an' go. Mebbe I've done wrong. But it was the one chance of us keepin' out of a Montreal prison."

"Oh, Lawd! I'd take any chance to keep clear of that! Any chance that'll land me down on Little Briar Crick!"

"Hush! Hush!" murmured Peevy.

He broke off and whistled a few bars of "Sinclair's Defeat". If the boy actually had sensed discovery of the plot in the killer's expression, as registered

in the trade mirror, then, in all probability, Little Briar Creek would see him no more. This possibility was so appalling that Peevy would have attempted any desperate scheme to protect his young fellow-conspirator. Again master of himself, at least outwardly, he quickly directed:

"When the Winnebago begins his frog dance, you be close to the staff officers. Where's the 'riginal letter?"

"In my pocket."

"Judas W. Iscariot! Be you plumb crazy? Never mind, never mind. Git it in your hand an' crumple it up small. Bend over as if tyin' your moccasin. Place it behind your heels where I can step on it. Then clear out. We've been together too long."

Young Cald did as he was directed, and as he released the wad of paper behind his heels Peevy covered it with the toe of his moccasin. He dropped crosslegged to the ground as the boy walked away. Securing the paper, his first thought was to cut a sod in the hard ground and bury it. Then the fear of the red trailers' cunning caused him to take a more Spartan method. With his hands between his knees he tore the letter into bits and rolled them into a large pellet, and proceeded to chew them to pulp and swallow them.

Having finished, he scrutinized the ground between his legs with the utmost care and made sure no telltale particle had been overlooked. He was lazily erect and yawning, when two soldiers came up and without a word began to run their fingers through his clothing.

"Come to git what the Injuns even were willin' to leave?" he complained.

"Never you mind what we come for," harshly advised one of the searchers. "Take off those moccasins."

"I can't go barefooted," insisted Peevy, as he dropped to the ground and unfastened the rawhide lacings. "What in sin do you think to find?" Why don't you tell me? I'll hand it over if it's on the premises."

"We're lookin' for a paper," said one of the men.

"What sort of a paper?"

"We don't know. Any paper."

"An' I haven't any paper of whatsoever kind whatever. But if you'll walk

along with me I'll call at the cabins an' see if I can't find some. But paper is mighty scarce in this stockade, an' in this Territory."

"In this part of Canada," sharply corrected one of the searchers.

With that they left him.



PEEVY slowly walked back to Gutherie's kettle, lugubriously humming. Coming up to young Cald, sitting on the ground, his elbows on his knees, his young face betraying great worry, Peevy turned his back on the youth and from the corner of his mouth demanded—

"What's happened?"

"Two red men yanked me into a hut and searched me."

"Injuns, huh? Did they say anything?"

"Talked in grunts. I couldn't understand, of course."

"Brother Ween is suspicious," mused Peevy. "He smells a big rat. But he ain't got any proof. When you see him next you complain to him how the Injuns busted you about an' went through your clothes. Ask him to have such business stopped."

"You got rid—?"

"Ate it!" was the grim reply. "You shouldn't be in the dumps. Git to whistlin'. That one where we hear the mockin'bird. Master sweet. Wander round. Go everywhere but here. When's this show to begin?"

"When the sun is teeterin' on the skyline."

"Keep away till then. When it's time for the frog dance you wander back here to lead the singin' of 'Sinclair's Defeat'."

"I 'lowed you was plumb sick of that tune."

"Was. But it's like a strong medicine one has to take at times. Old Joel Hone down home used to put up his 'Universal Bitters.' Sick man take a swig of it an' would run for eight hours, or till he dropped, hootin' from stum-mick misery. But his runnin' always made him sweat worse'n ever was, an' if he didn't feel better he felt different. I want that tune howled most loudsome 'long 'bout sunset. But if anything should catch fire across the

parade, you-all will run an' work like beavers to put it out."

"An' you?"

"I'll be where I can do the most good for us an' the most harm to the enemy. Be off now. Act keener-like. Whistle."

Young Cald held his head high and whistled cheerily as he walked to the entrance of the stockade. To observe him one never would imagine that he had a care in the world, or that he was a prisoner. It required a great effort for him to maintain his cheerful rôle when he saw Captain Ween approaching. The captain's teeth were very white as he revealed them in a broad smile. His piercing eyes, however, held no geniality. Young Cald likened the effect to hate wearing the mask of utmost good nature. The man's peculiarity of showing overmuch white of the eye produced a very baleful expression.

The captain genially greeted—

"Whither is your path leading you, young man?"

"Nowhere in particular, Cap'n."

"So? Then you are free to bend your steps where they will do me a bit of service. Now, being on Canadian soil and a guest of Canada, you would relish that."

"Most sertain, Cap'n."

"Excellent. Call at headquarters and find one of General Brock's orderlies. Through him present my compliments to the general and say for me that I humbly desire that the general be present to witness my Indian's new dance—a dance that should bring the dancer a new medicine."

"Yes, sir. I'll find one of the general's aides at once."

"Not so fast, my loyal worker. You will add that my Winnebago's search for a strong medicine will endow him with the tongue of the prophets. Can you remember that?"

Cald repeated the words. Ween nodded in approval and added:

"And then you will touch upon particulars to some extent. You will say that if the Indian finds the new medicine during his dance he will be able to reveal to me, and to the general, a damnably serious plot."

As he talked his thin lips were smiling, but his gaze was fixed and con-

tained nothing of humanity, let alone merriment.

Cald dutifully repeated the substance of the last speech, and Ween nodded in approval. He commented:

"Your mind is virgin. Not loaded up with no-account matters. You remember well. I am sure you will go far—very far. When the sun all but touches the western horizon, the Winnebago will evoke the spirits and will learn rare secrets, which wicked men believe to be buried in their own wicked minds."

"Yes, sir. Shall I give the last?"

"If they let you get that far."

"Mayn't I say something that consarns myself, Cap'n? Two red men seized me and searched me after I left my work this afternoon."

"Searched you!" exclaimed Ween. "But why should they search my young clerk?"

"They didn't say, sir. I had nothin' on me even a thief would want. I warned 'em I should make a complaint to you."

"And very rightly. I can't have warriors or common soldiers pawing over my clerk. Remember my compliments to the general, and that the hour is near. Just before the sun rests on the western horizon."

Cald knew the headquarters staff already had been advised of the primitive spectacle; yet he discharged his errand conscientiously as if he had been entrusted with news of great importance. A captain of foot lowered on him as he made the announcement of the lost medicine dance. Beyond that he ignored the lad and told an artillery officer—

"It takes all sorts to make an army."

