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(Continued from page 41)

with her by now that he could have forgiven her much more than an inability to care for his national sport.

Though he no longer paid Joyce the assiduous devotion of his first meeting. Jeanne Mazell was not the only one who saw through his transparent devices and realized that Billy Valdemagara was, as they phrased it, "sunk at last."

"It was a good ship, Billy," Jeanne said to him on the way home to Biarritz after the bull-fight, "but it couldn't float forever."

"I don't understand you," said the Marquis stiffly.

"Oh, yes, you do, my child," said the piquant blonde. "You know exactly what I mean. The good craft Valdemagara has been scuttled by an American corsair—"

"Jeanne," said Billy, "you are my friend, and I adore you. But you will not speak of this again?"

Jeanne looked at him. Her gentle blue eyes were misty.

"Billy, my friend!"

She put her hand in his, and he lifted it to his lips.

"Does she know?" asked Jeanne, ignoring his wish that the subject be not reopened. Jeanne Mazell knew men.

"I—I fear that she does," said Billy.

"You fear that she does," Jeanne smiled.

"I mean that," said Billy.

"But why? My poor dear infant, don't you know that no woman can be offended that a man loves her? She may not wish him to speak—although she will forgive a weakness that makes him tell her—but she wishes to know."

"I—I'm not sure that Mrs. Tracy would like to," said Billy.

"Oh," groaned Jeanne, "but you are besotted! Joyce Tracy—well, she's the nicest girl I've met in years, but no nicer than I, Billy."

"No nicer than you, my Jeanne," agreed the Marquis.

"Nor more virtuous," said Jeanne.

"Nor more virtuous," said the Marquis.

"Yet even I," chuckled Jeanne, "while I find it deplorable that a man should care for me, devoted as I am to my husband, still, realizing how tremendous was their temptation, I have even managed to forgive those who screamed about their love for me. Yes, Billy, Joyce will forgive you if she knows. Still, I wouldn't tell her."

"Heaven forbid. I'm fond of Larry," said the Marquis.

"Most men are, at first, of their loved one's husband," said Jeanne. "But—it would be a shame—she adores Larry, you know, and your friendship—"

"You think she does?" Valdemagara eyed her eagerly.

"Think so? I know so," said Jeanne.

"I—I wondered," said Billy.

JEANNE'S lips grew prim. "Then cease wondering, my angel, for I assure you it is so."

"She has perhaps mentioned her passion for Larry," suggested the Marquis.

"Naturally not," retorted Jeanne. "She's a bride. Larry is a most attractive man—"

"But their acquaintance was so brief before their marriage—"

"You've known her less than a week and fallen head over heels in love with her," she reminded him.

"Men do that with women," he observed. "But—do women—with men?"

"Often enough. Look here, Billy, you aren't dreaming of—"

"I'm dreaming of nothing—but of Joyce," he confessed.

"I wouldn't care for you if you did an un-nice thing, my dear Marquis," said Jeanne.

Involuntarily Valdemagara grinned. This petite little woman, hardly more than a child, reproving. . . . Then he saw how right she was.

"I won't, my Jeanne," he promised.

They had passed the border and were in the neighborhood of Bidart, where villas bloomed on every hillside. Plenty of people could have looked into the motor and witnessed what happened and gossip would have spread all over Biarritz.

FOR Jeanne Mazell leaned swiftly toward Billy and kissed him on the lips.

"There, you poor dear," she said.

He looked at her. "Jeanne, you blessed lamb—"

"I'll tell Jimmy in my letter tonight that I kissed you," she laughed.

"And I," he said, "will tell my God that you are the sweetest girl—oh, Jeanne, why must this happen to me? I—Jeanne, I would not boast, but after all, I am Valdemagara. There are girls, lovely, beautiful, well-born—who could care for me. Fifty generations, Jeanne—I want sons to inherit what it has pleased God to transmit to me, and Jeanne—I shall never have them. Jeanne, I shall love no one but Joyce, and—oh, my God!"

Appalled, Jeanne stared at him. She formed a quick intention. Somehow or other she'd get the Tracys out of France. It might be most advisable.

(To be continued next week)

Believe it or Not! By Ripley



CALIGULA

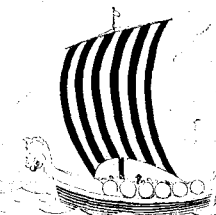
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CONSULSHIP UPON HIS HORSE
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Mr. Thruppy Assaults the Mole

Continued from page 7

clothing both Iris and Daffodil in several coats of gray paint, and, while he did this, numberless other workmen installed strange machines and instruments in queer and inconvenient places.

Throughout these months Mr. Thruppy found that he derived his most certain moments of happiness from the propinquity of the young officer who had enlisted him. This young officer came often to superintend the work of conditioning the Daffodil, and when he was about Mr. Thruppy was tireless in his efforts to waylay him. An opportunity to greet him, Mr. Thruppy discovered, insured him a pleasant day, and to have that officer stop in his appointed duties for a word of praise or salutation immeasurably increased the pride and satisfaction which Mr. Thruppy derived from the uniform he wore and the service he had entered. Mr. Thruppy's officer was, in the opinion of Mr. Thruppy, a bloke what a man could follow. Mr. Thruppy's officer was a young feller a man could take pride in.

IN THE fullness of time it was Mr. Thruppy's privilege to learn the mystic ritual of machine-gun drill. Also he was instructed in the use of rifle, grenade and small arms. But it irked him that he was barred from those selected companies which played with awful mechanisms in strange places; nor was he permitted to enter the holy mysteries which surrounded the construction of a flimsy but seemingly important pier which was erected in the harbor.

This pier reached out a great distance from the shore, and was painted to resemble solid masonry; but all men nursed the secret that it was in truth a hollow sham, a thing of ill-set piles and planking. About it much activity was centered into which the presence of Mr. Thruppy was not invited until a day when the saloons and deck-ways of the Daffodil were thronged with men, their machinery and gear and equipment neatly stowed, and Mr. Thruppy found himself standing by the stern hawsers while the ferryboat steamed forth to dress rehearsal.

It was preceded out of harbor by a dignified but obsolete cruiser, and was accompanied by its sister ferry, the Iris. After an hour's stately progress the cruiser turned and steamed slowly in from the outer harbor until it sidled up against the extreme end of the improvised pier. The Daffodil, for her part, swung in to the starboard and, bow on, pressed the cruiser firmly home against the flimsy structure. Obedient to instructions, Mr. Thruppy threw his scaling ladders up against the cruiser's side and the men swarmed up from the Daffodil, bearing guns, grenades and instruments of war over the cruiser's decks.

As far as Mr. Thruppy was concerned, it seemed to all work beautifully, like a bloomin' picnic; but the whole show was run off again and again, until some obscure person higher up was satisfied.

Another dress rehearsal took them forth into a waste of twinkling water. The elderly cruiser towed them this time, the ferryboats following her like two dogs held in leash, and Mr. Thruppy was appointed to a place in the stern of the cruiser to stand by the Daffodil's tow line.

Strange things occurred that day. The cruiser Vindictive and her tow came, as it were, to a rendezvous. A flock of airplanes droned forth to fly above them. Three other obsolete cruisers slipped up from the southwest and

veered toward them. A couple of submarines glided into the picture amid a great procession of buzzing, darting smaller craft of the coast patrols. The whole sea seemed alive with the light forces of the navy. It was like a regatta, a bloomin' 'oliday, and Mr. Thruppy, looking upon it, became vaguely conscious that he was in on something very pertickler. He was then called upon to cast off the two lines and they all went home.

The third rehearsal saw the whole lovely procession mobilized again. But this time they did not return. They waited, and while they waited the sun sank low and lower. Then about him as he stood beside his hawsers Mr. Thruppy heard a buzz of excitement among the men who thronged the deck.

"Goin' through with it," was the word, and Mr. Thruppy felt an unreasonable thrill ripple and quiver through him. "Goin' through with it!" With what? He looked upon the craft which thronged about them. Something . . . it sounded like a whisper within him. . . . Something . . . glorious.

With the Vindictive in the van, the whole fleet moved orderly into the east. To the starboard, destroyers steamed on the wings of the column; behind the Vindictive, the other cruisers followed. The submarines, with a little picket boat between them, moved sullenly in the swell, and the mosquito fleet was legion as it crowded the waterways between. And in the midst of them all the two ferryboats, incongruous interlopers in the company of these fighting craft, followed the motherly leader.

The night dropped, comfortably, its cool coverlet upon them, and Mr. Thruppy felt the need for fellowship. He turned to a sailor who was first in a long line which started from his starboard side. The man wore leggings, a tin helmet, and other things. He was a living arsenal. He was bound about with cartridge belts and hung with hand grenades.

"Where do we go to, matey?" Mr. Thruppy inquired.

"Well, seein' as you can't go out an' tell the neighbors," conceded his friend, "I'll tell yer. There's a coast town along 'ere that the 'Uns are usin' as a base for their perishin' U-boats. They bring 'em dahn out of a canal, see?"

"Yes," said Mr. Thruppy.

"WELL, we're goin' to stop up that there canal so that not no blighted shrimp could get aht, after we've done, let alone a submarine."

"An' wot 'as ferryboats got to do with that?"

"There's a mole," said the sailor.

"A mole?" cried Mr. Thruppy in justified amazement. "Not wot you've got on your chin?"

"There ain't no mole on my chin!" exclaimed the sailor indignantly.

