The Wooden Bell

BY HOMER J. COUNCILOR

PART II.

Before the last of the villagers had disappeared into the sheltering jungle, I had reached Williams. With the knives intended to work the destruction of his spirit I cut the thongs binding him to the stake.

"Take this," I said, handing him one of the knives, "and we will run for cover."

"I can't make it, sergeant," he answered, "My legs are too cramped. I can't walk, much less run. You will have to go alone."

"Alone? nothing. Put your arm around my shoulder."

Catching him about the waist, we half ran, half hobbled out of the village in the opposite direction from that taken by the fleeing cannibals. We had passed the houses and were nearly across the intervening space to the edge of the jungle, not 200 feet further on, when we were confronted by two native women who appeared from among the trees. Screaming with terror they darted past us and disappeared behind the nearest house.

"Those women will set the whole tribe on our heels," Williams declared.

"Probably, but they are so confused now that there is no immediate danger of pursuit and every minute they are delayed increases our likelihood of escape."

A moment later we reached the edge of the woods. Not a second did we waste in a backward look at the devastation wrought by the fire. With the piteous moans of the burning chieftain faintly ringing in our ears we pushed on into the beckoning shadows of the heavy undergrowth.

The days that followed brought hardships and dangers of every imaginable character. Then we laughed; now I shudder at their thought. The roving savages by day, the beasts of prey by night, the stalking fevers of the tropics, the pangs of hunger, the torture of thirst. At one time we wandered for two days in a region of salt springs and small salt lakes. Nowhere was to be found water that we could drink. All the cunning and craft acquired through years of wilderness campaigning were called into play. Without this previous schooling we must have perished.

No one who has not been similarly placed can realize the terrible struggle one has with his reason. To a hunted man everything becomes abnormal, every movement in the trees or grasses means a hidden enemy ready to spring; every unusual sound becomes a signal calling more distant foes; every passing shadow the assurance of capture. Knowing this through years of experience the corporal and I would probably have thrown off the usual deep depression had it not been that almost from the first we were haunted by a most peculiar sound, a methodical hollow note unlike anything we had ever heard before. "Clink-clink, clink-clink." Dead, toneless and unspeakably uncanny, our days and our nights alike were filled with its echoes. We found ourselves straining to catch the sound. Our overwrought nerves enlarged upon it and increased the frequency with which it was heard. Only by studied efforts were we able to maintain our mental poise under this strain.

Unexpectedly one evening we stumbled upon the camp of a small party of native hunters. From the manner in which they greeted our appearance and instantly rushed toward us with fierce yells it was evident that they were, to say the least, not surprised by our presence. A hurried retreat by us developed into a desperate game of hare and hounds, in which the hares again proved sufficiently clever to elude the hounds. Finding refuge in a small cave we discussed the situation in whispers.

"Did you notice that they seemed to be expecting us?" I asked.

"It impressed me more as though they had suddenly discovered something they were looking for," Williams answered.

Not willing to voice the sentiment of my own convictions, I pressed the question:

"You mean you think they were hunting us?"

"Do you doubt it?" he questioned in reply. "I believe the entire Niam Niam tribe are beating the jungle for us. What a feast they will have when they catch us."

"Not 'when' old man, but 'if,'" I corrected.

"Have it any way you like best," he rejoined, "I am certain of one thing. After to-night we are marked men with less than one chance in a thousand of escaping alive."

Unwilling as I was to admit the truth of his statement, I could make no reply.

The silence which had fallen over us, intensified probably by the nature of our thoughts, was suddenly broken by a faint but unmistakable sound.

"Clink-clink, clink-clink, clink-clink."

Williams clutched my arm, his breathing was labored.

"Do you hear that?" he demanded. "You know that nothing alive could make a noise like that. It's a devil from hell knocking his bones together laughing at us."

My own heart was pounding with sledge-hammer blows.

"Clink-clink." Louder it grew. The sound seemed to come from the darkness at the mouth of the cave. Like Williams, I felt my reason slipping. A savage fury possessed me. Almost unconsciously I pulled the knife from my belt and grasping it by the point I waited. Again the sound came:

"Clink-clink, clink-clink."

