

Read **SIR A. CONAN DOYLE'S 'POISON BELT'**

Scoops

STORIES of the **WONDER-WORLD** of TOMORROW



2D
EVERY
THURSDAY

**NIGHT EYES
OF THE FLEET**
Isek Snide

Battles can be Fought in Fog with the Aid of the Night Eyes of the Fleet

The Wonders of Noctovision

SUCH great strides are being made in the science of Noctovision that it will soon be possible for ships to "see" in the darkness and through mist or fog.

With the necessary apparatus, warships could fight sea battles at night or in fog; and smacks across would become useless before the Night Eyes of the Fleet.

Briefly, Noctovision is television by means of invisible light, or infra-red rays, and has been invented and perfected by Mr. John Eagle Ford.

The principle of Noctovision can be described simply thus:

A lens concentrates an image of the scene on to a whirling perforated disc,

behind which is situated a photo-electric cell sensitive to infra-red rays. The light pulses received by the cell are amplified and transmitted over the distance required, where they are converted into visible light rays and focused on to a screen by the method employed in television.

The picture below shows how Noctovision can be used in the Night Eyes of the Fleet.

SCENE SCANNED BY WHIRLING DISC AND FOCUSED UP BY PHOTO-ELECTRIC CELL SENSITIVE TO INFRA-RED RAYS





The POISON Belt

★ SUBMERGED

THINK chamber, which was destined to be the scene of our unforgettable experience was a charmingly furnished sitting room, some fourteen or sixteen feet square.

At the end of it, divided by a curtain of red velvet, was a small apartment which formed the Professor's dressing room. This is here opened into a large bedroom. The bedroom was still hangings but the bathroom and dressing room were practically one chamber for the purposes of an experiment. The door and the window frame had been plastered round with varnished paper, so as to be practically sealed. Above the other door, which opened out to the landing, there hung a flashlight which could be drawn by a cord when some ventilation became absolutely necessary. A large chair in a tub stood in each corner.

"How to get out of our excessive outbreak, devoid without anyone wanting our oxygen is a delicate and vital question," said Challenger, looking round him after the five men, each had been laid out by him against the wall. "This longer case in preparation I could have brought the whole concentrated force of my intelligence to bear upon fully upon the problem, but as it is we must do what we can. The trouble will be of some small service. Two of the oxygen tubes are ready to be turned on as an instant's notice, so that we cannot be taken unaware. At the same time, it would be well not to go far from the room, as the noise may be a serious and urgent one."

"There was a knock, her window opening out upon a balcony. The view beyond was the worst of that which we had already obtained from the study. Looking out, I could see an sign of disaster anywhere. There was a road cutting down the side of the hills under my very eyes. A cab from the station, one of those grotesque survivors who are left in the island to see country villages, was cutting slowly up the hill. Lower down was a carriage, wheeling a paralytic and leading a second child by the hand. The low crests of smoke from the cottages gave the whole widespread landscape to six of settled

order and homely comfort. Nowhere in the land leaves or on the coast south was there any lumbering of a catastrophe. The barrowmen were back at the fields once more and the gullies, in pairs and flocks, were still glowering round the lake. There was no change a moment within our own land and only a smugling of an approaching terror that the indifference of these people was amazing.

FOR NEW READERS

In a letter to the Press, Professor Challenger announces that it is his opinion that the mysterious lowering of Freuchen's a Year at the apartment point is a widespread casual change, and that the world is returning into a poison belt of other. He attributes the sudden change at the entrance of the island of Samaria to the effects of the poison.

At the same time, the Professor has treated to his home the little group of the "Lost World"—Professors Sumner, Lord John Keston, and Mr. Milson, the newspaper reporter.

He asks them all to bring a cylinder of oxygen, and when they arrive at his house he announces that, in his opinion, they are about to witness the end of the world.

Reports that come in from all parts of the globe are not less true, and the little party makes preparations for the end.

"These fellows don't seem to feel any of them," said I, pointing down at the lads.

"Have you played golf?" asked Lord John.

"No, I have not."

"Well, young fellow, what was do you I know that, one fully and on a level, it would take the risk of down to step a true golf."

"From time to time during and after lunch the high, vibrant ring had announced the

Professor. He gave us the news as it came through in less than a few minutes. Both tennis courts had never been registered in the world's history before. The great shadow was creeping up from the South like a rising tide of death. Egypt had gone through its delirium and was now quiet. Spain and Portugal after a wild frenzy in which the Catholics and the Anabaptists had fought most desperately, were now silent.

No cable messages were received any longer from South America. In North America the Southern States, after some trouble spent voting, had succumbed to the poison. North of Maryland the effect was not yet marked, and in Canada it was hardly perceptible. England, Holland, and Denmark had each in turn been affected.

Dispersing messages were flashing from every quarter in the good countries of Europe, to the elements and the doctors of world-wide reports, imploring their advice. The astronomers, too, were deluged with messages. Nothing could be done. The thing was too slow and beyond our human knowledge or control. It was death—surely and inevitable—death for young and old, for weak and strong, for rich and poor, without hope or possibility of escape.

Such was the news which, in scattered, distracted messages, the telegraphs had brought us. The good cities already knew their fate, and so far as we could gather were preparing to meet it with dignity and resignation.

Yet here were our golfers and laborers like the birds who gathered under the shadow of the leaf. It seemed amazing. And yet how could they know? It had all come upon us in one quiet stroke. What was there in the morning paper to alert them? And now it was too late; they in the afternoon. Even as we looked some rumors seemed to have spread, for we saw the rangers hurrying from the fields. Some of the golfers were returning to the club-house. They were talking as if taking refuge from a shower. Their little vehicles looked behind them. Others were continuing their game.

The organ had started and was passing her paralytic hurriedly up the hill again. I noticed that she had her hand to her face. The cab had stopped and the tired horse,

By Sir Arthur CONAN DOYLE

with his head sunk to his knees, was resting above them was a swirl of misty grey—no large swirl of nebulae like, nor few a few fancy white clouds over the distant dawn. Of the human race most fit to-day, it was at least upon a glorious death bed. And yet all that grand wreckage of Nature made this term, and wholesale destruction the more pitiable and awful. Surely it was too goodly a wreckage that we could be so easily, as they, created from it.

But I have said that the telephone-bell had rung ever since. Suddenly I heard Challenger's tremendous voice from the hall.

"Mama!" he cried. "You are wanted." I rushed down to the landline. It was McArthur speaking from London.

"Thank you, Mr. McKee!" cried his favorite wife. "Mr. McKee, for God's sake, see if Professor Challenger can suggest anything that can be done."

"He can suggest nothing, sir," I answered. "He regards the crisis as universal and inevitable. We have some oxygen here, but it can only deliver our fate for a few hours."

"Oxygen!" cried the voice. "There is no time to get any. The office has been a perfect pandemonium all morning. New ball on the staff are impossible. I am weighed down with business myself. From my window I can see the people lying thick on Fleet Street. Judging by the last telegram, the whole world—"

His voice had been striking and suddenly stopped. An instant later I heard through the telephone a muffled thud, as if his head had fallen forward on the desk.

"Mr. McArthur!" I cried. "Mr. Mr. Arthur!"

There was no answer. I knew as I replaced the receiver that his case had been settled for ever.

At that instant, just as I took a step back from the telephone, the thing was on me.

It was as if we were both up to our shoulders in water, with suddenly one submerged by a rolling wave. As my hand descended to buoy myself I found myself thrust not to be partly passing the life from me. I was conscious of agonies oppression upon my chest, great tightness within my head, a lead dragging to my ears, and bright flares behind my eyes. I staggered to the balcony of the stair.

At the same moment, resting and snuffing like a wounded buffalo, Challenger dashed past me, a terrible vision, with red-purple lips, engorged eyes, and breathing fast. His little wife, insensible to all appearances, was slung over his great shoulder, and he thundered and tripped, but carrying himself and her through storm will have through that terrible atmosphere in the hours of temporary safety.

At the night of his effort, I, too, reeled up the steps, clambering, falling, clashing at the wall, and I tumbled half senseless upon my face on the upper landing. Lord John's legs of steel were in the collar of my coat, and a moment later I was stretched upon my back, unable to speak or move, on the balcony except. The wind lay beside me, and the morning was hatched as a shiver by the window, his head nearly touching my knees.

As as a woman I saw Challenger, like a monstrous beetle, crawling slowly across the floor, and a moment later I heard the gentle humming of the emergency oxygen. Challenger bearded two or three times with enormous gas, his lungs roaring as he drew in the O₂ gas.

"It isn't!" he cried, exultantly. "My poisoning has been justified!" He was up on his feet again, alert and strong. With a look in his head he looked over to his wife and held it to her face. In a few seconds she roused, stirred, and sat up.

He turned to me, and I felt the tide of his speaking winding through my arteries. My woman told me that she was not a little relieved, and yet, curiously as we talk of it, when every form of evidence now seemed an unreasonable thing.

Never have I known such a thrill of sensation as on that night with that freedom of his. The weight fell away from my lungs, the head loosened from my brow, a sweet feeling of peace and gentle, largest comfort stole over me. I lay watching Sammelke's nervous under the same canopy, and finally Lord John took his turn. His opening to his feet and gave me a hand to rise, while Challenger picked up his wife and laid her on the stretcher.

"Oh, George, I am so sorry you brought me back," she said, holding her by the hand.

"The air of death is indeed, as you said, hung with beautiful, shimmering curtains. For, once the choking feeling had passed, it was all unacceptably soothing and beautiful. Why have you dragged me back!"

"Because I wish that we make the passage together. We have been together so many years. It would be sad to fall apart at the supreme moment."

For a moment as his teacher voice I caught a glimpse of a new Challenger, something very far from the bullying, snoring, arrogant one who had alternately amazed and offended his generation. Here is the shadow of death

sofa that he was drifting. His husband turned an uneasy gas.

"In prehistoric days," said he, "they used to keep a white mouse in every farmhouse, as if definite organization, give signs of a certain atmosphere before it was perceived by the stalks. Yes, my dear, will be our white mouse. I have now increased the supply, and you are better."

"Yes, I am better."

"Possibly we have hit upon the correct mixture. When we have ascertained exactly how little will serve, we shall be able to compute how long we shall be able to exist. Unhappily, in consulting ourselves we have already consumed a considerable proportion of this first tube."

"Does it matter?" asked Lord John, who was standing with his hands in his pockets close to his window. "If we have to go, what is the use of hiding on?" You don't suppose there's any chance for us?"

Challenger looked and shook his head.

"Well, does, don't you think there is some danger in taking the jump and not waiting to be pushed up? If it must be so



was the innermost Challenger, the man who had won and held a woman's love.

Suddenly his mood changed, and he was no longer certain some again.

"Above all mankind I see and feel the catastrophe," said he, with a ring of conviction and scientific triumph in his voice. "As to you, my good Sammelke, I trust your last doubts have been resolved as to the meaning of the burning of the train in the apartment, and that you no longer content that my letter in the *Times* was based upon a deflection."

For ever our passionate children was dead to a challenge. He could not sit quaking and stretching his legs, this time, as if to secure himself that he was still really upon the planet. Challenger walked across to the oxygen tube, and the sound of the loud hissing fell away till it was the most gentle sedation.

"He must husband our supply of the gas," said he. "The atmosphere of the moon is now strongly hyper-oxygenated, and I take it that some of us feel my distressing symptoms. We can only determine by actual experiments what amount added to the air will serve to neutralize the poison. Let us see how that will do."

We sat in silent, nervous tension for five minutes or more, observing our own sensations. I had just begun to fancy that I felt the constriction round my temples again when Mrs. Challenger asked me from the

"I'm for oxygen any proper, damn' off the gas, and oxygen the window."

"Why not?" said the lady, heavily.

"Surely, George, Lord John is right, and it is better so."

"I must strongly object," cried Sammelke, in a querulous voice. "When we read the list up by all means the, but to deliberately anticipate death seems to me to be a foolish and unpardonable crime."

"What does our young friend say to it?" asked Challenger.

"I think we should see it to be the truth."

"And I am strongly of the same opinion," said he.

"Then, George, if you say so, I think so, too," cried the lady.

"Well, well, I'm only patient! It is no 'anxious' and Lord John. 'If you all wish to see it through I am with you. It's done already, and no meaning about that. I've had my share of adventures in my life, and as many deaths as most folk, but I'm worth' on my top note."

"Granting the continuity of life," said Challenger, in his most dialectic manner, "most of us can produce what opportunity of observation may have been from what we may call the spirit plane to the plane of matter. It rarely must be waded to the most obvious position that it is while we are ourselves material that we are most fitted to watch and learn a judgment upon material phenomena. Therefore it is only by keeping

The Silence of Universal Death

drive to these few extra hours that we can hope to carry on with to some future existence a clear conception of the most important event that the world, or the universe so far as we know it, has ever associated to me it would seem a desirable thing that we should be very well carried up to such a point as to wonder if an experiment."

"I am strongly of the same opinion," cried Sumner.

"Carried without a division," said Lord John. "By George, that poor devil of a chauffeur of yours down in the yard there has made his last journey. No one makes a wily and brings him in."

"It would be absolute madness," cried Sumner.

"Well, I suppose it would," said Lord John. "It couldn't help him, and would rather set you all over the house, even if we ever got back here. My word, look at the little birds under the trees!"

We drew four chairs up to the long, low window, the lady still resting with closed eyes upon the wicker. I remember that the wicker and gossamer often crossed my mind—the flowers may have been heightened by the heavy stiffness of the air which we were breathing—that we were in the front seats of the vehicle at the foot of the drive of the world.

In the immediate foreground, beneath our very eyes, was the small yard with the half-cleaned motor-car standing in it. Austin, the chauffeur, had covered his final notice at last, for he was sprawling on his back beside the wheel, with a great black brass upon his forehead where it had struck the step or scapular in falling. He still held in his hand the handle of the lever with which he had been washing down his machine.

A couple of small plants fresh from the corner of the yard, and such-and-such as the lay several pretty little bits of baby furniture with their feet upflung. The sweep of Death's wrath had included everything great and small, man and creature.

Over the wall of the yard we looked down upon the winding road which led to the station. A group of the rapturists whom we had seen running from the fields were being all pulled off, their bodies crossing each other, at the bottom of it. Further up the inclined lay, with her head and shoulders propped against the slope of the grassy bank, the lady who takes the baby from the persimmon, and it was a monstrous bundle of wrappings in her arms. Close behind her a baby (with upon the outside showed where the little boy was strangled. Still nearer to us was the dead—old horse kneeling between the wheels. The old driver was hanging over the splash board like some grotesque scorpion, his arms drooping, absurdly in front of him.

Through the window we could dimly discern that a young man, was seated inside. The door was swinging open, and his head was grasping the handle, as if he had attempted to leap forth at the last instant.

In the middle distance by the golf links, dotted as they had been in the evening with the dark figures of the golfers, lying motionless upon the grass of the course, as among the bushes which skirted it. On one particular green there were several bodies stretched where a forecote, with its caddies, held to their game to the last.

No bird flew in the blue vault of heaven, no man or beast moved upon the vast grassy-side which lay before us. The evening sun shone its general radiance across it, but three knotted over it all the stations and the silence of universal death—death as which we used to come to you. At the present instant the one final blast of glass, by holding in the engine, shut us off from the fire of all our kind. For a few short hours the knowledge and foresight of our race could preserve our little coils of life at the vast doors of death, and ours as from participation in the common catastrophe. Then the gas would run hot, we, too, should be gazing upon that cherry-colored boundary

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target, and the fate of the human race end of all earthly life would be complete. For a long time, in a mood which was too solemn for speech, we looked out at the tragic world.

"There is a house on fire," said Challenger at last, pointing to a column of smoke which rose above the trees. "There will, I expect, be many such—possibly whole cities as Boston—when we consider how many folk may have dropped with lights in their heads. Ah, there you see another on the top of Cambridge Hill. It is a good thing, however, as I can mistake. There is the church clock striking the hour. It would indicate our philosophers to know that man-made machines have survived the race who made it."

"By George!" cried Lord John, shag exactly from his chair. "What's that peck of smoke? It's a train."

We heard the roar of it, and presently it came flying into sight, going at what seemed to me to be a prodigious speed. Whether it had come, or how far, we had no means of knowing. Only by some miracle of luck could it have gain any distance. But now we were to see the terrific end of its career. A train of one truck stuck motionless upon the line. We held our breath as the express passed along the main track.

The crash was terrific. Engines and coaches piled themselves into a hill of splintered wood and twisted iron. Red spots of flame showed up from the wreckage and it was all silence. For half an hour we sat

with hardly a word, stung by the stupendous sight.

"Poor, poor people!" cried Mrs. Chellinger at last, clapping with a whinger to her husband's arm.

