

Sun, Sand and Soap—A Story of Adventure—By H. Bedford Jones

"My New Rules of Warfare"

By Ring W. Lardner.

IT WAS 3 in the afternoon and as hot as a day on the Mohave desert. An eye blew out the top thermometer. The westerling sun blazed down from a blue sky, as clear and hard as a crystal dome. Its rays drew the thin dry skyward in shimmering heat. It radiated from the glistening white faces of tortured rock, from the blinding, shifting white sands.

Desert dweller though he was, "Mont" Mangas had never before been so badly off from thirst. As he stumbled along, at the head of his two burros, his lips moved almost incessantly, dry, tortured lips inclosing a swollen tongue.

Water in the rocks over there," he mumbled, squinting at the opening of a canon, a mile distant. "I saw it coming out! Yes! Water, no alkali, either."

Mangas was no weakling. To the little world of men who wandered along the edge of the desert he was anything but. His feet in height and of stalwart build, he was regarded by the weakened desert rats as a giant. Yet now his great frame was weakening.

"It wasn't for that hole yonder. I'd think I was never intended to get out o' here," he said, as he frugged, his mind on the rivulet of water he hoped that in the little canon ahead, among the rock waste.

"If I could strike it rich!" His words had no meaning now, but the thought was clear enough in his brain, despite the dry lips. That'd be worth this torture, to know what his mine was up to. He looked at those paint miners down by the Salton! Look at that strontianite mine that they opened up—"

THE harrowing throb bit into him anew. The wind blew in through San Geronimo Pass and spread out across the sand wastes. Dust devils played here and there, little whirlwinds that sent spirals of sand spinning. One of these passed across the train in front of Mangas; it raised a fog of fine sand, and for a moment the young prospector stumbled, coughing and choking.

Presently his steps became faster. The burros, too, recognized the spot and tried to shove past the man. He prodded them in the ribs, hurled himself forward, spent his last reserve of energy in a spurt that took him to the jumble of black lava and granite outcroppings. There, in a little niche, was the water hole, but it was dry.

Mangas stood staring, incredulous and desperate. Then the shoving burros roused him into action. He beat the burro back and charged the water hole again. He perceived now that some one had been before him, not so very long before, either.

He dropped to his knees, buried his face in the shallow basin, scooping at the sand and powdered rock with his fingers. "What the hell was that all?" None showed. He bent forth his red bandana handkerchief and stirred it down in the sand. It showed one or two moist spots.

Frenziedly the man fell to work. Again and again he shoved down the handkerchief, plunging it as deep into the sand as he could get it. At last he found enough water in it to wring a drop or two on his tongue. Over and over he did this, but he soon realized that it would give him no permanent relief. If he camped here until next day he might get some water out of the hole.

His eye, used to the dry, white monotony of the desert, was caught by a moving speck. He straightened up, staring, letting burros nose the ground unheeded. He should have seen the speck before this, would have flung himself on it, but he had been so busy with his thirst frenzy. Now he saw the trail of a man and a single burro.

"Come on, Dynamite!" He jerked at the leading burro. "Hell camp in the foothills over beyond; we'll get there, all right, after him. We can get a drink out of him, any o' one drink, Dynamite!" He prodded the burros into activity and set forth along the trail.

Those few drops of water had helped him vastly, had helped restore his flagging interest. Now, as he emerged again from the canon opening, he carefully eyed the speck in the distance, saw that it was heading up another canon. For this Mangas headed in a bee line, disregarding the trail entirely. The speck disappeared, but he had his bearings.

On he edged the man and the two burros. Mangas was in a new valley, a part of the desert which he had not previously visited, although he had crossed this way on his trip out from civilization. What lay ahead of him he could not tell. There were no doves which indicated the presence of water. He had simply the spoor of the unknown man for hope.