With a full sweep of my arm, I hurled the blade into the pitchy blackness. A slight scratching noise, a muffled "clink" and all was silence. Pulling myself together, I realized that in my momentary weakness I had probably thrown away my only means of defence. Intending to search for the knife I groped my way toward the entrance. In the thicket just outside the cave I found it buried in the heart of a hunting hound around whose neck was fastened a curious wooden bell.

Toward midnight we left the cave and undertook to scale the side of the hill. This was not only a dangerous but an extremely difficult task, as the ascent was almost vertical. Cautiously, testing each foothold, we climbed inch by inch. Reaching the top we hid ourselves in the branches of a tree to wait for morning and daylight.

Morning brought ample proof of the truth of Williams' predictions. We found ourselves on a plateau perhaps a mile in width rising abruptly from the valley out of which we had climbed and stretching to the north and south as far as the eye could see. This tableland was broken about midway east and west by a great chasm running its full length. Varying from fifty to 200 feet in width, with perpendicular walls 400 or 500 feet in height, the canyon was the course of one of the many turbulent mountain streams common in the upper hill country. Below us, in the valley where for days we had been roaming, we saw the smoke of several fires. From their location we were convinced that it was a tribal hunting party and we were the prey. They were beating the woods as a hunter would for any game.

"They are determined upon vengeance," I mumbled over and over to myself. "They are systematically tracking us down."

The relentless cruelty and superior intelligence of these savages so much spoken of by the explorers was not to be underrated. Our hours were limited. Only a miracle could save us. Turning our backs upon the death valley we scanned the plateau for signs of possible relief. There were none. It was hopeless. Reaching the edge of the famous Lado canyon, the one line beyond which the Niam Niam tribesmen dared not wander, we stood fascinated by its dizzy depths.

"Before they lay hands of me again," Williams declared in a thoughtful tone, "I will go over this cliff."

"You will not go alone this time," I assured him, for the same thought was in my mind. "We will race for first place at the bottom."

Explain it as you may, this death door, opening as an avenue of escape from the savages who pressed closely, filled us with new confidence and hope.

Along the edge of the precipice we walked, coming shortly upon the narrowest point in the gorge. Here it was scarcely more than fifty feet from edge to edge. By comparison with the average width it looked as though by superhuman effort one might even leap across and land in the protecting branches of the grove of giant yew trees growing on the opposite cliff. Williams measured the distance with his eye:

"With a rope one could probably reach the other side from here," he said.

True enough, but no rope was at hand.

"Why a rope necessarily?" I asked. "What else could you use?" he demanded.

"Why not that grapevine?" pointing to a heavy vine climbing one of the trees. "It might do if it were long enough."

"Fasten two together if one is not long enough."

"We could do that, all right," he agreed, "but after all what good would it do? We have no means of getting it to the other side, or of fastening it once it is over."

"I'm not so sure about that. If we can secure a sufficient length of grapevine and fasten a stout stick to the end like the bar on a watch chain, we could make it catch and hold in the branches of one of those trees."

"It sounds worth trying, sergeant, but how could you and I throw such a weight that distance?"

"We're not going to throw it. We're going to shoot it across. Don't waste time in arguing. You strip the vine on that tree yonder while I work on this one. When we finish we will splice them. Hurry now!"

An hour saw the task accomplished. Faintly we heard the sound of shouts and answering calls in the valley. It could not be many minutes now before our pursuers would reach the cave and find the trail to the plateau. The roots of the larger vine had been undisturbed. This we concluded would be an ideal anchorage. We coiled the makeshift rope as compactly as possible with the crossbar lying on the top.

Bending down the tallest sapling we could handle, we bound the upper branches roughly together and laid our coil of grapevine upon these as the ancient Romans once loaded their terrible catapults. Back we jumped, releasing the sapling. Out shot the vine. Across the chasm it flew striking the trees on the other side. For an instant it clung, but only for an instant. Into the canyon it slipped and, swinging back to our side, it struck with a reverberating crash.

Again we coiled and hurled it across. Again it returned with a swish.

The unmistakable clatter of many wooden bells sounded on all sides, although the dogs were still hidden in the deep grasses. A third time we loaded and were about to release our catapult when Williams whispered:

"I see some one moving near the top of the hill where we climbed up."