"My dear, they were no more anxious than the cats into which they crashed, or the carboys which they have now become," said Challenger, shaking her hard, stoic reply. "It was a train at the bridge when it fell. Victims, but it was driven and inspired by the dead long before it reached its fate."

"All over the world the same thing must be going on," said I, as a vision of strange happenings ran before me. "Think of the ship at sea—how they will stoop on end on, and the furnace die down, or until they see tall hills upon some beach. The sailing ships, too—how they will back and fill with their cargoes of dead sailors, while their harbors, out and their ports leak, till one by one they sink below the surface. Perhaps a century hence the Atlantic may still be dotted with the old drifting derelicts."

"And the folk in the red rooms," said Sumner, with a dismal shudder. "If ever prodigents should by any chance live upon Earth again, they will have some strange theories of the existence of man in carbonaceous strata."

"I don't profess to know about such things," remarked Lord John, "but it seems to me the Earth will be 'Ye let, empty, after this. When once our furnace world is wiped off, how will it ever get on again?"

"The world was empty before," I had long answered, gravely. "Under laws

The World's Last Hours

which in their inception are beyond and above us, it becomes negligible. Why may this same process not happen again?"

"My dear Challenge, you can't mean that?"

"I am not in the habit, Professor Sumner, of saying things which I do not mean. The observation is factual." Out went the light and down came the ceiling.

Well, you find an abnormal degeneration, and this means to the end," said Sumner, solemnly.

"And you, sir, have lived an extraordinary abstemiousness, and never can hope now to emerge from it."

Your worst critics will never accuse you of lacking imagination," Sumner retorted.

"Upon my word!" said Lord John. "It would be like you if you used up my last pipe of cigars in smoking such stuff. What can it matter whether I fill my back or not? It surely won't be an end to me."

"In that respect, sir, you betray your very pronounced limitation," said Challenge, severely. "The true scientific mind is not to be laid down by its own conditions of time and space. It knows full an observatory erected upon the border line of present, which separates the infinite past from the infinite future. From this vantage point it looks its subject over to its beginning and to its end at all things. As for itself, the scientific mind does it its past working in normal and methodic fashion to the end. It disregards to getty a thing as its own physical limitations as completely as it does all other limitations upon the plane of matter. Am I right, Professor Sumner?"

Sumner gazed at an expressionless face. "With certain reservations, I agree, my lord."

"The ideal scientific mind," continued Challenge—"I put it in the third person rather than appear to be too self-complacent—the ideal scientific mind should be capable of thinking out a point of abstract knowledge in the interval between its owner falling from a balloon and reaching the Earth. Men of this stamp here are needed to form the engineers of Nature and the layguards of truth."

"It strikes me Nature's on top this time," said Lord John, looking out of the window. "I've read some leading articles about you gentlemen controlling her, but she's getting a bit of her own back."

"It is not but a temporary setback," said Challenge, with conviction. "The vegetable world has, as you can see, survived Lord's the havoc that plane time. The birds are dead, but the plants flourish. From that vegetable life is food and to much will come in time, the tiny crawling microscope shows which are the precursors of that great army of life as which for the instant we see have the extraordinary duty of serving as reorganizers. Once the lower form of life has established itself, the final advent of Man is as certain as the growth of the oak from the acorn. The old world will swing round once more."

"But the poison?" I asked. "Will that not up it in the end?"

"It may be a mere straggler or leper on the other—perhaps that Strawn whom that nighty coming in which we float. Or tolerances may be established, and life accommodate itself to a new condition. The mere fact that with a comparatively small hypercondition of our blood we can hold out against it is surely a proof in itself that as our very great change would be needed to realize our end life to emerge it."

The smoking house beyond the trees had burst into flames. We could see the high turrets of the old shooting up into the air.

It's pretty awful, murmured Lord John, more impressed than I had ever seen him.

"Well, after all, what does it matter?" I remarked. "The world is dead. Creation is surely the best burial."

"It would shorten as up if this house went ablaze."

"I foresee the danger," said Challenge, "and asked my wife to guard against it."

"Everything is quite safe, dear. But my head begins to throb again. What a dreadful stroke!"

"We must change it," said Challenge. He bent over his glass of oxygen.

"Is nearly empty," said he. "It has lasted as some three and a half hours. It is now three and a half. We shall get through the night, certainly. I should expect the end about nine o'clock tomorrow morning. We shall see our course, which shall be all our own."

He turned on his second table and opened for half a minute the brightest over the door. Then as the air became perceptibly better, but our own symptoms more acute, he closed it once again.

"By the way," said he, "and does not live upon oxygen alone. It does not use and over. I assume you gentlemen, that when I invited you to my house and to what I had hoped would be an interesting reason, I had intended that my kitchen should justify itself. However, we must do what we can. I am sure that you will agree with me that it would be only to continue on air too rapidly by lighting an oil stove. I have some small portions of cold roast, bread, and puddings, which, with a couple of bottles of claret, may serve our turn. Thank you, my dear—see as ever you see the glass of oxygen."

It was indeed wonderful how, with the self-will and some of propriety of the British housekeeper, the lady had within a few minutes adorned the round table with a more white cloth, laid the napkins upon it, and set forth the simple meal with all the elegance of civilization, including an electric lamp hung in the center. Wonderful also, too, it is to find that our appetites were roused.

The World Clears THE POISON BELT

With the last of their oxygen and gas, Professor Challenge's company upon a window is gone the end. But the world has cleared the Poison Belt: They know of all mankind are saved. Read next week's brilliant installment of this amazing story.

"It is the pressure of our emotion," said Challenge, with that air of modestness with which he brought his scientific mind to the explanation of insoluble facts. "We have gone through a great crisis. That means molecular disturbance. That in turn means the need for repair. Great sorrow or great joy should bring intense hunger—not abstinence from food, as our ancients will have it."

"That's why the country folk have great feasts at harvest," I remarked.

"Exactly. Our young friend has hit upon an excellent illustration. Let me give you another slice of toasts."

"The same with oranges," said Lord John, cutting away at the beef. "I've seen those boys' a cliff up the Aracuan River, and they ate a buffet that must have weighed as much as the table. There are some of these down New Guinea way that eat the little-known medicinal berries by way of a hot tub. Well, of all the funeral trains on this earth, I suppose the one we are taking is the queerest."

"The strange thing is," said Mrs. Challenge, "that I find it impossible to feel grief for those who are gone. There are my father and mother at Bedford. I know that they are dead, and yet in this tremendous moment I realize I can find no sharp sorrow for any individual, even for those on this earth. I suppose the one we are taking is the queerest."

"And my old mother is in her coffin in Ireland," said I. "I can see her in my mother's eye, with her shawl and her lace up,

lying back with closed eyes in the old high-backed chair in the window, her face and her hair beside her. Why should I weep for her? She has passed and I am gone, and I may be never far in some other life than England is to Ireland. Yet I grieve to think that that dear body is no more."

"As to the lady," remarked Challenge, "we do not mourn over the prizing of her body and the rest of her life, though they were once part of ourselves. Nature does a one-legged man years subsequently over his missing member. The physical body has, rather, been a source of pain and fatigue to us. It is our constant trials of our limitations. Why, then, should we weep about its detachment from our preterial selves?"

"If they can indeed be detached, Sumner has guessed. But, anyhow, successful death is dreadful!"

"As I have already explained, said Challenge, "a universal death must be so much to far less probable than an isolated one."

"Same in a bottle," remarked Lord John. "If you see a single man lying on that floor with his chest knocked in and a hole in his side it would turn you sick. But I've seen ten thousand on their backs in the hospital, and you get no sick of it, for when you see a man's history the life of any man is too small a thing to worry one. When a thousand rotten pain together, none are prepared to die, you can't pick your own paper far out of the crowd."

"I wish it were well over with us," said the lady, weakly. "Oh, George, I am so frightened!"

"You'll be the bravest of us all, little lady, when the time comes. I've been a blunderer all my life, you see, dear, but you'll just bear in mind that G. E. J. is as he was made and couldn't help himself. After all, you wouldn't have had anyone else."

No one in the whole wide world, dear," said the lady, and put her arms round her husband. "We'll show what the world is and stand steady at the night which will not stir us!"

Darkness had fallen and the dead world was shrouded in gloom. The light across the western horizon was our long, vivid sunset streak, waving and waning in third phases of life, leaving suddenly to a crimson wash and then dying down to a glowing line of fire.

Leaves in silence," I cried.

"No, it is Brighton which is breathing," said Challenge, stepping across to join us. "You can see the curved back of the dome against the glow. That fire is mine on the farther side of it. The whole town must be alive."

The stars were several red glimmers at different points, and the drive upon the railway line was still considerable, but they all seemed mere pin-points of light compared to that monstrous configuration throbbing beyond the hills. What copy it would all have made for the Gazette? Had ever a pamphlet such an opening and so little chance of being it—the mass of scraps, and no one is appreciative of it!"

And then, suddenly, the old instant of recording came over me. If these pins of silence could be as true to their life's work to the very end, why should not I, as my humble way, be as constant? No human eye might ever rest upon what I had done. But the long night had to be passed somehow, and for me, at least, sleep seemed to be out of the question. My notes would help to pass the weary hours and to occupy my thoughts. This it is that I can live before me the notebook with its scribbled pages, written coarsely upon my line in the dim, waning light of our one electric torch. Had I the literary touch they might have been worthy of the occasion. As it is, they may still serve to bring to other minds the long, dreary emotion and traces of that awful night.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



The Earthmen marched forward as the wall of flaming air sprang up behind them.

One of the last strongholds of Nature on Earth is the mighty Depths of the Sea. Man has descended but 2,100 feet into the 7 miles Depth of the Atlantic. In this highly imaginative story our author explores the unknown immensity of the ocean.

It was owing to the friendliness of Ben Flight, the Prince of the tides that men, that Stenness and Kells had obtained the direction of this way to escape to the upper world.

But what had happened to Alst, Curvall, their companion? He had been left behind when the earth dropped on them; but Ben Flight had promised to provide the means of ascent for Curvall from the bed of the sea. So far as Curvall was concerned, the only possibility of feeling whether he had been successful was to push forward towards the rendezvous that had been arranged—the British Consul's headquarters at Montevideo.

And now Stenness and Kells were on their way to South America. But it promised to be a long job, wading along in darkness, laden with provisions and diving suits.

The first settled as they advanced and the curious fact that their eyes, since they had entered these regions, had become useless, became more pronounced. To these two daring scientific adventurers this was an ordeal without remark; they knew that the human eye has this peculiarity, that it can to a large degree shut itself to an environment, just as a prisoner through long confinement in a dark dungeon cannot bear the light when he is released.

The clearing of the dust made the passage possible daily in darkness and when they had walked for some time Stenness perceived Kells's head quiver and jerked. Down the wall of the tunnel he had observed a thin stream of water flowing softly. It dropped as if from a dozen nooses, fell close and glowing in the ground and disappeared in a creek that ran ragged across the floor.

For a moment the two stood looking at this tiny waterfall. They observed—but observed for some time—that the tunnel in which they stood was of strange construction. And now Stenness nudged the glass of his helmet, Kells followed his example. Their faces there was hot, but no appearance and they breathed more freely than they had done when their helmets were closed.

Stenness moved his heavy, lead-weighted

DEVILMAN of the DEEP

★ EARTHMEN LEAVE FOR HOME

STENNESS and Kells closed the face plates of their diving helmets and soon in their feet to survey their surroundings.

No sound came to them from the outer world, but the dust floated before them to this wisp, strangely illumined by the electric torch which Stenness held about. Except for the glass of that ray they were in utter darkness, and once having ascertained that they could move forward, the passage that ran just high enough for them to walk upright, the flash lamp was extinguished. The battery had to be recharged by future adventures.

They were the first human beings who had ever stood as near the earth's center, and never since they had descended from the outer surface was there more need for courage than now. Blind in kind they groped along the floor of the passage, standing in the darkness now and then, feeling their way by passing their feet back against the rugged walls.

Nevertheless though they wore the need for self preservation was apparent in their wading and while they could not talk because their helmets were closed the same thoughts passed through both their brains.

Behind the man of fallen earth that had almost smothered them, and which they had left behind some hours before, the second flash-lamp was lighting that battle for the possession of the subterranean world.

Devilman, that monster whose mentality was half shark and half human, had been faced by Ben Flight, whose intelligence and leadership were of a higher order, to retreat to the ocean surrounding the crater. The law of life which governed the savagery of nature above in the jungles of the world had been demonstrated as similar, in that respect at least, in these underground regions. The first only could survive.

diving boots and kicked at the ground, then broke off a piece of warm rock from the wall, holding it close to his face.

"Famine starve," he remarked to Kells. "It must be necessary there for it to keep the heat of the volcano from us. We can not hear the rambles of the Jutlandians except faintly."

Yes, in the silence they could hear a strange noise no nearer from below than that rose at times to the muffled explosion of an volcano, then died down to a hardly audible whisper. They stood listening for some time to this agony of the world in the tones of frustration.

But now another sound attracted their attention. It came from behind, and made them both reach for their revolvers. It was the sound of the voice of Devilman!

What he said they could not tell, but it was unmistakable, that voice, that transporting entrance that might have been a telephone's notes. It rose and fell, glowing and dying, faintly like the rattle of a cogged fan's gears, then reached a height that seemed to admit a challenge, and died down abruptly.

Dumb Horrors of the Undersea World

Stinson raised one voice.

"Devilman!" whispered Stinson. "He must have eluded Sea Flight, and here we sit in pursuit of us—"

"He snuggled up the light suddenly, and his form softened. Kells felt the very sensation of danger, his companion murmured. They stood still, eyes staring ahead. "I saw something!" whispered Stinson. "I jumped on the edge of the light!"

"His eyes shook as he spoke, his revolver was raised ready to fire. But nothing could be seen, not a sign of life was there in the tunnel.

"They remained on the alert for some time, and they began to think that Stinson had been mistaken, that his eyes had played him false.

"We cannot remain here," said Stinson at last. "We must go on. Maybe I was wrong, Kells."

"Contently they advanced. That journey to South America had to be completed as quickly as possible if they were to see the light of day again.

They felt no resistance and gradually threw the rest of the machine left there. They tried to walk on increasing upper and lower steps. Perhaps Devilman had abandoned the device.

The path became easier, the ground smoother, and the roof rose higher. Now and then they entered irregularly shaped chambers that stretched again towards the opposite side, and then the passage continued as before.

They noticed that these chambers became more numerous as they advanced, and they were a regular series, connected by tunnels. They thought they heard the wush of ocean currents, the roaring of underground rivers. Once they crossed a bank, that rose to their knees.

It proved dark and cold, from left to right, and Kells dipped his head to it and tested it. It was soft. This must be a tunnel. He saw a faint light that had faded to the way down through the rock.

"Let's have some food here," advised Stinson, for they were both weary with the tramp. "We've been searching steadily for hours and we'll need to conserve our strength."

"They sat down and opened their packs and ate heartily. Among their provisions Sea Flight had placed some of that wonderful, strengthening substance that they had eaten so many times before. What it was they did not know, but it had the effect of putting great energy into their frames.

Stinson, after they had satisfied their hunger, took out the small pocket compass he carried and watched the needle, then made some calculations.

"We are walking due west," he announced, "and that is just as we ought to go."

He hung the beam of his torch to a wall niche. Not a sign of life, nothing moving. Yet the torch's ray revealed a thousand answering flashes from the ground.

Kells stopped and pushed up one of the small rocks that had glided suddenly. He held it under the torch, then both eyes were set to find astonishment. What Kells held was a glass diamond.

"They were in a state of dizziness and not only dizziness, but nausea, sickness and vertigo. Having recovered the torch light flashed them.

"Forward Stinson! Hang the beam of the torch and see if they both crowd out in wonder.

From the roof, from every corner of it, there came flashes of every colored prismatic shade: lavender, blue, green, white, yellow, purple. And yet small signs from small pools, but flashes as from mirrors!

"Are we being led? Or are those things really what they seem?" cried Kells.

He drew a white stone slowly across the edge of his face, glass carefully, gently, without pressure. The stone cut the glass without effort, leaving a clean scratch that

proved its nature beyond a shadow of doubt.

"We'll have some of these," he said, and gathered a few which he stored in his pocket.

Stinson did the same, taking not diamonds, but other stones, and as they were thus engaged Kells, raising his eyes from the ground, noticed a cry that rang through the distance of the chamber.

* AMBUSH IN THE CAVE

STANHOPE sprang to his feet. But the service of what they saw from them to the spot.

Out of the gloom there had advanced upon these shapes that looped to long, looping bands from the passage ahead.

Great, grey shapes they were, more like kangaroos than anything else. Six of them stood to a row ten feet high, balancing themselves on their hind legs, of legs they were, and looking on their chests with their detached flippers that were paws so well.

