KEITH OF THE BORDER

A TALE OF THE PLAINS

By RANDALL PARRISH

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Illustrations By Dearborn Melville.

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SYNOPSIS.

Jack Keith, a Virginian, now a border plainsman, is riding along the Santa Fe trail on the lookout for roaming war parties of savages. He notices a camp fire at a distance and then sees a team attached to a wagon and at full gallop pursued by men on ponies. When Keith reaches the wagon the raiders have massacred two men and departed. He searches the victims finding papers and a locket with a woman's portrait. He resolves to hunt down the murderers. Keith is arrested at Carson City, charged with the murder, his accuser being a ruffian named Black Bart. He goes to jail fully realizing the peril of swift border justice. A companion in his cell is a negro, who tells him he is Neb and that he knew the Keith family back in Virginia. Neb says one of the murdered men was John Sibley, the other Gen. Willis Waite, formerly an officer in the Confederate army. The plainsman and Neb escape from the cell, and later the two fugitives become lost in the sand desert. They come upon a cabin and find its lone occupant to be a young girl, whom Keith recognizes as a singer he saw at Carson City. The girl explains that she came there in search of a brother who had deserted from the army. A Mr. Hawley induced her to come to the cabin while he sought to locate her brother. Hawley appears, and Keith in hiding recognizes him as Black Bart. Hawley tries to make love to the girl. There is a terrific battle in the darkened room in which Keith overcomes Black Bart. Horses are appropriated, and the girl who says that her name is Hope, joins in the escape. Keith explains his situation and the fugitives make for Fort Larned, where the girl is left with the hotel landlady. Miss Hope tells that she is the daughter of General Waite. Keith and Neb drift into Sheridan, where Keith meets an old friend, Dr. Fairbain.

"Oh, You Mean Hope? Do You Know Her?"

CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

"You say there was no trace?"

"Nothing to travel on after forty-eight hours—a posse started out next morning, soon as they found him—when they got back they reported having run the fellows as far as Cimmaron Crossing—there they got across and escaped."

"Who led the posse?"

"A man called Black, I think," he said.

"Black Bart?"

"Yes, that's the name; so, I reckon you didn't bury Willis Waite this time, Captain. You wouldn't have thought he was a dead one if you had heard him swear while he was telling the story—it did him proud; never heard him do better since the second day at Gettysburg—had his ear shot off then, and I had to fix him up—Lord, but he called me a few things."

Keith sat silent, fully convinced now that the doctor was telling the truth, yet more puzzled than ever over the peculiar situation in which he found himself involved.

"What brought the General up here?" he questioned, finally.

"I haven't much idea," was the reply. "I don't think I asked him directly. I wasn't much interested. There was a hint dropped, however, now you speak about it. He's keen after those papers, and doesn't feel satisfied regarding the report of the posse. It's my opinion he's trailing after Black Bart."

The dining-room was thinning out, and they were about the only ones left at the tables. Keith stretched himself, looking around.

"Well, Doctor, I am very glad to have met you again, and to learn Waite is actually alive. This is a rather queer affair, but will have to work itself out. Anyway, I am too dead tired tonight to hunt after clues in midst of this babel. I've been in the saddle most of the time for a week, and have got to find a bed."

"I reckon you won't discover such a thing here," dryly. "Got seven in a room upstairs, and others corded along the hall. Better share my cell—only thing to do."

"That would be asking too much—I can turn in at the corral with Neb; I've slept in worse places."

"Couldn't think of it, Keith," and the doctor got up. "Besides, you sleep at night, don't you?"

"Usually, yes," the other admitted.

"Then you won't bother me any—no doctor sleeps at night in Sheridan; that's our harvest time. Come on, and I'll show you the way. When morning comes I'll rout you out and take my turn."