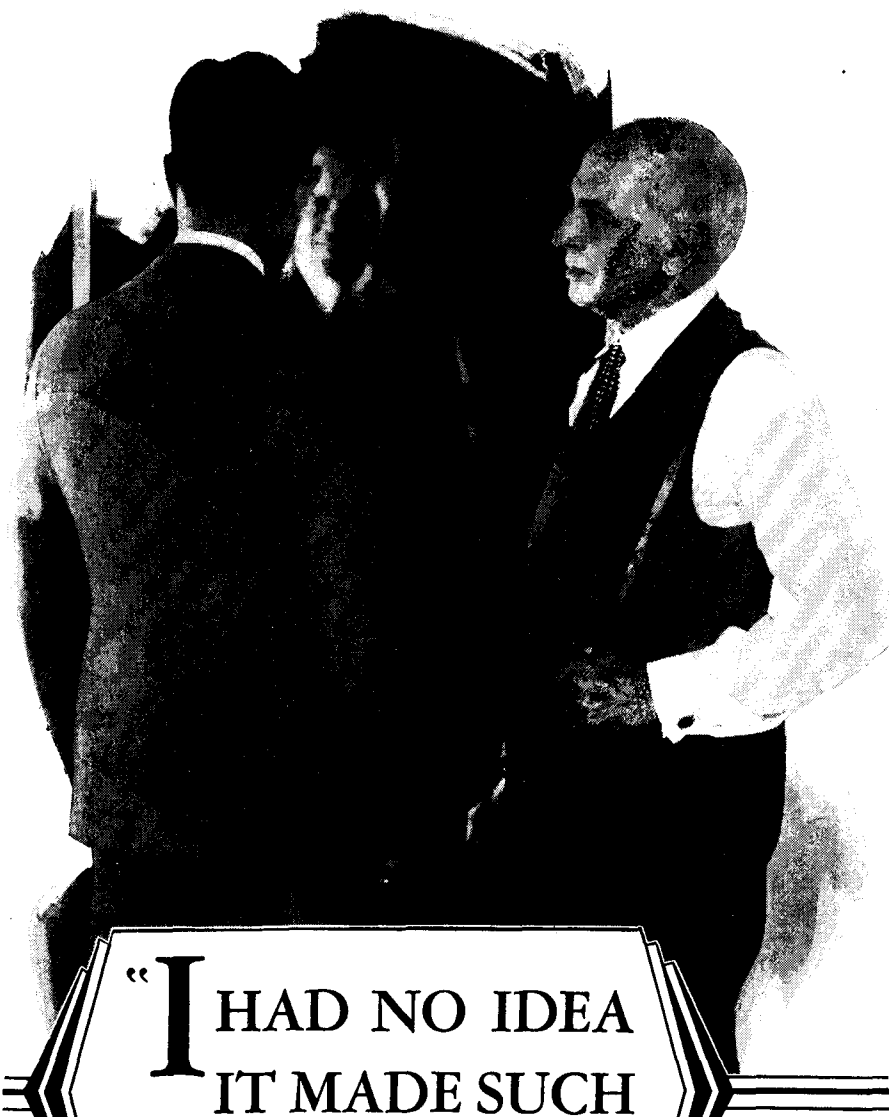
"I mean in a manner of speaking," explained Mr. Thruppy hurriedly.

"No, it ain't that kind of a mole. It's a pier, like, or breakwater, that's built out in a 'arf a circle, like that pier we practiced on. It's near a 'undred feet wide, an' it's covered with guns, an' machine-gun nests an' ammunition stores. That's what we're up to. We ain't got nothing more to do than to tyke that bleedin' mole an' clear it of the enemy, see?"

"Ow'll that stop up the canal?"

"It won't. But it'll let the block ships in. Them cruisers be'ind us is filled to the scuppers with wet cement, an' they're to be blowed up an' sunk in the

(Continued on page 44)



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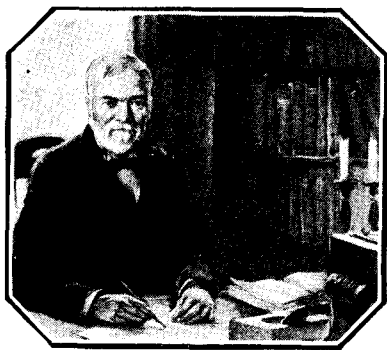
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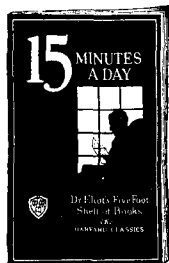
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(Continued from page 43)

maht o' the stinkin' canal, s'welp me." "Gaw!" murmured Mr. Thruppy again. "Blowed up! With all them men on bawd?"

"Them men," explained the sailor, "will be took off by motor boats w'ich will also carry torpedoes." He paused, to peer backward over the dark water. "Them submarines, now," he said. "They don't 'old nothink but ixplosives."

"They blow up too?" Mr. Thruppy gasped. The sailor nodded.

"There's a runway that joins the mole to the blinkin' land," he explained. "An' wot's to prevent them sendin' men in their thousands out to 'old us?"

Mr. Thruppy couldn't answer that one.

"Well, these 'ere subs, they run in under the runway, an' they blow their selves to bloody 'ell, an' likewise they blow up the runway, d'yer see?"

IN AN awesome picture of cataclysmic death and destruction, Mr. Thruppy saw.

"It's black soocride!" he declared.

"Right," said the sailor warmly.

At that moment a distant gun boomed forth, and another followed it—and still another.

"The monitors," breathed Mr. Thruppy's friend, and a movement rippled down the lines which thronged the deck, as the men stood to their arms and equipment.

The invisible guns boomed and rumbled in the distance and a little moaning sound came out of the night above them. Mr. Thruppy felt a singular, electric warning in the air, a sense of unseen but inescapable danger.

They were sailing serenely to their death. . . . As Mr. Thruppy realized this, the world vanished as the Vindictive slid into a thick and impenetrable fog.

Yet it was not a fog. It stung the inside of your nose and throat. It blinded. It strangled. Gas?

"Gaw!" The blood of Mr. Thruppy turned to water in his veins. Die? Not this way! Not like a dog. . . . But there was no escape. . . . none!

"This bleedin' smoke screen," whispered a voice in his ear, "ain't no ruddy perfume."

Mr. Thruppy crestfallen. Mr. Thruppy vaguely ashamed of himself while the sweat stood out on his forehead and a sickly feeling stirred in his middle. . . .

"An' now," whispered the invisible man at his side. "We take it."

Through the fog a brilliant white light gleamed, and even as the Vindictive emerged from the screen the light flickered and went out.

Mr. Thruppy, peering through the night, saw the dim form of a great, solid wall loom up before the ship. He stared at it fascinated, so that he did not see the long finger of light that went groping over the water until it reached out and touched the Vindictive. For an instant he was blinded by the glare; then he was immediately deafened.

FROM the wall in front of them the clap of doom burst forth, accompanied by the rattle of many little dooms. And almost simultaneously the deck leaped beneath Mr. Thruppy's feet and the air smote his ear drums with an intolerable din as the Vindictive answered the gunfire with all she had and took the full force of it in her nose. Horrified, Mr. Thruppy saw a blaze of fire leap from the foredeck and, he could have sworn, the forms of men flung like dolls into the air. A ghastly hail was playing in the air. Sharp fragments snapped and whined about him.

White rockets soared up from the shore, hanging a brilliant light in the air, and from the waist of the Vindic-

tive pale illumination arose with moans to linger over the raging wall which they approached. Then they were beside it, under a sky which blazed with many colored lights, and Mr. Thruppy found his feet slipping in blood.

With suicidal madness his shipmates filed forward to a companionway which led to the hail-swept exposure of the upper decks. But Mr. Thruppy knew better. He would hug that wall. Until the ship sank, he would live.

Like a cowed animal he crouched there in the stern, and watched the lunatics who filed up the companionway to the field of death. Above him he saw them filing onto the mole, hugging their rifles and machine guns, stumbling, falling—and joking. . . . The whole posture of Mr. Thruppy's body was in that moment a grimace of soul-dissolving fear, and he was uttering sounds which the roar of exploding guns and bursting shells mercifully hushed.

It was, then, phenomenal that the voice of Mr. Thruppy should have become abruptly audible above the fury; it was extraordinary that Mr. Thruppy should have straightened up and become suddenly erect. The sound which one single officer heard was not, regrettably, printable; but the officer who heard it didn't care. It was the young officer who had enlisted Mr. Thruppy—Mr. Thruppy's officer—and he was at the moment ascending the companionway which led to the brows from which the Vindictive was unloading her storming party.

Mr. Thruppy, seeing him, straightened up and shrieked his objection to this suicide. As he straightened up a fragment of flying steel nudged him sharply under the arm. He stiffened as he felt the impact of the blow, and slowly, consumed with fear, he inserted his hand under his blouse to feel his mortal wound. It was a mere scratch, and Mr. Thruppy stood grinning shamefully as he felt it. Looking upward, he caught the eye of his young officer, who smiled grimly down upon him, and at the same time his hand felt something more than the underclothing beneath his blouse. The combination was too much. Mr. Thruppy plunged forward and thrust his way into the line of ascending men.

What mattered it that Mr. Thruppy had no rifle, grenade or machine gun in his hand? He had seen his officer going forth to the battle, and he had felt close to his heart the soft fabric of Clara May's bright scarf.

"Do something!" she had cried. "Do something!" she had commanded. This, it had occurred to Mr. Thruppy, was his

opportunity to do something, and that realization overcame his fear.

The storming party was scattered down the mole in little groups. In the light of the star shells Mr. Thruppy advanced behind a group of men who were rushing toward a blank wall at the mole's end. The men kept dropping as they ran, until there were only a handful left. These turned back and ran toward him. Mr. Thruppy turned as well and he turned in time to see a column of flames arise down the mole.

It was as though, in the anteroom of hell, the door was opened. Mr. Thruppy fell upon his face, expecting death, and the song of the bullets was blithe above him. Then an officer was shouting so near him that he could hear the man's voice above the din.

"They've blown up the viaduct!" shouted the officer. "At 'em, lads! They can't reach us from the shore!"

In Mr. Thruppy's mind flamed the picture of a young officer who stood and chatted with his men on the deck of a submarine. . . . And then that sheet of flame. . . . That clap of doom. . . .

Someone was bending over him.

"Here's a machine gun!" cried a clear young voice. "Take it!"

The voice which had spoken to him in the engine-room of the Daffodil! The voice to which he had replied with a challenge to death! His officer's voice! Mr. Thruppy struggled to his feet, hugging his gun.

"Right, sir!" he shouted. "I'm all right!"

"It's Thruppy!" cried the youth, and Mr. Thruppy lived again in the warm glow which that recognition brought him.

MADLY he lurched and limped at his officer's side. He was part of a human wall which swept up the mole in the face of the guns they would silence. Again the men were falling. Again the line was thinning.

"Now!" snapped Mr. Thruppy's officer.

Frantically, but with the deftness of long practice, Mr. Thruppy set up his Lewis gun. They were in a position to see black figures which swarmed behind a barricade of wire, and Mr. Thruppy felt a wave of calmness flow through him as he turned the fire of his gun upon those figures.

"Oh, damn!" ejaculated Mr. Thruppy's officer, who crouched at his side.

Mr. Thruppy glanced at him, and was surprised to see that the grim intensity of the young man's face had given way to a gentle, regretful smile. And then, as Mr. Thruppy's officer slowly col-

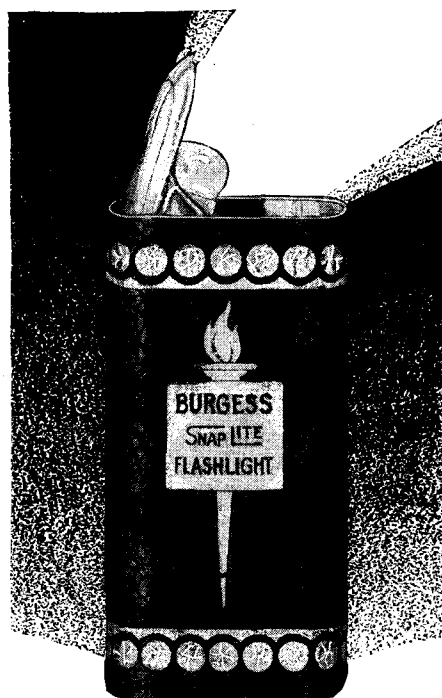
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lapsed at his feet, Mr. Thruppy read the meaning of that smile.

