

MINING THE POLE BY JULES VERNE

CHAPTER V.—(Continued.)

As on the preceding night, each man took his hour's watch on the upper plateau. When it came to Altamont's turn, and he had gone out to relieve Bell, Hatteras called his old comrade round him. The doctor left his desk and Johnson's cooking, and hastened to their captain's side.

"My friends," he said, "let us take advantage of the American's absence to talk business. There are things which cannot concern him, and with which I do not choose him to meddle." Johnson and Johnson looked at each other, wondering what the captain was driving at.

"I wish," he continued, "to talk with you about our plans for the future." "All right; talk away, while we are alone," said the doctor.

"In a month, or six weeks at the outside, we can leave here. Have you thought of what we had better do this summer?" "Have you, captain?" asked Johnson.

"Have I? Not an hour of my mind passes without revolving in my mind one cherished purpose. I suppose not a man among you intends to retrace his steps?"

"No one replied, and Hatteras went on to say: "For my own part, even if I must go alone, I will push on to the north pole. Never were men so near it before, for we are not more than 250 miles distant at most; and I will not lose such an opportunity without making every attempt to reach it. Even though it is impossible, what are your views, doctor?"

"Your own, Hatteras?" "And yours, Johnson?" "Like the doctor's?" "Captain Bell?"

"The truth is, we have neither wives nor children waiting us in England, but, after all, it is one's country—one's native land! Have you no thoughts of returning home?"

"We can return after we have discovered the pole quite as well as before, better even. Our difficulties will not increase, for as we near the pole we get away from the point of greatest cold. We have fuel and provisions enough. There is nothing to stop us, and we should be culpable, in my opinion, if we allowed ourselves to abandon the project."

"Very well, captain; I'll go along with you." "That's right; I never doubted you," said Hatteras. "We shall succeed, and England will have all the glory."

better now. It is five against five." "Four!" said Johnson, in a frightened voice.

"The doctor!" replied Johnson, pointing to the empty sitting room. "Well, he is in the ice, Johnson." "A bad job for him," said Bell.

"But we can't leave him to his fate, in this fashion," said Altamont. "No, let us be off to him at once," replied Hatteras.

He opened the door, but soon shut it, narrowly escaping a bear's hug. "They are there!" he exclaimed. "All?" asked Bell.

"The whole pack." Altamont rushed to the windows, and began to fill up the deep embrasure with blocks of ice, which he broke off the walls of the house.

His companions followed his example silently. Not a sound was heard but the low, deep growl of Duke. They were leagued.

All were worried about the good doctor. "We must get rid of the bears before he comes," said Hatteras.

"But how?" asked Bell. "It was difficult to reply to this. A sortie was out of the question. They could hear the bears prowling about outside, growling and scraping the walls with their enormous paws.

However, action must be taken speedily. Altamont resolved to try a portable through which he might fire on his assailants. He scooped out a hole in the wall, but his gun was hardly pushed through when it was seized with irresistible force and wrenched from his grasp before he could even fire.

"Confound it!" he exclaimed, "we're no match for them." He hastened to stop up the breach as fast as possible.

This state of things had lasted upwards of an hour, and there seemed no prospect of a termination. The question of a sortie began now to be seriously discussed. There was little chance of success, as the bears could not be attacked separately, but Hatteras and his companions had grown impatient. Also they were ashamed of being kept in prison by beasts.

He took Johnson's furnace poker and thrust it into the stove, while he made an opening in the snow wall, or, rather, a partial opening, for he left a thin sheet of ice on the outer side. As soon as the poker was red hot, he said to his comrades, who stood eagerly watching him, wondering.

"This red hot bar will keep off the bears when they try to get hold of it, and we shall be able easily to fire across it without letting them snatch away our guns."

Hatteras withdrew the poker, and plunged it into the wall. The melting snow made a loud, hissing noise, and the two bears ran and made a snatch at the glowing bar, but they fell back with a terrible howl, and at the same moment four shots resounded, one after the other.

"Hitt!" exclaimed Altamont. "Hitt!" echoed Bell. "Hitt!" repeated Johnson, carefully stopping up the opening meantime.

The poker was again thrust into the fire, and in a few minutes was ready for Hatteras to recommence operations. Altamont and Bell reloaded their guns, and took their places; but this time the poker would not pass through. "Confound the beast!" exclaimed the American.