Keith had enjoyed considerable experience in frontier hotels, but nothing before had ever quite equalled this, the pride of Sheridan. The product of a mushroom town, which merely existed by grace of the temporary railway terminus, it had been hastily and flimsily constructed, so it could be transported elsewhere at a moment's notice. Every creak of a bed echoed from wall to wall. The thin partitions often failed to reach the ceiling by a foot or two, and the slightest noise aroused the entire floor. And there was noise of every conceivable kind, in plenty, from the blare of a band at the Pioneer Dance Hall opposite, to the energetic cursing of the cook in the rear. A discordant din of voices surged up from the street below—laughter, shouts, the shrieks of women, a rattle of dice, an occasional pistol shot, and the continuous yelling of industrious "barkers." There was no safety anywhere. An exploding revolver in No. 47 was quite likely to disturb the peaceful slumbers of the innocent occupant of No. 15, and every sound of quarrel in the thronged barroom below caused the lodger to curl up in momentary expectation of a stray bullet coursing toward him through the floor. With this to trouble him, he could lie there and hear everything that occurred within and without. Every creak, stamp, and snore was faithfully reported; every curse, blow, snarl re-echoed to his ears. Inside was hell; outside was Sheridan.

Wearied, and half dead, as Keith was, sleep was simply impossible. He heard heavy feet tramping up and down the hall; once a drunken man endeavored vainly to open his door; not far away there was a scuffle, and the sound of a body falling down stairs. In some distant apartment a fellow was struggling to draw off his tight boots, skipping about on one foot amid much profanity. That the boot conquered was evident when the man crawled into the creaking bed, announcing defiantly, "If the landlord wants them boots off, let him come an' pull 'em off." Across the hall was a rattle of chips, and the voices of several men, occasionally raised in anger. Now and then they would stamp on the floor as an order for liquid refreshments from below. From somewhere beyond, the long-drawn melancholy howl of a distressed dog greeted the rising moon.

Out from all this pandemonium Keith began to unconsciously detect the sound of voices talking in the room to his left. In the lull of obstructing sound a few words reached him through the slight open space between wall and ceiling.

"Hell, Bill, what's the use goin' out again when we haven't the price?"

"Oh, we might find Bart somewhere, and he'd stake us. I guess I know enough to make him loosen up. Come on; I'm goin'."

"Not me; this town is too near Fort Hays; I'm liable to run into some of the fellows."

A chair scraped across the floor as Bill arose to his feet; evidently from the noise he had been drinking, but Keith heard him lift the latch of the door.

"All right, Willoughby," he said, thickly, "I'll try my luck, an' if I see Bart I'll tell him yer here. So long."

He shuffled along the hall and went, half sliding, down stairs, and Keith distinguished the click of glass and bottle in the next room. He was sitting up in bed now, wide awake, obsessed with a desire to investigate. The reference overheard must have been to Hawley, and if so, this Willoughby, who was afraid of meeting soldiers from the fort, would be the deserter Miss Hope was seeking. There could be no harm in making sure, and he slipped into his clothes, and as silently as possible, unlatched his door. There was a noisy crowd at the farther end of the hall, and the sound of some one laboriously mounting the stairs. Not desiring to be seen, Keith slipped swiftly toward the door of the other room, and tried the latch. It was unfastened, and he stepped quietly within, closing it behind him.

A small lamp was on the washstand, a half-emptied bottle and two glasses beside it, while a pack of cards lay scattered on the floor. Fully dressed, except for a coat, the sole occupant lay on the bed, but started up at Keith's unceremonious entrance, reaching for his revolver, which had slipped to the wrong side of his belt.

"What the hell!" he exclaimed, startled and confused.

The intruder took one glance at him through the dingy light—a boy of eighteen, dark hair, dark eyes, his face, already exhibiting signs of dissipation, yet manly enough in chin and mouth—and smiled.

"I could draw while you were thinking about it," he said, easily, "but I am not here on the fight. Are you Fred Willoughby?"