They had got him!... The filthy lice had killed him... His officer... His friend... The swine!... They had killed him! Incontinently Mr. Thruppy was lurching at a dog trot up the mole. Without his Lewis gun. Without rifle or grenade. Bare-headed he was loping toward that machine-gun nest, and shrieking a queer war song as he ran... He became the nucleus of a little group which followed him. A lanky officer, his face a mask of blood, trotting beside him, an automatic held against his hip. And the group increased.

SOMEONE was shouting from the rear. Shrieking and shouting that they stood in the way of their own fire. The machine guns! The machine guns couldn't play! But Mr. Thruppy was up to them now. He was fighting barbed wire. He was scrambling through it, his clothes torn from him, his companions hanging quivering in the wire. Half naked the lanky officer still held his place beside him. And then, magically, they were there! Hand to hand! Close quarters! Strange faces were snarling at them, black figures were pressing backward, screaming in a strange language. And Mr. Thruppy's fist went here and there. Like a machine he wielded that deadly fist, from a crouch he swung it upward with rhythmic regularity, and they scrambled to avoid it, bunching and pressing together, so that the bayonet work was slaughter.

A siren was blowing. "Back!" roared the lanky officer. "Back! Get back! It's the recall!"

Mr. Thruppy stared dumbly into the blood-smeared face.

"The recall!" repeated the officer. And Mr. Thruppy was conscious of the fact that, amid a pile of bodies, he and a little group of Royal Marines stood unopposed. Grinning they turned back, and reached the scaling ladders to the parapet with their little group much depleted.

They scrambled up—but not with Mr. Thruppy. Mr. Thruppy they had left behind; for Mr. Thruppy had stopped in his retreat to lurch from one to another of the limp forms which strewed the mole. While the chattering guns and the singing bullets kept him company, he sought here and there the thing which he still might save. Under the white glare of the rockets, he was the only living object in that field of death—and the siren shrieked above him in vain, calling him back, calling him away. Mr. Thruppy ignored it.

The siren ceased and the grappling anchors were frantically cut away. The Daffodil, her mission done, steamed away from her post to seaward, and the Vindictive started to move in the scend of the sea. It was then that above the parapet a symbolic figure arose. A man who rocked and swayed as he tottered toward the ship. Upon his shoulder was a burden, and blood covered his naked torso like a shawl.

From the Vindictive men and officers plunged forth to bring in this officer and man, and Mr. Thruppy, it seems, became a burden, too, as he reached the Vindictive's deck.

But Mr. Thruppy's faintness did not last, for as the Vindictive roared away from the mole, her fires leaping through her riddled funnels, her guns answering valiantly the blast of shell which followed her, one officer was brought into the crowded, reeking sick bay, and a wounded, half-naked sailor man with a limp bent over him, seeking his wounds, eagerly assuring all the world that this officer still lived, would live, must live... In this he was quite correct, and Mr. Thruppy came back to port with the record of having officiated

with a complete success as deck hand, fighting man, machine gunner, prize fighter, stretcher bearer and hospital orderly. It was also said of him that he made a very satisfactory patient.

By the time Mr. Thruppy was dismissed from the hospital the storming of Zeebrugge Mole and the blocking of the channel had become the news sensation of the year. By the time Mr. Thruppy returned to Liverpool it had become history. Mr. Thruppy, indeed, as he limped up the stairs of Clara May's home in Merton Street, carried in his pocket an evening paper which bore the last and most authentic record of the gallantry whereby that memorable success had been achieved.

It was Clara May who let him in, and it was she who stared at him with a peculiar mixture of solicitude, fear and poignant regret in her eyes.

"'Erb!" she cried, in a little scream of apprehension.

The sound of it brought in from the kitchen her father and Stoker Pentecost. The appearance of Stoker Pentecost at that moment was in itself an indication of the time which had elapsed during Mr. Thruppy's absence.

"'Ere," boomed Stoker Pentecost. "Wot's goin' on 'ere!" He spoke very possessively.

"'Erb," remonstrated Mr. Robinson, "I must say as 'ow I'm surprised. That you should come back to my 'ouse! That you should 'ave the witherin' cheek to come back 'ere!"

"Why not?" demanded 'Erb, staring at Stoker Pentecost meaningly. "I don't see any better man than wot I am." "I should think that once 'aving gone into 'iding," said Mr. Robinson, "you'd of stayed there. It's a penitentiary crime to waylay members of 'Is Majesty's forces an' slug 'em with brass knuckles an' such."

At this Mr. Thruppy looked long and lovingly upon Stoker Pentecost.

"So that's your little tale," he scoffed. "Well, I didn't use no brass knuckles, Mr. Robinson; I used my fist. An' I 'aven't been in 'idin', neither."

"Then w're 'ave you been?" demanded Mr. Robinson.

"I've been to Zeebrugge," said Mr. Thruppy.

Silence fell with the emphasis of an exclamation point. Stoker Pentecost broke it.

"That's a likely story!" he roared. "You a deck 'and on a ferryboat!"

"If yer don't believe it," grinned Mr. Thruppy, "look at this."

HE JERKED from his pocket the evening paper, and flinging it open before them revealed to their startled gaze the headline:

**ZEEBRUGGE VALOR AWARDS
MADE PUBLIC**

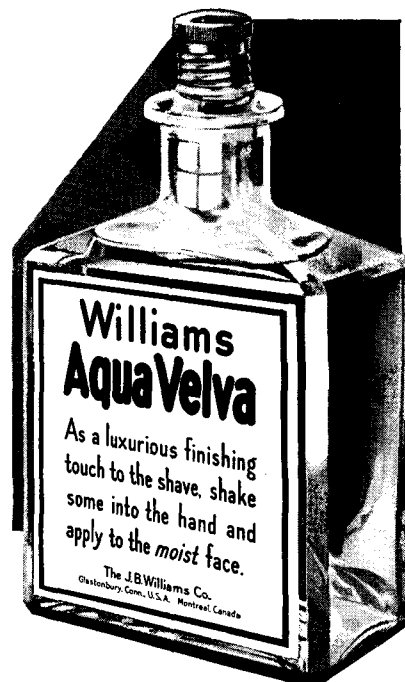
And there, proudly under the letter T stood the name of Dkhnd. Herbert Thruppy, R. N. V. R., awarded Conspicuous Gallantry Medal.

It was only natural that Clara May should draw close to Mr. Thruppy's shoulder the better to read his name upon the list. And it was only natural that Mr. Thruppy, to hold the paper open, should pass one arm about her shoulders. Thus, when Mr. Robinson somewhat rudely snatched the paper from his grasp so that he and Stoker Duncan Pentecost might have it to themselves, it was natural that Clara May should be left imprisoned in Mr. Thruppy's arms.

"Oh, 'Erb! 'Erb!" she sobbed quietly. "Oh, 'Erb, 'Erb, 'Erb..."

"'Ere!" roared Mr. Pentecost. "'Oo do you think you're pawin' abaht, eh?" He lunged forward but Mr. Robinson stood firmly in his way.

"Dunc," said Mr. Robinson ominously, "I'm surprised at you."



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For use after shaving

Just a Good Customer

Continued from page 18



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of the theater, and I make my shows, for the most part, to please myself. If they get over with me, they're reasonably sure to get over with audiences. Sometimes I have to battle with my staff to get my stuff in.

Never Argue

"You might say that no musical can get over unless it has at least one great tune—and then someone mentions Kid Boots. You might say that no musical can get over unless it has comedy—and then some lad bobs up and points to Rio Rita. And you might say that a musical comedy must have real beauty of sets and costumes—and then it'll be just your luck to have someone say, 'How about Irene, mister?'"

"Of course, in a 'book show' a good yarn is important.

"I never argue during a rehearsal. If I think a thing is good, it goes in, and if someone else thinks something is good and I think it's rotten, I say, 'All right, put it in and we'll see.' Then later it either stays in because it is good or it goes out.

"The funny thing is that often the men who write the book and lyrics or who compose the music for a show don't know when they've got something good. I remember when Ruby was casting about for a key number for The Five-O'Clock Girl. He came over to my apartment one afternoon all upset because he couldn't seem to hit one. He played over some of the stuff he had, and among them was the Thinking of You number. He didn't think it was so hot, but when he'd played it over I said to him, 'There's your key number: what are you kicking about?' And sure enough it turned out that way.

"Unlike a lot of producers, I always attend my own openings. I don't sit out front, but I'm backstage or else standing in the rear of the house. But I don't always stay for the final curtain—I wait for a spot where we've been counting on a big laugh, and if it doesn't come I duck out and wait for the boys to bring me the bad news."

A lot of producers will tell you what a wonderful training school the chorus is, and they'll point to a number of stars who have been graduated from it. But Goodman is skeptical.

Once He Took a Flyer

"On my ninety-ninth birthday, he said, 'I hope to produce a show in which the chorus girls are beautiful and intelligent and gifted. But for the present I guess we'll have to worry along, draping the back of the ensemble with the beautiful dumb-bells and putting the unbeautiful but more talented steppers in the front.

"Every once in a while I say to myself, 'Phil, you ought to get out and learn about your chorus and its possibilities. You ought to have a chorus quiz and find out what each girl's aspirations are, whether she has any hidden talent, whether she is star material.' But I've never gotten around to it, and I don't suppose I ever will. I don't know where the Mary Eatons come from. They just seem to me to have always been finished products."

Goodman can well afford to trade only in finished products. When he wants a player he'll go out and get him by kidding, cajoling, flattery—and by offering a fatter salary than any other manager.

One interesting thing about seat sales that will probably be news to most thea-

tergoers is the fact that the balcony and gallery sale has the most to do with the success or failure of a production.

"Unless a show does a brisk business upstairs, it can't last," Goodman said. "If the upstairs business is good, the business on the floor will grow, but it doesn't work the other way round. The people who sit in the balconies see just as many shows as the people who sit in the orchestras, but there's this difference between them: if your low-priced seats are sold out, you can sell a patron an orchestra seat at a higher price. But you can't sell floor customers on the idea of sitting aloft."

Despite the fact that his business is a large one, Goodman clings to the small, sparsely furnished office which he engaged in a remodeled Fifth Avenue dwelling when he started in show business. You have to enter an art gallery and take a small elevator to reach it, and when you get there you'll find only a great antique table and a few chairs. On the walls hang some antique vestments and some rare French prints.

Goodman's chief interest outside of the theater is philology. He has as large a collection of dictionaries as anyone in the world. And some day, he says, he's going to write a book on the subject—but he probably never will. Also he likes good food carefully selected and skillfully prepared and served.

Once he took a flyer in the publishing business for a short time. He didn't make much money, but he had an awful lot of fun. He published How's Your Second Act? by Arthur Hopkins, and George Jean Nathan's The Book Without a Title and In Defense of Women, by H. L. Mencken. With Mencken he wrote

Do You Remember?—a series of mellow, tender reminiscences of old saloons, barber shops and cigar stores.