"Headquarters is always interested in showing sympathy for our red allies. But 'tis a pity one has to work at times with miserable tools."

"True. Yet one must use a plotter to catch plotters."



ON THE north side of the parade Gutherie smoked his pipe and casually inspected for the third time his arrangement of the birchbark to satisfy himself it could not fail to ignite the thin

powder train and set fire to the dry rubbish inside the shed. And as he smoked he watched the western sky.

Overhead a mammoth flock of passenger pigeons threatened to veil from sight all the western heavens and the setting sun. Between the farthest edge of the incredible flight of pigeons and the wooded horizon was a narrow band of red, like a war chief's sash. Gutherie smoked lazily and watched the disk of the red sun wheel down into the scarlet ribbon, soon to balance itself on the skyline.

Across the enclosure the cabin windows and doors were filled with the heads of the curious and the frightened. The very heavens seemed to contain an ill omen. The red men concealed their strong emotion, but back of each facial mask a warrior was anticipating tremendous drama—stark tragedy, did the Winnebago fail to find a new medicine. In the middle of the parade was a small teepee, hastily erected by Captain Ween, his technique evidencing much practise in such work. At the stockade gates there was a bustling back and forth of men. Then the entrance was cleared for General Brock, Colonel St. George, various staff officers, General Hull and several American traders who had been caught in the net.

Drums and fifes and blaring trumpets now delighted the horde of Indians, and gave a martial atmosphere to a locale so meager in any suggestion of martial astuteness and stability from the American point of view. General Hull was woebegone of countenance and did not seem to sense his surroundings. The years since he had shown real metal as a Revolutionary War soldier had taken toll. He moved with pathetic, lagging steps and rolled his gaze about the stockade without seeming to see anything with which he had been familiar. He had aged much during the brief lapse of time since his surrender and shuffled his feet wearily. His staff showed loathing for the spectacle, for anything whatever which recalled the great disaster.

In great contrast was the rare good humor and high spirits of the Canadians. Their drums and fifes reflected their exuberance by rolling and shrill-

ing rollicking music, such as became a happy holiday. As a background were the eagerly curious red men. They were so many children at a raree show, yet so many panthers in their unslaked passions.

The great Tcumseh walked at the right hand of General Brock and presented a martial appearance second to none. Brock paid him every courteous attention, while behind him in single file trailed chiefs of lesser degree and importance.

After the rank and file had stretched out in a half circle to witness the spectacle, Captain Ween came forward and saluted smartly. When the music ceased Ween swept off his hat in recognition of the women present, and in a loud clear voice, the shrill timbre of which carried far, explained—

"I would not presume to ask my very busy superiors to come here merely to witness the spectacle of an Indian seeking to regain a lost medicine, although, as most of us know, his quest is just as all important to him, as it is for a Canadian or Englishman to endeavor to save his soul—"

"Or Americans!" shouted a deep voice.

"I am not acquainted with American honor," replied Ween, "so I scarcely can speak of their regard for things spiritual. My guests, the Winnebago in his search for his lost medicine will, as a warrant for his loyalty to his most gracious Majesty, smell out certain evil-doers, who even now are plotting against our army and our illustrious leaders."

This statement caused a ripple of interest among the spectators. Even General Brock lifted his head and gazed more objectively at the speaker. Ween, quick to take advantage of this show of interest, continued:

"It may surprise you to know that American villainy is active in this place. I can safely avow that the Winnebago will reveal to you a most astounding piece of perfidy. He will present for your inspection a plot so bold and unexpected as to make one fairly doubt the truth of his revelations until the facts are proven beyond question. You, who have heard of Yankee cunning and deception, will find in this

plot the masterpiece of old Satan himself."

He now had his audience quite breathless with anticipation. He paused and consulted some notes jotted down on a piece of paper, and obviously was willing to please a large majority of his hearers with more mystifying showman's talk. But Colonel St. George called out, saying:

"General Brock has many important matters awaiting his decision. I suggest, Captain Ween, that you pass on to the actual spy smelling and medicine dance without further preface."

If Ween took umbrage at this blunt interruption, he was sufficiently self-schooled not to betray the fact. He flashed a smile about the half circle, glanced up at the cloud of passenger pigeons still obliterating the zenith, and then pointed to the teepee. In a red dialect, understood only by a few veteran bordermen, he called out in a stentorian voice.

Almost immediately the skin flap of the medicine lodge was drawn back, and there hopped into view what, for all the world, was a gigantic bullfrog. The huge eyes, set high, almost as if supported by stalks, caught and reflected the sun's vague light as rifts opened and closed in the flying ceiling. The brilliant green of the manufactured monster was splotched with patches and bands of a deeper green, while the under part of the body was a leprous white. The first reaction of the spectators was disgust. Then the artistry of it was acclaimed by loud clapping of hands.

The gigantic frog moved grotesquely toward the thin line of American spectators. With gargantuan hops it passed up and down the line of prisoners. As the monster came to a halt Ween shouted:

"He smells an enemy of his Majesty the King. Soon he will find him!"

Now headquarters as well as the humble file waited anxiously.

"Soon he will be touching the evil one," encouraged Ween.

Brock and his staff were beginning to realize that the spectacle was intended for something more than a grotesque entertainment, and they

quicken their attention. Those who were familiar with Ween's history anticipated a bloody finale.

A sharp whistle, brief but peremptory, cut the air; nor did it emanate from the hideous amphibian. In fact, the frog ceased his hopping and moved about uncertainly.

"The frog medicine is about to indicate the enemy of our King!" cried Ween.

Then sounded a second shrill whistle, and the prisoners' voices were raised high and loud in lines from "St. Claire's Defeat."

In good volume the strong voices rang out in one of the many stanzas of the lugubrious ballad. Then, as suddenly as it had begun, the singing ceased, as from the opposite side of the parade rose a shrill cry of:

"Fire! Fire!"

All eyes turned toward the source of the smoke, now rising from one of the sheds. In mighty unison the fourth line of the gruesome stanza was shouted from the south side of the enclosure—

"We'll strive to form in order and retreat the best we can—"

"Good heavens! What is this?" exclaimed Colonel St. George, and he came to his feet and pointed toward the huge amphibian.

The frog was standing erect and turning slowly about as if to display the shafted arrow buried deep in his white breast.