The lad stared at him, his uncertain hand now closed on the butt of his revolver, yet held inactive by the other's quiet assurance.

"What do you want to know for?"

"Curiosity largely; thought I'd like to ask you a question or two."

"You—you're not from the fort?"

"Nothing to do with the army; this is a private affair."

The boy was sullen from drink, his eyes heavy.

"Then who the devil are you? I never saw you before."

"That's very true, and my name wouldn't help any. Nevertheless, you're perfectly welcome to it. I am Jack Keith." No expression of recognition came into the face of the other, and Keith added curtly, "Shall we talk?"

There was a moment's silence, and then Willoughby swung his feet over the edge of the bed onto the floor.

"Fire away," he said shortly, "until I see what the game is about."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Interviewing Willoughby.

Coolly, yet without in the least comprehending how best to proceed, Keith drew toward him the only chair in the room, and sat down. Miss Hope—more widely known as Christie Maclaire—had claimed this drunken lad as her brother, but, according to Hawley, he had vehemently denied any such relationship. Yet there must be some previous association between the two, and what this was the plainsman proposed to discover. The problem was how best to cause the fellow to talk frankly—could he be reached more easily by reference to the girl or the gambler? Keith studying the sullen, obstinate face confronting him, with instinctive antagonism over his intrusion, swiftly determined on the girl.

"It was not very nice of me to come in on you this way," he began, apologetically, "but you see I happened to know your sister."

"My sister? Oh, I guess not!"

"Yes, but I do," throwing a confidence into his tone he was far from feeling, "Miss Hope and I are friends."

The boy sprang to his feet, his face flushed.

"Oh, you mean Hope? Do you know her? Say, I thought you were giving me that old gag about Christie Maclaire."

"Certainly not; who is she?"

"That's more than I know; fellow came to me at Carson, and said he'd met my sister on a stage west of Topeka. I knew he was lyin', because she's home over in Missouri. Finally, I got it out of him that she claimed to be my sister, but her name was Maclaire. Why, I don't even know her, and what do you suppose she ever picked me out for her brother for?"

He was plainly puzzled, and perfectly convinced it was all a mistake. That his sister might have left home since he did, and drifted West under an assumed name, apparently never occurred to him as possible. To Keith this was the explanation, and nothing could be more natural, considering her work, yet he did not feel like shattering the lad's loyalty. Faith in the sister might yet save him.

"Perhaps the fellow who told you," he hazarded blindly, speaking the first thought which came to his mind, "had some reason to desire to make you think this Maclaire girl was your sister."

The suggestion caused him to laugh at first; then his face suddenly sobered, as though a new thought had occurred to him.

"Damn me, no, it couldn't be that," he exclaimed, one hand pressing his head. "He couldn't be workin' no trick of that kind on me."

"Whom do you mean?"

"A fellow named Hawley," evasively. "The man who claimed to have met my sister."

"'Black Bart' Hawley?"

The boy lifted his head again, his eyes filled with suspicion.

"Yes, if you must know; he's a gambler all right, but he's stuck to me when I was down and out. You know him?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HIS NAME MOST APPROPRIATE

"Knapp" It Was and Drowsy Delegate Proceeded to Live Up to Cognomen.

During the morning prior to the opening of the national convention, a special meeting of those delegates already arrived was held to discuss and vote on some preliminary measures. These met in a smaller hall, opposite the convention hall; and when they were all assembled in the stuffy room, one of the members leaned back wearily in his chair and promptly fell asleep.

After an hour's session, the chairman called a vote on a certain measure. All responded but the sleeper, whose snores now and then echoed through the room.

"Here! wake that man up!" demanded the chairman, at this point. "What's his name, anyway?"

No one being able to tell, and no one following the chairman's order to wake the sleeper up, that functionary at once called upon a ballot clerk to carry out the order. So accordingly the clerk hurried down the aisle to the dozer, shook him vigorously by the arm, asking him his name the while.