That canon was not so far distant, after all; the westerling sunlight had deceived his eyes. Now the stars were beginning to shine more clearly, as Mangas headed into the unknown canon on the trail of the unknown. He looked ahead for a camp fire, but perceived none.

MANGAS came to an abrupt halt, peering through the starlit darkness ahead. Then his inflamed eyes touched upon a dark blue. Again he pressed forward; ahead of him, pulled away by a burro, was a man. Then, hurrying on, despair spurring him, Mangas came close to the burro. Again he halted, staring at the animal; now, however, with incredulous amazement and anger stirring in his heart. He recognized that burro with the peculiar white streak, which he had known the brute anywhere. "Luck's against me," he thought, peering around for the man. "It's Crater Heller! Of all men! He'd sooner shoot me on sight than give me a drink!"

Suddenly, as Mangas stood there, a sound came to him from above. He raised his head. Perched among the rocks on the hillside, a hundred feet away, was the dark shape of a cabin. What was it? Who lived here? Not Heller, certainly.

Abandoning his burros Mangas turned and mounted the hillside. He looked back at the man and then, alert for the warning of rattlers. No sound came to him, either from the rocks or from the dim outline of the cabin above. Then, as he watched, he saw a small square of light break out in the cabin outline, a window.

Heller was there, then, and had laid a trap for Mangas.

Mangas approached the place cautiously. What he was about to find here he did not know, but he knew Heller. If he was to get a drink from that man he must fight for it. And Mangas was too far gone, too utterly desperate, to hesitate.

irresistibly. He approached without sound; it was a singular thing to find a cabin here, and it was more singular to find Heller at this cabin. As he came close, but not too close, he doffed his hat and raised his eyes to a level with the small pane of glass. He caught his breath quickly; his eyes, dilated with startled anger, were riveted upon the scene within the cabin. A moment he stood motionless, then his hand slipped swiftly to the holster and slid forth his revolver.

Even yet he waited; then, with a low growl of anger, he smashed the muzzle of the weapon through the glass. The crash of the glass was followed by an oath from within.

"Hands up!" said Mangas. His words were almost unintelligible, but his gun and the eyes over it spoke his message even better. Painfully he spoke again, spoke words that came clearer. "Take his gun. I'll come inside."

An instant later he left the window and hurried around the corner of the shack to where the door was located. Mangas pushed this open and stepped over the threshold. At his appearance the bearded Heller dropped an oath of rage and consternation. He was not a handsome individual, this Heller.

His round moon face scowled in angry recognition of Mangas; his black whiskers seemed to bristle; his beady, shifty eyes showed nothing but a baffled fury.

MANGAS sank upon a stool beside the center table of the place, his gun hand resting on the table, the weapon covering Heller. He shot a quick glance at a bunk against the rear wall of the cabin. Stretched out on this bunk was a young man, pale and haggard, the marks of long illness on his wan features. Near him, standing in panting defiance, stood a girl; in her hand was the pistol taken from Heller.

"Water!" The head of Mangas lunged forward; he recovered himself desperately. The word came from his lips like a groan.

None the less the girl recognized the word, and with light step, she darted across the room. She drew a dipper of water from an olla on a bench near the door and brought this to Mangas. He raised the cup greedily; in his madness he would have emptied it, had not his tongue been so swollen, his throat so nearly closed. As it was only a few drops would trickle down.

He set down the cup, not lifting his eyes from Heller, who stood with arms in air. Mangas tried to speak as he looked through the window, but he was choked by the words. He motioned to the girl. Admiration leaped into his eyes at her quick wit, for she swiftly had pencil and paper before him.

"Get your money," he wrote, "and see that he is unharmed."

The girl looked over his shoulder and read the words. For a moment she hesitated, as she looked up at Heller, then she stepped forward. Mangas watched with eagle eyes, while from the desert rat's pocket she took a roll of bills. Mangas had seen Heller take this money from beneath the pillow of the sick man, after a slight scuffle with the girl.