There was a moment of almost a dead silence, so intent were the spectators gazing at the gruesome spectacle. Then the colonel, voiceless for the moment, pointed at Captain Ween, who threw both hands above his head, his mouth opening and closing spasmodically, reeled drunkenly and fell on his back with a long war shaft protruding from his throat.

"Colonel St. George, clear the grounds of all but the prisoners!" shouted General Brock. "Leave none of the Indians inside. Allow none of the prisoners to go outside. Bring along the officer and the frog man quickly. Surgeons attend to the two. Let the infantry extinguish that fire. Bring the artillery to rake each side of

the stockade. Do not fire until commanded. You, prisoners, retire to your cabins at once and remain there. Staff officers, attend on me. There's some queer business here."

"It's a damnable, cold blooded plot, General!" exclaimed St. George.

"But a plot to do what, sir?" impatiently demanded Brock. "Win a volley from our cannon?"

"No, no. The Winnebago was to point out men who were in a plot against our arms. Captain Ween told me this morning that something of that nature would be revealed."

"And it remains hidden," said Brock.

"But it will be revealed if the Winnebago man can speak and name the man he was about to touch when he was hit by the arrow."

"Then what are we waiting for? Bring the wounded Indian here. Call some one who understands his language."

"If you please, sir, the Winnebago is dead," informed a captain.

"Damme, but it does not please me!" wrathfully exclaimed Brock. "We seem to be milling blindly around in a circle. Let's speak to Captain Ween."

"He's unconscious, sir."

"Then stay by his side until he regains his senses. Have the surgeon report to me as to the nature and extent of his wound."

"I will personally attend to it, sir," said Colonel St. George. "Ween has not been in favor with the rank and file of the army because of his ruthless tactics in killing Americans in a way which does not appeal to honorable men. I might say he was ostracized by his fellow-officers. But he did hint to me yesterday that he had discovered an infamous plot which would bring several men in Detroit to the noose."

"This is most unfortunate," said Brock. "There's Porthier's request, seconded by our Captain Roberts up at Mackinac, which should be attended to at once. But here comes a surgeon. We'll soon have news."

The surgeon halted and hurriedly reported—

"Captain Ween seems to have regained consciousness, sir."

"Seems to have!" exclaimed Brock.

"He has, or he hasn't. Or is there some halfway status about a man's being in his senses?"

"He has opened his eyes, but he appears to be paralyzed. The arrow must have shocked his spinal cord. He can not move or speak."

"Here comes a man running," said St. George. "Doubtless he brings better news."

The second man to report had nothing favorable to say as to Ween's condition. He had made one discovery, however.

"The two arrows, sir, are of Shawnee make," he announced.

CHAPTER X

SUSPENSE

THE longer General Brock considered the mysterious slaying of the Winnebago, the more convinced he became that the death of one man and the wounding of another was not the result of a hasty act, but had been carefully and cunningly planned. Captain Ween had promised the dramatic disclosure of a plot. He had been on the point of naming the ringleaders a few seconds before he was hit by the long arrow. These facts were bracketed in the general's mind while he was turning his attention to what was causing his officers serious concern—the fatal arrows.

All red men, with the exception of the Shawnees, believed that some of Tecumseh's braves had fashioned the shafts. With considerable heat for an Indian and a chief, Tecumseh denied that any of his warriors had desired the death of Ween or the Winnebago. He admitted the arrows were such as his people used, but very sensibly insisted they could be the work of any red hunter, or white borderman. One of the first reactions to the tragic climax of the weird exhibition was the Winnebagos' removal of their camp a mile away from the Shawnee shelters.

This very suggestive proof of the Winnebagos' fears and suspicions demanded prompt attention. Brock knew his capture of Detroit, the American army, and the immense Territory of

Michigan had won for him the backing of all the Northwest tribes. Any scheme which might alienate any portion of this red strength must be uncovered and adequately punished. Already the Shawnees were sullenly resentful of the unjust suspicions, and the Winnebagos were frightened. Other red racial strains were uneasy.

Brock left the council of his staff to talk aside with Colonel St. George. The latter rapidly summed up the suggestive facts attending the frog dance. Two points, in the colonel's judgment, were outstanding. The fire of unknown origin, on the north side of the parade, and the singing of the prisoners, when the death arrows were leaving the bowstring, were suspiciously opportune.

"By your theory of reasoning," said Brock, "the Americans must have set the fire to distract attention from the dancing, while the singing of that sad rubbish was to conceal the twang of a bowstring."

"Exactly, sir."

"Then we must credit the Americans for being super-plotters. No incendiary was seen. No bow and arrows have been found in their quarters."

"The eyes of all present were busy with watching the Winnebago, sir. There was no time for the bow to be burned. I doubt if there were more than two arrows."

"Yet smoke was coming from several chimneys before the Indian was killed," mused Brock. "I noticed them, as it was early to start a cooking fire. Especially while the prisoners and refugees were engaged in watching the pantomime."

He turned and told an orderly—

"Bring in the man Peevy."

The Tennessean, kept in waiting for nearly an hour, was brought in. Brock stared at him curiously. He accepted Peevy as an excellent type of the American border man, cool, shrewd and resourceful. He fenced none with the suspect, but demanded—

"Tell me why you prisoners started to sing that infernal song."

"Dawggone, General, I hate it more'n you do! Ask any man, an' he'll tell you I'm sick an' tired of it. They commenced singin' it down on the Ohio.

They've kept it up ever since. I opine that General Hull might not surrendered, if he hadn't been fair crazy to git away from that tune."

"That's the only explanation you can give?"

"I don't pretend to give any explanation as to why any one would ever want to sing it."

"Didn't you think it was strange they should join in as one at the moment the arrows were released?"

"I think it's strange they ever should join in. But how could they know any arrer shootin' was to begin? Mebbe the arrer shooter waited till some noise might hide the twangin' of the bow. I vow! I believe that's the right of it! Yes, sir!"

"What do you know about the fire in the sheds?"

"I don't know anything about it. Mebbe some Injun, or whites, were careless with their pipes."

"What else do you know?"

"The same as the rest of the prisoners an' all your fine army know, General. Nawtbin'."

"Some of you prisoners disliked Captain Ween."

"I'd say all of us Americans dislike the British officers an' men. Have to feel that way when you go to war."

"Yet Ween took a young man from you prisoners and gave him easy work."

"I reckon he thought the younker was a likely lad an' could save him a lot of work. Writin' letters! When I want to answer, or ask a question, I go to the man. I don't bother to write him letters. Ween kept the boy to work an' busier than a one legged dawg tryin' to scratch himself loose from a million fleas. Yet fleas—"

"Never mind that. You're acquainted with many men in Canada?"

