SHORT SHORT STORY

Dancing Shoes

By CHARLES DORIAN

While a vast throng of theatre-goers passed through the exits of the Orpheum, the beautiful blonde attraction left quietly by the stage door on the arm of her most ardent admirer, the owner of the theatre and a string of others.

At the curb stood Max Berber's limousine, and just ahead of it, a taxi. Four maudlin "Collegians" having a singsong, obstructed the entrance to Berber's car, but made way while the lady stepped in. Then suddenly three of them gave Berber the bum's rush, while the fourth clambered in beside Paula Pauleen, tap dancer extraordinary.

Max spluttered and fumed while the three kidded him. A letter was pressed into his clenching fist and his car keys were frisked from him. The taxi jumped forward, and in a moment was followed by the limousine carrying the dancer and four members of the notorious Scarlet Gang in evening clothes and top hats, still simulating drunken collegians, singing to drown out the cries of the distressed dancer.

In the Holland Tunnel the singsong ceased and one of the gang said to the girl:

"This is something new in kidnaps, sister. We're all jolly good fellows, members of a theatrical troupe (to the general public). But don't get us wrong. We'd rub you out as quick as any Broadway mug if you failed for a minute to join the spirit of our little game. Your big boy has just read our demands in a note left with him."

"I'll—I'll pay you," chatted the little dancer. "Please—my contract. I must dance every night."

The car sped along for thirty miles and turned into a narrow road. License plates were switched and another fifty miles sped by. They stopped at a railroad village and

"This is something new in kidnaps, sister," said one of the gang.

parked the car on a side street. They changed their toppers for peak caps and entered the railroad station.

"Oh, you're the troupe from the opery house,' grinned the operator. "Though there was two girls in the party."

"One of us a female impersonator, haw! haw!" laughed the spokesman. The operator laughed too, and began stamping the tickets. "Trains not due for thirty minutes yet," he apologized.

"O.K. brother, we'll put on a little show while we're waiting." He strode over to Paula. "Smile." sister, SMILE," he hissed, and out loud, "Come on, Sally Rand, give the gentleman your best imitation of a fan dance."

Paula was ready to faint but entered into the game by dancing a whirling tap number that had the operator's eyes popping. Some singaround.

ing followed and a bottle was passed

"Now, another dance," ordered the master of ceremonies.

"Just a slow one," pleaded Paula, "I'm very tired."

"Oh, all right," yawned the fellow, She made a long slow stride straight to the operator and whispered. 'Listen!' Then she performed a painfuly punctuated dance with more body unduations than footwork.

The bottle passed around again and the operator went to his key, took an order, sent one, and in a few minutes the train was in.. They boarded it.

Sargo was a small city. A taxi was ready waiting for them and whisked them out into the country where they got out in front of a big house.

Every shadow exuded a police officer. Eight of them had pinioned the four "collegians" before the door opened, and two more seized the servant.

Paula promptly fainted. Two officers carried her to safety.

"This house has been under suspicion for a long time," said an officer to Paula. "When that operator's message mentioned 'Sargo' we posted a squad at the house. Here's the car now which followed their taxi from the depot."

Oh, yes, Paula's dad had been a station agent and had taught her to tap dance the Morse code.

Mistakes Other Folks Have Made

When our baby had measles, we listened to friends' advice on how to care for him, instead of taking him to a doctor. As a result he got too hot, took a bad cold, and the measles settled in his throat. The only way we could tell he was crying was by his mouth's being open and tears on his cheeks. Hereafter I'll take my children to competent doctors.—Mrs. M.K.

I set down a can of lye, while doing my family wash, and my two-year-old daughter ate some of it. We rushed her to the hospital. After two weeks of treatment, we were able to carry her home. We had a large medical bill and untold anxiety because of my carelessness.—Mrs. A.H.

I left my fine Jersey heifer in the same pasture with the horses, instead of keeping her to herself just before calving. A colt kicked her, causing her to lose the calf. I shall not make this mistake again!—T. K.

Killing our best laying hens with anti-freeze was my biggest mistake. Last spring when I drained my car, I left the pan under the car and the chickens drank the solution. The next morning some of the hens were too sick to fly off the roose, some were dying, and the rest were dead.—C. W. H.

I repaired my five-room house inside, instead of first putting a good roof on it. A few days after ceiling and papering the inside and screening the porches, a spark of fire from the kitchen flue landed on the bad roof, and I lost my entire house.—E. B. M.

Relying too much on old or faulty farm equipment can prove very costly. Last fall I neglected to replace worn harness for my wagon. The harness gave way while I was riding a loaded wagon, causing the team to run away and throw me in front of two wheels. As a result I suffered three months with a broken heel and badly cut foot, and still cannot walk.—T.T.W.

People who insist on drinking before driving are putting the quart before the hearse.

High Steppers—Circus aerialists Betty and Benny Fox do a sky dance 168 feet above Chicago's Michigan Avenue on an 18-inch pedestal which projects 12 feet out from a hotel roof. They did it to herald the opening of their circus.