Heller proved to be unarmed, except for the gun which had already been taken from him. As the girl stepped back, Mangas rose to his feet and motioned to the door. Heller, in the deadly, venomous silence which he had maintained from the beginning, obeyed the gesture.

Mangas followed him, stood in the doorway a moment, saw that the desert door was descending the hill with a rattle of bolts. Then, turning, Mangas shut the door and slipped the bolt. As he did so he staggered and reached for a chair, then the room swam around before his eyes. He plunged down heavily.

It was daylight when Mangas came to himself. He opened his eyes, stared around and remembered everything. He lay in one corner of the room, upon a pile of blankets; his own blankets. Near him was all his own outfit, carefully piled up and neatly arranged. He understood at once that the girl must have done this. A girl, handling Dynamite and Pardner? He would have liked to see how she did it. At the thought he uttered a short laugh.

"Feeling better, are you?" queried a voice.

Mangas raised himself and saw that the invalid had spoken. He smiled back at the young man and then, crossing his stubby chin, he said, "Thanks," he responded. "Only I sure need a shave! Hadn't figured on striking women folks this way."

The other chuckled in response. Then came sudden interruption.

"Able to talk? That's fine!" The girl stood framed in the doorway, smiling at Mangas. She was good to look upon, her face radiating cheerfulness; brown eyes matched her braided hair; good, level, honest eyes.

gas, rising stiffly. "I'm much obliged. I'm all right, I guess. What's that I smell? Bacon and coffee?"

The girl broke into a merry laugh and turned. Over her shoulder she flung: "It'll be ready as soon as you are, I guess. Don't be too long primping."

Mangas grinned and reached for his boots. He was rather disconcerted to think that the girl must have removed them. "She's a wonder!" he observed solemnly. The young man in the bunk grinned back.

"She sure is," he answered. "She took care of man and beast last night, so don't worry about the burros. There's water on the outside. Towel on the rack, I expect."

Mangas got his simple toilet articles and went outside the door, where he found a basin of water and a clean towel on the rack before a small mirror. These civilized products astonished and delighted him; so did the scene up the canon, where a few palms and scrub trees denoted plenty of water.

True to her promise, that breakfast would be served as soon as Mangas was ready for it, he found the table spread when he re-entered the cabin. Introductions were in order and were duly accomplished. Mangas learned that

his hosts were brother and sister, Beth and Robert Linder by name.

"My brother and I have been here only a couple of weeks," said the girl. "His health is bad."

"No need to be speechy about naming it," said Linder cheerfully. "I'm a lunger—that is, I have been. These two weeks here have done me a world of good. Six months of it will cure me, pretty nearly."

"Sure ought to," said Mangas. "I was in mighty poor health myself a year ago, just a city kid, with no prospect of being anything else. I had some money saved up, and one day I lit out. I met up with an oil prospector over in Palmdale, on the railroad, and he taught me the ropes. Haven't found any gold mine yet, but living is cheap and I located some fair silver prospects a month ago. These will bring me in something eventually. Well, this feast certainly looks good, Miss Linder."

"No ceremony, please. It's Bob and Beth and Mont around here," said the girl laughingly, as she brought in the coffee.

Makehift seats were drawn up, and the three attacked breakfast. It was then that Beth Linder made a statement that caused Mangas to swab his eyes. "When Bob's able to take tips on the road, he'll do some prospecting, too," she said.

Mangas gulped. "You prospect?" he asked. With the rigors of desert prospecting in mind, its hardships and dangers, it was small wonder that he stared.

"Beth thinks that she can tackle anything," said Bob Linder chuckling. "Yet there was a vast amount of gold in his eyes; and Mangas liked him the better."

"Our plans for prospecting are different," remarked the girl.

AS she spoke she shot a glance at her brother. Between them passed something that Mangas did not understand. A question lay in the eyes of Beth, and the invalid assented to it with a nod. Then the girl turned to Mangas.

