



**CHAPTER XVII
DRINK AND A DOCTOR**

They rushed forward to where the huddled-figure lay. "Dr. Kerrivalt, is he dead too?"

"No," said Malcolm, "only drunk." The figure sat up wearily, and waved a fat hand deprecatingly.

"Drunk?" he said; "wish he were . . . take that light away."

Malcolm laughed. "That's all right, old boy," he said. "Sorry to disturb you like this, but the fact is, a poor native cove has been and got killed just down the river here. We're just going to collect the police, and I'm sure they'd like you to help them."

Leaving Malcolm to entertain the still somnolent doctor, Cornelle hurried on to the police post, now only a few hundred yards away. When he returned he brought with him the arm of the law looking somewhat unimposing in their night attire of rough blankets, despite the fact that they both carried handcuffs and knockberries. They found the dead boy lying as Cornelle and Malcolm had left him.

"Been dead for about half an hour," Kerrivalt announced quite soberly now. "Killed by a heavy blow at the back of the neck—dislocated vertebral column."

The native police, meanwhile, made a cursory examination of the site, but learned nothing from the innumerable blurred cracks in the soft sand; and after deferentially warning Malcolm and Cornelle that they would be required to give evidence at the inquest, they proceeded to remove the murdered boy to the police post. Dr. Kerrivalt, having bidden Malcolm a most courteous good-night, departed, carrying the police lantern.

Malcolm led the way through the river, and as he emerged on the opposite bank, Cornelle caught up with him.

"How drunk would you say Kerrivalt was, in actual fact?" he inquired; "and what the Hades was he doing on the river bank at that hour?"

"Fine bit of acting if he wasn't tight," replied Malcolm.

"Yes, I thought so too, until we got to that dead boy; but he seemed to shed his drink pretty quick then. Well, anyway, we'd better go and rout out Chan, and tell him about his boy. I'd like to know what Sam was doing there at that time. By gad! Cornelle went on, struck by another thought: "he was killed jolly near the path through the spruce that the chief has closed. I wonder whether the poor blighter didn't know about it—he'd only been back about a week, from the Rand mines. That makes it still more odd. It makes that place deserted enough during the day time, and still more deserted at night."

There was no answer when, having at length reached Campsie, Cornelle knocked on Channing's bedroom window. Wet and chilled as he and Malcolm were, he was in no mood to wait for Channing to rouse himself from his usual heavy sleep, so he turned and strode towards the door.

"That chap sleeps like a log," he said. "We'll just go in."

Channing was still asleep when, by the light of Malcolm's torch, they unceremoniously entered his bedroom. For a moment he blinked at them, uncomprehending and half awake, and at first hardly recognizing them. But when they announced his boy's death, sleep vanished, and he broke into a torrent of mingled wrath and regret for the death of his valued servant. But after a while his thoughts turned characteristically towards the practical issues at stake.

"Man, Cornelle," he said, "that's the third in three weeks. We've got to put

a stop to this bad luck. Hang, man, all our natives will say our farms are bewitched, and they'll go; my boys are saying that already. And, dash it, man, Sam was a good boy. When he came to me last week, and said he wanted work and was going to get married, man, I was glad; I thought I'd got him for good. And so I had, if this hadn't come along."

"But who could have done him in, Chan?" said Cornelle. "We was near that closed path, but that can't have anything to do with it. A chief would rather eat a boy's cattle for disobeying him."

"Ach, man, you can't tell what will happen in Basutoland. Those natives will do anything. Perhaps another native was after Sam's girl and wanted to get Sam out of the way. But anyway there's a sight more murdering there than the Government hears about, or the police find out. But," he exclaimed, apparently noticing for the first time the state of Cornelle's and Malcolm's garments, "your soaked! Were you over there?"

"We went across when we heard the poor blighter scream."

"You were down at the river? Didn't you see anything?"

"Nothing to see," Cornelle replied, "except for Sam—and he was dead when we got to him."

"But, man Cornelle, what were you doing down there? What time is it? Three o'clock! What were you doing there in the middle of the night?"

"Oh," Cornelle replied a little lamely, "that's a long story. As a matter of fact, Chan, somebody does some signalling over in Basutoland, and we've been trying to find out what it's all about. Did you know about it?"

"Signalling!" Channing said incredulously. "What sort of signalling? And who told you about it?"

"They look like torch signals. Poor old Japie told Malcolm about them, before he was done in."

