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AN EXPLORER AMONG THE AMAZON CANNIBALS



THE TABLE WHERE THE GOLD WAS TESTED.



REMADE DE MALES [CULMINATION OF EVILS] THE FIRST JUNGLE SETTLEMENT REACHED BY MR. LANGE.



THE PITARUCU, THE FAMOUS FISH OF THE AMAZON.

The jungle of the Amazon, that terra incognita of the South American continent abounding in poisonous reptiles, malaria and man eating savages, a region whose swampy forests have seemed to offer insurmountable obstacles to the explorers willing to brave its other dangers, has been penetrated at last by a white man. More wonderful still, the man who accomplished this feat, who fought and lived among its cannibals and even photographed them and who is at present in New York, is not yet 23 years old.

Algot Lange is the name of the explorer of this land of mystery. A young Dane, with little or no experience as an explorer, but with an insatiable thirst to photograph things no white man had ever seen before, he made the trip alone, spending altogether eleven months in the jungle, five months of which were passed among the cannibal Mangeromas, whose feasts on human flesh he witnessed and in whose battles with the Peruvians he actually participated. Strangely enough, it was these man eating savages who nursed him when the Amazon fever almost cut short his life, and he found that they were not devoid of some of the finer qualities found among civilized races, notwithstanding their practice of eating human flesh.

In his book shortly to be published by the Putnams, "In the Amazon Jungle," this intrepid young photographer and explorer describes not only his life among these cannibals of the headwaters of the Amazon but also paints a picture of the jungle which explains why it had remained unexplored up till now. After reading the account of his adventures, the conviction is irresistible that it was only by the rarest good luck and the ministrations of the cannibals that he escaped alive from its dangers. As a matter of fact, he did come back to this city only a shadow of his former self, the result of the fever, and he has spent many weeks recuperating here, some of them in a hospital.

Lying among the cannibals and watching them eat the flesh of their enemies while he was stricken with fever was not all of his adventures, by any means. An encounter in the moonlight with a cururujo boa constrictor, of all the monsters of the swamps the most dreaded, was another of his experiences. When killed the boa measured nearly fifty-five feet.

The horrors of the forest, so sombre at all times as to require often five minutes to take a photograph, seem as described by young Lange to rival if not surpass those of the African jungle. Often alone he encountered wild animals and dangerous reptiles and much of the time he was 150 miles from white men. And yet despite these experiences Mr. Lange now wants to return to the jungle again.

Young Lange came to this country only eight years ago and before he started on his Amazon trip he was official photographer to Dr. Lambert on Ward's Island. It was the taste for photography which sent him into the Amazonian wilderness.

He was born in Denmark in 1884. His father, who died in 1904, was the director of the Royal Opera House in Copenhagen. His mother is the author of several books of the Danish royal family. She has made a collection of old spinnets and harpsichords, among them instruments belonging to Beethoven and Mozart.

Now let us get to the book, stopping only long enough to quote a few paragraphs from Frederick Delebaugh's introduction:

"When Algot Lange told me he was going to the headwaters of the Amazon," writes Mr. Delebaugh, "I was particularly interested, because once, years ago, I had turned my own mind in that direction with considerable longing. I knew he would encounter many setbacks, but I never would have predicted the adventures he actually passed through alive."

"He started in fine spirits, buoyant, strong, vigorous. When I saw him again in New York a year or so later on his return he was an emaciated fever wreck, placing one foot before the other only with much exertion, and indeed barely able to hold himself erect. A few weeks in the hospital, followed by a daily diet of quinine, improved his condition, but after months he had scarcely arrived at his previous excellent physical state."

"Many explorers have had experiences similar to those related in this volume, but at least so far as the fever and the cannibals are concerned they have seldom survived to tell of them. Their interviews with cannibals have been generally too painfully confined to internal affairs to be available in this world

for authorship, whereas Mr. Lange happily not only avoided a calamitous intemperance but was even permitted to view the culinary preparations relating to the absorption of less favored individuals, and himself could have joined the feast had he possessed the stomach for it.