"We want to make our stay here serve a double purpose," she said quietly. "Years ago our father spent a good deal of time here on the edge of the desert, painting and modeling. He learned from an old Indian this somewhere near here there was a certain rock which, ground to powder, made a finer modeling clay than any known. From specimens of pottery which he got from the Indian we know that this was so."

"And you hope to find that rock?" asked Mangas.

"Yes. Our father left a map where he got it. I don't know, but I think some one made it for him from the Indian's description. We can't make much of it, and we've been wishing that we knew some one whom we could trust, some one to give us advice. Bob thinks that we can trust you. After what 'passed' last night."

"But what do you think about it?" queried Mangas quizzically, smiling as he spoke.

"I think we can," and the eyes of the girl met his frankly.

They all three broke into a laugh. "I guess you can trust me so long as it isn't a gold mine," said Mangas. "I've never been right in this valley before, but I've been all around here. If there's any advice I can give you, you're sure welcome to it!"

The girl produced for his inspection a map which was so crudely drawn as to be unintelligible, unless the locality to which it referred, was already known. Mangas chuckled as he bent over it, straightening out the paper. "I'm such a poor hand locating gold," he said whimsically. "Let me see what we can make out of this."

"Lose Horse Claim," located on the

purpled walls from the flat desert to the south of them; the twin granite buttes that marked where the Sulphur Sink began, and so forth.

There were stories connected with each name, and Mangas, who had listened to the old desert rats at the young man's camp, knew the stories. Thus to both of them the four hours passed swiftly, until at length they drew in to the long canon which they sought.

"You know the place?" queried the girl eagerly.

"Hm! Expect four hours, if it's the same place. About 10 hours' travel south of here there used to be a water hole; it's been dry for years, they tell me. As a water hole it's only a legend and a memory. The point is, however, that there used to be two palm trees, coming up from the same root, like this shows on the map. The place used to be called 'Las Palmas Hermanas,' or 'The Palm Sisters.'"

An exclamation broke from Bob Linder. His sister, an excited flush in her cheeks, leaned forward and seized the map. She turned it over. Upon the reverse side Mangas saw scribbled the words, "Las Palmas Hermanas."

"Well, I'm jigged!" he ejaculated and broke into a delighted laugh.

"No trail went nowadays with the way the water has vanished years ago, and for a time Mangas was not at all certain that he had found the right place. When they reached the fork of the canon, however, they found that this was beyond question the spot pictured in the map. The sister palms had vanished utterly, and all sign of a water hole had departed, yet there was no mistaking the place.

"But where's the claim, where's the tunnel that's on the map?" asked Beth, staring helplessly around at the waste of rock and sand and cactus.

"Gone the same way of the two palm trees, most likely," said Mangas. "However, we know about where it should be. Do you know the kind of ore or clay you're after, the color of it, I mean?"

"No. I have an impression it was yellow, but I can't be certain."

By reference to the map Mangas at length located what he thought might be the cave-in tunnel; there was little to prove the fact, however, amid the waste of rock and sand on the hillside. He now gave his attention to rigging up a shelter for the girl, by the aid of a blanket, a Joshua tree and a couple of sticks.

"I'll have to pick around for a bit, if you explain," he said, "most of the day, so there's no rush; and you must keep out of the sun as much as possible. In another hour it'll be a hundred and twenty in this canon."

"But you can't work in such heat!" exclaimed Beth, anxious to stop her, just look around a bit. And I'm used to it. By the way, did our friend Heller have any idea that the map referred to Las Palmas Hermanas?"

Beth frowned slightly. "Not until the other night. He was trying to get the map, but he couldn't get it, so you came. It was with the roll of money, and he had started to examine it when you interfered."

Mangas dismissed the matter carelessly. In fact he was not a whit worried over Heller, whom he knew to mine could turn out nothing except fire clay, at best. It would not afford it a very fruitful subject for dispute.