"Yes," put in Malcolm, "but from the look of them I'm not sure they're signals after all; they could so easily be caused by the jerks a man gives a torch when he's walking along with it. Anyway the bloke who carries the torch never stands still, and he doesn't waste much time over the signals. And then you know," he added, turning to Cornelle; "they seem to lead to nothing. I'm afraid, Cornelle, I've been making you lose sleep for nothing at all. That's the trouble about being a greenhorn. You mustn't take me too seriously. You see everything is still new to me, and I haven't stopped looking for the exciting bits."

"Man, I'd like to see those signals. What about me coming with you next time?"

"Yes, rather," answered Malcolm; "but not to-morrow night—or rather, to-night; I'm perished, and half dead with sleep."

"Man, you must be," said Channing suddenly jumping out of bed. "And before they could protest he had walked out of the room with his candle to return in a few minutes carrying a bottle of brandy, some tumbler, and a jug of water. He served them with generous pips, and as they drank, plied them with questions about Sam's death and their investigations; but by this time Cornelle had realized that unwittingly, he had broken the pact of silence between Malcolm, Maraka, and himself, and Channing had to be content to let go with his curiosity about the signals unsatisfied."

**CHAPTER XVIII
WHAT DID SAM SEE?**

The inquest was a purely formal affair, as most inquests on natives are. Malcolm, Cornelle, and Channing were

summoned to give evidence, and they all rode over together with Maraka. A native's point of view, however intelligent or educated he may be, is necessarily different to that of a European—a fact which Malcolm had already grasped; and Maraka's presence was chiefly due to a private desire on Malcolm's part to obtain an entirely unprejudiced, and possibly, original opinion on Sam's death, particularly since native superstition seemed to have some bearing on it.

The inquest was held at the nearest magistracy in Basutoland, and when they arrived almost the first person they saw was Dr. Kerrivalt, somewhat less expansive than at their former meeting, but quite unabashed.

"You're a fine set of young fellows," he said, "reaching along that cold river at all hours of the night, and stirring up trouble. You take my advice and get a full eight hours' sleep every night, and you'll keep out of mischief and save quiet people, like myself, the bother of attending useless inquests."

"What about yourself, Doc?" retorted Malcolm. "We deserve a more kindly word from you. We saved you a rotten cold as the very least."

"Fresh air never hurt anyone," said the doctor, disarmingly, "and I need it badly."

He gave Malcolm an expressive wink as they entered the court room. After the usual evidence of identification, the corporal in charge of the police post gave an account of the case, he had played on the night of the crime.

Native Constable Thithiboya corroborated the corporal's evidence in every detail, but gave the impression of having exerted rather more initiative than was implied by his superior.

Malcolm and Cornelle, who were called next, corroborated each other's evidence with a brief account of their share in the matter; omitting, however, the real reason for their presence at the river, which they explained by saying that they had been out for a walk, and while sitting talking on the bank, had lost count of the time.

Dr. Kerrivalt, in his evidence, estimated that the boy had been dead for under an hour when he examined him. Desh, in his opinion, had been caused by a blow on the neck, which had dislocated the vertebral column. In his opinion death must have been instantaneous.

The Government doctor deposed to having examined the body. He agreed entirely with his colleague's conclusions and added that there were no injuries, either external or internal, beyond that already described. Questioned by the Bench, he agreed that a blow from a heavy stick, such as a knobkerrie, would inflict such an injury.

The finding, under the circumstances, could hardly have been other than a verdict of "murder against some person or persons unknown."

As they left the court the magistrate, who was an old friend of the Recouille family, overtook them and insisted on their all lunching with him.

"Kerrivalt," he said, as they walked to his house, "you'll have to stop this fresh-air cult of yours. Sleeping in the open doesn't suit people of your build. Why don't you join the Service and reform?"

He turned to Cornelle, "You haven't been having too good a time your way lately, Cornelle. Your father must have felt wretched over poor young Mortimer. I was sorry to hear of his death—and young Van Sellen's."

"Yes; a rotten business—and father has felt it terribly."

After that, as if by common consent, all talk of sudden death was taboo, and luncheon was a cheerful meal, greatly enlivened by the sallies between the doctor on the one hand and the magistrate and Malcolm on the other.

Channing, Cornelle, Malcolm, and Maraka rode back quietly in the heat of that drowsy afternoon, taking so many of the short-cuts the bridle-paths of Basutoland provide, that they hardly ever followed the main road.

Maraka rode well in the rear, as a good servant does, but after Channing had turned in at the Campsie gate, and they themselves were almost home, he rode up to them, and without preamble said:

"What the Baas think him boy Sam see?" The abruptness and strangeness of Maraka's question made Malcolm and Cornelle rein in.

"Saw?" exclaimed Cornelle. "What him see before him die, Baas?"

"Why, was there anything that he did see?" Malcolm asked.