"What's the matter?" asked Johnson. "What's the matter? Why, they're piling up block after block, intending to bury us alive!" "Impossible!" "Look for yourself; the poker can't get through."

He was worse than alarming. The bears meant to smother the prey. They were heaping up huge masses, which would make escape impossible. Two hours passed. The air grew close. Every opening was hermetically sealed. The stoves would hardly draw, and it was evident would soon go out altogether, for want of oxygen.

Hatteras was the first to see their fresh danger, and he made no attempt to hide it from his companions. "If that is the case," said Altamont, "we must get out at all risks."

example, and Johnson took care to load a gun in case of necessity.

GIRLS HARVESTING CROPS.

Many of them earn good wages in the West. The small grain harvest was recently being finished throughout Southern and Central Nebraska, supplies convincing proof that the women of the West are rapidly crowding the men out of the fields of labor and are candidates for positions in all of the respectable avocations. When the Nebraska small grain harvest opened there was a great shortage of male help. Even \$3 a day, with board, lodging and washing, did not attract the city man. A large number of college students went to the rescue of the ripening grain, but the supply was far less than the demand. Farmers became desperate. The price of wheat kept on soaring and they could not afford to let the grain go back into the ground. Out in Beatrice one day Henry Wilson, a farmer living nine miles south of town, needed four men for gathering and shocking wheat. He offered idle park loungers \$3.25 a day, but they declined to go to work. Stopping at a lunch counter before going home, Mr. Wilson told of his troubles to Miss Jeannette Allison, a waitress.

"Why don't you hire girls?" she asked. "They would not go into the harvest field," responded the farmer. "Try them," ventured the girl. "Give me the same wages as you would a man and I will go. Besides, if I do not do the work of a man I will not charge you a cent."

Not only did Miss Allison ride home with Farmer Wilson that night, but four of her girl friends went along. The next evening Farmer Wilson told his wife that he had never had harvest hands that did better work than the five girls. The second day farmers came from miles about, saw the girls at work, and that night many of them went to Beatrice and other neighboring towns, where they hired fifteen young women to work in the grain fields.

Word was passed down to Omaha that young women could have employment in the harvest fields of Gage County. An employment agency published this ad: "Wanted—One hundred young women to work in the harvest fields. Wages \$3 per day. Board and washing."

The next day that employment agent did business. He was swamped with applicants, all young women, school teachers, stenographers, college girls and girls who had been working in factories at from \$5 to \$7 per week. All they wanted was to be given a trial, and they made good. They remained with the farmers until the harvest was finished, and many of them will continue during the stacking and haying, receiving from \$15 to \$20 per day and board—Omaha (Neb.) Dispatch to Boston Transcript.

HE BOUGHT AN AIRSHIP.

A wealthy Russian wanted a Blériot monoplane and lost it. A good story is being told in Paris of how M. Delagrangé, pilot of one of the Blériot monoplanes at Rheims, disposed of the monoplane with which he made his record flights last year. He was at his shed when a wealthy Russian, fresh from St. Petersburg, was introduced to him, the New York Morning Telegram says.

"Is your aeroplane for sale?" asked the stranger. "Yes, if you like." "Would you mind taking it out of the shed to let me see it?" "Certainly not," replied M. Delagrangé.

The Russian examined it all over, then asked the price and was told \$2,400. "I will take it," said the Russian, drawing out his pocket book and handing over the money. "All right." "Then the machine is mine?" "Yes," replied the aviator. "It is." Thereupon the Russian got into the pilot's seat and, looking up at M. Delagrangé, said to him:

"Turn on the motor, please. I want to see how the thing goes." There was laughter and astonishment all around among the persons present. M. Delagrangé in vain tried to explain to the Russian through an interpreter that a good deal of preliminary practice is required before one can fly.

The Russian insisted. At last M. Delagrangé did turn the handle. The motor started purring. The aeroplane ran along over the grass for some yards, rose a few feet into the air and then came down with a smash. The Russian was extricated from the wreck considerably scratched and bruised, but he seemed to be delighted at having had any sort of a flight for his money.

"I shall have the machine repaired; then I will try again," was all he said.

WHAT MAN IS MADE OF. G.A.C. 3500 FEET. FRANCIS, 70 DOLLARS. FROM SEVEN POUNDS. NATHAN, 500 000. PROSPERITY, EAGER TO KILL 500 PERCENT. NEEDS 38 QUINQUE. LINE, TWO POUNDS. SPEED 60 LINDS. SAIT 20 SPANISH. CANDLES 15 POUNDS. OFFICE. CHAIRMAN OF BOARD. STRONG. HYPOCRISY. ACID.