"Mr. Lange's account of his stay with these people, of their weapons, habits, form of battle and method of cooking the human captives, etc., forms one of the specially interesting parts of the book, and at the same time a valuable contribution to the ethnology of the western Amazon (or Marañon) region, where dwell numerous similar tribes little known to the white man. Particularly notable is his description of the wonderful wourahill (urari) poison, its extraordinary effect and the modus operandi of its making; a poison used extensively by Amazonian tribes but not made by all. He describes also the bows and arrows, the war clubs and the very scientific weapon, the blow gun. He was fortunate in securing a photograph of a Mangeroma in the act of shooting this gun. Special skill of course is necessary for the effective use of this simple but terrible arm, and, like that required for the boomerang, or lasso, practice begins with childhood."

"The region of Mr. Lange's almost fatal experiences, the region of the Javary River, the boundary between Brazil and Peru, is one of the most formidable and least known portions of the South American continent. It abounds with obstacles to exploration of the most overwhelming kind. Low, swampy, with a heavy rainfall, it is inundated annually, like most of the Amazon basin, and at times of high water the rivers know no limits. Lying, as it does, so near the equator the heat is intense and constant, oppressive even to the native. The forest growth—and it is forest wherever it is not river—is forced as in a huge hothouse, and is so dense as to make progress through it extremely difficult. Not only are there obstructions in the way of the trunks, underbrush and trailing vines and creepers like ropes, but the footing is nothing more than a mat of interlaced roots. The forest is also sombre and gloomy. To take a photograph required an exposure of from three to five minutes. Not a stone, not even a pebble, is anywhere to be found."

"Disease is rampant, especially on the smaller branches of the rivers. The incurable beri beri and a large assortment of fevers claim first place as death dealers, smiting the traveller with fearful facility. Next come a myriad of insects and reptiles, alligators, huge bird eating spiders, and snakes of many varieties. Snakes, both the poisonous and non-poisonous kinds, find here conditions precisely to their liking. The bush master is met with in the more open places, and there are many that are venomous, but the most terrifying, though not a biting reptile, is the water boa, the suouruju (Eunectes

murinus) or anaconda. It lives to a great age and reaches a size almost beyond belief. Feeding, as generally it does at night, it escapes common observation, and white men, heretofore, have not seen the largest specimens reported, though more than thirty feet is an accepted length, and Bates, the English naturalist, mentions one he heard of forty-two feet long. It is not surprising that Mr. Lange should have met with one in the far wilderness he visited of even greater proportions, a hideous monster, ranking in its huge bulk with the giant beasts of antediluvian times. The suouruju is said to be able to swallow whole animals as large as a goat or a donkey or even larger, and the naturalist referred to talks of a ten-year-old boy, son of his neighbor, who, left to mind a canoe while his father went into the forest, was in broad day, playing in the shade of the trees, stealthily enveloped by one of the monsters. His cries brought his father to the rescue just in time."

The foregoing will give an idea of what Mr. Lange was up against. The best way to tell the story of Mr. Lange's unique adventures is to quote from his book, "In the Amazon Jungle," which Messrs. Putnam will publish early in March. The book is profusely illustrated, but many more pictures are lost to the world, the negatives having been left behind in the jungle. The only photograph of the author extant at this writing is the very inadequate one taken by his jungle friends.

Remate de Males (Culmination of Evils) was the first jungle settlement reached by Mr. Lange:

"Some thirty years ago a prospector with his family and servants, in all about a score, arrived at this spot near the junction of the Javary and the Itechohy rivers, close to the equator. They came by the only possible highway, the river, and decided to settle. Soon the infinite variety of destroyers of human life that abound on the upper Amazon began their work on the little household, reducing its number to four and threatening to wipe it out altogether. But the prospector stuck to it and eventually succeeded in giving mankind a firm hold on this wilderness. In memory of what he and succeeding settlers went through the village received its cynically descriptive name."