"Yes, Baas. The Baas him say to-day, Sam him scream plenty bad."

"Well, wouldn't anyone scream if he was being killed?"

"But, Baas, the doctor him say Sam him killed plenty quick; him cannot scream. Him doctor say right; Sam's neck him plenty much broken, Baas, and man with him broken neck him not got time scream—him just got him die. Sam, Baas, him scream before him hit and before him die."

Cancels Engagements



Erich Kleiber, world-famous musical conductor, has cancelled all engagements to appear at La Scala theatre, Milan, because of Italy's anti-Jewish campaign, it is reported. In a singing letter to authorities of La Scala, goal of opera singers of all countries, Kleiber said: "Music is made for everyone, like the sun and air."

"That's all right," said Cornelle, "but he probably screamed when he saw the man who was going to kill him."

"But," persisted Maraka, "the Baas him tell the magistrate Sam scream plenty bad; him scream plenty frightened."

"Well, wouldn't it frighten you plenty much if you thought you were going to be killed?" asked Cornelle, impatiently.

"No, Baas. Native boy him not scream like that, like the Baas say to-day, when him see something him know. Oho, who, can Maraka say to make the Baas understand? Native boy him always plenty frightened, but him only scream plenty bad when him see something him cannot understand—something like—like—a spook, Baas. Maybe the Baas see nothing at the river when Sam him killed, Baas?"

"Gesh!" exclaimed Malcolm, below his breath, and stared at Cornelle. Maraka's question was certainly weird; it sounded almost like thought-reading. They had said nothing about the shadowy form they had seen crossing the river.

"Where were you that night, Maraka?" Cornelle asked suspiciously.

"Maraka him thinking the old Baas and Baas Cornelle him got plenty black hearts, with all this troubles," replied the cook, "and Maraka him think plenty good job if Baas Cornelle and the old Baas have one plenty good picnic on Sunday, Baas."

Malcolm and Cornelle gazed at him in astonishment. What on earth, they wondered, was Maraka talking about now? His face was wreathed in smiles and his manner became increasingly persuasive, as he laboured his curious request. He disregarded their surprise entirely, and hearing him talk, anyone would have thought that a picnic was the only subject that had been discussed that afternoon.

(To be Continued)

Britain Not at all Slow in the Matter of Television

(From King's County (N.B.) Record) While the marvels of television may not be possible over the much longer distances in this country for years to come, television is already an accomplished fact in British homes.

The following from a letter just received from a friend in England will give the people on this side of the Atlantic some idea of the advances already made in television in the Motherland. This letter was written from Dorking, in Surrey, approximately twenty-five miles from the scene of these broadcasts. It says:

"Although we are right away from London, we have been able to see some of the chief shows through television."

"We saw the State opening of Parliament, and the Cenotaph service; also the Lord Mayor's Show."

"We also earlier saw the Derby, the whole of it, and it was a marvellous spectacle."

"We get some very good cabaret shows and studio plays, and recently they have been doing parts of the plays actually from the theatres."

"We also saw Mr. Chamberlain's piano return from Munich and land, and he sweep out of it, and take the famous document from his pocket and read it. What a day it was! Bravo, Mr. Chamberlain! Those eyes of his can see much farther into the future than we can."

The television mast is erected atop Alexandra Palace in North London through which these visual broadcasts are transmitted.

And some call the Old Country "slow!" The New Yorker: Last Saturday morning a lady with bags established herself beside the information stand in Grand Central to await her husband, who knew where they were going for the week-end and how to get there. Soon a Red Cap came up and asked her what train she was taking. "I don't know," said the lady. "Where are you going to, Madam?" the Red Cap asked. "I don't know," she said. "How interesting," said the Red Cap.

How Rabbits Have Cycles of Scarcity

Case of Rabbits, Grouse and Other Animals and Birds.

Bulletin No. 8 of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto, has just been received and it is one of the most interesting pamphlets issued recently. Many readers of The Advance will find it of unusual interest. The letter accompanying it is also of very special interest to many. It reads as follows:

Toronto December 1938 To the Editor:—Enclosed is Bulletin 8 of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, containing a brief report of the activities of the Museum during the year October 1, 1937 to September 30, 1938. The Museum of Zoology is one of five museums constituting the Royal Ontario Museum. The other four are Archaeology, Geology, Mineralogy and Palaeontology.

We would draw your attention especially to the account of the Study of Animal Populations beginning on page 11.