Strictly Honest

The theatrical producer was giving an audition to a man with a new act.

Producing a puppy from his pocket, the man placed it on the piano, whereupon the puppy calmly proceeded to play part of one of the operas.

'Wonderful!" exclaimed the producer. "I'll give you $500 a week for that."

"But that's not all," said the man, producing from another pocket a parrot, which perched on the piano, sang an aria from the opera to the puppy's accompaniment.

Almost speechless by now, the producer managed to bring out an offer of $1000 a week for that."

"Er—er." said the man, nervously, "before you decide. I must tell you this act's a bit of a cheat. You see, the parrot can't sing. The puppy's a ventriloquist."

Good Neighbor — Josephine Bonilla is a real asset to the good neighbor policy. She was chosen queen of the Miami Good Neighbor Program. Josephine is well qualified for her hands-across-the-border title, since she's from Havana, Cuba.

Odd Communities In Finland

Finland is a country of waterways, but its largest stretch of water is the great Lake Ladoga. Here, on some forty islands and islets, 2,000 monks who have been outlawed from Soviet Russia are working out a successful communal life regardless of the troubled world.

From the forest lands of the islands the brothers secure adequate lumber and make resin and turpentine. Some work as bakers, others as carpenters and joiners. There are tailor monks for robes and vestments, cobbler monks, blacksmith monks. There is even a co-op store run by these Russian brethren in Lutheran Finland.

As soon as visitors arrive by steamer at the largest island — area 24 square miles — the blackrobed brothers in their tall cylinder hats are there on the quay to act as porters. They run their own hotel and a restaurant. And since they know that their visitors appreciate entertainment they even stage a church service lasting nineteen hours!

Another of Finland's strange communities is Mariehamn, the capital of lost ships. Commercial sailing ships of any size are no longer being built, but Mariehamn is continually buying up the surviving veterans, reconditioning them and putting them into use.

The Mariehamn fleet has but one owner, who operates his business on amazingly simple lines. He is a one-man company, doing everything himself in his own home. Having no office salaries or rents to pay, his sailing is sheer profit, and as he pays scrap prices for his ships, he can still count upon the vessels to be worth their weight in scrap whenever he decides to get rid of them.

Looked Ahead

Jake was a worthless and improvident fellow. One day he said to the local grocer: "I got to have a sack of flour! I'm all out and my family is starvin.' ' '

"All right Jake," said the grocer. "If you need a sack of flour and have no money to buy it with we'll give you a sack. But, see here, Jake, there's a circus coming to town in a few days. and if I give you a sack of flour, are you sure you won't sell it and take your family to the circus?"

'Oh, no," said Jake. "I got the circus money saved up already."

THE FARM FRONT

by John Russell

South of the border a number of newspapers have been "rapping" the use of DDT for spraying in dairy barns—some of them even going so far as to say that the DDT is responsible for the "virus "X" disease of man and the "X" disease of animals."

* * *

Now—following a meeting of the principal government agencies concerned with the use of insecticides —the United States Department of Agriculture has come out with an official statement. It says, "There is no evidence that the use of DDT in accordance with the recommendations of the various federal agencies has ever caused human sickness due to the DDT itself."

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"However," the statement goes on, "minor toxic symptoms may be produced by coal-oil and various solvents used in DDT and in practically all other insecticide mixtures."

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"Totally without foundation" is the way the statement deals with the published reports that DDT is responsible for the diseases mentioned in my first paragraph. Both these diseases had been reported and recognized before DDT was ever used.

* * *

Our own Ottawa Department of Agriculture has something to say on the subject. To protect farmers from buying insecticides that are either worthless or highly dangerous, all such preparations sold in Canada come under the provisions of the Pest Control Products Act. No pesticide is allowed on the market until it has been analyzed and approved by technical officials of the Department. And if such preparations are used IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE LABEL, they will be effective for the purpose for which they are recommended and will have no detrimental effects. (The capitals are mine, as I believe that most of the trouble with DDT has been because people DIDN'T follow the directions properly).

* * *

Officials of our Department of Agriculture say that spraying dairy barns with DDT—particularly with oil solutions—should be done when cattle are NOT in the stalls; and that special care should be taken to make sure that milk and cream cans and milking machines are not touched by the spray.

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This is because DDT in oil solutions can be absorbed through the skin of animals, and will be found both in the milk and in the animal fat. However, there has been little or no difficulty in spraying cattle themselves with DDT, when wettable powders are used in water. The water spray won't penetrate the skin, and the residue is not absorbed by the tissues.

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BUT EVEN WITH WATER SPRAY THE UTMOST CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO SEE THAT MILKING UTENSILS DO NOT COME IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE SPRAY.

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There are still some farmers who believe that chemical fertilizers are ruining our soils; but if you are one of them, I have to tell you that the facts seem to be against your belief. No experiments have ever shown that chemical fertilizers are in any way detrimental to soil.