The influences, or leaves, of this pole, or tree of life, will be for the healing of the nations. To it will flock the nervous wrecks and consumptives, and it will be the world's sanitarium. Ere long that region will be a city of anchored vessels, and we shall speak of it as 'paradise regained.'"

The Collector's Retort. After a long wait the crafty debtor glanced up from his desk. "Have a chair," he said to the persistent dun collector, who stood near the door.

"I'm not tired," was the fierce retort; "but this bill is. It's been standing a long time now!"—Judge.

Might Be His Feast. "Don't go 'round complainin' 'bout de way you friends has treated you," said Uncle Eben. "When a man ain't got de right kind of friends it's ginerally because he didn't deserve 'em."

SONG.

Love laid down his golden head On his mother's knee; "The world turns round so fast," he said, "None has time for me." Thought, a sage unhonored, tumbled From the onrushing crew; Song her stately legend spurned; Art her glass down threw. Roll on, blind world! upon thy track Until thy wheels catch fire; For that is gone which comes not back To seller nor to buyer. —Aubrey Thomas De Vere.

Helena's Pupil

When Helena realized that a cabal was organized against her to force her to give up her interesting pupil, she closed her pretty teeth hard, and all the fighting blood of her cavalier ancestry asserted itself in a thorough willingness to fight it out to a finish. She certainly would not give up James Langdon, who, with dogged perseverance and energy, was getting on wonderfully. One evening, sitting at the study table under the bright light of a swinging lamp, and figuring out a mathematical problem, Helena suddenly raised her eyes to see if her pupil was following her explanation.

But James Langdon, his arms resting on the table, was looking abstracted and yet with a keen thoughtful scrutiny, at the fringe hair, on which the light fell, bringing out golden gleams, at the fine oval of the face bending over the book, at its delicate, high-bred features, and at the straight long lashes which added so much beauty to the eyes now raised to his.

"Do you understand how it is done?" Helena asked. "I was not listening," Langdon answered, composedly. "I was looking at you, and wondering how much you believe of the things they have told you against me. I was wondering whether you will give me up."

"Well, I don't believe you will. You are too straightforward and brave, and too square. You don't mind a fight a bit, do you? It's in your blood." Helena laughed and nodded.

"So I thought," Langdon said grimly. "What have they told you? That I am dangerous and disreputable? That you should not do me the courtesy to help me get rid of some of my ignorance? I thought so. Did they tell you I once killed a man?"

"Yes, but I do not believe it," she answered quietly, and a look of immense relief swept over Langdon's face and a flush surged up to his short brown hair.

Leaving forward and looking steadily at her, he said: "You are so different, and so far above anyone I have ever known, you would never betray a trust. I was Joe Allen's father who shot the man. I saw him when he fired the shot. He is dead now, and the mortal fear that it would be found out shortened his life. His poor old, bed-ridden wife knows all about it. Allen owed the man money. She begged me to swear I would never tell, because it would stand against her boy Joe. Joe is wild, and always in trouble, and she thinks it will ruin him if people know the truth about his father. Of course, I promised her it eased her mind, poor soul, and she won't live long. She knows she can trust me."

"Do you mean to say," Helena asked slowly, "that all your life you intend to let the suspicion rest on you that you shot and killed a man when you could clear yourself easily by getting a deposition from that old woman?"

Do you not see how much it stands against you? Do you think it fair to yourself? You must look into the future. Can you not realize how it may ruin your life?" "I will keep my promise to that poor old creature. I will give her boy a clean chance to fight his way in the world and become a decent fellow, without a millstone around his neck. You won't betray me, I know. It's not in you. As for my future—it will have to take care of itself. If only you won't turn me off—which would be bad because you have a lot of influence, and everybody would say you did it because you believe me to be a reprobate and a murderer. I will work hard at my books this winter, and go to the city in the spring and take some special courses."

Some days later it occurred to Langdon that, although lacking in education, he was owner of a prosperous cotton mill; that he had inherited great tracts of land, prosperous farms and orchards, leased out and looked after by an agent, and one knowing their real owner, and which brought in large returns. His simple, rugged bringing up, his acquaintance with the advantage of large wealth, made him strangely indifferent to it. It was only when he saw how fagged and worn out Helena was by her unremitting labors that a realization came to him of what the hundreds of thousands of dollars piled up in a bank to his account would mean, if he pleased to make use of them.