Intent upon ascertaining the number of our approaching foes, we unconsciously loosened our grip on the sapling. Out of our hands it sprung all unnoticed for the moment since our attention was centred on the black-skinned figures swarming like giant ants over the crest of the hill. Hidden though we were by the foliage, we knew that the sharp-nosed hounds would soon pick up the lost trail.

With a single thought—our common promise to perish at the bottom of the canyon rather than submit to capture—we turned toward the yawning chasm. A gasp of surprise burst from our lips. We could not believe our eyes. There, stretched across the black abyss was the grapevine, swaying gently to and fro in the breeze.

"It's holding!"

Testing it with our combined strength we found it securely caught.

"Hand over hand, corporal. Go as quickly as you can. When you reach the other side I will follow."

Without a word, Williams grasped the improvised cable and slipped off the edge of the precipice. Foot by foot he made his way toward the opposite ledge. I agonized with him at every movement of the swinging vine. Could he make it? Once he hesitated an instant. A cold sweat covered me and the possibility of his failure c tched my throat. The crossing was made; he reached the tree and disappeared in the branches.

Crouching low I had sought to hide myself from the savages, who by this time were spreading over the plateau in their search. A series of sharp yelps from the hounds warned me that they had at last found the fresh trail.

Williams waved his hand. Out into space I swung. Measured by the rod it was a trifling distance—measured by all that was involved it could not be calculated. Ot the edge of the cliff, running eagerly back and forth, were two of the dogs. "Clink-clink, clink-clink." Each note was a spur, driving me on. A cannibal band behind—bottomless oblivion below—safety ahead.

The instant I gained a foothold among the boughs the corporal slashed the vine in two with a single stroke of his knife. Its weight carried it down. Like a live thing it lashed its fury out against the far side of the canyon.

Following close upon the lead of their dogs the Africans had just reached the scene of our recent activities when the vine crashed against the rock wall. Flat upon their faces they threw themselves as the report reverberated down the canyon.

The rest of the story would not particularly interest you. Being no longer in danger from the revengeful Niam Niam warriors, we experienced no further serious difficulties. Since all rivers in this portion of Africa empty into the Nile, it was relatively a simple matter after reaching one of the smaller streams, to float down by easy stages in a native canoe purloined for the purpose, until we reached Kodok, near the mouth of the Sobat. Here we learned of the whereabouts of the remnant of the expedition, which we later rejoined.

(The End.)

NURSES

The Toronto Hospitals for Incurables, in affiliation with Bellevue and Allied Hospitals, New York City, offers a three years' Course of Training to young women, having the required qualifications and desirous of becoming nurses. This Hospital has adopted the eight-hour system. The pupils receive uniforms of the School, a monthly allowance and travelling expenses to and from New York. For further information apply to the Superintendent.

Pertinent.

When I meet a man in the field or street,
Hurrying along his job to meet,
Whether he's toiler or millionaire,
Whether he's homely or whether he's fair,
I can't help thinking, as I go on my way,
"Will those who are yours be happy to-day?"

Did you leave them this morn with a pleasant smile?
Were the words you spoke without scorn or guile?
Did you do the act that you needed to do
To help the home folks who depend on you?
Did you give them some loving to cheer their way?
"Will those who are yours be happy to-day?"

You know that it matters, O man on the street,
Whether you're pleasant to strangers you meet:
Does it count for less to those whose day
Is built on your smile and the word you say?"
And so I am asking as you go on your way,
"Will those who are yours be happy to-day?"

—Clare Shipman.

Darkness That Makes Light.

A new type of lantern for lighthouses has been perfected.

The light is started automatically at night time or in foggy weather, switching itself off when it is no longer needed. The invention will enable us to set up many more lighthouses for the guidance of seamen. The old type of lighthouse is a very expensive affair for at least two people must be kept upon it constantly and boats must be sent out at frenuent intervals with food and stores.

There are places so inaccessible at some seasons of the year that it has been out of the question to erect man-controlled lighthouses there. The new automatic lantern will work untended for months on end.

How does it work? Well, it is really quite simple. Large quantities of gas are stored under enormous pressure in steel cylinders, which are connected by pipes with the burner of the lantern.

