

interest to life. He was gifted as a conversationalist and enjoyed the intercourse.

So passed these richly ripened years. In them Adams did not grow soft or maudlin. He lived out his life a strong man, but with each year the essential sweetness of nature which had lain concealed in him became more apparent. Bold and independent in spirit, in full possession of his mental faculties, he serenely waited for the end. He rejoiced in the approaching jubilee celebration of the Fourth of July, and gave as a sentiment for the day, "Independence forever." The

sound of cannon far from disturbing him, each added, he said, five more minutes to his life. Finally just fifty years to the hour from the public announcement, in Philadelphia, of the Declaration, the "chief of the Argonauts," as Jefferson called him, fell quietly into the sleep to which Jefferson had preceded him some hours before; with his thoughts full of his friend, speaking first three words which, while untrue as he meant them, were nevertheless the most prophetic of any utterance of his long and by no means silent life:

"Jefferson still survives."

(Next month: Thomas Jefferson)

THE OLD SEA-DOG

CATHERINE PARMENTER

"Not many hours more," I hear them say.
 Damn 'em. . . . They cannot see the schooner's bow
 Make head against the waves. (And who's here now?
 The parson, eh? I haven't time to pray.)
 Cold—cold the wind to-night, and high the sea.
 I don't remember such a storm before,
 Except the time we lay off Singapore:
 A typhoon—no mistake; and but for me
 The *Betsey Ann* had gone. How long it seems!
 It must be thirty—forty years, I guess. . . .
 A pile o' work. . . . A little happiness. . . .
 H'm . . . not so bad . . . and Lord! I've had my dreams!
 What's that along the starboard side—a light?
 Damn 'em . . . we'll make the old home port to-night!

DOWN ON THE LEVEE

A True Story of the Mississippi Tragedy

LYLE SAXON

WE ARE gathered together on the levee top, white and black men, rich and poor—or rather yesterday we were rich and poor; to-night we are equal in misery, for the Mississippi has taken everything from us.

The old Devil River. Rightly enough do the negroes call it so. . . . "The old Devil River, pushin' and shovin' at the levees," they say. These walls of earth, man-made, erected at tremendous cost and endless labor, are built higher and higher every year in order that our homes, lying behind the levees, may be safe from the ever-rising stream. And now, all useless, all washed away. This part of the broken levee top is like a long narrow island. Twenty feet wide, perhaps, a quarter of a mile long, and water washing on both sides—black water that extends out in all directions, mile after mile, dotted now with wreckage of our homes and covering the land endlessly.

We are tired out, hungry, wet, miserable. There are perhaps fifty of us, near the end of the levee. Ahead of us lies the crevasse . . . the water rushing through, inundating the fields and cotton land deeper under the yellow flood. . . . Yes, yellow by day, but at this hour only

a vast black torrent, with never a light anywhere. There is no moon. There are no stars to-night. A soft rain has fallen, making us, shelterless, even more miserable.

We sit upon the ground, in groups, afraid to sleep, too miserable to cry, waiting, with forlorn hope for a rescue boat.

We have been here for more than twenty-four hours, ever since the alarm came that sent us running out into the night. Can it be only twenty-four hours ago? It seems an eternity.

We have no water except that yellow foul stuff that is all about us. We drink sparingly of it, grimacing, wiping our lips. There is no food. There is no wood. We have no fire. This afternoon some one broke up a packing-case, kindled a fire, and made coffee. There was only enough for a few. The aroma made the rest of us sick with its fragrance.

Only two white men. We sit with bowed heads, leaning forward, looking out into the darkness. Near-by a group of negro men are sleeping. A young negro woman, separated from her family, lies moaning. She is going to give birth to a baby before morning—or so the old negro women say who have gathered around her. She is having a hard time. They