"About sixty-five houses, lining the bank of the Itechohy River over a distance of what would be perhaps six blocks in New York city, make up Remate de Males. They are close together and each has a ladder reaching from the street to the main and only floor. At the bottom of every ladder appears a rudimentary pavement, probably five square feet in area, and consisting of fifty or sixty whiskey and gin bottles placed with their necks downward. Thus in the rainy season, when the water covers the street to a height of seven feet, the

ladders always have a solid foundation. The floors consist of split palm logs laid with the round side up. Palm leaves form the roofs, and rusty, corrugated sheet iron for the most part the walls. Each house has a sort of back yard and kitchen, also on stilts and reached by a bridge.

"Through the roofs and rafters gambol all sorts of wretched pests. Underneath the houses roam pigs, goats and other domestic animals, which sometimes appear in closer proximity than might be wished, owing to the spaces between the logs of the floor. That is in the dry season. In the winter, or the wet season, these animals are moved into the house with you and their places underneath are occupied by river creatures, alligators, water snakes and malignant repulsive fish, of which persons outside South America know nothing.

"The people are all occupied with the rubber industry and the town owes its existence to the economic necessity of having here a shipping and trading point for the product. The rubber is gathered further up along the shores of the Javary and the Itechohy and is transported by launch and canoe to Remate de Males. Here it is shipped directly or sold to travelling dealers, who send it down to Manaus or Para on the boat of the Amazon Steam Navigation Company which comes up during the rainy season. Thence it goes to the ports of the world."

And this was the nearest approach to civilization that Mr. Lange was destined to visit for many months:

GAMBLING ON THE AMAZON.

"The people of the Amazon love to gamble. One night three merchants and a village official came to the hotel to play cards. They gathered around the dining room table at 8 o'clock, ordered a case of Pabst beer, which sells, by the way, at \$4.50 a bottle in American gold, and several boxes of crackers, and then began on a game which resembles poker. They played till midnight, when they took a recess of half an hour, during which large quantities of the warm beer and many crackers were consumed. Then, properly nourished, they resumed the game, which lasted until 5 o'clock the next morning. This was a fair example of the gambling that went on."

"The stakes were high enough to do honors to the fashionable gamblers of New York, but there was never the slightest sign of excitement. At first I used to expect that surely the card table would bring forth all sorts of flashes of tropic temperament, even a shooting or stabbing affair. But the composure was always perfect. I have seen a loser pay without so much as a regretful remark the sum of \$5,000 reals, which though only \$1,050 in our money, is still a considerable sum for a laborer to lose."

It was after securing a copy of Mark Twain's "Tramp Abroad" that Mr. Lange was taken down with fever. "But before

I could begin the book," he writes, "I had an attack of swamp fever that laid me up four days. During one of the intermissions, when I was barely able to move around, I commenced reading Mark Twain. It did not take more than two pages of the book to make me forget all about my fever. When I got to the ninth page I laughed as I had not laughed for months, and page fourteen made me roar so athletically that I lost my balance and fell out of my hammock on the floor. I soon recovered and crept back into the hammock, but out I went when I reached page sixteen, and repeated the performance at pages nineteen, twenty-one and twenty-four until the supplementary excitement became monotonous. Whereupon I procured some rags and excelsior, made a bed underneath the hammock and proceeded to enjoy our eminent humorist's experience in peace."

Remate de Males became too civilized for the adventurous traveller and he longed to get into the real jungle where nothing but horrors abounded. No amount of warning would deter him; the more he heard of the horrors the more he longed to meet them face to face, and he did. The captain of the little boat that was to start him on his journey tried to dissuade him but to no purpose. "I told him that I had fully made up my mind to penetrate the mystery of those little known regions. I use the term 'little known' in the sense that while they are well enough known to the handful of Indians and rubber workers they are terra incognita to the outside world. The white man has not as yet traversed this Itechohy and its affluents, although it would be a system of no little importance if located in some other country—for instance, in the United States."