There are certain substances which expand when light falls upon them, and contract when they are in darkness. A lever controlling the valve of the lantern's burner is connected with a rod made of one of these sensitive substances. So long as it is light the rod is expanded, and the valve which allows gas to pass from the containers to the burner is closed. But as soon as darkness sets in the rod contracts. As it does so it pulls on the lever, the valve opens, and the gas is ignited by an automatic lighter.

A Gentleman Defined.

A man who is clean both outside and inside, who neither looks up to the rich nor down to the poor; who can lose without squealing and win without boasting, who is considerate to women, children and old people, who is too brave to lie, too generous to cheat, and who takes his share of the world and lets others have theirs.—L. A. O'Marn.

Put the scrubbing brush to dry with the bristles down, preventing the water from soaking into the back and causing bristles to come out.

Minard's Liniment for Dandruff.

Who is England?

When you're down and out and hopeless, and a demon at your side
Whispers, "What's the use of trying? chuck it up and let things slide,"
Just sit down and think of England; she whose cradle was a grave,
She who had to win to freedom from the bondage of a slave.
Tell yourself her tale of glory, then let England's dead reply
To the question of your spirit, "Who is England if not I?"
England, once the least of nations, where the Roman Eagle flew,
Where the sons of Thor came burning, where the mighty Norman slew,
See how now, supreme in splendor, leading all the world's advance,
First to crush the Prussian serpent, first to save the soul of France,
Standing like a granite lighthouse where the fiercest waves are hurled,
In herself secure and giving light to all the trembling world.
What is England's glorious story but the story one by one
Of her children sternly minded that their duty should be done?
Each for ever holding firmly to the simple rules of right,
Each with dauntless heart believing wrong can never win a fight,
These were England, and they fashioned all the grandeur that we see,
And their blood that won the triumph flows for God in you and me.

—Harold Begbie.

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Necessary Nuisances.

In "Just David," Eleanor Porter's interesting story of a child, there is an enlightening chapter on the importance of housework as viewed from two standpoints, that of the proud housewife, and that of a child. David has been brought up alone in a mountain cabin by his father, a famous violinist, who takes the boy away from civilization in his infancy and keeps him until he is ten, so that he can have him alone in those impressionable first years. The father dies suddenly and David falls into the hands of a man and wife in middle life, who have no idea who the child is.

Shortly after David's arrival at the farm home the woman starts her weekly cleaning. David wants her to go for a walk with him. She can't go because she has so many things to dust, and after that will be meals. David innocently asks her why she doesn't give the stuff away or sell it so she won't have to take care of it; then she could go for a walk. The woman is horrified at the idea of parting with her treasures. She has worked hard to get them, and works harder still to take care of them. David thinks if all they are for is to be put in a room she never has time to sit down in, she might better get rid of them, and take that time to walk or play or read or visit the neighbors. He further scandalizes her by saying his father always said cooking and washing dishes and cleaning were just necessary nuisances, to be made as simple as possible so they could have time for real things. Real things with them, of course, meant music, books, and long tramps over the mountains. The woman concludes that she ought not to expect anything better of a tramp, as she thinks David's father to be, and continues her cleaning.

Probably the majority of housekeepers will join hands with the woman. But I must confess I hold to David's view. After all, cooking and dishwashing are just necessary nuisances, we have to eat, of course, but why make a ceremonial of it? Why spend so much time getting up a meal, when simple dishes and only a few, would take so much less time and be so much better for one's health?

Why, for instance, have cereal, and meat and potatoes and eggs, perhaps, and bread and butter and coffee and cookies for breakfast? Why not cut that down to, cereal with loads of milk, bread and butter, eggs or bacon, and fruit. Instead of cereal and potatoes, eat more cereal if you need the extra food. And substitute milk and cream for the extra energy furnished by the meat. Or if you must have the meat and potatoes, cut out the cereal and milk. It would mean less work, and less tax on the digestive organs.

Dinner could be simplified, too, considerably. Now mind, I am not saying eat less, simply eat fewer sorts of food at one meal. Meat, potatoes, one vegetable, bread and butter and a dessert, with tea, coffee or milk, is enough for anyone. Why multiply it by cooking two vegetables and making a fancy salad and having pie and another sweet? It means more work, and goodness knows the farm woman has plenty to do without increasing "necessary nuisances."