"Quite a number. Mostly in the fur trade."

"Do you know Captain Roberts, acting commander at Mackinac?"

"I sartainly do! A fine, upstandin' man. I'd hate most mortal to stand up an' fight agin him. That's the cussed way with wars. You have to fight strangers, or folks you know an' like. Now my wife's folks—"

"You know Porthier, of the North-

west Fur Company?"

"Yes, sir. Another fine man. I've been his go-between when some of the tribes got their dander up because of Porthier's agents drove too sharp bargains. Tecumseh will tell you that."

"You know him well?"

"As well as any one can know a Injun. When any one knows 'em weller it'll be me. He's a real man, alongside red or white. If his brother, the Prophet, had as good brains, the Canadian border by now would be pushed down to Platte River."



BROCK exchanged glances with St. George. Both believed the statement to be true. An express from Canada had brought word that Manuel Lisa, veteran American trader, thus far had been successful in holding back the tribes on the Big Bend of the Missouri from joining the Canadians and swearing allegiance to England.

Brock's tone was somewhat mollified as he next asked—

"Will you say you are very friendly with Captain Roberts?"

The Southerner slowly shook his head, then qualified the silent denial:

"I've done some business for him an' like him. He paid well. I did my work well."

"Would you say you're a friend of Porthier's?"

"Mebbe he wouldn't mind if I said it, as it don't hurt a body to have friends. But I never was that close to him. He has used me to patch up red troubles where some fool trader didn't understand Injun natur'."

"You may go. Orderly, the prisoner will return to the stockade."

After Peevy had departed, Brock frowned and tapped his fingers on his knee. Finally he said:

"Colonel, I would like to dismiss suspicion of that garrulous fellow from my mind. In truth, I am anxious to do so. Here is the reason." He opened a leather wallet, selected a paper and explained, "Copy of a letter from Porthier. We must forward the interests of the Northwest Company whenever we can. Their courier service at the outbreak of the war gave us a vast advantage

over the slow-moving enemy. The company controls all our red allies, and could call all but the Shawnees back to their villages tomorrow. But thank God the company is loyal. This is the letter:

"My dear General Brock: A runner informs me, among other bits of news, that you have among your prisoners an American named Peevy. It is of the greatest importance to the N. W.'s interest (which means Canada's interest) that I use this man in carrying new belts to the Minnitarées and Mandans on the upper Missouri. Manuel Lisa is successful thus far in restraining the upper Missouri tribes from smoking war tobacco with our regular agent and picking up our ax against the United States. While Peevy is, I assume, a loyal American, my errand will seem to be purely of trade interest. I know this much: If he promises me he will undertake the business he will keep his word. Naturally he is hostile to Canadians, but not rabidly so. I desire he be allowed to select four American prisoners, to act as pack-bearers to the Missouri, and be started north at once to report to me at Mackinac. All this, assuming he will accept my offer, now that he is out of the fighting. What's to be done on the Missouri must be done now. If done properly, Canada can carry successful war to the back yards of St. Louis.

—PORTHIER"

Before St. George could comment upon this letter, Brock selected another from the wallet and said—

"This should be read along with Porthier's—from Roberts, commandant at Mackinac.

"My dear General Brock: I have read Mr. Porthier's letter, and urge you to grant his request. It means much to the N. W. And the N. W. means much to all Canada. If we lose Mackinac, the Indians will be more suspicious of our strength than if we lost Montreal.

—A. ROBERTS"

St. George pursed his lips and said—"I assume these to be true copies."

"They are true copies. I had my orderly bring the originals from poor Ween's office. Here they are."

St. George unfolded the forgeries, and after a brief glance at each he handed them back.

"I know their writing quite well. Do you ask my opinion on the reasonableness of Porthier's request?"

"But yes. Else why bother to have

you read them?"

"Then I would say that you start this Peevy off north at once, and let him pick four men to accompany him. They would give their parole, of course. And I'm positive that he will be a trouble maker if he is kept here."

"If that is your only reason—his making trouble—I can erase it by ordering him before a firing squad."

"The execution of even a refractory prisoner always causes more trouble than the volley is worth," dryly reminded the colonel. "Porthier knows his man. He's out of the war. He must give his parole, or go down to Montreal. There's a tremendous stake to be won on the Upper Missouri. If this American fails, we have lost nothing beyond what already is lost. To us he is only one of an army of prisoners. On the Missouri he might outwit Lisa. It's a shame that Tecumseh couldn't have taken the Missouri mission in the place of his one-eyed brother."

"It's to be regretted. But if the Yankees agree to start north, I'll have some of the Indians trail them to make sure they keep going north."

An orderly entered and presented a paper to General Brock. The general found it to be a petition, signed by three staff officers, requesting permission to seize three male prisoners and announce they would shoot or hang the trio unless the slayer of the Winnebago surrendered himself, or was given up. Brock slowly shredded the paper and allowed it to sift through his fingers. To the orderly he directed:

"We hang only those who are guilty of the actual killing, or of aiding and abetting the slayer . . . Ween remains the same?"

"He neither speaks nor moves; but the surgeon believes he is trying mightily to speak. His eyes shine like those of a wild beast. At times he seems to be holding his breath. The surgeon believes, sir, that when he recovers it will be all right at once."

"We will hope he recovers at once," said the general.

Inside the stockade the elder Cald sat close to Peevy and gloomily stared to the north. His voice was faint, as if he were physically exhausted, as he told

his friend:

"I never can forgive myself if the boy's trick is found out. I never can forgive you, Ramblin', for gittin' him to cut up that dangerous caper."

"Shoot me an' welcome, Jim, if it will make you feel any better," was the gloomy reply. "We ain't heard nothin' yet to lead us to think the trick won't work. But this waitin' does raise hob with my nerves. It was either the trick, an' a race for it, or the dungeons at Montreal, mebber with a ride across the water in the hold of a rotten ship. With the Injun dead, an' Ween as good as dead, it does seem as if the game oughter work. The younker can write more like Porthier an' Roberts than those two men can write like themselves."

"Hush! You have a visitor," warned Cald.

Peevy did not glance about to betray his knowledge of the newcomer's presence. With brooding gaze directed to the ground between his knees, he continued breaking a dead twig into tiny bits and allowing them to sift through his brown fingers. Not until a shadow fell across him did he lift his head. He met the fixed gaze of Tecumseh and with a genial smile invited—

"Let my friend sit down beside his friend."