"My object was to study the rubber worker at his labor, to find out the true length of the Itechohy River and to photograph every thing worth while. I had with me all the materials and instruments necessary, at least so I thought.

"A hypodermic outfit, quinine and a few bottles of American gold, and several boxes of crackers, were my armament and for weeks this pistol became my only means of providing a scant food supply."

On board the boat every one slept on deck.

"To the post where I tied the foot end of my hammock there were fastened six other hammocks. Consequently seven pairs of feet were bound to come into pretty close contact with each other. While I was lucky enough to have the

hammock closest to the rail I was unlucky enough to have as my next neighbor a woman; she was part Brazilian negro and part Indian. She had her teeth filed sharp like shark's teeth, wore brass rings in her ears large enough to suspend pearls from and smoked a pipe continually. I found later that it was a habit to take the pipe to bed with her so that she could begin smoking the first thing in the morning. She used a very expensive Parisian perfume, whether to mitigate the effects of the pipe or not I do not know."

It was on this eighteenth day's journey up the river that Mr. Lange was taken down with the dreaded lary fever, but there was nothing to do but to take copious doses of quinine and keep still in my hammock close to the rail of the boat. The fever soon got strong hold of me and I alternated between shivering with cold and burning with a temperature that reached 104 and 105 degrees. Forward midnight it abated somewhat, but left me so nearly exhausted that I was hardly able to raise my head to see where we were going.

Mr. Lange often penetrated the forests alone, encountering wild monkeys and wild boars:

"During my walks in the forest I often came across snakes of considerable length, but never found any difficulty in killing them, as they were sluggish in their movements and seemed to be inoffensive. The rubber workers, who had no doubt had many encounters with reptiles, told me of large suourujus, or boa constrictors, which had their homes in the river not many miles from headquarters. They told me that they were in possession of hypnotic powers, but this, like many other assertions, should be taken with a large grain of salt."

The suouruju, boa constrictor is the most dreaded monster of the swamps, the silent monster of the river, and in the dead of night Mr. Lange and his party of natives came face to face with one:

"On a soft, muddy sandbar, half hidden by dead branches, I beheld a somewhat cone shaped mass about seven feet in height. From the base of this came the neck and head of the snake, flat on the ground, with beady eyes staring at us as we slowly advanced and stopped.

The snake was coiled, forming an enormous pile of round, scaly monstrosity, large enough to crush us all to death at once. We had stopped at a distance of about fifteen feet from him and looked at each other. I felt as if I were spell-bound, unable to move a step further, or even to think or act on my own initiative."

"The snake still made no move, but in the clear moonlight could see its body expand and contract in breathing. Its yellow eyes seemed to radiate a phosphorescent light. I felt no fear or any inclination to retreat, yet I was now facing a beast that few men had ever succeeded in seeing. Thus we stood looking at each other, scarcely moving an eyelid, while the great silent monster looked at us. I slid my right hand down to the holster of my automatic pistol, the 9 millimeter Luger, and slowly removed the safety lock, at the same time staring into the faces of the men. In this manner I was less under the spell of the mesmerism of the snake and could to some extent think and act. I wheeled around while I still held control of my faculties and per-

ceiving a slight movement of the snake's coils I fired point blank at the head, letting go the entire chamber of soft nose bullets. Instantly the other men woke up from their trance and in turn fired, emptying their Winchester into the huge head, which by this time was raised to a great height above us, loudly hissing in agony. Fortunately the shots took effect and the monster lay dead in the water. The skin measured when dried 54 feet 8 inches in length and 5 feet 1 inch in width."