And then there came the breeze, blowing more strongly now, and on the breeze the trumpet of a voice that could not be mistaken.

It was Devilman, but he remained unseen, and there was no talking from the shadow where he was hidden. But at the sound of that yell the six beasts leaped. There was an instant for the five men to see their revolvers before they could fire the great shapes were upon them in a confused whirl of arms and legs.

Stinson and Kells were lifted from their feet and held in the embrace of two monsters, pressed tightly against breasts that were soft and supple, and the latter began a series of leaping movements into the tunnel from which they had emerged.

At first there was not a chance for Stinson and Kells to defend themselves. The attack had been so swift, the force had been so death and mangled. But as Stinson felt himself in danger of slipping from the flippers of the creature that carried him, he found that his right hand was no longer crushed into the side of the beast.

Quickly he edged his hand downward and pressed his revolver against the side of the creature as it landed on the ground and prepared to spring again. But the revolver came a safer than through its body, and awful was the smell of blood that struck Stinson's nostrils as he dropped the kangaroo-like creature falling beside him.

He saw a flippers stretched out to grasp him, and he fired again as he lay, straight at the small head and the single eye that was in the centre of its forehead.

The eye disappeared suddenly, and from the wound there issued the dark fluid that the fishermen called blood. The beast stirred weakly and died.

Stinson was on his knees in a moment, his back smacking the ground as Kells. He saw ahead his companion's legs stretch out from the side of the beast that carried him. Taking steady aim, Stinson fired, the beast dropped to its flippers, and Kells was next awaiting with aim.

"Here, Kells!" roared Stinson, seeing that Kells was bewildered by the fall.

The Kells could not join his companion just then. Two of the monsters had been slain, but two more leaped at Kells as he lay. Three flippers were upon him when his ground his message and a third went down. But he was picked up by the companion, and his revolver, rattled to the ground.

He struggled fiercely against that revolver, kicking and pushing, and Stinson moved to his knees, the lead leg of the creature drawn back for a terrible blow. It all occurred in a split-second. Kells' line the left of the leg of a kangaroo that had been poised, and it flung on Kells he would be disemboweled in that upward downward stroke.

But Stinson's revolver drew a bead on

the branch of the beast, and its bullet smashed the muscle that moved the leg. Down went the monster, staggering backward on one foot until it fell, and again Kells was thrown free.

That time he drew his knife, and as the flippers were thrust out to catch him again, he rolled away beyond their reach after cutting out at the flippers completely off at a slashing stroke.

That was the last that Stinson was able to see of Kells' struggle for the remaining moments turned their attention to him. They had been intent on the battle for possession of Kells, but the revolver shot from their hands more ready than any other. Kells rose from the ground at once as they leaped.

Stinson, on his knee, saw the creature on the left. The sight need him for a moment. Not a sound came from them, as they rose to the attack like great birds. When at the air they could to resemble kangaroos, they were lean, their bodies and their flippers taking the form of bars.

Thoughts came without time, and as these appeared of a hot world spread themselves on a white flash Stinson, his mind, rolled back to the scene that was his last as well as his last. He called out a word that those obedient to his tongue, a word that he did not know he had uttered, but it found in its single articulation the nearest classification of his fate.

"Paradise!"

They were not really photostats, of course, for only in reality did they resemble those giant flying birds of past ages, they were dumb animals that were made of various kinds of substituted hide. But as Stinson called out the name that sent of hypnotic revelation his head automatically aimed at the one usually opposite him. Twice he pressed the trigger of the electric revolver, and twice he heard the scuffed tread of the flippers striking its objective.

The beast seemed to struggle as its body shifted, but it was not so much as it fell on its head and slipped to the ground, a sure it lay in convulsion.

But the second one leaped upon him, smothering him in its embrace and covering him with its claws. Yet Stinson's hand was ready for it. He had dropped his revolver in the attack as he was tipped over by the weight, but out of his mouth his long knife came leaping to his fingers.

But as he drew out he would have been a dead man had not the beast's mouth. The creature opened its enormous mouth and revealed his helmet in its capacious jaws. There was a grinding sound in Stinson's ears, a rattan that seemed to draw his helmet into that gap of death, and then the stone metal of the helmet reached the pressure, while Stinson drew up his body to escape the blow from the lead legs that he instinctively knew were weak.

It was all over in an instant. The jolt of the head had made the best a body gave, but Stinson's knife had already sunk into the breast, and was withdrawn and plunged again and again into its throat and side. Mutilated by the pain—if it felt pain, which was questionably—the creature thrust him away, and he slid from its embrace with its life-long staring his arm.

The seven legs of some before his eyes, he could no longer observe any, but he left the flippers on him by the knee and hand, his upward, and then he was dropped with a thud and he heard a long sigh like the breathing of a steam pipe.

He made an effort to leave himself in the next attack, raising himself to his knees again, his knife poised. But there was no need to brace himself, there was no attack coming. He saw Kells standing over the fallen beast revolver in hand. Kells had striven on the rock of time and had cut the creature through the base of the skull.

"Quick, Stinson! Open us counter?"

Ann to arm, digging each other, they staggered forward as the smothering of Devilman entered through the tunnel.

Strange Creatures of a Vegetable Kingdom

* PLANT-MEN OF THE DEEP

STANMORE could not see where Kells was leading his crew to the floor of the boat that obtained his helmet, and there was no time to stop just then. He knew that Kells could see, and that was enough. Out of the chamber they passed and came more entered the tunnel, through which they descended as fast as they could go. Behind them they heard movements and the voices of Devlin.

If Kells could see his way, however, he was faced a problem that concerned him for the first time. The tunnel forked, one narrow road leading away to the right, the other leading straight on. Without hesitating Kells took the one to the right, pulling them over by the arm, urging them to hasten.

The road became smooth now and sloped upward. At looks out on the sea, and loaves in the rock. Instead of walking they were forced to climb, and gradually the climb became steeper and steeper until it assumed an angle of forty degrees and more.

The effort to continue the pace was too much. They had to stop for breath, and Kells cut his eyes around in desperation. He saw various passages and holes in the face of the rock, some of the holes being occupied by shelves of dark earth.

"Get down and crawl in, Stanmore!" he cried. "We've got to choose it."

Down they went on their faces and wriggled under a shaft like ash. They found they were in a deep pocket that took in a depth of a few feet below the level of the rock, but they were forced in, and from this narrow dug-out they might see along the path in both directions.

They heard Devlin's voice urging and trespassing. They peered over the edge of the dug-out and saw the wobbly legs and feet of black fish-men hurrying past within a foot or two of them; and after the fish men came the big, furry white and red of Devlin himself. They cannot be kept trespassing. They cannot be put in the guard. "Find them! Dead or alive, find them!"

He was beside himself with rage, and his trespassing scarcely ceased. But he and his fish-men did not go far when they returned and once more the legs and feet stopped just the two men in a sorry of excitement.

"They have gone to the left!" trumpeted Devlin. "They have taken the passage to the sea. Find them!"

"What of Ben Flight's troops?" asked a voice warily, but Devlin uttered a stream of anger.

"Find the sea and then we'll see on Ben Flight. We shall buy a trap for him. One he is in this chamber we can attack from the other side. Call your men in! Sound the alarm! Am I not ruler of the Deep?" Devlin would roar!

His voice died away as the walls tapered into the other passage and soon there was silence in the narrow space.

"Here!" exclaimed Kells, "that was a narrow one. It's a good thing these fish men have no sense of smell or if you have been there. What is the name of Stanmore these livegreen things we called?"

Stanmore, who had now wiped his face clean clear, shook his head.

"I thought they were protoplasmic at one time," he said thoughtfully, "and before that I thought they were a low grade of sea-animal. They seem to be another type of complexity of the waterworld. That was a strange thing Devlin said, Kells."

"Fancy that he should mistake on our behalf. He suggested that Ben Flight was in the region too. The only thing I can think of is that Ben Flight is pursuing the lot of Devlin's farm to these infernal regions."

And Devlin is having a trap for him, Kells. If Ben Flight is unleashed Devlin will still see the Deep.

"How are we out of here, he can for all I care."

"Listen to me," said Stanmore, gravely, laying his hand on Kells' sleeve. "Devlin must not be allowed to conquer. When I was speaking to Ben Flight through that trap of air we were cut off by the landslide. I told him to let Cornwall have the spot of his house. Can you guess why?"

"Oh, Cornwall will be all right, old man. I have the feeling that he has escaped by the sea."

"I hope so. But one day, if we escape, we may return. That is why I asked for the spot to be bought."

Kells looked on surprised at his companion. After all they had endured in stress and hardship he could still be so cheerful. Yet that look of Stanmore's grave face showed him how devoted his companion was to scientific achievement, how he regarded his life as nothing as long as he could add to the data of the world of man.



Advanced—(A-B-C) Section of superior class in water and scientific. Prepared essentially of white crystals and known as protoplasm. It is a valuable stimulant for collapse during a surgical operation. Has no marked odor which had caused to be called. Full chemical name is Methylamine-ethanol solution.

Mr.—To a height of about six miles composition of the upper air. It is roughly a mixture of Nitrogen, I and Oxygen, I, but contains small quantities of other gases and water vapor in varying proportions. Also some traces of Argon, Neon, Krypton, Xenon, and Helium. Also bromine than all but water and Oxygen. It is an upper agent and atmosphere. The quantity of Oxygen (O₂) which is a part of concentrated form of Oxygen (O₂).

Miss.—Amorphous or wet which lack pigment in skin, hair, and the coating of the eye. Hair is white, skin transparent, eyes are pink and very sensitive to light (to be continued)

After a time Stanmore straightened himself and thrust his hand over the edge of the dug-out. He signalled to Kells to look.

By stretching their necks they had a clear view of the chamber from which they were separated by about fifty yards. Fish-men came there, the black fish men who were Devlin's special fighting force, but other things were there too.

From somewhere there were gathering masses of the livegreen protoplasm, as it might be called while hanging around the fish-men were still more pinkish creatures in this primitive, undeveloped world.

There these plants or clouds? Were they living things at all? They had no shape that was common to them all, apparently, yet all had a vague resemblance to each other. Their color was a dusty gray, like the powder over the canvas, but there was a greeny tint about them, and they did not walk; they just moved, some on trailing stems that might be legs, some on a stiff support like a rebbage stalk, some with growth from their feet like spreading war-like plants.

They came from the left first that the two men had crossed, rising out of it as water-level rose, but moving towards the back one after the other; and the two watchers noticed that even the black fish men stopped aside to let them pass and stream to be reformed to them.

Devlin stood in the center of the

chamber and watched their pass, half living things come at his command. They moved slowly but steadily forward, then sank to the floor of the chamber, where there were perhaps a hundred of them present.

"Fish-men!" roared Devlin, "that is my plan. I have called the position to the darkness of the cave so that they will stay here and sting Ben Flight's troops if this cave is discovered to be. The fish-men and the plants will keep in the darkness, and when Ben Flight arrives we shall fall on him as he and his troops become entangled with the fish-men. I have just a force after the fish-men to bring them back to be used in the yellow cave, who even we return."

A narrow crevice from the fish-men. From the beetle's blinking of the head this might later have been seen. From the moving plant. His face no eye at all.

Quiet fell on the chamber. Devlin drew back out of sight, the fish-men disappeared in the gloom, the beetle also became invisible.

"Look at your shell, Kells," whispered Stanmore. "Be careful of the light shining. Find out whether this sense of sound is a method."

"I don't need to look. I know it by heart. We have taken the wrong turn. We should have gone to the left, and it's too late now, I fear."

"Devlin has sent a party along the road to the left after us, so it is providential we took that wrong turn. Don't you see, Devlin came down this way. Ben Flight will come along here also, if he comes at all. We shall keep close here and wait for him before he enters that chamber of death."

"Good," said Stanmore, "but we seem to be hanging every kind of uncertainty possible. What are Devlin's men by his position now?"

"Just think, Kells. Don't you remember that there was a German scientist who carried out experiments with plants and proved that they reacted to sounds as well as to touch? Any time gardens in our world will tell you that. Flowers have a sensitiveness that is beyond explanation. There is a heroic scientist near London who declares that flowers know when they are being plucked by people who do not love flowers. It sounds strange, but it is true."

"I remember, Stanmore. What are you thinking to suggest so far on these men scattered all over now?"

"Look here we see Nature developing plants with something approaching human expression. That is the meaning of Devlin's cry that he would kill the roots to life. I wondered at that phrase. Oh, we are standing on the fringe of great and terrible discoveries here."

"But where can these things come from?"

"Originally, from the sea, which is the mother of all life, I fancy. Some have everything that exists has some origin in, or connection with, the sea—the fish-men, the Devlin's three roots of poison, these livegreen protoplasmic. Oh, we are at the very cradle of life down here!"

"It may be our coffin of death," said Kells, gravely.

"That is a risk all scientists must take, Kells, and that I fancy. Now we know. If we escape we must return. The data here is too valuable to lose!"

He stepped suddenly and held up his hand for silence. Once more he peered over the edge of the dug-out, peering his head through and that. His face even had become a mask.

"Probably he dropped it, I said whispered to Kells' ear still!

"Remembering to mention John's passage—Stan!"

Kells hardly breathed while Stanmore went back to his post of observation. Their conversation had been carried on in very low tones, and now it was stopped the silence seemed heavy and tense.

But Stanmore's ears had caught something

Escape Beyond a Wall of Fire

And now a faint Sopping sound reached Kells, a steady tap-tap.

"And Kells, is a whisper that was no louder than a sigh, he heard Stannace's breathing.

"Sea Flight! Sea Flight!"

The tap-tap ceased, the Sopping died away.

"Sea Flight! Sea Flight!"

"A soft riddling as of a snake's body, and then another voice soft as a caress.

"Is that you, my friends?"

The clattering of a fern as it slipped under the shell of rock, and then arose up before the two men the form of Sea Flight.

"I was just behind the first rank," he whispered, "and so know it was your voice. You are all the track, my friends."

It is a few words Stannace exchanged with the veterans and the proximity of Devlin and his plans. Sea Flight listened attentively, and when Stannace asked about the fate of Cornwall the Prince assured him that all had gone well.

"The spot is beyond as you asked," he said. "Your companion was picked up by a slip."

"The House chamber is all in, Captain. Now let us think of Devlin."

"He is waiting for you in the chamber fifty yards along the passage."

"Very well," said Sea Flight, "we shall not disappoint him. We lost him in the pit after the battle above, but we have pursued him down here. I now hold a council with my leaders."

"Sea Flight, even if we escape we shall, I hope, meet again."

"Do you think that possible? You and I belong to different worlds."

"As my rate I shall be anxious to know that all is well with you. I have a way to suggest that will give us that satisfaction."

"Tell it me if it is possible—"

"It is possible. You know that our comrades had located the spot where he was picked up. Instead of that being permanent we get back to our world. One day I will tell you the way to that spot and drop a line beside this door. If the end of that line reaches you, will you fetch this stone to the response at that when I lead it up I shall know you are again the ruler?"

"I promise, my friend."

Stannace handed him one of the large stones he had picked up in the chamber below.

A voice whispered from the track above, urging Sea Flight to go. He crouched back to his feet, and in a few minutes returned.

"This is the plan, Earthmen. You are observed by Devlin, but he does not know you are here. We shall attack, and clear the passage to the left. You must then slip through behind us, while we hold them in combat."

"You are not, then, afraid of the possession from the rock above?"

"We have an antidote to their poison, my friend. We are prepared. Come!"

★ THE RIVER OF OIL

THE two Earthmen crept out of the day out and was surprised at the direct result of the talk above him, that was Sea Flight's remark. Their numbers were not have been usually a thousand, and their ranks stood steady fit up the passage. At the front of the column were five ranks carrying a long wide metal tube like a cross-pole, as the end of which was a nozzle.

The whisper of command spread, the ranks pushed forward, and Stannace and Kells stood aside as they passed. Sea Flight stood beside them, and presently he turned his eyes.

"We have come to seek you, Devlin, dweller in the dark places, speaker of evil?"

The trumpeting of Devlin's trumpet in defiance, and hardly had it begun when a flash as bright as lightning burst forward from the front ranks of Sea Flight's troops. It sent a tongue of white flame into the chamber, and the cross-pole tube came off glittering green that sparkled on the floor,

walls, and ceiling. But it was death which this flame sent forth.

The sport of white light came from the big tube of compressed metal of the same substance as was used in the torches, yet the tube was of iron bound with a covering that made it possible to handle and direct. The nozzle was arranged into the interior, and six flame belched forth twenty feet in front of the nozzle.

It acted in two ways—set an illumination and as a weapon. Nothing could stand before it. The person-ton who had come from the rise melted away as the flame struck into their sides. The light showed their bodies burned, exploding, scattered in all directions; and Kells and Kells saw these creatures clearly for the first time on the glare of a look and light that could be compared to the fire of magenta.

