LIFE ON THE VELT PROVIDES THIS BAFFLING MYSTERY

The Riddle of THE RIDERLESS HORSE

By Jean and Cyril Casalis

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

Malcolm Green, son of a well-to-do city man, who after three years at a city desk, goes to South Africa to learn farming on the farm of his old Cambridge friend, Corneille Recoulle.

Channing, a phlegmatic personality, Assisted by George Loftus, his legal advisor and guardian, is making a lot of money in cattle speculation.

Corneille Recoulle, the young owner of Bon Espoir farm, who becomes involved in a series of mysterious crimes, and, with Malcolm, sets out to solve them. He is in love with Cynthia, the capable sister of his neighboring farmer and friend.

Piet Van Stellen, another neighbor-farmer. Unfriendly and sour. Disliked by his neighbours.

Japie Van Stellen, Old Piet's son. More agreeable than his father, but an unknown quality.

Maraka, Corneille's devoted negro servant, mentor and sort of self-appointed family retainer to the Recoulles.

CHAPTER I.

WELCOME TO A NEW LIFE

It was in the late afternoon of a September day that Malcolm Green arrived at Bon Espior, the farm that old Adhemar Recoulle had bought when his son Corneille was born.

Old Adhemar had resolved, almost in the hour of his son's birth, that Corneille must be a farmer; not a trader like himself, but a landowner earning his bread from his own ground. No one, at least of all Corneille, had ever wished to dispute the resolve. Old Adhemar resolved also that Corneille must have a better education than he himself had received, and so school in South Africa had been followed by a year in France and three years at Cambridge; and it was there that young Corneille and Malcolm Green had met.

And it was there, as he listened to Corneille's tales of life on a South African farm and his glowing prophecies of what he would achieve when he took over the management of Bon Espior, that Malcolm, country-bred and a lover of all country things, had allowed distaste for his own carefully-planned future in his father's city office to become outspoken discontent. Corneille had sympathized.

"If your father will let you have the capital to farm," he had said, "you can come to Bon Espior whenever you like, and I'll teach you all I know."

But Malcolm's father, with all the confirmed city man's distrust of farming as a profession, would not be persuaded, and the end of their time at Cambridge had brought a parting of the ways for the two friends. Corneille, exulting, returned to South Africa, and Malcolm went dutifully into the hated office. He had endured it for three years. Then, thanks to a providential illness and to a grave-faced doctor's hints of the need for an open-air life, his father had yielded; and so Malcolm Green had come at last to Bon Espior, not as a mere visitor, but as a prospective settler.

Corneille had met him in Bloemfontein, and they drove to Bon Espior together in the car that Malcolm had bought on his arrival. It had been pleasant to meet again. Corneille seemed to have changed very little from the enthusiast of Cambridge days, and they had at once renewed their easy companionship, talking incessantly throughout the hundred-mile drive, as they bridged the gaps left by letters during the three years since their last meeting.

Corneille's father was waiting for them on the veranda steps when they drew up before the low stone homestead. Old Adhemar had prepared a little speech of welcome, as was his custom when faced with so unusual an event as the arrival of a visitor at the farm.

"Welcome to Bon Espior," he said. "It is a very great pleasure to see you, and I am happy to welcome the friend of my son."

Then formality broke down.

"Those blessed motor cars," the old man said, his eyes twinkling behind heavy spectacles. "I was beginning to think that you were never coming. And how did you find the roads?"

"They're quite good," Corneille replied. "I've been telling Malcolm what they were like a few years ago — 43 gates between here and Bloemfontein, and always a spade in the car in case the sand was bad."

"Perhaps it's a good thing I didn't come out until now," Malcolm said. "I'm just in time to enjoy the national roads. The finished bit near Bloemfontein is quite good."

"Come into the house," said old Adhemar, shepherding them towards the veranda steps. "You would perhaps like a little drink? We have not much to offer you, but perhaps a little brandy? You must be thirsty after your long drive. The boys—where are those boys? They will bring in your luggage. Maraka!"

"Morena," came an answering voice from inside the house. Then a wire-gauze door was thrown open and a native servant, kitchen towel on arm, came swiftly out to welcome the arrivals with beaming smiles.