"Why did you come up here?" he asked. "I came because there is a dear old dad and a sweet invalid mother to be helped. Riches, you know, have a queer way sometimes of taking wings unto themselves and flying away. That's what my father's inheritance did. He is growing old and is not at all strong. I am, you see, so naturally, I am going to work to keep our modest cottage over our heads, now that our dear old colonial home and plantation have passed from us into other hands."

"Why not buy it back?" Langdon asked. "Because \$50,000 is not to be picked up by the roadside." "That's not much money," the queer young mountaineer said. "Your father could borrow that much. The place would soon pay off that amount if it were properly handled."

"Perhaps, that father is old, and—no, I will have to keep on teaching. It's not disagreeable work." A strong compassion came into Langdon's eyes as he looked into Helena's courageous proud face, which was followed by an expression of distress as he noticed that she was thinner and paler. The long winter was over and spring, with its splendors of forest bloom, had come, and Helena sighed for the ending of her difficulties. It seemed to her that James Langdon's absence—he announced one night that for business reasons he would be absent for several weeks—had intensified them. In a short while the pretty schoolhouse in the heart of the mountains would be closed. The day before Helena was to go down the mountains the postman brought her a letter.

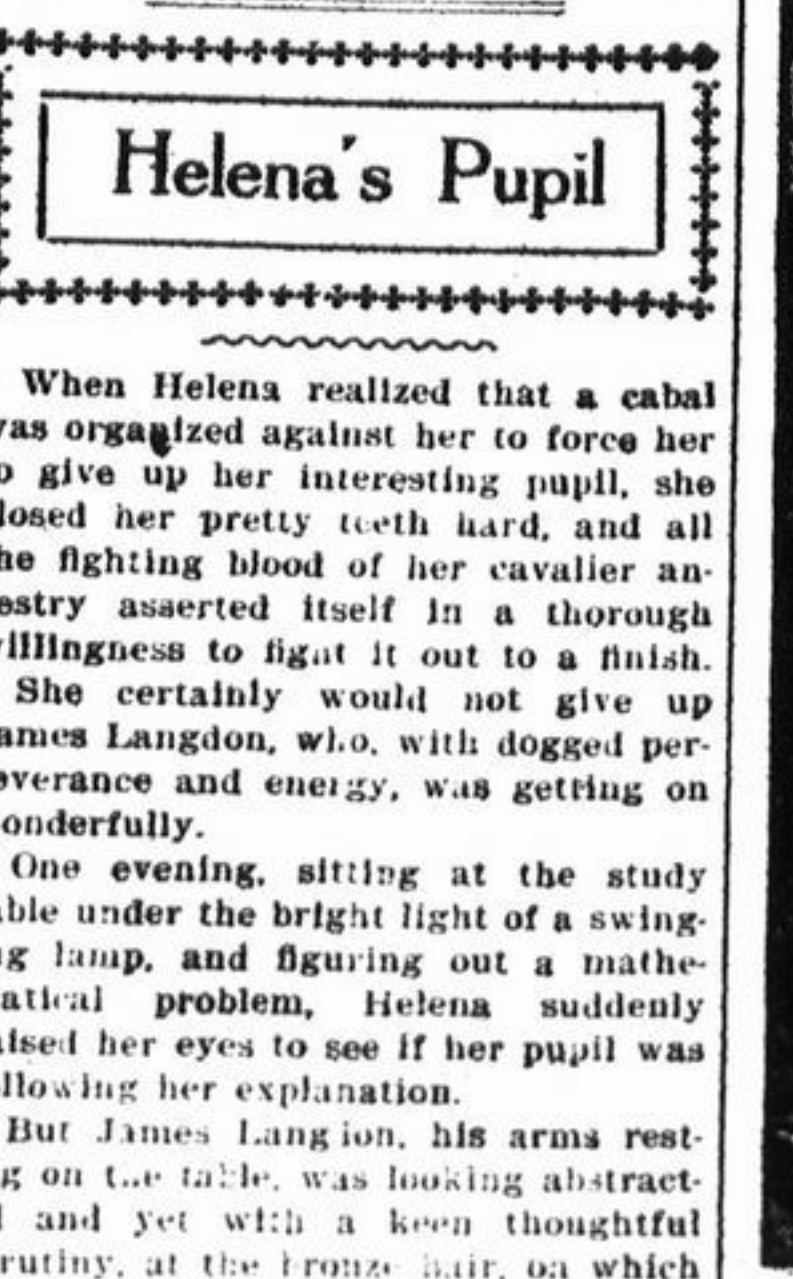
"My Dear and Devoted Daughter: The strangest thing has happened! I thank God for his kindness and mercy. The clouds of misfortune have lifted and never again shall you assume the weary burdens of poverty. Through a lawyer, acting under instructions of your poor Uncle Tom, who died in a village in the far Northwest, \$50,000—the amount of my indorsement of his note, you remember, with the accumulated interest, have been deposited in the village bank in my name. How reverently grateful we should be to our Father who is in heaven!"