With a broken snore that perforated the atmosphere, the sleeper awoke.

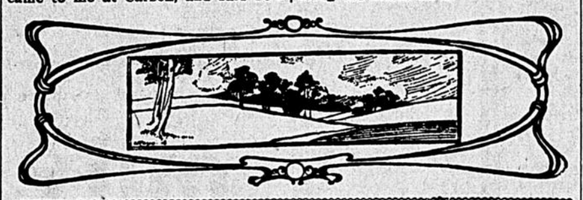
"What's his name?" again called out the impatient chairman.

At this, the clerk straightened up from the unknown member's chair, and announced, to the accompaniment of a roar of laughter.

"Mr. chairman, he says his name is Knapp."—Judge's Library.

Up-to-Date Street Beggars.

"Even your street beggars are up to date here in New York," said an observing out-of-town man as he tossed a nickel into the hat of a professional beggar wearing a badge "Victim of the Recent Fire." "I've never known it to fail," he continued, "that after a fire, an explosion or any other big accident there was a noticeable change in the appeals made by your street beggars. Another thing, note his shrewdness, as he doesn't specify any particular fire, but simply the recent fire. The desire to keep abreast of the times seems to be deep seated in all New Yorkers, and just after some great accident the street beggars are sure to make the most of the situation and make their appeal to the public along the latest lines."



Merely Obeyed the Rules

How the Late Tom Johnson, in Early Life, Squirmed Out of Very Tight Place.

When the late Tom Johnson started in life he drove a horse car in Indianapolis.

One night there was a big storm of sleet and snow and the tracks were almost hidden, Johnson was on the night shift, and in the storm he drove his car two blocks beyond a curve before he realized the car was off the tracks and slipping along on the ice.

He tried to pull the car back and failed. Thereupon he unhitched the horses, drove them back to the barn and left the car where it was.

Next day the superintendent called him. "Here, Johnson," he said, "what do you mean by driving a car off the track and then leaving it in the street?"

"Why," Johnson replied, suavely, "that's in the rules for drivers and conductors."

"In the rules for drivers and conductors?" roared the superintendent. "Where, I'd like to know?"

"Certainly," replied Johnson. "It says always to be polite to passengers. Do you remember the kind of a night last night was? Well, there was a lady on my car who didn't have an umbrella and she lived two blocks from that curve. So I drove her home."—Saturday Evening Post.

No Elevator to Success.

There are men who crowd about the push-button of an elevator, instead of taking kindly to the steep stairs of success and they will never get there or anywhere else.

Be sure you are right and then go ahead. Don't turn around to see if your neighbors are looking.

Suggestions About the Boy

Remember the Difference in Stages of Development and Do Not Force Him.

Study your boy; watch his development from early childhood; give him every opportunity to show what there is in him by furnishing plenty of wholesome work and strenuous play. Teach him to work persistently and with a purpose. Pay him reasonably for what he does and train him to save. Put him through the grammar school by all means and the higher schools if you can. Allow for a period of indifference to the business of the world, and also expect him to show more or less variableness and turning aside in the choice of a vocation. Do not force or resist him to the point of straining the close tie of friendship and affection existing between him and yourself. Await with patience the awakening of his best vocational aspiration, indicating all the while your belief that such an event will certainly come to pass. And sometime may you have the exceeding great joy of knowing how much worth while it has all been!—The Delineator.

Potato Exploded.

A potato, the size of a tea cup, caused extraordinary havoc in a home in Vancouver, Wash., the other day when it exploded in the oven of a range and shattered the cast-iron grate, blew open the oven door, and caused such a loud report that the maid thinking someone had shot at her rushed from the house screaming for help. The explosion was due to the large amount of water in the potato and to the fact that it was in a hot oven. When the water was converted to steam, the skin being baked hard, did not break until the pressure became tremendous, causing a report similar to the discharge of a shotgun.