"They are not ghosts!" cried Stannace. "They are jelly fish. No, they are not jelly fish. They are neomeres. No, they are what are they, Kells?"

But Kells had no answer. These creatures could not be classified, any more than the long-necked neomeres with the head legs of kangaroos.

"This way!" roared Sea Flight, waving the two towards the passage they were to take. "For, the way is clear!"

The white flame had ridged the whole side of the chamber about the opening, and the helmets carrying the tube were advancing towards the group of kangaroo neomeres behind Devlin.

Devlin saw the letter of direct facing form. With a wild wail he dashed forward, scolded several of his blacks in his under hands, raised three above his head and threw them at the troops directing the column of fire. The kangaroo forms leaped at the same time.

Down went the opening flame in the ground as the great leader among the general of the troops behind them.

Blinded and wounded by Devlin's blows, launched the great water fell back leaving their column on the ground, and the neomeres the kangaroo leader inflated was impaled as one.

Two black hoves fell up and down in terrifying yelps, tearing the helmets in shreds and pointing their tongues to fragments. In that awful moment the white ferocity of the animal world was in being, and as the monsters gained the advantage Devlin's group forced to gain possession of the weapon on the ground.

By whose force heaved along the floor but no longer did any damage, for Devlin's force avoided its striking flame and swung round to attack in the heels.

Stannace and Kells remained by the entrance to the passage, dismounted at the carriage and eager to lead a head. In vain Sea Flight desired to them to go as he dashed forward to rally his Earthmen. They did not hear him in the noise and screams that filled the chamber.

And then the Earthmen saw that the great column was not the only weapon at Sea Flight's command. Behind those who had heard taken a foot back. One after another their tubes were turned on and from there pointed each flame leaped a yard long.

As the pressure were thrown back from the column three smaller tubes came into operation.

The holder stopped the advance of the kangaroo beasts, firing off their tubes at them, striking the flame into their sides and faces, forcing a scintilla of air that extended until the flame went half round the chamber to the next one.

The rods of that set began to clank, enveloping Devlin and his troops; but Devlin had taken the column in his right hands. He swung it high to his shoulder and placed the butt there, using the weapon as a rifle. Scared by seeing it, neomeres, from the helmet and seeking their smaller tubes flying in every direction.

One of them fell at the feet of the two

Earthmen, and Kells picked it up. The flame was sporting in gusts from it, and by the nozzle there was a small tap wheel, as observed, captured the output. He turned the tap with his fingers. The flame ceased and only the red hot nozzle glowed dimly.

Stannace's eyes were riveted on the little tap wheel, and he was so busy watching a chance to see at Devlin's, but the confusion and leaping of the combatants prevented a clear view. Now he stopped for word among the noise of the loyal hot man. He did not want to go before he had talked with Devlin, and behind him Kells passed, also with another reply.

But even as they showed their way forward, the neomere was down, and he was seeing a chance to see at Devlin's, but the confusion and leaping of the combatants prevented a clear view. Now he stopped for word among the noise of the loyal hot man. He did not want to go before he had talked with Devlin, and behind him Kells passed, also with another reply.

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Devlin heard the cry of his foe and turned to direct the column in Sea Flight's direction; but he was too late.

The column fell from its ground, the flame was extinguished suddenly, and the last that Stannace and Kells observed was the falling body of Devlin with Sea Flight's arms straddling him as they went down together.

A column who commanded a detachment of Sea Flight's advancing troops pointed to the passage which was fire.

"In case of the Earth! The Prince bids you go!"

Over the passage Stannace and Kells clumped heavily until the noise of the battle died down.

They had gone perhaps a mile of that momentarily straight male when they stopped to rest for a moment. They heard the strange halting and gurgling of a river in front. But they heard also a sound behind them.

Stannace turned his flashlight along the ground. So far of the kangaroo neomeres were among them in their wake.

Swiftly the two men turned and saw Stannace's snapping at the truth he arrived.

The road seemed to dip away from their feet, they stumbled down a slope and found themselves on the edge of the river they had heard.

A curious smell pervaded the air. Stannace dropped his head into the running stream and raised it to his face.

"This is not water, Kells. It is oil!"

Kells gave a queer shock of attempt as he dangled himself to the other bank and stood stamping his feet to shake off the clinging oil. Stannace again swung his torch to the river.

The animals were within thirty yards of their nose.

"We've got to fight it out here, Kells. If once we get rid of these monsters one way is clear. So, the path leads upward now."

Again Kells laughed that queer way. His fingers fumbled at the handle of the flashlight he had picked up. There was a scintillating sound and a series of sparks in the manner of a cigar lighter; then the lamp of Stannace's.

"Watch, Stannace!" shouted Kells, as he bent down forward to the edge of oil.

He pushed the flame along the surface of the gurgling supplies. Beads of light flew upward, and then the oil caught. A mass of flame-muzzed high, and Kells leaped back, tearing off the top of his tube.

The flame spread with a roar along the surface, a wall of fire arose to the very roof, smoke belched on either side. Stannace and Kells dove back from the furnace and clanked the rising slope to get away from the scorching heat.

"Nothing to see now that," said Kells with satisfaction. "It will burn for you as far as I know, led by the flow from the rocks."

They marched forward, knowing that there was no longer any danger of pursuit; and the burning stream cut their shadows before them in long, dark patches.

Another powerful story of the Earthmen of the Day is our next issue.

The BLACK Vultures

Every age has its Pirates. The "Jolly Roger" was once the terror of the Seven Sea, the masked rider the menace of the highways. Today, kidnapers and smash-and-grab raiders defy the law. What of tomorrow—when the pirate will have at hand all the wonders of future science and mechanics?

* THE VULTURES SHOW THEIR TEETH

WITH terrifying solemnity the stillness of the temple was shattered by the roar of a machine gun, the noise reverberating delectably as it was hurled back from pillars, doors and niches.

High velocity explosive bullets tore their way through the lead, steel and body of the god, ripping the metal as though it were paper.

The great jointed arm and hand were shaken either through the crude machinery being worked at its operator being killed, and the bullets commenced to tear their awful, bloody way through the screaming, frantic monks.

Following the example of his guide, Derek dropped to his knees and fell flat on his face to avoid that deadly lead. Even when he lay he could see the dark forms of a group of men crouched by the machine gun in the shadows of the ornate entrance.

Suddenly the roar of the gun ceased, and as the last reverberating echoes of the exploding cartridges died slowly away, the sun and far famed Falso, snuffed in black leather flying ir, were stealing from out of the shadows.

Snatched through the terrified monks by a match, and gripping the nearest object by his pygmy wrists, pushed him to his feet.

"Release that man!" he said harshly, indicating the fettered Zoroaster. "If I hear his name in him, then every one of ye shall die!"

The abbot made a fumbling gesture with his claw like hands. He did not speak. He could not. Only croaking noises came from his bloodless lips.

But the monks understood what his mouthless means to convey, and whilst some rushed for a ladder, others disappeared behind the god, obviously to look to the machinery which controlled the arm and hand.

Why was there so much haste, one might ask. Why this wild obedience to Falso's impulsive command? The answer, indeed, was very simple.

The mariner's raid on Kao Hia had shown of what three dozens of the gods were capable with their terrible modern inventions of gun and gas, and the abbot and his monks decided what might now happen to them at the hands of these desperate men



As the giant fingers of the Buddha closed over their helpless victim, the silence of the temple was shattered by the roar of a machine gun. Priests flung themselves down.

who had so strangely, was entry into their heavily guarded sanctuary.

There was that gun, his machine, and anything that was from the shadows by the outside. At the first battle move there was not the slightest doubt that it would bring again into savage and vicious life.

For these were desperate men, out to rescue their practical chief, Zoroaster, who had been captured after a raid on the temple of Kao Hia.

He had crashed while returning to his sky factory, and had come upon Derek (Hobson, one of his own prisoners) who had escaped from the dirigible by parachute.

Derek a member of the British Aeronautical Research Society, had been captured by the Vultures while they were raiding the town of Boshay. He had been offered a chance to join the Vultures—or death, but when the

Vultures had gone to loot the sanctuary, he had escaped.

Zoroaster and he had been trying to reach the frontier together when the priests of Buddha had captured them. They were being offered as a sacrifice to the god when Falso had come to the rescue.

Yes, these men would be desperate. The trembling monks understood Zoroaster and honored him gently to the ground. He was quite unconscious, and his blind legs were thick with bloody foam.

As a show of respect from Falso, two of his men stepped forward from out the shadows and, after severing Derek's hands, picked up the dazed Zoroaster from of their leader.

"Take him to the market!" ordered Falso.

Waiting until the men had withdrawn with

their bodies. False turned again to the covering above.

"Due to stir one step outside the main doorway," he warned harshly, "and death shall greet them in the darkness."

With that he took Derek and the arm and together they turned and walked from the bridge, their retreat being covered by the deadly beams of the machine gun.

"Put this on!" said False, handing Derek a gas mask. "We won't see any by means of the gas, knowing that it would not prevent the heavy machine outfits."

"But how do you know we were in the trap?" asked Derek astoundedly.

False smiled, pointing in the adjustment of his gas mask.

"We learned it from the priest who guarded the door," he answered.

Followed by the machine-gun crew who carried down automatics in their hands, they passed through corridors thick with the yellow smoke of the gas.

Here and there they had to stop aside to avoid some hoodlum and blackboarded flame-ling ring and snarl in death, but at length they passed out into the clear, fresh air of night, and with an unobtrusive relief Derek tore off his gas mask to let the cold wind play on his frozen hair.

"So you escaped from the ship?" asked False, leading his way unobtrusively through the darkness to where the machine was parked down on the wind-swept plateau on the side away. "Where did you meet Zoroaster?"

Derek told him, explaining how they had spent the day and how captives had come with the ship.

"But it is an extraordinary thing to me," he concluded, "how you seem to find us in such proximity of each other."

"There is nothing extraordinary about it at all, my friend," replied False. "They don't see us, because, these masks, but they have some centuries-old and equally efficient means of spreading news. How it is done I do not know, but within an hour of your capture word of it would have been received in the farthest corner of Ellet. When we landed in search of Zoroaster we enquired for him at the tip of the Tundra coast. It was an effort, but to force the truth out of the outposts and his wife. They knew, and they told us that the pair of you were prisoners in King Et."

"And what is it happens to me now?" asked Derek after they had walked on for some time in silence.

False shrugged his shoulders.

"That will be decided by Zoroaster," he replied.

"Is he still alive," connected Derek.

"Yes," answered False grimly. "If he still lives."

Again there was silence between them until the black shadow of the machine loomed up in the darkness ahead.

"Why didn't Boring lead this man?" asked Derek. "Has Zoroaster's second returned?"

"Yes, but he has a whole host of fear of these black-clothed men," replied False.

"And I don't blame him for that," commented Derek dryly.

Reaching the black manosphere False lost sight Zoroaster, who was lying still and motionless on an improvised stretcher in the snow.

"I am afraid he is in a bad way," he said, strapping up and turning to his man.

"Let him stay quietly at you are into the rear cockpit of my aeroplane."

The men obeyed, and when he had seen Zoroaster made as comfortable as possible, False turned to Derek.

"You understand that I am taking you back aboard the ship?" he said. "You will travel in the rear cockpit of Alka's machine. If you will give me your word that you will not attempt to interfere with him at the controls I will detain him from being your Jewish god."

Derek bristled and False added:

"You realize how easy it will be for me to have you locked in the gun mounting, and how uncomfortable that will be for yourself?"

Derek smiled.

"Right," he said, "but he realized that he had talked no other option. "I give you my word not to interfere with Alka."

A few moments later the black manosphere was starting across the wind-swept plateau to rear up onto the night sky.

Strongest lights and most lights twinkling on the tips and ends revealed the course they took, and at three hundred feet False swung the formation over the black bulk of King Et.

His hand pressed on the torch release and four high explosives' heads hurried down into the darkness. Above the thunder of the engines, came a sudden receding roar as the four flames and howling debris sped up from the doomed manosphere.

Beyond from the other machine streaked down into that dreadful, blazing pit, and when the formation had passed and was already swirling up into the night air that moment of King Et was a blaring inferno hounded in by blackboard and aged walls.

★ DUEL TO THE DEATH

THEY landed the airplane at twenty-five thousand feet, and Zoroaster was carried down through the hull in his sedan where he lay at once attended by Doctor Silver, the surgeon's steward.

"He will live," he reported to False, quipping the robot an hour later and entering the brilliantly lighted salon. "but he is badly hurt and will, I am afraid, be a cripple for life."

"He is lucky to have escaped with that," said False, "for I have never known a man more close to death than was he. I will have the course laid out for the late."

"You mean," growled the bearded Black Boring, "that I will have the course laid out for the late?"

"The right kind of eyes of False regarded him, twinkling as they were.

"It is inaudible who gives the command," he said, "but we return at once to the bar."

"And what if I say we do not?" snarled Boring. "I, as second in command, am responsible and Zoroaster is fit to take over again eventually."

"I am not yet drinking that," returned False coolly, "but we are returning to our bar, and I shall, the pilot will ignore any other order."

"Who says he will?" shouted Boring, his little blood-shot eyes ablaze with rage.

"I may be well," returned False, and his teeth set on edge. "I and one overboard."

Quietly and unobtrusively the other pilot had grasped the situation behind False, their cold, hard eyes fixed on Black Boring.

"I suppose this is because I did not lead the blundering party?" snarled Boring.

"You may talk it as you," said False evenly.

Boring was silent, his great harsh jawed, and twinkle in his eyes. It was easy to see that the situation was beyond him.

"All right," he said throatily, "by the sword for the late!"

Pushing False roughly aside, he strode from the salon, slouching the door behind him. With a snarl at the others, False stepped to the telephone which connected with the control cabin.

"Take her up to thirty thousand feet," said, "and lay the course for home."

Replacing the receiver he turned to Derek.

"It must be obvious to you that you will not find escape so easy a second time," he said. "If you will give me your parole not to attempt it you may have the rest of the ship. If you refuse, then I'm afraid that I

must have you handicapped and locked in a cabin."

"I suppose I am to be killed eventually?" said Derek.

"As I have told you," replied False, "this depends entirely upon Zoroaster, my father, upon yourself. You will not be killed if you join me."

"I will never join you," answered Derek.

"Which is singularly stupid of you," returned False. "Lawless we may be, but we are a goodly company. However, do not give your parole not to attempt to escape."

Derek gave it, for, as before, he realized that he had no option. To be handicapped and locked in his cabin would render any attempt at escape absolutely impossible, and would only mean destruction for himself.

A little later he sat on the long dining room with False and his pilot enjoying a meal which would not have disgraced the menu of a first class hotel.

And northward glided the mighty air ship, descending wave at a speed of three hundred miles an hour; northward towards its base, bearing with it its commander, two good fellows in the flower of their manhood. Wherever they were Derek did not know, but, to his surprise, False attended the pilot without the slightest hesitation.

"Our host," said False. "It is on the roof of Greenland, a few miles north of Hargreaves Island. We shall reach it by dark to-morrow night."

And the following week, after hours of driving over a road and plateau sea, the great airship came gliding down through the Arctic chills towards a long, black sheet, flecked by scattered patches of ice in the white glare of a barren coast far from the haunts of man.

With a still which told of long practice, the airship was soon housed, and pilots and crew made their way to their respective lodges.

Now that they were on the ground, False did not ask Derek to remain in parole, but had him taken to a stateroom man but furnished with a table, chair and camp bed, and furnished an armed guard over him. And that night he realized what a well-deserved reward he was.

It was on the morning of the seventh day of his imprisonment that False walked into the bar.

"You are to come with me," he said with a smile. "My aeroplane is well enough now to take an interest in things, and he has decided to take of you and Black Boring."

"Black Boring?" repeated Derek in surprise.

"Yes," replied False. "Zoroaster cannot figure Boring's failure to lead the manosphere, and he is dealing with him accordingly. But come, he wishes to speak with you himself."

Obviously Derek followed him across the frozen snow to a luxuriously furnished and carpeted tent, the atmosphere of which was warm with the heat of two glowing stoves.

Zoroaster was lying on a bank, and Derek scowled how else he could be pronounced to be the man in command.

At a gesture from False, Derek stepped to the side of the bank. For long moments Zoroaster lay staring up at him, then his lips moved, and he spoke in a faint whisper.

"As we lived through it all. Will you join my Veterans?"

Derek shook his head.

"No, I will not," he answered.

Again the frail lips of Zoroaster moved, and so faint were the whispered words that Derek had to bend his head to catch them.

"After what we have passed through together I do not wish to see you die. So I am giving you a chance of life. You will take this as a gesture that covered Boring to fight to the death. Only one of you will come down alive. If that be you, then you will remain here a prisoner until I demand my Veterans."

