

TRUE STORIES

Adventure

Lost in a Blizzard Near the Equator

BY CAPTAIN HENRY MANSFIELD.

Actuated by a desire to see the world and an innate love of all things savouring of prehistoric times, I enlisted, shortly after graduation from Columbia College, as assistant to Prof. Marshall Saville, head of the George E. Heye expedition to Ecuador. The purpose of the expedition was to study the archaeology of the Inca and pre-Inca periods of civilization in Ecuador and Peru.

The first part of our traveling was prosaic and uneventful enough. We left New York in May, 1910, arriving at Guayaquil, Peru, some weeks later. There we were joined by Manuel Gamio of Mexico City, who made the fourth member of the party, a young fellow called Willie Buskey having accompanied us from New York.

After a few days in the unhealthy Guayaquil district we struck off into the forests of Riobamba, where we for a time made our headquarters, unearthing many relics of prehistoric military and domestic life. We, of course, employed the usual cavalcade of pack mules, horses, moses and two guides, and the work in Riobamba was more in the nature of an outing. We slept long and comfortably, the altitude at which we lived making it cool, and endured few hardships.

Skirting northward, we visited Quito, the city on the equator, and were entertained royally by President Alvarez of Ecuador. As this was the last stage of our journey before plunging into the real wilderness, where we were to almost fight for our living, I remember the banquet tendered us by the President very distinctly, and later had cause to remember it even more vividly and more gratefully.

Leaving Quito, we followed the highways to Salinas, a town in the northernmost part of the province of Bolivar. Then began the real work of the expedition. We set out through the Chimborazo Mountains to cross the province from north to south, with Chilianas as our goal.

Two or three days' journey from our starting point Gamio and I obtained permission from Professor Saville to explore and climb Cotapaxi, probably the largest volcano in the world. We expected to take two or three days for the feat, and besides heavy blankets we carried provisions to last us that length of time. The first night we came to a little adobe hut called by courtesy an inn, at Latacunga, under the very foot of the mountain. While we were eating supper two or three ill-appearing fellows entered the room and ordered drinks. Gamio, being a Mexican, spoke perfect Spanish, and I have always been as familiar with the language as I am with my native tongue. We had soon been induced into a conversation with them and they seemed to be not at all bad company.

Before our acquaintance had advanced very far they had told us of a hidden treasure, gold and jewels of the Inca, which was buried not far from the town, about two miles up the mountain.

This story is one which the traveler meets in almost every town of the vast territory which comprises the Peru known to Pizarro. As usual, in this case there was a ghost which guarded the treasure, and with all the cupidity of the natives they had never made any very determined effort to unearth it.

We, of course, took no stock in the story of the treasure, but our curiosity to see one of these dreaded spots for ourselves was strong. After some talk we decided to ride out to the place after supper, and as the inn was likely to be possessed of all the things which make life miserable in those countries, we planned to carry our provisions and blankets with us to sleep in the open. This we arranged in English, being not altogether willing to trust our new friends too far.

The description of the treasure spot, given us by our friends of the inn, had led us to believe we would find an excellent camping ground, and we were in a hurry to sleep. Nearing the place where the gold and jewels were supposed to be hidden, we saw three men apparently digging, and there were two more sitting on the ground. As soon as we were within hailing distance Gamio asked them what they were doing. The diggers dropped their spades, and others jumped to their feet and a number of shots were fired.

The fusillade came as a shock and we were nearly unseated by the rearing of our horses, which, frightened, wheeled and ran, taking to a path which led at an angle off from the one we had come on. This, I must admit, saved us the trouble of changing the horses ourselves, for we certainly would not have lingered in that locality. Gamio's pistol had caught in his holster, but I had managed to discharge my automatic in the direction of the men who had attacked us. Whether it was effective I do not know. I hope not, for we never heard of those who had assaulted us again.

nor were we ever able to figure out what was their purpose. Had it been our friends from the inn attempting to rob us, they might better have waited for us to approach and assured our defeat by meeting us under a guise of friendliness.

