In a Far Country

The Gold Seekers Who Journeyed Into the Silence and Peace of the Arctic and Who Never Came Back

By JACK LONDON

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WHEN a man journeys into a far country he must be prepared to forget many of the things he has learned and to acquire such customs as are inherent with existence in the new land. He must abandon the old ideals and the old gods, and oftentimes he must reverse the very code by which his conduct has hitherto been shaped. To those who have the protean faculty of adaptability the novelty of such change may even be a source of pleasure, but to those who happen to be hardened to the ruts in which they were created the pressure of the altered environment is unbearable, and they chafe in body and in spirit under the new restrictions which they do not understand. This chafing is bound to act and react, producing divers evils and leading to various misfortunes. It were better for the man who cannot fit himself to the new groove to return to his own country. If he delay too long he will surely die.

When the world rang with the tale of arctic gold and the lure of the north gripped the heartstrings of men Carter Weatherbee threw up his snug clerkship, turned half of his savings over to his wife and with the remainder bought an outfit. There was no romance in his nature. The bondage of commerce had crushed all that. He was simply tired of the ceaseless grind and wished to risk great hazards in view of corresponding returns. Like many another fool, disdaining the old trails used by the northland pioneers for a score of years, he hurried to Edmonton in the spring of the year, and there, unluckily for his soul's welfare, he allied himself with a party of men.

There was nothing unusual about this party, except its plans. Even its goal, like that of all other parties, was the Klondike. But the route it had mapped out to attain that goal took away the breath of the hardiest native, born and bred to the vicissitudes of the northwest. Even Jacques Baptiste, born of a Chippewa woman and a renegade voyageur (having raised his first whimpers in a deerskin lodge north of the sixty-fifth parallel and had the same hushed by blissful sucks of raw tallow), was surprised. Though he sold his services to them and agreed to travel even to the never opening ice, he shook his head ominously whenever his advice was asked.

Percy Cuthfert's evil star must have been in the ascendant, for he, too, joined this country of argonauts. He was an ordinary man, with a bank account as deep as his culture, which is saying a good deal. He had no reason to embark on such a venture—no reason in the world, save that he suffered from an abnormal development of sentimentality. He mistook this for the true spirit of romance and adventure. Many another man has done the like and made as fatal a mistake.

The first breakup of spring found the party following the ice run of Elk river. It was an imposing fleet, for the outfit was large, and they were accompanied by a disreputable contingent of half breed voyageurs with their women and children. Day in and day out they labored with the bateaux and canoes, fought mosquitoes and other kindred pests or sweated and swore at the portages. Severe toil like this lays a man naked to the very roots of his soul, and ere Lake Athabasca was lost in the south each member of the party had hoisted his true colors.

The two shirks and chronic grumblers were Carter Weatherbee and Percy Cuthfert. The whole party complained less of its aches and pains than did either of them. Not once did they volunteer for the thousand and one petty duties of the camp. They thought nobody noticed, but their comrades swore under their breaths and grew to hate them, while Jacques Baptiste sneered openly and damned them from morning till night. But Jacques Baptiste was no gentleman.

At the Great Slave Hudson bay dogs were purchased, and the fleet sank to the guards with its added burden of dried fish and pemmican. Then canoe and bateau answered to the swift current of the Mackensie, and they plunged into the Great Barren Ground. Every likely looking "feeder" was prospected, but the elusive "pay dirt" danced ever to the north. At the Great Bear, overcome by the common dread of the unknown lands, their voyageurs began to desert, and Fort of Good Hope saw the last and bravest bending to the tow lines as they bucked the current down which they had so treacherously glided. Jacques Baptiste alone remained. Hath he not sworn to travel even to the never opening ice?

Abandoning their river craft at the headwaters of the Little Peel, they consumed the rest of the summer in the great portage over the Mackenzie watershed to the West Rat. This little stream fed the Porcupine, which in turn joined the Yukon where that mighty highway of the north countermarches on the Arctic Circle. But they had lost in the race with winter, and one day they tied their rafts to the thick eddy ice and hurried their goods ashore. That night the river jammed and broke several times. The following morning it had fallen asleep for good.

