

MEETING A MONSTER

(From Central News and Press Exchange.)

I was sitting in my pet easy chair, reading the letters which had arrived by the last mail.

Some from my old home so vividly revived precious memories that letting them drop into my lap, I gazed dreamily out the open French window into the mirage of a Surrey landscape whose bowery lanes and ivy-clad cottages, clustering round a venerable church, fascinated themselves out of the gray monotony of the treeless Australian downs among which my lot had been cast for the last few years.

Then at the stroke of four from the little clock on my writing-table, I roused myself from my reverie in order to get through the rest of my budget before my husband's arrival. His five o'clock cup of tea. For it was my custom on mail days to have a précis of my letters ready by that hour.

Which always rendered my time at home, however busy he might be, called it "instruction combined with amusement." He was an energetic and hard-working man, but he never read but scant time for the writing or reading of any but business letters.

I found little worthy of remark in any of the five remaining epistles and composed myself to the reading of the fifth—a bulky one from an old friend and schoolfellow, a cousin of my husband's, Maria, the eldest who, with myself, had married and settled in Australia, and now lived many miles off in a more populous district. She was the kindest of women.

Maria's style was diffuse and her habit of underlining every other sentence imparted a fictitious air of emphasis to it which, as a rule, evaporated on perusal.

But in spite of its being doubly interlined, one passage of her letter roused me to keen interest. Reduced from the wilderness into ordinary prose it was to the effect that a neighbor of theirs—a Mr. Froggart, an eccentric and solitary old bachelor, who had spent his life in the habit of collecting snakes, kangaroos, and monkeys—had recently added to his collection a baboon of huge size and strength. This creature had, within the last fortnight, turned upon his master, and after hugging him to death, had battered the body with a club in a shocking manner and had then escaped into the woods. But this was not all. While the search parties were busily hunting for the brute, news came that with a huge bough of a tree, it had attacked a lonely woman—the widow of a sheep-herd—and her little baby, and had killed them both. Every effort was being made to capture the baboon, but they were of no avail, owing to its extreme cunning, without success.

Here I was interrupted by the pitapat of little feet on the veranda, and I turned our only child, a girl, rounded the corner and made for my window.

His shock of tousled fair hair—which defied the reforming influence of brush or comb, and had gained him the nickname which had utterly ousted his baptismal appellatives, Algeron Felix—surmounted a round face of scaphoid innocence, out of which his father's intensely blue eyes wandered round the room in quest of me.

"Where is your cap, Fluffy?" I asked from the cosy depths of my chair. Fluffy's right fist was tentatively applied to the top of his skull.

"Well, mum, I must, shouldn't I? I shouldn't wonder if it wasn't lying by the lower pole!" He uttered the Devonianism—inherited from his father, the younger son of a Devon squire—with a philosophic calm which utterly ignored the personal bearing of my question.

"And here you are, sonnie?" He twiddled all over. "Oh, mumsie dear, it was such fun! I purried the old turkey-cock was a kangaroo and a roded Jumbo after him he did not want to putend that and he gobled awful, Oh dear!"

And Fluffy wiped tear-born laughter with the back of his chubby hand. It was impossible to resist Fluffy in these moods, and by this time I was laughing under the infection of his merriment.

"And you know, mumsie, there is a long sheep-trough by the lower pole, and if you can get behind it, you could see his red head peeping over the edge so."

And my son, who had a strong dramatic turn, enacted the scene with a chair for the trough.

"So I made Jumbo jump over the trough just where his old eyes was peep-seeping and he gave a regular surprise-creech! Oh dear!"

At this point words failed the narrator and he lay on his back at full length on the floor, which he tapped with his heels in an ecstasy of mimicry, with the result that he soon found me. But it took a week of rest to help me recover from those few hours in the Oaxaca cell.

When Fluffy had disappeared I once more read the passage of Maria's letter which described the finding of the bodies of the widow and her infant child. Both were inside the shepherd's hut, the door of which had been broken open, and clutched in the mother's dead hand was a two-pronged steel table-fork, evidently snatched up for her defense, while her left arm was still round her baby.

I pictured to myself the poor soul's terror at the awful appearance of that demon-face glaring in at her window. It was then no doubt that she had strained her infant to her bosom and had armed herself with her particularly inadequate weapon. Oh, the anguish that must have torn her heart while her door was being battered in by her terrible visitor!

"Suppose my darling Fluffy tomorrow, straying by himself in our absence, I hid my face in my hands. "Amy, dearest, are you ill?" I looked up to see my six-foot husband, the picture of health and strength, standing at the open window. I instantly determined not to worry him with my morbid fancies.

"No, you goose; ring for tea." Fred, who had learned carpentry at Rugby and was very deft of hand, had hung all the bells in the house for me. "Any letters?" "None from home."

And I gave him a summary of their contents. "Anything more, little woman?" "One from Maria," and I leaned forward to pick it up from the floor whether it had fluttered.

Fred made a wry face and laid a hand upon my arm. "Let it be, darling. Maria's a dear, poor soul; but her letters are—well, hardly exciting. Besides, we've got to arrange about tomorrow."