Maraka had played so important a part in Corneille's reminiscences of his home, that, to Malcolm, he had been almost as familiar a character as old Adhemar Recoulle himself. He had been in Adhemar's service for over 30 years, and had developed from mere cook to confidential servant and general manager of domestic affairs, and he had always taken a very active interest in Corneille's amusements and escapades. Under his tuition Corneille had learnt to swim, and to kill game Basuto-fashion with a skilfully thrown tick, or the flat type of stone known as a "wind-skepper." He had always acted as cook, tracker and gun-bearer combined, and indeed Corneille owed him everything that he knew of veld-lore.

There had been innumerable stories of Maraka, and Malcolm was, in consequence, prepared to see an unusual native. He was. He had, it is true, the typical thick lips and broad flat negroid nose, but instead of the usual heavy expression and receding forehead, he had a splendid brow, a clean-cut shapely head; and as he followed Adhemar up the steps, leaving Corneille to direct Maraka's disposal of the luggage, Malcolm thought that he had never seen a face more radiantly alight with humour and intelligence than that of this tall loose-limbed Mosuto.

MESSAGE FROM MORTIMER

"You will make yourself at home and treat us, who are bachelors, like . . . like . . . a mess," Adhemar was saying when Corneille followed them in.

"Where's Mortimer, Father!" he asked. "He is my other pupil, Malcolm. A nice chap—you'll like him."

"Oh, he's gone to Brandfontein There was some fellow—one of those professors, mad too about flowers—on his way to Basutoland, and as soon as Mortimer heard about him he was telephoning everywhere; and now he's having dinner with him, and coming back tonight."

"By Jove! He was excited," he added.

"What? About the professor?"

"No, about something he had found He gave a message for you. He said: 'Tell Corneille chasing flowers isn't just the ladies' game he calls it. When I see him again I'll tell him something that'll make him sit up.' " Adhemar paused ruminatively. "Yes, those were the very words he used. And then he jumped on his horse, and was off. A nice young man, but a little strange."

"I wonder what on earth he's found now. Probably some obscure species of stinkblaar."

"Stink what?" Malcolm asked.

Corneille laughed.

"One of our weeds," he answered; "a stramonium. A big plant with a rather beautiful flower; but get it into your maize lands and you won't reap much of a crop."

"Is Mortimer a good farmer?" Malcolm asked.

"Oh, he'll never be a farmer," Corneille answered. "He works hard enough, but he's too keen on his flowers; he'll never be able to plough a land before he's identified every weed growing in it."

"Is botanizing a new craze?" asked Malcolm.

"Goodness, no! From the moment he arrived here—he's been with us three years, you know—he started on it. Every second day he's off on his own, pottering through all the sloots and dongas, going over anybody's land, and even getting into trouble. The Channings—the people next door at Campsie—don't mind; they let him go anywhere; but old Van Stellen beyond, has warned him off."

"Well, he went that way today," said Adhemar.

They chatted over their drinks. Then Corneille took Malcolm to his room—the typical guest room of an up-country farm—a circular, white, thatched rondavel, standing about thirty yards away from the homestead.

"This mine?" Malcolm said, promptly falling under the spell to which all visitors to South Africa succumb on entering a rondavel on a hot day. Its strangeness, the very simplicity of its plain irregular white-washed walls and ungarnished reed ceiling, delighted him. But he was in no mood to unpack. He washed and went out again. He could hear Adhemar and Corneille talking at the stables, and he went on to the veranda to await their return.

It was one of those September evenings when the promise of spring makes it hard to visualize the merciless droughts, winds, dust storms, and hail of the Orange Free State. There had been a thunderstorm before their arrival, and rain had given a fresher green to the struggling grass, and a softer outline to the distant kopjies, mysteries of blue and rose and purple now, in the glory of the sunset.

There was a haze of pink blossom over the orchard, and the scene of the wisteria that shades the veranda was mingled with the fragrance of wood smoke drifting from the stables, where the herd boys were lighting a fire to cook their supper. In the plantations of pine and gum trees that hid the road, hundreds of doves were calling, their clear clanging little notes of counding like the beating of innumerable elfin anvils, and in the orchard a pair of bokamkeeries, the rain birds, broke suddenly into their dual rapture of song. Across the broken line that Corneille had pointed out as the unseen Caledon River, the boundary between the Free State and Basutoland, a herd of native cattle that had been driven to the river to drink, was moving slowly up the steep sandy bank, going home to the kraal under a cloud of dust that the last rays of the sun transformed to a halo of molten gold.

Malcolm turned as Corneille came up the veranda steps.

"The peace of it!" he exclaimed "Does anything ever happen here?"

Corneille laughed.