A Battle of Death in the Skies

"And if it be Borring?" demanded Derek.

"He will work in future as a mechanic," replied Korotok.

His eyes sought those of Falco and quickly the latter stepped forward.

"Send them up!" whispered Korotok.

* A COWARD GETS HIS DUE

STILL, severely contemplating at all, Derek quitted the hot with Falco.

"You quite understand," said the latter, leading the way toward white two of the engine's lightning accessories were standing with their fingers ticking over. You see to go up and fight Borring. You will both flutter out at five thousand feet. I am accompanying you up in my machine, and will fire a red Vandy light which will be the signal for you to engage in battle.

"It is useless!" said Derek hoarsely.

"It is a chance of life for which you should be grateful," roared Falco. "Do be fair with you, call me Korotok, not myself base greed. I hope that you will join us. We do not doubt your courage, but this light will prove your ability as a fighting pilot. This is your chance."

"And if I refuse to go up and fight?" demanded Derek, talking by the little stream-lined plane.

"You will be shot within a quarter of an hour," retorted Falco.

Realizing that there was nothing else for it but to fight the gun duel with the headstrong Borring, Derek seized the flying kit which a mechanic handed him and clambered into the cockpit.

Little had he thought when he had undergone his Royal Air Force training that he would be put to an even a test as this.

Huffed in heavy flying kit, Black Borring was already ensconced in the cockpit of the other plane. He also was to fight for his very life, and he was grimly determined that he would send this Englishman down in flames.

After that he would work as a mechanic for Korotok, whose chief lieutenant he had been. But he would only work until the chance of a better one, then he would call to the British Government those men whom once he had called cowards.

Swinging himself up into the cockpit of his fighting plane, Falco was the first to take off, racing across the frozen snow to take the air in a steep upward climb.

Side by side Derek and Borring followed him, climbing swiftly to five thousand feet, where they detoured out. Falco continued to climb another thousand feet, and whilst those on the ground below watched with bated breath, a red Vandy light beamed from his cockpit and flashed downwards.

It was the signal for battle.

Working on rudder, Derek swung his machine towards that of Borring, who was already moving at him with a whooshing roar. His engine was worked round the trigger of his synchronized gun, but deliberately he held his fire, and suddenly whipping forward the control stick went northwards in a thundering dive.

He reared right under Borring's plane, then back onto the control stick, and he went soaring up and up in a wild race as red and shudder down on the now wildly whirling Borring.

His engine was clamped tightly round the trigger of the gun, the outrigger belt was whirling madly through the chamber, and hot flame from the burning mixture lashed back beyond the cockpit windshield.

Seeing the death which was rearing down at him, Borring took his machine on towards a wild, zigzag dive which took to the ground every flying wing and strut.

But only for seconds did he hold the dive before whipping back his control stick to go soaring up and up into the leaden greyness of the Austin sky.

Derek followed, sticking to him like a

hook, but Borring had already reeled, and pulling a sharp zig turn, drove straight at Derek, his gun opening faces and a deadly stream of tracer bullets.

Derek's machine was as rigid as though by an invisible axe, and as he glanced swiftly sideways to see the whirling lightning of the bullets striking the metal structure of wing. Instantly he threw the plane into a spin, and in that same moment something like red-hot iron scored his scalp.

Borring, his bearded lips down back in deathly snarl, saw the leather clad form of Derek lurch drunkenly forward across the cockpit.

Releasing the pressure on the trigger of his gun, he pushed his control stick forward and went northwards in the noise of the plane which was spinning in destruction on the snow-covered cliffs below.

The godliness and deathly masses caused by the bullet which had scored Derek's scalp, was only momentary, however, and the rest of his ear served to nerve him.

He was gasping, but he had plenty of breath yet. Still bearing his head as he lay sprawled across the controls, he had a glimpse of Borring circling round him, selecting the most vulnerable spot for a final burst of bullets.

Certainly Derek's gloved fingers closed on the throttle, and, reaching way behind him, he banded himself lock into his seat.

Unwittingly, he lurched on full throttle to counteract the spin and pulled the throttle open to full.

With a deafening roar of high-powered engine the palest little plane swooped from out of the spin, and, soaring on the death-tow straight as in Borring's synchronized gun flames.

Borring lurching wildly and, by aspect pulling, pulled clear of that deadly stream of bullets. Then swooping, he whipped forward his control stick and clambered down on Derek, who had fallen out of the cockpit into a tail slide.

His face was livid with fury, for the last few seconds had been a close call for him, and he knew it.

Derek did not need to glance over his shoulder to realize the death which was staring on his tail. He had one split second in which to act before he was either shot through the back by a stream of bullets or had his tail plane and rudder control wire shot to ribbons.

Death in the air! Never ceasing adventures it next week's powerful story of the Plotters of the Desert.



Derek went thundering down, his gun blasting a streaks accompaniment to the pander of his engine.

The March of the Berserks



The conduct of Man is ruled by his ductless glands—those tiny bodies hidden in the human frame. Character, strength, energy, growth—all are just a matter of ductless glands. Many scientists believe that a man's characteristics can be changed—a criminal become a philanthropist, a weak man strong—by treatment of the glands; but who knows what strange pranks Nature can play on those who invade her domain? Here is a startling story of a man who sought to battle with Nature

★ A GAMBLE IN HUMAN LIVES

THE island was a story told in the Azores group, hundreds more or less were labeled, and now loaned to Professor Regnard Meira by the Portuguese Government.

It stood alone, surrounded by the placid blue waters of the Atlantic, the other islands only visible as mere swells on the horizon.

There was a little bay on the southern shore, with rock jet headlands, and around the island were rich luxuriant masses of green vegetation. The bay was a natural harbor, the water being of such depth that the big liner, *Astoria*, had no difficulty in making her way in and securing a safe anchorage.

Two thousand men, strong, fit, happy, crowded the great vessel's decks, their gaze directed toward the shores of this tiny land, which was to be their future home.

And on the bridge stood Professor Meira himself, a tall, distinguished man with the eyes of a dreamer. Far behind him was a kind of lantern, too, in the depths of his looking into at his quiet manner the heated response of Meira's island.

"Well, sir, it looks good," said a blunt voice at his elbow.

Professor Meira started and turned. Captain Hanson was a bluff sailor, and ever since the liner had stepped out of London River he had had his doubts regarding this remarkable voyage.

For four passengers, good captain, it is the island of Hops," said the professor impulsively. "These unfortunate young men, for the first time in their lives, will have a real chance. Here, in the zone of sunshine, they will be permitted to hold up their vitamin-placed bodies. They will become men. You understand me, Captain?" His eyes positively blazed. "Men? Real men? Men such as the world has never before seen!"

"I hope you're right," said the Captain good-humoredly.

It was not his business to discourage the professor, so he kept his private thoughts to himself. This great experiment, noble as it was, did not greatly impress him. The professor was certain of success, but others were, more practical, had their doubts. Time alone would show.

Five months past Great Britain had talked of Professor Regnard Meira and his ambitious experiment. From north, south, east, and west men had come to join his expedition. Not all of them had been accepted, for those were conditions. The stranger was had been rejected, those with family ties had been rejected. Only the contrasts, the ill-matched, the weak, had found favour in Professor Meira's eyes.

Two thousand of them were back the decks of the *Astoria*—now, started heading, billowing crests where the world had used to

Not one of them was older than twenty five, and the majority were youths of between eighteen and twenty. An army of half-a-potful battalion of humanity's drags.

"You think I am a dreamer?" said the professor, turning abruptly to his companion. "Set your feet on my own back, and when you return with my own batch of recruits you will have the greatest surprise of your life."

Captain Hanson laughed.

"Admitting that the climate is sunny and warm, I can't quite see how you can justify your high hopes, Professor."

"Well, you should have good luck to see this business is costing you a pretty penny, and, as a philanthropic act, I should say it stands second to none. We could do with more men like you in the world, sir."

Other men had said the same thing. Professor Meira was spending a fortune on his experiment. A notorious British subject, he had made his name wealthy out of his chemical discoveries, which had been marketed by a British company. That wealth he was now lavishly expending for the good of his adopted country. He was a business man, but money had no lure for him. He was a scientist, and, seeking never side in his hands, he was using it to realize his own dreams.

At the back of the bay there was a venerable township of long wooden buildings—many here, in fact, of the most modern type. For months British contractors with their men had been at work on Meira's island, preparing this ideal camp. Here the youths, who had never known comfort and plenty, would become accustomed with life.

There had been much head-shaking amongst government men in England because the professor's projects were picked from England's drags. None doubted that Professor Meira could reproduce their physical condition. But what of the brain, many earnestly inquired, which controlled these animals? Would the care-free, open-air life cure their mental stumps as well as their rickety bodies?

Others rang out from the decks as the *Astoria* glided a full night of their future home. The stow was well ordered, and to the left and right of the buildings there were splendidly laid out recreation grounds.

Behind by the virgin country, which, during the course of months, the professor's children were to convert into profitable market gardens. Here they would grow exotic fruits for the English market, and the entire profits would go to their own pockets. For there was to be no slacking here. The men would work, but their hours would be congenial.

Tax discrimination was a long job, and what it was going on Professor Regnard Meira went soberly to address.

He was met by three eager, clean-lined

young men in white flannels. One, the elder of the three, was Dr. John Carlson, whom Meira had taken from one of the great London hospitals, and at a stroke had converted from a merely house-surgeon into a three-thousand-pound-a-year man. He was Meira's right hand, and the passengers with him were his assistants, fresh, earnest young doctors who had lately been little more than students.

"So!" exclaimed Meira, after they had exchanged greetings. "My friends, it is the day! See! Our subjects are here."

He was pointing towards the pier. He did not use the word "subjects" as a long night saw it, but as a doctor. The two thousand men were not human beings, but just—subjects. There was no phyllophagous plant, but the greatest scientific experiment any doctor had ever planned.

They went up the beach through the camp—two by two—"stretches" of army beds—in a neat, square building in the centre, a building of solid brick, with iron-barred windows and a single sliding door. It was the laboratory, a place of ultra-modern equipment, with lead walls and floor, with porcelain benches, X-ray apparatus, operating theatre, and, in fact, every facility for dealing with disease and injury.

Over the laboratory itself were the quarters of the three young doctors. For Professor Meira had never lost sight of the fact that his "subjects" were ill-matched, many of them diseased. In this island haven they would be cured. Carlson and his two assistants would have all their work out and from this day forward.

There was a visible change in the professor's manner after he had closed the green door. He was alone with his assistants now—banned the reach of all eyes and ears. The faintest light in his eyes had vanished, and his face, another face had become flushed.

"We are ready, you," he said, in a low, vibrant voice. "Really, my young friends, that to-day we start the most amazing experiment ever attempted by man—open humanity. Of the results there can be no question. Of the results we await."

"I wish I could agree with you, Professor," said Carlson, his manner becoming grave and earnest. "Why are you sure?"

A shadow of anger crossed the professor's face.

"Are you doubting my ability?" he asked harshly. "Have I not experimented for years in the obscurest corners of my Hazy road laboratory? Have I not met with unqualified success?"

"Forgive me, sir," said Carlson. "But you have hitherto experimented upon animals—"

"Fah! In those few differences" broke in the professor excitedly. "The organism of an animal is no different from the organism of a human. Science with one means success with the other. Already I can see



Every man was weighed and examined once a week. Slowly the strange work went on.

the island peopled by two thousand perfect men. Such men as the world has never before seen—giants of strength. Superiors of brawn and muscle, with clean minds and healthy nerves. I told you, Carlson, there can be no failure. As week succeeds week we shall see the change. The world will marvel, but we, knowing the secret cause, will be calm, and will patiently wait the complete fruits of success.

"By Heaven! If only you see right!" said Carlson, his eyes glowing.

"That?" asked the scientist. "There is no 'if,' Carlson. We must succeed or we shall be the laughing stock of the world. Remember, our real experiment is being conducted in secret. Even the men themselves will not know that we are introducing special vitamins into their food. Why are they so physically underdeveloped? In it all a question of glandular development. The tiny glands of the human body, uncounted by the dozens of all, are the true cause of all human ailments. Feed these glands, and feed them in the right way, and there vanishes—"

"Why are some men helplessly dumb? Are they brain deficient from other brains? It seems that some kind of forced draught makes their minds somnolent with dullness. The only real difference as to them is that their digestive glands are partially affected. There are the tiny Thy glands in our heads—the pituitary glands; the thyroid gland and the parathyroid glands in our throats. The two suprarenal glands in our bodies provide strength and energy. Without these glands no human would be no better than brutes."

Science has made these discoveries, sir,

I agree," said Carlson, "but Science is still groping."

"I am not groping," interrupted Professor Meikle coolly. "And my object in bringing two thousand men to this island is solely to test their pituitary glands. They will know nothing of it; the world will know nothing of it. These tiny glands, started just two inches behind the root of the nose, are extraordinarily sensitive to treatment. If the gland is fed on one side, and starved on the other, what happens? The subject develops amazing strength, he becomes indolent in pain. His skin tends to turn yellow. If the position is the other way about, and the opposite gland has its balance upset, then the subject becomes sensitive, fearful of pain, cowardly."

"Most men of science know nothing of the pituitary gland compared with my own knowledge. For years I have worked—and now, at last, I am on the eve of the greatest triumph in human history. By experiment I have discovered a method of developing the pituitary glands with absolute certainty, simply by the introduction of certain vitamins into the man's food, they will undergo a gradual change—a change which will become less gradual as time goes on. Here, in this laboratory, my friends, we have the necessary apparatus. It is only to be expected that a few robust subjects will develop abnormal strength. These subjects will be given special treatment in order to keep them normal."

"You think then, that the majority of the men will change in exact accordance with your calculations?" asked Dr. Carlson. "But what of the men with diseased

glands? Is it not possible that abnormally will show itself? A victim of abnormally, when the disease becomes acute, becomes lumpy and hollow; his face no longer resembles that of a human being, but becomes that of a horse. And these are typical characteristics the brain changes, too."

"Why do you talk of disease?" asked Professor Meikle impatiently. "If some of the men are diseased they will be cured. There can be no such failures when the pituitary gland is treated scientifically and in accordance with a rigid, regulated system. Now, on Carlson, there is nothing to fear. I have worked it all out, and I know just what I am doing. Work! Only a few weeks will elapse before you begin to see the change."

Later, they went out to inspect the newly-labeled men. A miserable-looking, scrawny, waddling, ill-mannered, narrow-shouldered, most of them had a long dog look. But they were happy, they were smiling in their good fortune.

There was no prison camp, but a place where they were their own masters. There were no guards to look after them, no employers to give them orders. They were free—as free as the air.

And in gratitude to Professor Meikle they danced as loudly as their underdeveloped legs would allow them.

In a very short time they had become organized, because men were given work as cooks, others became fish-walkers, and so forth. The camp became a hive of energetic, cooperative industry.

For several days after that the men were mostly engaged in bringing stores out from the boat. And with every meal they took their pituitary glands, unknown to them, were treated in accordance with Professor Meikle's carefully worked-out system.

For two months Professor Meikle remained at the camp in full command.

At the end of this period he revealed his objects with transparent ease. There were cord inmates, too—for every man of the two Command had his own cord. Every man was weighed and measured once a week, and a special record was kept. If the professor was enthusiastic, Dr. Carlson and his assistants were not less so.

"Two months to-day, sir—in the interests," said Carlson, as he approached the scientist. "And what an amazing change."

"My dear Carlson, you have been talking yet," chuckled the professor, as he looked through his glasses. "I will admit that the developments have been even more rapid than I expected, but one good advance will be further underlined as the weeks go by. Success is now assured."

"By Jove, sir, I believe you," said Carlson, almost breathlessly. "You must let me see for my mother's sake."

"Yes! It is nothing," interrupted the other. "Scientific men all over the world would murder me and if they knew what I was doing. But they don't know, Carlson, and that's our little secret, now. The world shall know nothing of the real truth until our success is complete."

He went to one of the windows and stared out, his eyes were glowing with intense satisfaction. What he was was astonishing enough.

The great camp was very different now. Glorious fencer boys had sprung up as though by magic and were filled with gay bloomers. There were swells and dandies everywhere. Scores of men, dressed only in shorts, were at work about the camp, his torso body was kept in the great fat suburbs and market garden of the island of the stars.

A stranger, returning to the island after two months' absence, would scarcely have believed the evidence of his own eyes. For the "dove and-ears" who had once on the great fair were no longer in evidence. The men who worked about the camp were tawny, tanned Apollos.



Seeking their ghastly vengeance, the Berserks burst in through the windows of the laboratory. Death was waiting for the assistants of Professor Sigmund Meats.

Monsters kill their Creator

Continuing . . .

The March of the Berserks

raged. It was as if a storm with the tumult within Professor Meeta's brain.

The island at last—a meadow on the lagoon.