And we were soon deep in the discussion of next day's "picnic," as we called our monthly drive of twenty miles to the nearest town for the purchase of such little odds and ends as could not well be got through carriers or chance messengers. We used to enjoy these excursions immensely. I had been a beautiful driver, Fred's gift, which I drove in a light hooded gig and had trained to go at half speed and full speed, to stop stock-still, or to travel close upon forty miles since which I drove in a light hooded gig and had trained to go at half speed and full speed, to stop stock-still, or to travel close upon forty miles since which I drove in a light hooded gig and had trained to go at half speed and full speed, to stop stock-still, or to travel close upon forty miles since.

The gallant creature sprang forward. And, to my great joy, gained rapidly upon the awful thing behind. But the mare, game as she was, had traveled close upon forty miles since which I drove in a light hooded gig and had trained to go at half speed and full speed, to stop stock-still, or to travel close upon forty miles since which I drove in a light hooded gig and had trained to go at half speed and full speed, to stop stock-still, or to travel close upon forty miles since.

Strange to say then, and not till then, did I remember that the revolver was in my bag. In a second I had removed all the knick-knacks I had bought in town, and there it was ready to my hand. While I was in the act of emptying the bag a plan formed itself in my mind. Thinking that I could not be sure of my aim while the gig was in motion, I bade "Brownie" stop. It was by this time getting dark, and as I crouched down with one knee on the seat, I felt rather than saw that the baboon was somewhere near, prowling stealthily round. "Brownie" must have scented him, for she trembled so that the harness tinkled audibly.

It seemed to be an eternity of suspense. Would the brute attack me from the right or from the left? Or would he spring on "Brownie's" back to do the deed on me? Every nerve in my body seemed to minister to the sense of hearing. Once I thought I heard a dry twig snap under a footstep, and some five or six yards away to the right, and I had the spig covered with my revolver in an instant, but in a moment I had wheeled round towards a shuffling sound on the left.

All of a sudden the shafts tilted up and I saw the great, hairy paws grasping with a weirdly human-like clutch, the rim of the book just above my sleeping boy, and the next instant they had raised the enormous shaggy head to a level with my face. I saw the gleam

of something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

"All right, you know best. And won't the young villain enjoy it!"

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

So it was settled. Now I must tell you that, by way of arousing me from the home-sickness which lay strong upon me at the outset of our farming life, Fred had taught me how to use a revolver. Constant practice had made me an expert shot, and I could hit the pip on an ace-card nine times out of twelve at a dozen paces.

That night rummaging about for something or other, my eye fell on my revolver, acting on some impulse which I could not explain. I carefully loaded all six chambers, and then put it into a small handbag which I was taking with me, and which I pushed under "Brownie" while she drove.

GEORGE B. PALMER Funeral Director and Licensed Embalmer (Established 1871) KEEPS THE FINEST FUNERAL SUPPLIES MADE SPECIAL TO HIS OWN ORDERS. Also Supplies for all who call for his Services. The following is the cost of Funerals for five grades, with Personal Services and Care of Body included:

- 1—Cloth-Covered Oak Casket and services of hearse. \$45.00
2—Cloth-Covered Oak Casket and services of hearse. \$55.00
3—Broadcloth Casket and services of hearse. \$65.00
4—Broadcloth Casket, satin-lined, services of hearse. \$75.00
5—Fine Cloth Casket, satin-lined, services of hearse. \$90.00
Best Carriages, \$4.00 each. Ambulance on Call.

Office and Parlors: Masonic Temple, 621 Jackson St. Open Day and Night—Both Phones 146—House Ind. Phone 243. C. W. WILLITS, Assistant.

Wall Paper If it is bargains you are looking for see me before you by. G. E. LAWSON, 208 West 7th St. Independent Phone 1197.



A waist of pale apricot broadcloth is shown in the sketch, the trimming consisting of braiding, lace and velvet ribbon and buttons. The cloth was slashed on each side of the front to show the lace under-bow, the opening being laced across with velvet ribbon of a shade darker. Narrow silk souchette

of teeth in the cavernous mouth and the flicker of a red tongue, and I felt I was looking into the jaws of death. For a moment I stood as one entranced under the gaze of the savage eyes, and then I fired into the mouth and almost simultaneously head and jaws disappeared from sight. Sprung upon the seat and peered over the top of the road, lay a dark, huddled, motionless mass.

The next thing I was conscious of was being helped out of the gig by my husband and carried to bed, where I lay in a kind of stupor for many days. They found the baboon the next day and shot it. My bullet had penetrated his brain. The shepherd's widow was avenged.

JEAN'S AND ISOBEL'S FROLIC. (By Euphemia Holden.) "And they're going to be away over Sunday," said Isobel. "And mother said to ask you whether if you couldn't stay with me, please, and we can have the whole house to ourselves and do anything we want and—did you ever hear of such a lark?"

"Oh—!" gasped Jean. "I never did. But what if my mother couldn't spare me. It's awfully hard for her to have all the work?" "But don't you see," interrupted Isobel, quickly, "we can both go back to your house in the mornings and help and then frolic the rest of the day and the evening. I'm sure it will work all right."