POLITICAL MURDERS IN RUSSIA INSTIGATED BY SPIES

WHEN a political killing happens in Russia, look for the agent provocateur.

This maxim is fairly justified, yet it has exceptions. There are contradictions and sinister puzzles. Things Russian are topsy-turvey from the moral as well as other standpoints. For latest example, take the slaying of Premier Stolypin. Who killed him, and for what purpose? The answer is not as obvious as an American would assume. Amazingly enough, the assassin, Bogroff, was claimed both by the government and by the revolutionists. "He was a cog in our machine who went wrong," assert the police. "He was a revolutionist who obeyed our orders," say the disciples of terrorism.

It requires thought to appreciate the niceness of the dilemma which the situation presents, especially on the side of the police. The officials find it a shade preferable to take the wrong cog view, and assert that Bogroff had a regular permit to enter the theater, and used a revolver supplied by the authorities. It is less injurious to the police to take this view than to admit that they were outwitted by the enemy, and that terrorism is in successful ascendancy.

If Bogroff had been asked which side he worked for, he would have found it difficult to answer.

There is an increasing roll in Russia, headed by the arch betrayer Azeff, who helped to kill a grand duke and a minister while in government employ, of ambiguous persons who may be styled the missing links or unclassified monstrosities of revolution. Agent provocateur, "secret co-worker," government spy, revolutionary spy—these seem to be simple terms whose meaning can be easily learned and understood. But the dictionary definitions do not satisfy an impartial student. There are things in the phenomena not covered by the definitions. The revolutionists are with the dictionary. Like the police, they do not believe in a twilight zone; they separate the sheep from the goats with a clear cut line. They explain most elaborately that a sheep is a sheep and a goat is a goat. Nevertheless, a survey of cold facts shows that there are woolly goats and goatish sheep. Azeff, Gapon, Petroff, Bogroff, they worked on both sides and helped and hurt both sides. A psychological zoologist would have difficulty in placing them.

The Russian agent provocateur is a government spy who encourages or commits crime for the sake of making arrests. But any spy or detective is likely to conduct a degree of crime in order to succeed in his work. Between direct provocation and condonation the difference is not always perceptible. The terrorist operating against the government must needs use to a greater or less degree the same methods. He must betray somewhat, injure his party a little in order to injure the enemy more. In a game of desperate intrigue, where the stakes are life and death, only the stanchest characters preserve their moral and mental balance. So great is the peril of losing integrity that many leaders of the revolutionary movement disapprove of any revolutionist entering the service of the police.

Some new light on the spy problem in general and the Azeff case in particular was given by Leonid Menschikoff, late senior assistant to the chief of the Third section at St. Petersburg.

Mr. Menschikoff is the original exposer of the terrific Azeff and has supplied evidence against lesser stars of the inferno of provocation.

A boy of sixteen in a technical high school at Moscow, Leonid Menschikoff was arrested for belonging to a revolutionary circle. He was betrayed by a fellow member of the circle, Zubatoff, who became an eminent provocateur and chief of police at St. Petersburg. The young student spent a few months in jail. Then he entered the police service, not as a spy, but as a kind of clerk or lower official.

He determined to learn the system and the personnel and to obtain documents for the benefit of the revolutionists. But he could not do much for the first fifteen years, being kept in subordinate positions. When he was transferred to the office of the Ohkrana, Department of Protection of Third Section, at St. Peteresburg, in 1900, he found his chance. As head of the department of "procedure" he had charge of secret and valuable archieves, and he directed his subordinates to make copies of documents, which copies he appropriated and deposited in various places in order to insure their safety. Some documents he would take home at night and make typewritten copies himself, informing his superiors that he could not do all the work at the office by day. In this simple fashion he managed to accumulate more than 1,000 pages of valuable material. He was not watched or suspected during this period. He worked alone and kept aloof from revolutionists, even as the tide of revolt rose to its climax in 1905, for he wished to complete a large enterprise. But something happened which forced him to uncover himself.