Professor Sigward Meeta, on the bridge, stared through his binoculars. He was a mere shadow of his former self, for the days of security and nights of sleeplessness had taken their toll.

Time and again, during this voyage he had called himself a fool for acting so impulsively. He should have stayed in England until the storm had subsided, then he could have chartered a plane with ease. He would have been at the island much—much sooner. But it was too late now.

Captain Hanson had done his best; he had broken all the Atanor's theories for speed, and every officer and man showed his spirit with excitement. They all knew that something had gone wrong with Professor Meeta's experiment, though they didn't know quite what that experiment was.

And when at last the liner cautiously entered the protected bay, officers and men were standing at the rails, staring towards the beach.

"Look as if the trouble came from the ship, sir," said Captain Hanson, with a stifling look at the professor. "There's less a cyclone here, I should say."

"Yes, yes," exclaimed Meeta, with intense relief. "So! Perhaps, then, I made the mistake. It's still one. Perhaps my plans were needless. Yet . . . My poor camp! How terrible!"

They were gazing upon a scene of wreckage and destruction. The tents, furiously blown and cast, were all scattered. It was as though a tornado had swept over the island. Everywhere wreckage was to be seen.

And, as meadow where one gazed, no living soul was visible either. It was like an island at the dead.

As the Atanor came to her anchorage, it was seen that many of the long wooden buildings had been burned. It was the same with the white brick laboratory. The walls were scorched, the roof was full of gaping holes. It was a mere shell—a ruin.

"The monster!" muttered Professor Meeta. "What have I done? Where has he gone? What have I done?"

He had scarcely known what to expect, but the actuality alarmed him, though it brought him relief at the same time. There had been some disaster at the camp, but perhaps things were not so bad as they seemed. The professor had had fears—such fears that he scarcely dared to put his thoughts into literal shape.

Before the great armor chains were swung through the knee holes, the liner's voice-loud was ready, and the professor went ashore with an officer and half a dozen men. It was blindingly hot, although the morning was early, the sun was beating down with relentless power from a brown sky. Not a breath of wind stirred and over the island there was no occasion for a word of alarm.

Professor Meeta was the first to step ashore onto the land grounded. He hurried up the broad, stony beach, and in his mind's eye he saw the camp as he had left it four months ago. Now . . .

It was as quiet as a stone, unpeopled island, stretching, unpeopled, which hung in the air, still as air.

An Atanor walked on, the ocean just in its ear, he felt a strange reluctance. His usual innumerable horror. Knowing the chaotic results of his great experiment—knowing the dreadful result if anything should have gone wrong—he was afraid. He was suddenly reluctant to advance further, and as again he found his limbs. His imagination had got into its power . . .

"The marching way is the left, sir," said one of the men.

His staff, proven some several to steady the professor's course. He went to the left with the others. There were exclamations of horror, and Meeta, coming to a standstill, found himself looking down upon—three skeletons.

"My God!" muttered the officer, shakily to the steward.

He needed no telling that the skeletons had been lying here not many days earlier. The man had done his work—the sea and perhaps the sea birds . . . One horrible fact was that most of the skeletons' bones were broken. Here and there scraps of dried flesh were clinging. There were tattered scraps of clothing, too.

"Carlton," muttered Professor Meeta, like a man in torment. "My dear young friends—"

"Heaven's! Look at the state of these skeletons! The poor things must have been buried here to death. Their arms and legs are broken, their ribs stove in, their skulls cracked—"

"But why?" broke in the professor sharply. "Why?"

He believed he had the answer—but he dared not voice it. He looked back at the fire line, at the water boat on the water's edge. He wanted to run towards it—

"Look!" screamed one of the officers.

Professor Meeta swung round—and then he saw just what he had feared to see. His eyes really were probably were then any person would be incapable of gazing.

From the trees at the back of the camp figures were appearing.

An fact it was not possible to believe that they were human figures. The creatures were gigantic, nine and ten feet in height—and as broad in proportion. They were covered with coarse, matted hair, and maddeningly red eyes, and with various decorations and what made the most striking feature of the bodies was that actual words were being spoken.

"It's Meeta—It's Meeta!" came one bellowing, guttural cry.

"Run for your lives, men!" shouted the officer.

They needed no second telling. Like madmen they turned and dashed for the boat. But Professor Sigward Meeta stood still, facing the oncoming horde. He was like a man breath of his wife. He stood petrified. Not until it was too late did his common sense realize that they had left him behind.

The professor's face had gone gray—for in that second he knew that his great experiment was a colossal failure—a failure, ghastly failure. These creatures which swept down upon him were the Berserks of old.

He understood something of what had happened; their primary glands had been overdeveloped in some way, and, as a result, they had almost lost their human shape.

They were more like men within. Mercifully, their enormous forms were half covered with hair. They had eyes, nose, mouth—but they were nightmare creatures. Caricatures of humanity—a thousand times more terrifying than the most fiendish goblins of the jungle.

By spending their carefully regulated glands, the treatment had made these primitives see development with amazing rapidity from kindergarten Apollon into harem goddesses. Carlton had used it, of course, but for some reason he had been unable to give a full warning. Perhaps he had been captured and held prisoner. No man would ever know what had actually happened on this island of horror during the past six or eight years.

For Dr. Carlton and his assistants were dead—and the others . . . Perhaps the abrupt cessation of Professor Meeta's treatment had accelerated the monstrous transformation.

With terrible cries the Berserks swept down the beach. And Professor Meeta came suddenly to his senses. He ran forward to meet the advancing horde, both hands outstretched.

"No, no!" he cried. "Have faith!"

What I have done I can undo! I will cure you, restore you to your present shape!"

But his voice was unheard in the frenzied tumult. The next moment the wretched of guests was upon him. He was swept off his feet and cast high into the air.

He fell into a sea of upturned hairy arms, and the man which some were like the torso of a tall human.

"Kill him—kill him!" went up the thousand voices.

Enormous hairy fingers snapped themselves round the arms and legs of Professor Sigward Meeta; and he had no moment more of life. . . .

BERSERKS SAIL FOR BRITAIN

"GREAT HEAVEN! Look, sir!" gasped the Atanor's first officer.

Captain Hanson turned pale. "But they can't hurt us, Mr. Hanson!" he said anxiously. "Quick! Give orders for the ladder to be raised! Get the anchors up. Mermaid God, they mean to attack!"

He had failed to realize, at the first sight of the Atanor's company, that he was looking at human beings—men with whom intelligence—men whose shape had been made hideously monstrous—and men whose brains had been developed, too. These hairy creatures were no purposeless animals, but real things, achieving men who had made definite plans for their work in advance!

Professor Meeta was dead; he had died hideously, the first victim of the Berserks' fury. Now the horde was taking to the water, and the bodies were swimming with incredible speed. The whole bay was a mass of foam, as the gigantic swimmers came nearer and nearer to the fire line.

Even now the officers and men of the Atanor did not realize that they were in any danger, for the Berserks were far across the sea, and, apparently beyond the reach of the Atanor's guns.

"On—!" shouted a third, guttural voice. "Heeta is dead. The boat is over!"

"To England—to England!" went up another cry.

It was awful to hear such intelligent shouts coming from these automatons. They knew—only a few miles off—the fabled change which had been wrought in them. They were mad with fury—they were men with a terrible primitive.

Work after work their bodies had grown worse and worse; their food supplies had given out, for as they grew their appetites were doubled, tripled, and food had become scarce. But there was plenty aboard the Atanor—plenty more in England. In England, too, they would demand reparations for the cruel wrong which had been done them.

Yet, with their intelligence, they were fierce, ferocious; they were aware of their own terrific strength, and they meant to use it. Frenzied and bloodied should gaze their wrath they sought, for they reviled in their own terrible strength, and they were reduced to the Berserks' level of nature and brutality.

On they came, two thousand strong, with the exception of a mere handful which had died. That Professor Meeta's treatment had been systematically applied was proved by the fact that all his victims revealed identical symptoms.

The foremost Berserks were already at the liner's starboard side. For signs, or details were looking over the rail, their bodies charged with incredulity and horror. But they did not fear, they leaped down upon the Berserks in a delirious kind of way—as one might look at a savage tiger from the safe side of iron bars.

Then, in a moment, the situation changed. For closing ranks, with bodies stretched, men were looking over the rail, their bodies charged with incredulity and horror. But they did not fear, they leaped down upon the Berserks in a delirious kind of way—as one might look at a savage tiger from the safe side of iron bars.

The Berserks Sail for England

Not in one place, but in two or three leaded, the grappling hooks had passed secure hold in less than a minute. It seemed, the situation had become desperate. Captain Ransom shouted his orders, and the men grabbed any level of weapons which came handy to the hand. But there was not a firearm aboard the ship—and none in the history of mankind had firearms been needed as they were needed now.

The sailors behaved valiantly; they threw themselves at the foremost Berserks as the latter came climbing aboard. It needed the utmost courage, for at close quarters the hairy monsters were ferocious to behold. It seemed incredible that the more inter-

There was no stopping this human avalanche—the human tide, in spite of all appearances. Berserk braves continued and gading on, armed bodies!

"Berserks!" came the guttural command of the Berserks leader—the one of the broad features seemed to have full control of its consciousness. "Berserks! Berserks!"

"None!" roared Captain Ransom from the bridge.

"We sail to England—to obtain justice!" thundered the Berserk. "Look at us! Do you see what your science has done?"

Captain Ransom leaped over the rail; he was attacked to find that the creatures were capable of intelligent conversation.

reps. At last not a Berserk remained in the ship. Nearly two thousand of them—proceeding over their rear, penetrating to the engine-rooms, the stoke-holds, the kitchen. And the men fell before them—men who were normally brave enough.

Within half an hour the splendid *Detave* was in the hands of the animal-men. And on the island were some scores of armed officers, A B's, engineers, sailors and stewards. Many had drowned. The rest could only watch in stupefied bewilderment.

For they saw the animals round, they saw the great bear's gnashing jaws chattering. The sea would surely boil, even now, that the great mariners were attacking the stoke-holds and engine-rooms—and taking complete control of the lines.

Yet, amongst those two thousand there were men with engineering knowledge and skill; there were other men who had been sailors. They had not forgotten, for their brains were not dulled, although their bodies had become transformed. In this emergency they were able to take the *Detave*, man her and get her under way.

True, the bear nearly scamped a reef of rock in getting out of the bay, but, aided by a miracle, she scamped disaster and reached the open water.

And so the noted—a fine ship, with the most heroic crew in the history of the world!

★ THE INVASION OF KENT

FOLKSTONE was crowded with curious on-lookers, and most of them, on this hot, sultry evening, were staring out into the busy Channel.

It was fairly late, and darkness was descending. A great bear was visible—very much larger than ships of her size usually seen. For an hour or two past she had sailed erratically, she had appeared as though from nowhere, out of the Channel, and now she was apparently heading for Folkestone. Harbour officials and keep-sheriffs were amazed—they knew the ship which could never berth.

As for the marine visitors, they were agog with pleasant astonishment. This was something different—something to talk about when they returned home.

There had been quite a lot, lately, in the papers concerning the extraordinary behaviour of Professor Raymond Meena's chartered *Detave*. It was known that the vessel had left England in a hurry, over a week ago,

afterwards, she had been sighted in the Atlantic. And it was a singular fact that she had returned to answer all enquiries, and she had steamed away from any ship which had shown signs of approaching her. Wireless messages were useless, for she refused to answer.

Little did the light-hearted holiday makers know of the turmoil which was even then taking place at the Admiralty, and its other Government offices! For shipwrights, taking their vessels to leave the Channel that day, had made startling reports, by means of radio.

Some declared that they had seen huge animals walking five abreast the *Detave's* decks, others reported that the great ship was apparently manœuvred by creatures, for she had sailed directly towards treacherous medians, and had only escaped going aground by chance. She took no notice of



force with a tiny gland could have possibly this appalling change. Yet, so debately balanced is the human machine, that when one interferes so grossly with it as Professor Meena had done—then, the results are likely to be overwhelmingly drastic.

With a cry, the Berserks piled aboard. The blood rushed at their nostrils to have so close. They apparently felt no pain, and they were so vast that the strongest boys were ineffective. The defenders felt very much as one might feel who attacks a chessman with a walking stick.

The sailors were caught up in the great hairy hands. They were tossed about, to splash into the sea, far below.

Already two or three hundred Berserks were aboard, swarming over the decks, attacking every man and officer they encountered. Some of the men felt their shoulders, but the Berserks charged, and threw them to pieces. Men were dragged out and hung without resistance. Those who were wise went without resistance; those who tried to fight back died.

"Kill him—kill him!" roared the thousand-throated shout, and the sea was swept the Professor off his feet and buried him high into the air.

"Listen to me!" he roared. "Behave yourselves, and I will give you passage home."

"No, no!" roared up a man's chorus. "He will trip women Meena and DeLion's tricked us! Away with him!"

A score of Berserks charged the bridge. . . . It was all over within a minute. Captain Ransom and his officers, fighting to the last, were overboard to join their unfortunate crew.

And still they came, swarming up the

The Ruthless Army Invades England

signals, and her course up the Channel had been erratic.

There was even more startling news, for a second West a destroyer, unknown as a result of the Admiral's behavior, had approached. And without warning the liner had changed her course and at last turned had toward the smaller vessel. She had cut the destroyer's lines in two and had swung on ruthlessly. Now the sea of Folkstone and swaying round with the evident intention of striking in the harbor.

Need wonder that Admiralty officials were reverting to some measure?

But before anything could be done the sea became invisible in England's history had begun.

On cross the line, saw at full speed. Apparently, the second one had first thought of looking for Dover, but for some reason they changed their plan. They sent the German land attack on Folkstone.

The crowds of holiday-makers on the beach and the explosion distinctly heard the dull, grinding roar as the mighty vessel went against. Her masts sagged like reeds, and she swung helplessly. A dozen motor boats that sat, some of them still with aviators' engines. But soon they came tearing back and they brought terrifying news.

Mountain waves from the liner had jumped into the sea—not hundreds, but thousands!

swell! Now they were advancing shore. The sea was alive with them. In the gray, greasy darkness it was impossible to see much, and most people abandoned the apparently absurd rumors. The crowds on the beach gave tremor and shudder.

But when the storm took definite shape it exploded like a bombshell, for out of the sea came the shaggy monster, looking more terrible than ever in the half light. At the first sight of these monstrous feet scurrying and sea screamed, too. For near as their lives had they seen such a dread sight as this.

All at a moment, it seemed, Folkstone was in a panic. The thing which had first seemed a fatal emergency was turning out to be a nightmare. To be sure that nightmare-like effect, a violent thunderous boom. An intense darkness shut down, which was only relieved, now and again, by vivid flashes of lightning. Here it looked descended, and people ran like frightened rabbits for their hotels and boarding houses.

And as the beach the Berserks collected—their whole formidable army. Then they came surging along the front, into the town—the most appalling force ever seen by human eyes.

Terror reigned. For the Berserks were best on destruction, they roared the ships, setting all food which came to their eyes.

heads. Shipkeepers and sailors fled at their approach.

Stoing bodies of poles, ever fatal to city, charged at the stragglers in rank. In such a crisis as this the authorities usually know what to do. The whole thing had happened without warning, they were once again.

The attack was a failure, for as the air charged into the ranks of the animals, they were quickly brought to a standstill. Some of the Berserks went down, and one or two were injured. The others seemed to be a mass of angry, and with guttural cries and furious curses—after to plain English—they raised the eyes in their empty hands and looked down.

The gull-rovers were seized, being into the air, and tossed from hand to hand. They were killed in the confusion of their duty. Others managed to get away, but nothing could stop that great, determined onslaught of the Berserks.

The storm had spread by now, and when it was discovered that the monster was intent upon taking the road to London, more eyes were sent on ahead. All traffic on the road was stopped and the lightning the storm spread inland. In Folkstone, the invaders had left a trail of destruction behind them—but, miraculously, the area was limited, for they had no grudge against the town and had no intention of remaining there. London as their objective—and they took the road in a great, organized body.

For all the activities were organizing, so were the Berserks. They were like animals, yet they had the intelligence of moving men. They formed into a great column, which filled the road from side to side as they went marching on.

As soon the thunderous was over, and the night sky was speckled with stars. On went the Berserks, carrying impounded trophies, which looted and looted. It was a picture which could never be passed from the memories of those who saw it.

★ THE COMING OF THE BERSERKS

LONDON heard the news, in the special editions of the evening papers, with astonishment—and disbelief.

Most people looked upon it as a newspaper stunt. For the story sounded preposterous. Two thousand Berserk like animals, gangs of men and ten foot, killers all, marching on London!

And the Londoners read the news, discussed it, and carried on. They were justified in being more or less indifferent. In fact there was very little chance that the invaders would ever reach the great Metropolis.

