JUNGLE PRISON COULD NOT HOLD THIS CONVICT

The Story of Eugene Dieudonne, Whose Third Attempt to Escape From French Guiana Was Successful—How He Sailed Away in a Cranky Boat

Paris.—Eugene Dieudonné, the cabinet worker of Nancy, who spent more than twelve years in the French prison in tropical Guiana and made three attempts at escape and finally succeeded in reaching Brazil, will, it is expected, soon be pardoned by his Government. Recently he was imprisoned in Rie de Janeiro, but later was released, his attorney advising him to place himself at the mercy of the French Ministry of Justice.

Dieudonne was convicted of attempted murder in connection with a robbery in Paris in 1913. Many doubt that he was guilty. There were other considerations, too, that lent support to his appeal for clemency. For one thing, twelve years' exile in Guiana is regarded by many as sufficient penalty, in view of the fact that the man Dieudonne is said to have attacked finally recovered.

The convict's wife, who works in a Paris department store, and his son have elicited the sympathy of many Parisians by their devotion to Dieudonne and their insistance upon his innocence. Moreover, the romantic aspects of the case and even the physical courage manifested during the three days and nights that Dieudonne spent struggling with tropical seas and mud in a fight to win freedom, have impressed the French and reacted in his favor.

While many prisoners seek to escape from the horrors of the tropical prison camp, most of them die in the attempt. Those that survive are usually recaptured. Letters written by Dieudonne to his attorney and friends in Paris revealed the details of his daring final break for freedom.

The French Guiana prison colony consists of the three Iles du Salut—the notorious Devil's Island. Ile Royale and Ile St. Joseph—a group of isolated jungle prisons on the mainland and two larger mainland camps, Kourou and Cayenne. Dieudonne, at the time of his escape, was in Cayenne. This camp borders on the quarter of the town of Cayenne in which live the "liberated" convicts. These are men who, having served their terms of hard labor, are forced to live as exiles in Guiana for a period equal to the expired term, if their sentence was less than eight years, or for life, if their sentence was longer than eight years. Men such as Dieudonne, whose sentences have been communted (Dieudonne was rescued from the guillotine by the clemency of the President of the French Republic), are permitted a relative degree of liberty in the prison camps.

"Bootleggers of Men.

There hovers about French Guiana a mysterious but apparently well-knit organization of bootleggers of men, whose business is to help convicts escape. Its members are mostly Chinese and negroes. The Chinese bargain with the prisoners for the fee to be paid in return for a helping hand toward freedom, and the negroes do the hard labor of piloting the evaders to the border. Dieudonne was able to get in touch with members of this band.

The prison camp at Cayenne is on the northwestern side of a little peninsula, which is one of the relatively few high-and-dry places on the coast. For the most part the territory between the jungle and the open sea is neither land nor water. It is alluvial mud, brought down by the great tidal rivers and flooded at high water. There is so much mud and debris on the coast that the sea for fifty miles out is tinted yellow. Escaping convicts must cross the mud flats.

Last December a negro bootlegger of men made an agreement with Dieudonne and five other convicts to pilot them to freedom. The fee for all six was $120, plus $40 expenses. He was to meet them in the evening in a little creek called the Fouille.

The convicts, eluding their guards in the daylight, made their way to the rendezvous at 3 in the afternoon. Dieudonne writes:

"It is 6 o'clock in the evening, and we have been waiting three hours. Will he come? Will he fail us?"

The escort finally did appear and by daylight the party had traversed the length of the creek and entered the open sea by a passage called the Cannes. Their progress was slow and painful, for the sail of their boat was quite insufficient and the rudder too small. Nevertheless, they went on for an entire day.

At ebb tide the boat was carried backward by the current, for its anchor was not large enough to hold it. Back they went, powerless to fight because they had no oars. They were carried all the way to the Cannes, where their craft stuck fast in the mud.

That night the six convicts and the negro cut a thwart from the boat and contrived to fashion it into a paddle. A cold wind chilled them as they worked. The next day, aided by the flood tide and the paddle, they recovered the distance they had lost.

New Perils and Obstacles.

Then they found a fresh obstacle—a great mudband that stretched along the coast for twelve miles and into the sea for three miles more. They might have gone around it had their boat been less crazy. As it was they hesitated to put far out to sea. After a moment's hesitation the negro said the best thing to do would be to cut straight across the mud bank at high tide—an extremely dangerous project.