Mr. Menschikoff saw in the secret records that there were three extremely able agents provocateur in the Third Section. One was named Raskin, another Vinogradoff, another Valuyski. These men were in the inmost confidence of the terrorists. They knew beforehand all the big plots, even the slaying of Minister Plehve and Grand Duke Sergius. This trinity of talent, strange to say, focussed gradually into one personage—a master traitor whose name has removed considerable stigma from that of Judas in the minds of several million people.

Mr. Menschikoff, regardless of danger to himself and his plans, felt compelled to write an anonymous letter to a member of the revolutionary central committee, informing him that a great terrorist leader was a police spy. The committee member was asked to tell no one except five of his fellows, but in his astonishment he showed the letter to Eugene Azeff, who was known to him by another name, and said:

"Who is Azeff?"

"I am Azeff," calmly replied the arch spy. "But there is a mistake. The guilty man is Tataroff."

Tataroff, also mentioned in the letter, was in fact a police agent. He was a candidate for the inner circle of terrorism, sent forward by his employers for the purpose of checking up the activities of Azeff, whose splendid villanies had no supervision. Tataroff tried to save himself by accusing his eminent colleague, though he had no personal knowledge of Azeff's police position. A revolutionary tribunal tried Tataroff, condemned him to death and had him shot in 1906. Before he was killed, however, Tataroff denounced Azeff to the police as being disloyal and engaged in terroristic work. Azeff was arrested by General Grassimoff, chief of police, and threatened with exposure of his double role, whereupon he made a wholesale betrayal of revolutionists whom he had perhaps not intended to betray. Several hundred were arrested, exiled, shot or hanged.

The confirmation of Azeff's character as a spy was given to Vladimir Bourtseff, historian of the revolution, on a railroad train in Germany by Lopoukin, assistant secretary of the interior and chief of police, for which act the official was exiled to Siberia in 1909. Azeff was tried by a revolutionary court at Paris in his absence, and condemned to death. He is in hiding. If the revolutionists ever find him—

"Could not the treachery of Azeff be balanced with his revolutionary work in helping to kill a grand duke and a minister of state?" was asked.

"No," replied Mr. Menschikoff. "Azeff was a beast."

James Persitz, late an official in the Russian secret police, now in New York engaged in writing his memoirs, gave an account of his adventures as a spy among terrorists.

"One society which I joined in the course of my duty provided me with an experience which I shall never forget. By the fierceness of my declarations and the enegry I displayed I rose until I was selected to carry out a desperate deed involving the murder of a number of prominent officials. Needless to say, the plot was communicated by me to the officials of the secret police. Communication with them was, of course, extremely dangerous. I took the greatest possible care to cover up the traces of my handiwork, but nevertheless the anarchist police outwitted me and secured incontrovertible evidence that I was a police spy. Their method of doing this was interesting.

"The chief of the society wrote out the details of an attempt to be made on a certain high official. At a time when only the leader and I were in the room he made some excuse for leaving me alone for a few moments. In my eagerness to fulfill my duty I rapidly searched over the papers he had left, noting the place and the date when the scheme was to be put into execution. Shortly afterward the anarchist chief returned and pocketed the documents.

"On the fateful night the chief informed me that the attempt had been postponed. As I afterward found out, some members of the anarchist police sent to survey the neighborhood had detected signs of the watching officials and realized that their plans had been divulged to the police by some traitor. Since the chief of the anarchists and myself were the only two people who had any knowledge of the intendd outrag—which, of course, was simply a sham affair prepared to trap me. I was immediately known to them in my true light as a police spy."