Aside from the saving in work, the simple fare is better for your health. You remember Daniel and his young friends would not eat the king's meat, and were allowed to try out their simple fare of pulse and water. At the end of the trial they were found to be in better health than the youths who had eaten from the king's table. To bring it right down to the twentieth century, consider how the boys in the army training camps were built up with simple fare and regular hours and proper exercise. Physicians will tell you that the poor are freer from dietary ills than the rich because they are forced to live simply. And the recent weighing and measuring tests in the schools have revealed that there is more mal-nutrition in the homes of the well-to-do than in the homes of the poor.

From every standpoint, health, time and pocketbook, simple meals are desirable. From David's, and from the viewpoint of anyone who would like to get time for something besides catering to the mere animal wants of the human race, simplified living is a thing to be desired. But when we go in for it, we run straight up against tradition and convention and "what'll folks say?" Well, do I remember the girl who left me to go to another mistress. I had put away all the bric-a-brac, junk, an unfeeling husband calls it, in order to cut out a lot of dusting, thinking thereby to gain favor with my hand maiden. But she left for a woman who was "awful rich because she had so many things on the piano and mantel to dust." If you must do housework, there's nothing like feeling your folks are quality!

Nevertheless I shall continue to follow David's manner of living. Eating and dishes and cleaning are necessary, but they are not all important. Life was meant to be something more than a round of caring for the bodies. Otherwise we would not have been given minds and souls that crave food. If God didn't mean us to get out and view his world, he would not have made it so beautiful. If He had not meant us to meet our fellows, He would not have made us social creatures with a craving for friendship. If He had not meant us to enjoy music and art and poetry, He would not have filled the universe with music and beauty. We were meant to have some time for play, and with most housekeepers the only way to get that time is to make it. And if the only way to make it is by giving the folks bread and milk for supper, bread and milk let it be. They may growl a good deal, but they won't starve to death.

Sachets of Scent.

There are often flowers left to fade on the plant, even after the vases in the house have been kept supplied.

Why not use those surplus blooms in the making of fragrant scent-sachets? Incidentally, as the continuous cutting of blossoms is essential to continuous flowering, your outside show will be better, and last much longer.

Here is the method. It has the merit of being quite simple. Procure from a herbalist or druggist a pound of cyprus powder. This is really powdered reindeer moss. Put it in a tin or canister with a lid that is absolutely airtight. Add, daily, flower-petals, which must be gently pulled apart. You may keep to the same sort, such as heliotrope, or have a mixture. Scented flowers only are used, of course.

The day's petals, should (for a pound of cyprus powder) weigh about two ounces. Stir three or four times daily, so that the powder may become well impregnated. At the end of three days sort out and remove the old, withered petals, and then begin the process again.

In three weeks the powder will be strongly perfumed, and then you can make your sachet-bags—silk is the best material—and fill them. They will last until next summer comes round. Placed in chests of drawers, handkerchief boxes, and the like, they will impart their fragrance to everything about them.

An open jar could be filled with the powder and placed in a sitting-room. The air will be delicately scented for quite a month.

Choose the blooms just before they become full-blown, and pick them, if possible, in the early morning after a rainless night.

Minard's Liniment for Burns, etc.

When Cat Meets Dog.

Most of the instinctive actions of domesticated animals may be traced back to what they did in the days when they roamed wild and were forced to defend themselves at a moment's notice.

For example, even a Pomeranian dog will turn round and round before curling up to go to sleep—a reversion to the days when its ancestors had to trample down the grass in order to make a bed for themselves.

The instinctive arching of a cat's back when it meets a dog with which it is not on friendly terms is an indication that the cat has recognized its traditional enemy. It assumes an involuntary position of defence against the expected attack. The fact that the cat is terrified is apparent by the bristling of the fur, while arching the back brings the feet close together, and gives the claws a firmer grip on the ground, thus permitting exceptionally rapid movement in any direction.

Moreover, the cat knows instinctively that the dog will seek to sink its teeth in the back of its neck, so it withdraws its head as far as possible.

They Liked Leeks.

It is owing to the fondness of the Celtic tribes for the leek that their descendents, the Welsh, retain it as an emblem of their nationality.