When he was young he had a tutor, and he's been busy self-uneducating himself since he was eighteen or nineteen. He's tried to spare his young daughter from having to go through the same process, and now he boasts that she's the most imperfectly "educated" child of whom he knows.

"She read Proust when few people in America had read him, and she was writing book reviews for The New York Tribune before she was seventeen."

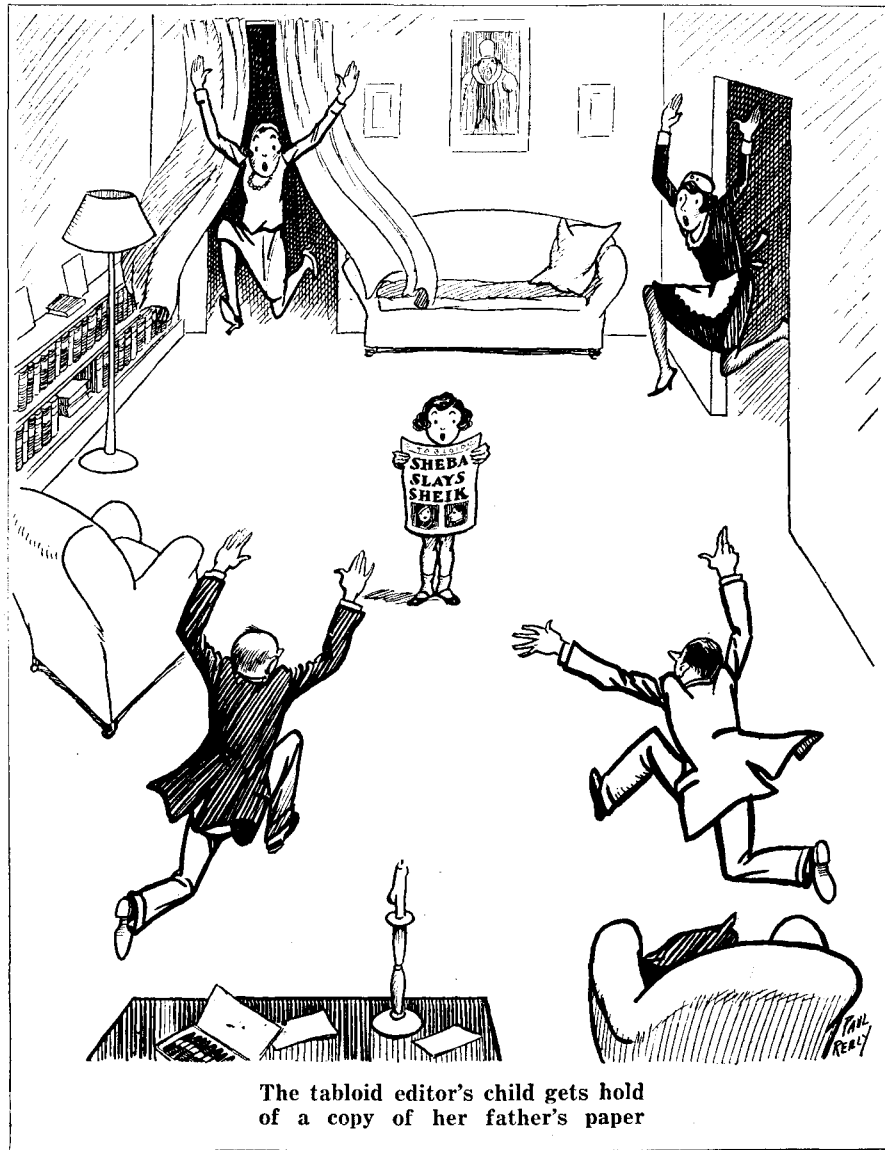
Only Good Plays

Goodman is going to keep on producing musical comedies because he likes musical comedies, and the ones that please him apparently please the public. He wouldn't undertake to do a revue, because revues bore him. But he will produce legitimate plays if he can find any he likes.

"Next season," he said, "I'll produce any good play that interests me. But nobody ever sends me a good play. They think I'm too much of a musical-comedy man. They'll call up and offer me the road rights for Such-and-Such for \$15,000. What do I care about the road rights for Such-and-Such? But if somebody'll bring me a play that gets me all worked up, I'll put it on—and I don't care what it costs.

"But, mind you, I'll produce only good plays. When my time comes they're going to have to say of me:

"Well, there goes old Phil Goodman. He produced many flops, but not bad plays."



The tabloid editor's child gets hold of a copy of her father's paper



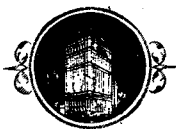
Good night

It is early in the morning. The masque is over. In her hair there's strange perfume of crimson flowers; in her memory there's music soft and sweet as any prayer; and she lingers while her mirror tells her the tales it told ten thousand years ago . . . Warm, fleecy blankets beckon . . . The stars are her lamps and cool morning winds steal in the windows and she pulls the covers high and smiles and sleeps—and all the happy make-believers come and live her masquerade again in her dreams: a pink-cheeked chimney sweep whispers to a listening Cinderella; a fairy Princess and a pagan Pan rollick with Dutch millers in wooden shoon; Harlequin and lovely Columbine tell tales that hadn't any words; and 'round her a sad eyed clown in dots and puffs vies with a familiar "Emperor" in royal red. *She slept.*

Good night. See you soon.

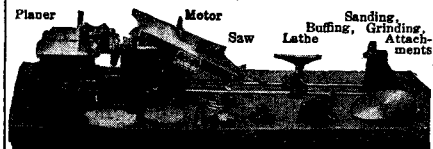
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Wings of Destiny

Continued from page 16

"A friend of mine, Miss Joyce Van Deusen, expected to sail for France about two weeks ago, for Red Cross work," he began. "Do you think it's possible—do you think there's any way you can find out whether she's here yet, and where she's located?"

The girl with the clear eyes wrote a name on a slip of paper and disappeared for a few minutes. When she returned, as quietly as she had gone, Joyce was with her.

JOYCE, it seems, had been addressing cartons of medicated gauze when the information girl had told her that a peach of a lieutenant in an English uniform was asking for her in the outside office. And Joyce had said, "He must be looking for someone else. I don't know any English officer." But the girl in the office had said, "Well, come and see him, anyhow. If you don't want him, I'll take him. I dreamed of losing money last night, and that's good luck. . . ."

Delavan learned these details about half an hour later while he and Joyce were waiting for a train for Versailles—this after she had been granted leave for the day. He only learned these details by listening carefully, her conversation at first being more or less disjointed because she couldn't walk up and down the station platform without breaking into an excited little dance step every so often—a terpsichorean hiccup, so to speak, brought on by too much excitement.

"And, oh, Mill, I'm so glad you enlisted in the British army," she said, admiringly stroking the sleeve of his uniform, "especially after our silly things acted the way they did. You got my letter—on the Paris?" she suddenly asked.

"Yes," said Dell.

"I wanted you to know!" she said in a low voice, and then with a hungry little squeal, "I feel so proud of you I hardly know what to do!"

Delavan, however, didn't feel so proud.

On the train she sat very close to him—so they could hear each other, you understand, without talking like two heralds on a balcony window.

"Have you done much flying?" she asked him once.

"A little," he nodded.

"Is it—awfully dangerous?"

"No; it's special work—very safe, really," he told her, carefully watching his words. "Dispatch flying, I suppose you could call it—carry correspondence and things like that. And once I flew to England and came back with a passenger—"

HER lips were slightly parted. Her eyes were wide with a childlike adoration.

Delavan laughed as he looked at her.

"Why are you laughing?" she quickly asked.

"My dear child," he murmured, "because you look so young."

"But I'm not so young," she protested. "Of course, I'm not old, either," she was careful to add, "but I was old enough to get my papers and be wrapping up medicated gauze when you came around this morning!"

They had a gorgeous day.

First of all they went to the Little Trianon where Marie Antoinette liked to keep house with her Louis whenever it was possible to steal away from the palace. Joyce and Dell looked into the drawing-room; they peeped into the kitchen; and they walked in the garden, too. When no one was looking, Dell

picked a forbidden sprig of forget-me-not.

"Allow me, Marie, to give you this small bloom," he said with a gracious bow.

"Thanks, Louis, old kid," said Joyce, and gave him a court curtsy for his bow.

Next came lunch, in a mysterious little Café de Mazarin, where they were the only guests—a lunch that was as memorable for its contented, smiling silences as for its conversations regarding things past and still to come.

After lunch—and they didn't hurry—they went for a long rambling walk in the palace gardens—in the orangery—among quiet fountains—Dell saying once, "When I'm king of the world I'll give you this place if you like it," and Joyce pretending to tremble with joy and answering, "Oh, tempt me not with palaces, Your Majesty; I am but a young girl."

It was growing dark when they returned to Paris. Dell wanted Joyce to go to dinner with him, but she had an engagement. Upon examination, this engagement turned out to be with the chief of her department.

"I can see right now where you will fight this war in Paris," said Dell, an unreasoning feeling of jealousy stirring within him.

"Jealous as ever, Louis?" said Joyce. "In the first place, the chief of my department is married. I'm dining with him and his wife. And in the second place, I'm already booked for active service next week—somewhere up in the Rheims sector, if you're ever flying that way."

SO Dell took her to the hotel where she was staying, and walked with her to the alcove where an *ascenseur* had been built in the old stair-well.

"Good-by," he said then. "Of course—I may not see you again—but if I don't, I'd like you to know that—I've never had a happier day."

"Mill, dear, of course I know I shall see you again," she tremulously answered, "but if I don't—"

She lifted her face and he kissed her. A few minutes later he found himself in the street—his heart seething with tenderness and something large and scratchy in his throat. . . .

"You'd better be careful," Delavan told himself with a grimace as he walked along. "This may be how it took hold of Dad."

"Ah—but that's different," he answered, changing the grimace to a frown of impatience. "Joyce wouldn't make a monkey of anybody."

"Dad may have had the same idea," he told himself, "and it was Joyce's own aunt who sank him."

He ended the argument by calling on mechanics and mathematics—that is to say, he took out his watch and stared at the dial.

"A quarter to seven," he thought. "Time I started for the Lanterne or I'll be late."

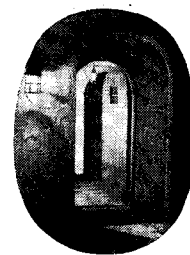
He wondered, his frown growing, if he would see Mitzi there again.

"And I wonder if Joyce knows that Mitzi's in Paris," he continued. "I doubt it, because she didn't say anything."