"Yes, lots. Locusts and hail, for one thing—and drought; you should have seen it after the big one; three years ago. Come along in to supper."

(To be continued)

Horrified at Nazi Brutality to Jews

United States Young Lady Tells of Things She Saw.

The following restrained account of happenings in Germany recently was published in New York's leading newspapers and in other journals anxious to give actual eye-witness picture of Nazi actions in the recent outbreaks of lawlessness and brutality. To the thoughtful person it is not so much what is told that will impress, as what is implied. The young lady interviewed told only of what she saw herself. Naturally this would be restricted, but the interview bears out the reports of atrocities without parallel in the history of so-called civilization, if the Belgian persecution is excepted.

New York, Nov. 23.—Ione Robinson, a golden-haired Oregon painter of 19, went to Germany to observe Nazi culture.

For two days in Berlin last week she saw it. Returning on the Queen Mary, she is one of the first eyewitnesses of that carnival of organized looting, burning, assault and murder to reach this country.

"I was staying in Berlin at the home of a newspaperman and his wife," Miss Robinson told reporters today in her room at the Hotel Croydon. "The word went around about 15 hours before the outbreak started that there was going to be a terrific anti-Jewish demonstration."

"We drove around Berlin that night and nothing happened. We thought that Hitler would prohibit anything like that because there had been so much protest in the past."

Before going to Berlin, Miss Robinson had spent over two months in Spain painting and drawing. She had gone through air raids in Barcelona and penetrated to the loyalist front-line trenches on the Ebro.

"Nothing Spain shocked me so much as what I saw in Berlin," she said. "In a war people can at least fight like men for what they believe. But in Germany anybody who opened his mouth was beaten. At one subway station I heard a woman protesting, and she was soon knocked down and beaten by a mob of men."

Ground to Atoms

Pointing to the mirror in her hotel bedroom, Miss Robinson went on: "You can take an axe and throw it at that mirror and smash it or you can grind it methodically to atoms. That's what the mobs did in Germany — simply ground everything down to nothing."

Early in the morning, Miss Robinson and her friends were awakened by the sound of smashing glass, which went on all that day and night. "Each incident horrified us more than the next, and we began to get numb just because there was so much of it."

The destruction was being done by young men of the age of college students, she said, who kept singing storm troop songs while they went about it, and devised new ways to humiliate the victims.

There was a woman standing near Miss Robinson with a child in her arms which began to cry. "No, you shouldn't cry," the mother said, "you should be happy that you can see such a wonderful demonstration."

The police were standing by while all this was going on, "laughing and chatting and enjoying the sight."

"But the majority of the crowds just stood in silence. The faces of those spectators were absolutely expressionless," she said. "It was as if they were completely stunned by what was going on, so stunned that they couldn't talk."

Miss Robinson was in a camera shop when she heard the familiar crash of glass from across the road. She ran out to watch, but the man from whom she was buying said: "You are an American and I don't want you to look at this. These are not the real German people." When Miss Robinson asked him to continue, he said: "You know I cannot speak."

Police Look On

She went outside. There was a crowd of about 300, mostly men, watching a dozen young men in mufti wrecking the store with policemen looking on.

"The wreckers were doing as thorough a job as I have ever seen. They broke everything in that store. They were not content until they smashed everything to pieces."

Miss Robinson was struck by the intensity of the men, some of whom were very young. "They laughed as they destroyed," she said. "They seemed drunk with a horrible spirit of destruction."

"But many of the people who looked on did not relish what they saw. They didn't say so, but there was horror in their eyes, and the same ashamed helpless look I had seen in the eyes of the man in the camera shop. I am convinced that the majority of Germans detested what went on in Germany that day.

"All that day I toured the city with my friends and everywhere it was the same—young men smashing things and beating people and no one interfering, police looking on sheepishly, the large crowds bearing witness, silent mostly, although the wreckers had some rooters who cheered when they smashed something particularly large or valuable."

Like Pack of Wolves

Miss Robinson saw the crowd throw the Jewish proprietor of a store out on the sidewalk. He picked himself up and ran off with the crowd at his heels like a pack of wolves. "But he wasn't a fast runner and they closed in on him like a rabbit. They pounded his head against the sidewalk until I thought his skull would break. They beat him with their fists and when they were finished each gave him a vicious kick as he lay helpless on the ground. I was struck," Miss Robinson repeated, "by the sadism of the young men."

Horrified and disgusted, Miss Robinson left Germany the next day. At breakfast, just before departing, the servant said to her, "This is not Germany. I am frightened at what is happening. I cannot bear to think of what is going on. It is terrible."