Pick in hand Mangas worked his way up the hillside, testing out the ledges and various points of contact. As he worked higher up the side of the canon, he saw that the talus he found here, sand and rocks, were Then, unexpectedly, he came upon a freshly dug hole among some boulders. It opened up what was undoubtedly a yellowish clay formation, under a foot of soil.

Mangas started at it in star-gazed alarm. Fresh! It was sure for that it had not been dug an hour ago! The sides of the exposed hole were not nearly so hot as the soil around; the sun had not been at it so very long. Again, a discarded quid of tobacco lay under a rock on one side where it had been lying. Testing it, Mangas found that it was not yet quite dry and hard. The evidence was indisputable. And Crater Heller, he knew, chewed tobacco constantly.

For a space Mangas stood there and gradually reconstructed in his own mind what must have taken place. Heller had been here, had words written across the back of the map and had come here. He must have had a scanty water supply to come with, also. Then he had set to work to explore the ground. Had he written this clay by accident? Very likely.

go with you? Do you think Bob is in any danger?"

"Not a bit of it," said Mangas. This was false; there was no telling what a man like Heller would attempt. His chief fear was for the invalid. He related to let the girl perceive this fact, however.

"Let the burros roam," he said, catching up a full canteen. "And don't try to set up those monuments until later in the afternoon, understand? All right. Good-by!"

The girl held out her hand to him and flashed a smile. "Good-by, Mont, and good luck!"

With his hat pulled low over his head Mont Mangas saw the end of his forced march ahead, the canon and its cabin to one side. Of Heller or his burro there was no sign. They might have gone on to the water hole or—

THE afternoon sun was still hot, although fast sinking in the west. Mangas was confident that Heller had seen nothing of him in the rear, for he himself had taken pains to keep out of sight, making use of every available outcrop and butte, while he exerted himself to catch up with Heller. He had not caught up, however.

And now, where was Heller?

The answer came to Mangas as he trudged wearily up the canon. It came in the sound of a shot, a heavy, echoed shot which had not been fired in the open. This shot came from the cabin on the hillside.

Dropping his canteen Mangas ran forward. He covered the hundred yards that intervened and rushed up the almost imperceptible trail to the open cabin door. Mangas burst into the cabin and stood panting. Facing him, backed against the rear wall, was Bob Linder, fear in his eyes, the still smoking revolver in his hand. The figure of Heller lay against the wall.

"I shot him!" exclaimed the boy.

"I shot him! I didn't mean to kill him, Mont."

Mangas stooped over the body of Heller and made a quick examination. He rose, a thin smile on his lips. "You didn't kill him, Bob," he said swiftly. "He's unconscious, that's all."

"Thank heaven!" said Linder. "I—he started for me—"

"Take it easy, old man," said Mangas quietly. "What happened? What did he say?"

"He didn't know I had the gun," returned Linder. "He came in and tried to make himself pleasant. He said that he had found the place we were after, and that he knew it was valuable, but that no one else knew it."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mangas. "He said it was valuable, eh? Did he say why?"

"No, that was his secret. He said that he was going to turn right away and file his claim, but he wanted to be fair to us. He tried to persuade me to write up a half interest in the claim for him, offered to take us into partnership. I suspected that he was lying about it and refused."

"Oh, I see his game now!" cried Mangas. "He wanted to get an interest in the claim from you, then he could have played hob with us through litigation."

"I suppose so. Finally he lost his temper and started for me. I warned him, but he came on. I was frightened, and I shot."

Mangas broke into a laugh. He stooped and dragged the figure of Heller forward. "You didn't hurt him," he said, indicating the course of the bullet. "As you fired, he flung up his arm. The bullet went through the flesh of his forearm and then nicked his tough skull. There, he's coming around now! Stand back, Bob, and throw a good scare into the gentleman." Mangas jerked out his own gun.