Many kinds of animals vary widely in numbers from years to years. Perhaps the best known example is the varying hare or snowshoe rabbit of northern Canada. Every ten years on the average, hares become scarce because most of them die of epidemic disease. In the next few years following their dying off, they gradually increase until in seven or eight years they are abundant again. This abundance is maintained for a year or two and then epidemics begin to spread among them again and soon they are scarce again as they were approximately ten years before. The years in which hares were last abundant in the Hudson Bay watershed before decreases set in were: 1856, 1864, 1875, 1886, 1895, 1905, 1914, 1924 and 1934, or 8 cycles in 78 years.

These alternate periods of abundance and scarcity of hares profoundly affect the number of many other animals. The lynx, fox, great horned owl, goshawk and other animals and birds which feed on rabbits become much more numerous when the rabbits are abundant and later scarce when the rabbits die off.

Ruffed grouse, commonly called partridge, vary from abundance to scarcity through periods of approximately the same length as the hare cycle. Grouse are now on the upgrade after one of the regular disappearances between 1933 and 1935. Previous disappearances in their numbers occurred in Ontario in 1924-1925, 1914-16; 1904-06, 1894-95, 1883-85 and 1874.

In arctic regions peaks of lemming abundance occur at four year intervals on the average. Lemmings are large, longhaired relatives of field mice. They are the chief food of Arctic foxes which supply the white fox furs so much affected by ladies in summer. The lemmings are eaten also by the snowy owl, Arctic foxes and snowy owls are unusually abundant every four years and scarce immediately afterwards due to the dying-off of the lemmings.

The disappearance of the lemmings in the Arctic has its effect in southern Canada and northern United States in

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the greater abundance of snowy owls, which, deprived of their staple food in the Arctic, migrate southward in search of a living.

As information accumulates, it becomes evident that many more species of wild life than was originally suspected are characterized by these regular periodic fluctuations in numbers. The importance of understanding the nature and cause of these fluctuations can hardly be over-estimated. It is too early to say whether anything can be done to control them, but whether we can control them or not it is of value to know that next year or five years from now certain animals will be scarce or abundant. Such knowledge is of special importance to officials concerned with making regulations for open and closed seasons, bag limits, etc.

The Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology has, for a number of years, been accumulating information on changes in the number of animals from year to year in an effort to throw further light on these periodic fluctuations, which are of great scientific interest as well as practical importance. The Museum depends for its information on the co-operation of sportsmen and naturalists throughout the country. It would appreciate hearing from anyone willing to co-operate by supplying information about animals in their districts.

Yours sincerely,
J. R. Dymond, Director

MERRY MIX-UP REPORTED IN THIS MARRIAGE IN PARIS

Huntingdon Gleener: Having gone through a marriage ceremony in Paris, Ralph Spencer Wade, employed in the customs department at Fremantle, Australia, hurried to Marseilles with the woman he believed to be his wife, only to be told that she had no legal claim to be his bride and that, in fact, it was her brother he had married. Thinking he was the object of a practical joke, the "Aussie" insisted on his right to sail with his bride, but the authorities arrested both for making a false declaration and being without proper papers. Then the explanation of the affair came out. The name of the bride-to-be was Marie Camille Dejean, and that of her twin brother, who acted as a witness at the ceremony, Camille Marie. When the clerk came to write out the marriage certificate he confused the names and thus it was that the brother-in-law figured as bride, while the bride was merely given as witness.

Renewed Hope for Those Troubled with Allergies

(From Health League of Canada) The ever-increasing public interest in the progress of those sciences calculated to conserve health was climaxed during the recent holiday season when meetings were held in many parts of America by scientific bodies. It has been estimated that during that week, the newspapers of America actually published more about biology and physics, electron-microscopes and mental diseases than they did about Hitler and Mussolini.

Before the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Richmond, Va., medical men told what progress they were making in understanding the action of vitamins and hormones on mind and body.

One of the outstanding revelations was in the comparatively new science of Chemo-therapy. It was a discovery of Dr. Charles F. Code of the Mayo Foundation, made in the study of allergies. An allergy is a condition of unusual exaggerated specific susceptibility to a substance which is harmless in similar amounts for the majority of members of the same species—for example, in some persons affections are brought on by eating foods that are harmless for the majority of people, in some by breathing certain dusts. Until recent times these allergies baffled medical men. Then an important step was taken when by skin tests it became possible to determine to just what substances anyone was allergic.

Even this, however, did not reveal the mechanism of allergy and it is in this field that Code's discovery has been made. As a result of his study of a special type of white blood cells, it is claimed that there is now a good prospect of the doctors being able to deal scientifically with the millions of people who cannot eat this or that without breaking out into a rash.

Detroit Free Press: In Germany it is safe to laugh only by special permit on order of Der Fuehrer.

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