The servant ran crying into the kitchen. "Her sobs," Miss Robinson said, "were the worst sounds I heard in Germany."

Chased by 15 People

In one street she saw a man being chased by 15 people. They caught him, knocked him down, jumped on him, and left him there writhing in agony. "People just passed him by and said nothing," she added.

On another occasion she was sitting in the home of her friends when they heard another shop window being smashed. Somebody shouted, "He's dead! He's dead!" They rushed out and asked "Who? Who?" But nobody, in the hundreds of people gathered there, would say a word.

Miss Robinson, tall and slim, with sapphire-blue eyes and a shock of golden hair, is the youngest person ever to win a Guggenheim fellowship. She used to work with Diego Rivera on his murals in Mexico City. She went to Germany, she said, to see Nazi culture, "because I'm interested in seeing a ministry of fne arts established in America. The Nazis have done more to support art and the theatre than any other government, but in such a way as to bring about complete sterility."

Suggests Banning Bow and Arrow Stuff

Should be Ruled Out by Ontario Legislature.

Commenting on the inane proposal to revive bow and arrow hunting in this North Land, The Northern Tribune, of Kapuskasing, says:—

"Adam may not have been the originator of the bow and arrow, but it is a safe speculation that not many generations followed him before the idea of tensing dried animal tendons on arched bows of wood, and propelling sharp missiles from such contrapations to fell game for the larder, was hit upon. These useful devices enabled the descendants of Adam, for long centuries afterward, to "bring home the bacon" as the modern phrase goes.

"Archery, too, has played its great part in the up-building of the present British empire. We are not going to delve into reference works deeply enough to establish just how important a part the noble bowmen of England, immortalized in song and story, played in the successive defeats of England's medieval foes; but historians agree that it was a not inconsiderable part.

"Archery as a pastime has had a notable revival. It takes people out into the glorious open, it develops strong muscles and steady nerves and better posture. It is said to endow young women with added grace. It promotes skill, and in bringing people together in competitive contests it sets high standards of true sportsmanship. All this, and more, can be said in favour of target archery.

"But people are forever casting about for new thrills, so it has transpired that a considerable amount of hokum has appeared in papers about hunting big game with bow and arrow. Parties have gone into the Canadian bush equipped with bows and arrows in place of firearms, and pictures have been printed showing animals escaping with arrows stuck in them, to certainly die lingering deaths and thus unwarrantedly deplete our diminishing game. There has been a popular revulsion against this barbaric practice, and properly so. Hardly any big game is shot these days in Canada because it is urgently needed as food; and when it is shot under such circumstances, reliance is naturally placed upon the far more dependable types of firearms found everywhere. Poor marksmanship will of course wound a percentage of the animals shot at, and some of them may escape to die from their wounds; but there is no room for argument that this percentage will be less from the use of firearms than with the bow and arrow.

"These facts will be so generally admitted, even by those not versed in the lore of hunting, that there is no room for argument. This bow and arrow hunting—behind which lies an element of show-off strutting, and a spot of commercialism too on the part of those who sell the equipment at fancy prices—should be abruptly ruled out as unlawful at the forthcoming session of the Ontario legislature. That, we feel sure, is the sentiment of the great majority of genuine hunters in this province, and probably an even greater majority of sentimental citizens who feel strong indignation that agony is imposed upon our noble denizens of the forest by needless and thoughtless reversion to barbarism."

Poor Business to Pay Poor Salaries to Teachers

(Guelph Mercury)

Those who advocate low salaries for school teachers neglect to consider two important facts. One is that the profession must be made attractive to the best of our young men and women, and one of the most effective ways of making it attractive is to pay higher salaries. The second is that unduly low pay for teachers will mean that fewer and fewer will enter the teaching profession, with an eventual serious shortage of school instructors.

When we are dealing with the future of our country, we cannot afford to be penny-pinching. The very highest type of young men and women are needed to guide and influence our boys and girls, and they cannot be obtained unless salaries are paid commensurate with their needs and requirements.

St. Thomas Times-Journal: Oh, for more public men like Lord Tweedsmuir. One day he is at a plowing match, hobnobbing with real dirt farmers, and taking a turn between the plow handles; the next day he is addressing a dignified gathering at a university and receiving an honorary degree. At both places he is equally at home, and utters commonsense remarks on each occasion.

Do Your Christmas Shopping Early.