The course of the path we were on seemed to trend upward and we followed it for a matter of two miles before we dismounted, staked the horses and turned in to sleep. Any of the trails, we had been told, led to shepherds' huts near the snow line, and we had reckoned on leaving the horses at one of these stations.

Early in the morning we continued higher and about noon arrived at a small cabin crouched among the rocks. We were near the snow line and anxious to start the ascent, as our time was getting short. The horses were left in the care of the shepherd, and with provisions for three meals apiece in case of emergency, we began our climb. At first we followed an almost hidden trail, which was soon lost after we entered the snow. The peak we wished to ascend was directly before us, and so long as we kept climbing we were all right for a time.

The wind was bitter cold, and despite the efforts of climbing, we shivered some after the sun became obscured behind a heavy blanket of gray. By the middle of the afternoon we were as high as we cared to go, and, after eating sparingly, started to descend. This, we had calculated, would not take us more than two-thirds the time of the ascent, but we chose to keep the greater part of our provisions for a remote case of emergency.

The tracks we had made in ascending were easily followed for a time, but soon after we had started back it began to snow, very gently at first, but developing rapidly into a swirling, raging blizzard. The tracks fast became obscure, and it was with great difficulty that we made our way. The wind hurled the stinging cold flakes into our eyes, so that at times we could scarcely hold them open, but we were not alarmed, thinking that we could find our way from memory.

Even when the snow enveloped us like a blanket and made it impossible to see a rod in any direction we regarded the experience more in the light of a frolic.

To protect ourselves as much as possible from the bitter weather, and because we continually became separated from each other, we began to walk lock-step fashion. First Gamio would take the lead and I would pace behind him, both hands on his shoulders, my face hidden behind his back, then we would reverse the order and he would take a few moments' comparative rest.

So we must have trudged and dragged ourselves through the ever deepening blanket of snow for about an hour, when suddenly, while I was leading, Gamio brought us to a halt with a tug at my shoulders.

We had just plunged and slid to the bottom of a gulch, and the formation of the range made it possible to take either of two courses in skirting a line of cliffs which we could not have hoped to scale and which I remembered we had not descended directly. I had just turned to the east when Gamio brought me to the sudden halt.

"That's the wrong way," he said, a little irritably.

"Are you sure?" said I. "I am quite positive we came from this direction."

I was still positive that I was right, but if there were any landmarks in the way of rocks or such they were either covered by the snow or we were unable to see them through the driving storm.

I at last argued Gamio around to my way of thinking and we continued on our way as I had started. This was well enough for a time, but I found myself wondering now at every point whether I was in the right or not, and the more I thought of it the more confused I became.

When it next became Gamio's turn to lead he seemed very downcast.

"It's no use," he said. "You may have come right, but I cannot be sure of myself for a single step. I haven't the least idea where we are."

When I thought it over I had not much idea as to our location myself, and meanwhile the cold was biting into us with cruel teeth. We were hungry and thought that a bite to eat might warm us, but I was almost frightened at the numbness of my fingers when I tried to unbuckle the strap which bound my knapsack. Gamio tried it, but his fingers had no strength. Together we tugged and pulled at it, but it was of no use. Finally I took it in my teeth, while Gamio held the sack between his stiffened fists and we managed to start the buckle enough to insert two aching fingers in the loop of the strap and tug it open.

While we ate we opened and closed

our fingers violently and shook our hands from the wrist joints, trying to revive the sluggish circulation. The meal was very sparse, for we did not care to be left with nothing to eat. We were both thoroughly frightened, though I do not think that even then we fully realized the gravity of our situation.

All the while it was getting darker, and I do not know whether night was near or whether the clouds were piling up thicker and thicker over the sun, probably the latter, for darkness follows very quickly after light in the tropics.

At last, with even less warning than usual, the worst came. The darkness of night added to our difficulties, and what with the natural gloom and the blinding, wrestling swirl of snow we could, actually speaking, scarce see a hand before our faces.

And all this within a few miles of the earth's equator! Somewhere in the same latitude sunburned and heat-tormented people were seeking the cool of the plazas and the cafes as the welcome relief of night came to them.