They now had two additional paddles, made, like the first, from thwarts of the boat. They leaned upon them with all their might, pushing them against the muddy mottom, and the boat went on in the moonless night. At this point there is a gap in the letters of Dieudonne. But he continues the main narrative:

"We are gliding beside a forest of mangroves, sinister trees that stretch their meager arms upward and dip their exposed roots in the millennial mud—a forest none but shipwrecked persons would attempt to penetrate. In spite of our efforts, we become fast in the mud again. The three weakest of us begin to moan, fearing the death that flies above these Dantesque places.

"The next day, the rising tide does not come up to us. What can we do? Shall we stay there, in the mud?

"The negro asks us to go overboard into the mud and push the boat a hundred yards to the point that has been reached by the rising tide. A half day of effort, hours of doubt and fear. The mud has made filthy, strange beasts of us, no longer in the least like human beings. Finally at 8 o'clock in the evening the boat takes the water. Long shouts of joy and enthusiasm in the tropical twilight."

Boat Turned Turtle.

Once more at sea, they raised the sail. But the sea was heavy, the small craft made heavy weather.

They shipped several waves.

"Steer to the left!" cried Dieudonne to the negro, fearing that the waves would drive them back to the bank.

"She won't answer the rudder," replied the pilot.

The sea grew heavier and heavier. A wave washed completely over the boat, then a second, third and fourth. It was too much for so unseaworthy a vessel. She teetered as she shipped more water, and finally, like an overworked draught horse giving up the struggle, turned over.

The men jumped. Dieudonne, in the water, found himself caught in the rigging. He struggled violently to free himself, but seemed only to entangle himself further. To make it worse, one of the other men, thrown against him, seized his arm. He tried to cry out, but a mouthful of muddy water half strangled him.

In his struggle Dieudonne struck his head against something floating. It was his box containing the meagre property of a convict, which, in the hope that he could escape and return to France, he had carefully guarded and carried with him. He seized the box, which was sufficiently buoyant to give him support, and with a final effort pulled himself out of the rigging.

Floating clear, Dieudonne turned to find the comrade, Lebreton, who had seized him in the water. He saw him, with three others, clinging to the keel of the overturned boat.

Still holding fast to the box, he tried to fight his way to his companions, but the waves were too much for him, driving him back toward the mudbank. He struggled over the mud, dragging his box, and as he went he called, hoping that the others would hear and follow him. They hear dand reached him. Then all headed for the forest, struggling through the mud. As soon as they reached dry ground they camped for the night.

On a Log Laft.

Next morning they threw together a log raft and set forth once more. With the aid of poles they pushed their raft forward. The seas swept over them, and more than once they were forced to swim, but they finally arrived and threw themselves exhausted upon the bank. Only Dieudonne and Lebreton had the strength to continue. The entire distance from Cayenne to Brazil, along the coast, is only about eighty miles, as measured on the map, but it presents terrific difficulties.

Dieudonne and Lebreton pushed on, leaving the others, who were recaptured a few days later.

Dieudonne settled in Para-Belem, where he pursued his trade of cabinet making. For a long while he believed himself safe, but at length he was arrested by the Brazilian Government, and the French asked his extradition. He pleaded with his friends in France to have him extradited to the mother country, not to Guiana.

"If they send me back there I'll hang myself," he wrote.

Career of Dieudonne.

Dieudonne was originally arrested as a member of a gang of bandits who terrified Paris in 1913, robbing banks, perpetrating repeated daylight holdups and killing those who opposed them. The band was captured in a house in which they had taken refuge. The two leaders of the bandits, Bonnot and Garnier, as well as a number of police, were killed in the attack.

Dieudonne and the others captured were sentenced to death. The charge against Dieudonne was the attempted murder of a bank messenger, who, recovering from the attack, had positively identified Dieudonne as the assassin. But Dieudonne continually protested his innocence, and his statements were supported by notes written by both the leaders of the gang, asserting that he had not been present at the attack on the messenger. On the strength of the victim's asserted recognition, the jury convicted him, but the President of the republic commuted his sentence to life imprisonment.

Dr. F. G. Banting

Of insulin fame, who makes a round indictment of the Hudson Bay Company for alleged unfair treatment of the Eskimo. This picture was snapped on board the C. G. S. Beothic, on which he journeyed to the near-Arctic regions.

Apple Storage Pointers

A well insulated storage house, a damp floor, and a fan to force cool night air into the house, are found to be the essentials of successful apple storage on the farm.

The night air, on an average, is approximately twenty degrees cooler than the air in the daytime in the fall, when the apple crop is put in storage. The air, however, is not damp enough to keep the apples from shriveling. This is remedied by keeping the floor wet to allow the water to evaporate.