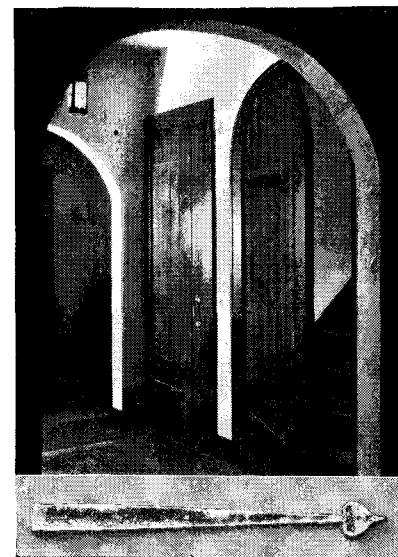
But Delavan hadn't said anything to Joyce about Mitzi, he remembered.

"Mitzi never tried to hide it—that she was pro-German. I don't know what Joyce would think if she saw her here now, running around with an English major. Perhaps I ought to tell Mitzi—to put her on her guard."

(Continued on page 48)

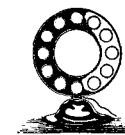


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(Continued from page 47)

He found a seat at the same table where he had dined the night before—a seat from which he could watch the other diners and the door as well. But no matter how hard he watched, no dark, piquant little figure was presently giving him a charming wink of recognition; no graceful, jeweled hand was writing a note on cigarette paper and sending it to him mysteriously by a waiter.

From time to time the manager strode among the tables, keeping his eye on the business, ready to act at a moment's notice if anyone wished to complain of the service or buy a picture. On one of his brisk jaunts about the room he stopped and spoke confidentially into Dell's ear:

"You are a friend, I believe, of M. Goya, who lives next door? . . . Ah, yes; he said I would not mistake you. He wishes to see you as soon as dinner is over. *Pas du tout, M'sieur.* . . ."

And descending into English to demonstrate his cosmopolitanism, he concluded, "Halways please' to o-blig' "

DEHAVAN finished his coffee and a few minutes later was ringing the bell next door. The concierge was still at her embroidery, for all the world like some old sister of the Fates. Dell climbed the stairs till he came to M. Goya's name; and after knocking with no result he opened the door and entered.

The outer office was empty. No camouflaging clerks were at the card-index cabinets—no human addressographs were compiling lists of names. But from down the corridor of the suite Delavan heard two voices. Both were speaking in Spanish; but Dell hadn't been there long, wondering whether he ought to slam a door or announce his presence with a cough, when he became convinced that one of those voices belonged to M. Goya—and the other to Mitzi herself.

"It's like an Italian opera," he thought uneasily. "I can't understand a word they're saying, but I can catch the drift of it."

And the drift of it went both backward and forward as far as the human race. As Antony felt toward Cleopatra, so M. Goya felt toward the Baroness Von Seidler of the piquant figure and provoking eyes. But instead of appreciating his attentions apparently the only emotion which they aroused in Mitzi was amusement.

M. Goya grew more and more eloquent—more and more insistent, until Mitzi laughed and said something—a short, clear something—which for a moment seemed to end the party.

"She probably told him how funny he looks," thought Dell, smiling in spite of himself.

M. Goya spoke again—with purpose, more than passion, this time in his voice.

"'Funny or not, I'll have a kiss!'" roughly translated Dell; and just as Mitzi came running down the hall, M. Goya in pursuit, Delavan managed to open the door and shut it with a bang—his cap on the back of his head, whistling Over There, as though he had just arrived.

"WHY, Mill!" laughed Mitzi, almost running into his arms. "Please do not think us childish, but little Fonso here is getting fat, and the only way I can persuade him to reduce is to run races with him up and down the hall. After a while, when he is more presentable, we shall run up and down the Bois."

"So you two know each other," interrupted M. Goya, evidently none too pleased either with Mitzi's banter or Delavan's appearance.

There was hidden significance in the

smile which Mitzi gave to Dell from underneath her eyelashes.

"Know each other?" she repeated. "Do two people ever know each other—when they are engaged to marry?" she gently asked.

Searching his memory, Dell wondered if he had not read something like this.

To escape unwelcome attentions, a girl pretends an engagement. Obviously it was up to the man to play the game for her—and not a difficult thing to do, he thought, still responding to the smile from beneath Mitzi's eyelashes.

And whether or not she had said it, Goya *did* look funny—a fat little fool who insisted on being taken seriously. Dell had not forgotten his first welcome at No. 37. It would be a pleasure to help deflate such importance.

"I'm not sure, Mitzi," he said, "that I approve of these races with M. Goya. The cause, I must confess, is a good one, but if I did not know you so well—"

M. Goya's dislike of the young American almost seemed to leap from a smolder to a sudden flash of flame.

"You think I sent for you to play the fool like this?" he asked. "Then let me remind you that here, from these headquarters, we are dealing with a war—not a comedy. So you two know each other as well as that, do you?" he continued with a challenging ring in his voice. "Good! Then I will put you both on the same job tomorrow night and in that way you will not be separated."

He bowed them in satiric direction along the corridor which led to his private office.

"For one thing," he continued, seating himself at his desk, "I am sick of the complaints which I am continually receiving from headquarters. 'Why have you no news?' 'Why didn't you tell us about the French drive at Soissons?' 'You are sending us nothing but commonplace gossip which would be uninteresting even if true.' And all the time they are urging me to make a bold stroke—reminding me that wars are not always won on the battlefields—that there is plenty of room for effort behind the lines."

"THAT'S one of the penalties of being Chief—receiving letters like that," said Mitzi with a graceful wave of her hand.

"Penalty or not," said M. Goya, "I am tired of it! They want a bold stroke? They shall have it! They shall have it without delay!"

"Sounds as though you have something good in mind," said Mitzi, who was beginning to listen more attentively.

"You shall judge for yourself," said the other, lowering his voice. "Among the other commonplace gossip which I acquired today is the fact that the British Premier arrives in Paris at four-thirty tomorrow afternoon. He dines with Clemenceau that evening, and later they call together to see Poincaré."

"What of that?" he echoed. "I will tell you! In crossing the Channel tomorrow he will have the protection of steel nets against our submarines, but in Paris there are no steel nets! In crossing the sidewalk, for instance, to Poincaré's door, there is nothing to protect him from being sunk if one of our human submarines is waiting there with a miniature torpedo!"

"You mean you would have him assassinated?" demanded Mitzi, her look of attention deepening.

"Why frighten yourself at a word?" retorted Goya. "Let us say that I will have him removed. And let us say that I will have him removed in such a way that the world will believe that an American has done it! Ah! Now you

see the boldness of my stroke?" Not only will a dangerous enemy be out of the way but the Allies will be split beyond repair."

"How do you mean—the world will believe that an American has done it?" asked Delavan, seeing in this some prophetic distortion of himself.

"I do not know whether I can penetrate your perceptions by a simple statement," said the other, "but as the Premier falls you shout in a loud voice, 'With love from your friends in America—'"

"Fantastic!" muttered Mitzi.

"But I tell you it is not fantastic!" protested Goya. "It is simplicity itself. Always before, in these confidential visits, the Premier's car has been followed by one other machine from the *Sûreté Général*. Now!"

HE TURNED to the map of Paris on the wall.

"After leaving Clemenceau's, the two cars will drive toward the rue St. Honoré, the Premier's car ahead, the *Sûreté* car behind. But as the latter car starts, it will be struck from the rear by one of our boys in a taxi. You two will be in a fourth car, just behind the taxi, and, carefully avoiding the collision, you swing around and follow the Premier's car, as though you were now his guard of honor. When he stops at the Élysée, our clever young American here jumps out as though to assist him, but instead of that he will shoot the most famous shot of the war. Then shouting loudly, 'With love from your friends in America!' he will run back to his own waiting car—where you, Baroness, will be awaiting him, though holding yourself concealed—and there you are, less than a minute later, on the Champs Élysées, and the war is virtually over within the next twenty-four hours."

Yes—at least Dell could see that. If the British could be made to believe that their dynamic Prime Minister had been shot by an American, there wouldn't be much coöperation left between the two nations—and still less between the two armies. A queer twist of Fate: if a war which had been kindled by one assassination should be extinguished by another!

"But what shall I do?" thought Dell. "Refuse, and have somebody else try it? Or say I'll do it and then have 'engine trouble'?"

Meanwhile Mitzi was saying in a low voice, "You are joking, Alfonso."

"Joking?" said Goya, his eyes shining. "What? You think I would joke when Heaven has given me an inspiration like this?"

"'Heaven!'" she mocked.

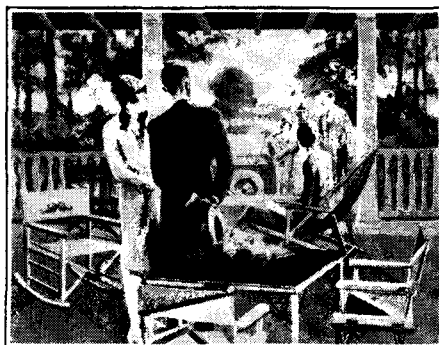
"Heaven, or the god of battles—whatever you will," he blithely answered. "Joking? Not I! And let me tell you this, my little racing friend! If I write to headquarters of my plan, and add that you refused to help me—and so great an opportunity to win the war was lost, perhaps forever—it will not be a joking matter for you, either."

"BUT to shoot a man in cold blood—without giving him a chance."

"Why not?" demanded Goya. "All war nowadays is carried on in cold blood. They teach a man to fire a high explosive shell at an invisible target. What does he care who is killed—or whether his victims have a chance or not? This visitor who comes to Paris tomorrow: he tells of the millions of high explosive shells which he has had made and shipped to the front. So how can he object now at just one little cartridge being shipped to his own private front—with love from his friends in America?"

"You are crazy," said Mitzi.

"I may be crazy now," exulted Goya,



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"but I shall be a great man the day after tomorrow."

"The British Premier is guarded in every possible way," protested Mitzi. "What you are proposing is simple suicide for those who attempt it!"

"Not if you are clever."

"What I can't understand is this," said Delavan, who had just arrived at his decision. "Why should the Baroness be in the taxi—especially if she's to hide herself?"

"What you can't understand is more than that," said Goya contemptuously. "But please try and grasp this much—if nature permits. After the Premier falls, you escape in a car which is apparently empty. But as soon as you leave the scene and turn the first corner, the Baroness raises herself from the floor where she has been concealed, and you are a young officer escorting a charming young lady across the city and not a lonely figure who has just made history. In other words, the presence of the Baroness permits you to escape. Now do you understand why she is to be in the car?"

"But suppose I don't escape?" persisted Dell. "Suppose one of his bodyguard gets me? Then what becomes of the Baroness?"

A GAIN Goya's smoldering spirit suddenly seemed to break into an open flame.

"Who do you think is the Chief around here?" he snapped. "What do you want? Something safe, like playing marbles? Do you think this war is being fought with rosebuds?"

He arose from his desk and strode to the wall on which was hung a picture of a bull-fight—a lithe Castilian dealing death to a clumsy, hulking bull from the north. Beneath this picture were two crossed swords; and snatching up one of these, he made a feint at Dell.

"War is a battle of men—not roses," he said. "It is not for the chicken-hearted. It is not—as you say in your United States—it is not for the tame rooster!"