But the situation down in the country was different.

As the Berserks advanced, they sacked and burned every village they passed through. The inhabitants, warned in advance, fled for safety. A few, here and there, stubbornly refused to believe in the danger. They remained behind to perish miserably.

Scarcely a year was made by the human warriors. They smashed into shops, took all the available food, then set fire to the houses and cottages, and marched on. Much was in their hearts—as their distorted brains. These unfortunate men were not mad; they were capable of thinking, of reasoning, and their situation was definite.

But they could not prevent themselves from killing, from destroying. It was in their very blood, and they did not realize that they were doing wrong. Had they been powerful, they would have joined the eyes gather and pity of their fellow countrymen. But for wicks, as they had seen themselves grow more and more hideous, they had received a hint of all around humanity.

"Destroy—destroy!" was their cry. "We have strength. We see the nations!" So they went, relentless, ruthless, a lawless army. One after one they an-

A Weekly up-to-the-minute News Feature on Matters Inter-Planetary

To the PLANETS

Contributed by P. E. CLEATOR (President of the British Inter-Planetary Society)

Missing!
WHAT has happened to Lubrik Gurnack, the Czechoslovakian rocket experimenter? He cannot be traced!

In my file I have some photographs of his experiments, which were carried out at Prague in 1929 and 1930. But my efforts to communicate with him have failed. Recently I sought the aid of Herr Willy Ley, of Berlin, but this friend has no news to offer.

It appears that Gurnack was a member of the old German Inter-Planetary Society, the Verein für Raumschiffahrt e.V., four years ago. Since those letters addressed to him have all been returned, marked "Paris."

It seems very strange that he should have gone without leaving any trace at all, and with the assurance that he has secretly departed for the Moon cannot be taken seriously. It is possible that his experiments may have been carried out fairly.

At the time of writing I am still trying to find out exactly what has happened to him.

A Dictionary of Rocketry

MOST inventors and new ideas intrude their fresh words, or give new meanings to existing words, and the science of rocketry is no exception.

Already technical advances have made necessary the coming of expressions of special significance to the new science.

The latest issue of "Astronautics," the official publication of the American Inter-Planetary Society, gives a list of such words. And as it seems likely that entries will see their way there in the not too distant future—just as the words "jazz," "pop," "hot lips," and the like, have become everyday expressions—I reproduce the list herewith for the benefit of Science readers.

Astronautics means of extra-terrestrial science. Vol. 1, No. 1, 1933.

- Best chamber** — the part whose form is determined by the
- Chin** — a curved part of nozzle
- Orbit** — any line which a body follows in its orbit
- Flare** — a part of expansion of gas
- Fuel part** — fuel which goes into blast chamber
- Launching rack** — a device for launching rockets
- Heads** — a part of nozzle
- Nozzle** — a part of nozzle through which hot gases escape from blast chamber
- Point** — a part of nozzle
- Rocket motor** — a device which produces thrust
- Reactor** — a part of nozzle with which a rocket starts
- Shot** — a part of nozzle
- Thrust** — the force of a rocket as it moves
- Thrust Accelerator** — a device for increasing the thrust



Illustration of the Rocket Motor. It will be in the form of a cylinder with a nozzle at the top and a reactor at the bottom. The nozzle is the part through which the hot gases escape. The reactor is the part which produces the thrust. The shot is the part which starts the rocket. The thrust is the force of the rocket as it moves. The thrust accelerator is a device for increasing the thrust.

Helpless before a Raging Army

returned great barrages which had been evolved across the roads—barrels of barbed wire, nails and spikes. Battering points, swinging behind to watch the procession, never tried to tell the story.

For they were sent, and the very sight of them set the amazement into fresh outbreaks of Bessie's fury. The reinforcements were thrown, and not one succeeded in getting away. For their progress could not wait invariable speed, in spite of their chattering. Bessie came magnificently, with sobbing, horns of warlike. Strong form laborers of muscle and loaves were throttled and crushed as a normal man might destroy the life of a child.

The barrages were thrown aside without difficulty, and much of the material which had been used in their manufacture was now utilized for the manufacture of further such bars.

Such resistance did great harm, for the Bessies knew that every man's head was against them. Their disabled fury increased, and they searched on, determined to give no quarter. All men who resisted them should die.

They covered the ground rapidly, for their strength was great that they could walk with twice the speed of an ordinary man. Thus, the advance took villages and towns wholly by surprise, as it swept the destroying invaders.

Behind them, in the black night, lurid flames marked their passage. And ahead the warning had gone, and men, women and children were deserting their homes, flying across the countryside for their lives. Before long, hundreds of Bessies marched into empty village streets, to find deserted houses and shops. They wondered then Bessie's fury subsided.

Meanwhile, the cathartes were moving. The Air Ministry, appalled by the police, sent scouting airplanes from one of the big northern aerodromes. Lieutenant Every 1-10 was one of the first to see the cause. Finding a fast-moving machine, he swooped by the wall of the windmill, and swooping low, he turned a big searchlight towards the ground.

And as he flew rapidly over the walled roads he saw the animal faces staring up at him, he saw gigantic fists shaking. It was a sight which shocked him.

Following father was a West End specialist, and the Bessie's head had been turned on a doctor. He knew, at the very first glance, that there was no hope for the woman's patients. Never could they be returned to their normal shape. The damage which had been done could never be undone. How, although you can play tricks with Nature, there is a limit to Nature's patience. Bessie, released, can be as helplessly harmful as it can be helplessly lovable.

Follows her back to his aerodrome, and without delay he made his report to Squadron-Leader Williams, who was in command.

"I've seen them, sir," panted Follows. "Hundred 100 are there again hundreds of times put—in my dream!"

"As bad as that, are they?"

"Worse, sir—more than your imagination could ever picture," said the young aviator.

"There's only one thing for me to do. We've got to go and see these!"

"We can't do a thing like that without direct orders from the Air Ministry," replied the other, shaking his head. "These men are our own countrymen, Follows. They are the victims of a scientific mad dream."

"They're not mad now, sir," interrupted Follows eagerly. "They'll never be mad again. Don't you realize that they're marching straight on Canterbury? They've burned every village along the road since they left Folkestone. They'll burn Canterbury just the same—and the great cathedral will go up in flames, too!"

"I'll tell you, you're mad," said Williams, biting his lip. "There's no stopping the Bessies—and once they set fire to the towns in earnest, no man could save it. But we can't get any further. We must wait for orders. We must wait for orders."



As the plane went soaring over the hideous army the bomb exploded with a mighty flash in the very midst of the monsters.

ping the Bessies—and once they set fire to the towns in earnest, no man could save it. But we can't get any further. We must wait for orders."

Lawrence Follows went out into the open air, feeling like a man who owned a fine old house in Canterbury. It was his home. It had been the home of the Follows' family for generations. Thus he had a personal interest in this dreadful night's adventure.

He had seen the Bessies—and he knew that nothing could stop them except death.

Meanwhile, in the Government offices of Whitehall, agitated Cabinet Ministers were in conference. Each man to turn the eyes of the night had come to them; and now the Minister for War, in the absence of the Premier, was in charge.

"Gentlemen, further talk is useless," he said, almost harshly. "We must act—now!"

"Can the police do nothing?" asked one of the other Ministers.

"The police? Oh what can we police against these ten thousand men—with the strength of half a dozen gorillas?" demanded the War Minister. "You don't seem to be substantiated the danger. These animals—for they are no less—are determined to march on London. They have intelligence—they are marching in orderly fashion. They are destroying all before them."

"Yes, these men are some way of dealing with them—without being too drastic," said the Minister of Health. "Gentlemen, gentlemen, we cannot withstand destroying these so happy creatures. They are very, like ourselves. Never, by his incredible fall, he wrought the hideous change. Cannot science stop it and save these poor fellows? With proper treatment it is conceivable that they can be fully restored."

"But how to stop them—and capture them?" asked the War Minister. "While we talk, they advance. Certainly, it would be good to kill them all, for a company of soldiers, with machine guns, could mow them down. But that is unobtainable."

The discussion was interrupted by the arrival of a further report. It was alarming enough. The Bessies were within three miles of Canterbury, and Canterbury itself was in a burning of terror. The entire population was in full flight, and the masses of thousands of innocent people were appealing.

Invisible, hidden, and people were being removed from their homes and hastily carried through the night. The hospitals were being emptied. For if the Bessies arrived and found any living souls, there would be no hope for them. Bessies had been evaded, but it was known that they would not start the advance.

"Gentlemen, this is appalling!" said the

The Holocaust of Horror

The Minister? "I asked you not to case this territory is allowed."

He was intensely agitated. If he took drastic action and had the Brencocks shut down, public opinion, he felt, would be against him. There would be a storm of indignation. People would say that he had conspired with man-eaters; people would point out that the nation was not at war, but England—now bearing good odds since the death and injuries of Thomas and Brown. They were not supposed to be ruthlessly destroyed.

And so, in his quandary, the War Minister decided to send every available Army tank to stop the advance. There was a depot within reasonable distance, a dozen tanks could block the road with ease, and it would be a heavier weight the Brencocks would never overcome.

SGUARDIAN-LEADER WILLIAMS, writing for articles in the Southern Association, heard of the latest order over the telephone. He was staggered. Another job had just landed, and the young officer had reported that the marching Brencocks were already within a mile of Canterbury, and behind them was a holocaust of horror.

To the north, the roads were crowded with refugees, and Canterbury itself was already more than half-emptied. The evacuation was continuing, now, in panic. But no matter how fast the tanks went, it was certain that sooner—perhaps tomorrow—would be left behind. And nothing could save these wretched cities was taken instantly.

"They don't realize—they don't understand!" exclaimed Williams harshly.

"Tanks? The officers in charge have been ordered not to fire—just merely to stop the advance."

"It's impossible, sir," said Lord Fellows. "These big pots of oil in the Whitehall officers and they don't understand a quarter of what is going on. I've used the tanks, and I know. Why, when they find the tanks in their way, they'll take to the hills—and teach their objectives just the same."

"Exactly what I was thinking," said the Squadron Leader. "The higher authorities seem to think that they've only got to block the road, and the advance will be checked. But that's nonsense. The step they have taken is the very worst thing they could have done. At present, the Brencocks are retreating—they remain as body of men. But if they spread out over the countryside they will smash out in a dozen different directions—pairs of muskets, killing and destroying as they go. It will be infinitely more difficult to deal with those ones."

Lieutenant Fellows' face was hot and flushed.

"Are you going to take a chance, sir?" he asked grimly.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that my piece is ready—not the tank, but the leg lumper."

"What?"

"Yes, sir—I took the liberty of having my loaded up with gas bombs," continued the lieutenant. "They cut them, so the

field, with engines backing over. We can get to Canterbury within ten minutes—before the Brencocks spread themselves over the town."

Squadron Leader Williams hesitated.

"By Heaven, Fellows, I'm tempted," he murmured.

"It's now or never, sir," signed the other. "We should use with our orders! Hundreds of first-rate air strikes—hundreds of pounds worth of property is about to go up in smoke. Are we going to remain here, idle, while those old women at Whitehall send a mass of lies?"

"No by god!" roared the Squadron Leader. "Listen right, young man! It's up to us to save Canterbury. Why, those rascals' tanks won't be within miles of the town yet."

"How true that was!" The War Minister, in giving his orders, had fondly imagined that tanks could be rammed in Canterbury to meet to no time. Everything had happened so quickly, so domestically, that the good men of Whitehall had not realized the dread urgency. But there on the spot did know. The advance and better in the old Kent city was appalling. The tanks were coming, it was true, but they were a long way off.

And the Brencocks, now used with the best of destruction, were at the city's outskirts.

But overhead flew a great bombing plane. Squadron Leader Williams was at the controls, and Lieutenant Fellows was his subordinate. Fellows was ready to operate the tank.

They beheld a dreadful sight as they came within range. Canterbury itself appeared to be deserted; the lighted streets were empty; not a man or bus was to be seen. But to the south of the town, fires were blazing from burning cottages and barns. The Brencocks were entering the city itself, demolishing, burning, and in the face of the acceptance's searchlight they were revealed in all their ghastly horribleness. It was there, at that moment, that Squadron Leader Williams knew that he had done the right thing. These animals were better dead!

"Let 'em have it, Fellows," he said grimly into the telephone receiver.

He backed the plane round to a point, wide angle then, flying, he fired directly over the Brencocks' heads.

Fellows cranked a lever; three atoms of enormous power as a bomb went dropping earthwards.

"Bombs away!"

It exploded with a mighty flash in the very midst of the main street; some fell in all directions, and great masses of deadly gas, every way instant death, spread like a blanket amongst masses of others.

Raised over the glass again, now more it dried, and the two Lieutenant Fellows released three bombs in quick succession.

"Bombs—bombs—bombs—bombs!"

His aim was good. The bombs fell in the thickets of the Brencocks, and even those foolhardy who occupied the actual explosion were overtaken, a moment later, by the deadly gas.

It was all over within five minutes. Not a Brencock escaped. They were destroyed, utterly and completely.

Thanks to the prompt, tactical action of two daring aviators, Canterbury was saved—and the town's stricken population was able to return.

Later, of course, there was a full inquiry, and Squadron Leader Williams and Lieutenant Fellows, for their brave operations, were being without orders, were hailed as the saviors of thousands of lives.

For, after the aviators had all died down, the most eminent doctors in England had examined Professor Sigward Mertz' victims; and they had declared that the infection could never have been brought back to normal. For chlorine treatment had left them nothing but broken mortars, and they were beyond aid. Better—far better—far better to be dead.

Can it be DONE ?

A Chance for
Investors

MIRACLE MOVIES

A miracle of optical science that will make every screen presentation appear the same as on the stage creating an illusion of depth hitherto unknown except with glasses or the stereoscope.

Turn to page 400 for an opportunity of raising your IDEAS into CASH



Here's a SCOOP

A Weekly Review mainly about Ourselves and of the Wonders of the World of To-day and To-morrow

Nature Was Ahead of the Scientists

ALMOST every day brings forth some new information concerning the latest of scientific wonders—"Heavy Water," which exists in ordinary water at the rate of one part of heavy water in every six thousand parts of ordinary water.

Heavy water can be given as a medicine to curiously regulated quantities to relieve from certain diseases, and at the same time benefits are definite about the fact that this heavy water is also a deadly poison.

Though heavy water is so new to science, Nature has been proferring it for millions of years—and every sweeping willow tree is a "maker."

As the willow "weeps" it sheds tears of this heavy water up to the ground below, and this explains why walking over grass beneath a willow tree.

New commercial interests have been induced to take up the matter of this heavy water, and by means of mass-production methods five thousand a day can be produced by a new plant installed by Imperial Chemical Industries.

This process is to provide supplies for scientific, and if the amount of heavy water it produces seems small it must be remembered that at present less than a quart of heavy water exists in the whole world—and that quart is valued at \$20,000.

Gold From Sea Water

A NUMBER of scientists believe that they have definitely found a method of extracting gold from sea water.

It has been shown that the water of the world's oceans contains many millions of pounds worth of gold, but always it has been impossible to extract any of this vast hoard of wealth owing to the fact that in the process enormous quantities of waste have had to be treated to produce even microscopic samples of gold.

But in the process of seeking a means of extracting bromine from sea water, a method of recovering gold was suggested. The basic waste extracted powers up to the treating of 2,000 gallons of sea water to produce one pound of bromine, worth less than one shilling.

As the extraction of gold from the sea water is said not to be more difficult than that of bromine, experiments are in progress with the new process to recover gold.

With gold at its present price the promoters of the scheme say they can recover the gold at a profit—and now it's up to those to prove it!

Italy Gains Altitude And Depth Records

AN airplane altitude record and a record descent by divers have just been made by Italians.

Major Renato Donati flew an airplane to a height of 47,578 feet—some 2,000 ft. less

than flight took him to sea level and a halt for the double journey, and at the highest point reached the temperature was 59 degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

The record descent was made by two divers from the submarine *Argo* while testing new diving suits. They descended to a depth of 1,111 feet beneath the sea.

The divers took with them a lamp of

25,000 candle power, which is capable of illuminating the sea bed at enormous depths, and the two record-breakers report that up to nearly a thousand feet visibility was excellent.

A depth of 2,500 feet in the deepest was had yet gone under the sea. This record was set up by two American scientists, who reached this depth in a special steel sphere in 1932.

Look for Invisible Stockings!

NO trade problem seems to demand more attention nowadays.

When last your ladies adopted a no-stocking fashion sales of stockings dropped by many thousands of pairs daily.

So for some time the makers brooded over the fact—and then got to work. As a result

came the *SCOOPS*—invisible stockings.



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(12 Branches)

Subscription Rates: 12 months—In 2/6; 6 months—6/6; 3 months—3/6.

They have produced a stocking for this season which is almost invisible when worn.