Gamio had begun to weaken perceptibly. I do not know whether I staggered or not, but it seemed that I could not put one foot before the other. Each time I lifted my shoe it was as heavy as though the weight of a whole drift was attached to it. I tried to support my companion but my hands were so numbed that his arm slipped from my grasp and he staggered about like one drunk. Wildly plunging and picking ourselves up as best we could when we fell, which was often, we slid and careened ever downward, only to find ourselves at last in a hollow or chasm, where it was necessary to climb weary heights again before we could descend once more.

When we stumbled and fell headlong into the snow it felt welcome, warm on wrists and hands and even face, until at last they became so numb that we felt absolutely nothing. Gamio groaned monotonously for minutes at a time, then was silent. No doubt I did the same, but I did not realize it at the time.

They say it is comfortable to freeze to death, and so I believe it is at the last, but the pain at first is almost unbearable. We were toiling and dragging ourselves up an especially steep and wicked spur when Gamio began to lag behind. I helped him as best I could, which I fear was little, and he seemed unable or else unwilling to make any effort on his own account. My patience was short and it irritated me to have him lag so.

"What is the matter with you?" I demanded.

"Nothing," said Gamio, and he actually smiled.

I feared he was going mad. His eyes were brighter than they had been, but he seemed weaker.

"Can't you get along a little faster?" I asked.

"What's the use," he said. "Thunder, but it feels good, doesn't it?"

"What fee's good?" said I. "This is no time to joke and if you'd buck up and make a little more effort to do your own walking I'd be better pleased." I added rather brutally, for the complacency of the man maddened me.

"Why, Jack," he added, "Don't you begin to feel warmer? I'm getting about as comfortable as they make 'em. But it was bitter while it lasted."

"Sure enough, I thought, he was crazed by the suffering.

"It's snowing harder than ever," I said.

He looked around him, peering into the white-like darkness.

"Yes, I know it is, Jack. You think I'm crazy, hey? Well, I'm not. I'm fully aware that we're lost. I know it's black as the Styx and that it's still snowing, but I tell you it's getting warmer. I'm almost comfortable."

With all the frenzied power of my will I had to force my cowardly body to do its duty. Grabbing Gamio under the shoulders I dragged him inch by inch up the mountain. When I was able to make him take a few steps of his own accord, but it was next to useless. The extra effort sent the blood tingling for a while through my body and limbered me a little, but I was fast nearing exhaustion and at last from sheer tiredness I let Gamio drop, and he settled, wriggling comfortably into the snow.

I was unable to drag him further, almost unable to stand myself.

"Get up, man!" I groaned.

Gamio only settled deeper into the white blanket which covered the earth, and said that he was comfortable.

I urged and pleaded, but it was useless. I tried to lift him to his feet, but I might as well have tugged at the mountain itself. Then an idea struck me. Gamio might be able to walk if he only would and if he had the proper mental stimulus.

After a deal of fumbling I managed to loose my pistol from its case. Leveling it at my friend with an unsteady hand, I said coolly and evenly:

"Now you get up or I'll shoot you." Gamio reached toward his hip.

"That's enough," I said. "I'll take your gun," and I reached down and lifted it from its holster. It was only the warmth that had suffused my body from the extra effort of dragging Gamio which made it possible for me to hold the weapons or use my fingers at all.

"Oh, I say," stammered Gamio. "Quit your kidding, will you? I don't feel like fooling."

"I'm not kidding," I almost yelled, "and if you don't get up out of there I'll pick a nice little round hole in you. Don't you know, you plagued fool, that it's only the numb warmth before freezing that you feel?"

"Oh, rot!" said Gamio.

"I will count ten," I told him. "One, two, three—"

He thought I meant it and staggered groaning to his feet. Feebly he tottered before me, looking back from time to time with an ugly gleam in his eyes.

A man in his senses would have known that the chances of my hitting anything with my hand trembling so were negligible.

At last we had mounted the spur and started once more downward. I had lost hope and it would be our last descent unless, indeed, we both dropped and died at the bottom.