"I had Burton's promise to let me buy back Beachwood, if possible, in ten years. So I have written to him through our lawyer. By appraisal I can buy back our old home for \$40,000." "Come back, my dear, brave daughter, and meet us in our old home. Your mother and I will spend our last years in peace and tranquil happiness. My heart is too full to write more. We will eagerly await you under the grand oaks before the front steps. Your loving father."

James Langdon came rapidly across the lawn, entered the schoolhouse and the familiar little room where Helena sat, her letter before her, her face flushed and joyous, only—in the depth of her eyes lay the shadow of some sorrowful regret.

DOGS AS RIFIFIANS.

"They have learned the value of dogs in warfare," said Major Richardson the other day, speaking of the Rififians and talking to a representative of the Telegraph. "Another trick which they successfully practiced was to put a 'burnous' and turban on a dog and to send him along from point to point in front of the Spanish soldiers. At a distance the dog looked very like a man creeping along, and at once the Spaniards were up and blazing at the supposed Moor. At the same time the Moors, who had taken cover, took careful aim, and many a soldier bit the dust." Occasionally, the Major told our artist when giving him the details from which this drawing was made, three or four disguised dogs would be sent out at a time, and that in broad daylight.—London Illustrated News.



FOUR-FOOTED MOORS.

"Do you mean it?" he asked hoarsely. Helena silently stretched out both hands. It was more than that he took and held—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

WOMAN IRON FOUNDER.

Can Cast or Mold Anything and Can Make Her Own Patterns. Mrs. J. H. Peters of this place, says a Rice Lake (Wis.) dispatch, is the only woman iron founder and machinist in the country, besides being a clever cook, a pleasing singer and a fair performer on the piano.

Mrs. Peters can cast or mold anything that comes to hand, carrying the sizzling hot metal and doing her own pouring. She also handles brass castings, melting and pouring the metal herself.

She can run a bandsaw and keep it in order and she can even make her own patterns from the blue prints as they come from the hands of the draftsman.

In an engine room she can fire the boilers, keep up the proper amount of steam and water and run the engine. Not only that, she can take the engine apart and put it together again.

It is the work in the machine shop, however, that attracts this remarkable woman most, and she likes such difficult jobs as "keysetting a coupling," "threading a piece of steel" and making a "shrinking fit."

And yet she is not spoiled for a housekeeper, nor has her expertness as a machinist detracted from the feminine side of her nature. She has a good education, her conversation is intelligent and entertaining, and, besides, being a cook of no mean ability, she sings and plays.