THE eyes of Heller opened. The desert rat glanced around, then scrambled to his knees. He saw the crimson stain that was over his arm, felt it on his face, looked up and saw Mangas' weapon trained on him. A wave of burst from his forehead and "You're killed me!" he shouted hoarsely, terror in his voice. "Don't shoot, don't make it worse! I'll tell you all about it. Don't let me die."

"Talk quick," said Mangas, cocking his revolver.

"It's a colonial clay," replied Heller, working forward on his knees, hands outstretched. "Don't shoot! Get me a doctor, don't let me die, Mangas! It's a colonial clay, same as soap. I didn't try to jump your claim."

Mangas put away his gun. Then he caught Heller by the collar, lifted the subject to his feet and, with his feet and calmly kicked him through the doorway.

"Exit Mr. Heller," he said cheerfully, as he returned to Bob Linder. "Don't worry about that fellow, Bob. He'll make no further trouble. I'll have to get back to Beth now and then I'll get to town and file those claims. So it's colloidal clay, eh? I've read something about that. I'd be surprised if we'd struck something rich, after all!"

"You mean that you found the claim?" asked Linder. "And it's valuable?"

"Good as gold, I expect. Well, I'll go fill up my canteen, give Mr. Heller a little talk about claim jumping and get back to fetch Beth home. Had to leave her here. So long, see you later!"

He left Linder staring after him, as he went back down the hillside and recovered his canteen. "Soap!" said Mangas to himself, grinning at the thought. "A soap mine! Can you beat it? And Beth—we'll be partners, eh? That's the best thing of all!"

(Copyright, 1922.)

Young Anacondas.

THE sixteen-foot Trinidad anaconda, or water boa, at the London Zoological Gardens, not long ago gave birth to twenty-four young ones. The new-born snakes were twenty-six inches long and about an inch in diameter at the thickest part of the body. In color and marking they resembled the adults—that is, they were of a dark greenish hue with black spots.

That number of young had been exceeded by a seventeen-foot snake at the New York Zoological Park, which produced thirty-four young. Still another anaconda has been known to produce thirty-seven at a birth, and a large specimen of the same species gave birth to sixty-four living young. The pythons differ from the boas in that they lay eggs and coil around a heap of rotting material. An official of the New York Zoo says that the pythons produce from fifty to a hundred eggs at a time, and that deposited sixty eggs, about which she coiled, and from which she sought out the hatchlings. The hatchlings proved to be all male.

"Oh, I'm not afraid," protested Beth quickly. "I only wish that I could

left them to their own devices. Well it is beginning to look as if I come home too soon.

As I understood it at the time, the reason for all the nations getting together was to see if maybe they wouldn't some way to fix it so as we wouldn't have no more war or at least, lesson the danger of having same. And that is what the boys started out to do, but in the last few wks. as near as I can make out they been devoting their tension to preparations for another war and what laws is going to govern conduct of same and you would pretty near think it was the annual meeting of the intercollegiate rules committee to discuss changes for next yr.

Like for inst. Asst. Coach Root of the U. S. team has made 2 suggestions which it looks like they would both be adopted namely:

(1) that submarines mustn't attack nothing but war ships and,

(2) that they can't no nation from now on use poison gas.

THESE has been agreed on by the other members and are suggestions which meets with general approval throughout the civilized world. But how are you going to enforce same is another question. According to Mr. Root's dope the submarine that shoots at a merchant ship will be looked on as a pirate and the nation that uses poison gas is a dirty outlaw. But the people that done both them things in the last war were called a whole lot worse names than that and never batted a eye.

What the boys needs first of all is suitable penalties for violations of the rules both new and old and secondly they need somebody to see that same is carried out and if I was running the meeting down in Washington I would appoint Tiny Maxwell and Walter Eckersall and W. G. Crowder and assign them to the new war and leave some of them set in a boat out in the ocean and handle the Navy while the others officiate in No Man's Land and I would tell them to see that the rules was lived up to and would give them a handy book of same with the new rules listed separate like as follows:

Rule XV.
No submarine shall shoot at any ship other than a war ship belonging to an opponent.