Suddenly a fresh horror began to creep into my brain. The frightful warmth which had already seized upon Gamio was treacherously stealing upon me. The very worst had come, and I believe I prayed. I still had sense enough to know what it meant and not to think, like Gamio, that the feeling was real. I struggled against it, but it grew even stronger as we staggered down the mountain. Time did not exist for me, and I do not know how long we had descended when I began to dream of hot coffee.

From time to time Gamio looked back over his shoulder and cursed me. Then he pleaded, groaning, protesting in maudlin, childlike sentences against my cruelty, but I held the pistol as steady as might be and forced him onward. Finally, while we were descending in a zigzag, senseless course, he turned with a particularly vicious curse and said:

"Look here, Jack, I'm not going a step further. Go on now, shoot if you like."

"I will," I whispered hoarsely. "Just as sure as there is a God in heaven I'll shoot you if you don't turn round and walk."

The one idea to keep him moving had sole possession of my consciousness, and I think I really believed what I said. I knew that I was losing my grasp on my sanity. I had thrown one pistol away, it was such an effort to carry it. The one I held I steadied by grasping my wrist with my free hand. Gamio laughed horribly.

"You have ten seconds," I told him, then began to count. "One, two, three—"

Gamio was staring me in the eyes.

"Four, five, six, seven—"

Without causing a sensation in my hand, the pistol dropped from it and tumbled into the snow. Gamio laughed insanely, sank to the ground. It was useless to try to pick the weapon up; I could not control my fingers. With the last of the feeble strength that was in me I tried to drag Gamio to his feet; I could not do it, so I started to haul him through the snow. I suppose I had tugged him not more than forty feet when my arms refused to hold. My hands were useless.

I staggered a few paces off to rest. Then my knees began to wobble and clatter together. The mountainside reeled and I did not know whether I was staggering upward or downward. Probably it was in a circle, for when I finally plunged into the snow I was only a few feet from Gamio. For a second my mind and sight cleared, and I saw him dimly through the driving white, on his feet, leaning over and apparently holding his hands as for warmth over a fire. Then blackness, tenfold heavier than even the darkness of the night, settled over me and I knew no more.

How long we lay there I do not know, for I had no idea what hour it was when I lost consciousness.

I returned to myself to realize that every fibre in my body was throbbing and aching. That I was in some kind of a habitation I knew, for I was gazing straight up at heavy, rough, wooden beams and a dirty, dusty ceiling. If my limbs had been numb and feelingless the night before they were almost numb with pain now. I tried to move them, but could not. They were still powerless, I thought, but in a moment discovered that I was bound hand and foot. The cords seemed to be drawn tight, but they did not pain me—in fact, I could not feel them.

Heavy blankets and dirty bags were over me and they felt warm. A smell of brandy permeated the room, and in a moment a man entered and I turned my head enough to see him. He had a glass of hot water and liquor, which he offered me and I drank. It sent the blood tingling, and I asked him why I was tied. He was indisposed to answer at first, so I repeated the question, asking if he wanted money and where was my companion.

The man shrugged his shoulders and turned to Gamio, forcing some of the hot toddy between his lips. It was effective and my friend soon opened his eyes. He was better informed on South American affairs and immediately realized that we were taken for Peruvian spies. Boundary disputes are perpetual between Ecuador and Colombia on the north and Peru on the south, and spies are continually being

sent from one country to the other, though to what purpose I could never understand.

No need to dwell on the inconveniences we suffered. We at least had good food and a warm place to sleep, though we were lodged into a little room about fifteen feet square. Reason as we could with our captor we could not show him the folly of suspecting two men in that desolate, forsaken region of being spies. We could tell "El Gobernador," he said.

After a day and a half of captivity our host entered early in the morning, and menacing us with some kind of pistol of ancient origin, but daunting in size, told us that we were to be bound and taken to the city. A woman, hard looking and masculine, brought some coils of rope, and while she covered us with the deadly weapon, the man bound us.

We were loaded into something which I suppose was a cart and to which a decrepit mule was attached, and while the woman mounted guard behind, the man led and drove the mule over some of the roughest, worst roads which I think exist. At a small army post at the foot of the mountains we were turned over to the military, and, the commander being deaf to argument, we gave our parole and were conducted on horseback to Guandana, the capital of Bolivar Province. There, the Governor, Leon de Herrera, had us cast into prison, and foul enough it was. He was swollen with his own importance and would not let us see his telegraph. He had never heard of the George E. Heye expedition, he said.