Warmer than ever from his own heat, he feinted again—probably expecting Delavan to draw back—or even to make for the door which led to the stairs. But instead of this his visitor sat as quietly as before. Goya's blade, expecting to find nothing, found an unresisting mark instead.

The edge of his sword drew a sudden red line across Delavan's cheek.

The door unexpectedly opened and two men looked in—one of whom Dell had seen in the outside office on his first visit to No. 37.

"Did anyone call?" asked this one.

"Yes," said Mitzi. "I think I screamed. Goya is beside himself. Do something to stop him, can't you?"

BUT Dell was attending to that.

Feeling the hot flash on his face, he had sprung to the rack and had snatched the other sword from the pegs. "If we're to fence," he said, "let us start even," and with a darting thrust, he lightly touched his blade to Goya's neck, giving, if anything, a little more than he had received.

"Be careful," said Mitzi, speaking in a guarded voice to Dell. "It isn't the first time he has done this. He studied at Heidelberg."

"He should have come to Staten Island," said Delavan, and the next moment was parrying a vengeful attack. The two men had entered and had shut the door. It soon became apparent that neither bore any love for Goya—they neither looked hopeful when he attacked nor sorry when he failed—but there was something in their expressions—something which was at once attentive and slightly sour—by which it was ap-

parent that they expected him to gain the victory.

And indeed Goya seemed to be in his element, posturing and flinging about with all the classic grace of the fencing master—left arm bent out and upward like a figure in an Egyptian bas-relief—right foot advanced and almost tapping out the rhythm of one of those dances of death.

A prickle went up and down Delavan's back, as Sterne's line flashed through his mind: "To be alone with your sword; to live or to die depending on your knowledge of twisting your wrist."

He caught a glimpse of the two men—watching as though for the inevitable—and then, swinging around, he saw that Mitzi, too, would hardly have served as model for a monument of Hope. To encourage her, the next time he parried Goya's attack he added a disconcerting thrust of his own—a thrust which made Mitzi catch her breath as though she could hardly believe what she had seen.

"Alfonso," she said to Goya then, speaking slowly and distinctly so that everyone in the room could hear it, "I want you to stop this—please. You started it yourself, and if anything happens, you have only yourself to blame."

Goya, beginning to breathe hard, answered, "I started it, yes. And I'll stop it soon enough!"

Bit by bit, the fencing match had become a fight. The pretty gestures of the left arms were forgotten; and so were the rhythmic "Tap-tap-tap" of the dancing feet. The swords were no longer fencing foils; they were thirsty tongues of steel—click-clicking with impatience whenever they met each other instead of what they sought.

It was, in its way, symbolic of the larger warfare to the north.

GOYA probably wished, with all his heart, that he had never snatched his sword from the wall; but having started, it was more dangerous to stop than to continue. If he lowered his sword, Dell's point might find his throat before he could speak. Whereas if he continued, one lucky stroke might win the victory. If, for instance, by crouching low, he could get beneath his opponent's guard. . . .

Lower and still lower he crouched; craftily, imperceptibly, not to put the other on his guard. But fractions of an inch, however invisible one by one, became apparent to the eye when added together often enough; and seeing his antagonist, so to speak, descending the *ascenseur*, Dell recalled a pithy line from Dumas: "The fencer who plays low has that advantage; but he lays himself open from above."

Goya, lunging upward and forward, might have been reminded of the line when he felt Dell's blade across the side of his neck.

"Don't be a fool, Goya," said Dell as he saw the other wince. "You started it. Now stop it."

Goya's reply was a vicious swing of his sword—an attack which in a boxing match is generally described as a gas-house swing—devoid of either reason or art. Dell sprang out of reach and Goya dashed in, swinging at him again. And then, as abruptly as this, the fight was over. Goya, rushing forward, had impaled himself on Delavan's protecting point—impaled himself like a moth on a pin. . . .

A few minutes later Mitzi said, "I will make out a report to be sent to headquarters. You must all sign it as witnesses." And later still, going down the stairs alone with Delavan, she stopped and whispered, "Confess, now. You know it as well as I do. You killed him because he tried to kiss me!"

(To be continued next week)

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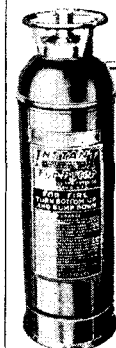
I paid L. D. Payne, Iowa, \$4,500 for his first 200 days with me—he is still averaging from \$500 to \$650 a month. Putnam of a small Michigan town averages \$600 every month. Many others averaging from \$6,500 to \$10,000 a year in this big pay field—the field of fire prevention.



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Side Trips Included

Continued from page 13

ship goes on from Singapore to Penang. We can go up to Kuala Lumpur by train or motor, spend a day there, proceed to Penang and rejoin the ship. It will also enable me to escape from my tour party for three or four days, thank Heaven."

"Harold," I said, "you have a genuine idea. We shall go to Kuala Lumpur."

I immediately borrowed a map and found the magic city midway between the two ports of call, but it was an English map and there is no way to compute mileage if you are looking at a British map. People who lay out English maps have a notion that it is silly to want to know the exact distance from one spot to another, so they discourage investigation. True, they insert a scale of miles at the bottom, but it is not the American system of so many miles to the inch. Kuala Lumpur looked to me like a town that would be about two hundred miles down the road. We began inquiring of tourists, stray Englishmen, or traveled Americans. Harold asked people on the port deck and I took the opposite side of the ship. The result was surprising when we next met.

It became a game. Harold and I, at first only lukewarm, now seethed with eagerness to reach Kuala Lumpur and when the Hillary Castle finally pulled into Singapore, we dashed ashore and asked natives if they had ever been to the mystic city, how they went there and how much it cost. Everyone agreed that a man who traveled to the Malay Peninsula and missed Kuala Lumpur ought to have his head examined. Harold neglected his tour party and I spent my time with owners of motor cars, and for three days the enterprise hung in mid-air.

Fate Was Against Us

Nobody knew where Kuala Lumpur was or how to get there. Old-time drivers who had been over the road once could not remember whether it was paved or mud. When it came to prices, the highest figure asked for what would be a brief motor trip in America was five hundred dollars. There was no lowest price. Garages and private owners wanted to know "what will I do with my car after I get to Kuala Lumpur?" It never occurred to anyone that he could drive his car back to Singapore and quietly resume former habits of life. As for taking a train, we were informed it was out of the question. The coaches were not intended for white men, they told us. Mosquitoes came out of their swamps and devoured strangers. Evil reptiles and poisonous insects crawled along the right of way, stinging everyone.

We tried hard to get to this garden-spot city, hidden away in the central valley of the Malay Peninsula, but it was not to be. Fate was against us and Harold mourned and was abrupt with his tourists. He became gloomy and refused to look at any of the interesting sights in Singapore.

There are three hundred thousand Chinamen in Singapore, thirty thousand white men and women and a sprinkling of Malays, Arabs, Hindus, Japs and others, and when there is a fire alarm, all try to attend in person. Street cars put aside business when the fire-engine clangs and the motorman, who has no rails to guide him, goes as far as possible, while his passengers lean out the windows and cheer the brave fire ladders.

The reason for this undue excitement over a conflagration is that life is

pretty dull in Singapore, say what you will. The main attraction is food and the main occupation is eating and the Chinese have no meals or meal hours. Breakfast means nothing to a Chink, especially a Singapore Chink, and he never heard of lunch or dinner.

His notion is to eat all the time and he does fairly well. His only hours for not eating are those devoted to slumber and he likes to sit down in the middle of a busy street, surrounded by rushing traffic and five hundred others and consume food. He is assisted in his gastronomic adventures by ambulant Chinese food-sellers, who carry edibles in boxes and distribute them from morning till night. Chinese women do not eat at all, which is a good system, and in our country would permit many ardent young males to get married, instead of waiting two years. Further, I doubt if there are any Chinese women, and though there must be a few around, one never sees them. Harold boasted of having seen several carrying small barrels, but so many Chinese men look like women that the chances are Harold was mistaken.

We knocked about Singapore for several days, talked hopelessly of Kuala Lumpur and sailed away to Penang, which is where the tin comes from—not ordinary tin, like the roof of a country garage, but silvery looking blocks, two feet long and a foot thick, and called either pigs or pickles.

Mrs. Southard, the ship's soprano, approached Harold again with soft words concerning the concert, the big, official concert, which was to provide unique entertainment for all on board and provide a fund for the boiler-room crew.

By and large, there had been a deal of dissension over this concert, dissension that started far back in the Pacific, when the entertainment committee fell into a squabble and almost came to blows. It seems that every ship should have a concert at some time during the voyage, and that the principal purpose of a ship's concert is to demonstrate that the average human animal is not a talented creature at all but a blithering idiot, especially when he stands up to amuse, entertain and instruct.

There are various ways to raise money for the boys down in the boiler-room. The official concert is one of them, and the fancy dress ball is another. The marine fancy dress ball is still popular on some ships and on some oceans, but there are no longer masquerade balls on the Hillary Castle. There will never be a mask ball or a fancy dress soirée on any ship commanded by Captain Carter Oakes, and it was astonishing to learn why this was so. After seven voyages the captain commenced to say "no" to eager ladies and of course they dispatched letters to the Line, asking that he be discharged.

Captain Oakes discovered that if he permitted such balls to be held, the male passengers went too far. That is the way he put it.

"They go too far," he said to me. "Sailors certainly learn about people."

There is, perhaps, no object in existence quite as repellent as an elderly, obese male clad in his wife's clothing, and Captain Oakes suffered intensely for six trips and passed a new rule—no more fancy costume balls on his steamboat.

"I'm as liberal as anybody," he stated, "but there are limits. I wish you could have seen some of the things I've seen."

The fancy ball being elided, there re-

mained only the official concert, and before she finished with him Mrs. Southard persuaded the good-natured Harold to take charge, act as master of ceremonies, arrange the program and settle disputes.

To begin with, a formal ship's concert and vaudeville show is probably the world's saddest form of entertainment, and if it occurred ashore, everyone would leave the room. You cannot escape aboard ship. Once you sit down, you are fixed for the evening and if you leave your seat you insult not only the performer of the instant, but her father and mother, who are sitting beside you. You are marked thereafter as a vicious character and everyone avoids you until you leave the ship in disgrace.

A Banker Turns Indian

Mr. Demuth took command in a masterly way, printed a program, summoned his entertainers on a calm evening at sea, and started off. Harold was excellent and the jolly way he introduced people was a caution. By mere luck I fell heir to a seat near an exit and was able to come and go quietly. Soon after eight the passengers filed into the ship's lounge, upon each face a look of smiling expectation, and the ceremonies started at full speed.

"The first number," Harold declared, gazing at a sheet of paper, "is Mr. Jasper Clarke in an Indian tribal song."

I had known Mr. Clarke since the beginning of our voyage: a tall, heavy, somber man, who said very little to the passengers, and was described as vice president of an American trust company. He was dignified, as becomes a banker, and when in discourse his conversation dribbled with heavy facts. To my intense surprise, Mr. Clarke suddenly bounded into the lounge, before a mixed audience, painted a violent red, wearing a blanket and carrying a spear.