Evaporation is also a cooling process. The temperature is further cooled as the water evaporates. The floors must be kept wet continually, observes Mr. Overholt, to keep the moisture in the air high enough, and aid cooling by evaporation. Pans, or even a narrow trench filled with water are not sufficient.

In a women's discussion at the meeting of the Welsh National Liberal Federation it was suggested that the giving of toy soldiers to children should be discouraged. The difficulty is, however, that no nursery dares to be the first to disarm.—Punch.

The wife of an aviator is the only woman who is always glad to see her husband down and out.—Louiseville Times.

Is Milkweed of Value?

An Iowa chemist, Dr. Gerhart, is making a plea for milkweed. He finds that this much despised plant has many promising virtues. And what he says should occasion a careful study of the plant to learn if the possibilities he suggests may not be realized in a practical way.

In the first place, this chemist states that the milk from this weed corresponds closely to that of the rubber plant, and it may in the future, prove a domestic source of this valuable product. According to his tests, the milkweed will produce, in the wild state, from two and one-half to three per cent. of rubber.

Further, an acre of the weed will produce around 550 pounds of cotton floss. This is a greater production than is had from the cotton fields. A superior quality of upholstery can be made from this floss. At the same time the blossom is producing the floss, the stem of the plant is growing a fibre of high tensile strength. The fibre of the milkweed runs the entire length of the stalk. This chemist states that it would make an excellent substitute for hemp. In strength it compares well with manila hemp.

The fibre of the plant also produces an excellent quaitity of paper and wallboard. The long tough fibres make this possible. In producing wallboard, eighty-eight per cent. of the plant was used.

Another product is the seeds. From fifty-five to sixty bushels could be harvested from an acre. This compares favorably with yield of corn. These seeds contain about twenty per cent. of oil, and from thirty-five to forty per cent. protein. The oil compares in quality with cottonseed oil, and the protein should make an excellent stock feed. About the only requirement in getting the seeds to reproduce is scarification.

This persistent plant, which all these years has been a liability to agriculture, may some time be placed on the other side of the ledger. Extensive research should be made promptly along the lines of the pioneer work by Dr. Gerhart.

Will Rogers Would Make Every Golf Course an Airport

To Editor, The New York Times.

Washington, D.C.—Bobby Jones, Atlanta, Ga.: Bobby, you can be the means of saving a lot of human lives. The big problem of aviation is having emergency places to land. Now you insist on every golf course having one fairway long enough and level enough to land a plane on, all marked with crosses to show it. Every golf club should be patriotic and humane enough to do this.

Think what it would mean to an aviator with a missing engine to know that every golf course was a life preserver. If they don't do this voluntarily the Government will make 'em do it some day.

Now all you got to do, Bobby, is to say you won't play on a course that won't go to that much expense for their country and their fellow-man. If you do this you will do as much for aviation as Lindbergh.

Yours,
WILL ROGERS.

The going is best when you are on the level.

Treat Your Farm Machinery Right

A farmer retired last year, after farming for some thirty years. Before he left the farm he had a sale. This neighbor's machinery had always had the best of care, and the surrounding farmers knew it. Some of them had borrowed tools from him at different times, and knew they were always in perfect repair. As a result, a corn binder that he had been using for twenty years brought $80; a fanning mill that had been in use for fifteen years brought $28, and a grain drill that had been used every year for eighteen years brought $40. Other machinery averaged as well, and all were worth the price they brought.

I have a small farm, and all the tools I need for the size place I have, and I consider my eighteen by thirty-foot tool shed one of the best investments I have ever made. When I finish using any piece of machinery that requires a bright working surface, from a shovel to a disc., I clean it thoroughly and then give it a coat of harvester oil, with a small paint brush, before it is put in the shed. After the metal parts are so treated I give the wooden parts a coat of linseed oil and then a coat of paint. It costs but little, requires but a short time, and pays big in the long run.

My tool shed is nearer the fields than any of my other buildings. That is, it is as near the driveway that leads to the field, as possible, so as to make it convenient to leave the tools right where they belong. Overhead I keep the spades, shovels, hand rakes, forks, an dother hand tools, and keep them where they belong, so it is not necessary to hunt for a needed tool when in a hurry. Cleaning and oiling them after using keeps them all as good as new.