"A chief of the Great Medicine Panther family sees two white men," Tecumseh said.

Peevy nudged Cald to withdraw. Cald arose and, without meeting the searching gaze of the great red leader, hurried back among the cabins. Peevy, as if for the first time detecting the uneasiness in the Shawnee's clouded face, came to his feet, saying:

"When a chief stands, no warrior can sit. Does my brother carry war belts in his eyes?"

"They say a Shawnee arrow killed a big frog," replied the chief, his voice sonorous. "The white man from the Tennessee fire knows it is a lie."

Inwardly much worried, as he had anticipated such an interview ever since he bent the bow, Peevy asked—

"What else does the white man know?"

"He knows who killed the frog."

"The frog lost his medicine. Can a man live who loses his medicine?"

"The frog was bad flesh," answered Tecumseh. "Shawnee men do not use arrows on bad flesh. They use a club."

"He had to die that your friend might live," frankly admitted Peevy.

The implacable eyes seemed to lose a shade of their inexorability. But they grew hard again, and Tecumseh said—

"The great white chief must not think the Shawnees killed the frog."

"Tecumseh will tell who did kill?"

The chief stared into the west and for a minute did not speak. To Peevy it seemed to be a much longer period of time. The red voice was mournful when he answered:

"A chief must care for his children. His children are ugly because the great white chief believes they wasted arrows on such poor game. A chief must tell."

"The white chief does not believe that."

"Brock is a very brave man," said Tecumseh. "He must not be left to believe a lie about the Shawnee."

Peevy believed the worst had come. Did Tecumseh reveal the identity of the deadly bowman, no amount of manufactured evidence could outweigh the accusation. Yet Peevy made the gesture of playing for time.

"Your friend has been in your village and has sat on your robe," he began "He slept in your village, knowing he was safe. Now, a prisoner of the white men, he finds his old friends bringing him death. But he can not ask his friend to do what a great chief can not do. How long will his tongue sleep?"

Tecumseh stared into the golden west, his heart heavy. He believed he was about to sentence an old friend to death. Had the affront been personal, instead of a reflection on the whole Shawnee nation, he might have kept silent. Speaking slowly, he answered—

"When the sun again leaves his teepee in the east and again crosses the earth to roll in his blanket in the west, Tecumseh speaks."

The CAMP-FIRE



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readers, writers and adventurers*

A FURTHER note on early model hand-guns, by a well known authority:

Visalia, California

In Camp-fire for December 1, 1932, T. J. Johnston has a letter on early Smith & Wesson revolvers that is, to say the least, very misleading. The facts regarding the earliest "bored-through" revolver cylinders are: Rollin White on Apr. 3, 1855, was granted a patent for a firearm with the cylinder bored clear through so it could be loaded from the rear, but this arm was not intended for metallic cartridges. It was intended to load the cylinders with loose powder and ball or ordinary paper cartridges and then close the rear end of the chambers with a wad having a hole at its center, through which was to pass the fire from a cap placed on a single nipple located in the frame of the arm. The arm was never made as patented by White.

The first arms by S&W under this patent was for a .22 cal. metallic shell without powder, using fulminate only, very like the BB cartridge of today. In April 1860 S&W obtained a patent right for cartridges loaded with powder; and their first guns—also the first revolving guns to use the modern rim-fire metallic cartridge—used a shell loaded with a .22 cal. bullet of 34 grains weight and 3 grains of black powder. Any one familiar

with the modern .22 cartridge knows that this load *would not* penetrate "an inch and a half of seasoned oak at 40 yards (or any other distance), tearing off slivers ten inches long from the bark."

SMITH & WESSON'S next model, made for Army use during the Civil War and sold by the thousands, was a .32 caliber with 103 grain conical bullet and 13 grains of powder, black, of course. It was with one of this model revolvers Wild Bill Hickok is said (probably with truth) to have killed Dave Tutt in Springfield, Missouri. Just what Hickok said of the small caliber pistols I don't know, but as they were the best to be had at the time, any one armed with one was on an equality with his opponent—all any one would ask.

Mr. Johnston's complaint that these early revolvers were dangerous to the user in that they had no trigger guard nor half-cock notch is lame in that the trigger guard is, on small guns, a comparatively recent innovation, and no safer than the older sheath-trigger; and every S&W I have or have seen during the last sixty years *has* a half-cock notch.

REGARDING the S&W of .44 caliber, I agree with Mr. Johnston that it is "a terrible weapon, entirely safe," but I fail to understand how .45 caliber Colt cartridges were used in it. I have never been able to use .45 caliber cartridges

in any .44 caliber revolver. The Government (Army) cartridges would interchange in the S&W and Colt .45 revolvers, but the commercial 40 grain powder shell for Colt .45's were too long for the .45 S&W. The 30 grain Colt cartridge, more popular with pistol users than the 40 grain loads, could usually be used in the S&W .45 in place of the regular .45 S&W American cartridge designed for the S&W .45.

The 1855 patent of Rollin White's sold to Smith & Wesson was renewed, and S&W held the sole right to make revolvers loading from the rear end of the cylinder until Apr. 3, 1869, fourteen years after the date of the patent. Many, including White, infringed on this patent and were compelled to settle with the firm of Smith & Wesson. Ethan Allen paid \$25,000 damages to S&W.

—MORVE L. WEAVER

WHY Chinese is a difficult language. Sidney Herschel Small, of our Writers' Brigade, replies to a reader's question on the Cantonese dialect:

Lougheed, Alberta, Canada

In the November 15th issue of *Adventure* there is a story by Sidney Herschel Small entitled "Moon Jade." In the second paragraph, on page sixteen of the magazine, a Chinese character utters these words: "*Sang ni kam ch'u ho la.*" There are other Chinese utterances in the tale, and I have tried the above and one other on a local Cantonese Chinaman, who denied understanding them. Was this Chinaman spoofing me or are they not genuine Chinese utterances? Or are they of other than the Cantonese dialect? I would be obliged if you can put me right.

—W. C. EARLAM

Mr. Small's reply:

San Rafael, California

Adventure has forwarded your note concerning Cantonese. "*Sang ni kam ch'u ho la*" is truly Cantonese; due to difficulty in printing, reading and understanding, it is impossible to give the proper tones to the words, by means of which, if you spoke them for a Chinese, he could know what you are talking about.