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"We can't be more'n 400 miles from the Yukon," concluded Sloper, multiplying his thumb nails by the scale of the map. The council, in which the [illegible] had whined to excellent [illegible], was drawing to a [illegible] long time ago. No [illegible] Baptiste's fa- [illegible] for the. Fur [illegible] incidentally marking the trail with a couple of frozen toes.

"Sufferin' cracky!" cried another of the party. "No whites?"

"Nary white," Sloper sententiously affirmed. "But it's only 500 more up the Yukon to Dawson. Call it a rough thousand from here."

Weatherbee and Cuthfert groaned in chorus.

"How long'll that take, Baptiste?"

The half breed figured for a moment. "Workum like h——, no man play out, ten, twenty, forty, fifty days. Um babies come" (designating the incapables), "no can tell. Mebbe when h—— freeze over; mebbe not then."

The manufacture of snowshoes and moccasins ceased. Somebody called the name of an absent member, who came out of an ancient cabin at the edge of the campfire and joined them. The cabin was one of the many mysteries which lurk in the vast recesses of the north. Built when and by whom no man could tell. Two graves in the open, piled high with stones, perhaps contained the secret of those early wanderers. But whose hand had piled the stones?

The moment had come. Jacques Baptiste paused in the fitting of a harness and pinned the struggling dog in the snow. The cook made mute protest for delay, threw a handful of bacon into a noisy pot of beans, then came to attention. Sloper rose to his feet. His body was a ludicrous contrast to the healthy physiques of the incapables. Yellow and weak, fleeing from a South American fever hole, he had not broken his flight across the zones and was still able to toil with men. His weight was probably ninety pounds with the heavy hunting knife thrown in, and his grizzled hair told of a prime which had ceased to be. The fresh young muscles of either Weatherbee or Cuthfert were equal to ten times the endeavor of his, yet he could walk them into the earth in a day's journey. And all this day he had whipped his stronger comrades into venturing a thousand miles of the stiffest hardship man can conceive. He was the incarnation of the unrest of his race, and the old Teutonic stubbornness, dashed with the quick grasp and action of the Yankee, held the flesh in the bondage of the spirit.

"All those in favor of going on with the dogs as soon as the ice sets say aye."

"Aye!" rang out eight voices—voices destined to string a trail of oaths along many a hundred miles of pain.

"Contrary minded?"

"No!" For the first time the incapables were united without some compromise of personal interests.

"And what are you going to do about it?" Weatherbee added belligerently.

"Majority rule! Majority rule!" clamored the rest of the party.

"I know the expedition is liable to fall through if you don't come," Sloper replied sweetly, "but I guess, if we try real hard, we can manage to do without you. What do you say, boys?"

The sentiment was cheered to the echo.

"But I say, you know," Cuthfert ventured apprehensively, "what's a chap like me to do?"

"Ain't you coming with us?"

"No-o."

"Then do as you please. We won't have nothing to say."

"Kind o' calkilate yuh might settle it with that canoodlin' pardner of yourn," suggested a heavy going westerner from the Dakotas, at the same time pointing out Weatherbee. "He'll be shore to ask yuh what yur a-goin' to do when it comes to cookin' an' gatherin' the wood."

"Then we'll consider it all arranged," concluded Sloper. "We'll pull out tomorrow, if we camp within five miles, just to get everything in running order and remember if we've forgotten anything."

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The sleds groaned by on their steel shod runners, and the dogs strained low in the harnesses in which they were born to die. Jacques Baptiste paused by the side of Sloper to get a last glimpse of the cabin. The smoke curled up pathetically from the Yukon stovepipe. The two incapables were watching them from the doorway.

Sloper laid his hand on the other's shoulder.

"Jacques Baptiste, did you ever hear of the Kilkenny cats?"