So Friday afternoon Jean packed her Uncle Francis's dress-suit case and she and Isobel lugged it over and deposited it in the big front room overlooking the lake. Then they spent the rest of the afternoon at the skating rink, where the ice was very bad but the fun with skaters very good.

They came back barely in time to slip into their dinner dresses and go down to a beautiful table set for two and served with care and exactness, just as it was the first night Jean had dined with Isobel, many months before.

After dinner they went into the parlor and played on the piano and sang awhile and then began to speculate on something more original and exciting to do.

Rings on Her Finger Nails. A famous Philadelphia beauty, Kate Furness, hardly more than a debutante, though she is now Mrs. Thompson, has been the sensation of fashionable watering places all this summer, displaying her rings—which are countless—in a most original and barbaric manner. She wears her jewels only on the upper joints of her fingers, weighting the slender digits up to the nails with diamonds and rubies, and sapphires and emeralds, leaving the bottom story entirely vacant. The effect is certainly bizarre and not altogether fortunate. But what's the use of being alive if one can't be unique? In playing bridge, to which, of course, the lovely Mrs. Thompson is a devotee, her eccentric ring arrangements produce their full effect. Nor does she seem the least inconvenienced in her digital manipulations by the clumsy hardware she has elected to impose upon herself. Louisville Courier-Journal.



The cut illustrates a graceful long piece of soft silk or crepe, the skirt being full-plaited, and the waist accordion-plated. The model was in dark wine red, which is to be one of the most fashionable colors this autumn. The yoke and collar were of cream lace of fine, transparent texture, and on each side of this vest, embroidered pieces in Oriental colorings were set in, these in turn being outlined by a band of the silk, embroidered in raised dots the size of a pea. The girdle was made of the colored embroidery and bands of the silk, the short sleeves being similarly finished.



The plate shows one of the new millinery models for dress wear, the shape being rather a large one, with a bowl crown. Pale blue felt formed the hat, which was tilted up on the left side, the bandless being filled in with a draped knot of pale blue velvet. Brown tulle

was used under the brim across the back, the trimming consisting of shaded hydrangea blooms, in pale blue, pink and mauve, with foliage. A pale blue algrette sprang from the centre of the front, giving the required height.

THE BLIND SNAKE. An Adventure in the Hinterland of Mexico. (By Captain A. B. Hawser.) "Throw him into the rear cell," commanded the officer of the ragged, villainous patrol that had caught me. I was in the province of Oaxaca, well back among the mountains and before Mexico was as peaceful and quiet as it is now.

The men who had roped me off as a horse and taken me prisoner were ostensibly military, but in reality they were bandits. They pretended that my passports were irregular. What they were really after was to take away my equipment and what money I had and then to keep me in a cell till I should be glad enough to let them keep all my property in return for liberty.

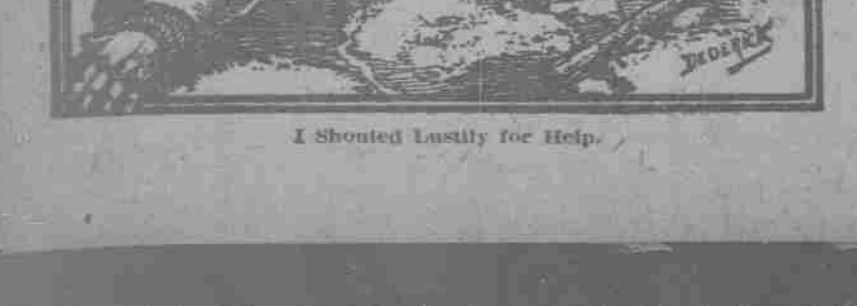
The cell was a miserable little den in a humble-down adobe house. Had I been free to move about I could have broken out in a very short time. But my captors had reckoned on that. They had tied my arms and also my legs, so that I was forced to remain in a sitting position. Every time I arose it was only to fall down again after taking a few tottering steps. So soon thought I that I was dead and I lay down to sleep.

What awakened me I do not know. It may have been a noise or it may have been instinct. At any rate, I awoke with the strong impression that I was not alone in the cell. I was lying on my side and the sunlight was shining on the floor just beyond my face. My eyes naturally wandered there first and my heart jumped hard at what they saw. Not five feet away from my head lay a huge fat rattlesnake, bleated and muzzling.

I jerked my head back instinctively and as the motion the snake moved too. Its evil wrinkled body writhed and swelled and its horrible head arose and turned in my direction. Then I saw that the thing was blind. It had shed its skin recently and the thick white membrane that forms over the eyes of these serpents at such times had not yet come away.

My first impulse was of course, to straggle to my feet and get as far away as I could. But the moment I scrambled to an upright posture I fell headlong again, partly because my legs were tied both above and below, the knees and partly because the tight bonds had stopped the circulation of the blood so much that both legs were quite numb.

And when I fell I fell in such a way that I nearly landed on top of the serpent! So I did not try to rise again. I got to my knees and thus, on elbows and knees, I scrambled away from the blind snake as swiftly as I could. I could not go far, for the cell was not more than ten feet long and less than seven feet deep. In hustling away in my clumsy position I kicked



I Shouted Lustily for Help.