After this, Mr. Persitz says, he was decoyed to a lonely wood near Moscow, bound hand and foot by the terrorists and ordered to confess. "At first, rendered desperate by my peril, I stoutly refused to admit my guilt, shouting frantically, 'I deny it all!' But, with many curses and blows, they told me that I was already convicted. They ordered me to divulge to them the secrets of the political police. This, however, I refused to do. My captors then held a consultation and decided to follow the methods of the inquisition and wring from me by torture the particulars they were seeking. . . . Pins were forced into all parts of my body, each tormentor apparently vying with the others to discover a place which would produce the most excruciating pain.

The lash was applied in addition to the pins. Then the captors, considering it vain to gain any information, discussed methods of killing the traitor. A handsome young Polish Jewess, says the narrator came forward and exclaimed:

"'I have an excellent idea. All the deaths you suggest are too quick. He is tied; let us lay him on the railway. The Petersburg express will shortly be due, and the cus will have the pleasure of lying helpless while he sees the train coming nearer and nearer. It will give him time to think over his treachery.'

"The suggestion was heartily approved. With many a curse and blow I was promptly carried off and laid across the rails of the Moscow-Petersburg railway, being tied face uppermost to the rails by the ropes that bound my hands behind my back. After having brutally kicked me almost into insensibility and wished me a sarcastic 'goodby,' my onetime fellow anarchists disappeared in the gathering darkness of the night. . . .

"Slowly the minutes passed away, and, at last, to my horror, I heard the rumble of the approaching train. Never shall I forget the unspeakable terror of that moment. Nerve racking though the period of suspense had been, it was as nothing to this. Presently the rumble grew to a roar, and, turning my head, I saw the lights of the express approaching. Then I think I lost all control of myself. In a frenzy of fear I redoubled my efforts to escape, flinging myself this way and that. Larger and larger grew those glaring orbs of light, nearer and nearer came the ponderous wheels. I realized that I had but a few moments more to live. Making an effort, I managed to lie calmly for a brief second or two; then I braced feet and shoulders and heaved upward with all my remaining strength.

"The cord parted. With one wild scream of excitement I rolled between the rails. I remember a deafening, thunderous roar and the approach of a hot blast, such as comes from the opening of an enormous furnace door. Then everything went red, and I lapsed into insensibility."

Mr. Persitz says he woke up in a hospital three months later, having been delirous all that time. On account of the affair he was rewarded with $400 "gratification money," an increase of salary and a six months' vacation, which he spent mostly in Italy.

WILD GAME IN VENEZUELA

Jaguar, Many Varieties of Wildcats, Strange Birds and Snakes Are Plentiful.

"Venezuela offers a better opportunity for the seeker of wild game than any other country in the world, perhaps," said Ralph Totten, recently consul of the United States at Maracaibo, Venezuela. Mr. Totten, who is a Tennesseean, has been in the consular service for three years and has been stationed in Maracaibo and Santo Domingo. He is on his way to his new post at Trieste, Austria.

"It has always been a source of wonder to me that more Americans fond of hunting have not gone to Venezuela, where, along the Amazon and in the vicinity of Lake Maracaibo, more varieties of wild birds and small game can be found than perhaps in any other place on earth. So far as I know there have been only two Americans who have hunted in that country. One of them was Caspar Whitney, the naturalist and writer, who went there to kill a jaguar, a species of the tiger family.

"The jaguar is probably one of the most powerful members of the cat family. He has tremendous strength in his forelegs, and with a stroke of his paw can kill an ox. There are all varieties of the wildcat family in Venezuela, and they can be found almost any place in the country outside of the cities.

"Everyone knows of course that myriads of all varieties of the parrot family and monkeys can be found there. There are dozens of different kinds of parrots. Among them is the largest parrot in the world—the macaw—which measures several feet in length. These birds are black, with bright red heads and tails, and wings tipped with red. A more beautiful bird I never saw. They fly in pairs and a peculiarity of the species is that while flying they hook their bills together.