Cantonese has four "tones": the first, the even, or monotone; the second, rising tone, like the final word in an English question; the third, the falling tone, the intonation falling as the word is spoken; the fourth, the entering tone, an abrupt termination, as if "sat" were said and the final consonant chopped off. In Cantonese dialect this last tone is always indicated by a final k, p or t.

Next, these four "tones" are again divided into upper and lower tones, separated from each other by two or more musical notes.

THEREFORE, to make it possible for a Cantonese to understand Cantonese (unless he comes from a district using different inflections, or even words), the sentence should be spoken like this:

Sang 'ni ,kam ,chiu 'ho la'

For the upper tones commas are used, for the lower, periods. Upper tones: first (,) ; second (' at start of word) ; third (' at end of word) ; fourth, (, at end of word). Periods in the same manner.

The Chinese, having so many words of similar sound, are forced to use these inflections. If you speak the words without proper inflection, you can readily see that no Cantonese could possibly understand what you were saying.

—SIDNEY HERSCHEL SMALL

DO YOU fire a rifle with both eyes open? Here's an expert who does, and defends this method:

Mosman, Sydney, N. S. W.

On reading "The Man from Nowhere" in your number of October 15th, I was astonished to read: "He could not be taught to shoot, for he insisted on firing with both eyes open, handling the military rifle like a shotgun."

Well, I've done quite a bit of rifle shooting. I don't wish to boast, but I've made top score on an Irish international rifle team at 800, 900 and 1000 yards, and I never closed my left eye in my life; and I know a lot of crack rifle shots who don't. Why should you? It is true it has the disadvantage that you see two rifle barrels and that they both have a transparent appearance, as if you could see through them, but you quickly get used to that, sight with the left barrel and soon are unable to notice that there is a second shadowy barrel, especially if your right eye is the master one, as it usually is.

The great advantage of open eye shooting is that the target is twice as brilliantly illuminated as when you use only one eye; indeed more than twice, for the effort to close the left eye may affect the right eye slightly also. I know it does with me.

—T. L. GILLESPIE

LAMH *Foistinnach an Uachdar*: Another of the Sullivan family renders a new translation.

Miami, Florida

Regarding "*Lamh Foistinnach an Uachdar*," I noticed the translation given when it was first mentioned and was mildly surprised but said nothing.

As some controversy has arisen, and as one entitled to bear the coat-of-arms of the Sullivan Beare family, and as Tanist thereof (did such a thing exist today) I wish to state that Sir Bernard Burke many years ago when he verified the Sullivan genealogy (which as far as I know is possessed only by members of my family) gives the translation of the above words as: "What we gain by conquest we keep by clemency."

Whether Sir Bernard Burke was an authority in Gaelic I can not say, but I doubt that a gentleman of his reputation would be wrong.

—LYNDE SULLIVAN

YOUR polished mouth-organist is above all a product of perseverance, as Comrade Searle points out. Let all embryo performers be of good cheer:

New York, New York

In a recent issue Mr. Donald M. Harvey wrote asking how to get started as a harmonica player. I have a fellow feeling for Mr. Harvey because for no less than forty years I nursed a secret ingrowing wish to do the same thing. But as a boy I had three older sisters and later a wife whose peace of mind it was undiplomatic to disturb with any such things as sour notes from a harmonica.

Last summer my dreams came true. My wife and daughters left me for a whole week to lead a bachelor's life for the first time in seventeen years, and I improved the fleeting hours by polluting the atmosphere with weird noises from a mouth organ to my heart's content. For me, the booklets published by the manufacturers of harmonicas, intended to teach you painlessly how to play, were no good; I guess I was too old to profit by their method of instruction. So I learned just as you wrote you did—more or less by main force. For a while I simply ran up and down the scale with no definite idea in mind except to somehow learn how to play. Finally I heard something that reminded me of a bugle call and I refined it until I could play "Taps"; then with less and less evidence of agony came "The Assembly", "Turkey in the Straw", "The Girl I Left Behind Me", "Hinky Dinky", "Tipperary", etc. And now with a little practice I can play anything I can hum or whistle.

IN AUGUST I spent a couple of days on my old trout stream and would now and then sit me down on a rock and toot away on my harmonica. Doctor Franklin, who was with me, on looking at my mess of trout, claimed I had been playing "Home Sweet Home" with such feeling, and with the lid of my creel open, that the trout had been charmed right out of the water into my basket; Nevins, who is a wag and not to be taken seriously, said I had just made the trout so mad with infernal noises that they had rushed me. Be it as it may, I now play the harmonica.

Never mind the instruction books, Brother Harvey; go somewhere where your sense of good citizenship and innate modesty will not prevent the unholly row you will make at first and just go to it—and you will learn to play. I wish you as much enjoyment as I get out of it.

—A. H. SEARLE



OUR old friend Tonto returns to the Camp-fire from a jaunt to Mexico, with comment ranging from placer mining to Old West outlaws:

Los Angeles, California

Four of us rolled down into Mexico last week, and in twenty hours' running time and a few more eating and sleeping, we had left rocky coast of Hollywood upon which so many writers are now stranded and entered the border placer

district, where life moves as it did a hundred years ago. Quite different from the six weeks it took the pioneers to make the same trip with all the grief and hardship of hunting horse-feed and water.

The Bacoachi is a placer district within a hundred miles of the border, between the Rio Sonora and that part of the Ajos (Garlic Mountains) they call El Monte de Oro.

It is the land of the *gambusino* (gold prospector), where the hunt for coarse gold and *chispas* (nuggets) has been the occupation of men since the days of New Spain and before. None are rich down there and none are starving.

THE white men are frittering in, and in this and other placer districts machinery is starting to do what the *gambusino* has done before with his hands, since ancient times. It is no bonanza, but merely handling dirt for the \$2 up and down of gold in the gravel, which has yielded the Mexican, Miztec, Maya, Yaqui and varied Indians a living if he washes a yard of dirt; and it may prove to be profitable if a machine washes a hundred yards an hour. The question is not the gold but water. Expenses are light. You can buy a very fair grade 700 white-face steer with good tallow for five pesos plata, or \$1.67 gold. There are a few reasonable laws to keep, and peace reigns in a wonderful climate, with superb deer and javalino hunting, as well as wild turkey.

Down there as a guest being shown a new country, I saw the placer district was just the "other side of the hill" from where we took out 10,000 war finance cattle in 1926, and I ran across a lot of people from other days, and began to feel more at home than in the fair City of the Angels.