The half breed shook his head.

"Well, my friend and good comrade, the Kilkenny cats fought till neither hide nor hair nor yowl was left. You understand—till nothing was left. Very good. Now, these two men don't like work. They won't work. We know that. They'll be all alone in that cabin all winter—a mighty long, dark winter. Kilkenny cats—well?"

The Frenchman in Baptiste shrugged his shoulders, but the Indian in him was silent. Nevertheless it was an eloquent shrug, pregnant with prophecy.

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Things prospered in the little cabin at first. The rough badinage of their comrades had made Weatherbee and Cuthfert conscious of the mutual responsibility which had devolved upon them. Besides, there was not so much work, after all, for two healthy men. And the removal of the cruel whip hand, or, in other words, the bulldozing half breed, had brought with it a joyous reaction. At first each strove to outdo the other, and they performed petty tasks with an unction which would have opened the eyes of their comrades who were now wearing out bodies and souls on the long trail.

All care was banished. The forest, which shouldered in upon them from three sides, was an inexhaustible wood yard. A few yards from their door slept the porcupine, and a hole through the winter robe formed a bubbling [illegible] of water, crystal clear and painfully cold. But they soon grew to find fault with even that. The hole would persist in freezing up and thus gave them many a miserable hour of ice chopping. The unknown builders of the cabin had extended the side logs so as to support a cache at the rear. In this was stored the bulk of the party's provisions. Food there was, without stint, for three times the men who were fated to live upon it. But the most of it was of the kind which built up brain and sinew, but did not tickle the palate. True, there was sugar in plenty for two ordinary men, but these two were little else than children. They early discovered the virtues of hot water judiciously saturated with sugar, and they prodigally swam their flapjacks and soaked their crusts in the rich, white sirup. Then coffee and tea, and especially the dried fruits, made disastrous inroads upon it. The first words they had were over the sugar question. And it is a really serious thing when two men wholly dependent upon each other for company begin to quarrel.

Weatherbee loved to discourse blatantly on politics, while Cuthfert, who had been prone to clip his coupons and let the commonwealth jog on as best it might, either ignored the subject or delivered himself of startling epigrams. But the clerk was too obtuse to appreciate the clever shaping of thought, and this waste of ammunition irritated Cuthfert. He had been used to blinding people by his brilliancy, and it worked him quite a hardship, this loss of an audience. He felt personally aggrieved and unconsciously held his muttonhead companion responsible for it.

Save existence, they had nothing in common—came in touch on no single point. Weatherbee was a clerk who had known naught but clerking all his life; Cuthfert was a master of arts, a dabbler in oils and had written not a little. The one was a lower class man who considered himself a gentleman, and the other was a gentleman who knew himself to be such. From this it may be remarked that a man can be a gentleman without possessing the first instinct of true comradeship. The very presence of either became a personal affront to the other, and they lapsed into sullen silences which increased in length and strength as the days went by. Occasionally the flash of an eye or the curl of a lip got the better of them, though they strove to ignore wholly each other during these mute periods. And a great wonder sprang up in the breast of each as to how God had ever come to create the other.

As the sugar pile and other little luxuries dwindled they began to be afraid they were not getting their proper shares, and in order that they might not be robbed they fell to gorging themselves. The luxuries suffered in this gluttonous contest, as did also the men. In the absence of fresh vegetables and exercise their blood became impoverished, and a loathsome, purplish rash crept over their bodies. Yet they refused to heed the warning. Next their muscles and joints began to swell, the flesh turning black, while their mouths, gums and lips took on the color of rich cream. Instead of being drawn together by their misery, each gloated over the other's symptoms as the scurvy took its course.

They lost all regard for personal appearance and, for that matter, common decency. The cabin became a pigpen, and never once were the beds made or fresh pine boughs laid underneath. Yet they could not keep to their blankets, as they would have wished, for the frost was inexorable, and the fire box consumed much fuel. The hair of their heads and faces grew long and shaggy, while their garments would have disgusted a ragpicker. But they did not care. They were sick, and there was no one to see. Besides, it was very painful to move about.