Penalty—Submarine must come up 5 yards closer to the surface.

Rule XVI.
Neither side shall use poison gas.

Penalty—Loss of 1/2 the distance to the goal.

Rule XVII.
No regiment may replace another without the regiment thus substituting first reporting to the referee.

Penalty—For not reporting—Loss of 5 yards. For new regiment communicating with old regiment before reporting to the referee, loss of 15 yards.

Rule IX.
Gunners must all be behind the gun when gun is fired.

Penalty—The gun shall be fired off again from a point 5 yards farther away from whatever they was shooting at.

Rule XXI.
No soldier of the side which is going over the top shall be in motion towards the opponent's trenches before the signal is given.

Penalty—Loss of 5 yards from the point at which he started.

Rule XXV.
They shall be no coaching either by generals or other persons not participating in the action.

Penalty—Loss of 15 yards by the side for whose supposed benefit the offense was committed. The offender shall be excluded from the neighborhood of the field of battle for the remainder of the war.

Rule XXVI.
Nobody shall attempt to crawl after they have been shot down.

Penalty—Loss of 5 yards.

Rule XXVII.
In case of accident to a participant, one representative of his army may, if he has first obtained the consent of the officials, come on to the field of battle to tend to the injured man. This representative need not always be the same person.

Rule XXVIII.
No person not taking part shall be allowed to walk up and down No Man's Land.

"IS THIS THE STUFF?" HE DEMANDED.

That was some guess, eh? If this was a gold mine, now—

"Can you take us there?" asked the girl eagerly.

Mangas hesitated. Bob Linder divined the cause and spoke up.

"Leave me out of it. I couldn't take any four-hour trip and back! You go and look over the place in the morning, sis, if Mont will take you."

"I'll be mighty proud to serve as guide," said Mangas. "We ought to leave early and come back late. I don't think Beth ought to attempt travel in the heat of the day. Especially if she's only been here two weeks."

To this Beth Linder assented meekly. It was planned that they were to start before the following dawn, since it was now too late in the day, unless the girl were to be exposed to the fiercest desert heat. And this Mangas declared impossible.

"By the way," said Mangas suddenly. "I took for granted that Crater Heller was trying to get away with your money last night. But how did he learn you people were here? He's been on a wild spree in Los Angeles for two or three weeks."

Beth smiled. "He had to go on a train to Los Angeles and back, didn't he? Well, we happened to be on the train, too, and we were talking with him."

Bob Linder intervened. "Hold on, Mont! It was my funeral altogether. Mont; she had nothing to do with it. I got talking with that fellow on the train, trying to see if he could tell us anything about this Lost Horse claim. I said too much about our plans and about the map, probably."

"That's it, that's it!" cried the girl excitedly. "Then, if he comes back, we'll tell him the truth. But he won't come back, will he, Mont?"

Mangas shook his head. "I can't say, Beth. He's a queer fellow, that Heller, a bad actor. He's a coward, for one thing, but he has education and knows more about ores and minerals than the average desert rat. I've heard of his doing queer and unreasonable things, due chiefly to moonshine hooch. If he has any liquor on hand he might show up again, if only to even up old scores with me. However, I don't think we need worry about Heller."

Later in the day, when he was alone with Bob, Mangas referred to the revolver taken from Heller. Bob had retained it as a trophy of the encounter.

"You keep it close to hand while we're gone," said Mangas quietly. "I'll take care of your sister, all right, but I can't be in two places at once. If Heller shows up, you shoot first and argue afterward, savvy?"

Bob Linder nodded.

Mont Mangas enjoyed that four-hour trudge across the desert, as he had seldom enjoyed such a tramp before.

Bob Linder, in her trim hiking outfit, presented a fit model for the best of calendar girls. Mangas recalled one of these which hung on the wall of his own cabin, back in the foothills, and wondered why an artist should pick such commonplace models when there were such girls as Beth in existence.