Our protest that we had been received and entertained by the President of Ecuador, he considered mere bravado, and announced a court martial for the morrow.

That night we bribed a gold-loving guard to telegraph to President Alvarez in our names, and also to Prof. Saville, whom we thought might be searching for us in and near Latacunga.

About midnight, the Governor himself opened the door to our cell and with profuse apologies invited us to a banquet and offered us the hospitality of his palace. We refused and told him some of the things which we had been saying about him. Even then he bowed and apologized, but we went to the inn and remained there for the night. It appears that the President, remembering us, had telegraphed for particulars and a full description of us. This had convinced him of our identity and he had ordered our immediate release, reprimanding the officious Governor.

Prof. Saville, when we did not return, had sought us in Latacunga and had found the hut where we left our horses. He had concluded we were lost in the storm, but waited for a few days in the little town, meanwhile sending men to search the mountains. He had received our telegram and notified the American Consul at Quito, who in turn took the matter up with the President, but we had by then been released. Altogether we had come off with more than we had expected and were so glad to be alive that we did not make any trouble. The only man I really hold a grudge against is that "El Gobernador."

Make Hot-Bed Do Double Duty

A farm without a garden and hotbed is like a family without a mother, and really, the hotbed is the mother of the garden. It germinates the seeds of tender plants and protects them in their early and delicate stages of growth. But after the hotbed has functioned in this way, what more can be done with it? We answered this question in a partial way some years ago, by cleaning it out, ready for spring use, and then dumping into it such roots and vegetables as were wanted for mid-winter or spring use, covering them up with straw or leaves to keep out frost.

Last fall, however, we hit upon a better way of doing much the same thing and making the contents much more accessible. By nailing strips on opposite sides of the frame, about ten inches below the top, we laid a movable floor of boards, which was then covered with sawdust about four inches deep, except for a piece in the centre about fifteen inches wide. This latter is fitted with a board, or door, that can readily be removed and, when in place, and the weather has become cold, will be covered with straw or other easily removable mulch. In place of the sash, boards and battens are placed on top loosely, and the contents of the hotbed, which had previously been removed, is banked around the frame. Down below this false door, with its sawdust covering, is a moist, frost-proof cellar about two feet deep, in which can be stored crates of potatoes and apples, roots of all kinds and, if it be taken up with ample roots, a good supply of delicious celery for the family table.—A. M. B.

An Idea Came to Roost.

Trees brought home the need of orchard trees brought home the need of orchard and fertility on the rest of the trees. The "chicken" trees increased their yield of apples year by year. The others didn't.

It has been proved that the total bird population, on a given area, can be raised far above the normal by putting up bird-houses. Birds feed upon practically all insect pests, and it's up to us to increase their numbers. Build and put up bird-houses now.

S.S. LESSON

March 24. Last Words of Jesus With His Disciples, John, chs. 14-17. Golden Text—I am the way, the truth and the life.—John 14: 6.

ANALYSIS.

I. JESUS TELLS OF THE HEAVENLY HOME, 1-4.

II. THE QUESTION OF THOMAS, 5-7.

III. THE REQUEST OF PHILIP, 8-11.

IV. FURTHER CONSOLATIONS, 12-24.

INTRODUCTION.—These four chapters contain the sublime teaching on religion and have been the inspiration and comfort of countless Christians. They tell of the continual presence of Christ with the believers and they give encouragement to all his suffering followers that a future of infinite glory awaits them. The fourteenth chapter gives answers to three questions put by Thomas, Philip and Judas.

I. JESUS TELLS OF THE HEAVENLY HOME, 1-4.

V. 1. Let not your heart be troubled. The little group is overwhelmed with confusion and sorrow especially by the statement of Jesus that he is to leave them immediately, while in addition there is the prophecy that their most distinguished member will fall in the hour of trial, ch. 13:38. These conditions appeal to the compassionate love of Jesus, and "the sad silence is at last broken by these words which for the first time open heaven to faith." Believe in God, believe . . . in me. Faith is the only possible attitude in which the Christian can successfully meet confusion and sorrow. To believe in God and in Christ is the anchor that will hold in every storm.