Even this was not adventure for Mr. Lange, for though he lived five months at Floresta, which was eighteen days by boat from Remate de Males, he wanted jungle, more danger. Finally he started out with six men and canoed up the Itechohy and then struck into the forest:

"Let me think that a jungle trail is broad and easy. As I started along the tortuous uneven path, in the sweltering midday heat, pestered by legions of plums, or sandflies, and the omnipresent mosquitoes, climbing fallen trees that impeded us at every turn, I thought that I had reached the climax of discomfort. Little could I know that during the time to come I was to look back upon this day as one of easy, delightful promenading."

At last they got 120 miles into the unknown, then the fever struck them and they turned their faces toward Floresta. One by one the little party died of fever and Mr. Lange was as near death as any one could well be:

"The fever had me completely in its grasp. I was left alone more than one hundred miles from human beings in an absolute wilderness. I measured cynically the tenaciousness of life, measured the thread that yet held me among the number of the living, and I realized now what the fight between life and death meant to a man brought to bay. I had not the slightest doubt in my mind that this was the last of me. Surely no man could have been brought lower, or to greater extremity and live; no man ever faced a more hopeless proposition. Yet I could or would not yield, but put the pistol back where it belonged."

"All night long I crept on and on and ever on through the underbrush, with no sense of direction whatever, and still I am sure that I did not crawl in a circle, but that I crawled and crawled with distance. For hours I moved along at the absolute mercy of any beast of the forest that might meet me."

"The approaching morning found me in this region, and me with a cooling touch and restored once more to some extent my sanity. My clothes were almost stripped from my body and smeared with mud and dirt, and face were torn and my knees were a mass of bruises."

AMONG THE CANNIBAL MANGEROMAS.

He had a vague recollection of hearing the barking of dogs, of changing his crawling direction to head for the sound, and then suddenly seeing in front of him a sight which had the same effect as a rescuing steamer on the shipwrecked:

"To my colossal misery it seemed that I saw many men and women and children and a large round house. I saw parrots fly across the open space in brilliant colors, and heard their shrill screaming. I cried aloud and ran forward when a little curly haired dog jumped up and commenced licking my face, and then I knew no more."

"When I came to I was lying in a comfortable hammock in a large, dark room. I heard the murmur of many voices and presently a man came over and looked at me. I did not understand where I was, but thought that I, finally, had gone mad. I fell asleep again. The next time I woke up I saw an old woman leaning over me and holding in her hand a gourd containing some chicken broth. She allowed slowly, not feeling the cravings of hunger, in fact not knowing whether I was dead or alive. The old woman had a piece of wood through her lip and looked very unreal to me, and soon I fell asleep again."

"On the fifth day, so I learned later, I began to feel my senses return, my fever commenced to abate, and I was able to grasp the fact that I had crawled into the maloca, or communal village, of the Mangeromas. I was as weak as a kitten, and, indeed, it has been a marvel to me ever since that I succeeded at all in coming out of the shadow. The savages, by tender care, with strengthening drinks prepared in their own primitive method, wrought the miracle, and returned to life a man who was as near death as any one could be, and not complete the transition. They fed me at regular intervals, thus checking my sickness, and when I could make out their meaning, I understood that I could stay with them as long as I desired."

"Although the chief and his men presented an appearance wholly unknown to me, yet it did not seem to distract me at the first glance, but as my faculties slowly returned to their former activity, I looked at them and found them very strange figures, indeed. Every man had two feathers inserted in the cartilage of his nose; at some distance it appeared as if they were moustaches. Besides this, the chief had a sort of feather dress, this was simply a quantity of muslin feathers tied together as a girdle, by means of plant fibres. The women wore no clothing whatever, their only ornamentation being the oval wooden piece in the lower lip and fancifully arranged designs on face, arms, and body. The colors which they preferred were scarlet and black, and they procured these dyes from two plants that grew in the forest near by. They would squeeze the pulp of the fruits and apply the rich colored juice with their fingers, forming one

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