The part that will perhaps interest some readers is the fact there is one member of the old Wild Bunch of the 80's and 90's still alive down there, and a number of others who had various parts in the days of Billy Stiles, Alvord, Chacon and the later men who disdained conventions and laws.

I have met men who claimed to have seen this party I refer to hanged, but he is surely alive. So as in the Tiburcio Vasquez matter, they hanged some one else; and having to die anyhow, they did a favor to an old friend by taking the rap in the friend's name.

SO WHAT I understand is fact is either a lie, or first-hand information from a participant, who was in the Canyon Diablo train holdup around '92, through the Tonto War, with the Black Jack crew, a friend of Billy the Kid, etc.

The Canyon Diablo train robbery is one of the mysteries, and many a treasure hunt has been organized for that loot, and many theories advanced. Mental rest can be assured, for those boys went to Mexico and spent it, and after the affair they all scattered at once and left.

—TONTO

PLEASE address all communications intended for this section to "The Camp-fire", care of the magazine.



ASK Adventure

For Free Information and Services You Can't Get Elsewhere

Blowgun

HOW Gordon MacCreagh improved on the savage weapon, using brass pipe and a sailmaker's needle.

Request.—"May I infringe on your time for a little information? I have a great interest in blowguns and would appreciate your advice on size of blowgun (diameter and lengths).

What are the dimensions of the dart (length, diameter, weight)?

If I should make an experimental gun of one-half-inch brass tubing, made in three-foot sections, fitted together by means of a friction sleeve, what would you suggest that one could make darts of?"

—J. W. D. CHESNEY, M.D., Maywood, Illinois

Reply, by Mr. Gordon MacCreagh:—Relative to blowguns: Length may be anything from five feet up to ten. The most commonly used guns average about eight feet. Bore is strictly dependent upon length. A longer gun must have a smaller bore than a shorter one for the very obvious reason—as you will find when you experiment—that a ten-foot gun of, say, half-inch bore, absorbs quite a deal of the puff before the dart ever leaves the gun.

Five-sixteenths of an inch would be all the bore you would want for a ten-foot gun—or even for an eight. Three-eighths of an inch for a six-foot gun, though five-sixteenths ought to be quite big enough.

The native guns, as you possibly know, are most laboriously made. The best ones consist of two sections, each with a semicircular groove, glued together and encased in an outer protective barrel of bamboo or palm sapling. Even at that the bore is far from true, and accuracy is a matter of extreme skill of the individual coupled with primitive patience and a fatalistic acceptance of fifty per cent misses.

I have a nine-foot gun made as above described, with an elaborate front sight made of a peccary tusk and rear sights made of the lower jaw and canine teeth of some small carnivorous mammal. Pure swank, in my opinion. I can't

see that the sights are of any assistance; and I'm sure the maker was copying the idea of some rifle that he must have seen.

The darts are made of thin slivers of hardwood or palm. Very thin. Knitting needle size for birds; heavier for animals. Nothing ever so thick as a lead pencil, even for the heaviest game—and in the Amazon country I have seen tapir killed with blowguns.

The length of dart varies from eight to ten inches. The tuft is merely a wrapping of tree cotton loosely tied on with thread. It is placed at the extreme rear end. Length of tuft about two inches.

A quite inefficient missile; for, as you will readily see, while the tuft fills the bore it can not be so tight as to hold the dart dead center. The tip of the dart, of course, runs along the bottom of the groove. In actual practise, therefore, one must overshoot one's mark to overcome the already downward trend of the dart.

Your brass tube experiment will be a great improvement on the native gun. I don't see why your sleeve joint should interfere with either accuracy or velocity—provided, of course, that the ends of the brass tubes within the joint fit reasonably close together.

I made a brass tube gun for myself; six feet long without a joint, five-sixteenths bore; the whole encased in a bamboo fishing pole for rigidity. I made another, three feet long. I found that the double length gave me *perhaps* fifteen per cent greater distance; not more. I was not expert enough to be able to note whether the longer barrel gave any appreciably better accuracy. For my own play, in fact, I found that the three-foot gun very decidedly compensated in convenience whatever advantage the six-foot gun may have had in distance and accuracy. This three-foot gun I fitted up as a walking cane, (screw threaded at either end for a handle and a ferrule); and I have gotten squirrels and rabbits with it—without poison, of course.

Darts. I used those heavy three-cornered sail-makers' needles. Knitting needles seemed to lack weight and penetration. I don't know why, in theory, because the knitting needles weighed as

much as the three-cornered ones. I didn't carry the experiment through with any scientific thoroughness. Maybe my preference was no more than a hastily formed whim. But the three-cornered needles seemed to be chunkier and felt as though they should be more efficient.

For tufts I experimented with paper cones glued on. It was there that I found the trouble with the dart point lying along the bottom of the barrel. Then I made cotton wrappings—two of them, one at the extreme rear end and one about halfway down. You get the idea? Support for the dart at two points to keep the point centered in the barrel. Not only did I find an immediate improvement in accuracy, but the double tuft gave me markedly better distance.

Finally, to save trouble and laborious wrapping, I bought some felt gun wads and a five-sixteenths punch; and I just pushed my needles through the middle of my wads with a drop of glue to hold them at the required points.

That made a quite deadly tool. Good, as I have said, for rabbits. With practise in blowing you will find that you can send such a dart through a soft wood door panel. No toy to give Junior for a plaything while people go around with only two eyes and now and then a tempting seat of the pants. The thing is really a weapon.

The puff or blow. Have you used a putty blower? It's the same idea. The tongue must be held over the end of the tube and released suddenly at the height of your lung pressure.

Knife Fighting

A FENCER advises the upward thrust.

Request:—"I know that fencing doesn't include this—but can you give me any of the fine points of knife fighting?"

—FRANK DEAN, San José, California

Reply, by Capt. Jean V. Gromboch:—While I do not pretend to be an expert on knife fighting, I shall try to answer your letter.

I would classify modern knife fighting in two categories. There is a special knife fighting in Spain in which the participants have a sort of scarf or small blanket about the left arm and a knife in the other hand. Of this school I know little. The other school is just the plain ordinary rough and tumble knife fighting where there are no rules.

However, I have one valuable observation to make which saved my life and which I consequently believe vitally important. That is, if you should ever get into a knife fight, do not hold the pommel up with blade down for the purpose of striking downward, but grasp the knife with the blade up and for the express purpose of slashing or cutting upward or forward or sideward. The advantages are obvious.