Never intended to sing, he began singing, howling in what he probably regarded as the Indian manner, dancing with the creaky awkwardness of middle age, and thrusting his spear at the smiling faces before him. He had painted his chest, head, legs and arms, and wore black beads, which he had borrowed from Mrs. Lewis. After screeching desperately for several moments, he suddenly subsided, folded his blanket and slid out a side door, and I wondered what his board of directors would have said about it. In the corridor I met him on his way to remove the atrocious costume. He had already become a banker again. His mad spell was ended; and later in the evening many of the spectators said Mr. Clarke was excellent in his Indian specialty, although nobody knew what it was.

Mrs. Southard sang a high-toned piece from the classics and everyone said it was as good as grand opera. Harold announced that as a special bit Mr. Crawford would play on his steel guitar, which the young man proceeded to do without further delay.

There was a certain shyness about him, for he appeared by magic from nowhere, sat on the floor among the legs of the four-piece orchestra and in a highly embarrassed manner began to play on his steel guitar before the band could catch up with him, or discover what he was doing, or what tune he was playing.

Our audience held its breath during the Crawford selection and mothers hushed their children, but it was in vain. You could not tell remotely what

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Mr. Crawford was doing, down there on the floor. He might have been shelling peas, for he was not producing noise of any kind. It had been my previous notion that a steel guitar is a fairly noisy machine and can be heard afar, yet here was Mr. Crawford, crouched over his instrument, apparently playing to himself. When he concluded, he rose blushing to his feet and the audience thereby knew his turn was over. He was politely applauded, not to the extent of an encore, and faded from the room as silently as he had come. Mrs. Southard dashed back to sing another trifle from grand opera, which she had apparently forgotten, and Harold introduced a child dancer, who kicked feebly for ten minutes amidst the admiring comment of the mothers present and wound up trying vainly to do the split.

Pictures of Life in India

Followed special motion pictures of life in India, by Mr. John N. Buell, who was a shark with a movie camera. Mr. Buell was a small, gray, excitable man with a red face, a veteran globe trotter, raconteur and an authority on Asia. He joined our ship in China and was immediately recognized as the amateur motion-picture expert. What he didn't know about hand cameras, nobody knew. There were thirty photography fiends in our original company and they all bowed before Mr. Buell, recognizing the master. We had been hearing of his India pictures for days and days.

"I may show them," he said modestly, soon after he became a passenger.

"Oh, do, Mr. Buell," everyone pleaded, for we were all warmly interested in India, and it was Mrs. Southard who advised chucking the moving-picture specialty into the concert. After she had concluded the entertainment with a rare little gem from another opera, everyone had to move, so that Mr. Buell could set up and project.

Four or five passengers helped him in the early stages and later eight or nine others joined in, carrying chairs, tables, pieces of cloth, pieces of wire, boards, nails, mosquito netting, electric globes and virtually everything needed for a showing of amateur pictures of life in India. A small screen was erected in a corner of the lounge by the simple process of nailing a tablecloth against a marine seascape and partly destroying that section of the ship and while the prospective spectators flattened themselves against walls Mr. Buell hurried here and there, blowing out ship's fuses and stepping on old ladies who were too weary to stand aside. He placed his projecting machine in position in one hour and twenty minutes, and thirty minutes later the first bit of life in India flashed upon the screen. Owing to minor defects in the ship's lighting system, Mr. Buell explained, he was working with the wrong wires and the projection was imperfect.

The screen contained large wrinkles and so produced distortion and for the first reel nothing could be noticed except a small pig climbing out of a ditch. It was an Indian pig, but it looked like practically any pig. Mr. Buell acted as his own announcer and identified each sequence as it passed, and that was a good idea. The pig returned endlessly and continued to climb out of the same ditch, and I doubt if one hundred or more interested passengers ever saw a shoat climb from a ditch so persistently. The rest of the picture was a muddy blur, punctuated by lightning flashes and total breakdown of the machinery. Promptly on the stroke of twelve I decided I had seen enough potential pork chops in the act of leaving a ditch and I retired. Esther had long since deserted the concert. The next day I heard that Mr. Buell had

spent the night in the deserted lounge putting his machine together. His enthusiasm was undimmed, for I saw him on deck in the morning sun, taking movies of a flock of gulls four miles away.

The official ship's orchestra of the Hillary Castle had always saddened me because its members were so young and lacking in judgment. They were, first of all, poor boys wishful to see the world, playing their way across the seven seas, and I always felt blue when I looked at those four boys: Joe, Henry, Arthur and Gabrielle. Never did I find fault with their playing, for they tried their best and were tireless. Joe played the piano, Henry beat several drums and a triangle, Arthur was a saxophone addict and Gabrielle would be a violinist if he lived.

They signed up in New York and faced a number of definite and discouraging prospects. Their home was the after part of the ship, the lower deck, where the coolie hands played mah jong and fan tan. They were not permitted to associate with the paying guests, or to promenade the walking deck, eat with the passengers, play games with the lads their own age, or flirt with the girls. It was a dismal life, with nothing in it to promote a superiority complex.

Yet the youngsters maintained a jolly air, played their tunes indefatigably, retired to their lowly cabins, ate their solitary meals and looked forward to seeing the great wide world. Being young they fell into trouble not of their own making but due to the conviviality of passengers. Eleven o'clock was shutting-down hour on the Hillary Castle for music. Long before that the elders were in bed. Dancing came to a stop one hour before midnight, yet there was an occasional "party" in the lounge or elsewhere and gay passengers, jolly with wine, invited the four boys to continue the music; not only invited them but handed them small sums of money and wet their youthful beaks in the juice of the grape, so that people like Mrs. Harris had reason to complain and did complain that gangs of hoodlums made the night fearful.

Too Much Water

These parties usually happened just before the Hillary Castle was due in Japan, China, Manila, the Malay Straits, India, or elsewhere, and the four youthful globe-trotters were in hard luck, for upon breaking the ship's rule by harmonizing for insistent passengers they were disciplined and the punishment was always the same—cancellation of shore leave.

When laughing, excited throngs left the ship at our first Japanese port, I looked back and beheld four sorrowful boys sitting on a hatch cover. They had been forbidden to go ashore for flagrantly playing their instruments into the middle of a certain night at sea. Down in China they again surveyed a foreign land through the circular face of a porthole, and in Java they sat glumly on deck when the tourists departed. We got almost to India before the quartette kicked their shoes against dry land, and their world tour was largely a failure.

"Why don't you boys behave yourselves?" I inquired of Joe.

"Mister," he said, "you can't have no fun on a boat. We're going back to Seattle and get a job in a movie theater."

"What about seeing the world?"

"Land is what I like," said he sadly. "There's too much water in the world."

And so on to Naples, the Land of Romance or something. In next week's Collier's.

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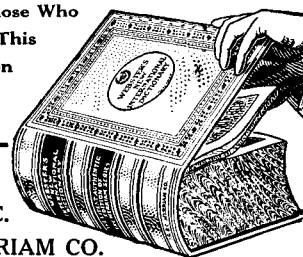
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Don't bother about Drafts

Continued from page 19

physical handicap has a congenitally poor capillary circulation, or circulation of the small blood vessels situated in the extremities. Such people have to be very careful in severe weather for fear of chilblains, but they often overdo the warming process. The wearing of light-weight wool on the hands and feet, especially at night, is better than subjecting the small vessels to extremes of heat, however good it may feel at the time.

The person who has acquired the habit of cold hands and feet should take active measures to break it, rather than attempt to coddle it. Mechanical stimulants to the circulation are infinitely better than thermal stimulants. The person whose vessels are normal (and it is fairly easy to determine this because the hands and feet, while cold, are not blanched in color) but who still "feels the cold" unduly needs exercise. He has grown lazy, and he should be ashamed to ask a hot-water bottle or a hot bath to do his physiological work for him. The slowing up of the capillary circulation is merely an indication of a slowing up of the whole circulation. The heart will not do all the work alone. It expects help from the muscles, and if the muscles get lazy the heart follows suit. The brain worker and the office worker and the inactive idler make up the class of persons who feel the cold unduly. While I haven't any statistics on the subject I believe it would be hard to find a manual worker or day laborer who suffers from cold, working or idle.

The Bath in Winter

One of the worst effects of fear of the cold is its influence on our attitude toward baths in cold weather. Naturally, the bath changes its function when we are no longer perspiring freely, and when we do not need its help to keep cool. Moreover, from the standpoint of cleanliness baths are not as necessary in the winter as they are in the summer. But the bath is no more dangerous in the wintertime than it is in hot weather, if it is not overheated to make up for the temperature outside. A bath at any time of year is best taken not too hot and for not too long a time, and in winter this is particularly true. The feeling of warmth that follows a very hot bath is transitory at best, and

in the average person is followed by chilling, because it dilates all the skin capillaries and subjects them to the cooling of the air. Therefore the person who takes a hot bath in winter to warm himself up is fooling himself. He does not really absorb any of the heat of the water.

For the person whose circulation is sluggish anyway this hot-water treatment is a poor idea unless he follows it immediately with cold splashing, which he practically never does.

Cold air alone is enough of a stimulus for most people in winter. There is no particular virtue in being Spartan about the morning shower. Half of its virtue anyway is psychological, and if you don't enjoy it you are making a martyr of yourself unnecessarily. All that is needed is the first gasp of surprise and shock, which expands the lungs to their capacity and then completely empties them, and such a gasp follows a simple splashing of the chest with cold water. It is not necessary to undergo the ordeal of leaping into and out of an ice-cold tub. However, when people say, "I can't take a cold bath: I don't get any reaction," they are seldom quite honest. What they really mean is, "I haven't the nerve to get into a cold bath," which is nothing to be ashamed of.

Discretion may be the better part of valor, but discretion in matters of self-care in winter is apt to degenerate into self-coddling.

Although they say we are living longer in these days, I can't see that we gain anything by getting soft. Certainly the cold in the head is becoming more of a problem every year. We carry discretion to such extremes that some of us are afraid to change to lighter-weight clothes during the day when the temperature goes up, and some women continue to wear their fur coats during a hot spell in the winter because they are afraid to leave them off. Children suffer dreadfully from such coddling. Mother puts on a heavy shirt on a cold autumn day, and won't take it off when the temperature goes up to summer heat.

Winter, certainly, should not be treated as an enemy, something to be feared and dreaded; but rather as a friend, whose good points we appreciate and to whose faults we adapt ourselves, to our advantage.

All our Life like that!

Continued from page 23

Bare! No green curtains, no chintz covers, no Ruth! Oh, God, had he lost her?

He flung himself up the stairs to Mrs. Murphy's.

"Mrs. Murphy, where's Ruth?"

"Hello, Jim."

"Where's Ruth?"

"She moved away a month ago."

"Where?"

"Let's see, she left an address."