To all this was added a new trouble—the fear of the north. This fear was the joint child of the great cold and the great silence and was born in the darkness of December, when the sun dipped below the southern horizon for good. It affected them according to their natures. Weatherbee fell prey to the grosser superstitions and did his best to resurrect the spirits which slept in the forgotten graves. It was a fascinating thing, and in his dreams they came to him from out of the cold and snuggled into his blankets and told him of their toils and troubles ere they died. He shrank away from the clammy contact as they drew closer and twined their frozen limbs about him, and when they whispered in his ear of things to come the cabin rang with his frightened shrieks. Cuthfert did not understand, for they no longer spoke, and when thus awakened he invariably grabbed for his revolver. Then he would sit up in bed, shivering nervously, with the weapon trained on the unconscious dreamer. Cuthfert deemed the man going mad and so came to fear for his life.

What with the fear of the north, the mental strain and the ravages of the disease, the pair lost all semblance of humanity, taking on the appearance of wild beasts hunted and desperate. Their cheeks and noses, as an aftermath of the freezing, had turned black. Their frozen toes had begun to drop away at the first and second joints. Every movement brought pain, but the fire box was insatiable, wringing a ransom of torture from their miserable bodies. Day in, day out, it demanded its food, a veritable pound of flesh, and they dragged themselves into the forest to chop wood on their knees. Once, crawling thus in search of dry sticks, unknown to each other they entered a thicket from opposite sides. Suddenly, without warning, two peering death's heads confronted each other. Suffering had so transformed them that recognition was impossible. They sprang to their feet, shrieking with terror, and dashed away on their mangled stumps, and, falling at the cabin door, they clawed and scratched like demons till they discovered their mistake.

Occasionally they lapsed normal, and during one of these sane intervals the chief bone of contention, the sugar, had been divided equally between them. They guarded their separate sacks, stored up in the cache, with jealous eyes, for there were but a few cupfuls left, and they were totally devoid of faith in each other. But one day Cuthfert made a mistake. Hardly able to move, sick with pain, with his head swimming and eyes blinded, he crept into the cache, sugar canister in hand, and mistook Weatherbee's sack for his own.

January had been born but a few days when this occurred. The sun had some time since passed its lowest southern declination and at meridian now threw flaunting streaks of yellow light upon the northern sky. On the day following his mistake with the sugar bag Cuthfert found himself feeling better both in body and in spirit. As noontime drew near and the day brightened he dragged himself outside to feast on the evanescent glow, which was to him an earnest of the sun's future intentions. Weatherbee was also feeling somewhat better and crawled out beside him. They propped themselves in the snow beneath the moveless wind vane and waited.

The stillness of death was about them. In other climes when nature falls into such moods there is a subdued air of expectancy, a waiting for some small voice to take up the broken strain. Not so in the north. The two men had lived seeming aeons in this ghostly peace. They could remember no song of the past; they could conjure no song of the future. This unearthly calm had always been—the tranquil silence of eternity.

Their eyes were fixed upon the north. Unseen, behind their backs, behind the towering mountains to the south, the sun swept toward the zenith of another sky than theirs. Sole spectators of the mighty canvas, they watched the false dawn slowly grow. A faint flame began to glow and smoulder. It deepened in intensity, ringing the changes of reddish yellow, purple and saffron. So bright did it become that Cuthfert thought the sun must surely be behind it—a miracle, the sun rising in the north! Suddenly, without warning and without fading, the canvas was swept clean. There was no color in the sky. The light had gone out of the day. They caught their breaths in half sobs. But, lo, the air was a-glint with particles of scintillating frost, and there, to the north, the wind vane lay in vague outline on the snow! A shadow! A shadow! It was exactly midday. They jerked their heads hurriedly to the south. A golden rim peeped over the mountain's snowy shoulder, smiled upon them an instant, then dipped from sight again.

