

Russian Peasants Pay Toll to Wild Animals

While live stock decreased and the production of fields and farms diminished during the war and the revolution in Russia, wolves and bears waxed strong and became more numerous. They roamed not only the sparsely settled, snow-covered forests and plains but also in the Moscow and Leningrad districts, only a few miles from the cities. Last season in the Moscow district the death of 17 horses, 162 colts, 47 cows, 48 calves, 1,761 sheep and several persons was charged to wolves. Every peasant family's involuntary tax to the "gray landlords," as the wolves and bears are called, is estimated at 28 cents to \$2.60, according to his neighborhood. In the Bashkira republic the destruction of cattle caused a loss of \$2,500,000. Near Nizhinnogorod, wild animals attacked a trainload of hogs. Through the season is running, 150 bears have been killed near Leningrad. The Russian wolf is a huge animal—larger than a mastiff. The government encourages hunting parties to reduce the scourge. The thrifty peasants are willing to point out a bear's lair to city hunters without asking their usual fee.

BOASTING



"My Bob broke his nose in yesterday's football game."

"That's nothing, my Jack broke one leg and dislocated his collar bone."

Got Around Difficulty

President Cochrane of the Irish Free State recently set out to repay a call to the commander of an American warship that visited Dublin. The only vessel available to take the President out to the warship was a tug, and it was pointed out to him that the tug would not be saluted by the American ship unless it flew the Union Jack, as it has been definitely laid down under the international code that the Sinn Féin flag cannot be recognized as a maritime flag. Mr. Cochrane accordingly made the journey with an enormous Sinn Féin flag in the bow and a tiny Union Jack at the mast head.

In Valhalla and Out

by George Ethelbert Walsh

CHAPTER XIV

Although Barnett, as the newly appointed captain of the Pelican, was naturally in command, Dick assumed charge and began active preparations for meeting the enemy. The yacht was ransacked for firearms, and with every member of the crew armed with some sort of weapon he divided his men into two squads.

Captain Barnett was left in charge of the yacht while Dick led half the crew up to the house. Alice accompanied him, although he sought to hold her back. "I want to see how Uncle Al" she gave as an excuse.

Unable to combat this argument, Dick permitted her to trail in the rear. Without ceremony he burst into the front door, and then more cautiously made his way up to the sick chamber, followed by his men.

Maria, white of face and trembling violently, met him at the doorway. "Oh, it's you!" she cried in relief. "We tried it was that horrid captain again!"

"Where is Captain Barnett?"

"Gone away with Doctor Alster."

"Where to?"

"I don't know, but he said something about Mr. Blake and a cave, and—"

Dick swung around before she finished. He kept his steps about his nearest men in descending the stairs. There was a possible chance of heading Brent off before he reached the cave to release the prisoners, and he made a hasty flight in that direction.

But there was no sign of the enemy on the way, and when he reached the entrance to the cave he heard voices below that convinced him he was too late. Brent and Alster were down there with Blake and McGee.

Stationing his men in strategic positions Dick approached the entrance.

"Brent, we know you're down here," he called, "but neither Blake nor McGee has a gun. I saw to that. There are six of us up here, and every one's prepared to shoot the first head that shows up. Alice Cutler is discharged, you, and appointed Barnett's skipper. I'm his first mate. Therefore, this isn't mutiny. The crew is following the orders of their captain. Now, will you come up peacefully and surrender, or is it fight?"

The answer came rather unexpectedly and violently. There was an explosion below, and a bullet whizzed itself on the rock near Dick.

"Thanks for the answer, Brent," was the retort. "We can now consider hostilities opened. Look out!"

He fired at the dim light of the above. There was a groan, and the object disappeared from sight.

"Close in, men," Dick said coolly, "but don't expose yourselves. Shoot at anything you see."

Intermittent volleys followed, and bullets rattled down the cave with an occasional shot from below. Realizing the men below had the advantage of light, Dick again cautioned his men not to expose themselves. But once advantage was in their hands, they surrounded the mouth of the cave on all sides, and while the enemy was taking a shot at one of their number the guns of the others could be trained on him.