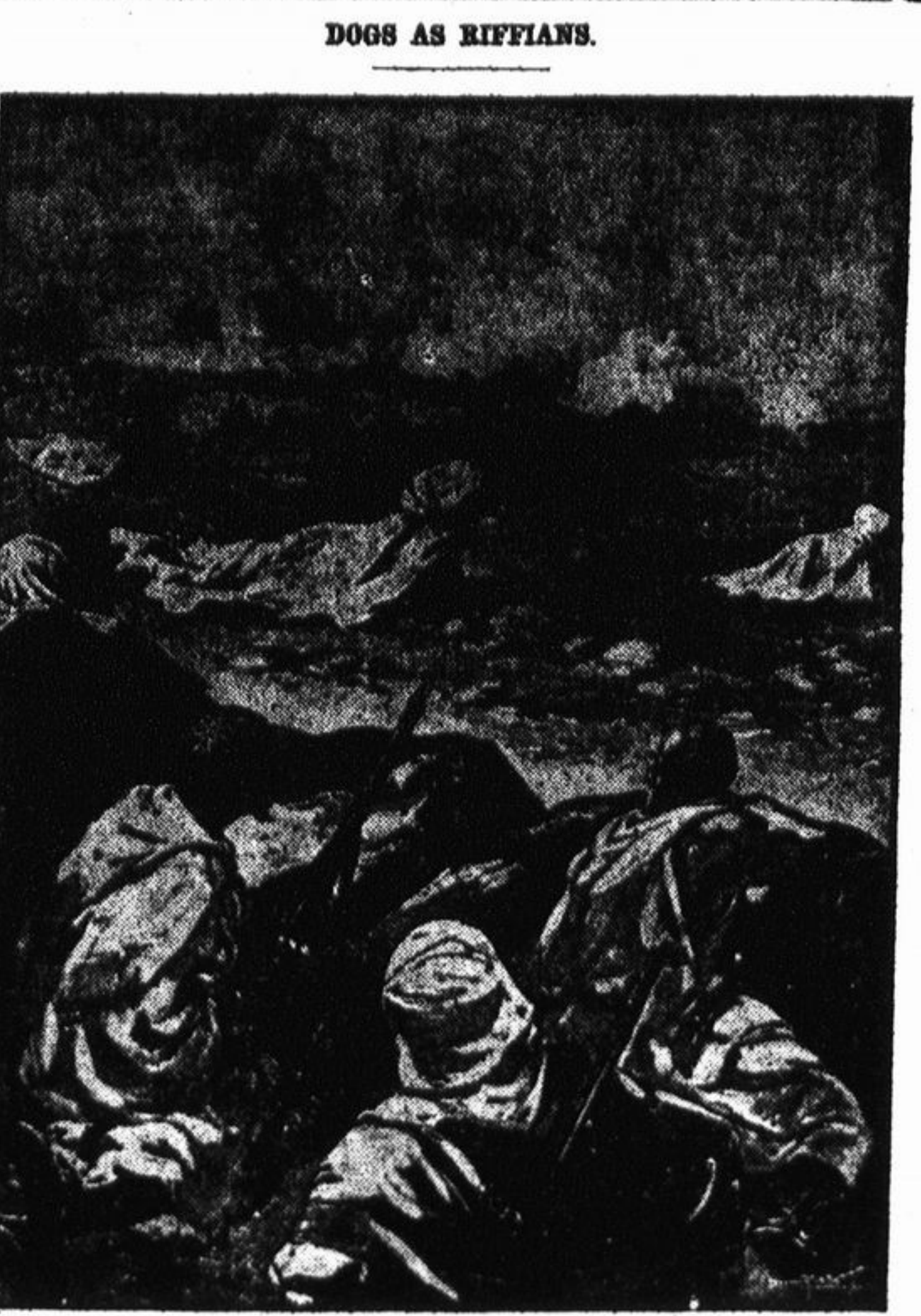
Mrs. Peters picked up her trade when frequenting her husband's shop, where she watched the men operate the machines until she had gained sufficient courage to undertake it herself.

Nationality in China.

A recent Chinese newspaper states that the law of nationality, consisting of twenty-four articles, has been decided upon, a consular report says. By this law any person who has lived in China over ten years and is above 20 years of age, of good moral standing, being helpful to China, may be allowed to assume Chinese nationality, if asked for. Unless one has lived in China more than twenty years he will not be allowed to serve in the grand council, imperial household department or as a military official in any position above the fourth grade, neither can he become a member of Parliament nor of the provisional council. When one wishes to abandon his nationality as a Chinese he must first get the consent of the board concerned or he cannot lose his nationality. Only a person who has an official position or has not failed to pay taxes is allowed to abandon his nationality. When a Chinese woman marries a foreigner she will abandon her Chinese nationality, and when a foreign woman marries a Chinese she will become Chinese. In either assuming or abandoning nationality the wife and children will follow the husband's nationality. A woman who is married is not allowed to change her nationality alone. Women who are divorced and persons who have abandoned Chinese nationality before the laws are enforced will be treated as Chinese so long as they live in and enjoy their rights in China.

A Serious Question. "Will the discovery of the pole result in any tangible benefit to mankind?" "I don't know as it will," answered the press humorist. "I doubt if the few new jokes it afforded will offset the raft of good old jokes it put out of commission."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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