There were tears in their eyes as they sought each other. A strange softening came over them. They felt irresistibly drawn toward each other. The sun was coming back again. It would be with them tomorrow and the next day and the next. And it would stay longer every visit, and a time would come when it would ride their heaven day and night, never once dropping below the sky line. There would be no night. The ice locked winter would be broken; the winds would blow and the forests answer; the land would bathe in the blessed sunshine and life renew. Hand in hand they would quit this horrid dream and journey back to the southland. They lurched blindly forward, and their hands met—their poor maimed hands, swollen and distorted beneath their mittens.

But the promise was destined to remain unfulfilled. The northland is the northland, and men work out their souls by strange rules, which other men who have not journeyed into far countries cannot come to understand.

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An hour later Cuthfert put a pan of bread into the oven and fell to speculating on what the surgeons could do with his feet when he got back. Home did not seem so very far away now. Weatherbee was rummaging in the cache. Of a sudden he raised a whirlwind of blasphemy, which in turn ceased with startling abruptness. The other man had robbed his sugar sack. Still, things might have happened differently had not the two dead men come out from under the stones and hushed the hot words in his throat. They led him quite gently from the cache, which he forgot to close. That consummation was reached; that something they had whispered to him in his dreams was about to happen. They guided him gently, very gently, to the woodpile, where they put the ax in his hands. Then they helped him shove open the cabin door, and he felt sure they shut it after him—at least he heard it slam and the latch fall sharply into place. And he knew they were waiting just without, waiting for him to do his task.

"Carter! I say, Carter!"

Percy Cuthfert was frightened at the look on the clerk's face, and he made haste to put the table between them.

Carter Weatherbee followed without haste and without enthusiasm. There was neither pity nor passion in his face, but rather the patient, stolid look of one who has certain work to do and goes about it methodically.

"I say, what's the matter?"

The clerk dodged back, cutting off his retreat to the door, but never opening his mouth.

"I say, Carter, I say, let's talk. There's a good chap."

The master of arts was thinking rapidly now, shaping a skillful flank movement on the bed where his Smith & Wesson lay. Keeping his eyes on the madman, he rolled backward on the bunk, at the same time clutching the pistol.

"Carter!"

The powder flashed full in Weatherbee's face, but he swung his weapon and leaped forward. The ax bit deeply at the base of the spine, and Percy Cuthfert felt all consciousness of his lower limbs leave him. Then the clerk fell heavily upon him, clutching him by the throat with feeble fingers. The sharp bite of the ax had caused Cuthfert to drop the pistol, and as his lungs panted for release he fumbled aimlessly for it among the blankets. Then he remembered. He slid a hand up the clerk's belt to the sheath knife, and they drew very close to each other in that last clinch.

Percy Cuthfert felt his strength leave him. The lower portion of his body was useless. The inert weight of Weatherbee crushed him—crushed him and pinned him there like a bear under a trap. The cabin became filled with a familiar odor, and he knew the bread to be burning. Yet what did it matter? He would never need it. And there were all of six cupfuls of sugar in the cache. If he had foreseen this he would not have been so saving the last several days. Would the wind vane ever move? It might even be veering now. Why not? Had he not seen the sun today? He would go and see. No; it was impossible to move. He had not thought the clerk so heavy a man.

How quickly the cabin cooled! The fire must be out. The cold was forcing in. It must be below zero already, and the ice creeping up the inside of the door. He could not see it, but his past experience enabled him to gauge its progress by the cabin's temperature. The lower hinge must be white ere now. Would the tale of this ever reach the world? How would his friends take it? They would read it over their coffee, most likely, and talk it over at the clubs. He could see them very clearly. "Poor old Cuthfert!" they murmured. "Not such a bad sort of chap, after all." He smiled at their eulogies and passed on in search of a Turkish bath. It was the same old crowd upon the streets. Strange they did not notice his moose hide moccasins and tattered German socks! He would take a cab. And after the bath a shave would not be bad. No; he would eat first. Steak and potatoes and green things—how fresh it all was! And what was that? Squares of honey, streaming liquid amber! But why did they bring so much? Ha, ha! He could never eat it all. Shine? Why, certainly. He put his foot on the box. The bootblack looked curiously up at him, and he remembered his moose hide moccasins and went away hastily.