The noise of the shooting soon brought others from the yacht. With their quarry imprisoned in the cave there was no need of keeping more than a corporal's guard about the Pelican. Their shots soon began to tell for the explosions from below became less and less frequent. A moon occasionally reached their ears. At least one of the crew had been killed. The problem of getting the men out of the cave was a herculean one. With night coming on the difficulty of watching and guarding the place would increase in the course of time they would be starved out, but that might require days and days.

"It's only a question of time before we get them," Dick said to Captain Barnett when they withdrew to consider the situation. "There's no fun in starving them out. We ought to find some quick plan for getting it."

"I could go down there," volunteered the young skipper, "and get one of them."

"You get killed yourself," smiled Dick. "No, Barnett, I won't permit that."

"You forget I'm captain and you're mate," laughed the other. "You take orders from me and not give them."

"Well, if you want a small-sized mutiny on your hands, captain, you try to go down there."

"Suppose I order you to go down?"

Dick shrugged his shoulders. "I'd obey," he replied.

Barnett chuckled. "I believe you would."

Jorgins, who was crouching behind a rock, with one eye on the cave's



"Oh, Dick, I Almost Wished It Wasn't Coming."

entrance, suddenly raised his head, and pointed. "Miss Cutler looks excited."

Dick and Barnett whirled around. Tripping hurriedly over the rocks, with her hair and skirts whipping the wind like flags, Alice Cutler came, waving them in what Dick thought was anxiety and fear. He started toward her on a run.

"Dick! Dick!" she called. "Oh, Uncle's better!—and a ship's coming!"

With this double information out, she stopped, and panting for breath, waited for him to reach her side.

"Isn't it good news, Dick?" she asked, smiling into his face. "Uncle's conscious, and begins to remember things. Oh, I'm sure he'll get better!"

"I'm glad that, Miss Alice. But you said something about a ship?"

"Yes, I forgot. It's nearly here, steaming at full speed. And very close, Dick, I think it's a Navy vessel, a revenue cutter or torpedo boat! I don't know which. Anyway, it's got guns on it, and it looks awfully fierce and warlike."

"Where is it?" he demanded; and whirling her around he made her lead him back to the top of the cliff.

There, in plain sight, heading for the island under forced draft, was a scarp-looking torpedo boat, her deck lined with bluejackets.

Dick smiled. He guessed the Pelican wasn't the only one that picked up my S. O. S. She certainly acts as if she was in a hurry."

The girl by his side suddenly turned gray, and said the most inexplicable thing. "Oh, Dick, I almost wished it wasn't coming. It was going to be so nice on the island without—without—Now, I suppose there'll be a crowd!"

He looked at her waveringly, queer sensations at his heart, strange lights dancing before his eyes. Like a man seized with vertigo he staggered toward her, caught one of her hands in his, and pressed his mouth to it. But Captain Barnett at that moment appeared, a pair of binoculars in his hands.

"As sure as you're born, Mr. Van Ness," he said, "it's a warship. That's good news."

"Of course it is," muttered Dick in disgust. "Anybody could see with his naked eyes it wasn't a scow or rowboat."

Barnett lowered his glasses and stared at him in amazement. Then he turned to Alice, and seeing her flushed face, he grunted and walked away.

CHAPTER XV

The torpedo boat Sprite had picked up Dick's wireless at sea, and hurried to the island; but the Pelican was ten miles nearer and beat her by a small margin of time. The arrival of the warship completely demoralized Captain Brent and his confederates. After a threat of the commander to blow up the cave with a depth bomb they surrendered and calmly permitted themselves to be taken prisoners.

Dick was not sorry that the responsibility of capturing and holding them was transferred to another's shoulders. On the warship, where the prisoners were put through a separate and collective grilling, he learned details of the plot that cleared up many points.

Mr. Blake had taken advantage of his position of trust and confidence, as Mr. Cutler's private secretary, to manipulate the stock market for his own benefit, using a brokerage firm of questionable reputation as a confederate. Knowing that the enforced absence of Steve Cutler would create a panic in the stocks supported by him, he had planned skillfully to bring about this situation.