The leac or leek was an important table vegetable among the Anglo-Saxons, for they called their gardens "leac-gardens," and the gardener was a "leek-ward."

As other species of the same tribe were introduced into the country, they also were called "leeks," with a prefix denoting some peculiarity of the plant. Thus, garlic was formerly "garleac," or "the leek with a spear," from the spear-like stem and head of the seed pod. The onion was "enne-leac," or "one-leek," because it did not throw off side-bulbs.

Pews were first placed in churches for the use of Norman nobles. Ordinary worshippers sat on three-legged stools.

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BOLSHEVISM AND THE GREAT DROUGHT

CAUSE FAMINE CONDITIONS IN RUSSIA.

Failure to Sustain Production in Field or Factory Threatens National Collapse.

Famine in Russia, which is decimating and to menace the lives of twenty-five million people, is attributed by most observers in the country to Bolshevism and the drought. While Russia is common with other countries that have suffered severely from the latter scourge, Russia's condition has been produced primarily by Bolshevism, the successful denial of elementary economic principles.

Famine is a familiar menace in Russia, and, in the old days, it was the custom to store up large quantities of grain against the threat of shortage. Under Bolshevism, these stores have disappeared; not only so, but the farmers have been discouraged from producing by the Bolshevik policy of commandeering part of their produce to his, there has been the breakdown of the transportation system, which, in a country of such expansion such as Russia, endangers the life of the people.

The Uprising Masses.

Soviet newspapers frankly admit the serious nature of the situation. There are fears of great mass movements of unparalleled magnitude in history filled tides of people swept over the land in frantic search of relief. Indeed, these movements have begun already. Starving peasants are packing a few belongings on their carts and, driving their remaining cattle before them, they are leaving the Samara region, where conditions are the worst, with their wives and children, eastward towards Siberia. The mass psychology of such times is again in evidence with the fair legends in circulation that some mighty leader who is to arise has already arisen, under whose inspiration the people will succor.

Under the general threat the people of all parties have rallied in Russia to take action for public welfare. The open nerve of the Bolshevik leaders, is said to lead to their doubt the efficacy of repression, so effective in the past, will prevail against the spirit produced by famine. The executive of the Soviets has adjourned its session indefinitely and the four hundred members entrusted to country to do relief work. Food for the Red army, mutiny in a number of places added to the anxieties of the company.

Disease is Rampant.

Cholera and typhus, due to existing conditions consequent upon the blight of famine, are said to be sweeping over the country. Peasants in desperation are cutting their crops prematurely or eating harmful substitutes. The problem of relief from outside sources is complicated by the unwillingness of any Government to trust the Soviet authorities, who are alleged to be in the habit of placing certain elements with favors at the expense of the suffering majority. Even Herriot, in discussing proposed measures, makes the restriction that the German expedition must work independently of the Soviets.

Russia's industrial production, long on the downward grade, has dropped with startling emphasis since famine spread. The mines in the Donetz basin, which produced [illegible] 000 poundns in March, produced 18,000,000 pounds in June. The paper Pravda admits that thirty cent. of the workers are stay away from the railway repair shops; also that the number of factories and mills shutting down for labor deficiency is increasing. cannot work without food. The transportation of oil from Baku is also hampered. Russia faces the [illegible] of the human element, in her tries.

The Threatening Future.

It is apparent that another and even more deadly phase is beginning to unfold itself in the awful tragedy of Russia. The general impression that, even if the Bolshevik regime crumbled under the restless overturnings of the tortured Russian giant, the future will be very dark and menacing. The potentialities of Russian collapse hold grim threats for Europe and the world. The work of reconstruction difficult beyond precedent, owing to the broken down systems of transportation, the clashing and suspicious interests in the country whose present show of co-operation is far from convincing, and from the ristlessness of the people as a whole. Russia is diseased as well as hungry. She faces a chaos more distressing than any pages of history relate.

He Was Not There.

Debt Collector—"Is your master at home?"

Servant (sourly)—"No, he isn't."

Debt Collector (suspiciously)—"But I can see his hat hanging in the hall."

Servant—"Well, what's that got to do with it? One of my dresses is hanging on the line in the back garden, but I'm not there."

"The race marches forward on the feet of little children."