Hark! The wind vane must be surely spinning. No; a mere singing in his ears; that was all—a mere singing. The ice must have passed the latch by now. More likely the upper hinge was covered. Between the moss chinked roof poles little points of frost began to appear. How slowly they grew! No, not so slowly. There was a new one, and there another—two—three—four—they were coming too fast to count. There were two growing together, and there—a third had joined them. Why, there were no more spots! They had run together and formed a sheet.

Well, he would have company. If Gabriel ever broke the silence of the north they would stand together, hand in hand, before the great white throne. And God would judge them, God would judge them!

Then Percy Cuthfert closed his eyes and dropped off to sleep.

Sprang to Their Feet, Shrieking With Terror.

BELIEVE BRAIN IN STOMACH

Chinese Ignorant of the Anatomy of Human Body—Subject of Microbes Difficult to Teach.

Ignorance is responsible for the guesswork of the Chinese about the anatomy of the human body, Jean Price writes in World Outlook. "Nothing is known of the nervous system or of the circulation of the blood, and every organ except the brain is said to have a pulse. The heart is considered to be the center of being, and therefore it must also be in the center of the body." The Chinese also believe that the brain is in the stomach. Perhaps that is the reason that more than half the thought and conversation of the common people relates to food!

It is ignorance which makes a mother chew her child's food, before putting it in the little one's month. It is ignorance which allows a mother to wash the clothes in a green, stagnant pool while the child at her side eagerly drinks the same water. It is ignorance which our mission doctors have to fight when they suggest that women should not use poisonous face paint, should bathe the baby at least once before it is grown, should wash the dishes once a month in clean water. This ignorance makes the subject of microbes more difficult to teach than the English in which it is taught.

And, though it's hard to say, it is ignorance which causes a lover to take water in which his body is washed and secretly mix it in the drink of his loved one. But, then, that is romance and we musn't mention germs in the same breath.

Just as Easy.

Two commercial travelers, while on a train on the Oregon Electric railway, got into an argument over the action of the automatic brake.

"It's the inflation of the tube that stops the train," declared the first traveler.

"Wrong, wrong!" shouted the second. "It's the output of the exhaustion."

So they wrangled for an hour. Then, when the train arrived at the station they agreed to submit the matter for settlement to the motorman. That gentleman, leaning condescendingly from the door of his car, listened with an attentive frown to the two travelers' statement of their argument. Then he smiled, shook his head, and said:

"Well, gents, ye're both wrong about the working of the vacuum brake. Yet it's very simple and easy to understand. When we want to stop the train we just turn this 'ere tap, and then we fill the pipe with vacuum."

As Lawyers Decide.

Black—"He's a young lawyer, and desperately in love!" White—"Yes, he enters an appearance at the girl's home three nights a week, pleads his case, receives an adverse decision and then appeals again!"—Puck.

ZOO SNAKE SWALLOWS MATE

Boa Gulps Down Companion as Both Are Endeavoring to Feast on the Same Live Pigeon.

A snake's method of swallowing is almost automatic; the internal mechanism begins its work as soon as the reptile takes the food into its mouth. In his book, "Of Distinguished Animals," Mr. H. Perry Robinson relates an extraordinary incident that occurred a few years ago at the London zoological gardens.

The attendants put some pigeons into a cage occupied by two boas, one ten feet long, the other a foot shorter. In the night the larger snake seized a pigeon, and his mate unfortunately selected the same bird. The tip of the smaller boa's nose was drawn into the mouth of the other together with the pigeon, and after it the rest of the snake continued to go, although the eater must have been surprised at the almost intolerable length of what it had believed to be an ordinary pigeon.

