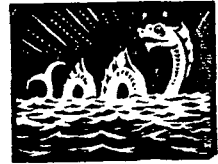




STRANGER than FICTION



By JOHN S. STUART

PERSONALITY IN LICENSES

IN Spain the owner of a motor car can exercise his own ingenuity and taste in a license. The authorities permit the licenses to be manufactured privately, but the car has to be officially registered, with the customary payment of fees.

ANCIENT COUNTERFEIT

ACCORDING to an ancient piece of paper money on exhibit in the Princeton University Library, copper money was extensively counterfeited in the Fourteenth Century in China. The note is thirteen inches long and nine inches wide, and is printed in black and red on paper made from mulberry bark. It bears a warning to counterfeiters: "The Board of Revenue, having petitioned and received the Imperial Sanction, prints the Great Ming Treasure Note, to be current and to be used as copper cash. The counterfeiter shall be decapitated. The informant and captor shall be rewarded with 250 taels in silver, and in addition shall be given the property of the criminal."



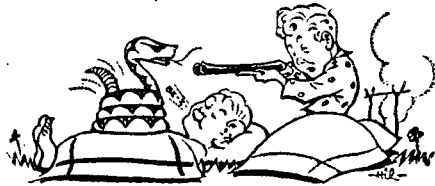
FINNISH EQUALITY

FINLAND was the first country to give women the vote — in 1907 — and since that date women have been eligible for election to the Chamber. Equal rights in Finland apply to other things also; women have an equal right to work, and it is not uncommon to see both a man and woman sweeping the streets at the same time.

This feature appears in ARGOSY every week

THE FIRST SKYSCRAPER

CHICAGO had the first American skyscraper. The first building so known was erected at La Salle and Adams Streets, Chicago, in 1884-5. It consisted of ten stories built on a steel frame, and was designed by Major William Le Baron Jenney for the Home Life Insurance Company of New York.



SWEET DREAMS!

TWO boy scouts in California went on a camping trip. Just about dawn the elder was awakened by a strange noise. He looked at his companion who was still asleep. Coiled on his chest was a rattlesnake. The elder lad quietly reached for his shotgun, aimed, killed the snake, blowing it off the boy's chest. His companion awakened with a start, unhurt. The snake was five feet long and had fourteen rattles.

NEW YORK TO HONGKONG BY RAIL

PLANS are secretly under way to construct railroads that will unite New York and Hongkong. The route will probably run from Seattle to Dawson City; thence to Fairbanks, Alaska; and to the point on the coast nearest Asia. A tunnel will bridge Bering Strait, and the trans-Siberian railroad will be extended to the Asiatic end of the tunnel. This rail venture, if carried out, will bring to the world's markets untold billions of dollars' worth of minerals, timber, oil, fish, wheat and furs.



The outlook was hopeless, but only one complained

The Weakest

By CAPT. WILLIAM OUTERSON

*The biggest man in the boat was the first to go overboard
—to a startling fate*

THERE had been eight men in the boat of the foundered Cynthia, but the mate had died from injuries received in the wreck, leaving in command the bo's'n, who knew all about seamanship but nothing of navigation, and could not determine their position. He sat in the sternsheets with one hand on the useless tiller, the other resting on his thigh, his fevered eyes staring westward at the skyline, where he hoped to see the loom of land before long. Behind him and astern, the sun was rising on a clear windless day, and if land or a ship was not sighted before another dawn these old shipmates would die one by one in the agonies of thirst, as he would die.

Larry sat on the after thwart in front of bo's'n, his elbows on his knees, staring ahead, and Frenchy crouched beside him, his hands hanging limply

between his legs. Nibs moved his head continuously from side to side, searching the round horizon for a ship that might heave in sight any minute and save them from madness and death. They had subsisted for some time on a single mouthful of water once a day, but now the precious stuff was finished, the breaker had been smashed and its damp staves gnawed and sucked for the slight moisture they contained, and now they were left they knew not how far from land without a drop of water.

They labored at the oars all night in the cool air, but in the daytime such toil could not be endured by their wasted bodies, and sleep would not come to ease their sufferings. The sun beat down, grilling out of their gaunt frames the little fluid they still held. The outlook was hopeless, but only one of them made complaint, and he did