V. 2. In my Father's house. Jesus had spoken of the temple in these terms (ch. 2:16), but the earthly temple was only a copy of the heavenly home. The emphasis is to be laid on "Father." Heaven depends, not on its buildings, but on him who dwells there. God is all its life and glory. Many mansions. This house will be spacious. "There will be room for every worthy human activity, thought or affection." I would have to do you. Jesus had freely told them of the darker side and can they imagine that he is any less sincere in speaking of this brighter hope? His departure is not final; he is going to prepare a place where all their best hopes will be realized. "The language is borrowed from the practice of sending a messenger in front to secure proper quarters."

V. 3. "I will come again. His departure is the condition of his return. This coming of Jesus is many-sided. As his resurrection he will come, also in the advent of the Holy Spirit, in the great events of the Christian church, at the death of each believer and in the final glorious return at the end of the world.

V. 4. The way ye know. The disciples might not be able to see the distant scene, but they had been with Jesus long enough to know his ideals, and to recognize the true nature of his thoughts and actions in the immediate present, that if they would only follow him the road would be clearly revealed.

II. THE QUESTION OF THOMAS, 5-7.

V. 5. How can we know the way? Thomas was by nature a doubter and is honest enough to confess his difficulty. The future is all wrapped in mystery. He has no clear understanding of the place to which Jesus is going, and how, therefore, can he know the way? Until we are aware of our destination we cannot select our road.

V. 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus replies that he himself is the way. Thomas should have known from what he had seen and heard that the controlling desire of Jesus was to return to the Father, to see the divine face and glory. Jesus found all his joy in doing the Father's will, and in this Jesus was really revealing the way. Thomas must have recognized that the presence of Jesus had been the one great illuminating and directing influence in his own life. Had he only paused to think it out he could have known that the Father was the real goal of Jesus. Jesus is the only true, living way by which we come to the assurance of the Fatherly love of God.

III. THE REQUEST OF PHILIP, 8-11.

V. 8. Show us the Father. Philip was the great friend of Thomas and he finds his difficulty in another direction. Where is God? He is so mysterious! He hides himself! He would to reveal himself as he had done in olden times (Exod. 24:9; Isa. ch. 6), then they would be satisfied.

V. 9. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. Had not Jesus been like a divine presence in their lives? Did they not realize that when with him all was well? They had really been seeing the Father as they looked on Jesus, and they should rest content that in Jesus they had the proof of the Divine Presence.

Thus these two answers furnish us with Christ's notion of the great mysterious life, and they show unmistakably that Christ is the heart and centre of all our religious life.

IV. FURTHER CONSOLATION, 12-24.

Jesus now comforts them by assuring them that the work which he has begun will be continued and increased. These "greater works" will depend upon his intercessory presence with the Father and upon their earnest prayers. He also tells them of the approach of the Holy Spirit who will guide them into all truth, while he crowns everything with the promise that he will himself return, "I will come unto you."

I Watch That Point.

I've discovered that one does not need to follow directions to the letter in mixing hen mash. The big point to keep in mind is that 20 per cent. of the mash needs to be protein. Use the grain that is cheapest and easiest to get.—E. R.

Sheep could be purchased for fourpence in England in the twelfth century.

TONIC FOR Indigestion down Co Through —Dr. Make No There are raction such belching of bloating and heart, a drea causes. I digested food is all, and grows steady digestion nerves and indigestion through the cure intends thorough use of Dr. V new the b and enable with ease a digestion m you have a trouble try Dr. W. Williams you will be Among the new health Williams Webb, R.R. says: "For through the gation; I other words dured. It ratched. It did not sleep ing weaker but with no band sold, had no willan Dr. Williams and he got been taking knew they gain and slept better. The felt like a had felt for my much After such how can I mend Dr. V if you n begin taking today. So or sent by writing The Co., Brock Oh Mot How babies ask how often come inter pay, some rainy day have a pr for them. ture.



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