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Over in England there's been a test going for almost a century —95 years to be exact—using manure on one patch of wheat, and chemical fertilizers on a similar patch. The plot receiving 1,392 pounds of complete fertilizer each year out-yielded the plot treated with an annual application of 15.7 tons of manure. During the past five years the yield was 4.4 bushels per acre greater. So it would seem that this patch of soil hadn't been poisoned or harmed after receiving chemical fertilizer annually for 95 years—which is quite a stretch of time.

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From what I hear more and more farmers in southern and central Ontario are getting interested in sunflower growing — although just how many of them are going so far as to put in a real crop I really cannot say at the moment.

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But from Buenos Aires comes word that is rather interesting. This report says that, compared with 1948, the area sown to sunflower this year has increased by 25 per cent—to a record figure of almost four and a half million acres.

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This is because Argentine farmers have found that their sunower crop is much more profitable than corn. Besides that, maturing wheat crops that were killed by heavy frosts have been replaced by sunflowers.

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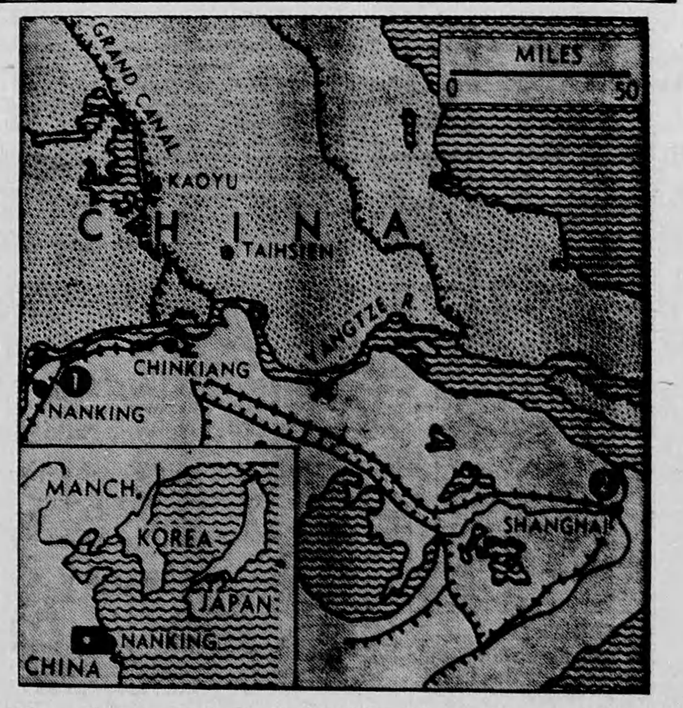
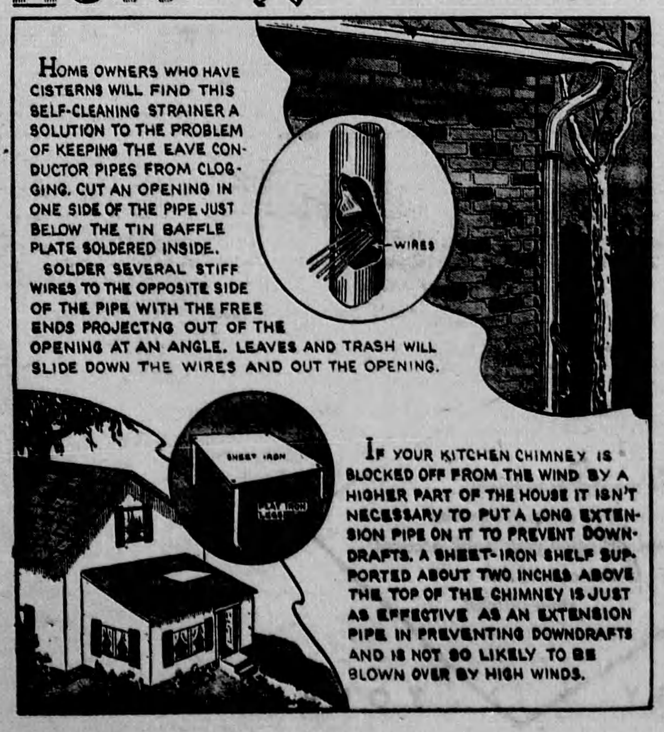
And, in case you don't already know it, lots of folks think that sunflower seeds—or at least the insides of them—are better eating than peanuts. I have a friend — he came from Russia years ago— who always has a handful or so in his pocket. Puts one edgewise between his teeth—cracks open the hull, sucks out the "innards," and reaches for another. Try it sometime.



Where Chinese Reds Shelled British Sloop—The cross in the Yangtze River marks the spot where HMS Amethyst, a British sloop, was driven aground by Chinese Communist shelling. The location is Rose Island, 80 miles east of Nanking (1). Help, in the form of warships, is racing to the scene from Shanghai (2). Communists hold the north bank of the river (shade area), with the Nationalists in control of the south bank.

HOW TO FIX IT

By Tom Gregory



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