The man slashing down will have his wrist immediately caught in his opponent's grasp, with the opponent having the distinct advantage of working "on short line". The man slashing upward is much more difficult. To begin with, the knife has greater mobility, the wrist is more difficult to grasp, and once grasped can not be

held as firmly or as easily as the descending wrist working from the outside. In other words, if two men equally strong and equally agile were placed in a given situation the man holding the knife upward and striking from below would reach his target before the man cutting down with blade below the grip.

Rustler War

IN WHICH Cattle Kate was lynched and Tom Horn hanged.

Request:—"I am interested in the Rustler War in Wyoming—its cause, date, number killed, etc. Where can I find a published account of the trouble?" —T. E. CRAWFORD, Parker, Florida

Reply, by Mr. William Wells:—The Rustler War in Wyoming was brought on by the efforts of the big cattlemen to keep settlers from locating on the public lands along the streams, where the settlers had a perfect right to homestead, and to which the cattlemen had no right whatever. The war raged for nearly twenty years, reaching its peak in 1892—I am not sure about the exact date. The cattlemen started in by running off the cattle and horses of the settlers, burning their houses and ordering them out of the country. However, the settlers—the cattlemen called them nesters in derision—were American frontiersmen, and fought back, in time outfighting and out-stealing the cattlemen; so the cattlemen called them rustlers, although the cattlemen started stealing the settlers' stock first.

The settlers were in the majority, organized counties, elected officials, held courts in accordance with law; but of course when the cattlemen tried to convict settlers for rustling, the juries would say not guilty. So the cattlemen tried lynching.

Among those lynched was a woman—Cattle Kate—who lived on the Sweetwater River and wasn't a rustler in any sense of the word. However, a bunch of cattlemen strung her up, along with a man named Averil, who kept a store.

Others were lynched, but the cattlemen, seeing that they were losing, organized a band of some seventy-five gunmen and sent them into Johnson County, Wyoming, the main stronghold of the settlers, with a list of men they were to kill. The gunmen surrounded a ranch where two of these men, Ray and Nate Champion, were, at night, shot Ray down when he came out in the morning. Champion dragged Ray back inside and held the gunmen off nearly all day, when they loaded a wagon with hay, ran it up to the log cabin, set it afire, drove Champion out and killed him.

Just after this Jack Flag, a friend of mine—the shooting had stopped but he saw smoke—rode up to investigate. Jack's name was on the list of men to be killed. Some of the killers recognized him, and the whole bunch started shooting, but he got away, went into Douglass, the county seat, and told what was up.

Red Angus, sheriff of the county, organized a big posse, ran the killers into a ranch and would have captured them, only United States troops under telegraph orders from Washington—the

cattlemen had a big pull—stepped in, took the killers away from a sheriff who had warrants for them on a charge of murder, took them to Cheyenne and turned them loose.

Beaten in this, the cattlemen hired professional killers like Tom Horn and paid them so much a head to kill off the settlers. However, the settlers grew stronger, Horn was arrested, tried for murder and hanged; killers were shot or run out of the country, the cattlemen lost out and the settlers held the country, but it was sure lively while it lasted.

In Emerson Hough's "Story of the Cowboy" is an account of the war, and other accounts have been published, but I can not recall them at present.

Several articles of mine dealing with the war have been published, but just at present I can not remember in what magazines or on what dates.

"The Virginian", by Owen Wister, gives the cattlemen's side of the affair.

Man vs. Alligator

TARZAN—being Johnny Weissmuller—outswam the saurian, but could an average man do it?

Request:—"Please give your opinion to settle an argument, caused by the recent motion picture, "Tarzan", in which Johnny Weissmuller, former amateur swimming champion, as Tarzan, outswims several alligators. What we want to know is: How fast does an alligator swim? Of course, they appear awkward on land, but seem to make speed in the water. I don't suppose anybody ever timed an alligator for a hundred yards, but we hope you have seen them in open water and can form an estimate of their speed."

—EDWARD R. BENJAMIN, Norfolk, Virginia

Reply, by Mr. Hapsburg Liebe:—"I'm no authority on the speed of alligators in the water, and don't know anybody who is. I doubt that there is any such authority. Who would know when the 'gator is doing his darnedest or when he wasn't?"

I've seen a lot of 'gators in my fourteen years down here, and some of them moved pretty fast

in the water. Also I've seen swimmers who moved pretty fast in the water. It is my opinion that, ordinarily, a really good swimmer would have at least a fifty-fifty chance of getting away from a 'gator or 'gators (Tarzan, you know, was a superman). But if it were in the mating season, and the 'gator was a big, angry bull, it might be a different story. It might be a different story also if the 'gator were a female with little ones. Mrs. 'Gator is alert and active when she has children as she is at no other time. She has to be, in order to keep some Mr. 'Gator from eating her children up! The male alligator also is extraordinarily alert and active during the mating season.

Africa

WHY a cycling safari is impossible.

Request:—"Next Summer, together with a friend, I intend to make a cycle tour from London across France, Spain and down the West Coast of Africa. Is it possible to bike through Africa?"

—P. SIMMONS, Fort Kamehameha, Hawaii

Reply, by Mr. N. E. Nelson:—"Your letter is a pretty stiff proposition for me to understand, especially that part of it in which you advise that you intend making a cycle tour "down the West Coast" inasmuch as you will have to be carrying and swimming the bike more than riding it. You must first of all realize that roads, as we know them, exist in very few places in Africa, and even there for comparatively short distances and in the more thickly populated and Europeanized towns. You can not depend on cycling along the native trails. First, because many of them begin and end nowhere; second, because they usually run only from town to town, and not for long distances. I could detail as many reasons why it is impossible to do this as any one could wish, but the only important one is lack of passable roads.

It is impossible for the white man to travel in Africa without a respectable retinue, and I have never seen or heard of a safari mounted on bicycles.

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• • **AROUND THE GLOBE**



WITH THE MASTERS

OF THE ADVENTURE STORY

• **MEN WHO HAVE BEEN THERE**

THE TRAIL AHEAD—THE NEXT ISSUE OF *ADVENTURE*, FEBRUARY 15th



They may look upon bullfighting as a business in old Spain, but Dirty-Shirt Jones and Magpie Simpkins were sworn to make of it an art. Of course, they were slightly handicapped in that neither had ever even seen a bull-

fight. But then, no more had any one else in the booming town of Piperock. And, said they, if two cowboys with *their* imagination couldn't toss the bull, who could?

Don't fail to sit in on their hilarious performance in

THROWING THE BULL FOR PIPEROCK

By W. C. TUTTLE

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