Drawers, papers, envelopes, eternity.

"Here it is—156 East 157th."

He turned and raced down the stairs. For weeks he had dreamed of this return, pictured her sitting in the cozy little room waiting—hug, kiss, ecstasy. Instead she was gone. Suppose—suppose she didn't want him! Suppose she was happier without him. Suppose she wouldn't take him back!

He threw open the street door. Coming up the steps was a girl. It was—

"Ruth!"

A little gasp, a little cry—

"Jim!"

THEY melted together. The snow fell on their faces. A taxi driver honked a derisive horn as he passed.

"Oh, Baby!"

"Jim, dear, have you really come back?"

"For keeps, Baby. Do you want me?"

"Do I want you!"

Kiss, kiss.

"Why did you move away?"

"I couldn't stand it, Jim, without you. I used to cry every time I looked at your chair. And I used to come around sometimes—like tonight—and pretend that you were here."

"Baby!"

They found themselves laughing and crying and feeling absurdly happy.

"I'm going back in a garage, Ruth."

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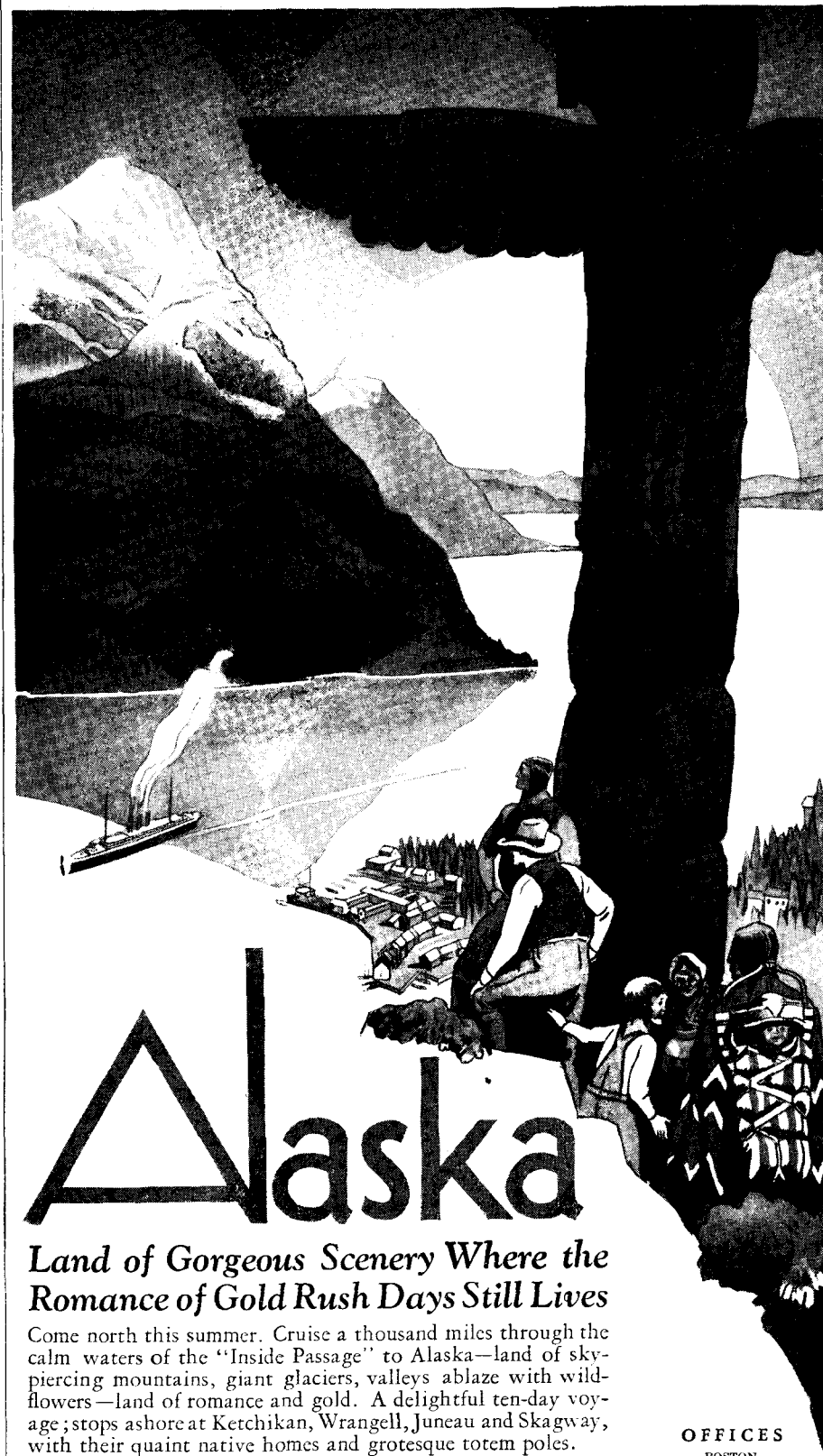
Slip-On Shade

"And I'm quitting my job in the morning."
 Laughter, tears, kisses.
 "Weren't we the silly fools, though?"
 "Weren't we!"
 "Let's take the old flat back again and fix it up just as it was."
 "Let's!"
 "It will be just like starting all over."
 "Tonight you can come down to my room. I got a little room down on 157th Street. I couldn't stand the flat alone."
 "Let's go—I want to get you alone, Baby."

ROOM on 157th Street. Canned peaches, bologna sandwiches. Ruth on the edge of the table. Jim smiling up. Murphy bed. Lights out. Another street lamp square on the wall. Ruth's head on Jim's shoulder.
 "Happy, Jim?"
 "Happy, Baby."
 "Jim, it's great having you back!"
 "It's great to be back, Baby."

Silence. Eyes smiling in the dark.
 "Jim, dear, don't you think it will be cold with the window up so far?"
 "No. It's all right."
 "It'll be cold by morning."
 "No, it won't."
 "It will, Jim."
 "Oh, all right then. I'll close it."
 Jim climbing out of bed. Jim grumbling. Jim closing window.
 "Jim, I didn't mean to shut it all the way."
 "You wanted it closed."
 "Not all the way. And you didn't have to slam it like that."
 "All right."
 Jim opening window part way. Jim climbing back into bed. Ruth's head on Jim's shoulder.
 "Oh, Jim, wasn't it sweet the way we met tonight?"
 "It sure was, Baby."
 "All our life's going to be like that, Jim."
 "All our life, Baby."

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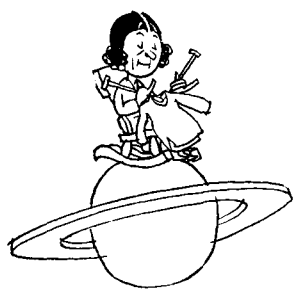
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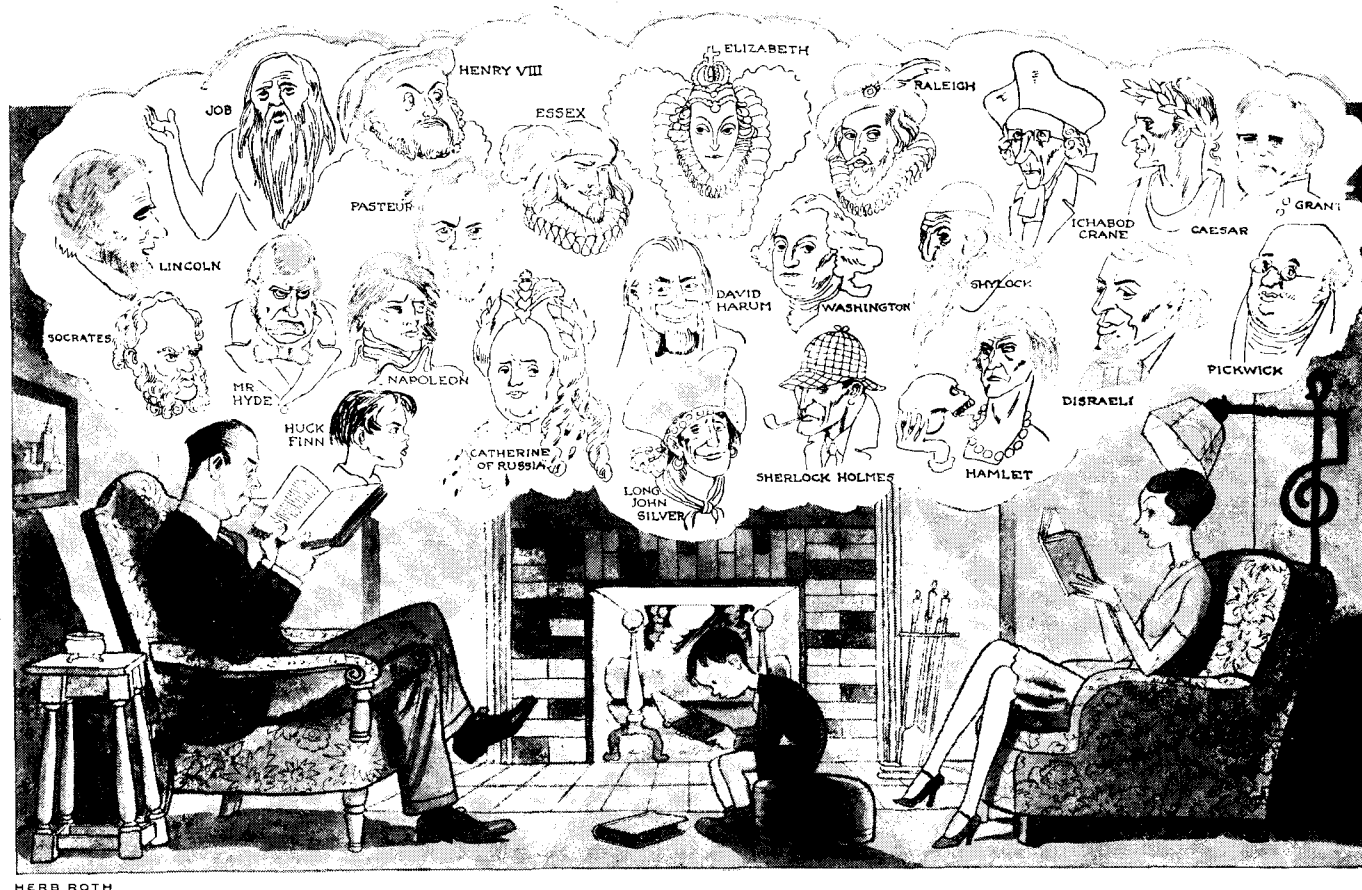
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THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

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HERB ROTH

We're Reading more than ever

IN SPITE of every distraction we continue to read books in increasing numbers.

Contrary to the fears expressed, reading has not been lessened by the new tools and toys which consume so much of our time.

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Not even the enormous growth of magazines and newspapers diminishes the time and attention we devote to books. Curiously, each new resource we obtain seems to add to the value and the enjoyment of the old.

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