Through the suggestion of Doctor Alster, he administered a drug that slowly weakened the old man's health, gradually breaking down his iron will until he was apathetic and indifferently. He became alternately peevish and irritable, followed by long periods of gloomy depression. His own family physician was unable to diagnose his case.

By working on his employer's mind when in this weakened condition Blake won the power to speak and act for him in many important matters. He had Captain Johnston dismissed, and Brent installed in his place. Then in one of his periods of dejection he prevailed upon Cutler to accept a temporary change of physicians.

After that the success of the plot was assured. Doctor Alster kept his patient weak and mentally depressed until it was time to spring the coup. Captain Brent had been to Valhalla to install the secret wireless plant in the cave, and when he returned arrangements were completed for the second step in the scheme.

Doctor Alster had warned Cutler that a period of absolute rest was essential, and he recommended a trip to Valhalla. Alice had unwittingly fallen into their plans, and when she added her persuasions to that of the others, the old man had grudgingly yielded.

All preparations for the trip had been left to Blake. His pretense of sending the servants down ahead to open the big house was in keeping with the rest of his underhanded maneuvers. When the yacht arrived, and it was found that no servants were on the island, he appeared to be more perturbed than any one. His plausible excuse of sending the yacht back for more provisions was accepted by Miss Cutler until her suspicions of his double dealing were aroused by Dick.

The Pelican had merely steamed off to Marsh Inlet, where it was in communication with the island, and also with a shore wireless station. Blake's messages to his brokers were thus relayed to the shore, and answers received via the yacht's wireless in the same way.

The man's original idea had been to commit no crime that could be traced to him. But two factors developed that upset his plans. One was his growing passion for Alice Cutler, which, when he had her in his power on the island, developed into a madness that caused him to overreach himself.

He had made love to Marie for purely selfish purposes, using her as an instrument for furthering his ends, but when she became obnoxious and

threatening he took the first opportunity to rid himself of her. In a moment of rage and passion he had pushed her over the cliff to what seemed certain destruction.

The other factor that had confided with his interests was the obituary of the stock market to move just as he wanted it. At first it was violently depressed by all sorts of rumors concerning the health and even death of Steve Cutler, but after that it had reacted and recovered some of its normal tone.

To make matters worse for Blake, he had to protect his margins with the stocks and securities of his employer, which he had abstracted from his private safe and deposit vaults and placed where he could get them easily. His brokers had called by wireless for more and more margins until tens of thousands of dollars' worth of Steve Cutler's securities had been turned over to them. Blake was not only a ruined man, but a thief and abettor, unless the market turned, so he could recoup his losses and replace the stocks and bonds before his employer returned.

The scheme had been blasted by Dick, who from the first had appeared as the man's Nemesis, accidentally, and then intentionally crossing his path at every important turn to his mate's life.

Steve Cutler had come out of his comatose condition, partly as the result of Doctor Alster's ministrations, just as Captain Brent appeared. Afterward the surgeon of the torpedo boat took him in hand, and before the warship was ready to sail with her prisoners the old man, though weak, was mentally nearly normal.

Alice explained in detail what had happened on the island before Dick was summoned to Cutler's bedside. As the man's Nemesis, accidentally, and then intentionally crossing his path at every important turn to his mate's life.

"Well, sir, you're a chip of the old block!" he said. "I know Henry Van Ness when he was a boy, and I grew up together, fighting our battles in knee breeches before we looked horns on the Street. I'm glad to meet you, sir."

Dick grasped the withered hand, and murmured some conventional re-

ply. "Now, sir," continued the money magnate, "what can I do for you? I owe you everything. I name your price."

Dick's head went up. "I haven't any," he replied coolly.

"Then I must be the exception," he smiled. As he did so, his eyes darted across the bed to the girl opposite. For a moment he was quiet and dreamily thoughtful. Suddenly he laughed good-naturedly, and shrugged his shoulders.