The next morning only one of the snakes was visible. Its enormously distended body no longer had the power of coiling, but remained stretched to its full length in a straight line, and appeared to be at least three times its normal circumference. It was almost painful to see the tightened skin, which had separated the scales all over the middle of the body. Twenty-eight days later the snake had not only digested its companion, but had regained its appetite as well as its normal size, and it immediately swallowed a pigeon put into its den.

Profits in Shipbuilding.

The sale of the schooner Glynn, the first ocean commerce carrier built south of Newport News since the war began, has brought out facts, says the Manufacturers' Record, showing the remarkable profits to be made from shipbuilding and the operation of freight ships under war conditions. The company made a profit of 25 per cent on the building of the vessel; her purchaser, James S. Brailey, Jr., received $52,000 freight for the voyage to Italy with naval stores and then sold her to French interests for $90,000. After deducting $21,500 for insurance, outfitting and provisioning and the salaries and wages, the Glynn netted him $46,500 in six months.

Correct.

Little Jim, did not know quite so much about scriptural history as he ought to have known, but when his sister asked him, "Where was Solomon's temple?" he was rather angry that she should think him unable to answer a simple question like that.

"Don't you think I know anything?" he asked.

"Well, where was it, then?" his sister repented.

And then he informed her: "On the side of his forehead, of course, the same as other folks'! Do you think I am a dunce?"

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Didn't Matter.

Passenger (loudly)—Man overboard.

Cholly Piffle (who is seasick)—Oh, splash.

Could Be.

Willie Monk—Ain't you a stork?

Mr. Stork—What did you think I was—a bill collector?

SOAP IS STRONGLY ALKALINE and constant use will burn out the scalp. Cleanse the scalp by shampooing with "La Creole" Hair Dressing, and darken, in the natural way, those ugly, grizzly hairs. Price, $1.00.—Adv.

His Intention.

"Rastus," inquired the colonel, "aren't you ready to die for your country?"

"No, sah, Ah ain't studyin' to die foh mah country. Ah's studyin' to make some German die foh his country."

Dangerous Remedy.

Policeman (holding down a tramp on the sidewalk)—No danger, ma'am, he's merely having a fit.

Kind Lady—Gracious! Shall I get some water to throw in his face?

Policeman—Do you want to kill him?

Question of Shape.

Brazen Co-ed—What shape is a kiss?

Unsophisticated Fresh—Why—uh—I never noticed.

B. C.—Well, give me one and we'll call it square.

Mad Enough to Fight.

A Massachusetts man who happened to be on two different transports when they were torpedoed has finally become so mad at Germany that he has enlisted and says he is ready to fight. Well, that's something more gained, even if the angry man doesn't succeed in breaking through anywhere.—Springfield (O.) News.

Not the Same.

A fledgling author at the Century club in New York drew forth a manuscript and volunteered to read it to Robert W. Chambers.

"You know how Poe," the young man said, "read his stories to an old colored mammy, don't you? He believed that what pleased the old mammy would please the public, and he killed the scenes the old girl didn't like, and built up those she did. Well, Bob, I want—ha, ha, ha!—I want to use you in the same way. Have a drink and a cigar, and then—"

"Excuse me, my boy," said Mr. Chambers, and he rose and took his hat and stick.

"You don't happen to be Poe, and therefore I don't feel called on to be your old colored mammy."

Bringing Home the Germs.

When our soldier boys mingle with the soldiers of all nationalities and fight over strange and disease-soaked soil they may acquire many strange disease germs and, returning to America, bring them along, warns World Outlook. Pestilence has generally been a camp follower of war. But science is dealing with this problem with unprecedented vigor. Sir William Osler said: "Never before in history has so great a host been assembled; never before in war time have armies been so healthy."

Yet we are warned as to the danger of indiscriminate immigration after the war and of the great need of careful medical and sanitary preparation to combat the unfamiliar diseases that Sammies will bring home.

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