Made of seamless silk, the new stockings are of a very light texture, and in order that no itching irritations can catch their lace to their skin, the stockings are to be produced in special flesh tones and in various shades!

Fireproof Paint?

ONE of the inventions proposed in our "Can it be Done?" series has been brought within the bounds of possibility by a new British fireproof compound, just issued.

It is a water based composition called Pyro-vel, which is dark grey in appearance, and dries with a dull matt surface. When applied to any rigid substance, such as wood or metal, it forms a film that swells up, from the material's expansion, and results in a protective and insulating heat or even more oxidizing compound.

It is not yet a perfect fireproof paint, for it is unsuitable for use by itself on places exposed to the elements. But it can be made so effective by using it as a protective undercoating—for any type of solid enamel, varnish or distemper can be applied over it.

The Falling Birth Rate

THE continued decrease in the birth rate has been causing much comment for some time past, and now a German statistician has made the birth-rate figures the basis of an interesting prophecy.

In an article published in Berlin recently his calculations show by 1955 Tokyo will be the largest city on the world with a population of close on 41 million.

New York will hold second place with 10 million, and Shanghai third with 9 million.

London, however, comes off rather badly. It will have dropped to sixth place in twenty years' time.

A graphic vision with interesting possibilities. . . .

Mechanical Legs His Idea—What's Yours?

LOS ANGELES inventors disclosed that walking in work made him crank, so he cast about for some way of erasing his "problem."

When he had solved it a pair of mechanical legs was added to the world's fund of novel ideas. With parts of an old bicycle, wooden legs, and a pair of old shoes, he constructed the walking machine you see illustrated here.

Putting in the middle of the machine, he turns wheels which are geared to the footed legs. By turning it over, and so the inventor "steps out."

And look here in page 460, and see how you can turn your feet into two hand each!



First Steps to Aerial Policemen

WHAT may be the first move towards the establishment in the future of aerial policemen took place a short time ago when 100 police officials from all over the country watched a specially arranged demonstration of flying.

It was organized by the aviation section of the National Safety First Association, and was intended to demonstrate how land flying clubs can help the training of the police in the handling of "dangerous" aerons.

Full training of constables would enable them to be able to distinguish from the ground the difference between dangerous piloting and the normal enjoyment which follows a take off or proceeds a landing.

BE TALLER!

Reports of Men People.

Age	Height	Weight
19	5' 10"	120 lbs
20	5' 11"	130 lbs
21	6' 0"	140 lbs
22	6' 1"	150 lbs
23	6' 2"	160 lbs
24	6' 3"	170 lbs
25	6' 4"	180 lbs
26	6' 5"	190 lbs
27	6' 6"	200 lbs
28	6' 7"	210 lbs
29	6' 8"	220 lbs
30	6' 9"	230 lbs
31	6' 10"	240 lbs
32	6' 11"	250 lbs
33	7' 0"	260 lbs
34	7' 1"	270 lbs
35	7' 2"	280 lbs
36	7' 3"	290 lbs
37	7' 4"	300 lbs
38	7' 5"	310 lbs
39	7' 6"	320 lbs
40	7' 7"	330 lbs
41	7' 8"	340 lbs
42	7' 9"	350 lbs
43	7' 10"	360 lbs
44	7' 11"	370 lbs
45	8' 0"	380 lbs
46	8' 1"	390 lbs
47	8' 2"	400 lbs
48	8' 3"	410 lbs
49	8' 4"	420 lbs
50	8' 5"	430 lbs
51	8' 6"	440 lbs
52	8' 7"	450 lbs
53	8' 8"	460 lbs
54	8' 9"	470 lbs
55	8' 10"	480 lbs
56	8' 11"	490 lbs
57	9' 0"	500 lbs
58	9' 1"	510 lbs
59	9' 2"	520 lbs
60	9' 3"	530 lbs
61	9' 4"	540 lbs
62	9' 5"	550 lbs
63	9' 6"	560 lbs
64	9' 7"	570 lbs
65	9' 8"	580 lbs
66	9' 9"	590 lbs
67	9' 10"	600 lbs
68	9' 11"	610 lbs
69	10' 0"	620 lbs
70	10' 1"	630 lbs
71	10' 2"	640 lbs
72	10' 3"	650 lbs
73	10' 4"	660 lbs
74	10' 5"	670 lbs
75	10' 6"	680 lbs
76	10' 7"	690 lbs
77	10' 8"	700 lbs
78	10' 9"	710 lbs
79	10' 10"	720 lbs
80	10' 11"	730 lbs
81	11' 0"	740 lbs
82	11' 1"	750 lbs
83	11' 2"	760 lbs
84	11' 3"	770 lbs
85	11' 4"	780 lbs
86	11' 5"	790 lbs
87	11' 6"	800 lbs
88	11' 7"	810 lbs
89	11' 8"	820 lbs
90	11' 9"	830 lbs
91	11' 10"	840 lbs
92	11' 11"	850 lbs
93	12' 0"	860 lbs
94	12' 1"	870 lbs
95	12' 2"	880 lbs
96	12' 3"	890 lbs
97	12' 4"	900 lbs
98	12' 5"	910 lbs
99	12' 6"	920 lbs
100	12' 7"	930 lbs

Thousands of British (Metric), All Ages, in all parts of the world.

See Quinine Water Pills, Pp. 421, 2.

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SCARBOROUGH, ENGLAND.

Every time they Breathed the Gas they went Fighting Mad

Fighting GAS

MANY gases, well known to Science, have strange and unexpected properties. A well-known illustration is Nitrous Oxide, which, given in small quantities, has the effect of producing laughter in human beings. We even call it Laughing Gas! In this humorous story our author takes Science a step farther and visualizes fighting gas—with all the startling predicaments such a gas might effect.

*A CONDUCTOR SEES RED

THE gas leaked slowly from the joints under the window frame. Bud Flanagan directed it to flow, watching through the slit in his cloth mask the nose of peaceful knaves in the street.

Very quietly that nose was to be changed! Invisible and without sound, the gas seeped a densely gaseous thin air, and it sank quickly to the street level.

A bus pulled into the curb. In the back and petrol holes, one of several London drivers fell asleep. He leaned on the wheel, snoring a yawn.

Suddenly he jerked upright. The blood seeped to his temples and he was conscious of a vast confusion. How much longer were those doddering passengers going to keep him awake? So quiet was his annoyance that he, rising toward and glared through the window.

Inside, the conductor was dealing with a difficult old problem. Three times had the elderly passenger inquired whether he had reached his destination, and so far the ticket inspector had remained kindly.

Now his patience changed. For no apparent reason he seized the old gentleman by his collar, dragged him to the step, and deposited him on the curb.

"Get to Jorjiba out of it!" he roared, his face clenching convulsively. "Get out of it!"

Wishes failed him. With a head of fury he leapt on the passenger and bore him to the ground. Not strongly enough, the old gentleman retaliated. His eyes were bloodshot, and he screamed as he used his umbrella as a weapon.

The greatest surprise was yet to come, however. More passengers poured from the bus, women as well as men, and rebel dogs could not have attacked the conductor with more ferocity. He retreated, the driver squinted down and rubbed to the reverse of his ears.

In two minutes the whole street was fighting!

In the room on the second story of the warehouse, Bud Flanagan and Pat's McGee raised their heads to be amazed.

"Didn't I tell you?" growled Bud. "That old professor I heard you were bringing. I guess I'm wrong when I found I'd preached his friends instead of the monks, but, get it? I'm glad now!"

Pat's McGee seemed amazed.

"What?" he snapped at length, "or may as well get to work. It don't look as though there's anybody to stop us."

Adjusting his cloth mask again, they swept by a bunch of ruffians and entered a tiny bar. Bud led the way, and they dashed down stairs into the street.

The noise was tremendous. No longer was there any attempt at the part of the cab-drivers to single out loved ones. They



Turning from the bus driver, the policeman berated himself as Jack Mansford. With a roar of rage the reporter took up the challenge.

struck "app," but he was too stunned at a time to move.

Then his will waked again. Feeling into naturally for his umbrella, he ran to the rear of the car, almost bumping at the "app" for his paper.

That noise, that) was not to be. As Jack entered the bus, he was aware of a jerk on his foot. He glared at the policeman, who had now collided with the incident, and the constable returned his glare with anger.

Both together they uttered a snarl of rage. Jack threw away his notebook, and with a grapple into action he leaped on the policeman.

The Fighting Gas had got Jack Mansford!

*MANSFORD HITS THE TRAIL

IT was some time before Inspector Dale, of X Division, could make out what was happening. A phone message apprised him of the fact that there was a riot at Kent Church Street, and he did the right thing in sending a squad of uniformed men to quell the trouble.

The next message was to the effect that the riot was fighting among themselves, and the luckless inspector hurried off with another laugh.

Fortunately the mysterious gas was disappearing by the time he arrived, but Inspector

They were gradually a victim to his influence. His temper rose to a dangerous pitch, and it was only by the exercise of great self-control that he refrained from committing assault and battery on his associates.

He dragged a dried man to tallies to his feet.

"You infernal idiot!" roared the Inspector. "You're a thugger in the face. Take him away!" he ordered in a fury. "Take him away before I hit him!"

Later on, he grew alarmed at this outbreak. He put it down to a suddenly good temper, and shrugged at those propounding his figure.

By then, however, he had other things to think about. The robbery at the jeweler's had been discovered, and the former proprietor dragged his into the shop.

The Inspector listened to his tale.

"And where were you when it happened?" he queried.

"I don't know," said the other, weakly.

"I—I seemed to have a brain attack."

"So tell you where he was, or," said a cold constable. "He was trying to hit me with a hammer."

The proprietor hastily denied it. The constable, as usually occurred in Inspector Daky's case, was his friend.

"Well, you're both under arrest, anyway," he quipped.

Jack Mansfield was among those taken to the police station. He was in a dazed condition, and, like many others, could remember little of what had occurred. He was released eventually on bail, a fellow prisoner helping him home to his lodgings, and for the next twelve hours he lay in a heavy sleep.

Writing the following morning, he surveyed a large black eye in the mirror. He was thoroughly irritable. He dressed and made his way to the office, and the girls greeted him on an excited but nothing to inspire his lawyer.

"Specialism was ribs on to how?" asked Jack.

"I can't understand it," said Willie, the solicitor.

"You appear to have been right on the spot, Mansfield, and yet you stand before a master instead of 'plucking the trout.' If it isn't here for a court somewhere as the staff we, might have noted it in the morning news."

Jack sneezed.

"I don't what cause ever me. I don't know what cause ever anybody. I just had to punch someone. I fell out of mad. I still feel like it," he added, as a titter went round the office.

"It's certainly queer," agreed the solicitor.

"What's your theory about it all?" Jack hinted in a theory. It was quite to him to be laid up on the job, and he shuddered to the idea.

"You must excuse me, chief. I got to go to the court."

An hour later he was faced thirty shillings and looked severe to be of good behavior, and he left the dock with a stream of men of all ages and sizes. Tall men, short men, fat men, thin men, all were witnesses to the sight of a young man, of a young man, who could explain the rage that had taken possession of him.

Jack felt more depressed than before, and he walked back to the office and started to look through the files of old papers, chiefly to be out of the way of his colleagues.

His eye lighted on a paragraph in a three-week-old issue.

"The case of Professor J. B. Duns, who you found returned and blowing hot air, as in his laboratory at Haverhill, is still pending the police. Nothing of more interest to have been noted, and the professor can throw no light on the mystery. He is talking unconvincingly of some means for what he calls 'Fighting God,' a discovery he appears to have stumbled upon accidentally. He is greatly excited and hopes repeating the incident."—It should necessarily soon be noted. If it should

fall into the wrong hands, they will fight the Devil!"

Jack read it through twice. He had been on the case himself. The professor was probably recovering, but had lost his memory, and was now as a maniac house.

With a quick movement Jack grabbed his knife and cut out the paragraph. Then he crumpled on his hat and paid a visit to the bar.

"I want a tin based for a few days," he said, "to investigate this hot business."

"See what is investigate it?" exclaimed Willie. Then he quipped: "Looking for some cops to back, Jack?"

Jack treated the remark with dignity. He got the required permission, and for the next three days he was on a voyage.

During that time much happened. On the first day a riot broke out in Cannon Town. The police again came in for jobs owing to their part in the affair, which was some speculation there useful, and again a robbery occurred in the midst of the confusion.

Even the rioters had their pockets picked!

They were questioned closely, and some seemed to remember two men in civilian clothes who ran into the fray during the so-called hooded figures, but had afterwards forgotten them. He was approached for striking the sergeant, whom he declared had struck him first, and both pleaded ignorance as to what happened next.

It was the same with everybody. Madness had seized them for a time, but they remembered nothing the morning after.

The police was weary. As soon as men were sent in jail on a pretext, they created

TEMPLE OF DOOM

A god is a lie! A strange human form in a state of suspended animation swooped by natives in a mysterious valley in South America. Two explorers stumble on the Temple of Doom, and meet with startling adventures while the deeper reaches.

Read this story in SCOPES next week.

farther later." Even shop girls and business men had their heads.

The next day detectives of the special branch were armed with gas masks and kept patrolling the city. On that day the riot broke out in Birmingham, where it took the city by storm. Incidentally, ten thousand pounds in jewels were stolen from Abraham and Sons.

Jack and Pete were making money fast. As they drove in to London in a newly acquired Bentley, Jack ordered a fresh cup of tea to his companion.

"We've only touched the fringe of this business," he said. "I hope the men will be expansion. What we gotta do is something big, something that'll set us up for life."

Pete was of the same opinion. They talked it over, and came to a vague plan. They'd start with the Bank of England. Had had in side information that a shipment of gold for America was being removed on the following day, and he felt that his star was at his command.

"First though," he said, "we gotta get some more of the juice. I always like that job. It's too much like hard work."

They turned off the main road and ran into the grounds of a private house. Following them, another Bentley pulled up at some distance from the girls.

The race of the wheel was making. Efforts were made to get the car out of the gutter of sticking to the gas jet.

Jack Mansfield had stuck to Dad and Pete all the way from Birmingham. He had been in the office at Cannon Town, washed that day by a Spring wind, and had spotted his men as they were dragging. On

that occasion the crooks had walked quietly from the scene of disaster and hoisted a boom, and Jack, who had taken care to keep out of the zone of influence of the mysterious gas, had taken a "snack" and walked them.

A thirder remark from Dad in the truck had sent him to King's Bedroom. All that evening he had been occupied the telephone, while the crooks drank and fought around him, as seemed in a trial for Birmingham, next to the compartment in which the crooks traveled. They had met again after separating.

So far Jack had been following his "snack," but at Birmingham he had had good of what he thought. High up on the roof of a warehouse, he had watched the crooks getting in, and under the guard's watch, and had been gazed at the simplicity of their method.

While honest men fought each other, Dad and Pete took what they wanted!

The time, however, there had been some difficulty in making them. They work dear, the crooks had made a pit-way in a kitchen wall, and Jack had had to move quickly to keep them in sight. Fortunately, there had been a car driven and several vehicles when the blood-hunt took possession of him, and Jack had done the work as Dad and Pete.

As a matter of fact, he had done better. He had picked a car of higher power, and was still congratulating himself on a happy invention.

What would happen if he were caught in a trap of his own? He had not thought of this. He must get his men first so as to have some tangible evidence of his good intentions!

He left the Bentley and walked along to the gates of the drive. Dark was falling, and he had a difficulty in stepping into the ground.

Will he eye glared to a crack in the window, and he noticed a strange scene, a work had been seen the dining room of a Victorian mansion.

It was filled up as a laboratory. Two men in masks were moving about, mixing chemicals with great care in a mortar, and Jack caught his breath as he noted the edge of metal blades.

The chloroform was very faint. By far the greater portion of the mixture was gas, and Jack did not need to be told the dissolving effects of wood alcohol on the human brain.

"So that's the death formula, is it?" cried Professor M. on some scheme for dressing of a permanent alcoholic vapour—a blood-fermy gas. The lighters ought to be shot in using it.

Jack was not longer living. He wanted to smash the window and lunge on the crooks. At that moment, his foot slipped, unaccountably placed on a stone slating, and he tumbled back into a wood-grove fence bed.

* BATTLE AT THE BANK

FRESH air and the smell of damp earth pervaded him. He realized with a shock that he had only just missed a second dose of the fumes, and he left the vicinity of the window with all speed.

"Phew! That gas sure makes a Mike see red!"

He watched the house for a moment, but all was quiet. Taking advantage of this fact he slipped away for a moment and drove to the nearest phone box.

In two minutes he heard Willie's voice.

"Hello, Mike! What's up?"

"It's Mansfield! I say, old man, I want you to send me a gas mask."

There was a pause. Then the sob, a cry, actually.

"See you don't wear an army tank or a bowler!"