"Yes, I have a price," he said, "but it's too high for even you to pay. You couldn't do it!"

"Couldn't pay it?" snorted Cutler. "You think that Roudell's ruined me so I can't buy what I want? Young man, you don't know me. I could buy—buy—"

Dick turned abruptly away. "I can't discuss it any further," he said. "I shouldn't have mentioned it. Besides—hesitating and looking boldly from one to the other—"another would have to pay more than you, and I shouldn't dream of asking her to foot the bill."

"What's that—another pay my bills?" roared the old man, as Dick moved to the door. "What does he mean, Alice?" he hung at his side.

"I—I don't know," came the stammering reply, accompanied by a rich flood of crimson to her cheeks.

"Don't know! Don't know!" repeated the man on the bed. "By gad, miss! I believe you're keeping something from me. If you were a man, I'd say you were lying to me."

"Oh, uncle!" murmured Alice, burying her face in the pillow.

Two days later when the Pelican was homeward bound, Dick had the deck in the absence of Captain Barnett. In the misty moonlight a figure wrapped in a cloak stood close to him, swaying a little each time the yacht lurched so that he had to support her with an arm.

"You have such funny Dick," she whispered.

love me you'd stop talking about my money. Why, I don't mind, anyway. Uncle may die and leave it to charity."

"I wish he would—I mean leave it to charity, not die," was the gloomy retort.

"Aren't you deliciously frank and delighted with you talk that way?" she laughed, bugging the arm to which she clung. "You'd marry me if I were poor, but because I'm rich you want to jilt me."

"No, that, that," he interrupted, holding her close. "I'll have to marry you, rich or poor. I love you, so, but I wish there wasn't such a difference between—Why, I'm a failure, dear, a total failure!" He waved his arms eloquently. "Before I left the city I was down and out, and I shipped as a stowaway. I can't forget that."

"Well, I'll help you to forget it," she replied, kissing him. "Now, listen: I love you, and not what you've got or haven't got. I'll love you as a stowaway or failure or successful business man. That's all there is to it! What else really matters, Dick?"

"Nothing, I guess," he murmured a little dizzily, pressing his lips to hers and forgetting all his objections in the bliss of the moment.

(THE END)

Precedence in Parade

Organizations in a parade preceded by order of the dates of their establishment and organization, the oldest being to the front, as, first, the Grand army; second, the Loyal Legion; third, Spanish War Veterans; fourth, Veterans of Foreign Wars; fifth, Military Order of Foreign Wars; sixth, American Legion; seventh, Military Order of the World War; and eighth, Disabled American Veterans.

"Moron" Remains Child

The word "moron" is derived from the Greek term *moros*, which means stupid. Moron is defined as an adult having the mentality of a child of twelve.

March 10th Our Fiftieth Birthday!

And an Invitation to Inspect the Wonders of Your Telephone Exchange

Fifty years ago, on March 10th, for the first time in the history of the country, was the human voice transmitted by means of electrical impulses.

Fifty years ago, over a single wire and a "peculiar contraption" Alexander Bell carried on this first conversation, and his first words "Come here" still echo throughout the world.

The world marvelled at this phenomenal invention, for it was then that was born our telephone system of today.

The strides that this service has made from so humble a beginning are far greater than is ordinarily conceived. From two telephones

the whole land into one great community.

Today, your neighbor is only as far as your telephone. He may be only a stonethrow away, or he may be in a far off city, yet your telephone brings him at arms length. Day or night, whenever you please, your telephone places you in communication with loved ones, friends or business associates.

In our own state, the Michigan Bell Telephone System has more than half a million telephones, connecting with 125,000 telephones of other companies in Michigan and 16,000,000 telephones in the country. More than three million calls per day are completed in Michigan. Many men and women are employed constantly to give quick and efficient telephone communication. That has been the growth of your telephone service.

OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, March 10th

On Wednesday, March 10th, we cordially invite you to take a trip behind the scenes, to inspect the workings of your telephone exchange. We know it will prove a revelation to you.

