



CASTING *for* CASABLANCA

By Beryl Kent

YOU never know where fishing will lead to. And here's a whale of a tale that started with a line and is still making world history.

It began before the sixteenth century on the northwest coast of Africa in a little fishing village called Anfa. Fishing was good but the fishermen weren't satisfied. While waiting for the fish to bite, they cast avaricious eyes over the passing galleons laden with more valuable and less perishable cargo than that swimming in the Atlantic. Before long the fishermen, aided by the Barbary pirates, were going all out for looting, and using "fishing" for their excuse.

Naturally, the people whose ships were pillaged didn't like it. Particularly resentful were the Portuguese, who owned most of the ships. So they came down from the north, where the Straits of Gibraltar flow into the Mediterranean Sea, and in 1498 they put an end to all fishing in Anfa by completely destroying the whole town.

About 100 years later they rebuilt the place but weren't able to hold on to it. Soon it reverted to the small native population. Because the moisture-filled winds from the Atlantic Ocean and the bleaching heat of the bright sun kept the city especially clean, the natives called the place Dar el Beida, Arabic for the "white house." The Spaniards, who for

many years had their special trading concessions, referred to it as Casa Blanca.

Today the city's map name is Casablanca, called "Casa" for short, although the residential area in the western part is still known as Anfa.

At present, Casablanca, with its three-quarters of a million population, is the largest and most modern city in French Morocco. Much of the architecture is pleasing, although a combination of many periods.

Most visitors to Casablanca are astonished by the number of hotels and the citified look of the place — and by the high prices. Ever since Charles Boyer said to Hedy Lamar on the movie screen, "Com wiz me to ze Casbah," tourists have expected to find dens of iniquity and rapturous romance. Actually "casbah" is merely Arabic for *area* or *section* and was originally used to denote the fortresses in the mountains.

However, fishing is not a thing of the past in Casablanca. Whether for profit or pleasure, men still fish off its Atlantic coast. Numerous ships come and go unmolested in the harbor, for the old piracy has completely disappeared and been replaced by a thriving export-import commerce.

A visit to see "Anfa" now that it has become "Casablanca" will not be cheap, but it will be worth the price.

Letters to the Editor

» I am enclosing herewith check for renewal of my subscription for two years.

I have been a continuous reader of AMERICAN MERCURY for about fifteen years. At our home we receive thirty magazines. For the money, yours is the best buy.

JUDGE FRANK L. PINOLA
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

» For years I have read your magazine, buying it at the newsstands. . . . Please accept my congratulations on your present efforts. The magazine is splendid.

Enclosed is my check for a two-year subscription. . . .

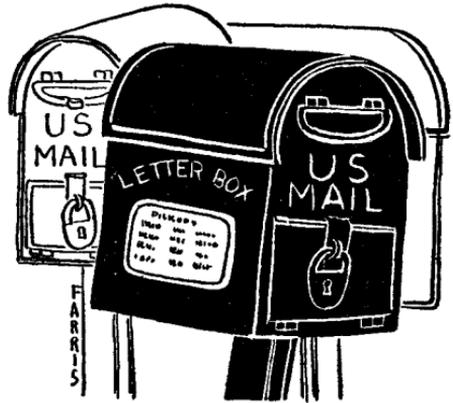
C. L. BEAVEN, M.D.
El Paso, Texas

» You have a very fine magazine. Very few of its kind are published. We who believe in our country should support it to the best of our ability. I'm for America First!

MRS. W. W. HYINK
Sibley, Iowa

» As one who has escaped the clutches of Communism, I feel deeply grateful for your courageous stand against this peril. Your magazine is *the* lighthouse guarding the rights of the American people and guiding them across the stratagem-studded seas of yellow journalism. Thanks!

In case you decide to publish parts of this letter, kindly withhold my name,



for I still might have some relatives left alive behind the Iron Curtain.

[NAME WITHHELD]
Ketchikan, Alaska

» I am enclosing a check covering one year's subscription to be sent to my daughter and son-in-law. I want them to know the pleasure of reading the truth for a change, something almost totally unrecognizable in the current daily press. If this nation should fail in its present defense against Communism — which, pray God, it will not — the fault will be that of the American press with a few notable exceptions. I do not know what in hell most of the editors are thinking of. They must be wholly bereft of sense as well as good old-fashioned, patriotic Americanism. I surely enjoy my subscription to your magazine.

THOMAS B. QUINN
Arlington, Virginia