A Good Crop Rotation

Experiments have been conducted on the Central Farm at Ottawa during the last seventeen years in order to learn which rotations give the best results under certain conditions, what sequence of crops produces the largest yields and which rotation is most effective in maintaining the productivety of the soil and in controlling weed and insect pests. An excellent rotation is, with several others, described in the latest report of the Dominion Field Husbandman, distributed by the Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa. It is a five year rotation with the crops in the following order: corn, oats, clover hay, timothy hay, oats. There is thus one-fifth of the land in corn for silage, two-fifths in grain, and two-fifths in hay. For the purposes of the experiments both the clover and the timothy are harvested as hay. Manure is supplied twice, once for the corn crop at the rate of 15 tons per acre, and once for the timothy, top dressed on the clover sod in the winter at 15 tons per acre. These large quantities of manure are applied because the land is not pastured.

There is an excellent opportunity of eradicating weeds with this rotation. The timothy sod may be ploughed as soon as the hay has been removed and cultivated during the remainder of the season, and the oat crop may be handled in the same way. The corn crop will, of course, permit of considerable cultivation during the year it is grown.

Russian Postmen Far From Happy

Complaints that the administration of the postal, telephone and telegraph service in Soviet Russia discharges union men and replaces them with non-unionists, thus making itself partly responsible for the fact that 18 per cent. of the organized employes are idle, were made at the recent biennial convention of Union of Postal, Telephone and Telegraph Workers held in Moscow.

These charges were backed up by the report of the Chairman of the Central Committee of the union and aroused bitter comment. Another cause of unemployment was said to be the abuse of overtime work in many divisions of the postal service. The allowance granted to unemployed postal workers is slightly less than $5 a month and the union itself is taking care of only 18 per cent. of its idle members.

Union Grows Larger

Despite these handicaps, however, the membership of the union, as quoted from the Chairman's report by Trud, the official newspaper of the All-Russian Federation of Labor, has risen to 114,364 as against 102,500 in 1925. The Chairman confirmed the complaints of some delegates about the large number of disputes between the trade unions and the Commissariat of Posts, Telephones and Telegraphs, due to the failure of many of the departments to observe the clauses of the collective agreement or the provisions of social legislation.

Regarding wages it was pointed out that the present condition of the finances of the Soviet Government militated against any increases in the near future, although the average monthly wage of $32 was only 63 per cent. of the pre-war pay. In this connection a dispute arose regarding the advisability of admitting rural mail carriers to the union. Answering the contention of several delegates that every effort should be made to line these workers up with their fellows in the service, the Chairman of the Central Committee explained the opposition of the committee as follows:

Not of the Proletariat

First, the country postman generally are small peasants who cannot be really considered as members of the proletariat.

Second, the wages of rural carriers are so very low that if these men were admitted they would immediately demand an increase. Under existing conditions the State could not consent to this and, consequently, the union would not be able to support such a request and its refusal undoubtedly would occasion discontent among the carriers.

The convention took no action on the matter.

Harnessing Static to Check Fires

Static, the curse of radio fans, is now being employed in the useful role of indicating the direction and course of lightning storms, according to S. R. Winters, in an article contributed to the Boston "Globe." This information, in the possession of the United States Forest Service, enables forest fire-fighters to plan their attacks on conflagrations caused by lightning. It is a practical application of the adage to the effect "forewarned is forearmed." Writes Mr. Winters:

The rumbling and crashing noises which constitute such a disturbing factor in our radio receiving sets are also being diverted to the serviceable function of furnishing an index to the relative amount of moisture in the atmosphere. This information is, in a measure, a barometer to the degree of fire hazard present from day to day in the national forests. Statics records, affording, as they do, an index of the day's relative humidity as early as six o'clock in the morning, give warning of the intensity of the fire menace, which may vary from day to day.

This striking illustration of changing static from a malediction to a benediction constitutes the major project of the United States Forest Service at its Pacific Northwest forest experiment station, Stabler, Washington. There, under the immediate supervision of A. Gael Simson, scientific aid of the forest service, the curse of radio reception has been coaxed to unfold whatever beneficent influences it may possess.

Lightning is the chief natural cause of forest fires—more than 1,000 such fires originating in Oregon and Washington alone in 1925—and to minimize the losses thus incurred to Government-owned timberlands it is necessary to know when there is probability of lightning and where it will probably exert its flaming force. Mr. Simson, in a 1926 progress report of this unusual scientific project, tells how static has been harnessed to denote the relative humindity in the atmosphere and the direction and course of lightning storms.

Modest Chap.

"He's a modest chap, eh?"

"Yes, holds his parts down when the wind blows."

YOUNG CANADA

Roma Holland the sweepstake winner of the "Young Canada" show at the Canadian National Exhibition. There were over 600 babies in seven different classes. Roma was judged the best baby of all classes.