"Along the Amazon and Lake Maracaibo, which, by the way, is as large a body of water as Lake Erie, there are all varieties of large snakes. The boa constrictor is a native of that country. The anaconda is another huge reptile that is met frequently. Deer abound in Venezuela and are of all kinds."

"Stint" and "Stunt."

Stint is a good word as a noun. As a verb it means something not quite so pleasing. Do not confound it with stunt, however. A stunt is something quite useless. It is the horse-play of the mountebank, and has nothing in common with honest, productive labor. A stint is the warning to the wise that something demands to be accomplished; a goad to the laggard that time is on the wing.—Atlantic.

New Life-Preserver.

A new life-preserver, which has been successfully tried, may be introduced into the German navy, writes the American consul from Brunswick. The apparatus, which weighs 5½ pounds, consists of two swimming cushions bound together by straps. The cushions lie upon the breast and back. The apparatus is provided with a small lamp fed by a battery.

WHAT I WENT THROUGH

Before taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Natick, Mass.—"I cannot express what I went through during the change of life before I tried Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I was in such a nervous condition I could not keep still. My limbs were cold, I had creepy sensations, and I could not sleep nights. I was finally told by two physicians that I also had a tumor. I read one day of the wonderful cures made by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and decided to try it, and it has made me a well woman. My neighbors and friends declare it had worked a miracle for me. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is worth its weight in gold for women during this period of life. If it will help others you may publish my letter."—Mrs. Nathan B. Greaton, 51 N. Main Street, Natick, Mass.

The Change of Life is the most critical period of a woman's existence. Women everywhere should remember that there is no other remedy known to medicine that will so successfully carry women through this trying period as Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

If you would like special advice about your case write a confidential letter to Mrs. Pinkham, at Lynn, Mass. Her advice is free, and always helpful.

PERCHERONS AND BELGIANS

Stallions at prices that defy competition and a satisfactory guarantee. Write us for particulars.

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HE GETS AWAY WITH IT

Variety Actor Tackles Second Gravedigger in Hamlet and Steals All the Laughs.

A company playing "Hamlet" was forced to find an actor to play the Second Gravedigger on account of the illness of the second comedian of the company. The only actor available was a variety performer, who had no reverence for Shakespeare and no respect for the traditions of the classic drama. The Second Gravedigger was a comedy part, and he knew that he could "get away with it."

When the First Gravedigger threw off the first waistcoat, revealing another underneath, the audience tittered. The removal of the second waistcoat brought a loud laugh, and the third produced a roar. The First Gravedigger was delighted. He had never played to such an appreciative audience, and visions of good notices in the papers and a possible increase in salary began to loom up before his eyes. As he threw off the fourth waistcoat he turned partly around, and the cause of the unusual hit was disclosed to him.

The Second Gravedigger, being accustomed to build laughs on lines and business of other actors, saw his opportunity and seized it. As fast as the First Gravedigger would throw the waistcoats on the ground, the variety comedian would pick them up and put them on. The new business was much funnier to the audience than the old, with which it was thoroughly familiar.

Not content with having stolen the laughs from the regular comedian in this scene, the new man went further. When the First Gravedigger said to him, "Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor" (to which there is no reply in the text), the assistant sexton replied:

"Yaughan told me to tell you that you couldn't have any more liquor from him til you paid for the last you got."—The Bookman.

An Unbeliever.

"Sir," said the haughty American to his adhesive tailor, "I object to this boorish dunning. I would have you know that my great-great-grandfather was one of the early settlers."

"And yet," sighed the anxious tradesman, "there are people who believe in heredity."—Argonaut.

And So On.

"What is this domestic science?" inquired the engaged girl.

"It consists of making hash out of the left-over meat, and croquettes out of the left-over hash," explained her more experienced friend.

One Mother Says

"There's only one trouble with

Post Toasties

"When I get a package or two, Father and the boys at once have tremendous appetites."

Post Toasties Require No Cooking

Serve with sugar and cream and the smiles go round the table.

"The Memory Lingers"

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