As they trudged ahead of the two burros, whose lading consisted largely of water, Mangas pointed out to his companion the features of the desert around them, which the girl had hitherto seen only as sand and rock. Now she saw the different points by name, the Devil's Fryingpan, away off to the east; Lost Man's Mesa, sticking up

Penalty—Loss of both legs.

Rule XXX.
Upon one nation declaring war on another, the other nation must be ready to fight within 2 months after receiving sight declaration of war.

Penalty—Forfeiture of the war.

RING W. LARDNER
Great Neck, Jan. 27.

Requests to Cats.

AN elderly French spinster died, leaving a will bequeathing most of her property to charity and a substantial sum to "my silent, sympathetic and best-loved friend, Minnette." Minnette was her cat. A Frenchman was moved by this incident to investigate the subject and he found that cats, among all animals, have most frequently been made legatees.

In 1671 a noted player on the harp and flute, Jeanne Felix Dupuis, bequeathed her executor to give the keeper of two cats 20 sous a week for their food, which she specified should be meat broth, "of the kind we ourselves eat, rich and sufficient without being eked out by bread crumbs, and served upon individual plates, belonging one to each cat." Her relatives broke the will, and this provision of separate plates for the pussies was a point upon which they strongly dwelt in the attempt to prove that her mind was enfeebled.

A century later Pierre Grosley left 20 pounds a year to his two cats to be paid as long as either lived; but he was a lawyer, and his will proved valid. Ten or twelve years ago a poor woman in Paris left her property to the city for charity after her cat Bis, a beautiful young Maltese, had been maintained till the end of his natural life. The amount was so small that principal as well as interest would have to be used, and there was some dispute as to whether, based on the average length of feline life, the legacy was accepted. Her Bis possessed the traditional nine lives, it would assuredly have been declined, as the city would have incurred an obligation, without receiving any benefit. He died advanced in years, but there was still something left.

Cat legatees are not peculiar to France. England has had them, and in our own country only a few years ago died the second of two cats, Blackie and Pinkie, that belonged to Benjamin P. Dilley of Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Mr. Dilley, at his death, left the income of \$40,000 to provide for them as long as they should live, and bequeathed her a pension till her death, after which the estate was to be divided, most of it going to charities. Pinkie died first. Blackie followed her two years later, at the age of sixteen, which is four years beyond the average life of a cat, as law and science reckoned it in the case of Bis.

Electric Steel Smelters.

IT is claimed that an electric induction furnace, which has been under trial for some time in Sheffield, England, solves the problem of making very large steel ingots demanded by modern machinery, because it is as easy to make a two-ton ingot in this furnace as it is admitted that at present high-grade steels can be made by the electric furnace on a commercially successful scale only in places where power can be obtained at an extremely low cost. Laboratory experiments have indicated that a high-class steel can be made by the electric process from inferior material, but for commercial purposes this is not yet possible.

Glass Resists Fire.

THERE is a product called "wire glass," which, it appears, presents a most effective barrier against fire. It consists simply of a mesh work of wire embedded in a glass plate. Even when lit by flames, and raised to a red heat it does not fall to pieces, and it has been shown in many cases that, employed in windows and skylights, wire-glass not only resists the heat of fire, but also the shattering effects of cold water poured over it while it is yet glowing hot.

LOOKS-like you've given me considerable attention," said Mangas.

"Able to talk? That's fine!" The girl stood framed in the doorway, smiling at Mangas. She was good to look upon, her face radiating cheerfulness; brown eyes matched her braided hair; good, level, honest eyes.

Mangas approached the place cautiously. What he was about to find here he did not know, but he knew Heller. If he was to get a drink from that man he must fight for it. And Mangas was too far gone, too utterly desperate, to hesitate.

WHILE OTHERS OFFICIATE IN NO MAN'S LAND

