

Three miles of dark, treacherous mine roadway lay ahead, and, as nobody knew how the after-damp lay, speed was imperative if the race for the air and the pulmotors was to be won. Carrying the inert shape in the hold he had been taught, Jack bent to the cruel, hopeless distance. His oxygen kit, weighting and impeding him, made the wreckage-strewn tube seem endless.

Tortured by impossible strain, effort he would have said no man could make, Gallagher watched for the patch of light in the distance which was the pit mouth, watched it grow by maddeningly slow degrees, prayed for it to grow faster.

Then, confused and groping, he realized that, somehow, he must have carried his man out, for what he later decided must have been cheering deafened him, and the fellows with the pulmotors seemed to rise from the earth, mammoth size, and throw themselves upon him. They took away that paralyzing weight.

Dazedly he reached for the straps of his gas equipment and tottered a step or two, blinded by the light. But dazed as he was, he did not fail to see and recognize the woman of the shanty steps break through the crowd and throw herself on the body stretched on the ground.

When he had been sufficiently revived in the engine-house near by, Jack, with Marilla at his side, stood outside the door

and watched the milling of the excited, hysterical women and swiftly moving, direct, and businesslike officials, doctors, and rescue men.

"There's the woman," he gestured, indicating the figure kneeling by the young miner, who was beginning to show signs of returning animation.

"Why, that's Mrs. Felisch, Jack," replied Marilla. "But that man is not her husband; he is big, with long mustaches."

"She keeps calling him Paul," said a bystander tersely. "Her man is Number 57. He's still in the pit, posted up as dead."

Jack and Marilla contemplated the man and woman on the wet ground and then looked at each other.

When they climbed out of the valley late that night to the cottage on the rim Jack's tread had the power of conviction. Marilla had said nothing. She knew Jack would cut his way back to the levels of their common life presently.

In the little parlor he paused a moment at the table which held his books.

"I got to get caught up if I'm going to take that mine-boss examination," he remarked. Then he swung around and faced his wife. He bridged the chasm in a slow, difficult question:

"Forget all that stuff about 'immune,' will you?"

Martinique

BY CORNELIA OTIS SKINNER

GREAT cone-shaped mountains rising from a stream
All jungle-tangled; little bamboo walls
Of native huts beside clear waterfalls—
An island like a mad and lovely dream.
Mandarin trees, hibiscus blooms that gleam
And burn. Small towns, toy travesties of France,
With jabbering markets, the inquiring glance
Of turbaned women on whose wrists there scream
Bright parroquets. Smells of the tropic night—
Crushed cinnamon and smoke and breadfruit trees.
Great unknown shadows and the quiet light
Of the cathedral. Did you dream of these,
O Josephine, when some great sail in flight
Trailed on the wind the spice of Carib Seas?

A Freshman Again at Sixty

BY ROBERT WATSON WINSTON



FEW years ago, when I retired from active work to reenter college at sixty, my business associates smiled and shook their heads—a schoolboy again at three score suggested the famous exploit of Juan Ponce de Leon. He too quit business at about fifty-five, went in search of the Fountain of Eternal Youth, which an old Indian woman assured him was on the island of Bimini, and came out of the adventure with a wound in the left leg, of which he shortly died, and the title Adalantado of Bimini. Although I cannot boast a fountain of youth or even an island of Bimini, as the result of my De Leon-like search, I can exhibit a calmer spirit and a golf score, when I am going good and the course is not too golfy, somewhere around ninety.

It so happened when I was about a year old that I became tenant in common under the will of an uncle in certain negro slaves, a circumstance which if I live to ripe old age may give me the distinction, good or bad, of being the oldest living ex-slave-owner. However, Mr. Lincoln's proclamation of January 1, 1863, followed by Appomattox, set free my slaves, scattered my ancestral estates, and in a word took the silver spoon from my mouth. Beginning life therefore in a small way I entered politics, as most impecunious young lawyers at that time did, and held various offices, a judgeship included. Soon finding out my political limitations I gave up the idea of being a statesman, and set about the task of the average American—attending to my own affairs and accumulating a fortune.

Whether I was keener on the conflict than others I cannot say, but, on looking back, it seems to me the universal rule of business was "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." After a time the World War came on, when I entered the government service and had

a real vacation. The nature of my new work and the impending world collapse caused me to reflect on the meaning of life and take an inventory of myself. No doubt I conferred with the "other fellow" of Joel Chandler Harris. I am quite sure I consulted McConnachie, the friend of Barrie. "What is it all about?" I asked. "Is it money I seek? It cannot be that. I have money enough for every reasonable wish. Is it a life of ease and pleasure, to live first in one place then another—in the North, in the South, in foreign lands? Alas, in a well-remembered line the poet two thousand years ago set that matter at rest: 'Cœlum, non animum, mutant qui trans mare currunt.'"

"Fame, then, is the object and end of life?" But that notion exploded in this manner: one day during the war, when things were not going well with Italy or the United States, I was looking up the beleaguered city of Trieste. On the same page with Trieste was the name Toplady—Augustus M. Toplady—author of "Rock of Ages." "Can it be," I reflected, "that by stringing together a scant hundred words one can acquire more permanent fame than a dozen lawyers combined? No; if it be fame I seek, my business does not lead up to that temple." Wealth, pleasure, fame, since these are not the wise life, what is? So the thought process continued until finally I gave up my practice, bade adieu to my partners, and at the age of sixty reentered the mother of State Universities at Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

II

WHEN the news got out that a freshman of sixty had reentered college there was rare fun. The whole State wanted to know. Here was a fellow, evidently in good health, and apparently of sound mind, who had retired while business was good and everything coming his way. Why, if he had not quit so soon he might